



ROAR

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Upcoming Events

JANUARY
 LET'S LOOK FORWARD
 TO OUR FIRST GATHERING
 OF 2021!

FEBRUARY
 WHEN WILL THAT BE??
 SOON...
 VERY SOON!

Talk to Greg Smith and
 Jim Purcell and get
 your ideas on the
 calendar!





PRESIDENT'S POINT

And Now a Word from your President...



So long 2020 and welcome 2021...

I hope you and your families are safe and doing good. The Rigsby's are good and making the most of the time we have together. I Sure do miss you all!!

Looking back on the events of 2020, It's easy to identify the "challenges" faced and dwell on what was missed, but there have been many shining moments throughout the year that remind us of why Top Cats - Illinois is such a great club. And the reason for these moments is squarely due to the quality of our members. So thank you to everyone for making this the best year it could be in spite of the obvious obstacles.



Casting our sights forward we will still have "challenges" moving into 2021, but together, we can overcome them and be ready to create more shining moments as soon as we can.

As with every new year, the RC's will meet and start planning our events and loading the calendar with them. Keep your eyes open for new opportunities to create new shining moments sharing good rides with good friends!

Lastly, I would like to say THANK YOU to Lisa Purcell, who is stepping down from the charity director position, which she has executed very well for several years.

As always, please feel free to reach out to me at anytime via my email: Gene.rigsby@gmail.com, or 847-770-9425.

Look Forward to seeing you there!
Gene "Lucky" Rigsby

KAUTION KORNER

Breaking, Stopping or Crashing?

By: Wayne 'Traveler' Kirkpatrick
Senior Road Captain



Normally, we never think about braking until we absolutely have to do it. Sound crazy? Think about it. When you first got on a bike, you were more interested in how to make it go than you were in how to stop it. When you taught someone how to ride a bike, you started by showing them how to make it go before you showed them how to make it stop.

With today's technology, we have four basic types of braking systems, each with it's own dynamics. We have regular hydraulic / cable brakes, independent brakes, linked brakes, ABS brakes and, combinations of all four.

To brake effectively....that is, to stop without skidding out of control and quick enough to not hit anything, we need to understand some braking dynamics and systems.

(Continued on pg. 3)



KAUTION KORNER

Which Brakes to Use



Front / rear balance affects a motorcycle's dynamics, and that's why most bikes have independent front and rear brake controls. It is generally accepted that around 70 percent of braking efficiency is done by the front wheel, which uses the hand lever on the right grip, and 30 percent by the rear, which is operated by the right foot pedal. Look at racing bikes and you will notice that the front wheel has two large brake rotors while the rear wheel has one small rotor.

Front brakes provide this level of efficiency because weight transfer from slowing down will shift the bike's balance from the rear wheel to the front, enabling the front tire to handle more load and not slip out of control. When there is less downforce on the rear tire, it becomes much easier to lock-up and slide that wheel, resulting in a loss of control. Optimum braking efficiency is, obviously, accomplished by judicious use of both front and rear brakes simultaneously.

Road Conditions and Braking



Different road conditions require different braking techniques, and you'll want to use your motorcycle's front brakes gingerly when traction is iffy. Locking up the front wheel can easily cause you to lose control of your bike. Locking up the rear wheel is less likely to cause you to lose control. Not that it won't, it's just less likely.

Approach areas with the potential for less traction like oil residue at toll booths, intersections, and parking lots, with extra caution. Ride as close to "Neutral" acceleration as possible. Accelerate or decelerate very gingerly. And, it takes quick reflexes, so cover your brake pedal / lever and stay alert to any loss of traction. Remember that it's much easier to recover from a rear wheel lockup than it is a front slide.

How Hard to Brake



Learning the finer points of your bike's braking performance is key to keeping your bike in control, so it's a good idea to explore those limits in a safe environment. Practice repeated stops in an abandoned parking lot, and you'll start to get a feel for the amount of effort that triggers tire slip. Try stopping with your front wheel only, your rear wheel only, and then a combination of both. That way, you'll get a sense of how hard you can apply the brakes in an emergency.

Once you become familiar with your bike's brakes, the sensations of weight transfer will start to feel more apparent. Stopping hard enough on the front wheel might even lift the rear wheel up and, using the rear brakes hard enough will cause a skid. You will also find that you can get away with applying more pressure at higher speeds. Learn those limits, and you'll be much better prepared for the unexpected.

