



ROAR

August, 2024

Volume 24, Issue 8

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Upcoming Events

AUGUST

- 3 BLACKHAWK RACE RIDE
- 5 FRONT RANGE RIDE
- 6 GENERAL MEETING
- 13 BOARD MEETING
- 23-25 TREMPPEALEAU AND BEYOND!

SEPTEMBER

- 3 GENERAL MEETING
- 10 BOARD MEETING

Talk to Greg Smith and get your ideas on the calendar! And let Greg know if you would like to help with activities!



Sturgis - The Mecca of Motorcycles
AND Blackhawk Farm Races!
Making
Memories with
Friends!



The Official
Publication
Of Top Cats
Illinois



PRESIDENT'S POINT

And Now a Word from your President...



Hello, Top Cats!

I hope you and your families are all well and enjoying the mild temps we've had lately. Speaking of mild temps... great riding weather.... Let's do it! Opportunities are coming.

We still need help in many areas to support the club. If you haven't yet. Ask how you can help. I'm sure you will feel good doing so. And, it helps to keep our club going.

Another FYI about the calendar... Our club calendar has been a bit wonky so you may not see all or updated details on the main calendar page. To be sure you see everything, click on the "View Fill Calendar" box. The full calendar will open so you can see all the up to date details. We are working with our website team to correct this.

Activities from July...

June 22 - July 2) Alder '24: The ride in Bavaria with Rolling Thunder ended in July. Most all returning that week or the next. We had a wonderful time and enjoyed many great adventures with our friends from Germany, as well as all the other folks from the US that attended.

Thank you Juergen, Julia, Frank, Andrea, Oliver and Marion and all that made this trip possible.

July 13-14) I would ride 500 miles: Well we opted to skip this overnight ride this year and instead, Mike led a nice ride out to Smokin' Coop's BBQ in Belvidere on the 13th. We had been to this place before and we remembered how good it was. No disappointment. I am sure we will go back, so those of you that missed out, maybe next time....

Activities for August...

July 29 - Aug 6) Sturgis: Bard, Wayne and the group are ready to go. If you missed the opportunity to go this year, start to think about getting on the list for next year. The scenery and places are worth making an annual visit!

Aug 3) AHMA race day at Blackhawk Farms Raceway: We missed out on attending this event last year as we had only a small group and most everyone had limited time and only planned to go to the track for a short time. So, we all decided to change the ride and we ended up in Lake Geneva for lunch. I am leading this ride. All the info is on the calendar and was sent out in a blast, with a reminder to RSVP coming out on 7/31.

This year we will be making out to the track. Should be there just before the races start.

Aug 6 - 12) Front Range Ride: Contact Wayne if you are interested in doing all or even part of this adventure ride.

Believe it or not, **we actually like to ride with you** (well, to be fair, we like to ride with all of our Top Cats family), so get out to these rides so we can see your smiling face.

Speaking of smiling, I recently realized that a lot of bikers have what I like to call a "bitchy riding face" and look so grumpy. WHY..? You're on an "F'in" motorcycle riding out on an adventure with your pals.... You should be smiling from ear to ear... I always remember seeing Mary taking this spirit to heart and always smiling while she rides. Ride on Mary!! I'm smiling with you.

Except, maybe when there are a lot of bugs around... ☐

*****See the club's calendar for more details about these and other events...**

As usual, watch for blasts and check the Top Cats event calendar regularly and by all means **SAVE THE DATES** first.

Make sure to send any activity or ride ideas to Greg Smith so they can get it on the calendar and get the word out to the club.

Feel free to reach out to me anytime via my email: gene.rigsby@gmail.com, or phone, 847-770-9425.

Looking forward to seeing you there....
Gene "Lucky" Rigsby





KAUTION KORNER



HELMET SAFETY!

Submitted by: Mary Kirkpatrick

By Max Strandwitz

Max Strandwitz is the CEO of Mips.

Mips specializes in helmet-based safety.

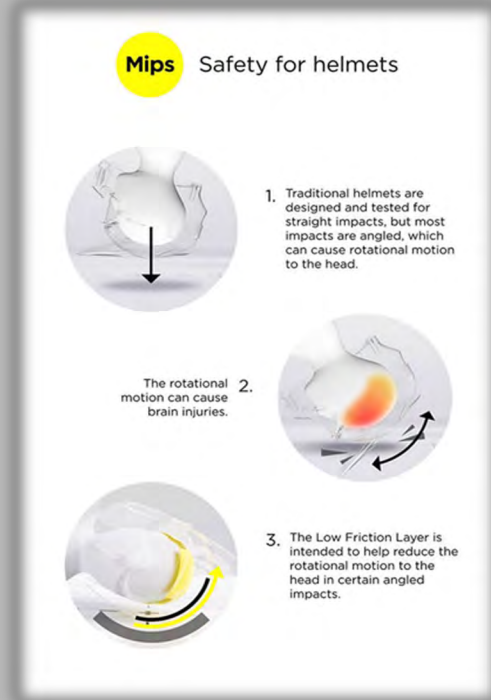
May is upon us, and riding season is in full swing. As enthusiasts' attention shifts towards getting out on the country's roads, highways and tracks, this emergence from the quiet winter appropriately coincides with Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month. This annual engagement is spearheaded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), continually urging motorists about the importance of being aware of their two-wheeled companions.

While Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month takes care to bring awareness to auto drivers, the focal point for motorcyclists is the vital importance for riders to ensure they're properly invested in the aspects of riding they can control. That begins with the choice of safety equipment, specifically the helmet.

The harsh reality of the open road is that more than 82,000 motorcyclists are estimated to be injured in traffic crashes each year (as of 2021, according to the NHTSA¹) and are disproportionately overrepresented in research involving traffic crashes and fatalities. Even more concerning, those figures continue to grow each year and are bolstered by the fact that only 66.5% of helmets in use (as of 2022, according to the NHTSA²) are in compliance with federally regulated testing standards. This figure encompasses all states, even though only 18 states require all motorcyclists to wear a helmet and an additional 29 have laws based on age. Shockingly, three states have yet to adopt any sort of helmet law. The numbers do not lie, and while no helmet, nor any other form of protection, can fully prevent injury, a helmet that not only meets the newest testing standards but is also equipped with technology with the intention to surpass those standards could be a difference maker in the event of a crash.

While these technologies, such as the Mips safety system, have been focused on an increase in protection for many years, helmet protection standards on a

global scale took a recent step forward with the introduction of ECE 22.06, an updated testing standard for helmets manufactured in the European Union that now also addresses rotational motion. This is a first for any of the testing standards currently in the marketplace, such as the U.S.-based DOT and Snell standards, and is significant in terms of bringing attention to the rotational motion that serves as the primary cause of traumatic brain injuries, or TBI.



(Continued on page 4)



KK continued...

Until ECE 22.06, helmets were required only to provide a specific level of protection for linear impacts. Unfortunately, the vast majority of motorcycle crashes result in oblique impacts, during which rotational motion can place dangerous levels of stress on the brain and can shear the delicate tissues of our most vital organ system. This can lead to different types of TBI that many are familiar with, like concussions, or severe TBI, which can be life-threatening.

With the implementation of ECE 22.06, helmet manufacturers will be required to offer a baseline level of rotational protection. While ECE-approved models will undoubtedly be available for consumers domestically, the standards of DOT and Snell still provide the foundation for protection in the U.S. Unfortunately, as of now, there's no clear sign of an update of this nature to testing standards in the States for the foreseeable future.

And again, while this is a long overdue progression in helmet protection with the aim to benefit the safety of riders worldwide, it is still important to recognize that ECE 22.06 is the bare minimum when it comes to protection. The capacity for increased levels of protection still exists, and it's within this newly established area of opportunity that helmet safety technologies become potentially invaluable.

As the world of motorcycling continues its methodical move towards embracing rotational motion protection, it's essential to know that technology is readily available to any consumer looking to get more out of his or her helmet. One can never be faulted for taking extra steps regarding helmet safety, as trust in one's equipment and greater peace of mind can make a significant difference in one's comfort on the open road.

A little bit of Adler, 24!



Just a small view of the wonderfully beautiful scenery, Wandering the landscape with good friends was a very special experience!



Oil Spots

By Traveler



Riding in Extreme Heat

Riding in extreme hot weather exposes us to progressively higher levels of health risks like:

1. **Sunburn:** Riding with exposed skin in extreme heat will cause burns that will become irritating and uncomfortable. Blistering and swelling of the skin can also develop. Prolonged exposure can cause more serious health effects, including various types of skin cancer. Severe sunburn reduces the body's ability to release excess heat and leave riders more vulnerable to other heat related illnesses.

2. **Dehydration:** The hotter the temperature, the more riders sweat and deplete bodily liquids. In dry climates, sweat evaporates so quickly that a rider may not realize the rapid rate at which he or she is dehydrating. The loss of approximately one quart of body fluids can produce symptoms of dehydration, which include decreased urine flow, which also becomes more yellow in color, reduced physical strength and stamina, drowsiness or even dizziness, slower mental processes, and impaired judgment and decision-making.

3. **Heat Cramps:** Painful muscle cramps in the legs and/or abdomen usually result from heavy exertion in hot weather.

