# The Beemer Reader

Newsletter of the BMW Riders of Vancouver Island

BMWMOA # 237 BMWRA #290

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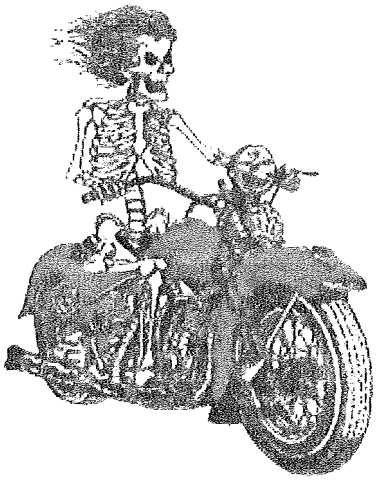


# October

And so the riding season is coming to a close for many. We in Victoria are fortunate to have the luxury of being able to ride year round. I hope you all take advantage of that.

As for me, I will be out there testing my double plugged RT. Although it was more costly than I had originally expected, it has transformed the bike - getting rid of the annoying surging which BMW claims doesn't exist. Now I ride waiting for the surge to return but, of course, it won't and soon I will come to accept the fact that this is way an RT is supposed to behave.

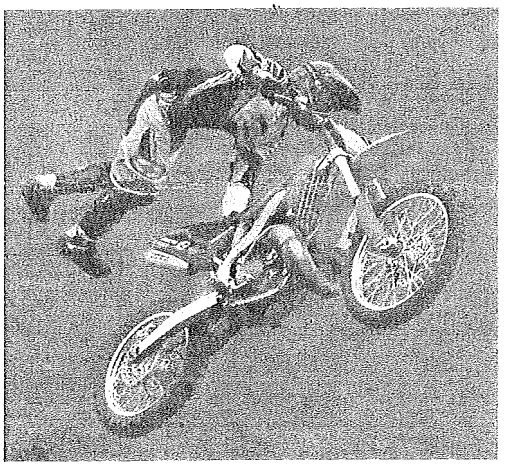
Our club event on Salt Spring Island at our hosts **Brian and Marjorie Radford** went very well. Attendance was good and the group ride to the Crofton Ferry was one of the best in my memory. Our hosts put on a great spread and although the weather was not the sunniest, the rain held off and everyone seemed to enjoy the day. I know I did!

I know of nothing specific planned for the coming months but if you have an idea and want to get organized, just let me know. I will help you put things into action. I think everyone appreciates the effort put into events and enjoys participating.

A big thanks to Brian and Marjorie.

Happy motorcycling ...

Chris Jones



**Contents**



**Sunday, October 3, 2004**

**Meeting is at 9:30 am**

**At *The Chequered Flag***

**SmarTire Tire Tips** By John Bolegoh, Technical Services Manager, SmarTire Systems Inc.

Article Four - In this final installment, we'll look at some basic tire care tips and introduce active tire monitoring for motorcycles.

General Tire Care Tips
These general tire care tips will help ensure longer tire life and a safer ride.

Know Your Load
Know your bike's total loaded weight including rider, gear, accessories, passenger, etc. and make sure not to exceed your tire's maximum load rating. If you are near the maximum, consider changing to a higher load rated tire and use higher pressure settings.

Know Your Tires
Inspect your tires before every ride. Look for irregular or excessive wear, any signs of cracking in the sidewalls and tread, blisters, knots, cuts or punctures. Immediately replace any damaged tire.

Pressure, pressure, pressure
Check air pressures regularly with a good quality gauge and always check tires when they are cold (about 65 degrees F.). Better yet, invest in an active tire pressure monitoring system that constantly checks tire pressures while you ride.

Stay out of the Sun!
Park in a shaded area and store your bike away from direct sunlight. Tires stored in direct sunlight will harden and age more quickly than those kept in dim light or the dark.

Store Away from Heat
Do not keep tires next to radiators or sources of heat. If you store your bike in a heated garage, find the coolest area. Tires subjected to heat will age more quickly than those stored in a cool, constant environment.