The introduction of linked brakes and Anti-lock Braking Systems (ABS) may totally change your braking technique so practice, and get familiar, with those as well.

(Continued on pg. 4)

Kaution Korner, continued...



The Lean Angle Issue

Tires are most effective when they are upright, so you'll need to keep that in mind when you start to lean your bike over. Under ideal conditions, 100 percent of a tire's grip is available when it is fully upright and making full contact with the road, roughly at about 90 degrees. Once that angle starts decreasing, the tire's ability to maintain grip will erode. Though grabbing the front brake might not break the tire free when it's upright, the same effort could cause a skid when the tire is leaned over.

That loss of traction can instantly lead you to "tuck" the tire under, triggering a low-side wipeout. Some braking effort can be applied while a motorcycle is turning, but the bike will be far less tolerant of brake input when increased lean angles are involved. Be very aware of your lean angle when you brake while turning. Skilled riders know to do most, if not all, of their braking before entering a curve.

Braking According to Your Bike

The 70/30 braking ratio can shift slightly based on the type of bike you are riding. Cruisers and choppers can handle more rear braking because they carry more weight over their rear wheel due to the rearward position of the saddle, while sport bikes can tolerate higher front braking effort because their forks are more vertical and their wheelbases are shorter. Read your owner's manual to determine the stopping capability of your bike, in distance, at specified speeds. Remember, however, that these specifications are under ideal conditions i.e., good traction, good brakes, good tires, and good reaction time.

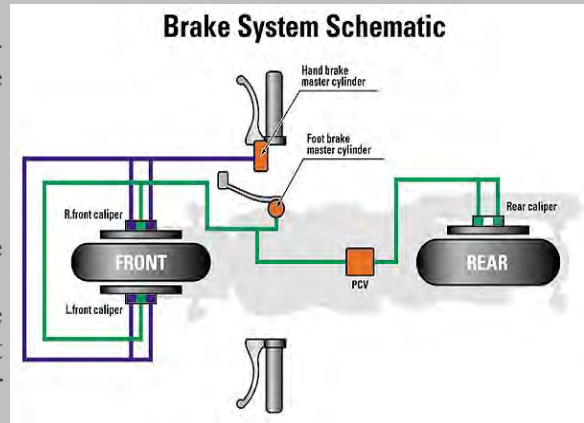
SUPERBIKES	
Braking 60-0mph	
aprilia	131 ft
BMW	118 ft
DUCATI	121 ft
HONDA	126 ft
Kawasaki	126 ft
KTM	123 ft
SUZUKI	127 ft
YAMAHA	133 ft

Many bikes today are equipped with linked brakes, which are designed to actuate both front and rear brakes through a single lever or pedal. When you activate either the front brake lever, or the rear brake pedal, the system applies both front and rear brakes at the same time. Some systems are only rear-to-front linked, while others work both ways, but the goal is the same with both: to remove some of the guesswork involved with choosing between the front and rear brakes.

Linked brakes are usually activated only at a speed over 15 mph. This allows for the use of the rear brake under 15 mph when making tight, slow turns such as in a parking lot or when performing a U Turn.

Most typical riders can't produce stopping distances as short as those created by linked braking systems. But, again, practice and get comfortable with how to use your linked – brake system.

Linked Brakes



Anti-lock Braking Systems



Many bikes now have anti-lock braking systems (ABS), which are designed to detect tire slip and "pulse" the brakes so they don't skid. The system allows the rider to apply full effort at the hand or brake levers without worrying about locking up the tires, but ABS isn't effective when a bike is leaned over.

(Continued on pg. 5)



Kaution Korner, continued...

Though it's difficult to match the stopping distance of an ABS-equipped bike in wet or compromised traction situations, not all riders are enthusiastic about computerized brake intervention. Once you practice braking with ABS, you will probably become a believer.

The newer the bike, the more likely that you'll encounter more sophisticated braking systems. Currently, some bikes are equipped with linked ABS brakes, some now have overriding traction control systems and some have integrated lean – angle systems.

If there was ever a reason to practice braking, and particularly emergency braking, it is with any bike with these sophisticated systems be it a new bike or even your current bike.

Learn how to stop safely unless.....you enjoy venison served in a hospital bed.



Winter Beauty! A Four Seasons Blessing....



