



ROAR



Top Cat's Monthly Newsletter

September, 2007

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings Top Cats

Having just returned from the Sturgis Rally, it is difficult to write about anything else. The Top Cats had several groups out there this year, but what was different was an attempt to have them spend quality time together. While it may be best to have a single location for us all to be together, when circumstances are such that do not make those arrangements possible, we have learned to make the best of it. The ride out was excellent as always despite a few hours of rain near the Badlands. There were several Top Cats making their first trip out and once again all made it safe and sound. The organization provided by Bard makes this a trip that a rider of any skill level can enjoy.



No visit to the Black Hills is complete without a visit to Mt. Rushmore. No matter how many times you see it, it remains a spectacle worth the return. The buffalo and donkeys were active at the Custer Wildlife preserve and Crazy Horse still looks like it never will be finished. These sights and lunch in Custer were all part of one day trip that included most of the Top Cats who were in the area.



Terry Kumro took us all through the Spearfish Canyon with a stop in Deadwood another day. We also went to Devils Tower and Sundance Wyoming. Close to a thousand miles of side trips.

We all assembled at the Alex Johnson for a Top Cats dinner one evening. We ended up overwhelming the staff with our combined group, but a fun time was had by all. Downtown Rapid City remains a great place to be during the rally.



Estimates were that attendance for the rally was down this year, but it still was a busy place. No matter what town we rode through we saw streets packed with bikes and people. Sturgis itself was pretty much the same as in the past. It was packed with vendors, bikes, and lots of interesting people. Despite many forecasts for rain, we didn't see any the whole time we were in the hills.

Haven't been to Sturgis? Start thinking now about next year. The Top Cats know how to do Sturgis! You won't be disappointed.

Gary

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ACTIVITIES

September - October 2007

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Start Location</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Leader</u>
Sep 01	Milwaukee HOG Rally	TBD West Allis Fairgrounds	TBD	TBD
Sep 04	Alaskan Adevnture	TBD	TBD	L. Scalzitti
Sep 04	General Meeting	Village Tavern and Grill Buffalo Grove	7:30 pm	G. Brandt
Sep 09	President's Ride	Citgo-Rt12 and Bonner-Wauconda	9:00 am	G. Brandt
Sep 11	Board Meeting	Mexican Lindo Restaurant, Lake Zurich	7:30 pm	G. Brandt
Sep 15	Galena Overnight Ride	Shell Station-Lake Cook and Rand Rd	8:30 am	G. Smith
Sep 22	Big Cats	Broken Oar	TBD	S. Levy
Sep 29	Sunset Ride	TBD	TBD	D. Dougherty
Oct 02	General Meeting	Village Tavern and Grill Buffalo Grove	7:30 pm	G. Brandt
Oct 07	Ragetta Ride	TBD	TBD	L. Adams
Oct 09	Board Meeting	Mexico Lindo Restaurant, Lake Zurich	7:30 pm	G. Brandt
Oct 14	Rolling Thunder,TFT	Rt 45,60.83, Vernon Hills	11:00am	n/a

Call the hotline (847) 622-3501 for updates and check the web site at: www.topcats.org

TopCats General Meeting Minutes AUGUST 2007

By Windy Krepel

John Lunde standing in for Gary brought the meeting to order at 7:40pm

Dan Strickler was asked to inform the membership about **Jerry Blum** and his accident that occurred in Sturgis, he has a shattered elbow and broken pelvic bone, but is doing fine. His wife only ended up with a few bruises.

Guests were then introduced. **Ralph Rasmussen** introduced himself; he is the Ride for Dreams Grand Prize winner. **Carl Marcyn** introduced his brother Chris. **Jill Hansen** introduced herself; she is from Kildeer and rides a Harley.

Lynn Adams presented the membership a Ride for Dreams wrap up. Final figures are still being put together and final numbers as well as the check for NISRA will be ready for September's meeting. Lynn then presented Ralph Rasmussen his check for \$5,000.00.

John Lunde asked all members of the Ride for Dreams committee to stand up and take a bow. They deserve a big thank you for all of their efforts.

Greg Smith reported on the upcoming rides for August and September.

Windy Krepel reported to the membership that the Progressive Dinner ride will be Sept 30, 2007 and that two more stops were needed. **Sandy Vernon** stepped up to volunteer for one of the stops.

Greg mentioned that ideas for ride for the month of October were needed, and if anyone had an idea please contact him. John Lunde gave an update on the Rolling Thunder ride.