Active Tire Monitoring for Motorcycles
Active tire pressure monitoring is a new technology recently introduced for motorcycles, with its roots in the world of racing where maintaining proper tire pressure and temperature is critical.

What is Active Tire Monitoring Exactly?
Active tire monitoring is a safety and performance system that displays real-time tire data and automatically alerts the rider to a loss of air pressure or to a dangerously high tire temperature (a rise in temperature often indicates the presence of a tire separation). This real-time tire information improves both rider safety and motorcycle performance.

An active tire monitoring system consists of two components:
- pressure/temperature sensors mounted on the rim inside each tire
- digital display with warning light mounted in view of the rider.

The sensor mounted inside the tire / wheel assembly continuously monitors both air pressure and temperature; transmitting this information via radio frequency to the receiver/display unit. If the tire pressure drops below preset thresholds or the temperature rises above a threshold, the display immediately alerts the rider with a bright flashing light and indicates the location and nature of the problem. At this point, the rider can safely stop and access what is causing the tire warning.

As well, the rider can view real-time tire pressure and temperature information by simply pressing the button on the display unit (preferably when stopped so it is not a distraction!). By pushing the button once, each tire's pressure, temperature and pressure deviation (amount of under or over inflation) is sequentially displayed.

The Importance of Temperature Monitoring
The air pressure inside a tire is directly affected by the tire's temperature. As a tire's temperature rises, the air pressure rises proportionally. The tire's operating temperature is influenced by:
- inflation pressure
- weight being carried by the tires
- speed of the motorcycle
- ambient climatic conditions
- tire properties
- riding style

An active tire monitoring system takes into account the natural change of pressure with temperature when triggering its alerts. This is called 'temperature compensation' and provides the rider with an earlier warning of a pressure irregularity than provided by a fixed low pressure alert threshold.

Temperature monitoring and alerting is also important because a steep rise in tire temperature often indicates a tire separation.Tire Inflation

Summary
An active tire monitoring system is affordable and easy to install by anyone with tire changing capabilities. It provides a critical early warning to tire pressure or temperature irregularities and not only saves your tires, but might just save your bacon!

Motorcycle tire under-inflation is a serious problem that causes thousands of needless accidents each year. Maintaining proper tire pressure not only increases rider safety but also improves motorcycle performance, tire life and fuel economy. SmarTire offers the industry's first active tire pressure monitoring system designed specifically for motorcycles and the safety conscious rider.

Send Us Your Flat Tire Stories!
Send us your best flat tire story, and I'll compile them for future distribution. If we publish it, we'll send you a SmarTire gift and we'll put your name in a draw for a free SmarTire for Motorcycles, Active Tire Pressure Monitoring System.
Send your stories to: tiretips@smartire.com

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**Roads I Have Ridden** by Vince Martorino

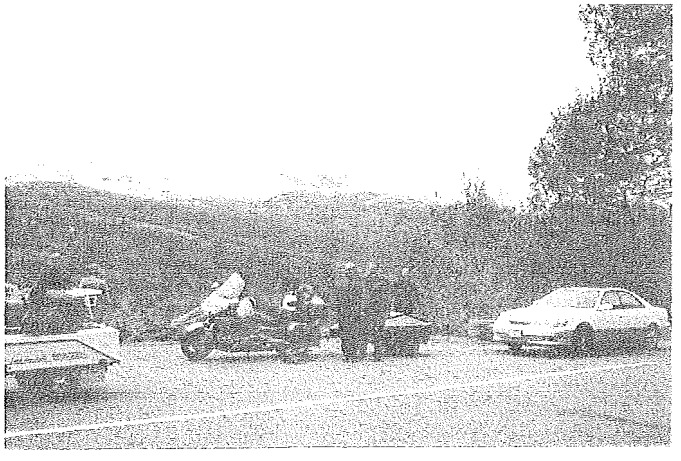
## Glacier National Park

It's called the Highway to the Sun. Found in Glacier National Park in the Northern mountains off Hwy 2 Montana.