Oil Spots

By Traveler

The International Motorcycle Show Heads Outdoors for 2021



As the global pandemic and government regulations continue to call for restaurant owners, shop managers, and events teams to adapt on a seemingly weekly basis, one generally accepted solution has been to take things outside. Like many businesses, the International Motorcycle Show (IMS) is following that model by changing its normal convention-center setting to the outdoors.

Tickets will go on sale April 9, 2021, at motorcycleshows.com. As of today, the dates for the Chicago Show are August 20-22, 2021 at a location TBD in Elgin, IL.

Harley-Davidson to debut 2021 products Jan. 19

Throughout Harley-Davidson's 118-year history, the brand has never before brought the entire world together to experience the debut of all-new Harley-Davidson motorcycles. But on Jan.19, 2021, that all changes as the company hosts its first-ever virtual launch experience to announce its all-new 2021 motorcycles, parts and accessories, riding gear and apparel.

According to an official announcement, "The global virtual launch is part of the company's streamlined and overhauled approach to bringing products to market for customers.

(Continued on pg. 6)



Oil Spots, continued...

Earlier this year, Harley-Davidson announced significant shifts including streamlining its planned product portfolio by 30%, shifting its new model year debut to align with the start of the riding season and amped-up marketing efforts to drive desirability and maximize impact in the market.”

"We're thrilled to bring the world together virtually to showcase the inspiration and passion behind our 2021 motorcycles, including a glimpse of our first adventure touring motorcycle, Pan America," said vice president of marketing Theo Keetell. "We look forward to sharing this moment with our customers and dealers from around the world.

American actor, producer and motorcycle enthusiast Jason Momoa will play a key role in the Jan. 19 event. Forever seeking new adventures, Momoa will share his thoughts on how Harley-Davidson's upcoming Pan America motorcycle has expanded his passion for Harley-Davidson and created new opportunities to explore endless horizons beyond paved roads.

"Harley-Davidson has unlocked opportunities for me to find adventure with amazing people, awe-inspiring places, and expand my inspiration seen in the United We Will Ride content series," said Momoa. "I was excited to collaborate with Harley-Davidson for a first look and chance to ride the Pan America 1250 motorcycle. It's the perfect vehicle that combines my love of the outdoors, the unknown, and Harley-Davidson. People are going to be completely stoked about this bike that Harley-Davidson has created."

Despite the virtual event, Harley-Davidson also plans to still “bring the world back together” on Feb. 22, 2021, to reveal the motorcycle's full details in a separate digital event with the spotlight on the new Pan America motorcycle.

2021

While there was nothing funny about 2020, let's chuckle about our sport in 2021.



(Continued on pg.. 7)



Oil Spots, continued...

Davidson Pan America will be fully unveiled in February



Harley-Davidson has finally announced that we'll find out everything there is to know about the new 1250cc Pan America adventure bike in February.

If you've not been counting it's been nearly three years since the bike was first announced and at times we've been wondering if it will ever arrive. There's a preview on Tuesday, January 19, 2021.



was announced that we would have to wait until 2021 to see it.

Then it all went quiet and we watched as H-D's other new model, the Bronx, was cancelled and the Sportster range fell victim to Euro5 legislation in Europe. We started to wonder if the model was still coming.

But now, fresh images have emerged from across Europe where the Pan America has been doing the rounds on a tour of dealerships. And since it looks like they're taking orders we wouldn't expect the model to arrive later than March.

The Pan America was first announced back in 2018 and sent a shockwave through the bike world with its brand-new water-cooled engine, polarizing looks and off road intent. Harley's intention was to create a "two-wheeled Jeep" that moved away from the styling employed by Japanese and European manufacturers.

It doesn't look like H-D has made any visible changes from the 2019 version so it still has a big TFT dash, multi button switchgear, adjustable screen, cruise control, heated grips, Brembo brakes and some level of electronic suspension adjustability. Harley says the new engine will make about 145bhp and 90lbft of torque, which is competitive with the BMW R1250GS.

The bike has been to dealer locations in France, Holland, Spain and Portugal with those who went to see the bike posting images and video on social media. Some say they have placed orders of the bike in S trim, which includes panniers.



We expect the model to arrive officially in March 2021. Although there's no official word on price, expect the top spec version to cost upwards of \$19,000.

Electric Triumph



Triumph has plans to develop an electric motorcycle the University of Warwick.