Ric Case reported for the Safety Committee and turned it over to **Craig Martens** who related a story

about when he and Linda were taking a quick ride to his auto parts store, and how even people who ride together for years need to communicate. Sometimes they can take each other for granted thinking they know exactly where they are planning to make a turn. Craig recommended that everyone should take an ERC course every couple of years as he does.

Jim Hennif reported on 2 members that he has recommended for their Road Captain Patch, **Tom Nichols** and **Mike Bradbury**.

John Lunde reminded everyone that the Roar deadline for articles is 3 days away. He also announced that someone was needed to help get sponsorship thru ad sales to help cover the cost of Roar.

John then opened the floor for member comments. **Paul Mackowick** announced that AIM was having a ride August 26, 2007 out of Woodstock Harley Davidson. Registration opens at 9:00AM and first bike out at 10:30AM, with a full police escort.

John mentioned to the membership that flying a Top Cat flag is a way to give our club visibility when we go to other clubs events, and we have plenty of flags available for our membership.

The ISAAC WALTON LEAGUE is having an ice cream social this weekend at their lodge located at 899 Jay Street, cost \$3.00.

Wildfire Open House on Sat and Sunday they are having a poker run.

Lynn Adams asked the membership if anyone had gone anywhere to put out flyers and used one of our plastic holders to please go back and retrieve them to help save the cost of having to purchase more next year.

Meeting adjourned 8:45PM

One Sturgis Report...

By Traveler

Seldom do we have the opportunity to look at how others view us or what they think of our events. In twelve years with Top Cats, I have never seen a review of any of our rides from an "Outsider." The following letter was actually an email report by a member of the Combat Veterans of America Motorcycle Club, to his president, on his experience with riding to Sturgis with the Top Cats this year...

Steve,

The trip to Sturgis was great; despite the rain, heat, flat tire, lack of sleep, hangovers, and long days in the saddle. After we left your place, we rode into Chicago to meet up with Don's dad, Wayne, and his German friend, Karsten. This was the second time I've ridden through Chicago, and I hope it was the last time. The traffic was crazy; the drivers (loosely characterized) have no respect for motorcycles and will blindly encroach right into the middle of a formation. We had to take evasive actions on a couple of occasions.

When we got to Wayne's house the rain was just starting. We thought about delaying overnight, but decided to push on, hoping the rain god would have pity on us. 30 minutes out of Chicago I could barely see the bike in front of me and, at 70 mph, we blindly trusted Wayne and each bike in succession to keep between the white lines. We stopped near Madison WI, soaked and chilled to the bone.

The next morning started at 6:00 am with more rain, continuing to the Minnesota border, and then it cleared and was pleasant most of the day. Somewhere in eastern South Dakota my bike started wobbling badly (at near 80 mph) and I stopped on the side of the highway with a flat rear tire. Paul

pulled off with me (he had an air pump and plug kit) while Lisa raced ahead to alert the group. The plug kit patched the hole and we linked up with the rest of the group at the next exit after about 25 minutes down time. Further delays for more air and uncertainty about the repair caused us to consider stopping for the night, but we decided to drive on for Rapid City.

We rode about 770 miles that day and were celebrating and telling stories at the Alex Johnson Hotel in Rapid City by nightfall. Each day we rode different areas of the Black Hills, Badlands, Custer National Park/Wildlife Area, Spearfish Canyon, etc. Lead by Wayne, Terry Kumro, Bard Board, and Jim Didier, we visited Mt. Rushmore, Crazy Horse Monument, an old Minuteman missile control center and silo, the famous Wall Drug tourist trap, Deadwood (where Wild Bill Hickok was killed), and the hundreds of vendors and custom bike builders in Sturgis. We saw Billy Lane and Arlen Ness (celebrity bike builders). Sheri got an autograph from Billy Lane and I busted on Arlen about lowering his custom Victory touring bike so much that the headlight contacted and dented the front fender.

Our best party day was at Full Throttle Saloon, just outside Sturgis; listening to bands, watching amateur Ultimate fighting, watching the hordes of people, and taking pictures...and drinking, a little. Some of the most memorable times were Lisa and Sheri doing Blow Jobs (a drink...really) at the Firehouse, the fantastic scenery and roads, and chilling after each day with a drink in front of the hotel.

