

Recollections and Reflections
of the
“PJ-1000”
Motorcycle Tours

Volume I
1977 - 1999

The PJ-1000 was named in honor of the grueling 'Baja 1000' off-road race. However, these motorcycle excursions bear little resemblance to the challenge of crossing the rugged Mexican Baja Peninsula. 'PJ-1000' denotes the approximate distance traveled during a well planned three-day weekend. In more recent years, the trip durations have been extended to four days, with distances exceeding 1,400 miles.

This edition reviews the first 24 of these annual events, encompassing 26,000 miles on the secondary highways of Northern California. In this text, I have compiled a record of the unique events and fellow motorcyclists that made each ride memorable.

The PJ-1000 is my annual reality escape. It has become an addictive experience for me, and I believe for many of the riders who participated over the years. The intense focus on motorcycle and road for extended periods, relegates everything else to a level of secondary importance.

I hold a genuine appreciation for the magnificence of the Sierras, and the serenity of the Pacific Coast. However, these destinations are not my focus. I travel throughout these scenic regions, because it is there that I find those undulating, curving strips of asphalt that excite my senses and lay challenge to my skills.

In 1985 I resurrected my old notes and began to compile a formal record. In 1990, I began to edit the writings, and since have continued to refine the compilation. Some of the ride accounts were documented shortly after the trip, while others were extracted from memory after many years. Thus, accuracy is arguably open to question.

The result of my literary effort is contained in the accounts that follow;

The who, and the where;

which way, and how far;

what worked, and what didn't!

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| | Nick Henneman | 1978 | Honda | CB750K | |
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| | Mike Caballes | 1983 | Suzuki | GS550E | |
| | Dave Sweetman | 1984 | Honda | VF1000S "V65" Saber | |
| | Nick Henneman | 1978 | Honda | CB750K | |
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| | Mike Caballes | 1984 | Honda | VF500F <i>Interceptor</i> | |
| | Dave Sweetman | 1984 | Honda | VF1000S "V65" Saber | |
| | Nick Henneman | 1985 | Yamaha | FJ1100 | |
| | Bruce Farley | 1984 | Honda | CX650 <i>Turbo</i> | |
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| | Nick Henneman | 1985 | Yamaha | FJ1100 | |
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| | Dave Sweetman | 1984 | Honda | VF1000S "V65" Saber | |
| | Bruce Farley | 1985 | Honda | CX650 <i>Turbo</i> | |
| | Luis Drumond | 1985 | Yamaha | FJ-1100 | |
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| | Rick Allan | 1990 | Kawasaki | ZX750R <i>Ninja</i> | |
| | Nick Henneman | 1985 | Yamaha | FJ1100 | |
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(1) SR 26/88/50 Tahoe, Virginia City Truckee (2)49N Downieville, Oroville 36W Eureka
(3)101South RAIN!!.

| | | | |
|-----------------|------|----------|-------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1994 | Kawasaki | Ninja ZX-9R |
| Chris Patterson | 1995 | BMW | K75RT |
| Carole Le Gall | 1996 | Honda | NSR250 |
| Bruce Farley | 1983 | Honda | CX650-Turbo |
| Rick Allan | 1995 | Suzuki | GSXR750 |
| Terry Tuohy | 1985 | Suzuki | GS1150 |
| Maurice Flores | 1993 | Kawasaki | ZX-7 |
| Roy Franz | 1992 | Yamaha | Seca II 600 |
| Nick Henneman | 1985 | Yamaha | FJ1100 |
| Martin Hester | 1982 | Suzuki | GS650 |

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(1) SR 26/88/395, Carson City, Virginia City Truckee (2)49N Downieville, Oroville 36W Eureka,
(3) 299 E, 3 S; 36 E, 70 E 89 to Quincy. (4) 49N Downieville, Nevada City, 174, I-80 Home.

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------|----------|-------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1994 | Kawasaki | Ninja ZX-9R |
| Chris Patterson (DNF) | 1995 | BMW | K75RT |
| Bruce Farley | 1983 | Honda | CX650-Turbo |
| Rick Allan | 1995 | Suzuki | GSXR750 |
| Scott Murnan | 1995 | Suzuki | GSXR750 |
| Craig Knudsen | 1998 | Yamaha | YZF-R1 |

1999 *The 24th running of the PJ1000 September 17, 18, 19, 20 1,404 Mi. Page 87*

(1) SR 26/88/89 Truckee (2) 49N Downieville, Oroville 36W Eureka,
(3) 299 E, 3 S; 36 E, 70 E 89 to Quincy. (4) 49N Downieville, Nevada City, SR20, 70, 99 I-5 Home.

| | | | |
|-----------------|------|----------|-------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1994 | Kawasaki | Ninja ZX-9R |
| Chris Patterson | 1995 | BMW | K75RT |
| Rick Allan | 1995 | Suzuki | GSXR750 |
| Scott Murnan | 1995 | Suzuki | GSXR750 |
| Mana Coste | 1998 | Suzuki | TL1000S |

Section 1

The first PJ-1000 in 1977 through the 8th ride in 1984 were not formally recorded until after 1986. A few notes in my motorcycle maintenance logs of dates, milage and locations, plus a few photo's provided the 'memory dredge' to log these events in this record.

PJ Naumchik 1972 Honda CB450T
Gene Miles 1975 Honda CB550-4

Distance: 591 Mi.

The First Experience

This ride certainly does not qualify as a PJ-1000. However, as this was the event that got me hooked on back road touring, it's very important that my riding archives include some impressions from this tour. With the exception of a ride to Santa Rosa to rescue my old 69 Volkswagen Squareback, this was my first excursion of any distance. It was the first time I had ridden beyond the limits of the greater San Jose - Santa Cruz - San Francisco area. I was a novice rider, and certainly a novice tourer. I had not been to Yosemite National Park since I was 6 years old, and had never seen Tioga Pass. My 1972 Honda CB450T was pretty tacky by my current standards. I had mounted pull-back bars, and a home made trunk on the back that served as a solo seat back. As it turned out, this 'comfortable set-up' was the discomfort factor that ultimately limited the distance of this first ride. I don't know how much touring Gene had done either, but he was certainly an expert compared to me.

Saturday Sept. 10th; San Jose to Yosemite

We got underway on Saturday Morning, The 1st day we rode east toward Yosemite. Gene got a flat tire about 10 miles east of Escalon. I had to remove the homemade trunk, fasten his tire to the back of my bike, and ride to a Honda Shop in Escalon to get it repaired. Finally, we got underway again after a couple of hours. Gene led us to the old western reconstruction, Columbia and we wandered around awhile. I had never been to this historic old town before and found it interesting. We then proceeded up to Yosemite on 120. Gene introduced me to a steep winding by-pass called Priest Grade. Arriving in Yosemite, we were fortunate to find a campsite, (shared a spot with a couple of Harley's and then proceeded to ride over for dinner at one of the nice restaurants at Yosemite Village. We went back to our campsite, and Gene retired early. I sat and talked with a group of young campers in the next campground till about 11PM and then retired myself.

Not having much experience at camping really showed, as I left a partial bag of chip on the picnic table next to where I was sleeping on the ground. About 1AM I awoke to the crunching-munching sound of some wild animal on the table immediately next to me. I was sure that some great huge brown bear was seated on the table eating up my leftovers - I was damn scared! I slipped out of my bag, and crawled around behind my bike (parked near by) and snapped on the headlight. Much to my relief, my "bear" turned out to be 3 or 4 raccoons, who scampered away. I threw away what was left of the chips and learned a valuable lesson.

Sunday the 11th.

On Sunday, Gene led me to higher elevations following the Tioga Pass Road. We took a leisurely stop and Tenaya Lake, and then proceeded East over Tioga Pass - Wow 9,945 ft. We went a few miles down Lee Vining Grade, to one of the first overlooks. I was impressed with that too. (still am.) Then we turned around and started back up the grade. My poor old 450 was running so rich I didn't think I would make it. We took it easy and managed to get back to the Park Gate, and then it was all down hill from there. We rode down to 49, through Sonora to Angels Camp. My mind wanted to keep going, but my very stiff and sore butt said "go home." We took SR-4 West from Angels Camp and headed back to San Jose. The first 10 miles was a good road, (curves) the rest, pretty boring.

Once I got home, all I could think about after that was "doing it again," so I have been, every year since.

1977 - 1978

Between 1977 and 1978, my awareness of motorcycling increased by an order of magnitude. Prior to that, I had been quite ignorant of the rapid development of motorcycle technology. Once my awareness was raised, I quickly became disenchanted with my 450 Twin. I worked with a fellow who owned a metallic orange 1975 Honda CB750SS. I admired his bike and began to shop for a similar motorcycle. After months of studying want-ads I located a bright yellow '76 for sale at a Toyota Dealer in November of 1977. One lunch hour I talked the salesman down to \$1175, and thus began my "Cafe Racer" craze. By the time the 1978 PJ-1000 arrived, my 750SS sported an aftermarket pipe, K&N Air Filters, and 6,000 additional miles.

The 2nd Annual PJ-1000

September 16,17,18, 1978

PJ Naumchik 1980 Honda 750SS
Dennis Hale 1978 Yamaha 750 -3
Peggy Hale, Co-Rider

Odometer: Start = 18,997 Mi.; End = 19,916 Mi. Distance: 919 Mi.

Saturday the 16th; San Jose to Yosemite

We got underway on Saturday Morning, Dennis and Peggy, very experienced tourers were on their new Yamaha 750 Triple. They had been riding a Kawasaki 350 2-Stroke Triple for several years, and Dennis was an experienced motorcyclist. The 1st day we rode directly to Yosemite, set up camp, and then rode up to Glacier Point and back. We went to the store purchased some food and returned to camp and put together a very basic dinner. The weather Saturday was sunny and warm.

Sunday the 17th; Yosemite - Ebbetts Pass - Mariposa

Saturday had been a beautiful day, temps in the 70's-80's. The following morning we arose early, the weather was still fairly warm as we left the valley. By the time we got up to the Tioga Road intersection it was noticeably colder. I stopped and put on some Ski pants. By the time we reached 5000 feet, the temperature began to drop very quickly and it was very cold. Stopping at a gas station near Tuolumne Meadows, and I remember putting my boots and gloves over the hot air hand dryer to chase out some of the chill. After a short break there I resumed my ride toward the 10,000 foot summit.

Impressions

In spite of the cold, the sun was very bright. I was hugging the tank trying to stay out of the chilling wind. The road there is paved with the local Sierra granite that contains a large percentage of highly reflective mica. In the morning sunlight the road reflected the bright light in flashing silver-white hues. I took shelter from the cold with my chin on my arm, the motor singing its high RPM song just inches below my ears. My focus on the curving road intensified until I shut out nearly all other visual sensations and, for several miles, imagined myself streaking through the bright blue sky on a twisting, curving, silver ribbon. These combined sensations created a euphoric feeling I have experienced few times since. So intense was this experience, that even today, years later, I can close my eyes, and feel the chill of the wind, hear the motor's song, and fly on that silver ribbon.

Back to Reality

As we crossed Tioga Pass, and descended to Mono Lake, it was very windy. We traveled up 395 and turned west to cross Monitor Pass. The wind was so strong in some corners it was difficult to hold a reasonable cornering line. The wind kept trying to push the bike upright. It was cold and very uncomfortable for me. Dennis and particularly Peggy did not have warm enough gear and they were really suffering. As we came down below 5000 feet it began to warm up again, and although it was still breezy, it was much more comfortable. At Angels Camp, Dennis and Peggy decided they'd had enough and headed home. I was damned if I was going to let the cold day spoil my trip so I continued south on 49 by myself. Dennis loaned be their tent and I found the it got much nicer in the early evening as I continued south on 49. I ended up at the Mariposa KOA, about an hour after I would have like to have quit riding, my arms and butt tired from the long day's ride. The KOA had a nice lounge and a TV, so the evening did not seem too long. I slept very well.

Monday The 18th; Mariposa - Shaver Lake - Home

South on SR-41, toward Fresno I began turning east on side roads toward the foothills to avoid getting too far out into the valley. Quite by accident, I stumbled on to SR 168 and followed it east up into the mountains again. It was a nice ride, but when I began to get to elevations above 5000 ft, the temperature began to drop rapidly. At Shaver Lake, I turned around, and rode back down, cutting just north of Fresno and returning up 99 to 152. The valley wind crossing toward Los Banos was violent and I rode at a 45 degree angle for about an hour. I wished all the way that the new sport fairing I had on order, (for my Birthday in two weeks) was already mounted on the bike. I got home tired, but happy I hadn't given up on Sunday.

In 1977, my first excursion of any significance, I was a total novice. Following Gene Miles, totally unsure of where we were, or were going. In 1978, I instigated the trip, but my co-riders were experienced Motorcycle tourers, and they lead the way the first two days. However, they left me on my own on the third day, and for the first time I began to learn to travel California's back roads on my own.

1979 was the first year I had ever planned the trip myself, and traveled with someone less experienced than I, at the art of motorcycling touring. It worked out quite well, all things considered. For most of the trip, I used areas shown to me by my "teachers" from the two previous trips.

The 3rd Annual PJ-1000 September 8, 9, & 10, 1979

| | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1976 Honda CB750SS |
| Nick Henneman | 1978 Honda CB750K |

Odometer: Start = 26,023 Mi.; End = 26,295 Mi. Distance: 902 Mi.

Saturday September 8th San Jose - Ebbetts - Tahoe.

Nick and I departed San Jose Saturday morning and took the standard route across the valley to Sonora. We spent an hour or so wandering around Columbia, before traveling up 49 to Angels Camp and heading east over Ebbetts Pass. We traveled up 89 to Tahoe, where on the way we encountered some significant road construction. We started up toward the West Side of Lake Tahoe, and settled in at D.L. Bliss camp ground near the Southwest end of the lake. We arrived early as I recall, about 3:45PM. We had an early dinner up the road about 5 miles, bought some beer and returned to camp. They were showing some type of film that turned out to be very boring (religious I think) so we departed and went to sleep very early. We both woke up about 4am, freezing our butts off. There was no firewood available, so I climbed through the fence on to some private property and collected a few pieces. We built a fire and warmed ourselves until we got sleepy again and then hit the sack a second time.

Sunday September 9th Tahoe - Virginia City - Yosemite

We were up early, packed up and rode about 10 miles to a coffee shop a few miles north. I think that's about a cold as I have ever been!! We had a leisurely breakfast and waited for the temperature to come up off the peg a bit. After the bright sun began to thaw the chilly Tahoe air we proceeded north around the lake and took Hwy 431 over Mt. Rose to Virginia City. the ride up to, and back down from Virginia City is a well-surfaced 2-lane, with lot of interesting corners. Well worth the ride. Then we traveled South on 395 all the way to Lee Vining, crossed up over Tioga Pass and down into Yosemite Valley, after having had some difficulty passing an antagonistic Harley Biker. The valley was very full, but as we circled the camping area a guy on a sharp looking Honda 550 stopped us and offered to share a camp with us. It turned out that a large group of Honda Mechanics from Sacramento was camping together in Yosemite and a couple of guys failed to show. We were able to pay a small part of the camping fee and join the group. They turned out to be an OK bunch, including a couple of brothers who brought Mom & Dad up on a CX500. Their folks were real swell and made sure Nick and I had plenty to eat. It turned out to be a terrific experience.

Monday September 10th Yosemite - Glacier Pt. - Home

On Monday morning Nick and I rode up to Glacier Point. Although not a significant distance, this road climbs rapidly up from the valley floor. It twists and winds its way to the point in a most enjoyable manner. We came back down from the Point and then continued South on 41. We ate Breakfast in Oakdale, then traveled north on 49. Through Mariposa on to Coulterville, eventually connecting with 132 we rode across to I-5. North to 580 and back home again.

Prologue 1980

There are those times in everyone's life when it would be preferable to avoid 'a situation,' but no graceful by-pass appears to be available. Such was the case in August 1980, time for the 4th annual "PJ-1000." The "situation to be avoided" was Vince Tutton. Vince, a Lab tech working with Nick, had become aware of my annual ride. He asked if he could come along. There seemed to be no graceful way to say "no." Vince was not "my kind of motorcyclist." Vince rode a ratty beat-up Honda CB550, with buckhorn bars, highway pegs, and a chopper style seat. Worse than his bike, was his habit of continually bragging about his riding skills. (which turned out to be quite nonexistent.) This year's venue was also unique, as another guy from work who didn't ride, volunteered to drive the "chase truck." So, on Friday we brought in our extra gear and loaded it into Terry's truck.

The 4th Annual PJ-1000 August 23, 24, & 25, 1980

Odometer: Start = 32,512 Mi.; End = 33,514 Mi. Distance: 1,002 Mi.

| | | |
|--------------|------|---------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1976 | Honda CB750SS |
| Ed Ritter | 1978 | Yamaha RD400 |
| Vince Tutton | 1976 | Honda CB550K |

(+Terry Quong - Chase Truck)

Saturday, August 23rd; San Jose To Albee Creek (340 Miles)

We started early (7am) Saturday morning, and rode north on 101 to San Francisco. We crossed the Golden Gate, shrouded in Fog as we began our northward journey up the infamous Hwy 1. As we approached Stinson Beach, I told "hotrod" Vince to go ahead and lead the way. I didn't want to slow him down. He took the lead, but after only a few miles, we both passed him because he was going so slow. Through the twisty part of Hwy 1 South of Bodega Bay we didn't see much of Vince. We stopped at a coffee shop at Jenner to warm up. It was still cool and overcast. North of Bodega Bay, the road straightens out some, and we relaxed our riding a bit, on this straight road Vince rode more aggressively. Ed was leading, Vince second, and I followed. After a substantial quiet period with few interesting corners, we encountered an abrupt blind, downhill right. Vince panicked, hit his rear brake, locked the rear wheel and skidded off the left side of the road. He got it shut down without falling, but then rode back across to the right side of the road, got off too far on the shoulder and fell over. No major damage, but he had a lot of excuses. We had a late lunch in Ft. Bragg at about 2PM. After our lunch stop, heading north again we found it warmer, with no more fog, but a bit of wind. Ed stopped and said his Yamaha wasn't handling well. No Shit, the rear axle lock nut had backed off and his rear wheel was moving around in its adjustment slot. We tightened the main nut and took it easy till we got to a Honda Shop around Westport. Turned out locknuts are fairly universal on Japanese Bikes and the Honda Shop had no trouble finding one that fit. We soon crossed the pass from the coast over to the Redwood area 101, following Terry's instructions on how to locate a campground at Albee Creek.

Albee Creek

The weather was warm now, but we were getting tired. It seemed a long way to Albee Creek. Terry had left early and driven straight up 101, secured a campsite and had Dinner on the fire when we arrived (5pm). We set up camp at Terry's "stew" that tasted real good, and put away some of the Scotch Terry had with him. We would have been well advised to have stayed put, but we decided to go exploring. Ed and Vince got carried away riding some of the footpaths in the Redwoods, I started to follow them but soon realized they were getting "crazy" so I took off by myself. I followed a small gravel road up a hill, spotted some deer and followed them to a clearing. Turned around and found it very difficult to get down the hill in the gravel. I even tipped over once, but didn't do any damage. I decided I better go back to camp and call it a day.

Sunday, August 24th - Albee Creek To Lassen (345 Miles)

We were greeted in the morning by a cold damp fog. We got underway at 8:30am, the dense fog persisted all the way to Eureka. We stopped for breakfast there, then departed on our way to pick up 299 East toward Redding. I really liked 299. Fast sweeping turns, smooth pavement, light traffic. It was warm and by noon we had forgotten the chill of the morning coastal fog. We stopped for lunch in Weaverville.

After lunch just East of Weaverville we took a short detour up to the Trinity Dam at Lewiston. Further east at Redding, we took a break in a shopping mall. The air conditioning and some ice cream refreshed us. We traveled Eastward again from Redding, this time on SR 44, a very uninteresting route. We arrived at the intersection of 44/299 at 5pm, Terry arrived at 5:45. Fortunately, there was a Bar and Restaurant at the intersection that turned out to be a nice place to wait. We all traveled back to a forest service camp on not too far from the northern entrance to Lassen Park. Again Terry cooked a filling meal that we all enjoyed. The two forest service camps we had used had no showers so Ed and I took a bath in a nearby stream. The water came straight down from Mt. Lassen and had to be the coldest water I have ever experienced. But it felt good to be clean, and after a scotch and campfire I was nice and warm once again. Some fully leathered BMW riders came into the camp ground later in the evening. Vince went up to tell them what a hot rider he was. The rest of us pretended not to know him.

Monday August 25th - Lassen To Home (335 Miles)

We were underway at 8AM Monday morning, Terry took off for home. We took off for Mt. Lassen. It was a great ride. The air was cool but it was a beautiful day. We traversed from North to South over Mt. Lassen, made several stops and exited the park's south entrance on 36. We then followed SR 32 south to Chico. This was an enjoyable road, although we had to follow a big gravel truck (who really knew the road and was hauling ass). We finally passed him, at least Ed and me succeeded. I don't think Vince ever even caught up to the truck. We stopped briefly at my Sisters house in Paradise (12:30pm) and then headed for home down 191 to 70, then 99-113-80-680. When we got on the 6 lane part of 80 headed toward Benecia, Vince demonstrated his skill and sped all the way home.

The 5th Annual PJ-1000 August 15, 16, & 17, 1981

| | | | |
|---------------|------|--------------|---|
| PJ Naumchik | 1980 | Honda CB750F | Odometer: Start = 11,100 Mi.; End = 12,134 Mi |
| Dave Sweetman | 1978 | Honda GL1000 | Distance: 1,034mi |

The Odd Couple

The duo of PJ and Dave Sweetman is probably best described as the "odd couple." These two riders had developed significantly divergent attitudes and riding styles. We however, are bound together by the love of motorcycles, of touring the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and exploring back roads.

SATURDAY 8/15/81 San Jose to Sonora Pass

We traversed the central valley on the standard route from 680-580-205-120 to 49. Then up to Sonora and east on 108 that leads up to Sonora Pass. This was my first time over Sonora pass and I was eager to get another view of the granite of the Sierra Nevada. We stopped at a small area known as Mi-wuk village, and at a small hamburger stand we had lunch. If I remember correctly, Dave had 2 milkshakes. From this point on the ride began to be what I had come to find. Now that I have ridden many more years, I know Sonora is not the best of the passes, but at the time I enjoyed it very much. Particularly the eastern slope, as it dives down from the pass to 395 on the Nevada Side. I remember, that above 7000 ft I found it necessary to stop and remove the air filter element from my air box to keep the carburetors mixing properly. Once down on the Nevada side, I waited for Dave to catch up, I had ridden very aggressively on the way down the mountain, and Dave, in his normal fashion, "toured" down, enjoying the scenery. We traveled north on 395 (boring) and cut back across to 89, then up the west side of Lake Tahoe. We camped at Sugar Pine Point, a very nice State Park on the lake.

Sunday, August 16 - Lake Tahoe, and the North Loop of 49

From the lake, we set out to the north up 89 to the intersection of 89/49. From here we crossed Yuba Pass and continued down 49 through Downieville and Sierraville. We took a break in Downieville, an old restored gold rush town. There is a neat little one lane bridge that leads into town from the northeast. This route has ever since been a favorite. South on 49 through Nevada City, and Auburn it got very hot, and the traffic congestion was annoying. We took a long break at Sutter Creek, and Dave took one of his (later to become famous) naps.

Carson Pass, Monitor Pass, to Bridgeport.

We continued South on 49 to Carson City, and then turned East on 88 up over Carson Pass. As we approached the summit, very threatening rain clouds were visible, and we could see rain in the distance. We picked up 89 and crossed Monitor pass toward 395. In one area the road surface was wet, but other than the occasional raindrop on the face shield, we never encountered the wet stuff. By this time the long day was taking its toll. I barely remember Carson Pass. As we reached 395, my arms were tired and my butt was sore. But the few camping areas along 395 looked very bleak.

Finally we hit Bridgeport. It didn't take us long to decide that we would stay the night at the Bridgeport Hotel in a nice soft bed.

Also staying at the Bridgeport Hotel was a group of writers from Rider Magazine. While I was checking in, Dave was telling them what a "Hot Rider" I was. Well, I guess from his prospective I was, but I was embarrassed. After all he was talking to "magazine guys," these guys test ride motorcycles for a living!! They were very interested in us, because we represented such divergent points of view regarding motorcycle touring. They even used us as the subject of an editorial in the following issue. A copy of that editorial is included on the next page. (including all of Dave's exaggerations about my riding abilities).

Anyway, we had an enjoyable talk, went off to dinner, and slept great.

Monday, August 17 Bridgeport - Tioga Pass - Home.

We were up early the next morning, continued south on 395, to Lee Vining, then west up the Lee Vining Grade toward Tioga Pass. We stopped for breakfast at the top of the grade at the Tioga Lodge, which makes the best pancakes I've ever eaten! After breakfast we crossed Tioga Pass, and enjoyed a nice ride down to Yosemite Valley. On the way out, Dave made a wrong turn and I had to wait an hour for him at the Tioga Road Junction. From there to home was typically uneventful.

The following editorial appeared in the November 1981 issue of *Rider Magazine*. We met up with the Staff of *Rider Magazine* at the Bridgeport Hotel during the running of the 5th PJ-1000. Dave Sweetman "The Gold Wing Interstate Rider" and me, the CB750F "canyon crazy" were used to illustrate the variety of approaches to Motorcycle Sport Touring.

"The Gap"

"Although motorcyclists of all types have something in common, a gap obviously exists between some...the dirt rider and the street rider, for example.

Rider exists because of it. Many touring riders grew tired of seeing so much off-road material in general interest motorcycle magazines and welcomed *Rider* like a breath of fresh air. Of course a gap exists even among road-riding enthusiasts. Possibly its larger than we have assumed, if a conversation held during a weekend test ride is a good indicator. Our task, as Denis Rouse has mentioned in his column was to test as many twins as we could. We ended up with six, three in the 650-750cc class, and 3 in the 900-1000cc class.

The stated purpose was to test them in a sport-touring manner. As you've probably noticed in the past year or so we occasionally label a test sport-touring, rather than just touring because the bikes have the ability to perform double duty. Some sport bikes are so uncomfortable the just cannot be used for any real form of touring. A fine example of a versatile sport-touring bike is the Yamaha XV920 featured on page 28 in this issue."

Anyway we were relaxing on the grass in front of our motel sharing a bit of the grape after an exhilarating day of riding the mountain passes of California's Sierra Nevada when two other motorcyclists rolled in - one on a fully dressed Honda Gold Wing and the other on a Honda CB750F.

They too had been on the High Sierra passes. Apparently they were new friends and had agreed to go on a "tour." Their definitions were rather different. The Gold Wing rider described the situation while his companion checked-in. He was excited about his own ride over Sonora Pass that day but was flabbergasted over his companion's definition of a tour. "My wife and I usually travel around taking in the scenery and looking for interesting places," he said. "We have fun riding the motorcycle in the curves and keep a good pace. My interstate has good cornering clearance, but of course I didn't expect to keep up with my friend. Little did I know how far behind I'd be! I watched him a couple of times when the road stayed in my view . . . and he's CRAZY. I couldn't believe anyone could ride that fast on a road like that and stay in one piece!"

Indeed they had chosen an incredible road. Route 108 peaks at Sonora Pass and connects California's Owens Valley and San Joaquin valleys in a most circuitous manner. The narrow road curves sharply and undulates at the same time. Most corners are blind and several are hairpin. A few are peppered with sand. "that place is spectacular", said the Interstate rider "but I don't think my friend saw much of it because he couldn't take his eyes off the pavement."

With of the two riders had the most enjoyment? Each thought he did. Such a road is fun regardless of a bike's size and handling characteristics. Many street riders share interests in touring along with fast mountain riding and motorcycle manufacturers have responded to this apparently growing market segment with compromise motorcycles designed specifically for neither touring nor sport riding, but which do both quite well. Many other motorcycles are in this category. On either side of this shared interest group are the riders who are devoted to one or the other style of riding and manage to throw a few jabs at each other like "AM-FM" Biker referring to the radio sounds that emanate from many motorcycles with large fairings, or "canyon crazies" for the footpeg draggers. In which of the three categories are most *Rider* readers? Good Question, about which we'd like to learn more. We don't feel we have anything near the problem faced by other magazines that must hold the interest of dirt riders as well as street riders but we want to continue tailoring our editorial package to our readers changing interests . . . if indeed they are changing. Along those lines, we've like to learn more about what you want to read about in rider.

Whatever your preference, there is so much fantastic road riding and so many great motorcycles today that it seems impossible for anyone to actually become bored with it."

**CLARIFICATION NOTE:

I feel compelled to defend myself from the implications of the above article. While in those days I did ride aggressively, Dave has been known to be prone to exaggeration. Secondly, the writer misunderstood. We had the previous day, crossed Sonora Pass on Route 108. However on the day in question, we had crossed from Route 49 over Monitor Pass, a much wider, cleaner and gravel free highway. That was the view Dave was describing. Indeed, a fast set of corners for me and the Honda!