Triumph CEO Nick Bloor

said "Project Triumph TE-1 is one part of our electric motorcycle strategy, focused on delivering what riders want and expect from their Triumph, which is the perfect balance of handling, performance and usability."

(Continued on pg.-8)

Oil Spots, continued...

The project is also supported and co-funded by the UK's Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy as well as the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) by way of Innovate UK, an agency in the UK dedicated to advancing technological innovation.



In the not-so-distant future, rides like the Bonneville could be powered by the battery and motor developed in the new Project Triumph TE-1. *Triumph Motorcycles*



As part of our electric motorcycle initiative, Project Triumph TE-1 represents an exciting collaboration that will provide valuable input into our future lineup.

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'Everything is gone.' Fire destroys Laconia Motorcycle Week memorabilia

A building fire destroyed old photos, magazine articles, and other



memorabilia from the Laconia Motorcycle Week Association that were collected from the 97-year-old bike rally in New Hampshire.

Laconia Fire Chief Kirk Beattie said it was likely that an electrical problem may have been the cause. He said the fire had probably been burning for hours before it was discovered.

The association's deputy director had just begun work

on the 2021 edition of Rally News, a magazine that contains information about the races and other activities during the nine-day annual event. That, along with Motorcycle Week merchandise, photos going back to the 1940s, and vintage magazine and newspaper articles were destroyed.

5 Motorcycle Myths



Myths are among our worst enemies. At best, buying into them can make you look foolish and, at worst, get you seriously hurt or dead. If you accept any of the following as gospel,

your belief may come back to haunt you.

"Loud pipes save lives"

Supporters of this myth tend to use anecdotal evidence to prop it up, usually of the "a truck was about to cut me off when he heard my pipes and veered back into his own lane" type. Maybe your loud pipes startled some poor schlep as you blasted past, causing him to swerve, but if he heard you, why was he about to cut you off in the first place? I've never seen any empirical evidence to support the loud-pipes theory.

"You can't use synthetic oil in a motorcycle engine"

The theory here is that synthetic oil is so slippery that it prevents the rolling elements of ball and roller bearings from turning. It's an interesting idea, but it's just a lot of smoke. The fact is that using it in a roller-bearing engine won't cause the least bit of harm.

"Don't use the front brake— it'll toss you over the handlebars."

My guess is this tale got started back in the days of dirt roads, when a good squeeze on the front brake lever could lock the front wheel and cause a slide. Why it persisted as long as it did says a lot about people's willingness to believe a good story despite evidence to the contrary.

"Always burn high-octane gas— your bike will make more power."

From an energy-producing standpoint, there's not much difference between high- and low-octane gas.

(Continued on pg. 9)



Oil Spots, continued...

However, high-octane fuel is formulated to resist detonation, and as such it's less volatile, meaning it's harder to ignite and burns slower than low-octane fuel. The truth is that burning high-test gas in an engine that doesn't require it is a waste of money and may actually reduce power.

"Never use anti-seize (or oil/grease) on a nut or bolt - It'll make the threads slick, and they'll come loose."

Think of a bolt as a spring; when it's tightened, it stretches slightly and applies a force to whatever you're trying to hold together. When hardware is assembled dry, some torque is used up overcoming friction between the threads. Lubricating a fastener will reduce friction as the bolt is tightened and provide the proper torque setting. Unless the manufacturer states otherwise, always lightly oil a threaded fastener before installing it.

Most myths have some basis in reality, and that's what makes them dangerous. They're also a way to explain the unexplainable without doing a whole lot of research.

The problem is that accepting a myth at face value often has unpleasant repercussions. In the past, it sometimes meant sacrificing a virgin or two to appease the gods, while in modern times, it may mean spending the rest of your life hooked to a feeding tube because you bought into a really dumb myth like "helmets kill more riders than they save."



May All of
Our 2021
Dreams
Come
True!

Helmet Care and Feeding

Toilet Head?

By Traveler

Distractions reduce our ability to safely operate a motorcycle. Period! The more we can eliminate distractions, the safer our riding environment will be.

Vision is right up there with distractions in terms of safety. If you can't see clearly....you are riding under unsafe conditions.



Combine distractions and reduced vision and you have doubled your risk factor.

Now, as you're riding down the highway and you encounter glare from the sun or you're having difficulty seeing at night due to oncoming headlights, that is a distraction that could be very hazardous.



Additionally, if you are distracted because of a weird odor coming from your helmet, a deteriorating liner falling apart or something crawling around in your helmet....you've got another hazardous distraction.