As it is a National Park, you are required to buy a pass at the start of the road. I did this while towing a trailer and th park attendant was worried that we couldn't make all the corners. There is a 20 foot limit for vehicles going througl the park as some of the corners are sharp and slow. This highway is likely better taken from West to East since the view is on this side of the road and the pull-outs are easier to access.

The road starts at the West Glacier in wooded terrain following the valley to Lake McDonald, which is quite a long lake. It seemed that a tight right turn came and then up the side of a mountain you go. The view across the valley is snow-capped mountains, glaciers with a feeling of being small next to them. This road is a fairly long ride with an information museum at the top, which is at the continental divide, location Logan Pass, elevation 6,642 feet

The ride down the other side is equally nice but with more trees and turns in a closer feeling road which ends at St. Marg on Hwy US 99. This side is quite different from the rocky mountain road going up the other side.



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# Tech tip By Geoff Stevenson

We call them 12-volt batteries, but the term is a bit misleading, Herewith, a primer on motorbike batteries.

First off, some readings to help you see what sort of shape a battery is in (we assume you have an accurate - and digital - multimeter. If not, you'll find it will pay for itself several times over if you do your own maintenance. Expect to pay around $25 for a good meter; they regularly go on sale. Do NOT buy an anolgue meter: They're just not accurate enough).

11.1 to 11.3 volts: Your battery is as flat as the proverbial pancake.

11.4 to 11.6: Almost discharged.

11.7 to 11.9: One-quarter charged.

12 to 12.2: One half charged (if ignition and carburetion/fuel injection/plugs are all in good shape, most engines will start at this voltage).

12.3 to 12.5: Three-quarters charged.

12.6 to 12.8: Fully charged.

From this, we can see that the 12-volt appelation is pretty confusing. In fact, at 12 volts, the battery is barely alive.

Batteries not being used regularly self-discharge. On a typical BMW, with a clock, you are drawing milliamps all the time. A good rule of thumb is that a battery in good shape will lose .001 volts a day, or about 0.3 a month. To test this, I kept close tabs on a fairly new battery on my K bike. On April 23 it read 12.33 volts; by May 12, without the engine being started, it was down to 12.07.Those of us with Beemers are well served in the alternator department, with those fine Bosch units. But a lot of the older Japanese bikes had alternators that were, to be polite, anemic. (And we won't even discuss Mr. Lucas' equipment on the older Britbikes).

If you're looking to buy a used bike, you can run a simple test to check the charging system. Start the engine and connect the leads of your multimeter across the positive and negative battery terminals. You will need to run most engines to 5,000 or 6,000 r.p.m.; at that speed you should be seeing around 13.8 to 14.1 volts on your meter. If you're still getting readings in the 12's, there's a problem (not necessarily in the alternator itself, of course). The engine speed is critical; at, say, 2,000 r.p.m., most alternators will put out nowhere near 14 volts.

Lots of older bikes pump out only around 10 amps (a discussion about amps, volts and watts is best left for another day!), which is barely enough to keep up with the demands of headlight, ignition and turn signals. It's quite possible in city traffic to run the battery down - even though the system is operating normally. If you have a kick starter on an older bike, you can obviously start it that way if the battery won't crank the engine over via the starter motor. But on some bikes, not even that will work - because as soon as you turn on the key, the headlight comes on, thus draining the last reserve from the battery. In this case, unplug the headlight (which requires 4-5 amps) and you'll probably get home.

If you're having electrical problems and the alternator passes the multimeter-across-the-battery test, the problem is almost certainly in the battery. You CAN test it yourself after a fashion, but you're best to take it to a battery shop and have them perform a load test on it. If it fails, a new battery should cure your problem. If it passes a load test AND the multimeter test, the problem is more complicated and, for most of us, a job for an expert.

Over the winter, an automatic battery charger should keep things in good shape, so you can just push the starter buttom in the spring and start the engine. Personally, I prefer to take the battery off the bike and keep it in a heated basement (NEVER on a cold concrete floor). I like to charge it every month for a couple of hours with a 1 amp charger.