The 6th Annual PJ-1000 - August 28, 29, & 30, 1982

| | | | | |
|----------------|------|----------|--------|---|
| PJ Naumchik | 1980 | Honda | CB750F | Odometer: Start - 18362 Mi; End - 19403 Mi. |
| Ted Stein | 1978 | Kawasaki | KZ1000 | Distance: 1,041 Mi |
| Nick Henneman | 1978 | Honda | CB750K | |
| Wayne Anderson | 1976 | Honda | GL1000 | |
| Dave Sweetman | 1978 | Honda | GL1000 | |

Saturday 8/28/82 - Starting Out To Carson Pass

We departed Denny's at Bowers and 101 at 7:15AM. Out 237 to 680, then the usual eastern trek to 580-205-5, but then by mistake I forgot to turn off at the Manteca exit to pick up 120. So we had to ride up to Stockton and then cut across to 99 using some expressway. It was only about 5 miles back south to intersect with Hwy 26 which was the planned route to get to San Andreas. This was my first experience with 26, and it turned out to be a great choice. We arrived at San Andreas at 10AM, (150 miles, 3 hrs.) and got gas at a 76 station. We then used 12 to get back to 26, on to Mokelumne Hill, and then east on 26 toward West Point. As soon as I started up the hill, I could tell this was my kind of road. The bike felt really good, and the road provided an exhilarating challenge. It wasn't long before the flash of headlights was no longer visible in my mirrors. I decided to pull over at an intersection and collect the group, its a good thing I did because the local Sheriff just happened to be parked there under the shadow of a big oak. Fortunately we were all slowing down as we came into his view. He paid no attention to us, and soon left down the road to the west. We followed 26 until we intersected Hwy 88. There's a small burger place right at this intersection which we used as a lunch stop.

Carson Pass to Feather River KOA

Up to this point I had been riding by myself, but as we headed east on 88 toward Carson Pass Ted tucked in behind me on his Kawasaki 1000 and we started putting quite a distance between ourselves and the rest of the group. We changed the lead several times and had great fun in the fast sweeping turns of this mountain road. By the time we reached the summit, the weather looked a little threatening, we saw a few sprinkles as we turned on 89 to head to Tahoe. A small shower caught us just outside of South Shore, just as we caught some traffic. The rain stopped without getting us more than damp, and we stopped for gas on the outskirts of South Shore. Saturday traffic was the pits, wedding parties and weekend gamblers packed the streets as we made our way around to the east side of the lake. This was the first time I had ever gone this way, and I would have been disappointed except we could see a significant storm across on the west side of the lake. The sky remained overcast, temperature was cool. We took 267 north toward Truckee over Truckee summit, I was disappointed, I thought this was the road I enjoyed so much the year before with Sweetman. Continuing north on 89, we then used county road A15 to cut over to Portola. We found the Feather River KOA a few miles out of town, set up camp and went back into Portola for dinner. (The Log Cabin Restaurant serves good meals). We went back to camp for the night. (logged 364 miles.)

Sunday August 29, 1982 - Feather River Koa To Susanville

We awoke in the morning, the ground and tents were damp from a light rain during the night. The sky looked very unfriendly. It took a long time to get the group packed up (particularly Wayne). We departed toward Southeast on 70, the road surface was wet, and got progressively wetter as we turned north at Blairsden proceeding toward Quincy. 5 miles outside Quincy we caught up with the storm. We found a small breakfast place in Quincy, wrapped our gear in plastic bags and went in to dry out. Fortunately it was a fairly casual place so they didn't mind a bunch of wet bikers gear all over the place. We ate and hung around awhile, trying to get a current forecast of the local weather. The storm moved on, and appeared to be heading west, (that's where we had planned to go through the Feather River Canyon). I decided to change the Plan. We headed north instead. As it turned out it was the right decision. About 10 miles out of Quincy we turned North on 89 along the Indian River, for a few miles the road was very good. (maybe 10 to 15 miles). Shortly after, we turned north on 147 up the east side of Lake Almanor. As we traveled north past the lake the sky began to break, showing definite patches of bright blue sky. We took County Road A13 across the North end of the lake, and picked up 36 toward Mt. Lassen. By the time we got to the Mt. Lassen Lodge, the Sky was all Blue, the sun was bright, it was a little chilly, with a light breeze, but a definite improvement over our earlier weather. We rode over the Volcanic mountain, stopping at the far entrance and trying to decide which way to head next. We elected Southeast to Susanville and stopped for lunch.

Susanville to Lake Tahoe

The weather got considerably warmer from Susanville South. We hit 395 and headed for Reno. Its a long way down hot, straight, (and on Monday) quiet 395. Sweetman and Wayne, with their big bikes and touring fairings began to push the pace, 70, 80, 90 mph, us sporty bike guys were getting blown off our bikes by the wind. I was a little better off cause I had a small Z1R replica sport fairing on my 750, but Ted and Nick had no protection at all. Ted was able to maintain the pace with them, while Nick and I dropped back rather than punish ourselves for extended periods at high speed. We got to Reno about 4:30PM, we saw a couple of campgrounds on the way in, we should have stopped. Instead we stopped in a gas station in Reno (my 750 needed a quart of oil) and the attendant told us it was just a short ride over MT. Rose to the lake and we decided to continue. It was a mistake. In the first place, the traffic was bad getting through Reno on 395 so that took some time. Then, going over Mt. Rose was cold, we were tired, and nobody really enjoyed this excellent road. Then, when we finally got down to the lake at Kings Beach, we had to ride all the way around the north end and down the west side of the lake to get to a campground. It got dark before we arrived at Sugar Pine Point State park, and we had to set up in the dark. At least we were close to civilization, and we went out for pizza and beer for dinner.

Monday Aug. 30th - Tahoe To Dardanelles

The morning was sunny and cool and a definite improvement over the two previous days. We headed for the only coffee shop in the area, but it was closed, so we headed south for So. Shore. I knew there weren't many places to pass on this road, and a slow truck turned on the road just ahead. I took the first opportunity to get past him, and there weren't any more after that. So I had a nice ride down to Emerald Bay. I decided I had better pull over and wait for the rest of the group. I waited and waited. After 30 minutes Sweetman showed up. Turns out Wayne thought he needed gas and went looking for a station, and Ted and Nick decided to wait for him. Sweetman and I rode on to South Shore. We waited another hour, finally the other guys showed, turned out Wayne didn't really need gas after all, but he found some eventually at a boat dock. We took off down 89, over Monitor Pass (I love that road) and hit 395 again to get to Sonora Junction. I stopped at the foot of Sonora Pass, got out the map and we all agreed to meet over the Summit at a Place called Dardanelles.

Dardanelles to Home

Ted and I took off and had a great ride up the east side of Sonora, Ted's heavier KZ1000 was out of its element on the tight twisty turns of Sonora's eastern slope, and PJ and the 750F got to the Summit first. We took a couple of pictures, and headed down to Dardanelles, which was only about 10 miles or so. We waited, and waited. Finally Sweetman showed up. Where were Wayne and Nick?? Dave didn't know, he thought they were ahead of him?? We waited. No Nick or Wayne. I went back up the road a ways..no sign of the Guys? Discovered a beautiful river though. We finally decided to go on. We stopped one more time on the way down to Sonora and waited again. Still no Wayne and Nick. We headed home, when we got to Oakdale, there out in front of McDonalds were our missing bikers. They forgot to stop!! We headed home, 314 miles total for Monday, and 3 hours wasted!

The 7th Annual PJ-1000 September 10, 11, & 12, 1983

| | | | |
|----------------|------|---------------|------------------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1983 | Honda CB1100F | New (barely used) Bike |
| Mike Caballes | 1983 | Suzuki GS550E | Brand New Bike |
| Nick Henneman | 1978 | Honda CB750K | |
| Wayne Anderson | 1978 | Honda GL1000 | |

Odometer: Start - 5724 Mi; End - 6759 Mi. Distance: 1,035 Mi.

SATURDAY 9-10-83

North on Hwy 1 to FT. Bragg.

As planned we departed from Denny's at Saratoga/280 at 7am. North on 280 to 19th Avenue and across the Golden Gate Bridge. Just north of Sausalito we took the exit to Hwy 1 North. Air was cool, Sun was bright, road was exciting. The running order was soon established; I was leading on my almost new 1100F, followed closely by Mike on his 1 day old Suzuki 550E, Nick lagging a bit in the corners and Wayne bringing up the rear quite a distance back. The southern part of Hwy 1 is an excellent ride although some of the signs of the winter's harsh rains that damaged the coast were still evident. There were still some bad washouts and even a suspended one lane bridge was still being used. The road surface was harsh in some corners but we all seemed to be able to manage. Everything was going well till we arrived at Bodega Bay. (Arrived there at 9:50AM - 130 miles from home.) I found a 76 Station near the south edge of town and waited for all to catch up. Mike was right behind me, Nick only 30 seconds back. But no Wayne! We waited. And waited. I took a ride back down the road to see if I could spot him. He was no where in sight. Did he make a wrong turn? Crash? Break down? We waited about an hour. We deliberated quite a while and then made a joint decision to move on and check with the CHP at the first possible opportunity. A few miles north of Bodega Bay we found a CHP office. They checked all the local Sheriffs for us.....no none reported an accident or breakdown. Considering we were only 70 miles from home we decided that as long as he hadn't had an accident he would be able to return home with a minimum of difficulty even if he had broken down. So we headed out. We stopped for lunch in Ft. Bragg. Again we hung around a while to see if Wayne would catch up. He didn't!

Ft. Bragg to Albee Creek.

We continued north, in the afternoon the wind kicked up a bit and the road north of Ft. Bragg isn't as exciting as it is further south. The real crunch came when we started to cross the mountain from the coast over to Leggett. The entire 25 miles of curvy mountain road was covered in 3" of fresh, loose, gravel. We were very cautious and rode slowly. We finally got over to 101 about 3:30PM, and then buzzed up 101 to Albee Creek, a Forest Service Campground in the Roosevelt Redwoods. We rode about 15 miles up a small side road, found a store, stocked up on some food and went back to camp to settle in for the night.

SUNDAY 9-11-83 Albee Creek to Bridgeville.

I woke up Sunday Morning and immediately sensed something was not quite right. I got up and looked out. A dense layer of fog hung menacingly overhead. We packed up, rode out to 101 at about 8AM and continued north. It was cold and damp, but we would occasionally encounter breaks in the fog which was encouraging. We needed gas. I wasn't too sure we would find anything open. We pulled off the hwy at Rio Dell. It was a long way from the exit but we found a Station open. We got gas, the fog got thicker. We almost missed the turn-off at Alton which lead to hwy 36 in the fog. About 3 miles from the turn-off, we stopped at a small country store in a heavy drizzle. I asked the locals what we could expect from the weather. "You'll be in this soup till Bridgeville" was the reply....30 miles further east.

The western end of 36 runs through a dense redwood grove, I'm certain it would be beautiful on a nice day, but I couldn't appreciate the local splendor on slippery pavement and in a dense drizzle. After about 10 miles the fog eased up a bit, and while still cold the visibility was OK and the road surface was fairly dry. We left the redwood grove and crossed a couple of old concrete bridges built in the early 1900's, they crossed several graveled washes. Then we came to some low foothills, and on the other side we found Bridgeville. Bridgeville consists of a General store and a hamburger stand that's only open in the summer months and an old barn. And of course a Bridge. (the third of the old 1900 type concrete spans). We took a break at the general store to warm up a bit. The old guy who ran the store was quite a character, had hot coffee on and claimed to be "just like McDonalds," except his coffee was only a dime. We asked him about the fog. "just cross the bridge, go up the mountain, in 5 minutes you'll be out of the fog!".....He was right!

Bridgeville to Red Bluff.

Up out of the fog we stopped to shed some of our damp, cold-weather gear. We stood just above a dense white cloud that extended from our mountain viewpoint as far west as we could see, bright sun above, cold and damp where we had been below. 10 minutes later we had to stop again to take off another layer, the temperature was climbing rapidly. The road surface at this point became wide and smooth, fast sweeping turns that continued up and over the first ridge of coastal mountains. The temperature was just right, road was good, we enjoyed traffic free spirited riding. Then the road began to narrow, and we started down into a series of small valleys, the road became rough and the corners sharp. Turns pitched hard left into sunlight and then dove right downhill into shadowed turns. Mike and I tried to keep up a hot pace, Nick backed off a bit. This road was a real challenge. Later the road improved some, and we crossed a second major ridge. At the crest of this mountain we could see clearly across the central valley all the way to the Sierras. From this mountain vantage point Hwy 36 began to drop in elevation and the terrain slopes to gradually undulating hills. We stopped again. Shirt sleeves this time, it must be at least 90 degrees now. Off we went again, the road is now smooth concrete a relatively new surface. The road closely followed the contours of the rolling hillsides, switching right and left, dropping off and rising quickly. The terrain is very open, a few scrubby trees allow for good visibility around many of the corners, the dips, humps and whoops often have the front tire spinning in air....20 miles of "concrete roller coaster"! Wow!

Red Bluff to Portola.

Red Bluff Burger King for lunch. We needed the air-conditioning, a break from the heat outside. We had picked the hottest weekend of the year. We rested a while, Mike checked his oil...OOPS the bike was really low. However, no problems developed. After a brief rest we turned south on 99 and rode to Chico, cutting across on Pentz-Durham Road. we picked up Hwy 70 east, toward the Feather River Canyon. It was still very hot. Asphalt patches in some of the corners took the edge off my confidence, and the ride down the canyon was reminiscent of 299 along the Trinity River. We stopped at one point to cool off by splashing ourselves with cool river water. It was hard to imagine that only a few hours back we were freezing our butts off. Intersecting with 89, we turned south toward Quincy and it began to cool off somewhat. We were all running a bit low on gas, but I figured we could make Portola all right. By the time we arrived at the Feather River KOA, just west of Portola Nick was nowhere in sight. We set up camp and waited about 20 minutes. Still no Nick. Damn, had I lost another one? I was concerned, no longer were we 70 miles from home. My problem was that I was very low on fuel, if I started back looking for Nick and had to go more than 10 miles then I would have to ride all the way to Quincy to get gas before I could get back. But I had no choice, I had already lost one guy on this trip I was damned if I was going to lose two! So I headed out, about 5 miles down the road I spotted Nick coming out of a Forest Service Campground entrance road. As it turned out, he had stopped for gas in Quincy, and had forgotten the name of the campground we were aiming for. So he had to stop at each small campground and check them out to avoid missing us. We got him back to the KOA, then we rode into Portola for Gas and Dinner. There is a nice TV lounge at the Feather River KOA, so we watched a movie and hit the sack. What a day!

MONDAY 9-12-83 Portola to Nevada City

Cold, cold morning. After packing our gear we put all the layers on again and headed into Portola about 8:00AM. Mike stopped for oil again and then we stopped at a reconditioned old home which served as one of the few local restaurants. We had a nice breakfast and came out about 9AM. By that time it was already much warmer. We used country road A-15 to 89.

A-15 had a little construction but nothing serious. We road 89 south to the intersection of 49 and turned right toward Yuba Pass. Yuba Pass, this was the road I remembered from my 81 trip with Sweetman, but I hadn't remembered where it was, after this trip I would definitely not forget again, it had become a real favorite. Following 49 to the west to Nevada City is an excellent road and I enjoyed it just as much as the time before.

Grass Valley to Home

By the time we got to Grass Valley (via Hwy 20) it was getting very hot again. We followed hwy 174 to 80 (an uneventful route) Mike decided to head home to Sacramento via 80, while Nick and I followed the route plan from Auburn down 49, then 193 to Placerville. We stopped for a frozen Yogurt (2PM). It was just too hot to enjoy riding further, we were tired and decided to scrap the last leg of the trip via 26 and 12 and head home by the most direct route. We used 49-124-88-4 through Stockton and 205-580-680 home. I got home at 5:30PM.

Ouch!

In October of 1983, I experienced a bad fall on the 1100F. This crash had a significant impact on my motorcycling habits. Although I wasn't hurt seriously, I did lose a lot of skin. I agreed with Florinda that I would significantly reduce my riding miles, which I did. It also slowed me down some, although Sweetman probably wouldn't agree.

Another result; during the insurance funded resurrection of the Honda 1100F, a complete metamorphosis took place. It took until February of 1984, but the bike that emerged from PJ's garage was very different from the original. Now a custom Red, White and Blue Paint scheme was propelled by a freshly tuned 1100cc motor, fed by 33mm Mikuni Smoothbores, and exhausted through an Ontario 4 into 1. PJ was ready to 'tour' again.

The 8th Annual PJ-1000 September 15, 16, & 17, 1984

| | | | |
|---------------|------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1983 | Honda CB1100F | Odometer: Start = 10771 Stop = 11732 |
| Ted Stein | 1984 | Honda VF1000F | Distance: 961 Miles |
| Mike Caballes | 1983 | Suzuki GS550E | |

Saturday 9-15-84

Getting Started; I planned to depart Denny's at Bowers/101 at 7am. Then meet Mike in San Andreas about 9:30am. I had breakfast, waited a bit and was about to leave at 7:15, hung around for just a few more minutes and Ted finally showed up. However, he was still in the midst of moving to a new apartment, and was planned to join us only for the ride on Saturday. Nick had to work, but was tentatively planning to meet us at the campground Saturday night. Ted and I headed out via routes: 237-680-580-205-120-99 to Hwy 26. Then east on 26 to 12 and down the road to the San Andreas 76 gas station. OOPS, no more 76, it had closed down since I was here last. Mike hailed to us from the Quick Stop down the block. We took a short break, shed our cold weather garb, as the temperature began to rise, and the 3 of us headed out for the mountains. Back down 12 to 26, hung a right on 26 toward Mokelumne Hill (someday I've got to learn how to pronounce that).

This is a great road. It runs over several sizable foothills and eventually intersects Red Corral Road which cuts back down to Hwy 88. This part I had been over before, and was just as good as I remembered. We took a long lunch break at the "Dairy Queen" at the 88 intersection.

Over Carson Pass & back over Ebbetts;

Finally got going again about 11:30. Took off toward Carson Pass. The 1100F and the 1000F were well matched for this particular road, and Ted and I have always ridden about the same, so we had a nice brisk ride up the mountain. Mike was never far behind but the 550 was at a slight disadvantage on this relatively fast uphill climb. We had a bit of traffic, a little more than the last time I crossed this pass, but it wasn't bad, and it thinned considerably as we approached the summit. Down the other side, then right on 89 toward the foot of Ebbetts Pass. I had noticed earlier near West Point (26) when following Ted that he seemed to be having trouble with tighter corners. As we proceeded up the east side of Ebbetts, he seemed unusually slow in the tight stuff, and as a result I put considerable distance between myself and the two of them. (Mike was following Ted and there are few opportunities to pass on this road). West of the summit the road turns into a series of fast downhill sweepers and we all rode together for the rest of the day. We arrived at our campground near Dorrington at about 3PM. Mike and I set up camp, while Ted took a nap. Then we rode down to Angels Camp for dinner only to find the town was closed up. Ted took off for home and Mike and I headed back up the mountain and stopped at Mountain Mike's Pizza for dinner. The beer was great. We stopped on the way home & picked up a bottle of wine. Got back to our camp, lit a fire, drank a little wine and waited to see if Nick was going to make it. He didn't. (361 miles total)

Sunday 9-16-84 - Back road tour - Start up problems;

Got up early, took a nice hot shower, felt great. However there was no electricity so I couldn't shave. Because the trip plan was to return to the same spot Sunday night we didn't have to pack-up, so Mike and I were on our way by 7:30am. We headed down the hill toward the back road route I had charted. 4 miles later I checked my rear view mirrors.....no Mike?? I pulled over, waited, Mike limps up on three cylinders. We eased him down to Arnold, fiddled with the plugs...no help, the 550 Suzuki was definitely Sick!!

So we coasted down to a Gas Station and Mike called his brother to bring a truck. I took Mike back up to camp to pack up. I dropped him at the Shell in Arnold and I took off for my back road tour.

Solo Ride;

First problem was finding some of the roads I had marked on the map. The first leg, Avery Sheep Ranch Road, intersected with Murphy's Grade just west of the little town of Murphys. Just out of Murphys I came upon an intersection which I thought might have been right, but it was unmarked, I went further looking for the right road, as it turned out the first opportunity was the right one. Anyway, I ended up going down Murphys Grade to 49. I went up 49 (ho hum) to San Andreas and took Mt. Ranch Road. (OK) then to Rail Road Flat Road. (better yet). Then continued to 26 near West Point, then up Pioneer Road to Red Corral Road to the intersection of 88. Ended up at the same fast food stop we had visited the day prior, had a lemonade and a burrito, crossed 88 and headed down Pioneer-Volcano Road. (like Moodie Road above Foothill). Then up Ramshorn Grade and intersected with Fiddletown-Silver Lake Road. This is a quasi-residential road which was extremely bumpy and not very interesting. This route took me back out to 88, then 3 miles east to Omo Ranch Road, which turns left off 88. This road runs East along the north rim of a long valley. This was a nice road, as I approached Fairplay it started to get very warm. Found Mt. Aukum Road (expressway) and took it to Bucks Bar Road. (good road) followed Pleasant Valley Road. to 49, then over the hill with lots of local (read slow) traffic to Placerville. I found a 76 gas station an filled up and dropped a couple of layers of clothing as it was very hot.

Route change - head for Tahoe;

I decided my route plan was at too low an altitude for the day's temperature, so I jumped on Hwy 50 and headed for Tahoe. It was a good choice, temperature was much better above 3500 ft. and it was a nice ride, one I had never taken on the bike. There was a ton of traffic going the opposite direction which made passing on the two lane stretches very difficult. Stopped at a store at the intersection of 50 and 89, had a quick sandwich lunch. I then headed back down 89 to 4. Back up over Ebbetts Pass, I was running well but starting to feel tired. The ride over Ebbetts was just as good as the first and the temperature was ideal. I got back to the campground about 3:30PM, had covered 288 miles. Rested a bit, cleaned up and went up to Arnold for dinner and gas. I went back to the campground for a while, although on Sunday night, after labor day with no riding companions it was awfully quiet. I got restless, rode up to Camp Connell where there was some kind of local celebration going on. I had a beer and then went back to Arnold. There's a neat old bar there called the Lube Room Saloon. I hung out there for a couple of hours and then headed back to the campground. I hit the sack at 9:45PM. It was real dark and I felt quite alone.

Monday 9-17-84 - Back over Ebbetts, Monitor, & Sonora passes;

Got up at 6:40AM, a hot shower felt great, packed up my gear and finally got rolling about 8:15AM. OOPS, still very cold..I had to stop and put on leathers. Early sun and shadows made visibility marginal going east over Ebbetts, so I took it easy. Stopped and took quite a few pictures. Over the pass and down the backside to 89. Turned right and headed for Monitor Pass, I forgot how good the front end of the road to Monitor is....great, curves. Stopped at the top of the Monitor grade and talked to a nice couple on a RS100 BMW. Then down the other side to 395, still my favorite 18 miles in California. South down 395, I had forgotten that this too is a good road after you get past Walker. On up to Sonora Jct. Headed up the east side toward Sonora Pass, nice ride, stopped at the summit for a few more pictures. The west side of the pass had fairly fresh gravel and oil, a lot of loose stuff in the corners, I had to be very careful there. Stopped by my favorite stream just east of Dardanelles & shed all but my jacket. The poor road surface persisted, so did I, had lunch at Mi-Wuk Village. Got real hot as I got back to Sonora.

Nothing left now but the long ride home, fortunately about halfway it was overcast and it cooled off a little. Everything started to hurt, back, butt, neck, left arm, throttle hand. By 3:30PM I was back home, logged 312 miles on Monday.

Final thought:

Solo rides aren't nearly as much fun.

Section 2

In September 1985 I'd had my first PC for about 6 months. After this ride the film containing all my trip pictures was lost by the local Photomat. So I was inspired to write about the trip to save the memory. This was the event that initiated this entire document. The Section 1 histories were added over the next several years.

June 1985 Father's Day

On Fathers Day 1985, a fateful fall from my son's new skateboard, left me with a badly sprained right wrist. A massive backyard reconstruction project was underway, preventing an adequate opportunity for the wrist to mend properly. The backyard project also consumed all of my weekends, so my Mikuni Carburetor Tuning program was not progressing very well. As a result, my riding skills were seriously hampered during the 9th annual PJ-1000. (But I still had a good time)

The 9th Annual "PJ 1000" September 20, 21, 22, 23, 1985

| | | | |
|---------------|------|-----------------|--|
| PJ Naumchik | 1983 | Honda CB1100F | 1,117 Total Miles, Longest Trip So Far |
| Dave Sweetman | 1984 | Honda V65 Saber | |
| Nick Henneman | 1978 | Honda CB750K | |
| Mike Caballes | 1984 | Honda VF500F | Interceptor |

Friday Afternoon, 9-20-85

The trip began Friday afternoon after work. Nick & I departed from Signetics at about 4:30pm. It took about 30 min. to get across 237 to meet Dave near the 680 fwy. We took off for Vacaville at about 5:15. Traffic on 680 was horrible from the foot of the valley grade to Pleasanton. Lane splitting was the only way to make any headway at all, & it was hot. My bike got very hot, but traffic eased up after Pleasanton and it had a chance to cool off before we hit the next jam at the Benica Bridge. Although congested, it could have worse. Beyond the Bridge traffic began to flow reasonably well and we arrived at our destination about 7pm. We spent the night at Motel 6 and met Mike for breakfast at 8am on Saturday.

Saturday 9-21-85 - 16 To 20 To Leesville & Lodoga Roads.

About 9:15AM, after a leisurely breakfast we headed up 505, turning off to Hwy 16 at Madison. Hwy's 16 and 20 were nice roads, with good surfaces and smooth corners. Shortly after intersecting with Hwy 20 we found Leesville Road., our route north. Leesville Road is a one lane asphalt cow path, covered with layers of patches and full of pot holes. A few miles up this choice trail we encountered a small foothill crossed by what can only be described as a glorified "goat trail". With caution we managed to reach a junction on the other side, only to find the next stretch to Lodoga was even worse, the first 1/2 mile covered with 3" inches of gravel. Surviving that obstacle course, the road improved marginally...we arrived at Corning after 161 tough miles. The riding order sorted out quickly, and as it turned out it worked out well for the whole weekend. I took the lead with Mike right behind, keeping up even better on his brothers VF500 than his GS550. Nick who normally rides faster than Dave, found that on the V65 Dave rode much more briskly than he had on previous rides, and they were very compatible. So we formed two pair, and that worked out well. We decided to take I-5 the rest of the way (19mi) to Red Bluff.

Red Bluff to Etna.

Lunch in Red Bluff added 6 mi to the trip because we were committed to finding the Burger King we stopped at last time, and I took the wrong off ramp. (there's only two!). However, the situation did begin to improve from this point on. One of the motivations for this particular route is a 20 mile section of Hwy 36 which starts about 12 miles west of town. This particular piece of road I have fondly dubbed the "Concrete Roller-coaster," because of its quick changes in vertical elevation (humps or whoops) combined with a rapid succession of right and left hand turns. The physical sensation created when riding this road is so good they ought to charge admission. The rest of Hwy 36 to the intersection of Hwy 3 is a pleasant road with a full compliment corners marked at 25, 30, & 35 MPH, and a relatively good surface. It climbs over several 3000 - 4000 ft. elevations and the only draw back was some loose surface gravel in a few of the corners near the Hwy 3 intersection. Hwy 3 up to 299 and beyond the Trinity lake area the road was similar but the surface was better. After some limited deliberation we decided to press on to Etna instead of camping in the Trinity Center Area. This established my new record for a single days ride at 372 miles. Camping a Etna was an experience, the small local park had limited facilities, however there was a restaurant near-by, which was more than we had seen in quite a few miles. The night was very. . . very cold.

Sunday, 9-22-85

We were all up early, I remember my air mattress was so stiff from the cold I could hardly fold in up. As we were starting to pack up this big yellow dog showed up and began to treat us like his long lost family. His favorite game was "fetch the stick," and he wore all of us out throwing the stick for him. This dog entertainment cost us a good extra 20 minutes. We were sure he would follow us all the way to Yreka. But he just stood there and sadly watched us ride away.

Yreka to Willow Creek.

We broke the cold weather gear and buzzed up the remaining 30 miles to Yreka. After a lengthy breakfast and a long gas & oil stop we hit the road once again. Immediately from the city limits, the road (263) is terrific. In just a few miles the intersection with 96 abruptly appears on the left. This Hwy is exceptional, and it goes on and on, 145 miles in all. The surface had been re-graveled sometime early in the summer so although it took a few miles to gain confidence that it was secure, but it turned out to be predictable and safe.