The point is that a clean, well-fitting helmet, with a clean liner and clear visor will eliminate one more distraction and give you the protection that your helmet is designed to provide.

Would you stick your head in a bag stained with sweat, full of dead skin cells and old hair? What if we added microorganisms and remnants of insects? How about if it smells like a month old arm pit? Of course not but....most of us do it every time we put on a motorcycle helmet.



Think about it. When was the last time you cleaned your helmet? Most riders would answer....never.

(Continued on pg. 10)

Helmets, Continued

During the riding season, bugs in the air, road debris, smoke, oil residue, and sweat on your brow, combine to leave your helmet dirty on the outside and smelling foul on the inside. When your helmet gets funky, it's time to give it a wash. Here's how.



First, pop off your visor and set it aside. Then use a sponge or a damp cloth to wipe down the exterior of your helmet. For really stubborn stuff like splattered bugs, let the crud soak and soften under a moist cloth and then wipe it off. Once the outside shell is clean, spray it with some polish and buff it out with a clean rag.



For really stubborn stuff like splattered bugs, let the crud soak and soften under a moist cloth and then wipe it off. Once the outside shell is clean, spray it with some polish and buff it out with a clean rag.

The face shield deserves special attention since you don't want to scratch it. All helmet makers warn against using cleaners with ammonia in them (that means ammonia - free Windex!) since there's a chance it might damage the visor's hard coating. If you want to go by the book use a solution of warm water with just a drop of dish soap in it. If your visor has an anti-fog coating on the inside, stick with pure water. Then rinse it and dry it with a clean cloth, preferably a microfiber.



Now for the interior. When it gets ripe, rip it out! Most helmets these days have removable liners that snap out. And they snap out so you can wash them.

To do that, fill a container with warm water and a little bit of soap. Baby shampoo is the best stuff to use since it doesn't leave behind any residues or aromas. Swish and squeeze those pads to get them good and



clean, then rinse them with fresh water and gently squeeze them out. Then just lay them on a towel to air dry. If you're in a hurry, a fan will help speed up the process.

Once they're dry, reinstall them. If your helmet doesn't have a removable liner, you can dunk the entire helmet in the sink and wash the liner in place. Make sure you rinse it really well. It'll take longer to dry but prop that fan up and sit tight.

Some riders have used their dishwashers to wash their helmets however, be very careful with this method. High temperatures and aggressive detergents can ruin your helmet. If you can use a light detergent and a low temperature, you might be safe. Be sure to let it air - dry rather than using any air - dry in the machine that might be too hot.

As a method of keeping your helmet clean and fresh, wash it more than once per year and, when you store it, place a sheet of fabric softener inside to mitigate odor.



Techno Riding in 2021



By Traveler

Technology, in our sport, can be applied as a great safety innovation or as a pure marketing gadget that adds to the distractions we already experience.

As technology in the auto industry emerges, so does the application of that technology in the motorcycle industry.

Remember when motorcycles had no radios, cruise control, ABS brakes, traction control, remote locks, keyless FOBs, digital instruments, navigation systems, engine monitoring systems, etc? Look at it now. Most new touring bikes even come with a DVD for the owner's manual because the print version would need 500+ pages to print all the instructions for all of the systems.

Even the engines require a laptop to download service information and fault codes. And that's just up until now. Hang on and get ready for the emerging technologies in 2021!

Here are a few of the systems, processes, gadgets, and toys that we can expect to see soon.

Smart Helmets



Helmet technology integration isn't exactly new to us. There's been a continuous introduction of smart helmets over the last few

years. However, that doesn't mean that new helmet technology necessarily enhances safety. Helmet intercoms, bike – to – bike communications with up to 15 other riders, blue tooth telephone and AM/FM radio links all can be major distractions.

In 2021, we hope to see helmet technology that enhances safe riding.

A French company, Kosmos Smart Helmet, is developing a smart helmet equipped with "tail lights" as well as an emergency warning system if the rider crashes. It also features the high-tech goodies we see in today's helmets like; Bluetooth connectivity, integrated comm system, etc.

Springfield-based Cranium Corp is developing their iC-R smart helmet with the specific goal of making riding safer. The helmet includes twin full-color LED heads-up displays, twin rear-facing cameras, built-in Bluetooth communications, phone connectivity, voice controls, blind spot monitoring, LiDAR rear-end collision warnings, an electronically controlled LCD visor that tints itself dark at the touch of a button, emergency service alert system, and even a washable respiratory filter to keep the air you breathe free of particles.