We wrapped up the week with people going their own ways on Thursday and Friday. Dan and Paul headed out on Thursday with both bikes on Paul's truck and trailer. Dan rode the rest of the way home after reaching his brother's house in Pittsburg. Barry and Sheri also headed out on Thursday and rode

to Des Moines to visit Barry's family, arriving on Friday. Lisa headed up to Montana on Friday to visit with her family. Don and I took off on Friday for an overnight stop at Spirit Lake, IA. We fought some hellacious winds across I-90, nearly causing us to scrape floorboards while trying to ride in a straight line (very slight exaggeration), while we caught up to a squall line. Once we caught up to the storm, the rain and occasional lightning were a welcome change because the winds stopped.

We made Spirit Lake by 2:30 pm and had plenty of time to visit all the bars I had become familiar with during previous visits. We contributed (by verbal encouragement) to an occupational mishap involving a fall from the top of a stripper pole (that's all I'll say about that). After closing another bar, Whiskey Dick's, and after 3 hours sleep we were back in the saddle (still pre-hangover) headed for a link-up with Barry and Sheri in Des Moines.

With 4 hours of riding under our belts and again in the company of Sheri and Barry, we hit the highway headed for Ohio. The weather was great but the lack of sleep made energy drinks the order of business at every stop. When we pulled into a Hotel in Dayton, Don and I had logged over 800 miles that day. We would have gone farther (neither willing to cry uncle), but Barry's shifter linkage took a crap (again) and required some wrenching the next morning.

The plan for the last day was to follow route 50 from Chillicothe across West Virginia into Virginia. After stopping in Clarksburg, I noticed my tire was losing air again. We pumped a can of fix-a-flat into it, only to have the goo bubble out the original hole. Another plug and another can of fix-a-flat gave us enough confidence to push farther east. We stopped every 50 miles and repeated the process until Romney, WV where the plug just wouldn't hold anymore and erupt-

ed in a hissing geyser of fix-a-flat. Don called another biker brother, Chuck, who drove the 120 miles to WV to load my bike in the back of his truck.

Barry and Sheri headed home while Don and I got acquainted with the fine folks at the VFW in Romney and waited for Chuck's arrival. We were just getting comfortable when Chuck found us (of course he knew to look at the nearest bar) and roused us out to get the bike loaded. The last 120 miles home was the worst part of the trip for me. It sucked to stop my ride short of the final destination; to make matters worse; my bike broke a tie down and fell over in the back of the truck, denting the gas tank. Now my bike's down with the rear tire removed and a dented tank; but the good news is: I've got my spare Harley.

Not to be beaten, we went back out on Saturday, 18 Aug, and rode over 500 miles through the twisty back roads of route 250 from Charlottesville, Virginia through Elkins West Virginia and along route 50 through Romney and back home to complete the final leg of my Sturgis ride. With no windshield on the Fatboy and my failure to account for the wind-chill, this was one of the most grueling rides I've ever been on. (I think the Ultra's making me soft.)

The whole trip was an unforgettable exercise in physical stamina, mental fortitude, and liver torture [strengthening]; and all-in-all wonderful adventure. I think the Iron Butt champ was (cherry) Sheri, who rode every mile with Barry [poetic..barf]. The Top Cats from Chicago welcomed us with open arms and the camaraderie was outstanding. Even more awesome was sharing the experience in the company of such fine and merry travelers. I wouldn't change a thing.

Terry

KAR's (Kick Ass Rides)

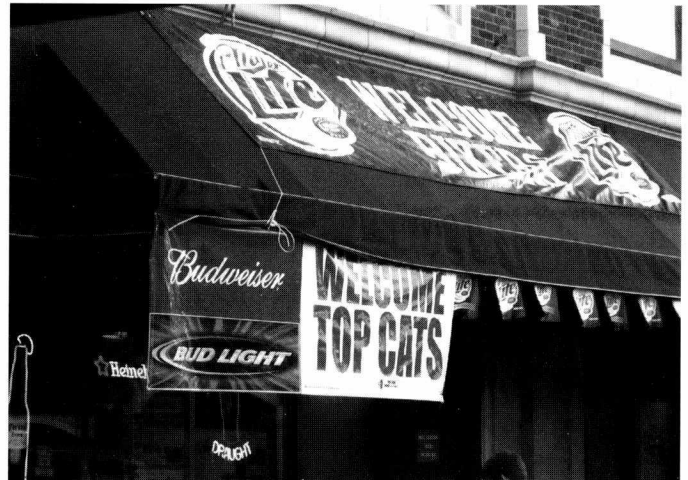
By Traveler

At some time in our riding lives, we all have, or we all will, ride on some of the greatest routes we can imagine. Recently, I solicited input on great rides from our members so we can share those routes with all of the Top Cats. Here's what we have so far and I encourage everyone to keep sending me (wkirkpa177@aol.com) their KAR's...