4. **Heat Exhaustion:** When dehydration becomes prolonged, riders are likely to experience heat exhaustion. The symptoms include fainting, rash, fatigue, and nausea. In addition, the skin can become clammy and moist or hot and dry. A rider experiencing these symptoms needs to take immediate corrective action to [lower body temperature](#).

5. **Heatstroke:** A body temperature of 105 degrees or higher, hot, red, dry skin, a rapid and weak pulse rate, and rapid shallow breathing are strong indicators of a heatstroke. Victims may also lose consciousness. This is a life threatening condition in which the body's internal thermostat has quit functioning. If unchecked, the body's temperature can rise far enough to cause brain damage and death.

Motorcyclists are more at risk if they are engaging in strenuous activity, like riding off-road or on technically and physically demanding paved roads or have some form of temporary illness.

Because health risks are present in all hot - weather motorcycling, the following mitigation strategies are recommended for more than just riding in extreme heat:

1. **Cover-up:** It may seem like riding in shorts and a tank top would be a sensible way of staying cool in hot weather,

but it isn't. Besides the considerably elevated risk of severe injury in the event of an accident, the hot wind wicks moisture from the under clad rider's body at an accelerated pace with little evaporative cooling benefit. As mentioned earlier, uncovered riders also are highly susceptible to severe sunburn.

To avoid sunburn, mitigate severe injury in a crash, or becoming quickly dehydrated, wear mesh motorcycle riding gear (with armor), synthetic undergarments that promote evaporative cooling, a full-face helmet, sunglasses or a tinted face shield, gloves, and boots. In summary, leave no skin uncovered.

2. **Stay Hydrated:** It's a good practice to drink water and other clear fluids when you get thirsty, but in hot weather that usually does not rehydrate our bodies sufficiently for two reasons: (1) humans do not always get thirsty when they need rehydration and (2) even when we think we've consumed enough water, we usually haven't. While riding in a hot dry climate, your body will need to consume at least a gallon of water each day to replace lost fluids. Many of us stop only periodically to drink water in large quantities, but much of this rapidly consumed water winds up in our small intestines and isn't absorbed into body tissues. A more effective technique is to carry a water bottle and sip small amounts from it frequently while riding.

3. **Avoid Diuretics:** Caffeinated drinks can produce an unquenchable thirst and act as a diuretic, increasing urine production and the loss of bodily fluids. So avoid any drink, or any other substance, that produces a diuretic effect on your body.

4. **Replace Electrolytes:** As riders sweat and produce evaporative cooling, they're losing both water and other chemicals, which are critical to keeping muscles and the nervous system operating normally. Consequently, it's important to replace your body's electrolytes (potassium, chloride and sodium) with fruit, juices or sports type drinks to maintain effective brain and neuromuscular functions. But avoid those drinks, which also contain high levels of caffeine.

5. **Start Early, Stop Early:** Begin riding very early in the morning, before the intense heat builds up, and then call it quits by early to mid afternoon. By beginning your ride at sunup, it's amazing how much better you feel and the distance that can be covered by noon. The absorption and radiation of heat from pavement reaches its peak in the late afternoon, which adds to discomfort in late afternoon riding. Stopping early also is a good strategy for avoiding severe weather, which often arrives later in the day, when temperatures are at their peak.

6. **Cool Down:** Making frequent stops for cool drinks in an air-conditioned environment is effective for keeping body temperature under control. Wearing evaporative cooling type garments (like a vest or a neck wrap) can help keep riders cool while still on the move.

(Continued on pg 6)



Oil Spots, continued...

One of the best strategies for achieving a rapid cool down is immersion in water in the form of a cool stream, a shower, a bath or just being dowsed with a bucket of cold water.

7. Get Medical Help: Once a rider has progressed to, or near, heatstroke, getting medical assistance becomes critical. If in doubt about the seriousness of a rider's heat related illness, call 91. It's always better to be safe now, than sorry later.

When is it too Hot to Ride Safely?

Even after employing all of the recommended heat risk mitigation strategies, sometimes it's just too hot to ride safely. A good yardstick for measuring heat discomfort is the widely reported heat index, which quantifies the combined effect of heat and humidity. Each rider will have to decide their own limit, but a prudent benchmark is probably about 110 degrees.

Conclusion

Heat illness, undoubtedly, increases a rider's risk of having a serious accident. In more extreme situations, dehydration, can lead to a life threatening condition. For their own safety, riders should recognize the early symptoms of heat related illnesses and mitigate them before they progress to a more serious state. And, if it's too hot to ride, don't!

Keep Your Bike Looking New

If you want to preserve that new ride shine well into the bike's later years, take the utmost care of it. Obviously, the baseline responsibility for maintain-

ing a bike's appearance is regular washing and upkeep, but those shouldn't be the only tricks in your proverbial toolbox.