Helmet innovations like these are expected to make their way to the market sometime in 2021.

Wearable Airbag Systems



(Continued on pg, 12)

Techno, Continued



Most of us have heard of airbag equipped motorcycle jackets available from such major manufacturers as Dainese, Alpinestar, Klim and Helite. These jackets enhance the safety factor provided by helmets, gloves, boots, and chaps but, what good is that if your legs are ground to the bone by road rash?

A European company, CX Air Dynamics, realized that void and is developing the next motorcycle gear safety innovation....airbag pants.

The airbag pants concept features a cable-triggered airbag system that uses a compressed air cartridge to inflate four airbags located on the side of the thighs and calves and integrated into the over-pants. Eventually the pants will employ an electronic trigger system.

The garment also features a thin layer of Poron foam for added protection. Any enhancement such as this should be considered an addition rather than a standalone piece of equipment.

Now, if someone can develop air-bag boots and gloves, we'll all look like the Michelin Man upon impact.

Split-Screen Display

Get used to them. Split screen displays are replacing analog displays and, given the right system, they could be a strong safety enhancement.



With multiple analog or digital gages, a rider must scan multi-

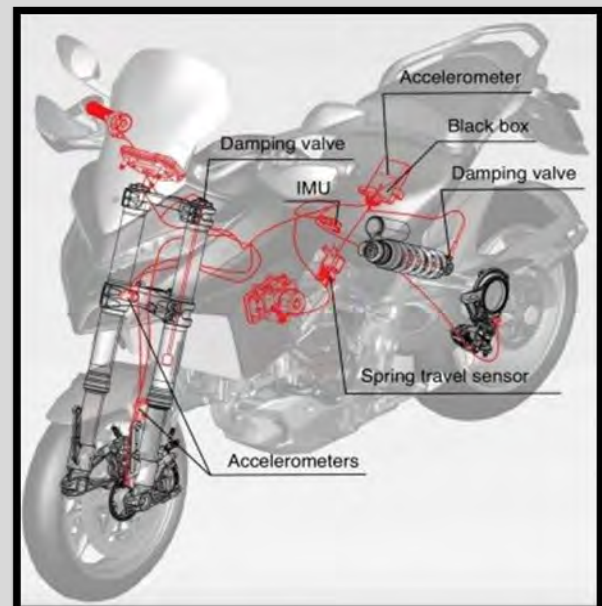
ple areas to stay aware of engine / bike performance. More scanning equals more time that your eyes are not on the road.

Bosch intends to change that with the introduction of its new app-enabled split screen system that allows riders to visualize such information as speedometer, odometer, and riding modes. Their mySPIN system offers a new riding experience with more safety and convenience for motorcycle riders.

Systems like the Bosch can be an add-on to your current bike. Many manufacturers are integrating split – screen systems to allow riders to select the data to be displayed such as speed, temperature, engine performance, navigation, etc., all on one, easy to read screen.

Another great feature of split – screen displays is the ability to set performance parameters like low fuel, hi temps, low oil, speed, and approaching turns. When the pre-set parameters are reached, the data displays can flash yellow, red or display bold font. Ideally, this can result in less time that your eyes are off the road.

Skyhook Suspension



Skyhook suspension is an electronic suspension that acts as though the bike's rear is suspended by a sky hook which increases its stability on irregular surfaces.

(Continued on pg.. 13)



Techno, Continued

Electronic suspension isn't new. In 2012, Ducati introduced the Multistrada 1200 equipped with the skyhook semi-active suspension.

For 2021, we'll see many newer skyhook-equipped motorcycles. Not only is the new Ducati Multistrada V4 getting the latest generation of active suspension like its predecessor, but BMW and Kawasaki have also integrated skyhook suspension systems.

Look for more manufacturers to integrate Skyhook Electronic Ride Adjustment suspension in 2021.



Adaptive Cruise Control

Automobile and truck Adaptive

Cruise Control (ACC) technology has been available for years. In the motorcycle industry, it wasn't until around 2010 that companies started seriously working on a motorcycle version of the system.

Many motorcycle manufacturers have announced their intention to introduce a motorcycle equipped with some form of adaptive cruise control however, only two manufacturers have developed viable systems: Ducati and BMW.