The road is made up of a combination of predictable corners, well marked with appropriate yellow caution signs, most marked at 35 MPH. By the time we hit Happy Camp, fatigue caused by my ill-tuned carbs began to take its toll. Engine response between closed throttle and $\frac{1}{4}$ turn had a lean spot, caused by my inadequate carb jetting and testing before the trip. This also produced pinging in the higher gears, which I tried to avoid by running in third and fourth most of the time, keeping the revs up. This practice tended to amplify the flat spot, requiring extra throttle rotation to put the power back on in the corners, which always arrived abruptly after too much speed was scrubbed off. This extra action, while frustrating, was playing havoc with my right wrist, which was still a long way from recovered from the sprain I had incurred in June. The net result of all of this was...going slower. It took some of the fun out of the road, but was enjoyable just the same. Hwy 96 ends at Willow Creek, and I enjoyed the more relaxed layout of Hwy 299 to Eureka. Then we cruised down 101 to our destination at Richardson Grove Redwood State Park. Nice Park, a much warmer night. Dinner at Garberville.

MONDAY 9-23-85 - Richardson Grove to Ft. Bragg.

Monday AM was cool although considerably warmer than the previous morning. Packing seemed to go more smoothly (works better when your hands aren't numb) and all were packed and ready by 8am. I would have preferred to spend the first hour down the block in a restaurant, however no one else seemed ready to eat so we headed out. The few miles of 101 passed quickly as I almost rode passed the Hwy 1 turn-off at Leggett. We made the right at Leggett, paused once more to test the breakfast decision, and off we went up over the mountain toward the ocean. The road was swell, although the early morning sun made heavy contrast between light and shadow, making visibility less than desirable. Over the pass, we encountered our first patch of fog, then around the final corner.....splat! Fog and drizzle so thick the road seemed to disappear 20 feet ahead. Needless to say we proceeded with much caution, I turned a rag in my left hand into a manual face shield wiper. After 40 miles of fog, logging trucks and road construction, the restaurant in Ft. Bragg looked awfully good! Time to change the plan! It might clear, but...then again it might not.

Rt. 128 & points South.

I hauled out the maps. Looking for options I spotted Hwy 128. Funny, I had never really noticed it before, but it was one of those friendly looking roads, the ones that wiggle across the paper. So off we went, the fog was lifting which was a temptation to continue on 1, but I've been fooled before along the coast, so we hung a left and began to explore a new route home. And what a pleasant surprise! Quiet redwood groves, winding smooth asphalt, light traffic. A little too much shadow at first, then opening out into some low foothills, winding its way across the rolling hills toward the wine country. A truly enjoyable experience. As we approached Cloverdale (at 101) we began to encounter more traffic, slowed by several large trucks. We also found a bit more road construction but it caused only a slight delay. After Cloverdale the road interest deteriorated quite a bit, although we turned off 29 at Calistoga and used the Silverado Trail (which parallels highway 29 through the wine country) was quite pleasant. Its a nicely finished 2-lane which skirts the Napa valley foothills and is quite picturesque although not terribly exciting. Beyond Napa it was just freeways (780-80-680) the rest of the way home.

Summary

All in all it was a great trip. Would have been better if my carbs and wrist were both working better....but that was not a major drawback. I was sorry Ted and Pike couldn't make the trip.

Some key lessons were learned:

- 1) Friday night departures are the pits, definitely not to be repeated.
- 2) Riding 36 again was a gas, and well worth the return visit.
- 3) Discovering 128 was a real plus. This road is on my list to do again.
- 4) Dave definitely goes better on his V65 Saber than he does on his Goldwing..
- 5) This is the first trip my back road selection was a bummer, oh well . . . chock that up to experience.

Fotomat lost my film, so this is the only "picture" I have of the trip.

The 10th Annual "PJ-1000" August 16, 17, & 18 1986

| | | | |
|---------------|------|--------|---------|
| PJ. Naumchik | 1983 | Honda | CB1100F |
| Mike Caballes | 1983 | Suzuki | GS550E |
| Dave Sweetman | 1984 | Honda | VF1000S |
| Nick Henneman | 1978 | Honda | CB750K |

1,060 Total Miles, (Similar Route To PJ 1000-5, 1981)

Saturday August 16th - Starting Out To Sonora Pass

The take off point was Denny's on Calavares Blvd. in Milpitas. I met Nick and Dave and after a light breakfast we left for Sonora to meet Mike. The ride from San Jose to Sonora is usually dull and this year was no exception. We left Denny's at 7:30 and arrived at the Sonora '76 station at 9:55. Mike pulled up just as we took off our helmets. After gassing up and a rest we departed for Sonora Pass. The first 20 miles or so was slow, with a bit of traffic. The first marked 30mph turn was a smooth banked right hander. I entered the turn about 50 feet behind a car which was negotiating the turn at a reasonable speed, certainly not fast.....all of a sudden half way through the turn I felt the rear wheel slide, I pushed the bars straight ahead and let off the gas, the bike stood up crossed into the other lane, but back in control. Whew! Quickly I pulled it back into my lane. For the next 20 miles I was nervous about every corner. A few miles further up 108, we stopped for a rest at Dardanelles. I spoke with each of the other riders about their experience in that 30mph corner. Dave had also had a slip in that turn, must have been something on the road. That made me feel a little better. We pushed off for the summit, but Nick's back was giving him a real hard time, so he was contemplating turning back. At the top of the pass we took quick stop for pictures. Nick had enough discomfort and decided to head home, and we were faced with the east side of Sonora pass freshly covered with a couple inches of gravel.

Sonora Pass to Pardee Reservoir. The gravel covered east side of Sonora Pass all the way to the bottom of the grade. We descended slowly, without incident. At Sonora Jct. we turned left and headed north on 395. There are a few good turns on 395 just north of the Jct., but its very hard to pass. So I made it a point to get clear of the traffic before the curves. As it was I encountered only one slow camper so I was able to enjoy most of this section at an exciting pace. We had lunch at Walker, I got a great hamburger. Just a little further north we turned left on 89 and headed up to Monitor pass. As always, the 18 miles of climbing curves and switchbacks which up to and over Monitor Pass provide some very enjoyable minutes. At the intersection on hwy 4 we took a left and headed up toward Ebbetts Pass. Again California highway maintenance spoiled the road. The surface on the east side of Ebbetts Pass was new, not loose gravel like Sonora, but a long way from secure. The road surface got better after the pass. We were running low on gas, so we stopped at Bear Valley, they didn't have any good gas so we just got a couple of gallons, and headed down the mountain to Angels Camp. We gassed up at Angels Camp, then set out to find our camping area at New Hogan lake. The one I selected was real nice, but very full. They directed us up the road to a second one on Pardee Res. It was OK but very dusty. They had a small store and deli so we didn't have to go far to eat. Longest day yet 388 miles!!

Sunday August 17. - Pardee Res.. To Truckee We were up early, having had a good night sleep. Packing up went quickly and we were on the road early. We got to Mokelumne Hill and cleaned up the bikes at a local gas station, then had breakfast. After Breakfast we went up 26, still one of the best 26 mile long roads around. Intersecting with 88, we once again turned east, this time toward Carson Pass. Carson doesn't have any of the tight stuff like Sonora or Ebbetts but it is a terrific road, and had no construction. We took a break at Kit Carson lodge, at the edge of Silver Lake cool but very scenic. Over Carson and down to Picketts Jct., then left to lake Tahoe. I had expected traffic on the west side of the lake, but I certainly hadn't expected a traffic jam, which was precisely what we got. We took a break at a 7-11, and then a rest in a small park up the road. Later we turned on 89 toward Truckee and fought traffic for another 20 miles. Beyond Truckee things cleared up and we had a nice ride to Sattley. The we turned on 49 and enjoyed once again the 49 loop. We took a long stop at Downieville, and then pressed on to Nevada City. We then encountered the first new road of the trip, Hwy 20 from Nevada City east to intersect with I-80. There were a few nice curves at the beginning, but the road soon straightened out and cut through a quiet green forest. It was a real nice ride, and about all the effort we wanted late in the day. We intersected with I-80 and followed it back to Truckee.

The Donner Memorial State Park is very nice, and the shower felt great.

It can get very cold up there but we were fortunate and enjoyed a comfortable evening and night. Dinner was an experience, but having your order forgotten for over an hour isn't the worst thing that can happen..is it?

Monday August 18 Truckee To Carson And Home.

Up early again, and on the road. Heading south on 267 from Truckee toward Lake Tahoe we had the pleasure of following a CHP all the way. Fortunately the road isn't real exciting so we didn't miss too much. We had a light breakfast at Kings Beach on the north end of the lake, then up 431 over Mt. Rose...what's this? more road construction. Although we encountered the warning signs at the bottom of the grade, we didn't hit the bad stuff till we were nearly down the other side, so it was a nice ride anyway. We did have to wait 20 minutes for a construction delay, but were soon on our way up 341 to Virginia City...Great Road. Took a long break in V.C. and found the road out to be as good as the road in. Down through Carson City, I stopped for oil. The a bit further south to another new piece of road called Kingsbury Grade. A shear cut up the side of the mountain which takes you back over to Stateline from just south of Minden. Through Tahoe again, not quite so much traffic on Monday. Down 89 to Picketts Jct. again, then back up over Carson Pass. The California Maintenance guys were trying to spoil things again, but had only just begun, so we had to cross a couple of short sections of gravel but they didn't amount to much. We took a leisurely stop at Caples Lake, then a lunch stop about 20 miles further down. After lunch we came out just as a logging truck with about 75 cars behind passed by going our way. Needless to say the ride down wasn't too much fun. We split from Mike at Red Corral, but it was getting very hot and 26 wasn't as much fun as it should have been, but much better than fighting traffic. We followed 26 all the way to 99, and it was very hot. Hwy 26 is good west of 49, something I hadn't remembered. I'll have to try it again when I'm fresh and its a little cooler. The rest of the trip is just as it always is, boring and hot. We got home much later than usual, about 7:30 for me after stopping to return the rented sleeping bag to Mel Cottons. Was a nice bag, think I'll rent one again next year. I guess 1986 will be remembered as the year of road construction and although it seemed bad it really didn't mess up all that many miles.

The 11th Annual "PJ-1000" September 18, 19, 20, 21, 1987

| | | | |
|---------------|------|--------|-------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1983 | Honda | CB1100F |
| Mike Caballes | 1984 | Honda | VF500F |
| Dave Sweetman | 1984 | Honda | VF1000S |
| Nick Henneman | 1985 | Yamaha | FJ1100 |
| Bruce Farley | 1984 | Honda | CX650 Turbo |

1,407 Total Miles, First Southern Route, Longest Trip, First 4-Day Event

Friday September 18th - San Jose To Big Sur

The starting point this year was Little Johns Restaurant on Hillsdale Ave in South San Jose. Mike drove down Thursday Night and met us at the restaurant Friday AM, riding his "new" 84 Honda VF500F. Dave brought a newcomer, Bruce Farley, the service manager from CO-ED Honda in Milpitas. He was riding a Honda CX650 turbo. Nick was there on his "new" 1985 Yamaha FJ1100. Most had some breakfast before we headed out, Mike needed gas, so we swung over to the ARCO on Pearl. By the time we got going it was already about 8AM. We headed South through Uvas Canyon. Near Calero reservoir we encountered heavy fog, making our first 30 minutes uncomfortable, but by the time we arrived at Hwy 101 the fog was less intense, but it was overcast.

Mike's Oil Problem We turned left on Hwy 25 toward Hollister. As we neared Hollister I noticed the guys pulling off to the right shoulder behind me. We stopped to discover that Mike's 500 had a serious oil leak. As we pulled off, a pickup stopped on the other side of the road. A "biker" from Hollister introduced himself and led us to a local repair shop, and ensured that Mike would be well taken care of. We left Mike there, with the hope he would "get fixed" and join us later in the day. Continuing South through Hollister we took Cienega Road past the offroad park and followed it south till it intersected with 25 again. This is a road I've been meaning to take for years, I'm really glad we tried it, its a big improvement over the North end of Hwy 25. Down the road after the intersection the curvy part of 25 seemed to come up quickly. Nick was hanging in close behind in the corners, I guess he likes that FJ1100. Then up over the hill to King City, and north on 101 10 miles to Greenfield. After a brief gas stop, it was on to the Arroyo Seco. The weather had cleared and the sun was bright, it was still a bit cool, great riding weather. About halfway across the valley I stopped for a break, only to find Dave missing(1) for about 20 minutes...yep he took a wrong turn at the Carmel Valley sign. We waited till Dave showed up and then headed on to Carmel. We had lunch at a Greek restaurant in Carmel. After lunch I "called in" to find that Mike was already waiting for us at Big Sur. We hit the road, out of Carmel the back way. 2 miles south of town on Hwy 1 we found that Bruce got tied up somewhere (2). It took him about 5 minutes to catch up. By this time we were several hours behind schedule. The coast was overcast but comfortable, traffic was heavier than expected, although much lighter than a weekend day. I found it fairly easy to get around cars and campers, and was able to really enjoy Hwy 1 South.

Big Sur to Morro Bay We picked up Mike at Big Sur, but there was still some concern about his oil leak. He took it easy for a while. We soon discovered he was still oiling his rear tire. Nick stayed in the 2nd spot, but due to traffic he wasn't in my mirrors very often. It was later than planned as we approached Cambria so we elected to not do the Santa Rosa Creek Road loop and we pressed on to Morro Bay. Mike went ahead to San Luis Obispo to find a Honda Shop and buy a valve cover gasket, the probable solution for his oil leak. We agreed to meet him at Morro Bay State Park Station. As advised previously, the state parks were full, and the ranger advised us to head 6 miles South to El Charro Regional Park. Simple instructions, but my crew (led by Bruce) decided on a different direction(3), another 10 minute delay. I got very annoyed this time! We got to El Charro finally, it was disappointing, but adequate. We set up, paid the \$7 fee plus \$5 for 1 extra vehicle. We were dead set against paying \$5 per Bike and figured we'd argue it out with the ranger in the Am. We decided to go to dinner in Morro Bay, so we could stop and try to pick up Mike on the way. When we got back to the State Park, he hadn't arrived yet, but no sooner did we head for the fwy than along came Mike, having finally fixed his oil leak for good. We grabbed dinner at a Pizza place, and decided to take in "stakeout" at the local cinema. Mike passed, and went out to the campground to set up. We got back late (about Midnight) and hit the sack. With our extra trips, we logged 345 miles that first day.

Saturday September 19th - Morro Bay To Palmdale

We were greeted in the morning by a low overcast and a pushy lady Park Ranger who pressed for the extra \$5 per bike. She finally relented and let us go (actually we said we would take our case to the other Ranger at the exit, but when we reached the exit he was waving us on, so we just left). We agreed to head for Santa Barbara for breakfast. About 20 miles down the road, I pulled off to make sure everyone was still happy with the decision, Bruce missed the exit(4)! Bruce found his way back after a few minutes and we headed off down Hwy 101 in a light fog. It was quiet on the road and we made very good time running about 70-75 mph. We made a brief gas stop for Mike, as he had put on a few extra miles to SLO and back. I forgot to take the Hwy 154 turn-off which was planned to take us our last 35 miles to Santa Barbara. So we came in on 101, grabbed an exit, found gas, then drove to the beach and had breakfast at the original Sambo's. The fog had lifted by Santa Barbara, so we headed out on 144 in bright sunlight and warming temperatures. The back roads I had chosen were a bit residential, but with nice curves and good surfaces, much better than droning on 101. Hwy 150 to Ojai had some exciting parts, but East of Ojai things got straight and the temperatures were on the rise. We took a break in Fillmore at a Carls Jr. Then on to Santa Paula and the intersection of 126, Mike, Nick and I waited at a freeway on-ramp for Dave and Bruce to catch up(5). Once again the 5 of us headed out, this time toward Castaic Jct., then down I-5 2 miles to the Saugus turn-off and then headed out toward Bouquet Canyon Road. We had a couple miles of expressway and shopping center traffic, until we cleared civilization and got up into the canyon. This road was a good choice. A typical southern California "Canyon" lots of corners, not much elevation change. A couple of corners had some gravel, I remember being concerned, as I passed them that the rest of my companions would spot them in time. 10 miles into the canyon I caught up with a green Mustang who appeared to know the road very well. He pushed the old Ford hard but it was no match for the 1100 Honda, and after a well calculated pass, he was only able to stay with me for a mile or two. Apparently, he became more belligerent with Mike, Nick and Bruce. Dave didn't try to pass him. Bouquet Canyon Road intersects with Elizabeth Lake Road where we parked in the hot sun and . . . you guessed it, waited for Dave(6). It was hot and very uneventful from this intersection to Palmdale where we took a long gas stop. I finally gave in to the heat and changed out of my leathers.

Angeles Forest and Angeles Crest Hwys

We breezed down 14 to the Angeles Forest Hwy. This road sweeps around corner after corner climbing up from the valley floor for 20 miles through sage brush covered hills that slowly turn into mountains, intersecting at its end with the Angeles Crest Hwy, SR 2. This road is nothing like I expected! This close to LA, I expected a "Hwy 9" type setting with lots of commercial and residential properties, full of buzzing racing squids and covered with cars. Not So! 3 cars, 2 other bikes (and 3 CHP). Desolate treelined mountains cut by sharp sweeping turns, gradual uphill climb....about as good as it gets. The only negative at all was a high concentration of asphalt patches in the cracks of the old concrete surface, which at times allowed the tires to "squirm" in some corners. However, I found no restriction to my running comfortably. Nick and Mike came from nowhere behind me and closed right in and "pushed me" for the rest of the ride up the mountain. We all enjoyed the Angeles Crest!! We arrived at Big Pines, a forest Service headquarters bldg. at the East end of Hwy 2. I asked for a camping recommendation, and we soon selected Mountain Oak, as the best of the 4-5 local forest service locations. It was a nice campground. We set up camp and then rode into Wrightwood for dinner. There wasn't much to choose from, but the restaurant we chose was good, and the food was enjoyed by all. We met a father and son (local) who just rode up for dinner, they were riding a Hurricane 600 and a "very trick" Yamaha FZ600. they were extremely complimentary about my "customized" Honda. After dinner we headed back to camp, near our destination, I hit the brakes and got an oil warning light, so I rode back to Wrightwood for a quart of oil and filled with gas. When I got back, we were all ready to give it up. We hit the sack at 9PM. there was a very noisy band of Arabs camped next to us and a 1:30AM they broke into loud folksinging. Dave got up and gave them hell. After two shouting sessions, they gave up and quieted down.

Sunday September 20th Angeles Crest To "Balch Park"

Again we were up early, packing up quickly and heading out to beat the desert sun. North on Big Pine Hwy, the first few miles were filled with downward sloping curves, followed quickly by an undulating 2 lane laid out due north across the desert floor. High speed on this road had a tendency to get bikes airborne. It was sunny and very comfortable as we turned on Pearblossom Road. 85 mph was a reasonable speed for this road, because out here on the desert at 8am on a Sunday morning, we were just about the only things moving.

We soon turned north on 14 headed for Mojave. As we cruised along I waved Nick up along side. At 60 mph in 5th gear we did a few top gear roll-ons....the old Honda pulled the Yamaha about 6 bike lengths. I then tried it with Bruce's turbo. He pulled me by 3-4 bike lengths until the 1100F caught its breath and I blew past as the turbo topped out, and my Mikuni's kept on breathing.

4-Lane Divided Hiway - Early Sunday Morning - Mojave Desert - Sunny but still Cool - Not a Car in Sight. I found out that the ol'1100 Honda would easily outrun a CX650 Turbo and an FJ1100. I also found out that the Honda was still pulling at 10,000RPM!!

This game made Tehachapi arrive very quickly and we pulled off into the small desert community for breakfast. After we ate it was just a few miles to the Beaville Road turn-off, and we began a whole new backroad experience. Beaville Road joined the Calente-Bodfish Road, up over a tight foothill pass, then on over another pass to Lake Isabella. We stopped at Lake Isabella for gas, and waited for Dave(7), who, after missing us in the gas station proceeded to leave town on the wrong road. Nick and Mike still had fill nozzles in their gas tanks so I told Mike to pay for my gas, tossed down my gloves and smoked out of the station to catch Dave before he went too far. When we got back to the station, Mike and Nick pointed out that in my haste to leave the station I failed to notice that immediately across the street was the CHP headquarters!! When all had gassed up we went back up the street to an Ice Cream/Frozen Yogurt place and had a cool-off snack. It was too hot for my leathers once again. North of Lake Isabella, we followed Hwy 155 to Wofford Heights, then hit the backroads once again on Burlawood Road, which ran for 20-30 miles along the Kern River, then just past Johnsondale, the road began to climb up into the mountains, and Sequoia Redwoods became apparent along our route. At a nondescript intersection where the road makes a hard right turn on the map, Mike, Nick, Bruce and I waited for Dave(8). We stopped at the Ponderosa Ranch near the top of the mountain we were crossing, and took a long break. From that point we followed the road to the northwest and pulled over near Springville at the Jct. of County road J-37. Nick had literally torn the sole off his boot, so we took a few minutes to glue it back on with cement from Mikes Air-Mattress patch kit and a big rubber band from my tent roll. We had no idea we were about to embark on the most "memorable" part of our trip.

Sequoia Forest - the long way.

Our next land mark was the Jct. of Hwy 198 just 25 miles northwest via J37 and the Yokohl Valley, on the map it looked like a straight shot. Bruce decided to head out while we were busy repairing Nick's boot. A few minutes later the rest of us mounted up and took off. The road had good corners and in my usual fashion I couldn't resist grabbing a handful of throttle. I passed one adjoining road on the right, and a few miles another intersected on the left, I paid no attention as I was convinced that I should continue on J-37, and continue I did. I didn't give it much thought until it started to narrow and climb a steep grade, however as I did I passed a van, and 2 cars passed me going the other way, also the only other road I saw at this point had a sign reading "no outlet" so I knew that couldn't be the right road. I paused once and looked back across the mountain at the road I had just traversed, Nick and Mike were no where sight. I was getting a little concerned when once again I saw the reassuring sign "J-37". The road got narrower, much like the west side of Mt. Hamilton, steep, rough, sharp turns and very narrow. I was getting tired, the road was hard work. I was beginning to get the idea that I had made the wrong turn. I went over the route in my mind, but I couldn't remember a major turn which I had missed. All of a sudden I saw "J37 END". Now I knew I had screwed up. But I had been riding for more than 30 minutes. I looked at the map, there was a tight looping road which intersected the Yokohl Valley road and wound up a mountain, that was where I was.

Balch Park....who the hell wanted to come here??

I decided to go to Balch Park which was noted on a number of signs on the way, which was only another 5 miles...it took a long time to cover 5 miles on this road. When I finally arrived, I flagged down a Pickup truck occupied by a nice older couple. They confirmed my error, but told me I would be better to keep going than to turn back because I had come 20 miles, and had but 18 miles of better road to go to get back down. At this point I was convinced that I was the only one who had made such a drastic mistake. Thinking that they were all waiting back there at the intersection wondering where the hell I had gone, I pushed as hard as I could to get back down off the mountain. Finally I got back to J37. I turned back in the direction I had been going when I got lost. 4 miles up the road there was that left turn again...this time the sign was clear, that was where I should have turned. Now with still 20 miles between me and the 198 Jct. I cranked the bike up and rode as hard as I could to get to the waiting group. When I arrived. Only Bruce was waiting!!!

I then realized that all of the rest of the group made the same error. Bruce had arrived at 3:30. I completed my loop at 4:55. At 5:15 Dave showed up, 15 miles up the mountain he figured out the error and turned around. Mike and Nick were somewhere on the mountain. I found a gas station and small store just up the road and bought some cokes. At 6PM I finally called the emergency numbers to see if they had called in. They hadn't. By the time I got back Nick and Mike had arrived. They had asked a local who remembered seeing a Red White-and-Blue motorcycle go by, so they figured they were on the right road and kept going. When they got down, Mike was worried that he might not have enough gas, so they went back to Springville to buy gas.

Back at the "Intersection"

So there we were, after 6, still quite a ways to go. Bruce and I had bought gas at the nearby 76. Mike and Nick had purchased gas at Springville. The gas at this 76 was a little pricy and Dave didn't want to buy gas while we waited, so another gas stop was required 10 miles up the road.(9) (8 cents a gal extra...on 5 gals; that's a whole 40 cents)!! This stop included some food and oil for others as well so it took a little time. By the time we finished it was nearly 7pm and daylight was beginning to fade. Having missed showers for 2 nights, I was determined to find a campground with showers. We had passed a KOA a few miles back up the road, I was tempted to head back, and should have, but the map indicated "LodgePole" the original destination was only 30 miles ahead. With the urging of a local guy at the station, we started out, up the mountain toward the Park. I pressed hard, trying to get as far up the mountain as possible before the daylight faded out. Mike stayed close, but 15 miles up the mountain.....it was dark. Not my favorite situation. A steep, narrow, winding, mountain road...totally dark. The "nice" thing about a motorcycle headlight, it's never pointing where you need it in a corner. Needless to say, we went Slow!! Finally we arrived at Grant Grove Village. LodgePole was another 6 miles. Mike and I stopped and waited(10). Dave, Bruce, and Nick did not show up quickly. We gave up and headed on. Upon arrival at LodgePole at 8:05 we were informed that all facilities, including showers, closed at 8PM!!! A few minutes later the rest of our riders showed up. We dropped off our gear at the campsite, and then rode back to Grant Grove Village and had some dinner. It wasn't great (cafeteria) but it was warm and filled the void. We headed back to LodgePole, and set up by Headlight. Dave thought he left part of his tent at the last campground, and spent about 30 minutes trying to jury-rig his tent. He eventually found the missing parts by the side of his bike, and got it set up correctly. We didn't stay up long, and all slept soundly.

Monday September 21st

The next morning was cold, and the showers were a long way from our site. I was the only one who braved the hassle. It was worth it, even though it cost a dollar. (Sure was glad I had the quarters). We packed up and rode back to Grant Grove Village for breakfast. The lodge restaurant was nice. After a leisurely breakfast, I wandered outside and ran into a the Richman's, a couple from one of my dance clubs. They seemed really pleased to see me in my "biker uniform". I exchanged pleasantries and the group took off for Kings Canyon. We stopped at the top of the Canyon - Wow! A nice smooth 2-lane road traced the rim of this massive crevice. Twisting and winding down the right perimeter of the Canyon. I decided to change out of my leathers. The rest of the guys decided to take off without me. This gave me a real incentive to try to catch them before we got to the bottom of the canyon. I caught Bruce and Dave fairly easily, it took longer to catch up with Nick and Mike, they weren't hurrying, otherwise I would probably not have made it. We all stopped for a break at Cedar Grove at the end of the canyon. The ride back up the canyon was just as good as the ride down, a little warmer, but still nice. Mike got ahead going up the mountain, and I had to work hard to stay with him.

After the Canyon

After a gas stop at Grant Grove, we headed out of Kings Canyon/Sequoia National Park. We proceeded down the mountain, out of the park, looking for Elwood Road. Elwood road was relatively uneventful, although during this area we did notice the temperature began to rise. We found an intersection which I believe led to Piedra. Although I'm not certain I ever identified where that was. We began to encounter some interesting curvy road which followed the perimeter of a large reservoir. My map analysis put us along the shores of Pine Flat Lake. If my map reading skills are worth anything, we were now on Trimmer Road. I honestly think (in hind sight) that at this point I was the only one enjoying the ride.

I think everyone else would have liked to just go home. But I felt great, and was enjoying the challenge of the road. A left off Trimmer took us along Maxon Road to Watts Valley Road and eventually to Burrough Valley Road. on which we encountered a lot of livestock, and a particularly a large herd of horses who thought they owned the road. Burrough Valley Road led to TollHouse Road, which wound up the mountain to 168 at Pine Ridge. This is where I really "lost" the group. While I was having a great time scrapping my way up this twisty grade, my companions were apparently fading fast. I just didn't notice. I had the destination firmly registered in my mind, and I wanted to get to Shaver Lake, yet another 15 miles up the mountain. We got there, stopped at a small variety store, drank a coke, and rested.

The Long ride Home

Now the fun part was almost over, time to head home. I remembered this area, even though it had been 6 or 7 years since I had been up here. I specifically remembered two things. 1) logging trucks 2) the water they dump to cool their brakes. If you want to enjoy the ride,....you have to get ahead of the logging trucks. We started out, a truck loomed up ahead, I went for it, got past, found another, got past and split. I checked my rear-views, no bikes in sight. By this time I was off the 2-lane part of 168. Down to the fast 4-lane stretch of super fast sweepers. I mean we're talking 80-90 mph, no sweat!! So I went for it, down the mountain, swooping and carving my way down....no traffic, no trucks, no CHP. When I got to the bottom, the intersection of 168 and Auberry Road, I thought about stopping, but the right turn was so obvious, and I was so pumped, I just kept going. I remember passing the sign to Auberry, but a quick glance at my map said "wrong way", and I continued.

Where's the group??