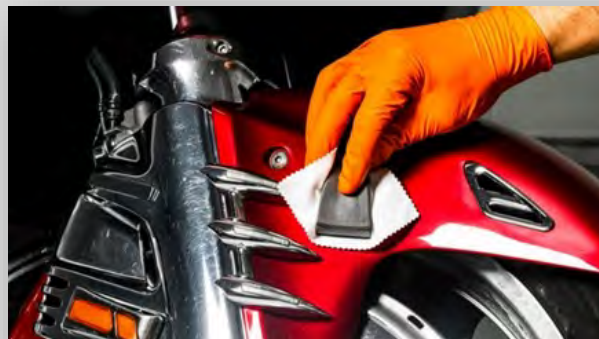
Proper Parking And Storage

The bed-rock rule of ensuring a motorcycle's longevity can be boiled down to three words: location, location, location.

Motorcycles may be fairly sturdy vehicles, but that doesn't mean you can just leave them out on the street like your childhood bicycle. Improper motorcycle storage, particularly leaving it outside and/or off of pave-

ment, exposes it to the elements. Dirt and mud gets stuck to the tires, rain pours down from above, the sun bakes the paint job, and more. All in all, leaving your ride outside unprotected is one of the worst things you can do to it, especially during the cold and wet winter months.

Store your motorcycle in an enclosed, temperature-controlled space, i.e., a garage. If you don't have room in your garage, or a garage at all, you can still store your motorcycle in a driveway so long as you employ protective covers. A light, weather-resistant tarp will keep the icky stuff away, and can be easily removed when it's time to hit the road. Or, if you don't mind splurging a bit, you can purchase a collapsible shelter for your motorcycle, setting it up in a driveway to serve as a spacious canopy.

**Reapply Paint**

A completely unmarred coat of paint on a motorcycle gives it that lovely shine. Sadly, as you drive your motorcycle around, that paint will gradually fade as it's exposed to UV baking from the sun and bug splatters on the highway. Eventually, the paint will turn dull and muted.

If your motorcycle's paint has become dulled, chipped, or otherwise diminished, you can either touch it up yourself or bring it to a professional customizer to have them do it. Reapplying paint isn't just about covering your bike in a brighter color; the process also sands down gathered chips, bumps, and other assorted imperfections, ensuring the new coat of paint is flat and uniform. A fresh coat of paint is often followed up by a good waxing, which both helps to seal in the paint's color and create a barrier between the paint and any would-be contaminants, ensuring that shine lasts for as long as possible. Plus, repainting your bike is a great opportunity for some creative customization.

(Continued on pg. 7)



Oil Spots, continued...

Use UV Protectant On Plastic Components



In addition to a fresh coat of paint and wax, there are additional products you can use to improve your motorcycle's longevity in the face of the harsh elements of the road.

While washing and waxing can help to protect your bike's metal components from the sun, any plastic components like dashboard gauges can still get baked by the sunlight, turning an unsightly yellow color.

To protect the plastic surfaces on your motorcycle, use a can of UV protectant. These sprayable products are meant to, create a separate defensive layer on plastic components that guards them from intense UV light. A good can of UV protectant costs around \$15, and can be sprayed onto gauges, windscreens, instrument faces, and any other plastic bits on your ride. Just remember to wipe down any plastic components with a microfiber cloth before spraying, just so you don't accidentally seal the contaminants onto them.

Apply Leather Seat Conditioner

The dark color of a natural leather seat on a motorcycle makes for an excellent contrast against a sparkly

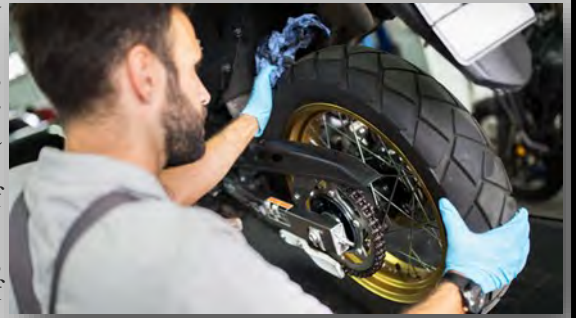


paint job. Without proper care, leather can start to wear out, becoming tough and uncomfortable and tearing open in places.

Leather seats need to be cared for in a very particular way, using specialized cleaners and conditioners. You can't just splash leather with water and call it a day; you need to carefully work cleaning solutions into the leather to get into its various nooks and crannies in order to remove any stains. Afterward, conditioner should be applied to moisturize the leather, helping to keep its natural bounce and resilience.