In late 2020, Ducati announced that its flagship adventurer, Multistrada V4, would feature its first adaptive cruise control and blind-spot monitoring system. BMW launched the R1250 RT armed with Dynamic Cruise Control (ACC) a few weeks beforehand.

Both ACC systems rely partly on radar input to modulate the motorcycle's speed based on the detected speed of the vehicle at the front which helps keep a safe distance and eliminates the need for the rider to manually slow down or accelerate. The 2021 BMW R1250 RT and Ducati Multistrada V4 will both feature the new technology.

360-Degree AI System

Blind-spot monitoring and forward-



collision warning systems are also being considered to improve riders' safety. The hi-tech Ducati Multistrada V4 offered with radar-based blind-spot monitoring technology is just one example. Harley-Davidson, BMW, Honda and Damon are also rapidly developing their own ensemble of safety features.

One major problem with the forthcoming use of 360-degree AI is that once the technology is out, it cannot be retrofitted to your older motorcycle. You must buy a new bike with that capability from a specific manufacturer.

Recognizing that limitation, a company called Ride Vision is developing a 360-degree safety system that can be installed on any motorcycle. Ride Vision's system uses two cameras—one at the front and one at the back—that detect objects and vehicles located around the motorcycle. The warnings are displayed on two light clusters installed to the motorcycle's mirrors, allowing the rider to know what's going on around them at a quick glance.

We can expect more companies to enter this market in 2021 with their more economic, yet fully reliant, after-market 360-degree AI systems'

While I am sure that innovative minds are already developing new and yet to be heard of technology, we need to stay aware of the distraction factor that comes with each new innovation and decide if; 1.) Its just a fad, 2.) It only looks cool, 3.) It serves no apparent purpose or...4.) It is, in fact, something that will enable us to be safer riders.

With any new safety – enhancing technology, our challenge for 2021 is to master the use of that technology for safer riding and not let it become a distraction and deterrent to safe riding....





V.P.'s Vision

By: Mary 'Trooper' Kirkpatrick

The 2nd Entry of MC History

As promised last month, here is the story of a 'steam powered motorcycle'... So hard to imagine but here are the details of this 1867, post civil war creation.

Sylvester Howard Roper (November 24, 1823 – June 1, 1896) was an American inventor and a pioneering builder of early automobiles and motorcycles from Boston, Massachusetts. In 1863 he built a steam carriage, one of the earliest automobiles. The Roper steam velocipede of 1867–1869 may have been the first motorcycle, for which he was inducted into the Motorcycle Hall of Fame in 2002. He is also the inventor of the shotgun choke and a revolver repeating shotgun. (Wikipedia)

Although there is much discussion on the date of the Roper steam velocipede, the earliest date places the creation at 1867. Another inventor, Michaux-Perreaux was also developing a steam cycle at that time, and there are many conflicting dates and times for both inventors/inventions. For this article, I will continue with the Roper information, as I have found more details and pictures to give you. If you would like to do your own research, please send me any of your findings and we can add them to our historical discussion in the coming months.

To start with, check out this video: Click [Here](#)

It is a short video on Roper and includes the story of his death 'in the saddle'...



So now, on to the mechanics of our ancestor. The reason that this is considered a motorcycle, even though it does not have a fuel source, is that it did in fact pioneer successful motorcycle technologies. At the top of the list is the twistgrip throttle control, the frame geometry and engine placement used by the motorcycle as we know it today. The *Reitwagen*, that we spoke of last month, was exceedingly crude and failed to employ the well understood principles of rake and trail to remain upright. It also limited movements of the front fork and turn by leaning.

Rake and trail are created by having the steering axis angled to varying degrees, rather than perfectly vertical, and by having the steering axis slightly offset, creating trail. This subtle engineering by Roper made it possible for the rider to turn the bicycle or motorcycle by the counterintuitive (and typically unconscious) technique of counter-steering, in which the handlebar is pushed slightly to the *left*, causing the machine to lean to the right and turning the vehicle to the *right*.

Trail, also called fork offset, is an element contributing to the stability of bicycle and motorcycle dynamics, and the lack of it was one reason why the *Reitwagen* had to rely on two outrigger wheels to keep it from falling, so it remained vertical and was steered much like a tricycle.