When I got to the intersection of Millerton Road. I stopped and rested at a gas station and waited for the others to catch up. I waited, and waited, and waited. (11) No group. I rode back up to the 168 I-Section. Waited. No bikes. Shit!! How did they get lost here? (12) I said, "screw-it, they're big boys, they can find their way home." I headed off, back the way I came. I made the right toward Friant, needing to pick up Road 206 to 145 to Madera. But, at speed, even the ol' infallible PJ blew it and missed his turn. Next thing I know, I'm at the outskirts of Fresno. I cut across the North side of Fresno, and intersected with 99. I headed back north to Madera. I pulled off in Madera, and found the intersection of 145 in town. I stopped, and gassed up at a 76 station near the intersection. I waited a while, to see if the guys would show(13) ...they didn't. It was hot, and was getting late. I mounted up and set out for home. 99 North to 152, 152 West toward home. It was hot! Just as I turned off on 152, I thought I saw a Motorcycle headlight in my mirrors, I slowed and checked it out, but I didn't see it again. I continued. When I got to Los Banos, I decided to take a break. There was a Dairy Queen across the street from the city park. I stopped at the park and walked across the street, bought an ice-cream and sat in the park to rest. Within ten minutes a ragged tired band of bikers pulled into the Dairy Queen for a break. Guess who!! Mike soon took off for Sacramento Nick and I took off together, leaving Bruce and Dave for an extended stop. The balance of the return was hot and boring. I got home quite late.

Summary

Review of Significant Delays - 10 to 30 minutes

1. Dave Misses Carmel Valley Sign, goes to Arroyo Seco Park
2. Bruce Lags in Carmel Traffic, delayed getting out of Town.
3. Bruce leads Dave to another Camping Area, even after the Ranger told me it was full.
4. Bruce doesn't follow the group off the Freeway.
5. Bruce and Dave Lag in Traffic in Santa Paula
6. Wait for Dave, who doesn't pass the Green Mustang on Bouquet Cyn road.
- *That was pretty legitimate - the Mustang was hostile*
7. Waiting for Dave at Lake Isabella Gas Station - he goes past and misses turn.
8. Waiting for Dave at Sequoia Forest Turn-off.
- +++ **Big Delay**, Bruce does it right, and Dave finally checked his map, PJ, Nick and Mike screwed up this time!!
9. 2nd Gas Stop for Dave, Dave saves 40 cents.
10. Waiting for Dave, Bruce & Nick at Sequoia and Lodge Pole. This was legit too, it was damn dark on the side of that mountain! But I missed my Shower, the main reason we came to Lodge Pole.
11. The "Group" Decides to turn off 168 on Auberry Road??
12. Group is Missing. Returned to the 168 Intersection and Waited
13. Group is Still Missing. Paused again in Madera and Waited Again.

Review and Conclusions

So there I was, after 11 years of PJ-1000's. Annoyed at all the delays and wrong turns . But Nick says, "if Dave didn't come, you wouldn't have any stories to tell." And I have to admit to myself, I took a couple of wrong turns too.

Maybe I'm in too much of a hurry.

I think there are some key lessons here. . . .better pay attention to this next year.

What the Hell, next year we'll do it better. . . or maybe we'll do it the same. But, we'll do it!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The 12th Annual "PJ-1000" September 8, 9, 10, & 11 1988

| | | | | |
|---------------|------|--------|---------|---------------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1983 | Honda | CB1100F | 4 days, 1,400 miles |
| Nick Henneman | 1985 | Yamaha | FJ1100 | |
| Mike Caballes | 1984 | Honda | VF500F | |
| Dave Sweetman | 1984 | Honda | VF1100S | (3 days only) |

Day 1 - Thursday; September 8, 1988 - Getting Started

I left the house about 6:15 AM and rode 101/680 to Mission Blvd. I got there a little before 7 and Nick and Dave were already there. We had a quick cup of coffee, used the "facilities" and departed about 7:20 heading East via Hwy's 680, 580, 205, and then North on 5 to Sacramento. The early morning valley mist made the early riding cool, but the sun was bright and warm. We pulled into the 76 Station Mike had identified about 9:20 and Mike arrived minutes later. After a short break and gas we mounted up and headed North. Just north of Sacramento we took the 70/99 exit toward Marysville, then Hwy 70 to Oroville. We pulled into a Carl's Jr. in Oroville, had a light lunch and rolled out toward the Feather River Canyon (Hwy 70). This is a relatively fast road, its sweeping turns climb down to the river from the West and follow the Feather river for about 60 miles to the intersection of 70/89. Mike had just installed new Michelin Hi-Sports and found that the installer had done a lousy job of balancing the front wheel. The Feather River canyon offers some very good high speed opportunities and Mike indicated that above 80 the front end got shaky. So I tried to contain myself, and keep a 70-75 MPH maximum. There is another short piece of good road near (Indian Falls), then the road straightens out as it passes Lake Almanor and on to Hwy 36. At the intersection of 36, we found a small motorcycle/snowmobile shop and we stopped to let Mike inject some "liquid balance" into his front tire. Not a trivial task as it turned out. But he got the job done, however later he reported it did not seem to do a great deal of good. We stopped for a break at Mineral, then proceeded to our Camp Ground at Battle Creek, a Forest Service camp ground about 10 miles West of the Mt. Lassen. There was no water, so the nominal \$2 fee was not charged for use of the camp. We set up our tents and then went up to the Mt. Lassen Park entrance. Even after explaining to the Park Ranger we just wanted to ride 20 miles up the mountain and back, he still insisted we would have to pay the \$5/bike park entrance fee. We were beginning to get tired anyway, and decided it wasn't worth the price. We went back to Mineral, had dinner and played pool and shuffle board till about 10PM. My total riding distance for Friday was 365 miles.

Day 2 - Friday; September 9, 1988 HWY 36 Battle Creek to 101

We were up early and got underway ahead of schedule. This part of 36 was a little better than it appeared on the map, some good corners on the eastern part and then some clear straight road, (useful for "carb testing"). After breakfast in Red Bluff we proceeded West on 36. Funny how the memory works, the road was great, but still different than I remembered. The "concrete roller-coaster" had brand new black top and was great. However, this year I found it a little intimidating. I was not at all happy with my execution in most of the corners, possibly I was a little out of practice or maybe I was pushing too hard. I don't feel as though I rode it as well this year. That's is what it's all about, going "well" on a good road. Not racing or being foolish, just feeling that you are riding at your own personal limit! Beyond that area there is a section that was older pavement, a little straighter then up into some mountain areas with great corners. Like the last time, trucks had kicked up some gravel in the corners so a little caution and carefully selected lines through the corners was necessary. Down to the Intersection of 36/3, and continuing west toward the Pacific, this road never disappoints.

The only "construction"

Somewhere near the South Fork Summit we encountered a major section of road construction. It was a 5 mile detour, following a pilot car. First we waited about 15 minutes for the pilot, then the detour took about 25 minutes to cross. It was nice to know that we only missed 5 miles of this fantastic road. Beyond this area we came to the narrow, tight cornered area I remembered from our prior trip, but they were fun, and not as tough, or as big a challenge as I remembered it to be. We proceeded over a second set of mountains, and dropped down into Bridgeville, the General Store, now closed and boarded up. The across the "gravel wash" area and into the redwood grove as we neared the coast. Even though it was well after noon, the fog still lingered for the last 20 miles, and all put back all the clothing layers which had been shed along the 150 mile route. We took a "short-cut" through Rohnerville to Eureka and stopped for lunch and gas.

Eureka to Weaverville on 299

Then North another 10 miles to Arcata and the intersection of 299 heading back East toward Weaverville on 299. Because it was a weekday, traffic on this main East-West artery was significant. Lots of unloaded logging trucks, headed East for more Logs. We managed to get around them and by Willow Creek traffic had diminished somewhat. 299 is another river canyon highway, and follows the Trinity River for about 115 miles. I remember one short break we took by the river. I was talking about getting a new bike for the next year, something smaller, better handling. All the guys were giving me a hard time, saying " what you, on something with less than 100 HP - never! We'll bet you'll be on a Honda Hurricane 1000!!" We passed through Weaverville about 5PM, nobody was ready to eat because we had a fairly late lunch in Eureka so we continued North on HWY 3, 14 miles to our campground on Trinity Lake. We set up, and all decided that the 337 miles we had just completed was enough. We soaked out the stiffness in a hot shower and had microwaved hot-dogs at the Campground Store and settled down to watch the local VCR movie at the Camp with a bag of chips, 2 jars of Salsa (Mike's idea), and a couple of 6-packs. I think we were all asleep by 9:30PM

Day 3 -Saturday; September 10, 1988

We left our camp set up at Pinewood Cove. I was the only one who started the day with another hot shower. Dave had to pack up because he was going to head home. I really have to hand it to Dave, he was packed up and ready early both mornings, and he was never too far behind during the day's rides either. Because Dave wanted to ride home in the cool rather than the heat, we reversed the Saturday Plan. We had breakfast in Weaverville, gassed up and rode Hwy 299 back to Willow Creek. We took a break there, said good-bye to Dave, and then the 3 of us Nick, Mike and I turned North on Hwy 96. Now, I'd been remembering this road as the best in the State for 3 years. And the first 25 miles was enjoyable, but beyond that it wasn't like I remembered at all. It wasn't bad, mind you, still lots of corners, but instead of being lots of tight challenging 25's & 30's, it was a lot of easy 35's which were could be casually negotiated at 65-70, no sweat. To make it just a little less fun after Happy Camp (about half way) we ran into some gusty head winds, not too bad, but a little unsettling in some corners. Mike had it worst because he doesn't get as much wind protection from the fairing on the Interceptor as Nick and I do.

Yreka to Pinewood Cove

We arrived at Yreka about 2:30 PM. Took a break and then started South on Hwy 3, which I remembered as mostly straight and boring. Wrong! This road has some nice sections, there is one pass about half way between Yreka and Weaverville that is really great. And there was quite a number of miles of good corners, not tight ones, but some good stuff, particularly as we got close to camp again. Saturday ended up at 317 miles total, and following those fantastic hot showers, dinner was Microwave Hot-dogs again, and another movie at the local campground pavilion.

Day 4 - Sunday; September 11, 1988

We packed up early and headed to Weaverville for breakfast. It was cold. We then traveled South on 299 to Douglas City, then South on Hwy 3. This is a neat road! Then on to Hwy 36, back up over the mountains and take a second ride on the "concrete roller-coaster," this time heading East. We got to Red Bluff about noon after 125 really good miles. We got on I-5 and took the ride home in two long bursts. The first to Sacramento. Short Break. Then on to San Jose. Home at 4:30PM, after again setting the all time PJ-1000 1 day mileage record at 391 miles. This year was a Great ride!!!!

New Bike

Remember that river-side conversation in 1988. Well I fooled them. No Hurricane 1000. Instead a salvaged 1987 Kawasaki 750. Only 85 HP (But it also only weighs 495 lbs). A nice, middle-of-the-road Middleweight. Handles great, it's comfortable - I love it. (Although there still may be a Honda Hurricane 1000 in my future!!)

The 13th "PJ-1000" Sept. 16,~~17,18~~, 1989 (Rained Out)

| | | | |
|----------------|------|----------|-------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1987 | Kawasaki | Ninja ZX750 |
| Dave Sweetman | 1984 | Honda | VF1000S |
| Nick Henneman | 1985 | Yamaha | FJ1100 |
| Bruce Farley | 1984 | Honda | CX650 Turbo |
| Paul Boogaards | 1985 | Yamaha | Virago 500 |

The "13th" Annual PJ-1000

Guys that build Hotels know about it. They don't call the 13th floor, "the 13th floor" for a reason. . . its bad luck! I knew that too, but I proceeded to call the 1989 PJ-1000 the "13th" Annual PJ-1000! And as a result, out of the sunny blue September sky came . . .Rain! It had been beautiful Wednesday, and the forecast sounded great. Things got a little funny Thursday, and by Friday night it looked very threatening. Saturday morning it looked BAD!!

Day 1 = Day Last, Saturday Sept. 16th

We gathered at the Peppermill on Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road at 280. Roads were wet, but it wasn't raining. The sky was overcast and it smelled like rain. Dave and Bruce were already at the Peppermill when I got there. They had both encountered showers on their way over. Nick showed up a few minutes after me. Paul came in late, having almost gone to the wrong Peppermill. (Goes to prove that all the elaborate maps and directions don't work if they don't look at them.) We ate a tentative breakfast, it sprinkled briefly while we were in the restaurant. All of us very apprehensive. But, we decided to give it a go. We pulled out and headed up 280 toward San Francisco. The surface of 280 was dry but the shoulders were very wet, the sky was gray. It was a little misty as we ran along the coastal mountains. We crossed the Golden Gate and headed out toward Stinson Beach. The road was very wet here, and looked very treacherous. As we broke over the hill and headed toward the ocean, the pavement dried and I was able to gas it down the hill. I enjoyed my brief scooter, but it soon ended. The surface again glistened with a film of the wet stuff and we all cut the speed to a very conservative pace. Rooster tails of wet spray flew up off of the rear tires of the bikes. Along Tamales Bay the fog and overcast hung menacingly along the coast and the road stayed wet. In those instances when the road swung inland the pavement was even more precarious, often covered with wet Eucalyptus leaves. I kept watching all the good corners go by, one after the other, turning carefully, no speed, no lean, . . . Shit, No Fun! We intersected Tamales-Petaluma Road. We decided to head inland to 101, riding a slippery wet Hwy 1 wasn't much fun. We turned right toward Petaluma and it began to rain. Looking in my rearview mirrors I noticed that we had lost Paul and Dave at the edge of Town. I pulled over to the side of the road, but it began to rain harder. I drove ahead a few blocks and found an old gas station which was no longer in business. I pulled in under the overhang to wait out of the rain. The old cement pad was wet and oily. As I dismounted, and stuffed the kick-stand, I slipped, the kick-stand didn't hold and the bike toppled on its side, busting the left front turn signal. Now I was really pissed. Dave and Paul pulled up and joined us.

Tough, Wet Decision

Now it was time for the big decision. Continue North? Hold up and wait for the rain to stop? Or for the first time in 13 years, head home and cancel a PJ-1000? It was a tough decision, but the rain increased and the decision soon became obvious. We stopped again in town near a hardware store so Paul could buy a rainsuit. We pulled up on the sidewalk under a movie theater marquee while Paul went to the store . . . boy talk about an optimist - he left home without a rainsuit! He got one, and suited up. We took off for home, crossed the Richmond-San Refael Bridge and south on 17. We stopped at a coffee shop somewhere near Oakland. It was a real scuzzy place - but by that time we were a pretty scuzzy crew. I can't remember a time when I was more disappointed and frustrated. Dave kept trying to get me to come over to his house to "ease-up" but I was too out-of-sorts to want to do anything but go home. So we did, and we recorded the shortest PJ-1000 on record, only 243 miles. As it turned out, it was an incredibly wet weekend all over the state. It was a good thing we didn't try to go further.

The Announcement: The 14th "PJ-1000" Sept. 30, Oct 1 & 2, 1989

Fellow Motorcyclist,

I'm sure you must be aware that the 13th Annual "PJ-1000" scheduled for Sept. 16, 17, and 18 had to be terminated early due to the inclement weather. 5 brave souls departed on schedule from the Peppermill in Cupertino, and threaded their way carefully up Hwy 1 on wet pavement almost to Bodega Bay before the rain brought us to a halt. We attributed all of this miserable luck to the fact that this was the 13th "PJ-1000". So, consider the 13th PJ-1000 officially over and complete (all 243 miles of it).

We are now ready to move on to the 14th "PJ-1000".

Saturday, September 30th; Sunday, October 1st; and Monday, October 2nd.

Its the same basic 3 day trip planned previously, however we will run it in reverse, heading first East up to 49, then Southwest on 70, West on 36 to the Redwoods, finishing up on Hwy 1 heading south, weather permitting. If it's foggy on the coast, we have a Monday alternative using Hwy 20 and 128 which should still keep things interesting. For those of you who had a schedule conflict on the 16-18th, possibly you will join us on September 30th, October 1st, 2nd.

Departure, Saturday Sept. 30th, 7:30AM

We will be departing from Denny's on Mission Blvd., just West of 680 as you head North from Milpitas on 680. We plan to Depart at 7:30 AM.

The Trip: The 14 PJ-1000, 1989 -- Second Try (*The End of Camping!!!*)

| | | | |
|---------------|------|----------|-------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1987 | Kawasaki | Ninja ZX750 |
| Nick Henneman | 1985 | Yamaha | FJ1100 |

I learned my lesson. Scrap the 13th - that is history. Schedule conflicts prevented me from finding another weekend when the group could muster. Just Nick and I planned to do the 14th PJ-1000.

| | | | |
|------------|----------|-------------|------------------|
| Total Trip | 3 days | 1,111 miles | (13652 to 14763) |
| Saturday | Sept. 30 | 402 miles | |
| Sunday | Oct 1 | 343 miles | |
| Monday | Oct 2 | 366 miles | |

Day 1 - Saturday Sept. 30th

We started from the East side of the valley, at Mission and 680. Out 580 I had mapped out a detour on Tesla Road East from Livermore. Turned out to be kind of a bust. It took quite a few minutes to get through Livermore, and a few more to find the way out of town, and the road was something of a disappointment. We cut back up to 580 and continued East on the standard route, 580-205-120-99-26. 26 was great as ever. We took a break at the 26/88 intersection. Then East on 88 to Omo Ranch Road. I had discovered this road by myself in 1984. The year Mike broke down and Ted had gone home. I remembered it as a reasonably nice road back then. But I don't think it had any surface maintenance since I was there last. It was an OK road, but it was a real challenge to "dodge pot-holes." We took several other back roads, but I made a wrong turn and we ended up on 49, and continued on to Placerville, the long way. Definitely not a route to repeat.

After Lunch in Placerville, on to Auburn. Again attempting to make the route more interesting, from Auburn north we followed a series of Back roads just west of 49, up past Lake Wildwood. There was a 5-10 mile section of road that was unpaved and very rough. Once past that, the road surface improved. It was another route which consumed too much time, and wasn't really worthwhile. Intersecting with 49 just north of Nevada City we traveled to Downieville. This northern loop of 49 is my 2nd favorite road in California. Good pavement, great corners, remote with little traffic. Scenery's not bad either, but I am only peripherally aware of that, my focus is on the twisting, undulating flat gray road disappearing right and left ahead of me. We took a break in Downieville, it was late in the day.

Too many miles on the trip plan, and many were too slow. But the exhilaration of riding 49 up over Yuba Pass, soon made me forget I was tired. It was late and cold when we arrived at Portola. 402 miles, a long day! We were supposed to camp out at the Portola KOA, but it was October and we were wondering how cold it was going to get. We asked - they told us "Damn Cold" we found the Sleepy Pines Motel! Little did we know, this was the end of Camping on PJ-1000's. We went to dinner at the Log Cabin Restaurant in Portola. This must have been the third or fourth time we have eaten at this fine old German Restaurant. Food was great - later the Bed was great.

Day 2 - Sunday October 1st

We awoke in the morning and . . . they were right! It was Damn cold and Foggy. The bike seats were frozen and hard as rocks. We packed up and went to the local Breakfast place (doubles as a Bar at night). We had a leisurely morning, waiting for the bright sun to take the morning chill off - unfortunately we didn't have that much time. So we braved the cold morning air and moved north toward the Feather River Canyon. The low valleys were shrouded in cold damp fog. But upon turning west off of 89 to follow the Feather River we were greeted with a bright crisp Sunday morning - the temperature was just about perfect now. Seemed like it was just us and the road. Most of the Hwy 70 was painted with double yellow, and following a slow pickup truck 60 miles down a fantastic sweeping road like this was not my idea of fun. I waited for a clear high visibility gentle left curve, I pulled out and passed, across the double yellow - OOPs. There was a CHP shadowing us about a quarter mile back. He pulled me over, but was real nice, let me off, told us to have a nice ride and be careful. So I was careful, I really checked my rearview mirrors every time I passed over the double yellow!

On to 99, north to Red Bluff and lunch at our favorite Burger King. A restful lunch stop, gas and we were ready for the Fantastic Hwy 36. 140 miles of the best set of corners anywhere in the state of California. We took a couple of rest stops, and enjoyed a perfect day for a great ride. At the intersection of 36 and Hwy 101 we stopped at a bar, had a beer and rested the butt a bit.

Then south on 101 toward the Redwoods and a night of Camping?? No way! One night in a soft bed was all it took to have us searching for a good motel for Sunday night. It wasn't great, but it sure beat camping.

Day 3 - Monday October 2nd

It was overcast and cold again as we headed south on 101 toward Garberville. We decided to give the coast a chance to clear and we continued south on 101 to Willits and then took 20 west toward Ft Bragg. This is a great road. But, its also a logging road. We were lucky, we got there early enough to miss a lot of the traffic, and got a few breaks to get past the slow struggling loggers. I like this road, but my bet is that its real hit and miss. As soon as we started up the mountain, we found another bright sunny day waiting for us.

South on Hwy 1 the day remained sunny and pleasant , a little breezy up north. We took a break at Mendicino. This is not a great place to stop. Further south, the road gets better, and I was really having a great time. A one point I got a good pass on a camper, and figured Nick didn't get a good shot. I was zoomin' through the corners wondering how much distance I had put on Nick, so I decided I'd pull up and wait. So I stopped on an uphill loop around an ocean cove, where I could watch the road on the other side of the inlet. I waited a few minutes then . . . I realized Nick was parked right behind me, wondering, " what the hell did he stop here for??" Guess I'm not as fast as I think I am. The rest of the ride was great, southern end of Hwy 1 is always good.

Got to San Francisco, out 19th Ave, the south on 280 to Home. This was a great "make-up" ride, too bad the other guys didn't get to join us. We learned that old guys like motels!

Section 3

The '90's

By 1990, writing about these annual events has become a bit of a passion. Although some years it takes many months to get them finished, writing about the ride has become an important issue for me.

Announcement: 15th "PJ-1000" Sept. 15, 16, & 17, 1990

Hey SPORT RIDERS,

It's time to layout the route for yet another PJ-1000. THE 1990 PLAN will be a "repeat" of the 14th PJ-1000, from last year. After the rainy weekend and re-schedule in '89, only Nick and I were able to make the trip. We thought this route plan was good enough to do again.

The Route

The plan; Saturday (9/15) head East across the valley (680, to 580, to 205, to 99, to 26, to 88) about half way up to Carson Pass (Hwy 88) cut over (via backroads) to Placerville. Then on up (Hwy 193) to Auburn. From Auburn, I-80 a few miles to Hwy 174 to Hwy 20/49 to Nevada City. Then proceed up the Northern loop of Hwy 49 to Hwy 89/70 and on to Portola for the first night. Sunday (9-16), Northwest on Hwy 89/70 to Quincy, then Southwest on Hwy 70 (Feather River Canyon), Northwest on Hwy 99 to Red Bluff. Then (look out corner lovers) West on Hwy 36. South on Hwy 101 to the Redwoods. (2nd night). Monday (9/17), head South on Hwy 1, weather permitting. If it's foggy on the coast, we have a Monday alternative using Hwy 20 and Hwy 128 which should still keep things interesting.

Ground Cloth or Bedspread??

Funny thing happened last year. It got cold, and Nick and I opted for a Motel. As a result, I don't want to camp this year. Something about a soft bed, these old bones, and 375 miles a day on a motorcycle seat. 2 Guys to a room and it only runs about \$17-20 per night. It sure makes the next day feel better.

Departure, Saturday Sept. 15th, 7:30AM

We will be departing from Denny's on Mission Blvd., just West of 680 as you head North from Milpitas on 680. (exit Mission Blvd., cross back under the freeway, Denny's is about a block down on the right.) We plan to Depart at 7:30 AM. Be sure to gas up before breakfast.

The Trip: PJ-1000 No. 15; September 15, 16, 17, 1990

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1987 | Kawasaki | Ninja 750 | 15th PJ-1000 | Odometer: 17198-18319 |
| Dave Sweetman | 1984 | Honda | VF1000S | 8th PJ-1000 | |
| Bruce Farley | 1985 | Honda | CX650 Turbo | 3rd PJ-1000 | |
| Luis Drummond | 1985 | Yamaha | FJ-1100 | 1st PJ-1000 | |
| Nick Henneman | 1985 | Yamaha | FJ-1100 | Last minute problem | |

Total Trip = 1121 miles
Saturday = 437 miles (new 1 day record, previous was '89 = 402 miles)
Sunday = 367 miles
Monday = 317 miles

Pre-Trip Concerns

Things looked good till Friday Night. Nick called to say he had discovered a crack in his Yamaha's oil filter housing, and no one had a replacement. He was hopeful that he could find one in a salvage yard in Hayward, and join us Saturday night in Portola. The weekend weather forecast also predicted potential showers up North, but in our area and points East, the forecast sounded terrific. There wasn't much mystery in the trip route, because with a couple of minor modifications, we had covered all of these roads several times before, most of them, just last year.

Saturday, September 15, 1990. (Ninja Odometer = 17,198)

After a typically lousy nights sleep (night before anticipation) departure time for PJ and the Ninja was about 6:50AM, arriving at Denny's - Mission Blvd. at about 7:15AM. Everyone showed up early and we were on our way by 7:40AM. As predicted, I needed a pit stop in Tracy but it was quick, and after that we made good time and got gas at Valley Springs (Mi = 17,329, 9:45AM), 110 miles into the trip. Beyond Valley Springs the ride up Hwy 26 was as enjoyable as usual, and new guy Luis was hanging in real good. Even Bruce and Dave stayed in a lot closer than on previous rides. We took our first calorie break at the intersection of 26 and 88 (Mi = 17367, 11:00AM), that same little "dairy queen" we have used many times before.

Soon we were on our way East on 88, looking for our first variation on the trip the "North-South Road." North-South Road intersects Omo Ranch Road just 1 miles in from 88. The first 10 miles was narrow and slow, although the scenery was great. Just when I began to think "oh shit, another 14 miles of this is gonna be tough" the road widened to 2 well marked lanes, the surface became smoother and the road was terrific. I stopped at one point and let the group gather, as we pulled out I waved Bruce and Dave passed. I got past Dave relatively quickly and I rushed off in pursuit of Bruce. I could break a lot deeper entering the corners, but when the CX650 Turbo "hit the boost" at the exits, the best the Ninja could do was to hang on to his tailpipe.

Although my cornering speed capability was quite a bit higher than the Honda, here were no places with adequate room or visibility to pass, so I just chased him all the way to the Mormon-Immigrant Trail, it was really fun. Mormon-Immigrant turned out to be very straight so it was fortunate we didn't have to stay on it long. I decided to pick up Hwy 50 and head straight to Placerville for lunch.

Dave's Electrical Failure

On the on-ramp to the freeway (Hwy 50) I pulled over to make sure the guys were ready for lunch. They were, (I should have known) so we mounted up and pulled onto the freeway. I glanced in the mirror and saw Luis and Bruce, but no Dave. (not a totally unusual situation).

I kept my speed at 50-55mph and kept checking the mirror-- no Dave. I pulled off and waited -- No Dave! ("Stop to ask the guy a question. . . and he takes a nap," I mumbled.) We took the next exit, I stationed Luis and Bruce at the exit in case Dave came along, and I returned toward the exit where we had seen him last. A couple of miles up the Hwy -- No Dave . . . I began to be certain that there was trouble, because even Dave would have been rolling by now. I found our original on-ramp. He was still there -- no electricity! I found Pollack Pines just around the corner, and suggested Dave to push his bike there, while I went to fetch the other guys. We all came back together, found Dave (with some difficulty), and Bruce went to work trying to diagnose the electrical malady, fuses already checked by Dave were OK. Ignition switch didn't prove to be the problem either. After about an hour and two unsuccessful push starts, we decided it was the battery. Fortunately, just up the road was a Napa Auto Parts Store that carried motorcycle batteries!! While the guys fitted the Honda with a new battery I called Nick to learn that he had exhausted all possible sources for his oil filter cover, and would not be able to make the "15th PJ-1000." We headed out for Placerville. We had a quick lunch at a Burger King, and continued on our way about 3PM, a good 2 hours off our schedule and 250 miles from our destination. From Placerville we took 193 to I-80 and 174 to Nevada City. Both of those backroad highways are similar, and we encountered enough slow traffic to minimize the fun of the roads, but both were better than Hwy 49 in this area. At Nevada City (Mi = 17,501) we gassed up, it was then about 4:20PM and obvious we were in for a late arrival in Portola. From Nevada City we continued East-North-East on Hwy 49. This great 2 lane Hwy was as enjoyable as ever, light traffic, sun at our backs, surface smooth and clean. We took a nice long break at Downieville about 6PM, and then continued over Yuba Pass (Elev. 6,700ft), stopping briefly at the 89 overlook, and then continuing on to Portola. As we turned off Hwy 89 on County road A-15, it began to get dark and cold. We had only a little daylight left when we arrived at the Sleepy Pines Motel (Mi = 17,635, 437 miles; longest day I've ever spent on a bike). They still had our rooms available, and we unpacked the bikes and headed to the Log Cabin Restaurant for dinner. At the Log Cabin we were greeted at the parking lot by the attractive barkeeper, who said "4 motorcyclists for dinner?" By the time we had parked the bikes, they had our table waiting. They had a good German chef and I really enjoyed the food. We drank Czechoslovak beer, and ate well. An hour and a hot shower later it was sleepy time. I found out that my roommate Luis snores like a buzzsaw when he's tired. (what the heck, I probably did too!)