Replace Worn-Out Components

Like any mechanical device, a motorcycle is a complex system of interlocking parts, all of which



must be in proper working order to ensure proper functioning. However, as a vehicle that regularly endures physical punishment, the smaller, more fragile components of a motorcycle can start to wear out beyond the point of restoration. Nothing makes a motorcycle look run down like busted parts, so when the time comes, swap them out for fresh ones.

There are a handful of components on your motorcycle that will likely need to be replaced after you've after you've owned your motorcycle for long enough. These components include things like brake pads, chains, spark plugs, air filters, and perhaps most obviously, tires. Even if these parts aren't immediately visible at a glance, poor functioning can have ill effects on the rest of your bike's appearance, such as oil and carbon buildup on the sides of the engine. Replacing these components when they become too worn out not only helps to keep your motorcycle looking factory-fresh, but also ensures the continued safe operation of your vehicle.

[Norton Returns to the U.S.A.](#)

Norton, the inventor of the superbike with its 1967 Commando, is readying a return to the U.S. market after a long absence.



After decades of ups and downs

where the innovative British bike maker changed hands several times—including a significant spell under North American ownership—Norton now has the backing of Indian two-wheel giant TVS.

The new owners have global ambitions, with the United States chief among them. Germany, France, Italy and India will also see the benefit as Norton launches six new bikes over the next three years.

Six Norton models will be launched over the next three years.

(Continued on page 8)

Oil Spots, continued...

The range of products will not only reflect Norton's brand aspirations, but also meet the demands of the varying markets across the world. Specific details will be revealed at a later date.

Although Norton does plan to go electric by 2040, the first of the new wave of global bikes will be combustion-powered. The six models must appeal to the people that remember the bikes of the past. So building on the tradition for Norton of having beautiful design, incredible materials, innovation. And yeah, fantastic to ride."

Harley-Davidson Announces BUILD Moto Sponsorship



Harley. announced their new sponsorship of BUILD Moto (BUILD) starting with the 2025 season. Harley-Davidson has signed on as the new sponsor of BUILD for the next three years. The sponsorship includes donated items like motorcycles, parts and accessories, as well as access to motorcycle manufacturing experts and additional support for program operations.

BUILD provides high school students an opportunity to learn technical skills including design, welding, fabrication, repair, machining, media and more, through motorcycle construction. In addition to acquiring technical skills, teams also participate in marketing and fundraising efforts and host local events showcasing their work. BUILD program elements also emphasize the development of strong teamwork and interpersonal skills.

Teams of students from local high schools are organized to design and rebuild a motorcycle to American Motorcycle Association (AMA) flat track racing standards. Each team is matched with at least one faculty advisor from their school and up to three mentors who act as coaches and team leaders. Teams are required to document their progress with photos and videos posted to social media. Teams are judged on design, execution and completion of milestones throughout the build timeline, culminating in a bike reveal and awards event at the end of the program.

BUILD is a 501(c)3 organization that operates through contributions from volunteer board members, mentors, faculty advisers, local businesses, volunteers, students and parents.

Most Collectible Harley Davidsons (If you can find one)



Harley-Davidson Serial Number one© Harley-Davidson

The V-twin rumble and distinctive appearance of Harley-Davidson's motorcycles have earned them a place as American cultural icons. In fact, the engine's exhaust note is so well recognized that the brand spent years trying unsuccessfully to trademark it.

Despite its legendary status, however, it hasn't been all smooth sailing for the brand. Its place in the motorcycle world was forged via a succession of highly popular models, but there were also financial and commercial failures that played an equally important part in shaping Harley's history. Both its game-changing successes and its forgotten failures are often sought after by collectors keen to own a piece of Harley history.

There are many motorcycles in Harley's back catalog that can claim to be both influential and very collectible, but a few models stand out as particularly sought after among the most dedicated — and often the most deep-pocketed — collectors. These eight models consistently draw high interest from collectors, and range from pioneering century-old antiques to modern classic superbikes.

Harley-Davidson EL Knucklehead



Harley-Davidson EL Knucklehead© Michael Barera/ Wikimedia Commons

(Continued on page 9)



Oil Spots, continued...

One of the first motorcycles to receive Harley-Davidson's now iconic V-twin engine was the Model 7D, which debuted in 1911. Prototypes and promotional motorcycles with the engine had been shown off by Harley for several years prior, but the Model 7D was the first to receive a mass-produced production version. Unlike the modern stereotypical Harley-Davidson, the motorcycle was designed to be as quiet and unobtrusive as possible, with the brand's marketing material reportedly referring to it as the Silent Gray Fellow thanks to its new, quieter muffler.