Fred Zimbric: Close to home, Hwy 131 from Wauzeka, WI, to Wildcat Mountain, with a little detour on F to hit 33 over Wildcat is a great scenic route with nice rolling sweepers and beautiful valleys and farmland. County Road E and Hwy 179 in that area are also favorites of mine.

Bob Brizzolara: Here is an out-of-the-way ride for those who may not think I-25 is a great way to go south in Colorado. It was an incredibly wonderful day's ride (about 8 hours including a lunch stop). It has mountains, deserts and several passes (from which you can see across entire breath-taking valleys. If you see another vehicle on the road, it is an event. I started out in Morrison, CO., which is just south of Golden on State Route 285. I took it south until it intersected with Hwy. 17 and took that south (as straight as an arrow) passed the (How did that get here?) Great Sand Dune until it rejoined Route 285 in Alamosa. Then, back on 285, I went south through Antonito (the east-end of the (more scenic than the famous Durango-Silverton) Scenic Toltec and Cumbres Steam Rwy, and into New Mexico. There, 285 intersects with Route 64, which I took southeast. It crossed a very high, magnificent bridge over the Rio Grande River and came into Taos, NM by late afternoon.

Traveler: Phantom Canyon Trail (RT 67) from Victor, CO south to just east of Canyon City, CO. It is a 20 mile, old dirt railroad bed, complete with tunnels, fords, and extremely rough dirt roads. Signs at each end advise that only four-wheel drive vehicles should enter. It is, by far, the most rustic, rugged, and scenic trail I have ever ridden. Caution: If you attempt it, ride with another vehicle.



Look forward to additional routes from our members who will be submitting them for the next issue of ROAR...

Kaution Korner

By Tom Malia

When riding a motorcycle, we all know the potential dangers of "target fixation". The point of this safety message is to encourage you to avoid what I will call "plan fixation". This fixation is a blind adherence to a plan despite unanticipated developments such as bad weather (freezing cold, rain, etc.) or mental or physical issues or bike problems that should cause you to at least re-think your plans. Many of us have had plans in place for weeks only to get up on departure morning to discover some unforeseen circumstance. Maybe the weather has turned bad, maybe you have a splitting headache, maybe you got home late and are overly tired, maybe you only now noticed how worn your tires are. It has been my experience that for many of us, once plans are in place, we are overly reluctant to change them.

My message is, in the face of such adverse developments, we should objectively reassess the premise behind our plan. Do we really need to arrive as originally scheduled? Can we take a different route or skip some scheduled stops or endure a longer riding day to compensate for a delay in our departure? We need to re-think our plans and carefully assess whether proceeding as planned is still the prudent course of action.

One of the most poignant non-motorcycle examples of this fixation was John F. Kennedy Jr.'s ill-fated flight to Cape Cod. You may recall he and his wife and her sister were planning an afternoon flight from NY to Hyannis Port for an early Friday evening arrival. When his sister-in-law's lateness

delayed their departure such that they would now be largely flying in darkness, John apparently ignored the dangers of his inexperience in IFR flying over water, stuck to his Friday arrival plan, took off....and the rest is history.

My plan fixation experience thankfully had a different outcome. I had ridden to Washington D.C. and I had it in my mind that I needed to leave for home on a certain day. When that day came and it was raining, I delayed my departure for as long as possible; but eventually I decided I needed to leave. When the rain turned into a torrential downpour, I still had it in my mind that I needed to stick to my initial timetable. So rather than stop, I kept rolling. I survived, but in retrospect it would have been much more prudent for me to sit out the storm and then either delay my return or make up the time by riding into the night...contrary to my initial plan.

So if conditions to ride are not ideal, have the personal gumption to step back from your plans and give serious thought to changing those plans despite the disruption, real or imagined, by such a change.

Editor's Note:

Due to the later date for the August 2007 board meeting, the minutes from that meeting will be published in the October 2007 ROAR.

John LaMonica

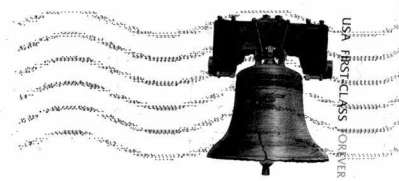


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