Sunday, September 16

All rose early and faced the cold Portola morning. Although nippy, it wasn't nearly as cold as it had been last year (October 1st) when Nick and I first discovered the warm and wonderful comfort of a motel. We had breakfast at the Canyon Cafe (your only choice if you want Breakfast in Portola) and let the sun warm the air a little. With several extra layers, and the sun bright and warming, the cold mountain air was tolerable. Dave reminded me that we had seen lots of colder mornings in the mountains on previous trips. Hwy-89/70 North from Portola isn't real exciting, but it was cold enough that all we wanted to do was sit still and keep out of the wind anyway. We gassed up in Quincy, (Mi = 17,670, 8:40AM) Bruce's idea to wait and get gas here, to give us another break during the cold morning hours. It worked, thanks Bruce! We turned West on Hwy-70 and found a renewed road surface in the Feather River Canyon.

This sweeping riverside 2-lane was, as always, an enjoyable ride, relatively fast, with light traffic. It seemed to me that in the re-painting of centerlines, they had added a lot more legal passing area's. (I like that after my encounter with the CHP officer last year on this road). One thing about buzzing sweeping turns at 75-85 mph, the miles pass quickly. We took a short break near the West end of the canyon. I suggested that we stop at my Sister's house in Paradise, no one objected. About 10:40AM we pulled in to the Jensen's house on Connifer Drive to find only brother-in-law Al at home. We had a short visit, a cup of coffee, and about 11:30 were on our way.

Down the Skyway from Paradise to Chico, then North on 99, passing cars and trucks and holding the throttles on a little longer than necessary, just to relieve the boredom. We arrived at Red Bluff at noon, (Mi = 17,806) and had lunch at the same Burger King by I-5 again. Across the street after lunch we filled the bikes once again. A customer in the station called over, "where are you guys headed?" "West on 36 to the coast," I replied. "oh," he said "terrible road, ever been on it?" "yes" I replied "about 6 times, that's the only reason we come here!" Looking at Luis, I said, "guess its all in your perspective."

Although hot, it was a lot more comfortable than usual in the central valley, and I was still in full leathers, determined not to change unless it became really unbearable, which it never did.

The "concrete roller coaster" was as good as usual, the surface still in excellent condition. A little gravel in several corners drew some caution and I don't think I was as aggressive as I have been in the past, but I always think that.... what the heck it was still great fun.

We took a break at the roadside, a fairly long one, then just a few miles later came upon that general store where Nick and I stopped last year, and took another break (I hadn't remembered where it was). Anyway, we needed some fluids because of the heat, and because there weren't any more services for about another 60 miles. Finally with a little prodding I got the group back in the saddle, and off we went to cross the mountains to the Pacific. We encountered little traffic, one fairly obstinate pick-up, three "good-ol-boys." You know the type, long hair and baseball caps, the kind of guys who hog the left lane on a narrow road, then wave you by into a blind hairpin. I just laid back and they became disinterested, and finally let me by. As we approached the redwoods, we took another break at a country store. After that the traffic got slow and heavy and we didn't have any significant clear road for the balance of the tour on 36, but it was only about 30 miles anyway. The coast near Alton (just South of Eureka) was cold and foggy as usual, but we jumped on 101 South, and were soon back to clear skies and sunshine, although it was starting to turn to evening. We stopped at Red Crest, spoke to a local, and with Bruce's urging headed South to Garberville (Mi = 18,002) for the night. That turned out to be an excellent decision, as our meal choices in Red Crest were non-existent.

We checked into "The Motel" which cost a bit more than Portola, but was a lot nicer too. We ended up in a Pizza Place for dinner - OK but not great, but Garberville choices aren't all that great anyway. A Hot shower and bed were soon the prime agenda.

Monday, Sept. 17, 1990

We were up early again Monday, with a good breakfast place right at our Motel. I called KABC, the FT. Bragg Radio station and got an enthusiastic secretary who told me the weather was clear and bright. Good News!! After breakfast, we suited up and started to head out of town. As we made the U-turn at the end of Main Street, I noticed the Ninja's front end felt heavy and abnormal. I checked the air pressure but it was OK, so off we went. A few more miles South through the 101 redwoods, then West on Hwy-1 over the mountain from Leggett. Again, in the tight corners, the front end seemed a little off, so I kept my cornering speed down. I noticed right turns felt awkward, but lefts seemed better. (??). On over the hill to the Pacific. Beautiful! Clear! Bright! Sunshine! We stopped shortly after reaching the coast. There is this big turnout near a bridge. We've stopped here before. The water is blue-green, and the coast line is real nice. Snapped a few extra pictures. Then on South down Hwy 1, good corners, then a few straight parts, one real ornery logging truck that was hard to pass, but the next one was easy and we never saw number 1 again. We continued South, the weather stayed nice and traffic was light. We stopped for lunch at a small hamburger place at Point Arena. Later, we stopped at Ocean Cove at a property that had been a school for "wayward boys" in years past. Bruce had spent his last 3 high school years there, and seemed to enjoy visiting there, and sharing some of his boyhood experiences with us. Back on the road and approaching Bodega Bay it was time for gas. We had been running longer between fills, and on Hwy 1 you don't have numerous options. We pulled up to the only station in town - - and it was closed for construction! We asked around, "only gas for 30 miles is over at Bodega - a small burg just over the hill."

So off we went to Bodega (Mi = 18,192; 2:45PM). One antique store, one general store, and one antique gas pump @ **\$1.79.9/Gallon!!** I think this guy made his entire year's profit while the 76 Station in Bodega Bay was being repaired. We all bought the most expensive tank of gas ever, took a long break and then started the last leg of the trip toward home. Traffic got a little worse South of Bodega Bay, and by this time the front end of the Kawasaki was acting real nasty on the brakes. In spite of that, it was still a nice ride. Construction on Hwy 1 near Stinson Beach directed us on a detour over Mt. Tamalpais, might have been great on a light traffic day, but it was real hard to pass, and my front wheel wasn't providing a lot of confidence anyway. I did manage to get around most of the real slow guys, so my ride over the mountain was OK, some of the others got hung up and had to follow some real slow movers all the way. We took our last break at the Intersection of Hwy 1 and 101. Dave and Bruce decided to go across the bay, and Luis and I headed across the Golden Gate - - out 19th Ave, and South on 280.

When we hit the far end of San Jose traffic was backed-up. I took the Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road off ramp, but Luis stayed on the Freeway. I went down Stevens Creek Blvd., applying the Front Brake now was like riding a jack hammer. But I got home without a problem.

Now 2 weeks later and \$300 poorer, I found out how much it costs when you warp the front rotors on a 1987 Kawasaki Ninja (Salvaged Set = \$150). And I had to replace a front tire which was completely wasted on the right side (\$100)

even though it only had 5000 miles on it, and to make certain I put in new brake pads (\$45) too! First time I ever wore out a front tire faster than a rear. But, I'm just glad it didn't start giving me real trouble any earlier in the trip, because it only really hampered my ride during the latter half of Monday.

Summary

The 15th PJ-1000 will go into the history books as the best weather, and best road conditions in recent memory. (or is it just senility?) It was a great ride. I wouldn't have changed any of this route. The guy's suggestions about gas in Quincy and Sunday night in Garberville really enhanced the ride.

I missed Nick, but, shit happens. We really lucked out on Dave's battery. Luis is a fine new addition to the group, and I'm glad my brakes lasted until I got to San Jose.

Applied Learning's from PJ-1K #11

I found by being a little more patient, a little less aggressive with the gas at corner exits, and not passing every car I find before I see all the headlights in my mirrors, really helps keep the group together, and doesn't make me feel like I'm not running my pace.

This ride is going to be hard to beat. But next year, there's the promise of having Nick and maybe even Mike back on the ride, and with Luis, Bruce, and Dave it'll be a great group. Now all I have to do is figure out where we should go!?

The Announcement: the 16th "PJ-1000" Sept. 7, 8, 9, 1991

Hello fellow Motorcyclists,

Yes its that time of year again, and I have had the maps out for the past week looking for a new and interesting route for this years "PJ-1000." After 15 years, we have done just about every road possible, but I did manage to connect some familiar routes with a few we haven't done before.

Departure - Saturday, we will depart from our standard Easterly departure point, the Denny's at Mission and 680. In case you don't remember, or if you haven't gone East with us before, take the Mission Blvd. Exit off 680, loop around and cross under the Freeway, Denny's is a couple of stoplights down on the right. I Plan to get the trip underway by 8:15AM, so if you want to eat breakfast at Denny's come early.

Saturday's Ride - Saturday we will cross the valley to 99 then head east on Hwy 26, connect with Hwy 88 and cross the first of 6 Sierra Passes, Carson Pass (8,573 ft). We will turn right on the other side of Carson Pass and cross back over the mountains on Hwy 4, increasing our altitude a little as we traverse Ebbetts Pass (8,730 ft). Then West on 4 to Angles Camp, and another 20 miles South on 49 to Sonora, where we will look for a Motel to rest our weary (and aging) bones after a reasonable 333 miles.

Sunday's Route - Sunday morning, after breakfast its East once again, this time on Hwy 108 over Sonora Pass (9,624 ft) then down the east side to 395. South on 395 for 36 miles will put us at the Intersection of Hwy 120 and at the foot of Lee Vining Grade. On the way we will climb over Conway Summit (8,138 ft) which gives a great view of Mono Lake. Then up the hill to the highest of the Sierra Passes, we will cross Tioga (9,945 ft) as we enter Yosemite. 60 miles of Tioga Road through the high country of Yosemite will bring us to Big Oak Flat, where we will turn South. Crossing the Merced River to Hwy 41 we will continue South to Yosemite Forks where we will turn off on a series of backroads (see maps attached) which will eventually deliver us to Hwy 180 and Grant Grove Village in Sequoia Nat Park. Another 333 miles. There I have reserved us 2 "Housekeeping Units" each capable of sleeping 3-4 guys. Some of it is double beds, so if the idea of sleeping with one of the "other Bikers" bothers you, then bring a sleeping bag so you can sleep on top of the covers.

Monday's Tour - After breakfast at Grant Grove Lodge, we will take the spectacular ride through Cherry Gap (6,897 ft) down into Kings Canyon, take a short stop at Canyon's end, then come back up, leaving the Park out the South entrance to Hwy 198. Then for a few hours it will be hot and straight as we cross the valley toward Coalinga. But to make the ride interesting, I found Coalinga Road, which will give us an additional 54 miles of interesting stuff as we cut across toward Hwy 25 near the Pinnacles. From there are a few good miles on 25, then its home on 101. Total Monday = 368 miles.

Money Matters:

- o Saturday Night - We have a reservation at the Aladdin Motel in Sonora. I didn't have a lot of choices so we are currently booked there. Cost is kinda high, \$21/person for 2 double Queens (2 Rooms) that's the best I can do for now. Rooms are Non-Smoking, Ground floor. I don't know how you guys feel about sleeping together??? --- for 2 nights!!
- o Sunday Night - We have confirmed lodging in Grant Grove Village Housekeeping units; similar arrangements (3 and 4/unit) although the cost is better (\$14/Person).
- o Gas in the mountains is usually more expensive, so figure your mileage at about \$1.25/gal or bit more if you like to pump the good stuff. Cash is often preferable, we don't always get brand choices.
- o Food tends to run about \$20-25 per day if you eat good (and we usually do)

The Trip: 16th "PJ-1000" Sept. 7, 8, 9, 1991

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| PJ Naumchik | Kawasaki ZX750R Ninja |
| Rick Allan | Kawasaki ZX750R Ninja (New Participant) |
| Nick Henneman | Yamaha FJ1100 |
| Luis Drummond | Yamaha FJ1100 |
| Dave Sweetman | Honda VF1100 Saber |
| Bruce Farley | Honda CX650 Turbo |
| Chris Patterson | BMW K-75 (New Participant) |

Starting Odometer: 20267 Ending: 21375 Total Trip = 1,108 miles

Saturday 362 miles

Sunday 376 miles

Monday 370 miles

Saturday September 8, 1991, Early Morning: Overcast

We gathered at the traditional "going East" departure point; The Denny's at Mission and 680. Four of my "regulars" and 2 new participants, Rick and Chris make a group of 7, the largest "troop" ever assembled for a PJ 1000. After breakfast, we begin our eastward trek across the central valley toward our mountain destinations. Our first stop, is at Valley Springs at the intersection of 26 and 12. A few miles East of this point the road will begin to get interesting and I can already feel the anticipation. The day is bright and reasonably cool, it takes a few miles to get "in-the-grove", and as I do I notice new members Rick and Chris are staying close behind. Hwy 26 is great as usual, and at the intersection of 88 we take another break. There is a Harley Convention at Carson City, Nevada, and there are lots of Harley riders on 88. Their presence also increases the presence of the Law, so after we gas up and head out it's prudent to be a little more cautious than usual. 88 over Carson Pass inspires some fast riding, clean and fast, no evidence here of the recent rains in the Sierra. We stop for lunch in Markleeville, the 7 of us, and about 150 "Harley Guys", but they all seem to like the same bar and restaurant, leaving one at the other end of town to us.

Saturday Afternoon - The Incident After lunch we pass the turn-off to Monitor Pass and swing West toward Ebbetts Pass. There are a few more clouds in the sky as we start our ascent past Silver Mt.. (6500'). The road narrows and begins to climb gradually. I swing through a couple of tight fast lefts, up through the trees, approaching a blind right-hander, and I'm on the brakes hard as I approach the first sharp, up-hill right-hand hairpin. I focus uphill above the turn, looking for traffic. This is a sharp turn, I'm not planning to do it fast. As I arrive at the corner I jab it down a couple of gears and shift my eyes back to the road surface...Oh Shit! It has been raining here, and the soft Sierra sand that lies inside the steep sharply graded turn has washed across the entire width of the road - BAM!! (it always happens so damn FAST) PJ and the Kawasaki "eat-it" as the front tire loses traction in the sand. My leathers perform their duty well as I hit on my hands, knees, and elbows. I'm up quickly, and note that everybody else got stopped in time. The bike's not hurt too bad, fairing cracked, windshield broken, the worst damage is the right side driver peg has broken off. While I tend to a few minor scrapes on my knee, the guys figure out a way to mount the passenger peg on the driver mount. A couple of washers from Chris' BMW tool kit make the task possible and in about 20 minutes were ready to head out. I'm a little shaken, but damn glad to be able to continue.

As we start up the incline around this fateful hairpin corner it starts to rain. I feel some mixed emotions - glad I can ride - sorry the bike is hurt - glad it runs and handles OK - I wish it wouldn't rain - I'm glad the road is wet, I can go slow. . I don't feel like riding fast right now.

It doesn't rain long, leathers barely get wet. Just a Sierra shower. But the road stays wet for the next 25 miles or so - and that's OK. We get a bit further West past Bear Valley and the sun is out and the road is clear. I start getting a bit more aggressive as we head down the mountain toward Angels Camp. We take a short break just above Arnold and head for 49. I took a wrong turn at the foot of Hwy 4 (its kinda confusing) so we did a tour of Angels Camp before I figured out we were headed North instead of South. We get turned around and head South toward Sonora, and as we were exiting town - Nick got a flat rear tire. Rick, Luis, and I didn't know it until we got to Sonora - we waited a while at the edge of town, Luis who had to head home due to other commitments left, and Rick and I finally gave up and went to the motel just East of Sonora on 108. They managed to "patch" Nick's tire OK and the rest of the group showed up about 45 minutes later. Went out for Pizza and all sacked out early.

Sunday - A long-long day

Sonora to Yosemite

There was a breakfast place adjacent to the motel so we all got packed up and walked over. Large group, slow service - it was 9:30 by the time we were ready to leave. We rode up 108 toward Sonora Summit, took a break at the now infamous "Dardanelles Lodge" (the waiting place from 1981) and then proceeded over Sonora Pass, and down its steep eastern grade. The rain had been here too, lots of sand and gravel in the corners, so I took it real easy. At 395 we turned south and rode briskly over Devils Gate Summit (7,519') and down to Bridgeport where we stopped for a refreshment break and gassed up. We were soon on our way south on 395 again and scanned the spectacular view of Mono Lake as we breezed over Conway Summit (8,138'). Shortly thereafter turning right on 120 and traversing up the steep eastern slope of Lee Vining Grade. Through the park gates a Tioga Pass, (9,945') highest of the Sierra Passes, we enjoyed the sparkling granite of the high country of Yosemite. The temperature rose as we approached Yosemite valley, and traffic was heavy as we attempted to skirt the Valley crowds by turning south on 41.

Hwy 41 South

Efforts to avoid traffic failed, and the trek up 41 though the Wawona Tunnel was complicated by a touring bus belching thick black diesel exhaust as it labored up the steep grade. Wallowing near and across the center-line, it effectively eliminated nearly all passing opportunities. So there we were, fighting traffic, hot, and time was getting away from us. We finally got by the big bus but there were numerous cars to pass, some were courteous, but most were not. Finally as butts got sore and hands got tired we tried to find a place for lunch (it was about 3PM) there weren't any. We finally located a small place along the road and enjoyed a good hamburger and a really friendly restaurant owner (who sat at our table and chatted with us while we ate). We got out of there quite late in the day, with a lot of back road ahead of us.

Back road boondoggle

We turned-off 41 on the back road route I had painstakingly worked out, and we found the chosen route poorly maintained and bumpy. I selected an alternative way around Bass Lake, only to find ourselves on a slow winding shoreline Park road - more time passed. Once beyond Bass Lake I failed to see a road sign and led the group the wrong way. This route brought us to the beginning of an area of road construction, where the road was completely torn out and only a rutted dirt bed, strewn with big boulders was visible. We checked the map, I ran back up the road to check some sign posts, we finally figured we were heading east and would soon intersect 41 again. It looked to be the best bet so we forged ahead. In a few miles we got out of the construction and joined the traffic headed south on 41 to Fresno. As it turned out, we were far better off on this route because it was already very late and the back roads I had selected would have definitely have taken far longer.

The Last dash

We gassed up in Fresno and headed out East on 180, with Grant Grove Village "Housekeeping Cabins" awaiting our arrival in Sequoia National Park some 55 miles and 6,000 feet of elevation further up the road. It seemed to take forever to get out of the congested traffic of Fresno, as the road opened up and began to rise and twist, Rick passed me and began to push on the "speed button." I dialed up a few more HP and stayed with him for a while, but I was feeling damn tired and the light of the day was beginning to fade. The Chris came past, and he and Rick began to add significantly to the pace - too hot for me, I let them disappear into the distance. It was very dark by the time we all caught up with them at the entrance to the Park. We found Grant Grove, checked in and found out that in Sequoia, "Housekeeping" means no lights and a pot-bellied stove. No problem, we unpacked and walked down to the restaurant for dinner. We ate well, showered, and then slept well.

Monday - Kings Canyon

I awoke early Monday morning to the sound of raindrops falling on the roof of the cabin - oh shit! I rolled over and went back to sleep. It sprinkled off and on until it was finally time to get up. We took an extra half hour or so, then got up, packed the bikes and rode down for breakfast to see what the weather was going to do to our day. It had stopped raining, but was still overcast. We had breakfast and decided to see what the road was like. For the first 20 miles it was damp and wet, but by the time we got to the top of the Canyon the pavement was dry and the sun was beginning to shine. The temperature was perfect. We had a spirited ride down the 36 mile canyon wall, Most of us riding hard and staying within sight of each other. At one point Rick had a scary good rear-wheel slide, but he recovered OK and kept on the pace. The road was wet at the bottom, but there are few curves there anyway. We rode to Canyons End and then returned to the Lodge at Cedar Grove for coffee before starting back up the canyon. The ride back up was almost as good as the ride down, but I just can't bring myself to push quite so hard when I'm on the Outside edge of a steep canyon wall!! It was great just the same. I enjoyed it every bit as much as I had the first time in 86.

Rick runs out of Gas

We left the park through the south entrance, a nice ride but it began to get hot. Rick was worried that he didn't have enough gas to make it to Visalia . . . "don't worry" I said I know my bike can do 220 miles on a tank. Well, 5 miles outside of Visalia, Rick ran out of gas. Turns out he runs in lower gears than I do (particularly when he's chasing Chris) so he used up a lot more fuel. We found a juice bottle, filled it with gas and I took it to him, which was plenty to get him to the gas station. We all topped-off and set out across the wide flat central valley on 198. It was hot. The wind was blowing across the road from the south at about 45 mph. We took a break at the Harris Ranch but it was blowing so hard you could hardly bear to stand outside. Once we reached the other side of the valley the road got interesting. Chris took the lead and proceeded to set an incredible pace over the remaining miles of 198 and then north on 25. I always thought the southern end of 25 was kinda boring- not when your running at Chris' pace. We ended up getting gas again in Hollister, and the last 40 miles were uneventful.

Home Again - Some Repairs Required

I got home late, I guess it was about 6:30 or 7PM. It had been a good ride and good route, spoiled a little by my crash and too much traffic. I really felt fortunate that my fall had not caused any more physical problems - little did I know that the worst was yet to come. Over the next week or two my right leg turned black and blue (red and green actually) My left thumb which had been lightly sprained in the fall became swollen and sore. I developed a little water on my left knee. (old football injury) and was too sore to consider riding.

I took the fairing off the bike, had it plastic welded and painted (\$180). Had new knees put in my leathers at Just Leather (\$80). Bought a new foot peg (\$22) and aftermarket windscreen (\$40), and touched up the damage on the bike. Sure is expensive to fall down! By the time it was fixed - I was recovered and ready to dust off a few more of California's fantastic back roads.

Hwy 36; Inspiration for 1992

I first discovered State Route 36 in 1983 with Mike and Nick. That year we came up Hwy 1 and camped out at Albee Creek. We were greeted in the morning by heavy fog. The soupy drizzle persisted until we climbed up the mountain west of Bridgeville. '83 was before they fixed the road west of Mad River, and that tight, twisty section nearly wore us out. When we got to the east side of the Chalk Mtns. it turned out to be the hottest weekend of the year. But, we loved the road, especially the last 30 miles, which I fondly dubbed the "*Concrete Roller Coaster*."

We came back to Hwy 36 in 1985, starting at Red Bluff. That year we turned north on Hwy 3 so we only did half of the route. In 1988, we did 36 1½ times, first traveling from Red Bluff west. That was the year we encountered road construction on the twisty section east of Mad River. On our return leg, we came down Hwy 3 and used the eastern end of 36 to get back to Red Bluff on our way home. In '89, after getting rained out on our first attempt, Nick and I did 36 again, from Red Bluff to the coast. That trip was so good, we took the "big" group on the same route again in 1990. So, what could possibly be better than doing Hwy 36 1½ times? . . . how about twice in the same day!!! That was the primary objective of the trip plan for 1992 and the 17th PJ-1000.

2nd Announcement for: The 17th "PJ-1000"

Howdy Guys,

I got a call from Dave and Luis, and as much as possible I have changed things in an attempt to accommodate them. I hope that doesn't screw up anyone else's schedule.

When? Friday 9/11, Saturday 9/12, Sunday 9/13, and Monday 9/14

The Plan: 4 days 1,400 miles

Friday - Cross the valley to 99 then east on Hwy 26 (like last year), connect with Hwy 88 use a few back roads to get up to Placerville, then up 49 to Nevada City to hook up with 75 of our favorite miles through Downieville, over Yuba Pass to 89. Straight up 89/A15 to Portola area. (Approx. 350 miles).

Saturday -North on 89 to 36, then East to Mt. Lassen. Over Mt. Lassen Summit, then East on 44 to Redding. Follow 299 East from Redding to Eureka (about 150 miles) to end day at about 330 miles. 299 is a good road, fast, lots of sweepers, but has a fair bit of traffic too.

Sunday - DOUBLE YOUR PLEASURE!!

The whole incentive for this plan is figuring out how to DO 36 TWICE! So on Sunday, we leave Eureka, 20 mile south to Fortuna, then due west on **California's best motorcycling 2-lane road**. 140 miles to Red Bluff. Have lunch, then turn around and head right back to the coast on 36 again. Then, south on 101 to Garberville to get set up for the ride home down Hwy-1 on Monday.

(Round trip Plus, = 350 miles)

The risk for this option is a fairly high possibility of Morning Fog in Eureka and for the first 20-30 miles of 36. Its been bad before, especially if its really hot inland.

Monday - South on 101 to Leggett, over the mountain to Hwy 1 (Fog permitting) then south on 1 all the way to San Francisco. This is a good ride, and we have either 20 or 128 as options if the weather isn't great. About 370 miles will get us home.

A Mileage/Time estimate is attached.

Any of you who want to discuss this further,

Or if You Plan To Attend, I Need to Hear From You NO LATER THAN AUGUST 25TH.

PLEASE CALL Home (408) 267-7496 work (408) 988-1584.

SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER

Regards, **PJ** *keep the rubber side down! (I'll try to remember that too!!)*

The Trip: The 17th PJ-1000 Sept 11-14 1992 (4 Days)

| | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|------|---------|----------------------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1987 Kawasaki ZX750R | 17th | PJ-1000 | (4th year on the Kawasaki) |
| Dave Sweetman | 1984 Honda VF1100S | 10th | PJ-1000 | Start = 23884 End = 25372 |
| Bruce Farley | 1983 Honda CX650 Turbo | 5th | PJ-1000 | |
| Luis Drumond | 1985 Yamaha FJ1100 | 3rd | PJ-1000 | |
| Rick Allan | 1990 Kawasaki ZX750R | 2nd | PJ-1000 | |
| Chris Patterson | 1991 BMW RS100 | 2nd | PJ-1000 | |

| | | |
|----------|---|-------------|
| Friday | San Jose to Portola via Hwy 26 and 49 | 370 miles |
| Saturday | Portola to Eureka via Mt. Lassen and 299 | 395 miles |
| Sunday | Eureka to Red Bluff and back on 36, then to Garberville | 367 miles |
| Monday | Garberville to San Jose via Hwy 1/128 and Mt View Rd. | 356 miles |
| | | 1,488 Miles |

Friday September 11; Day 1

After a really sound night's sleep, (first time in years) I awoke refreshed, but no less anxious to get started. A few last minute items went into the tank bag and I left for the departure point about 7:00AM. We used the traditional east-bound departure point, Denny's at Mission Blvd. Dave, Rick, Luis, Chris and I showed up at Denny's between 7:20-7:30AM. We all had a light breakfast. Bruce joined us right at 8AM for a few minutes, then we all suited up and were rolling by 8:15. I managed to get past Tracy without a pit stop this time, and we quickly put the central valley behind us. The weather was overcast and a bit cool, but very comfortable for riding in full leathers. We crossed to Hwy 99, at Stockton hung a right on Hwy 26 making our way toward our first stop at Valley Springs. We took a break at the store at the intersection of 12/26 and I was surprised to note a new shopping center had sprung up next to the store since we were here last.

A few miles up the road a hard left is required as Hwy 12 and 26 separate, we have nearly missed this turn before, but we managed to get it right this time. The road begins to get interesting from this point, and with the sun starting to warm things a little, the pavement clear, we began to get serious about our lean angles. In just a few miles we crossed Hwy 49 and swooped and scooted over the foothills to the east. Nice Road! Nice Road! Too bad its only 25 miles. At the infamous "dairy queen" at the intersection of 26 & 88, we pulled in, but decided not to stop, which was a big disappointment for Dave who was ready for his morning rootbeer float. But it seemed too soon since our stop at Valley Springs.

We crossed 88 and pointed the bikes toward Sutter Creek Canyon Road. Sutter Creek Rd angles into Volcano-Pioneer Road, and I missed the sign. When we arrived at the little old town of Volcano about a mile further up the road, I asked a grumpy store owner where the turn-off to Sutter Creek was, and he grudgingly told me we had passed it a mile back. We found Sutter Creek Canyon Road easily on our way back and followed its twisty course 15 miles to Sutter Creek. It was OK, but like most of the backroads in this area, not anything to rush back for. We arrived at Sutter Creek about 11:40AM (164 miles into the trip). We had lunch at a quaint Cafe, and were soon traveling north on Hwy 49. The ride to Placerville was comfortable and uneventful. By the time we arrived in Placerville, the sun was beginning to push the mercury up. We pressed on to Auburn, then toward Grass Valley. Hwy 49 between Auburn and Grass Valley is being transformed into a 4-Lane Freeway, and the congestion and construction was the pits. It was Hot! It was Slow! and, it had been too long since we had taken a break (a fact which Dave reminded me about at least 3 times). I led the group on to Nevada City, where we took a lengthy stop downtown. We broke into several groups, each seeking the tavern or cafe which suited their taste. 30-45 minutes passed and everyone wandered back to the bikes. We mounted up and left the vintage town for points further east. The next 70 miles of Hwy 49 was the primary reason I included this region in the trip. Good surface, light traffic, a languishing sun at our backs, and lots of corners made for superb riding, even this late in the day. We pulled into Downieville about 4PM. This reconstructed old gold rush town has always been a pleasant stop. In the patio area out back of the local saloon, we rested on the banks of the Yuba river. We departed Downieville and continued east, through Sierraville and up over Yuba Pass (6700 ft). We took a short picture break at the Yuba Pass overlook, then finished our Friday tour up Hwy 89 swinging east on County Road A-15 to Portola. We checked in (2 cabins, 3 guys each) to the Sleepy Pines Motel (3rd time) and went out to dinner at the Log Cabin Restaurant (5th Time). A great German meal and a few beers put a great finish on the day, and after gassing up we retired for a good nights sleep. I warned the guys about frozen motorcycle seats, Rick and I both took ours in the room, the rest gambled on the weather.