It's an exceedingly rare find today, with only four examples of the first-year model known to still exist. One example did appear at auction in early 2024, but didn't reach its reserve price. According to data from Hagerty, a Model 7D in good condition would be worth \$167,000, although a mint condition example could fetch almost double that figure

Harley-Davidson MT500



Harley-Davidson MT500© Cox's H-D of Rock Hill/YouTube

Not every highly collectible Harley-Davidson will cost six figures to own. The Harley-Davidson MT500 is a rare and in-demand motorcycle with an international fanbase, but even as-new examples sell for around \$15,000. Used examples can be picked up for even less — assuming you can find one for sale in the first place. The MT500 is unusual in that, despite wearing a Harley badge, the bike was not designed by the American manufacturer nor was it ever intended to reach dealerships.

It was instead a licensed version of the Armstrong MT500, a British military motorcycle, and was designed to win military contracts from organizations like the U.S. military and NATO. Unfortunately, when the Harley-Davidson branded MT500 and its smaller sibling the MT350E was unveiled in 1993, NATO had just issued a declaration that all future military vehicles should switch to using diesel instead of gasoline. That made the MT500 redundant before it ever won a single contract.

After a period of trying and failing to secure production deals with other military organizations, Harley eventually

produced a few hundred examples that were sold through select civilian dealerships. Production ended in 2000, and the brand hasn't attempted to make another military-oriented motorcycle since.

Harley-Davidson Model VL



Harley-Davidson Model VL Buddy Dana/Mecum

The VL years spanned 1931 -1936. The VL was a high compression bike earning fame as a fairgrounds race bike. As a Depression Era bike, it sold for \$200. Only a handful of VLs exist worldwide and only two, complete, VLs in North America. One is in Canada and one in Illinois. The value of a VL worldwide ranges from \$50,000US to \$200,000+US.

Harley-Davidson Model J/JD



Harley-Davidson Model J© Nicola/Wikimedia Commons

Not all Harley-Davidson fans realize that the company's association with the military goes back more than a century, as the manufacturer created the Model J for Army use in 1915. After World War I ended, Harley adapted the model for public sale. It continued to tweak and adapt the bike over the following years, eventually launching the improved Model JD in 1925. Its engine was an improved version of the V-twin first popularized in the Model 7D, with 61 and 74 cubic inch variants available.

From its wartime conception until the model was replaced in 1929, the only color available for the motorcycle was military-spec Olive Drab. While the model was far from a rarity at the time of production, with plentiful supply available both from Harley's dealerships and from military surplus, very few examples survive today.

(Continued on page 10)

Oil Spots, continued

Those that have survived vary wildly in value, with one concours-spec restored model fetching almost \$100,000 at auction but most examples selling for a small fraction of that amount.

Harley-Davidson XR750



Harley-Davidson XR750© Harley-Davidson

Considered by some to be among the most successful racing bikes ever, the Harley-Davidson XR750 was launched in 1970. It was designed at short notice when a change to racing rules meant that Harley-Davidson's previous competition model, the KR750, faced increased competition from foreign brands. The XR750 suffered some reliability problems at first as the bike tended to overheat during summer races, but design tweaks in 1972 remedied the issue. After that, the XR750 proved unstoppable, racking up race wins and championship titles for decades. It also gained fame as Evel Knievel's bike of choice in his later career.

At launch, Harley sold bikes to racers in completed form, but in the '80s, it switched to selling only XR750 engines. In its first decade of production, only extremely limited numbers of complete XR750s were produced, and those original examples are in high demand with collectors today. Values vary based on each example's condition and racing provenance, with the top examples fetching \$40,000 or more on the rare occasion they appear for sale.

Harley-Davidson Strap Tank



Harley-Davidson Strap Tank© David Pimborough/Shutterstock

Very early Harley-Davidson models are naturally of interest to collectors, although most examples sell for an order

of magnitude above what the average Harley enthusiast could afford. The 2023 sale of an ultra-rare Harley-Davidson Strap Tank is a prime example -- when auction fees were taken into account, it sold for a final price of \$935,000. That made it comfortably the most expensive motorcycle ever sold.

The unbelievable price tag was down to several factors, one of which was the rarity of the Strap Tank overall. Around 450 examples were reportedly made by the time the model was replaced in 1908, but precious few have survived to the present day. Just 12 are thought to currently remain, with most of those modified to some degree.

The record-breaking example was uniquely original, having been put into storage for over six decades by a collector. Even examples that don't boast the same degree of originality are incredibly expensive, with one example selling at auction for \$297,000 in 2021. Collectors without such exceptional budgets will have to make do with one of the many Strap Tank replicas that exist instead.