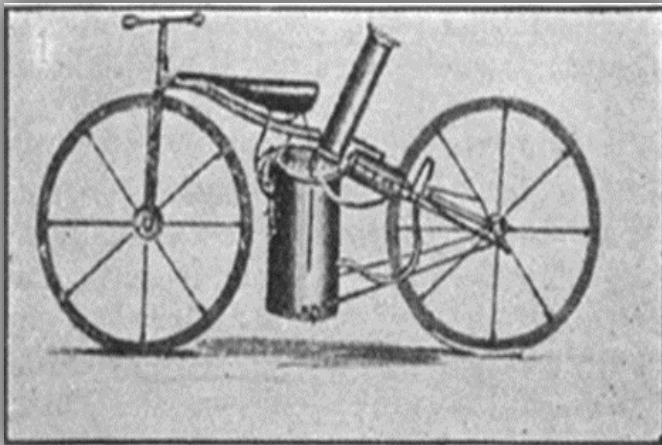
According to the Smithsonian, Roper's first velocipede of 1867–1869 used a purpose-built frame specifically designed for what he was envisioning, rather than adapting an existing velocipede frame by retrofitting a steam engine..

(Continued on pg. 11)



Motoring author Roland Brown stated that Roper used a hickory wood frame built by the Hanlon Brothers, who made and demonstrated boneshakers at fairs and circuses, although the Smithsonian's Roper has an iron frame. A sidenote: A boneshaker was what they called the first bicycles built with a steel frame, pedals and wooden wheels with a steel 'tire' band.

Back to the Roper Report: The Roper frame had a wheelbase of 49 in (1,200 mm) and two 34 in (860 mm) diameter wheels made of iron bands on wooden felloes with wooden spokes. It had a rigid, forged iron fork, and a solid handlebar with wooden grips. Unlike the modern twistgrip, where the grip on only one side is a sleeve that rotates around the handlebar to open the throttle, the Roper velocipede's entire bar was rotated with both hands, and it had a dual function. When turned forward, the throttle opened, and when turned backwards it applied the spoon brake (a piece of leather on a metal bar that pressed on the top of the wheel) on the front wheel. The seat doubled as the water reservoir and can be described as saddle shaped.



Production	1867-1869
Engine	Twin cylinder steam
Bore / stroke	2 ¼ in (57 mm)?
Frame type	Iron
Suspension	Forged iron fork, rigid
Brakes	Spoon
Tires	34 in (860 mm) Iron on wood rims, wood spokes
Wheelbase	49 in (1,200 mm)

A hand pump transferred water from this tank to the boiler. The boiler was between the wheels with a "nautical looking" chimney from the boiler angling backwards behind the rider. The firebox was in the lower half of this housing and all of this hung from the frame with a spring to absorb shock. Two stay rods attached the bottom of the housing to the back of the frame.^[3] There were three water level cocks on the left side, near the water pump, and a drain valve on the bottom. The two cylinders, with bores of about 2 ¼ in (57 mm) were located on either side of the frame, from the upper part of the boiler near the chimney, connecting to 2 ½ in (64 mm) cranks on the rear wheel. Exhaust steam was conveyed by tubing to the base of the chimney, provided a forced draft.

The steam engine normally generated 150 pounds of steam pressure, but could go as high as 185 pounds, which the Boston Daily Globe in 1896 described as equivalent to 8 hp. Roper was known to regularly ride this machine, which he called his 'self propeller', from his home at 299 Eustis Ave., in Roxbury to the Boston harbor, a distance of 7 miles, the engine's maximum range. Roper claimed his machine could 'climb any hill and outrun any horse', and American Machinist magazine noted, "the exhaust from the stack was entirely invisible so far as steam was concerned; a slight noise was perceptible, but not to any disagreeable extent."

Roper was asked to demonstrate his 'self propeller' at the Charles River velodrome, a banked concrete bicycle racing track, where he first paced the racing cyclists, then raced professional rider Nat Butler, easily outpacing the bicyclists with timed laps at around 30 mph. He was then encouraged to give a demonstration of maximum speed, and was timed at over 40 mph, when a 'sudden pallor' was seen on his face, and his machine wobbled to a stop, Roper falling off his cycle. He died at the track-side with his son Charles, of 'natural causes', at age 72.

Not sure where next month will go... but, I'm enjoying the reading and research. Any suggestions? Let me know, otherwise, I will prattle on next month. Maybe we will be able to return to meetings again by February and I'll be able to not only write but TELL you all of the things I'm finding! Meanwhile,





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