Saturday, September 12, Day 2

The ol' travel alarm began buzzing at 6:45AM and I roused the troops. Dave told me I had been snoring loudly all night. Those who slept in the room with me last year all agreed, and I became 'room-mate persona non-gratta' for the rest of the trip. It was cold in the morning, the thermometer on Chris' BMW was registering 28°F. But, it definitely felt warmer than 1989 and 1990. ('89 was the worst, it had been cold and Foggy, '90 was just damn cold!) Rick and I were glad we had kept our motorcycle seats in the room. We decided to have breakfast in Quincy to break up the cold morning ride. We packed up, and put on a few extra layers. Dave was having a very difficult time getting the Honda to start in the cold morning air. Of course, he had brought along his personal mechanic Bruce, who soon took over the task of exercising the flooded 1000cc V-Four. Once the Honda fired, we were alarmed to see Bruce's Honda dripping antifreeze, but he figured it was just a loose overflow connection suffering from the cold so, we were on our way, and it was still before 8AM. Ride to Quincy was not too uncomfortable, and it's only 34 miles. We saw a lot of CHP along the way. We had breakfast, and by the time we came out Chris' thermometer was registering 42°F.

At 9AM we left Quincy traveling north on Hwy 89 toward Mt. Lassen. This is a scenic route, but the terrain does not require the road to turn very often, so the riding is not very interesting. We took a break near Lake Almanor, and another at Mt. Lassen Lodge. The Ranger at the park gates gave us a break, charging only \$2.00 per bike instead of the posted \$5.00 fee. It was a beautiful bright sunny morning. We took it easy going up the south side of Mt. Lassen, where a few tourists, and a little sand and gravel in the corners made it prudent to keep our speed reasonable. We stopped at an overlook near the summit (8500ft) for pictures, and then started down the north side of the mountain, picking up speed - - oops! A few corners ahead I caught a glimpse of a sheriff's car. He was cruising at 35 mph (the Posted Speed). So, we had no choice - - 35 mph all the way down the north side of Mt. Lassen. He turned around about 100 yards outside the park's northern gate. (I think he was smiling all the way!)

At this point we were at "Option A" on the route map. Due east on 44 would have us in Redding in 47 (boring) miles, or north to 299, then east through Burney and over 4400 ft Hachet Mtn making it 93 miles of unknown route to Redding. We all agreed to try the long option through Burney. The weather could not have been more perfect. Cool, bright sunlight, the scenery was beautiful too, we were in the forest at about 4000-5000ft of elevation. Unfortunately the road continues to be straight and flat. We passed through a few areas which had sustained damage from the recent fire on our way to 299.

We took a lunch stop at a remote little hunting store and cafe along 89 about 11:30Am. The driveway and parking area was dusty gravel. While we were sitting at some outdoor tables awaiting our lunch order, we were facing the bikes. The dust from the driveway had decorated the front tires of each bike, making the tread pattern stand out, all the bikes except . . . mine. Man, it looked pretty worn there in the dust. I had noticed that the front tire was a little lean when I was getting ready for the trip, but I thought I had 2000 miles left on it. No way! We ate lunch and continued our northern progress a few miles, intersecting with 299. We then turned west toward Burney. In five miles we were in the middle of the area consumed by the big forest fire a few weeks before. We stopped in Burney for gas @1:40PM, 150 miles north of our starting point in Portola. Burney was totally surrounded by blackened forest. The devastation in this area was really significant. More than 64,000 acres of timber and many small homes and villages - - gone! The road never got any better, so now I know, this area wasn't worth the extra miles - but that's the only way I know to find out.

We arrived at Redding about 2:30 PM. Hwy 299 connects with I-5 south for a couple of miles, but I missed the sign. Chris pulled up at a traffic light and told me, so I swung into a shopping center parking lot to check directions. It was hot, (about 85-90°F) not too bad for Redding, but very uncomfortable for sitting still in full leathers. While the guys gathered, and we planned for a stop someplace with A/C. Dave changed his leathers and ate a candy bar, while we all waited sweating! "Hey . . . C'mon Dave - hurry up, lets go someplace cool."

We used an adjacent surface street to connect with 299, found a Burger Place and had a cold drink. Soon we were on our way again, west on 299. Nice road. Lots of fast sweepers until Weaverville, I was leading, Rick and Chris right behind. Then Luis, Bruce and Dave, everyone was hanging together really well. Then we encountered a mountain stretch with great corners and brand new black top. The bright sun at its mid-afternoon slant caused the road surface to gleam like glass. I immediately flashed back to our lunch stop and that view of my worn front tire. I knew it was good, smooth blacktop. I knew that even though worn, the tire had plenty of grip. I felt nothing abnormal when I bent the bike into the turns, . . . but, that shiny - smooth - surface! My logic said "it's OK, it's OK" but my I just couldn't overcome the fear of losing the front. (the memory of last year's spill is still pretty fresh in my mind.)

Knowing my over-cautious entry speed would be slowing up the fast guys, I pulled over and waved Rick and Chris by. They quickly disappeared, neither one having any trouble with the new surface. I tried, but I couldn't overcome my fear of that shiny surface! At the end of the "good stuff" Rick and Chris waited for the rest of us to catch up, and we all took a break. As we prepared to leave, Bruce mounted up and took off, about 5 minutes ahead of the rest of us. So the game became, "catch Bruce before we get to Willow Creek."

We caught him, Dave too, but it wasn't safe to pass. Bruce's corner entry speed is pretty slow compared to Rick, Chris and I, but getting past the Honda's "Turbo-boost" coming out of the corners is a real challenge. So, we just followed Bruce the last few miles into town. At 5:15 we arrived at Willow Creek, all of us had enjoyed the spirited ride along the Trinity on 299.

We gassed up, 161 miles from the charred forests of Burney. Another 40 miles of 299 brought us to Hwy 101. It was cold and there was a very strong cross wind blowing in-land from the ocean as we joined the heavy Saturday night traffic and concluded the day's ride to Eureka. A few blocks into town we found the "Motel 8" and to my surprise, it was a very nice place.

Cruise Night in Eureka

We took 3 rooms, 2-guys to a room, freshened up and took a walk toward town in search of restaurant for dinner. As we wandered down the street it was obvious that something special was brewing, people were beginning to line the streets, with lawn chairs and blankets. A few even had BBQ's going in small parking lots. We stopped a couple of locals to find out what was happening. It was the Annual Cruise Night in Eureka!! We walked about 10 blocks before asking some folks for a recommendation for pizza, only to find the suggested place was only 2 blocks from our Motel, in the other direction! So we ate pizza drank some good dark beer, and went back to the Motel to watch the Big Cruise! I only lasted a short while and decided to rest my ol' aching hip. It didn't take long, I sacked out.

Sunday September 13; Day 3

Because I had gone to sleep early, I was awake about 5:30AM. My hip was giving me a little trouble, so I filled the tub with really hot water and soaked for about a half an hour, then showered and roused the rest of the guys. Turned out that Dave wasn't feeling well, so he decided to hang around Eureka a while, then go straight down to Garberville via 101 and wait for us to do our round trip to Red Bluff. Hwy 36 isn't Dave's favorite road anyway. We went to breakfast at the coffee shop across the street from the motel, then checked tires, and oiled chains. (at least those of us who have chains!) PJ, Rick, Chris, Luis, and Bruce were on the road about 8:40AM. It was cool on 101, but there was no fog, a real blessing for the Eureka area. We found Hwy 36 twenty miles south, and turned left to start the part of the ride we had all anticipated. Up and back, on Hwy 36. 300 miles of the very best motorcycling in the state of California. Even though I have ridden this route 5 times before, it is always different than my mental image. I guess I just can't memorize 150 miles of road, especially if I only see it every 1-2 years. (good excuse anyway) The first 15 miles is a rural residential area, followed by a few good corners in some scrubby forest before you pass through Grizzly Creek Redwood State Park. Then out through the some flat-lands and up over a mountain on a tight twisty route before dropping down into Bridgeville. Bridgeville is nearly a ghost town now, and it never was much. The old general store was closed sometime between 1983 and 85. It was still very cool. We took a break and were still in winter gloves. Beyond Bridgeville, the road follows the valley a short distance, then climbs up through a second tight twisty region much longer than the first. (a lot like the west side of Mt. Hamilton). Beyond the crest of the mountain, the road descends quickly down the other side. I asked Rick to lead though this part, and he set a challenging, but fun pace. The eastern side is new road, and its fantastic. They put in this new section 4 years ago and it is really great. I hope in time they will convert more of the really twisty stuff, but the part they replaced was the worst as I remember it. I haven't seen any signs of construction since we went through in 1988 so this may be as good as it gets.

The bottom of this section ends at Mad River. East of Mad River is South Fork Summit, (4000') a nice pass, but the corners of this mountain road are always strewn with some gravel and sand, and I tend to get really conservative and cautious here. Then comes the intersection of Hwy 3. On past the Wildwood store, the Ranger station, and about 20 miles of straight road. I was leading, looking for a familiar landmark, so I could give the group a break before the really good stuff. Rick got a little impatient, and passed me, setting an aggressive pace at 85-95 mph. No problem here, the road is very straight. I worked hard to get past him to stop the group, I didn't want to hit the last 30 miles without an opportunity to 'freshen up.' We re-mounted rode 3-4 miles and arrived at . . . the concrete roller coaster. This last 30 miles is the best. A series corners which follow the rolling terrain, connected by links of slightly less aggressive corners. . . every time you see a sign: "road narrows" look out, we're on the gas!

With Rick and Chris leading, we blasted our way across this incredibly perfect motorcycle route. I was keeping in pretty good touch, but was remembering the wear on my balding front tire. Luis had become increasingly aggressive each day, and on both Saturday and Sunday I saw the Yamaha behind me a lot. Bruce was a bit further back, but nearly keeping on the pace. We arrived in Red Bluff at 12:45PM, 170 miles from our starting point in Eureka. We lunched at the ol' standard Burger King near I-5. After resting a while, we gassed up at the station across the street, where Rick got offended 10 times by a cucumber. (that's an inside joke, you'll have to ask him about.) Luis had to head for home from Red Bluff, to make his classes on Monday. Too bad, he was really lovin' 36. I know it was a tough decision for him.

With several hundred miles of I-5 ahead, I suggested he go east on 36 and take 32 South into Chico, I did that road back in '81 with Ed Ritter, and remember it was a lot of fun. (I talked to him when we got home, he confirmed it was a pretty good route, although on that Sunday he found a bit of traffic.)

By this time my front tire was lookin' really sad. No tread was visible anywhere except for the very outside $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of the tire. We were all amazed at how quickly it had gone from "lean" to "slick." I was seriously thinking "new tire" but Chris reminded me that a rough slick would be a lot better on 36 than a smooth new tire. But, the tire had also worn bevels on both sides of center, and was beginning to cause the steering to feel a bit awkward. It bothered me most on really tight corners, which I was getting increasingly paranoid about anyway.

Soon just the 4 of us (PJ, Rick, Chris, & Bruce) were "pulling air" on the concrete roller coaster again, although Rick and I agree that it's more fun going east than west . . . hey we're nit pick'in OK! After an interesting 3 man drag race, which Rick won, the ride west was great too, although I'll have to admit, this is a lot of road to do twice. The twisty part west of Mad River was a chore for me this time, and by the time we got back to 101, I was ready for some easy road. We got to Garberville without much effort, arriving at 6:00PM, and adding another 190 miles to our day. We found Dave well rested at the Garberville Motel, feeling a somewhat better. We had dinner at the same restaurant as 1990, and went back to the rooms to relax. We all hit the sack early again.

Monday Sept 14 - Day 4

It was bright but a little hazy Monday morning. We were up on schedule, got the bikes packed up and had breakfast. I called KABC in Ft. Bragg and got a clear but cool forecast for the coast, and we rolled out at 8:40AM. Near Leggett we turned right on Hwy 1 and crossed the mountains toward the coast. I was not enjoying this ride, as the front pushed more, I got increasingly paranoid about slow sharp right turns. It wasn't so bad, but I had to go slower than I would have liked, just to be comfortable. The last time I crossed this mountain I had a similar problem, that time caused by a warped disk rotor and uneven tire wear. We stopped at the coast and again in Ft. Bragg. Chris, Rick and I pulled off to the right as we entered Ft Bragg. We knew Bruce and Dave were a ways back, it was cool and I suggested that we go into Ft. Bragg, find a coffee shop and wait there. "Will they see us OK" inquired Chris, "Oh Sure" I responded knowingly, and off we went into Ft. Bragg. There was nothing on the right side of the highway, so as we got the other end of town I pulled into a place on the left. Chris and Rick were in the parking lot, so I waited out front on the sidewalk to be sure to flag our other 2 riders. After 5 minutes I saw them and waved. Dave, riding behind Bruce, pulled in. Bruce went on by. I figured he was just going up to the stop light to turn around. But, he didn't turn around. I watched for a minute and then decided to go after him. I put on helmet and gloves and pulled out. Traffic was heavy, and I got caught at both traffic lights. I went a couple miles - - no Bruce. Surely he would look for Dave in his mirror and find him missing. I went back, collected the others and off we went, certain that we would find Bruce waiting at roadside, as soon as he discovered Dave was missing.

We got to the intersection of 1/128. No Bruce. We waited. No Bruce. We went to Boonville (only half of this is a good road). We had lunch. Still No Bruce. Surely he would discover Dave was missing, discover his error, and wait at the intersection of Mountain View Road and 101. We finished lunch, and took off to explore the new route. The east side of Mountain View road was pretty tight stuff. On the way up we passed an ambulance going the other way. Soon we came upon a huge truck carrying a crane parked on the tight mountain road. Just beyond him, a sheriff, a wrecker, and a very munched Yamaha FJ1100. Apparently the Yamaha was trying to pass the big truck on a bad corner and didn't make it. Wow, it looked bad!! That slowed me down even more!!

Rick and Chris zoomed up the road, Dave and I rode over the mountain together, that scene, coupled with the way my front tire was feeling, I was a lot more comfortable going slow.

However, the west side of Mountain View Road was much better, wider road, newer surface, a bit more relaxed layout. I enjoyed that a lot more. Back to Hwy 1. No Bruce! I couldn't believe he would go that far without looking back to see if Dave was still there!.

Oh well, shit happens. On we went down Hwy 1. It was an OK ride, but there was a lot of traffic. As the Kawasaki's handling degraded, my corner paranoia increased. By the time we hit the high cliff's south of Tamales Bay, I wasn't able to enjoy it very much. We took a break near Pt. Reyes, a little country store that Chris was familiar with. I was getting pretty tired.

At 5:10 PM, at the intersection of Hwy 1 and 101, we bought our last tank full of gas. Said our farewells, Dave and Rick turned north to the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge so they could head down 880. Chris and I crossed the Golden Gate, then went out to the Coast Hwy to by-pass the Monday evening traffic, came back to 280 and south to San Jose. I got home at 7PM, crawled out of my leathers and spent about 45 minutes in the hot tub.

Summary

Great Weather - We have had nicer weather on a few rides, but never as moderate as it was this year in Red Bluff and the Central Valley. Redding was hot, but 86°F is pretty good for Redding. Portola was cold, but not as cold as years past.

The route plan was good.

Hwy 49 through Downieville/Yuba Pass was great. Hwy 49 South of Grass Valley sucks. I knew that, but I keep thinking its better than a freeway, I'm not so sure its worth the time. Mt. Lassen isn't worth all the straight miles it takes to get there, and the route north to 299 wasn't very interesting either, I don't think I'll do Lassen again. The Feather River Canyon is a much better choice.

Hwy 36, as great as ever, but I wasn't totally up to the task. Hwy 299 from Redding west was terrific. That's the 3rd time I have done that route, I like it more each time. I'd like to work out a 299-3-36 combo again. Hwy 1 was a disappointment again this year, partly because of me, partly due to traffic. I think we need to go north on 1 early in the day to avoid traffic.

I'm really beginning to enjoy following, riding behind Rick and Chris is a real gas. It's really different when you can see somebody going into the turn ahead, plus its fun to watch.

I'm sorry we lost Bruce, I just can't figure how he didn't look back for Dave!

I think everyone had a good time, I certainly hope so.

Lessons

- No. 1 Never, Never, Never start a big trip on a marginal TIRE!!!
I need to get a new front tire, scrub it in, and go out and work some local corners till my confidence improves.
I gotta get rid of my fear of tight right handers. -- Going slow sucks!
- No. 2 Going East we need a stop somewhere around Stockton, we're ready for a break, Valley Springs is too far for a first stop, and too close to Dave's "Dairy Queen."
- No. 3 Everyone wants me to plan a spring trip. It's not the first time that has come up, but maybe I can find time this year.
- No. 4 Hwy 36 is Great, but doing it twice back to back is almost too much!
I'll have to think about how to work that out a little differently.
- No. 5 Guess, we should always wait on the right-hand side of the road.
I can't believe Bruce could ride 70 miles without looking back for Dave!???

1993, An October Ride

September 1993 was a busy month. The normal timing for a PJ-1000 would have been the 2nd or 3rd weekend. However, with the 1993 USGP at Laguna Seca on the 12th, and a Las Vegas trip planned with my wife for the 25th and 26th, October ended up the only viable solution. Due to the fact that we would be traveling a bit later than usual, and because we had been North the prior year, most of the guys seemed anxious for a trip South. I have only planned one true "Southern California" excursion, and that was back in '87. Funny thing, I had a difficult time remembering what some of the prior routes were like. I remembered the Angeles Crest, and the canyon roads leading to it. But the trip north along the west edge of the Sierra's was a vague memory. But I got out my map, marker, and calculator, and began to sketch out the 1993 PJ-1000.

By the time the 18th PJ-1K came around, I felt a lot better about my cornering prowess, but had spent very little time on the bike in 1993. In '93 I have ridden less miles than any year since I began serious motorcycling in 1977. I must make more of an effort to keep my skills tuned. Being a very competitive person, its been hard for me to accept not bring able to keep up. But finally, there are no excuses left, I have accepted my skills relative to the skill level of these guys. Not that I won't keep trying to keep up, but if I can't . . . its OK.

Announcement for: The 18th "PJ-1000"

OK Guys, as promised, I looked hard for a "Southern Route." I came up with what looks like a pretty good plan. Both Dave and Rick reviewed the route by phone and thought it sounded pretty good. So attached you will find a route sheet and a couple of maps for the 18th running of the PJ-1000.

Saturday October 2nd

Starting Point - Muster at **COCO's Coffee Shop** (at Howard Johnsons) located at the intersection of **North First Street and Hwy 101**. The restaurant is across the street from the San Jose Hyatt.

Departure will be at **8:00AM Sharp!** So all you "eaters" come early for breakfast.

We will get into some "good" stuff real fast as we head east over Mt. Hamilton. After a brief break at Lick Observatory, we go down the Northeast side of the Mountain, hang a Right on Del Puerto Canyon Rd out toward I-5. Del Puerto Canyon Road drops out of sight when I switch from the AAA Peninsula Points map an move over to the Yosemite Map, but it looks like it crosses I-5 pretty close to Patterson.(?)

From here I chose some squiggly secondary roads across the valley thru Turlock, Merced Falls, Hornitos, and intersecting with 49 at Mt. Bullion. I haven't been on any of these roads, so I can't tell you what to expect. From here its just a couple of miles to Mariposa where we can stop for lunch and gas up.

After lunch we will trek down to Oakdale, and try again that series of numbered roads I got us lost on a couple of years ago. Hopefully we'll get it right this time. At least we won't run out of daylight this year. If all goes according to plan, we check out a number of backroads, (a few of which we sampled back in 87) and travel South across 168, to 180, then up the hill to Grant Grove Village in Sequoia. I'm planning to put us up in "Housekeeping Cabins" again, unless they have some other bargain accommodations that sound better. Remember "Housekeeping" means no heat, no lights, and no running water!!

Sunday: Breakfast at the Lodge, then **KINGS CANYON!!** Well take a short stop at Cedar Grove Lodge, then back up out of the Canyon, thru another 50 good miles in the Sequoia Forest and then out of the Park to the South. From here we turn East again and follow the Western edge of the Sequoia Forest south toward Lake Isabella on 190. Then 50 miles on 155 (marked on the map in Red as "Steep Winding Rd") will bring us to Bakersfield. I still need to find us some accommodations there.

Monday: With the morning sun at our backs, and before the heat kicks up the afternoon Valley wind, we will cut across the Central Valley on Hwy 58, then up to Atascadero. I've never been on Hwy 58 either, but from the looks of the lines on the map, it should have some good sections. Then over the hill on 41 to Hwy 1. Then North on 1 to Monterey/Carmel. About 100 miles of the Pacific Coast Hwy. It gets better as we get further north. From there its only about 80 miles home, we can either come home on 101 or go to Watsonville on 1 and over Hecker Pass, depending on how we feel.

All three days are right at 300 miles. These slightly shorter days should let us enjoy the riding a bit more, and there really aren't a lot of options in this neck of the woods anyway . . . I think were doing all of the good roads as it is. So far, Rick, Dave, Bruce, and (I think) Chris have signed up. There may be another new guy Dave and Bruce know, Luis is a new Dad and can't get away from the diapers, and Nick is iffy with knee problems. I have invited 2 other guys I'm still waiting to hear from them. See ya on the 2nd!!

The Trip: The 18th PJ-1000 Oct 2, 3, 4, 1993

| | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|------|---------|----------------------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1987 Kawasaki ZX750R | 18th | PJ-1000 | (5th year on the Kawasaki) |
| Dave Sweetman | 1984 Honda VF1100S | 11th | PJ-1000 | Start = 27644 End = 28609 |
| Bruce Farley | 1983 Honda CX650 Turbo | 6th | PJ-1000 | |
| Rick Allan | 1993 Honda CBR 900RR | 3rd | PJ-1000 | |
| Chris Patterson | 1994 BMW RS1100 | 3rd | PJ-1000 | |

| | | | | |
|----------|----------------------------------|--|--|-----------|
| | | | | 965 Miles |
| Saturday | San Jose to Kings Canyon | | | 363 miles |
| Sunday | Kings Canyon to Bakersfield | | | 263 miles |
| Monday | Bakersfield to San Jose (Hwy 1). | | | 334 miles |

Saturday Oct 2nd

It was gray and overcast Saturday morning, just the typical Northern California early morning stuff. All but Bruce showed up early for breakfast, and he wandered in at about 8AM. We mounted up shortly thereafter and took off for Mt. Hamilton. On the way up we encountered fairly thick fog, but soon passed through that as we proceeded to higher elevations. Rick and Chris easily left me behind when the visibility got limited (I'm sure they would have anyway). We took a break at Lick Observatory, then descended the east side of the mountain, taking a 2nd break at the Del Puerto Canyon Road junction. Then, on east toward I-5 and Patterson. The good stuff ended when we reached I-5, we had a long wait under the I-5 overpass for Dave and Bruce. From Lick Observatory to I-5 the pace was a little more reasonable, and I kept contact with the two fast guys.

The ride from Patterson to Mariposa was uneventful, save for the 15 minute delay in trying to find our way through Turlock. The map made it look like a straight shot, but even asking two locals didn't help. Fortunately, Chris had been lost here before, and eventually found us a route through town. We took another break (Dave's rootbeer float stop) at a small hamburger place in Merced Falls. At a junction a few miles later we decided against using the Old Toll Road, and followed an easier route, Hornitos Rd, on to 140, following it into Mariposa instead of intersecting with 49 at Mt. Bullion. It was pretty hot, and we all found that the frequent breaks were needed.

To Oakhurst and Points South

On to Oakhurst, and a lunch and gas stop. Refreshed, we moved on to that confusing set of numbered roads that flank both sides of Bass Lake. This was where we had lost our way two years previous. It was just as confusing this time, requiring several sign post conferences to determine which way to go. When we found the intersection of Italian Bar Road - - which was equally confusing. We had to stop a group of young bicyclists to inquire about directions and the nature of the road. They pointed out which direction we needed to go. Their description of what the road was like was a little less accurate. However, there's a good chance none of them had ever gone very far down that road. Not one of my better picks!! Very twisty. Sharp turns slicing down a hot dry canyon to a body of water called Redinger Lake. The road was narrow and the pavement rough, broken, and gravel strewn. Still, not as bad as J-37 to Balch Park. The total loop was about 20 miles, but it seemed much longer. About halfway, we crossed a single lane bridge over the San Joaquin River that fed the lake. We took another break here, it seemed even hotter! We left the river, climbing up the other side of the canyon. The road improved quite a bit. It was still twisty, but the surface was smoother, and as we got higher, it widened. Still not a go-fast road, but certainly an improvement from the other side. At Auberry Road we were on good two-lane again, heading down toward a junction with 168. With all our stops we were about an hour behind our schedule, but not doing too bad considering the heat, and the very slow tour around Redinger Lake.

Hey Chris -- That's Once!!

We turned left on 168 and started up the 9 mile grade which I first discovered in 1978 (PJ-1000 #2). This is a very fast, really fun, up-hill climb. I started leading, Rick tucked in right on my rear tire and we flew up the hill. This part of the road is 4-lane, so traffic (which was very light) was not an issue. About 7 miles up the hill, Rick passed me, and shortly after, Chris went by both of us. I started loosing a little ground - OOPS! Zoom! Chris and Rick went right past the Toll House Road turn-off. Chris wasn't looking back, and there was sure no way I was going to catch him. I slowed and Rick noticed. We pulled off and Dave and Bruce pulled up too. Chris was on his way to Shaver Lake!! I was a little annoyed - but I went back down the hill a couple of miles and stopped at a general store - had a coke and sat on the store porch. The rest of the group waited at roadside, probably didn't want to listen to me bitch. I waited about half an hour before Chris figured out he wasn't where he was supposed to be, turned around and came back down the hill.

168 to 180 "My Way" - - turned out to be Great

We continued back to Tollhouse Road and started down the mountain. Now, I hadn't been on this set of roads since 1987, and I couldn't remember much about them. The sequence; Tollhouse Rd to Burrough Valley Rd, to Maxon Rd, to Trimmer Springs Rd, Past Pine Flat Lake to Elwood Road. I remembered some of it was good - especially near Pine Flat Lake - but I was wrong!! It was Great! All of it! Better than I had remembered. I think the surface had been improved since I was here last, and the corners were superb. Take a note on these roads: - must do again!! The last leg, Elwood Rd, cuts across to Hwy 180 and isn't very exciting. But the rest was really terrific.

On to Kings Canyon

Intersecting with 180, we stopped for gas. The place we stopped in 1987 is all closed up and out of business. We gassed up at a general store nearby. As seems our usual faire, when headed for Kings Canyon - it was getting late. When we came in to Kings Canyon in 1987 from the South, we had done the "Big Error at Balch Mt" and had to traverse the Southeastern entrance in the Dark! When we came to Kings Canyon in 1991, I had done my crash at Ebbetts, followed by rain, then traffic congestion at Yosemite. This set of delays was followed by the numbered road error at Bass Lake, so we made our entrance in to the Sequoia forest - in the Dark. So here we were, one more time, 30 miles from Kings Canyon Lodge (in the canyon) and it was already about 5:30PM. Hwy 180 up the mountain to Sequoia and Kings Canyon is almost as good as 168 - maybe even better. So we did our thing, up the sweeping climbing curves of Hwy 180. By the time we passed Grant Grove Village we were beginning to lose the light, and we were tired. Kings Canyon ain't no place to go fast when you're tired - so nobody went fast down into the Canyon. I hadn't wanted to stay down here, but I delayed my reservations call too long, and all the Grant Grove accommodations were full - this was all that was left. We stayed at "Creek House," a rustic two story 'house-shack' up the road about a half a mile from the rest of the Lodge. Rustic Kings Canyon Lodge is run by a couple of nice Australian families. The rest of the guests were friendly too, and we shared some good laughs (one lady kept trying to get us to take her mother). We found the accommodations adequate, except for the driveway to Creek House that was steep, half sand, and required a hard left turn at the porch to avoid sliding down into a gully. Dinner was served country style on the patio-deck at the main lodge. Food was good, if not a bit expensive. We borrowed some cards, bought a six pack, returned to Creek House. The guys were promptly aware of a strange thumping sound, the sound of my head banging off the wall as I fell asleep sitting on the couch. Time for Bed.