Harley-Davidson WLA



Harley-Davidson WLA© David Pimborough/Shutterstock

Simple, tough, and highly capable, the Harley-Davidson WLA was built for the U.S. military, with the first examples delivered in 1940. Over the following years, the motorcycle would be used by America and its allies in World War II, with an estimated 88,000 examples built during the period., although a significant number of those would end up in Russia for use by the Soviets. Harley-Davidson temporarily paused production after the war ended, but would ramp up again when the Korean War in 1949 saw the military order a fresh batch of motorcycles.

After their use in military service, thousands of examples were sold off as surplus to civilians, and they soon became popular with returning veterans. Relatively few of those survive to the present day, however, and those that do are sought after both by Harley fans and fans of military history. While they're far from the fastest or most refined machines built by the brand, their important role in preserving American and Allied freedom earns them a spot among the best Harley-Davidson motorcycles ever made.

(Continued on page 12—See some great ride details on page 11!)



Blue Skies... Sunshine... and Reasons to Ride!

Information from our Website: TopCats.Org



Ride, Rock and Rumble! June 9th, 2024!

Our event this year was exceptional! The weather, the food, music and destination was all in place! NISRA sent their representative, Laura Culotta and also our member, Jim Wiseman.... It was a great day! Hope we can repeat in 2025!



Trempealea Trip August 23-25

Join another great "Back Road" Captain! The area is beautiful and Mike Bradbury finds the best roads! This one is exceptional! Good people good roads! An awesome Ride! Join Us!



Oil Spots, continued



Harley-Davidson VR1000

*Harley-Davidson VR1000©
Thesupermat/Wikimedia Commons*

A track-ready superbike isn't the kind of motorcycle that most people associate with the Harley-Davidson brand, but that didn't stop Harley from building one in the '90s in a bid to compete with the top European and Japanese brands. The VR1000 was designed primarily as a racing motorcycle, but to comply with homologation rules a limited run of 50 roadgoing examples were built.

Unfortunately for Harley-Davidson, the VR1000 never really made its mark on the racing world, as it never managed to take a win across its whole career. It wasn't for lack of trying — money was poured into the Harley racing outfit and many of the brand's brightest minds worked on the project, but to no avail. The bike was eventually retired from competition at the turn of the century and forgotten about by many enthusiasts.

It might not have been a winner in competition, but the VR1000's status as one of the rarest motorcycles of its kind has kept it in demand with collectors. Examples very rarely come up for sale, but when they do, they can fetch in excess of \$100,000 at auction.

Methodology

Harley-Davidson logo at dealer© Ermess/Getty Images

Harley-Davidson's history goes back more than a century, and as a result, there are myriad models and special editions to choose from. There were several key criteria considered to build this list of top collectible Harley-Davidsons, with the most important factor being sustained interest from fans of the brand. Often, this interest was also reflected in a model's elevated resale value, with most entries here fetching values far above the average used Harley-Davidson. Importance to the history of the Harley-Davidson brand was also a key area of consideration, with many of the models listed proving highly influential to later Harley-Davidson models.



STURGIS!

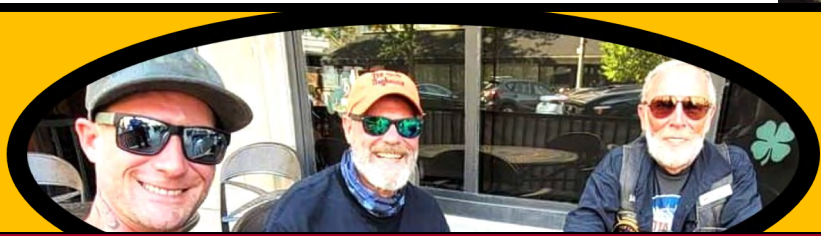
The Views are beautiful and the roads are curvy, sweeping and inspiring!

Some roads as open as the eye can see!

Others are tree lined and follows the waterways!

All of these roads bring time to reflect and be grateful!





This One's a HIT! AI and Sturgis!

Submitted by: Traveler and Son, Don ... and Grandson, Chase!

I used to think that artificial intelligence was something you often encountered in a road-side biker bar or that frequently defined a "Poser".

Looking further into AI, one of my inquisitive off – spring found an AI app last year and asked it to come up with a song about riding a motorcycle from Chicago to Sturgis. Holy S...! This is incredible. This was created last yer... but it is still appropriate for this year! And it commemorates a 3-generation Sturgis and beyond ride!

Here is what that AI app came up with:

(Verse 1) In the heart of the city, where the engines roar, We'll mount our steel horses, ready to explore, From Chicago's skyline, we'll break free, On a wild adventure, just you and me.