## Buy, Sell, or Trade

**For Sale:** 1985 BMW K100RT. Burgundy. New tires, battery, front discs, oil/water pump, later RT windshield, Corbin seat. 66,000km. $6,000. Geoff Stevenson, 652-9127.

**For Sale:** or trade for newer RT 2001 R1150R Atlanta Blue Roadster, 37K, ABS, EVO, System bags, speedster w/s, cruise control and several other options. $12,500 obo. Call 727-6110, Horst Unger

**For Sale** 1996 R1100GS 60 K. Black, ABS, RID, BMW cases, Givi E45 Topbox, Aeroflow, engine protection bars (Zweckdesign), BMW tankbag, barbacks, Kissan Tailblazer and Signal Minder, Haynes manual and more. This bike is in excellent condition, asking $11,000 contact Pierre Laliberté at 721-9936 (home) or 516-5101 (cell)

**Notice:** *Any ads placed in the newsletter will run for two issues unless otherwise requested.*

Dear Ed, Re: information about our use of mesh jackets for summer riding:

My wife and I have used Joe Rocket mesh jackets for the last two years and prefer them over our Belstaff Gortex jackets for all but the coolest weather. We have logged about 8,000 kms over the last two summers with one trip through the Okanagan last year and then through Bend, Oregon to Lake Tahoe and back to the Island via the Oregon coast this past June. The temperatures ranged from 100 to 55 degrees F and we used our Belstaff jackets only when rain threatened. We ride an old R100RT, so the fairing gives excellent weather protection (too excellent on the hot days). A great way to cool off is to buy a bottle of water at each gas fill up, and drink half the bottle and dump the other half down your Tshirt, under the mesh jacket. The next 50 kms are very pleasant! We paid $139 Cdn for each jacket at year end from Action Motorcycles in Victoria. I think the regular price that year was $179. Best regards from the north Island.
Neil and Edie Wilcox

*Thanks for this. Ed*

**Calendar of Events**

## Sun. October 3, 2004

**Sat. November 6, 2004**
**Sun. December 5, 2004**

**Meeting at 9:30 am**
**The Chequered Flag**

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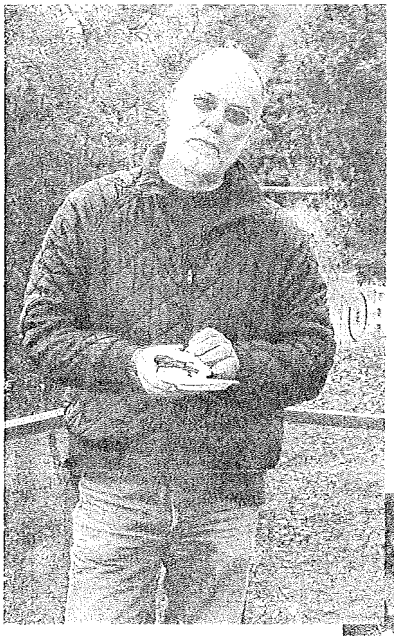

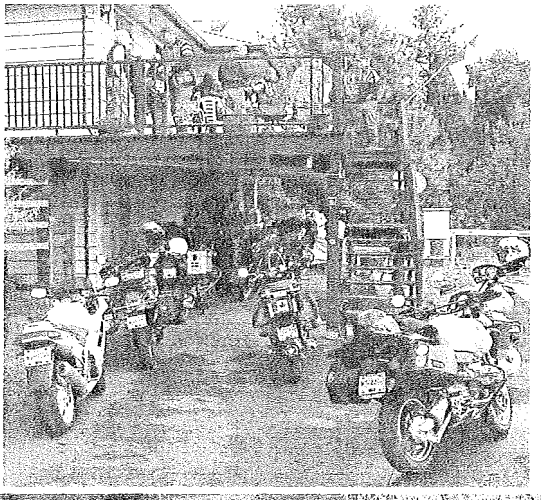

# Salt Spring Island Event

September 18, 2004

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