Sunday Oct 3

All awoke Sunday morning prepared to ride first and eat later. There was much grumbling about some really loud snoring sound during the night. Funny, . . . I didn't hear anything. Because we were already in the Canyon, and only five miles from the bottom, we decided to go just to Boyden Cave then turn around and head back to Grant Grove for breakfast. We got to the bottom quickly, took a short break. Then Bruce left early, getting a head start and taking his time going up the mountain. Chris and Rick took off next. I passed Bruce just before the Lodge, but I didn't see Rick and Chris again until Grant Grove Village. We had a leisurely breakfast, knowing today was going to be shorter than plan because had just shaved 30 miles off the route due to the shortened ride in the Canyon. Chris was suffering from a massive migraine headache, and didn't seem to be getting any better. We left the lodge, and enjoyed a spirited ride through the Sequoia forest. We kept speeds somewhat reasonable, because we passed through many camping areas. Down the twisty east side of the mountain. We took a break at Ash Mt. Then out through the Park east entrance to Hwy 198. We cruised at a very fast pace on 198 - looking for Yokohl Valley Road, which would take us past the famous spot where Balch Mt cost us 3 hours in 1987. I noted earlier, I had a limited recollection of these roads, and although I had remembered a bit about the loop between 168 and 180, I remembered almost nothing about the roads from here to Lake Elsinore. Yokohl Valley Road turned out to be great! Everybody went fast here. Rick and Chris stayed mixed with Bruce and Dave, and we all had a spirited ride from 198 to Springville. But it was hot! We stopped for lunch and gas in Springville. Chris was really suffering from the heat and his headache. We already knew where we were staying in Bakersfield Sunday night, and at Springville Chris could cut over to Hwy 99 and go straight there. Dave and I convinced him to forgo the rest of the mountain riding and meet us in Bakersfield. He finally agreed - I think it's a good thing, he looked to be really suffering.

Sunday - After Lunch

The rest of us gassed up and left Chris at Springville. More great surprises. I don't know where my mind was in 1987 - I should have remembered coming down this road. East of Springville the road immediately starts climbing back into the Sierras. Up to 7000 feet on one of the best roads I can remember. Good surface, good corners - -- but, what really struck me was the consistent rhythm of the corners.

Gas - brake, into a tight banked right. Gas up the hill. . . brake hard - lean deep around the next left. Gas to the next right, on and on. Not an unusual pattern for my kind of road choice, but this one was different. Each of the right-left sets of corners seemed to be a repeat of the previous ones. No surprises, no decreasing radius turns, very predictable. So you just got better and better, faster and faster. I stayed glued to the fat rear tire of Rick's new CBR900. As we got higher, it got cooler - that was also a great relief. This incredible part of the road was only about 30 miles, but it definitely made it into my favorite road log. Too bad Chris wasn't able to enjoy this, he would have really liked it. Once we were up on top of the mountain, the road straightened out. We cruised along through the Sequoia Redwoods until we turned right and began to follow the Kern River. The terrain changes here, flat and open, with only a few trees. The road is still pretty good, but a lot of people spend weekends along the Kern River, and there are numerous camp grounds and Lodges. As a result, there was more traffic and we had to be cautious about cars entering the Hwy from side roads. Plus, it was hot. On toward Kernville, we stopped and rested at one of the roadside lodges. Owners were very congenial. We chatted, Dave took one of his famous 10 minute naps. Down to Wofford Heights. I missed the turnoff to Woody, and we had to backtrack about 5 miles. We then swung west on 155 (Evans Rd). Tight and twisty, up and down grade, did I make a note that it was HOT! I mean HOT! Rick and I kept a pretty good pace, the road was pretty good, but there was sand in some of the corners. No traffic to speak of, which was good for a Sunday afternoon nearing a large metropolitan area. After Woody, the road got a bit straighter, and as we passed the oil pumping rings on the outskirts of Bakersfield, we were just anxious to get some relief from the heat. We got on Hwy 99 easily, got off after just a mile or two and found our motel within a block. Good location for a blind pick. Chris' BMW was about the only vehicle in the large parking lot. We checked in, and after being assigned the somebody else's room a couple of times, the desk clerk finally got it right and we settled in. I took a cold shower and put on shorts - did I mention it was HOT! There was a Denny's or some such generic food place just next door, so we didn't venture out very far for dinner - it was pretty hot ya' know. I did remember to note that it was Hot - didn't I?? At Bakersfield, the odometer on the Kawasaki registered only 28,275 miles. At Kings Canyon Lodge, 28,007. That works out to only 268 miles! Definitely a record for the shortest day on a PJ-1000!

Monday Oct 4

They put Bruce and me in a room together, sort of a non-snorers revenge. However, we didn't keep each other awake, at least, Bruce didn't keep me awake! Monday AM, and we were all fresh and ready to ride once again. Chris looked better, but was still suffering. We again decided to forgo breakfast until we had ridden a while. It was beginning to warm up already in Bakersfield, although one local told me that it would be cool (only 88°F) in Bakersfield that day. We were a little uncertain what to expect later in the day, as the news had forecast possible showers in the Monterey area. The morning was very pleasant, as we traversed the flat central valley on Hwy 58. Out through Buttonwillow the road was predictably straight and boring. No wind, sun at our backs, speedometers frequently registered 3 digits. Thus, it wasn't long before Hwy 58 veered off to the right and into some foothills. This part of the route was much more interesting, a number of good corners and curves. Chris, Rick and I put a fair distance on Bruce and Dave, so we pulled off to let them catch up. When they came along - they continued on by, to get a little further up the road. We started out after they passed, and in a few miles the temperature began to drop. About 15 minutes later I pulled over to add another shirt. Pulling out, Rick took the lead. Rick set a hot pace as we entered a fast set of foothill curves.

OK Chris - That's Twice

When Rick is leading, if the road is not too blind I could keep up with the two of them. When Chris was leading, Rick would stay with him and I would slowly lose ground. That was the scenario here. Chris passed Rick. I kept them in sight but they were pulling away. Then, we encountered a big truck in a set of tight curves. By the time I got past the truck I could no longer see the flash of the BMW or CBR. We had still not caught up with Dave and Bruce. As I came flying around a fast left, I noticed a road intersecting to the right. I stopped and looked at my map. Yep - La Panza Road, we were supposed to turn right here. No sign of Dave and Bruce. Had they seen the sign?? No sign of Chris and Rick. I doubted that either of them had seen it at the speed they had been riding. I waited awhile to see if they would realize their error. Nope. Oh well, I was sure that eventually they would, and there were several alternatives to get back to Atascadero. I took La Panza Road, it wasn't very interesting, but it was the most direct route to Atascadero. It got colder, a little misty and foggy so I stopped and put in my jacket liner. I lingered a few more minutes to see if Rick and Chris might come along. Just as I was pulling out Dave and Bruce were coming back to see what was up. I explained I had lost Chris and Rick, and we left for Atascadero together.

Entering Atascadero was a little confusing, but we all knew we were leaving town via Hwy 41 toward the ocean. I found a Dennys near the intersection of Hwys 58 and 41 and the 3 of us stopped for Breakfast. We weren't even inside, before Chris and Rick rode in. Ok Chris, That's Twice!!

On to Hwy 1

The weather in Atascadero was cool and bright, and remained so as we traversed Hwy 41 to the Coast. We found Hwy 1 fairly busy, not terrible, but fewer cars to pass would have been more enjoyable. The road from the junction of 41 to the area above San Simeon is straight, but a few miles north of the famous Hearst Castle, we began to find the beautiful coastal mountains and curves. Often, it seemed we had to work too hard to pass the endless stream of slow moving vehicles, just in time to see the end of the curvy section. I guess there are 6 or 8 of these sections along the coast. Each is separated by several miles of straight scenic highway. I think we were probably able to go through about half of the mountain sections at "our pace," the rest ended up being an endless wait for an opportunity to pass yet one more slow car. During the 100 miles up Hwy 1 the overcast returned, making it cool but comfortable for riding.

During our ride up Hwy 1 Rick and Chris usually led, with me close behind and Dave and Bruce enjoying a more leisurely pace somewhere behind us. We made one major rest stop about mid-way up the coast, I couldn't believe how quickly the terrain began to look familiar as we approached Big Sur and Carmel. On the outskirts of the picturesque seaside village of Carmel we re-grouped. Bruce decided to head home, the rest of us went into town for a late lunch. We took a long break and then headed up to Watsonville, bought gas and came over Hecker Pass to the Uvas Canyon turn-off, then in along the back roads past Uvas Reservoir. Dave and Rick spun off at Bailey Road, Chris and I continued down Almaden Expy.

Then at Branham Lane, I turned right and headed to Haines Ave., ending the 18th running of the PJ-1000.

Summary

Good Ride - I felt much better about my riding. Found some great roads I had forgotten, and one I would like to forget. A couple of wrong turns, a little too much heat - - - but I think everyone had a good time.

Lessons and Learning's

- No. 1 Everyone wants me to plan a spring trip. It's come up every year for the past 3 - maybe I better do it!
(I made the same observation last year)
- No. 3 Going south has one major drawback - - Heat!!
But as I rediscovered this year there are a bunch of really fantastic roads down there, and we do occasionally have to go back to check them out. Wonder how I could pick a cool time of year!?
- No. 4 We gotta get a system for turns and route changes.
Seems like somebody is always missing a turn or two.

1994, A "Repaired PJ" Rides again

Man, the miracles of modern technology. On May 19th 1994, I 'went under the knife' and had my old worn out left hip replaced with a high-tech high-performance, tungsten-carbide-chrome-moly design, good for 15-20 years. After a few months of crutchin' around, July 23rd I took my first ride over Mt. Hamilton. I wasn't very smooth, and not real fast, but it didn't hurt a bit!! I was ready for another PJ-1000.

September was once again a busy month. With the USGP running mid September for the 2nd year, and the work schedule hectic as usual, PJ-1000 route planning got put off till the last minute. After I sent out my first announcement, Rick called and suggested highway 49 South of Yosemite. He had just driven the road to Mariposa in a car and said it seemed great, and had a brand new surface. Sounded good to me.

I dug out the maps, marker, and calculator, and began the design of the 1994 PJ-1000.

Announcement *Final Trip Plan for the 1994 "PJ-1000"*

Howdy Guys, (Dave, Nick, Rick, Chris, Luis, Terry, Kerwin)

Find attached the Plan for the 19th running of the PJ-1000. This year we have 8 riders¹ planning to make the trip, the largest group we've had to date¹. The trip will be on:

Saturday, Sept. 17, Sunday, Sept. 18, and Monday, Sept. 19

The meeting place this year is the Denny's at the intersection of Berryessa Rd and Capitol Ave, one Block East of I-680. For those of you approaching Berryessa from the South (Traveling North on I-680) take Berryessa Rd. East. Watch for the entrance to Denny's Right off the Exit Ramp.

If your coming South on I-680, again take the Berryessa Rd Exit - East, loop under the freeway, then back over, look for Denny's on the right. It's right next to a Shell Gas Station. If you miss it, hang a right on Capital, and enter thru the Shell Station.

If you want breakfast, come by 7:15AM - I'd like to leave promptly at 8AM.

We have two 'new' guys this year - so if you come to breakfast it will give everybody a chance to get acquainted.

If anything impacts your plans to attend, please let me know ASAP.

See Ya' soon, Remember *Keep the Rubber Side Down.*

Regards, *'PJ'*

Note 1: Well, we almost had the biggest group ever - Bruce couldn't go due to a Grateful Dead Concert, but Terry, a 'new guy' from work was planning to attend, and his friend has also indicated interest in going - but, Monday the 12th the friend canceled, and Tuesday evening Luis called to say he couldn't make it either. So we were six.

Last Minute Panic:

When I dusted off the old Kawasaki back in July, (hadn't ridden much because of the ol' hip) the bike wouldn't start. I fussed around and jumped it, but the starter wouldn't turn over. I pulled the starter and cleaned up the brushes and armature, put it back together and, 'boom' it fired right up. I rode to work a few times, and made the run over Mt. Hamilton, and there were no indications of any lingering problems. I rode to Laguna Seca for the GP, rode around there, rode home. Each time, the bike started just fine. Got home from the race Sunday night, stopped in the driveway, opened the garage door, hit the starter button *nothing!!*

Monday, I made a few calls looking for a used starter - no help. Monday night I pulled the starter off, Tuesday I took it to a re-builder who informed me - "nothin' wrong with this starter." Had to be the cables, but I had checked them and they looked just fine. Well, not to use a whole lot more paper on this issue; (remember, this bike was a 'salvage') turns out the boys who put it together, stripped and broke the battery ground bolt on the back of the engine case. Instead of tapping the case and replacing the bolt, they just cross-threaded the broken bolt and turned it till it was bound. So it felt tight, but wasn't. I made a new set of ground cables (heavy gauge wire from OSH) and connected them to the original cable. Everything worked fine. But you gotta believe I was one grumpy S.O.B. till I got it fixed, just 3 days before a PJ-1000!!!

The 19th PJ-1000 Sept. 17, 18, 19, 1994

| | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|------|---------|-----------------------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 1987 Kawasaki ZX750R | 19th | PJ-1000 | (6th year on the Kawasaki) |
| Dave Sweetman | 1984 Honda VF1100S | 12th | PJ-1000 | Start = 29,498 End = 30,530 |
| Nick Henneman | 1985 Yamaha FJ1100 | 11th | PJ-1000 | |
| Rick Allan | 1993 Honda CBR 900RR | 4th | PJ-1000 | |
| Chris Patterson | 1993 BMW R100-RT (rented) | 4th | PJ-1000 | |
| Terry Tuohy | 1985 Suzuki GS1150 | 1st | PJ-1000 | |

| | | |
|----------|---|-------------|
| | | 1,036 Miles |
| Saturday | San Jose to Lee Vining (+ backside of Mt. Ham 2x) | 409 miles |
| Sunday | Tioga Pass to Kings Canyon | 309 miles |
| Monday | Kings Canyon to San Jose | 314 miles |

I felt a lot of excitement talking to Rick and Terry about this years ride. I was feeling more excited than usual, as I new I was going to ride 'comfortable' for a change. I was also a little apprehensive because I had done so little 'bike time' since last year (only about 900 miles). It didn't help to know that ol' "Rocket Rick" had been out dusting off Mt. Hamilton every weekend on his CBR. But hey, I resigned myself to 'not keeping up' a couple of years ago, didn't I??

Saturday, September 17

It was a typical cool September Saturday morning, as I rode up 680 to the Berryessa Denny's. This is a good starting location because it's close to the Alum Rock turn-off, very near the beginning of Mt. Hamilton road. I prefer starting out over Mt. Hamilton, otherwise it seems to take so long to get to the *first corner* somewhere East of Hwy 99. Most everyone showed up at Denny's early. I worried a little about Rick, because he said he would be there early, and then didn't show up until 7:45. But, 8AM rolled around and everybody was there, ready to ride.

We started up Mt. Hamilton Road, Rick, Chris and Terry leading the way, then me and Nick and Dave. We got up to the top pretty quickly. At Lick Observatory the 4 of us waited awhile for Nick and Dave, turns out Nick missed the Mt. Hamilton turn-off. We took a short break. It was really a beautiful morning, sun very bright, temperature nice and cool. Rick warned us that the road East, near the top had a lot of fresh gravel, so we mounted up and headed down the hill. Rick wasn't kidding! The first 5 miles had lots of loose stuff across both lanes, so we just putted along for those first few miles. By the time we got to the bottom of Mt. Hamilton's eastern slope, road was clear, and we were up to speed. Rick set a real comfortable pace and he, Terry, Chris and I stayed tight all the way down. This is a great road! And it stayed nice an cool.

Battery Maintenance Problems - Again!

At the junction of Del Puerto Canyon Rd, we pulled over to wait for the group to get together. We waited, and waited! No Dave, No Nick!? After a long delay, I decided to head back, and see if I could find out what had gone wrong. After 10 miles, I was convinced one of them had either crashed in the gravel near the top, or suffered some type of mechanical problem. I found them at the end of the Lick Observatory access road. Dave's bike wouldn't run - no electrics, Again! He had made a call to the towing service, and was near a pay phone, so we wished him good luck, and told him to catch us at Lee Vining, or call and let us know when he would meet us. Nick and I started down the hill. It was no longer nice and cool, although it wasn't terribly hot - yet. Just below the gravel, we met Rick who had come back because he had a tire repair kit, and thought somebody might need it. The 3 of us shot back down the hill and met Chris and Terry waiting at Del Puerto. We took a short break at the tavern there, then headed East once again. I asked Rick to lead out again, and he did, again with a nice pace which all found comfortable. Terry tucked in behind Rick, followed by Chris, me, then Nick. As we got further down Mines Rd., Rick began to crank up the pace. I started to drop back, Chris slipped back a little too (he was on a rented R100RT), but Terry stayed right with Rick - showed us he was up to the task!

We decided to skip the Tracy break, and attempt to make up a little time. Chris suggested Patterson Pass, and he lead out from Tesla Rd. He made a couple of turns, right, on Cross Rd, left on Patterson Pass Rd. I want to remember this, it's a neat route. We passed over 580 and picked up 205 just west of Tracy.

We continued to I-5, 120 to 99 and North up to 26. We needed gas, having added 50 extra miles with Dave's Mt. Hamilton problem. I should have stopped near 99/120 there was a big center right there after we got on 99, but there was a pesky little Volkswagen in the right lane and I didn't want to do a sudden exit and lose the group. So we waited till the 26 Exit, and found a small station there, (162 mi). After a brief gas stop, we continued East toward Valley Springs, finally getting into the Sierra Foothills. Up to 49 and across toward 88, the road was great as always, but it was getting pretty hot. We stopped for lunch at the intersection of 26 and 88. Same place we've stopped a dozen times before. We had made up some time and at this point we were only 30-40 minutes off my original time estimate. We finished lunch, and started up 88 toward Carson Pass. Above 3,500 ft. the temperature cooled off and the riding was really fantastic. Traffic wasn't bad, and there are a lot of good passing places on 88, so we were really having a great time, and keeping up a nice brisk pace. We took a short stop at Caples Lake, this high altitude (elv. 7,950 ft) body of water is really a beautiful place. I've stopped here several times before, must have 5 or 6 pictures of it by now. We noticed the sky was overcast, but didn't look too serious. We crossed the Carson Summit (elv. 8,573 ft) and began our decent down the east side of the mountains. We stopped for gas again in Markleeville (+142mi, @ \$1.70/gal for regular).

Monitor Pass and 395 South

On the road again, we turned left on 89 toward Monitor Pass. There was a little rain in the air, and a light wind blowing. Just past the summit (elv. 8,314), I saw a few drops on my face shield, but it was nothing to worry about. We stopped for a few photos just beyond the top of the Pass, that view of the eastern valley is really something. We all quickly sliced our way down the eastern side of the pass, where the road plummets from 8,000ft to 5,000ft in a little less than 10 miles. We soon found ourselves ripping along 395, starting to feel the effects of the long day, and the less than interesting route that would lead us to our day's destination at Lee Vining. An Ice Cream stop in Bridgeport, was our final boredom break before crossing Conway Summit (elv. 8,138ft) and descending to Mono Lake and our day's destination at Lee Vining - Murphy's Motel. Not Bad for a "one-star" place. Good thing we had reservations, the town's 4 motels were all fully booked.

We checked in. Because we were 5 and had reservations for 6, one of us was to get a room to himself unless Dave showed up. For some reason, they all wanted me to have the room alone it must be because I'm the oldest.

Six Elastic Dollars

We unloaded the bikes and said "where's the beer?" Across the street, a small restaurant had a beer sign in the window, so we headed for that. The place was pretty crowded, so we decided to inhabit the patio area. The waiter was reasonably quick with the first order of beer, but after 400 miles of riding, all of us were soon ready for another. The restaurant was busy, and the waiter didn't get back to us, so we put our money under our glasses and went back to the motel for a shower.

While in the shower (about 7:30PM), I heard somebody rustling around in the room. I looked out, it was Dave! He explained that it was the ol' battery again. He got towed off the Mt., called Bruce, who installed a new battery, and he was back on the road by about 3PM. He came straight out 120, up over Tioga Pass, and made damn good time.

We all cleaned up, a couple of the guys had found a 6-pack or two, so we enjoyed another beer, then went out for dinner. We got a recommendation for the other restaurant, but it had a long waiting line, so we headed back to stop no. 1 and waited on the patio. (They had a long line too.) While we were waiting we noticed that our old beer glasses were gone, but the money we left was blowing around on the patio. So, we picked it up and bought another pitcher of beer with it - that's called stretching the dollar!

After an extended wait, dinner was finally served. We enjoyed some fairly good food, certainly plenty of it. Back to the Motel, and I don't know about the rest, but I was asleep in a matter of minutes. Dave had to suggest that I turn off the TV and Light.

Sunday, September 18th

I called the other two rooms at 6:30AM. Amidst complaints that it was TOO early, I insisted, and they reluctantly complied. (Wow, such influence) We showered and loaded the bikes, and went next door for gas. (+92 miles; my odometer = 409 miles for the first day.)

We were a little slow getting started, (I think Rick was combing his hair or something) but we soon were headed up Lee Vining Grade, with the Tioga Lodge and breakfast on our minds.

It was chilly, but certainly not cold. Tioga Lodge is only about 12 miles up, and we arrived 1 minute before the small hiking lodge opened the doors at 8AM for breakfast. (Such a Master Planner!!) I ordered pancakes, which were as good as I remembered, but still full from dinner, I couldn't do the serving justice.

After breakfast, at the Yosemite Entrance (elv. 9,945') I convinced the Park Ranger at the gate that she should let us in at the bicycle rate, \$3.00 instead of \$5.00. (after all, we only have two wheels too!)

We enjoyed our ride through Yosemite's high mountain terrain at a moderate rate of speed. There was only a little traffic, but few legal passing points. At one point, while I was leading the group, we came up behind a truck pulling a fairly large horse trailer. When I first encountered it, I was doing 70mph, it was going the speed limit, 45 mph. I was tempted to just blast on by (across double yellow lines). However, I decided to be patient and wait a mile or so to look for a legal passing point. As I followed the trailer, I noticed the horse was saddled!! Now, who do you suppose would tow a saddled horse through a National Park? You got it! Sheriff or Ranger! Finally a broken yellow appeared, and I gingerly passed the truck at 47 Mph. The other guys went by too, a couple even passed after the broken yellow was gone. The Rangers turned off and paid us little attention - oh well, better safe than sorry. We saw *RADAR* at Tuolumne Meadows (25 Mph Zone), and one more ranger truck a bit later. Other than that, the ride was nice, but uneventful. We took a couple of breaks in the Park, then headed West, out the Big Oak Flat Entrance.

Rocket Rick vs. the ZX-11

On our way down the mountain, we caught up with 5 other motorcyclists riding some hot sport bikes. At least one ZX-11 a Yamaha FZR, and a ZX-10. They were riding pretty aggressively, but since they were reluctant to pass over double yellow, we were overtaking them as they got tangled in traffic. At one point Rick, Chris, Terry and I were all mixed up with 4 of them. Rick gassed the CBR pulled out from behind me, and passed us all including their lead rider (ZX-11). The ZX-11 pilot promptly took off after Rick. The two of them put on a lot of throttle. The rest of us were content to mix it up with a little less velocity. Rick eased his pace and the ZX rider came ripping by, at a high rate of speed, so Rick just upped the ante a little and blew by the guy on the inside of a high speed sweeper. That ended that! The ZX-11 waved a big thumbs up, and backed off, knowing full-well he'd met a much better rider that day! Entering Groveland they pulled off to wait for the ZX-10 rider who obviously wasn't comfortable with the pace we had been riding, and we stopped a few blocks later to let Dave and Nick catch up too. That was fun!

We enjoyed the circuitous drop down Priest Grade, and soon found ourselves turning left on 49, heading South toward Mariposa. We had dropped from the cool high Sierra elevations to around 2,000 ft and it was nearing noon. It was very warm. 49 South from this point was instantly very good. Initially, along the edge of a large reservoir, the road began as a series of "S's" with some minor elevation changes mixed in. Shortly thereafter, it began to climb and twist up the side of a mountain. I'm not sure how high the road goes at this point, but it climbs along the outside edge of 2 serious foothills. This part of 49 was as good as Rick had advertised, with a smooth new black asphalt surface, and lots of challenging sweepers and hairpins. Unfortunately, the good stuff only lasted about 40 miles, but it was well worth the go.

We arrived at Mariposa at 12:15 (right on the estimate) bought gas (+ 143 miles) and ate lunch. After lunch, it was 50 miles of barely tolerable 49 and 41 till we got to the 145 turn-off East toward 168. The backroads we used to get past Millerton Lake are not very interesting either, but refreshed after an air conditioned Fosters Freeze stop, we swung left on 168 and headed up the mountain toward Tollhouse Rd.

This piece of 168 is a 4 lane hi-way which sweeps uphill about 10 miles. Serious speed is needed to make this road interesting, and somehow we managed to have some serious fun. Just as the 4 lane drops to 2, the Tollhouse Road turn-off comes up quickly on the right. Several of the guys almost pulled a "Chris '93" and had to apply serious brakes to stop for the turn. I lead off down the hill. Tollhouse is a series of tight down-hill curves which soon begins to snake along the edge of a pretty severe hillside. (Read Cliff!). Beyond this 'cliff-hanger' section, the road winds through an area of small trees and brush. It was at this point where I almost acquired a bobcat front fender ornament. On to Burrough Valley Road, then Maxson Road. We took a break at a Bar at the intersection of Maxon and Trimmer Springs. We were still suffering a lot from the heat. We each enjoyed a non-alcoholic beer, chatted with a couple of old Harley types, and were soon off again to enjoy Trimmer Springs Road. This short 13 mile road curves along the edge of Pine Flat Lake. The surface was fresh blacktop and the pace was Hot. (Rocket Rick leading of course) Roads like this make you forget about the heat. We turned left over the bridge at Piedra, and swung left again on Elwood Rd, passing through Wonder Valley on the way to our eventual junction with 180. Along the way, we met up with a variety of livestock wandering unconfined on the road. This is not a new experience for us, we have seen this particular open range, before. A few miles after turning left again on 180, we stopped for gas and a little time to cool off before our final dash up the mountain to Grant Grove. It was about 4:45, we had again covered 143 miles since our last gas stop.

Soon we were back on the road, anxious to complete the last 25 miles. Not because we were hot and tired, but because this 25 mile route up to the Sequoia forest on 180 is one of the most exciting motorcycling roads in California. There was no traffic in sight as we started up the mountain. From our gas stop at 1,700 ft we would climb to 6,500 ft by the time we reached the Park Gate.

Rick, Terry, Chris, and I started together up the mountain. After about 10 miles, Rick and Terry put some distance between Chris and me, but they were never far ahead. The fast sweepers up this mountain allow for some incredible high speed lean angles. Damn, that's fun! The last mile or so was spoiled by fresh construction gravel all over the roadway. It turned out to be confined to only 3 miles.

Waiting in traffic to pay our park entrance fee gave Nick and Dave time to catch up, Nick was not far behind anyway. We then threaded our way along narrow gravel free tracks on the road, arriving at Grant Grove a little past 6PM. We checked in, and found our cabins.

Dave suggested the non-smokers share one Housekeeping Unit, while the smokers were relegated to the "Canvas-Roofed" unit in the low rent district. Dave, Nick and I shared a "housekeeping palace" complete with stove equipped patio. We showered, drank a few cold brews and went to the Lodge for Dinner. We enjoyed excellent service from a rather ostentatious waiter, who when not busy serving efficiently, sang along with the restaurant piped-in music. (He was pretty good at that too.) As we completed our meal, someone reported it was raining outside. Fortunately, it didn't last.

We all went back to the "palace" and sat on the patio with a fire in the little stove, and traded memories of the day and past rides. Dave had a lot of trouble sleeping that night, and because he gets cold at night, he fired up the wood stove in the cabin. So it was pretty warm in there, but I slept pretty good anyway.

Monday, September 19

I awoke about 5AM, and dozed till 6. I needed get up to make sure the other guys woke up because they didn't have an alarm. So I got up and dressed, hiked across the campground, only to find they were already up and in the shower. We got packed up, and gathered at the lodge, ready for a pre-breakfast tour of Kings Canyon. Dave's front tire was low, so he stopped for air. as the rest of us headed for the top of the Canyon. A spirited ride got us to the Canyon overlook, where we stopped for pictures and to wait for Dave. While lingering there, I read a small placard which said that Kings Canyon is one of the deepest canyons in the World. Measured from adjacent Sonora Peak, it is some 8,300 ft deep.

Dave soon showed, but didn't stop so . . . you guessed it, the game was - "Pass Dave before Boyden Cave." We did, but according to Dave's clock, **'Rocket Rick'** did it 5 minutes sooner than anyone else. We took a short stop at Boyden Cave, then I left to get set to take picture of each rider as he came around Horseshoe Bend. Horseshoe is this incredible corner carved out of the face of a cliff that reaches up about 1,000 ft from the road. It worked out OK, but next time I won't have the guys space themselves quite so far apart, it seemed a really long time to hold the camera steady. After our photo session we then took off for the top of the Canyon. Rick and Chris were gone, Terry and I rode up together, it was as good as always. We returned to the Grant Grove Lodge for Breakfast.

After a leisurely breakfast, we set out down the mountain, which is almost as good as coming up. At Elwood Rd. we hung a right and started out back through Wonder Valley. No livestock was out this morning, so we didn't have to play cowboy this time. The morning had started out beautiful, sunny and cool. We really enjoyed Trimmer Springs Road again (along Pine Flat Lake), when we arrived at the same bar (closed on Monday) where we had stopped on Sunday, we took a short break. The weather was very warm, and quite humid.