(Pre-Chorus) Leather jackets gleaming, as we hit the road, The wind in our faces, a story yet untold, With every twist and turn, we'll feel alive, As we ride to Sturgis, where dreams will thrive.

(Chorus) We're riding motorcycles, from Chicago to Sturgis, Through the open highways, where freedom urges, With the thunderous engines, we'll conquer the miles, Roaring like lions, beneath the sun's smiles.

(Verse 2) Through the rolling plains, we'll chase the setting sun, As the world rushes by, we'll feel like we've won, From the Great Lakes' shores to the prairie's embrace, We'll leave our worries behind, without a trace.

(Pre-Chorus) The rumble of the engines, a symphony of power, As we ride through the night, hour after hour, With every passing mile, our spirits ignite, On this journey of a lifetime, we'll find our light.

(Chorus) We're riding motorcycles, from Chicago to Sturgis, Through the open highways, where freedom urges, With the thunderous engines, we'll conquer the miles, Roaring like lions, beneath the sun's smiles.

(Bridge) Through the valleys and mountains, we'll forge our way, Through the storms and the rain, we'll never sway, Together we'll conquer, no challenge too tough, As we ride side by side, our hearts will be enough.

(Chorus) We're riding motorcycles, from Chicago to Sturgis, Through the open highways, where freedom urges, With the thunderous engines, we'll conquer the miles, Roaring like lions, beneath the sun's smiles.

(Outro) As we reach Sturgis, our souls will be free, United by the road, forever you and me, From Chicago to Sturgis, this journey we'll cherish, Riding motorcycles, our spirits will never perish.

Now, the real question is...who owns this song? Us or the app?

Because of the trip to Germany, there are no minutes for meetings in July! There will be a return to a 'normal schedule' for August! Hope to see you there!



Come On,
Boys!
Ready to
GROOVE?



More views of
Sturgis... Plan for
next year!



August Birthdays
and Anniversaries!

16 Jane Smith
24 Greg Smith

Happy Days to our Top Cats Celebrities
for July!

Let us know your special dates so that
we can celebrate with you!

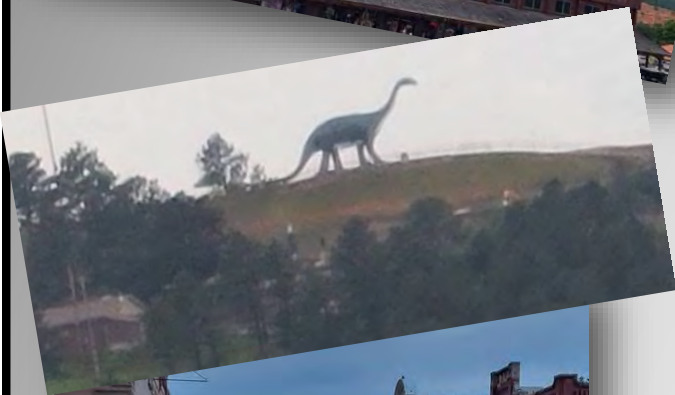
No August Love Stories!
(That's all we know! Tell us if
we're wrong!)



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help them through the year?





RIDES & EVENTS

Date	Ride/Event	Location	Destination	Time	Leader
Saturday, August 5th	Blackhawk Farms Raceway	South Beloit	Blackhawk Farms Raceway	TBD	Rigsby
Monday August 5th	Front Range Ride	Alex Johnson	Various Destinations and then Home	7:00 AM	W. Kirkpatrick
Tuesday, August 6th	General Meeting	Palatine	Alley 64	7:00 PM	Rigsby
Tuesday, August 13th	Board Meting	Palatine	Alley 64	7:00 PM	Rigsby
Friday—Sunday, September 23rd—25th	Trempealeau and Beyond!	Speedway, Volo	Trempealeau	8:30 AM	Bradbury
Tuesday, September 3rd	General Meting	Palatine	Alley 64	7:00 PM	Rigsby
Tuesday, September 10th	Board Meting	Palatine	Alley 64	7:00 PM	Rigsby
Send	Your	Ideas	To	Greg	Smith!

All ride and event information along with the Photo Gallery can be found at www.TopCats.org.



Barrington Library

Location and Hours

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See the Top Cats Archive

FREE ADVERTISING in ROAR for TOP CATS Business Owners

Attention all Top Cats business owners!

As part of our ongoing philosophy to support our members and goal to provide a more value-rich publication, we are now offering free advertising space in ROAR for Top Cats business owners. Each business owner can submit advertising content and graphics up to 2 X 3.5 inches (Business Card size) for their company.

We will run the ad for 3 months after which you will need to resubmit it.

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Submit your ad along with contact information to the ROAR editors at ROAR@TOPCATS.org



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