As we continued our backroad circuit toward 168, the sky had become overcast, and there was a distinct smell of fresh rain in the air. In several areas there was some dampness on the road, not enough to slow us down, but it was prudent to choose cornering lines with care. I know we hadn't slowed too much, because behind me I could hear Nick's 1100 running out of ground clearance in the tight uphill left handers. Up Tollhouse Rd to 168, then right on 168 toward Shaver Lake. Here, in the higher elevations, where the tree shadows still lingered on the road the recent rain left the shaded spots very wet. So caution was advised. Rick and Terry ignored the 'caution' and had some interesting rear wheel slides to talk about at lunch.

Shaver Lake doesn't have a big selection of eating establishments, and the fact that it was a Monday after Labor day reduced the selection even more. We rode up to the Lake. There was a nice lodge right at the end of the lake, but it was closed. So we headed back to town and ended up at the local hamburger establishment.

We finished our lunch to the realization that this was the end of the good stuff, except for the short sprint down 168. Too bad, it always ends too soon for me, and I think most everyone else.

We rode back down 168, took the backroads to 145 to Madera, and began the less than interesting task of heading home. Although the day had threatened to be hot, the rain storm which passed through cooled the air and made our morning very pleasant. However, this was no longer the case as we returned to the central valley. We took a short break at Madera, and then blasted across 152, stopping for our last break at Casa de Fruita.

We said our good-bye's here, as it was the last stop before the group would split up to head for individual homes. It was cool again as the sun began to descend in the west, and we dropped down into the Santa Clara Valley. Chris and I split off at the new 85 exit from 101, Rick, Nick, Dave and Terry continued on 101 to points north.

Epilogue

It's been another great year, another good 1,000 miles. I think Dave will probably buy a new battery every year from now on, and I'm inspired to go shopping for a new bike. We gained Terry, a fine new addition, however we will probably lose Chris because he will be moving up to Canada at the end of the year.

Once again I promised to attempt to set up a May ride, now that my hip is better I'll actually be able to set that up.

Announcement The 20th Running of the "PJ-1000"

We ended up with a pretty sizable group, 8 riders in all. Most of you already know each other, a couple of guys are new. Here's the list of participants for our 1995 event.

| <u>Rider</u> | <u>Motorcycle</u> | <u>Completed</u> |
|----------------|------------------------|------------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 87 Kawasaki 750 Ninja, | 19 PJ-1000's |
| Dave Sweetman | 94 Honda ST1100 | 12 PJ-1000's |
| Nick Henneman | 85 Yamaha FJ1100 | 11 PJ-1000's |
| Bruce Farley | 84 Honda CX650-Turbo | 6 PJ-1000's |
| Luis Drumond | 85 Yamaha FJ1100 | 3 PJ-1000's |
| Terry Touhy | 85 Suzuki GS1150 | 1 PJ-1000 |
| Norman Roberts | 85 Suzuki XN85-Turbo | First Time |
| Martin Hester | 85 Suzuki GS650 | First Time |

(Unfortunately Rocket Rick couldn't go this year, he's traveling in Italy)

Friday, September 15th; Thru Monday, September 18th Plan = 1388 Miles

Friday 9/15 Head for Hwy 1 North - pray for minimal fog and enjoy the Northern California coast. The road is pretty good all the way to Bodega Bay, and really great as we cross the mountains to 101 up North. Plan to spend the first night in a Motel in Fortuna. (347 miles)

Saturday 9/16 For the brave of heart we're going to do Hwy 36 TWICE (Again). Morning departure at Fortuna might be foggy and damp (first 30 mi) Over to Red Bluff and back after lunch. Stay the night in Eureka (312 Miles)

Sunday 9/17 We liked Hwy 299 a lot back in '92. 299 to 3, and back South on Hwy 3 after Weaverville and pick-up the last 65 miles of 36 again. We'll end the day at Chico. (328 Miles)

Monday 9/18 We'll head up the Feather River Canyon, then loop back over Yuba Pass (49 and Downieville) The we cut over on 174, pick up I-80 at Colfax and buzz on home. (401 Miles)

Cost

Gas: Last year gas averaged 1.46/gal; at 40Mpg that's about \$50

Motels: are selected, Reservations made, 3 nights = \$80

Food: you can eat pretty good on \$30/day (depending on how much beer you drink) = \$100

Total budget, allow \$230 for the 4 day weekend

(but hey, I don't charge tour guide fees, so it's a bargain right!?)

See Travel Sheet attached

Starting Point - Peppermill in Cupertino

We will depart from The Peppermill just off 280 @ Sunnyvale-Saratoga Rd in Cupertino. Heading toward SF (North) take the Sunnyvale-Saratoga Rd exit. Turn left, cross over 280, make a U-Turn at the light past the Peppermill.

Peppermill is on the Left about 1¹/₂ blocks from the freeway.

Remember this is a Friday AM departure so we are going to hit some traffic. Please plan to come early (7:00 if you plan to eat, 7:30 if you eat at home.)

We will depart Promptly at 8AM.

PLEASE CALL Home (408) 267-7496 Work (408) 944-6351 FAX@Work (408) 944-6762

Remember *Keep the Rubber Side Down.*

The 20th Running of the "PJ-1000"

The week prior to the running of the 20th PJ-1000 was eventful. However, the Sunday before the ride, I located and purchased an almost new 1994 Kawasaki ZX-9R, and the owner delivered it to me on Monday evening. I had just time enough to put air in the tires, adjust the suspension, mount my tank bag, and go.

Terry Touhy, 1st time PJ-1000 participant in 1994, and a good riding buddy, had an unfortunate accident the Sunday prior to "departure Friday." Although not seriously injured, he was badly 'rashed' and his bike suffered heavy damage. As a result, he had to miss this year's event.

Terry had invited 2 other motorcyclists to participate this year. In spite of his mishap, Terry encouraged the others to attend; the new riders were Terry's friend Martin Hester, and roommate Norman Roberts.

Missing from the '95 roster, but not forgotten, were Chris Patterson, who got married and moved north, and the infamous *Rocket Rick* Allan, who had an opportunity to go to Italy during this ride weekend.

Participants, 1995 PJ-1000:

| <u>Rider</u> | <u>Motorcycle</u> | <u>Previously Completed</u> |
|----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| PJ Naumchik | 94 Kawasaki Ninja ZX-9R | 19 PJ-1000's |
| Dave Sweetman | 94 Honda ST1100 | 12 PJ-1000's |
| Nick Henneman | 85 Yamaha FJ1100 | 11 PJ-1000's |
| Bruce Farley | 83 Honda CX650-Turbo | 6 PJ-1000's |
| Luis Drumond | 85 Yamaha FJ1100 | 3 PJ-1000's |
| Norman Roberts | 83 Suzuki XN85-Turbo | First Time |
| Martin Hester | 82 Suzuki GS650 | First Time |

Friday, September 15th; Thru Monday, September 18th Plan = 1388 Miles

Friday, September 15, 1995

San Jose - Hwy 1 North - Garberville - Fortuna

Starting Point - Peppermill in Cupertino

Over-anxious as usual, and particularly excited because of my new Kawasaki, I arrived at the Peppermill earlier than intended. (7:10AM) No one else showed up till after 7:30, a few came in close to 8AM. Needless to say, we did not make a prompt departure. Once underway, the few miles up 280 passed quickly, and soon we were threading our way through San Francisco's morning traffic. We made a pit stop on 19th Ave., then headed for the Golden Gate.

It was a typical gray overcast morning as we crossed the bridge, headed up the hill, through the tunnel, and exited for Hwy 1 North. OOPs! . . . not all of us exited! Nick, apparently still asleep, missed the turn-off. Fortunately, Dave who was following, recognized the error and caught him. The rest of us waited at foot of the exit ramp until Dave got Nick turned around, then we all proceeded out toward Stinson Beach together.

As we approached the hills heading for Mt. Tamalpias, we caught a large moving van lumbering up the road, fortunately he turned off after just a few miles, and we quickly dispensed of the few cars ahead. This is the first time I can remember being able to ride up Mt. Tamalpias not following a lumbering train of cars!!

Over the top, down toward the ocean, I began to get familiar with my new Kawasaki. I was being careful, not wanting to get in over my head with the bike's heavy dose of additional power. The bike is very smooth. The exhaust subdued, a little wind noise, but no buffeting. The transmission is a little 'clunky,' but I experienced no missed shifts. In the first three gears, the transmission makes a fine electric whine. When the throttle is opened the ZX-9 emits a throaty roar, easily heard from the intake ducts in the front of the fairing. The intake roar, coupled with the transmission whine . . . awesome music!

There was some light traffic as we traversed the hillsides along the Pacific coast. Not difficult to get around, but it kept our pace down a bit. At the north end of Tamales Bay the road winds around the jig-saw edge of the bay. Here the terrain is flat, the visibility excellent.

This was my first opportunity to explore some of the ZX-9's capabilities. Get down into 2nd or 3rd, lean it in, crack the throttle, and it's 'on-rails,' soaking up bumps and delivering an incredibly stable ride.

We took a break at Point Reyes and another at Tamales. We had to wait a few minutes for Dave and Martin. I was surprised to learn that Martin's (Terry's) GS650 already needed gas. (100 miles). The rest of us gassed up at Bodega Bay, just a few miles north. We had lunch in Pt Arena, nice restaurant down by the ocean, then proceeded North to Ft. Bragg.

Pretty uneventful route, with traffic a little heavier than I had hoped. The North end of Hwy 1 consists of long sections of predominantly straight road, which periodically intersects small ocean inlets.

Each of these junctures causes the roadway to swerve right, drop quickly to ocean level, then sweep left as it rises again to cliff elevations. So, any motorcycling enthusiast might wonder, what is wrong with that? Damn Cars, that's what! Always lingering in these neat little swervy bits, spoiling the good stuff. Once back on the open road, where passing is easy - guess what, no cars?! Next corner, damn, there's one again!! During this part of the ride Dave lost a bolt out of his handlebar mount, so at Ft. Bragg he went bolt shopping. No problem, he found one easily.

With bolts in place, and gas tanks full, we set off, ready to cross the Mountains to 101. The weather warmed as we crossed over from the ocean, taking a short break at the junction of 1 and 101.

We rode up to Garberville for fuel and a break. Preparing to leave, Bruce's bike wouldn't start. It appeared that his charging system wasn't working. He pulled his headlight fuse, and we bump-started the bike, and we departed for Friday's final destination, the Super 8 Motel in Fortuna. It was pretty late by the time we got there (7:30PM).

We got checked in, Luis and I shared one room, Bruce and Nick roomed together, Martin and Norman, and Dave was happy to have a room to himself. Bruce figured out the Yamaha FJ-1100 batteries were identical to the one in his 650-Turbo. So he and Nick agreed to periodically swap batteries and that kept the Honda running.

We didn't go out to dinner Friday evening, everyone seems happy to just to drink a few beers and eat some chips and stuff. We found a deli-sandwich bar in the local BP Quick-Stop so most of us just grabbed a sandwich.

Saturday September 16, 1995

Fortuna - Redbluff (36) - Redding - Eureka (299)

Well, I found out that Luis snores too - but it was not a problem, I slept really well. Most of us were up early, with the exception of our two new guys. Luis discovered an oil leak while warming up his Yamaha. Oil oozed out around the filter. He tried tightening the bolt, but it didn't help. Martin and Norman didn't get their wake up call, so while they got ready, Luis and I rode over to Fortuna and found a gas station where he could check the leak. It turned out to be a small piece of dirt stuck to the O-Ring. Just as Luis was finishing up, the rest of the group arrived, we all got gas and prepared for the planned round trip on Hwy 36.

The morning was gray and overcast as expected, but the moisture in the air was high and we did not have to face the region's usual heavy morning drizzle. We left Fortuna the back way, following Rohnerville Road, intersecting with Hwy 36 at Hydesville. 10 miles beyond that, we were sweeping through the Redwoods of Grizzly Creek State Park, crossing the new concrete bridges put in place since my first visits along this route. We crossed the first set of foothills called the Chalk Mountains, and dropped down the east side into Bridgeville.

As we started up McClellan Mountain east of Bridgeville there was a lot of road damage left over from the heavy rains of winter. Most of the gravel and construction was in the other lane, but enough sand and gravel was strewn across our lane to take the edge off the cornering confidence. The construction persisted for several miles. The new section of road going down the mountain toward Mad River was clear and very enjoyable.

We passed the intersection of Hwy 36 and 3 beginning our ascent over the third set of low mountains. The road here, called Cold Creek Road has always been a little "dirty." Logging trucks frequent this route, and scuff sand and gravel onto the road in the corners, - but this year it was really bad. The heavy winter rains filled the road margins with clay, and sand. The big trucks spread the dusty mess all over every corner. It looked treacherous, and it was. Luis told me later that the stuff was "spraying" off my back tire every time I powered the bike. So needless to say, it was slippery and I went slow.

We finally go down off of "Dirty Mountain" at stopped at Wildwood. Us and all of the "hunters." Turned out to be opening day of deer season, and all of the good-ol' local boys were out with their 4-wheelers, dogs and guns. They presented no issue to us however, as we saw very few of them on the road.

We departed Wildwood and continued east on 36. A little flat land, a few up and downhill sweepers. . . finally that eagerly anticipated little yellow sign; "Road Narrows." This road marker announces the beginning of my all-time favorite road; the "Concrete Roller Coaster." Starting 40 miles west of Red Bluff, this 27 mile chunk of highway is as good as it gets anywhere in California. Smooth, clean road surface, good visibility, lots of corners and rapid elevation changes.

As we past the sign, I waved to the guys behind, pointed to the sign and grabbed a handful of throttle. The first set of whoops has a hump in it that really gets you airborne, and the new Kawasaki didn't even wiggle as I flew over the first jump.

I soon lost sight of all of the rest of my group. I don't think I was going much faster than usual, but the big Kawasaki felt solid and planted in every turn. About half-way through the "good" stuff I came up behind a small truck. I couldn't see past him right away, so I followed him through a few turns. Coming around a right-hander the road straightened. I got a clear view of the road ahead, slightly up-hill, no cars approaching. I pulled out to pass, in 2nd gear, I twisted my right wrist and heard the now familiar "roar" of the induction through the nose of the ZX-9. The road had a quick rise in it, I was passing the truck just as the engine hit 7 grand. The next thing I knew the front wheel was in the air and I was doing a big wheelie. I shifted to 3rd, and the front just settled back down . . . no fuss, no bounce, no shake. Wow - that was too easy.

I stopped on a side-road after the end of the "roller-coaster" and waited for the rest of the group to catch-up. It was pretty warm. I went over in my mind my impressions of Hwy 36. Pretty disappointing! Even though the "coaster" was as good as ever, and the new section by Mad River was pretty clean, the rest had been too damn "dirty" to enjoy. I had no desire to cross "dirty mountain" again that day.

We took a short break, and then headed into Red Bluff for lunch. Back to our old favorite Burger King. We ate lunch and I suggested that we change the plan and go north to Redding, returning west to Eureka on 299 instead of 36. All agreed.

We had done 299 (East to West) back in '92. I remembered how good it was then, well it was just as good in '95. We stopped in Weaverville, got gas and rested a bit. The majority of 299 is fast sweepers, however there is one section, (Oregon Mt Summit) just west of Weaverville that has some really nice corners. Last time we were here, this was brand-new blacktop. I was uncertain about the new surface in '92. Now it was well worn, looking very clean and secure. Luis had become my shadow during the day. In the process of keeping the low slung FJ-1100 in touch with the ZX-9, he added some significant bevels to his new boots. We were really having a ball. I stopped by the side of the road and took another break after 30 miles or so. After this break, Bruce did one of his famous "moving target" departures. Everybody got on the road ahead of me, so of course I had to see if I could pass everyone before Willow Creek. The last time we played this game here, Rick, Chris, and I caught Bruce but didn't get a chance to pass. This year - no problem. I don't think Bruce was trying very hard!

We took a long Ice Cream break in Willow Creek, and Norman went off to buy a Saskwatch T-Shirt. Apparently he has a friend at work who is really into the "bigfoot" thing.

We rode on to the Super 8 in Eureka - nope, no "Cruise Night" this year. We had Pizza at the same place as '92. Drank a few brews and hit the sack.

Sunday, September 17, 1995

Eureka - Redding (299) - Red Bluff - Chico (36/32)

Everyone was up and ready early on Sunday. We decided to do a few miles before breakfast, and head back to our break stop in Willow Creek. We had the same sort of high overcast as the day before, and it was a bit cool. We started up the mountain heading west on 299. At the higher elevations (about 3000ft I guess) we hit fog. Coming down the hill after foggy section I saw a CHP on the side of the road. He pulled out in the midst of our group (all doing 55 now) but soon accelerated past us. We joined with a few cars on the road at this point, and shortly after the CHP passed we hit some really heavy fog. That slowed everyone down, so his presence (we never did figure out where he went) was of no consequence after all. We broke out of the fog on the down-hill section heading toward Willow Creek, but the dampness and temperature changes really fogged up the face shields - so cautious riding continued all the way to Willow Creek. We took a lengthy breakfast stop before continuing our journey west. Martin decided to try to find some "Big Foot" memorabilia this time, but unfortunately it was too early and none of the local stores were open.

After a hearty breakfast, we mounted up once again, and set out east on 299. Fast sweepers along the Klamath River, then back up over Oregon Mt Summit, and the really good section again. The first few miles up the mountain are 2-lane, we encountered only a few cars, Luis and I passed these easily.

Then we came upon a '60's Mustang, young fellow driving, accompanied by a lady friend. I followed him through a few corners, he was moving along well, but certainly not at ZX9 speed. It took a while to find a passing place. A left turn took us over the crest of the hill, the road dropping sharply down the far side. The surface widened to 4 lanes as we exited the turn, I pulled into the left lane, accelerating. Predictably, the Mustang accelerated too. (why do I always find these guys?) The bottom of the hill was coming up quickly, here the road twisted sharply back to the right, rising uphill again. On the gas, I passed the Mustang easily enough, slipped back into the right lane and pulled the bike down toward the apex. The turn, a decreasing radius right-hander, presented no problem for the Kawasaki's generous ground clearance, and a little pressure on the bars got me through effortlessly.

I could hear the Mustang's tires squealing behind me, and I guess Luis' pass contained a little more pucker factor, but we saw no more of the red Mustang.

Weaverville came up too quickly after that 'interesting' encounter. We stopped, and waited quite a while before the rest of the group joined us again. Martin gassed up in Weaverville, then we all continued east, enjoying another fun set of turns at Buckhorn Summit, before riding past the blue waters of Wiskeytown Lake, and stopping for lunch as we entered Redding. After lunch, we stopped at an autoparts store to find a muffler patch kit for Martin. Terry's GS650 aftermarket exhaust, had been quite corroded when we left San Jose, and now it was starting to crack. Between lunch and exhaust fixes we spent a long time in Redding, but we had made good time, so it was of no consequence.

After Martin's repair session, we jumped on I-5 and buzzed quickly down to Red Bluff. Gassed up, we then continued east on 36 toward the junction of 32, which memory said (1981) would be a great end to our day. We found the intersection of 36/32, before we found another gas station, which gave us some concern considering the short range of the Suzuki GS650. We had passed a mountain lodge a few miles before the 32 intersection, so I led the group back there for a break, and hopefully some gas, - no luck. We took a long break here, Dave and Bruce shot pool, some of the guys watched the 49er's on TV. Finally we took off, and turned south on 32, destination Chico. It wasn't long before it became apparent that good ol' hi-way 32 would be suffering from the same problem encountered on Hwy 36 - Dirt!! Not as bad, but most corners were a tan color, with two curving narrow, wheel tracks, which exposed mostly bare asphalt. So riding was done with much less abandon than would have been preferred. Down the mountain, toward Chico. As we approached the outskirts of Chico, I pulled off to collect the group. Martin had calculated that he would hit reserve about here - oops, he'd been on reserve for almost 40 miles. We headed toward Chico, finding 99, I jumped on (big risk) and headed for the next exit - GAS!!. We all got there ok, only to learn that where I got on the freeway, we were within 200 yards of a gas station. Oh well, we made it, next time I'll ask. We gassed up and Nick led us to our Motel for the night.

We checked in, same grouping as previous nights, and we made our plans for the evening. Bruce had an old friend, who came by to pick him up. Nick went off to visit family. I went up to Paradise to visit my sister, then later stopped by to see my niece in Chico. Martin and Norman headed for a brewery/eatery which turned out to be closed. I can't remember where Luis went, but he wasn't hanging around either.

As usual, we all slept soundly.

Monday, September 18, 1995

Chico to Quincy (70), Yuba Pass to Nevada City (49) - Home I-80

We were all up early in Chico. Greeted by cool air and bright sunshine, the consensus was to enjoy the early morning and have breakfast at the other end of the Feather River Canyon at Quincy. I hadn't planned on using the Pentz-Durham Road short cut from 99 over to 70, but when I saw the turn-off, I was sure I could find my way. We crossed with Butte College morning traffic, and easily found my way across to Hwy 70. Good thing we came this way!!! Hwy 70 was closed west of Pentz Road, so we would have been detoured anyway, and would have lost time to boot.

Swinging east on Hwy 70, we quickly consumed the first 10 miles of straight freeway, and then began to bending into the sweeping curves that hug the edge of the Feather River Canyon. Slipping past a logging truck, I enjoyed riding the steep curving slope down into the river canyon, stopping for a break below the canyon bridge at Pulga. Martin and Norman went back up to the west side of the bridge to get some pictures. Here, the Hi-way bridge which crosses the canyon several hundred feet above a railroad trestle below.

After our 'photo op' we resumed our spirited ride along the southern edge of the river, passing through tunnels and cruising along the river's edge. Soon Luis and I were alone on the road, having dispensed with the few cars in our path, and no longer able to see motorcycle headlights in the mirrors. We carved our way up the valley. Pulling off at the truck scales at the junction of 70 and Hwy 89, the group gathered for a break. Continuing south a few miles on 89 brought us to Quincy and a hearty breakfast.

After breakfast we continued south to 89, then turned east on 49 toward Yuba Pass. We stopped at an overlook after climbing the first few thousand feet up toward the pass. The weather was warming up rapidly, and 49 was not as clean as usual. Here in the Sierra's the earth is reddish brown, and like Hi-way 32, most corners were covered with loose red dust, save for the narrow wheel tracks made bare by passing cars and trucks. Again, the speed and enjoyment had to be throttled back to compensate for the less than perfect traction. Now it was getting hot. We took a long break in Downieville, before continuing to Nevada City. The group got separated for a short while here, and parking in town was a real challenge.

We wandered a bit, but didn't stay long. We fueled up, and Martin was accosted by a young lady driving a beat-up Pinto, who claimed he had done damage to her car with his saddle bags as past her at the pumps. It was a big joke, because the side of the Pinto was pretty trashed already. Anyway, we fueled up and continued on 174 till it intersected with I-80. Again, the road surface was decorated with good ol' red dirt!

I-80 began the long arduous task of cruising home. We made numerous stops, one of which Bruce missed. Keeping the group together and taking long breaks to get relief from the heat caused our arrival home to be nearly 8PM.

Upon arrival at San Jose, the ZX9 Kawasaki's odometer read 4,913. I had covered 1,453 since leaving home on the 15th. The official trip distance, 1,407 miles was the 2nd longest PJ-1000 in history. We bettered this distance only in 1992 at 1,488 miles. The new bike consumed 31 gallons of gas, averaging 44.2 Mpg.

Conclusion

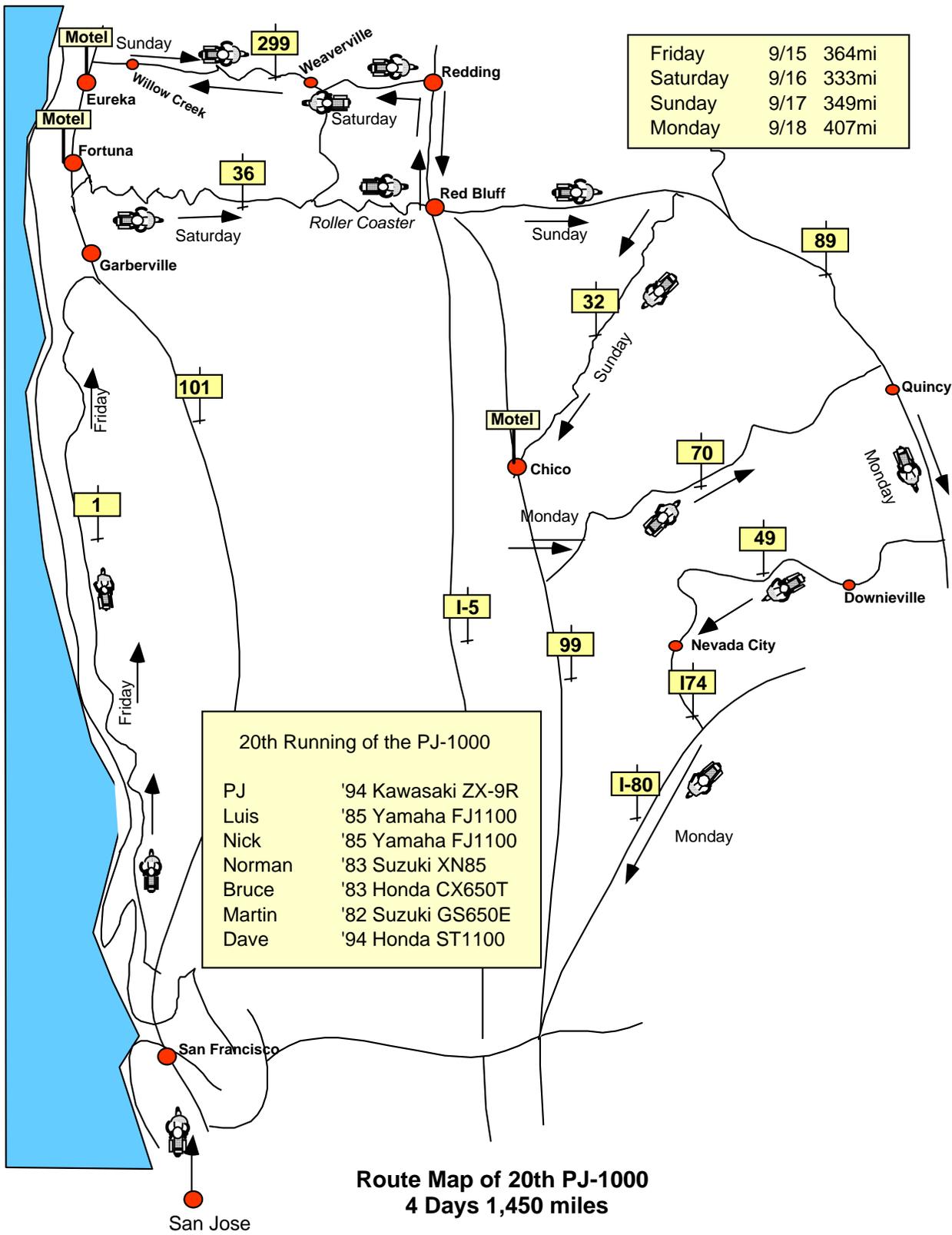
Not a bad ride, but dust and dirt strewn road surfaces spoiled most of my favorite routes. Hwy 36 and 49 were the two biggest disappointments, and 32 could have been good but wasn't. As it turned out, 299 and 70, similar roads, were the only salvation of this years event. I missed not being able to really learn to do tight, twisty bits very well on my new mount. Well, I guess that will come in time.

Starting out, I was concerned the new Kawasaki's higher pegs and slightly more aggressive bar to seat arrangement might be less comfortable, but even after 407 miles on Monday, I felt really good.

It was a good ride, but not a great ride.

Oh well, well do better next year.

Trip Map 1995 PJ 1000 Route (Actual)



Preparation for the '96 Ride

Last year, only a few days prior to the PJ-1000, I acquired a “new” '94 Kawasaki ZX-9R. I really enjoyed the new bike, but never really felt like I was using much of it's immense capability. Riding time had been pretty limited since, but I did manage to “do” Mt. Hamilton and Mines Road 5 times, and each of those excursions included 3 cycles on Mines Road. During my last 2 new tire scrubbing sessions there, I finally felt like I had come to an ‘understanding’ with the big green machine.

The Plan

ANNOUNCING: The 21st running of the ‘PJ-1000’

Howdy Guys,

Here we are approaching September, and time for another PJ-1000.

This year I have planned the trip for **September 21, 22, and 23.**

Last year we went North, so this year it's South once again. I decided to try a different direction, just to add a little variety to our visit to some favorite roads near Kings Canyon.

The trip has some interesting variations:

- Kings Canyon (in and out twice)
- The Wonder Valley twisties (twice)
- A new piece of SR 168 above Shaver Lake we haven't seen yet.
- The good section of SR 49 above Mariposa (on the inside this time)
- The Hill (SR 120) to Groveland, up and back.

Saturday, September 21

We will depart from the Colonial Inn, near the intersection of Almaden Expy and Capitol Expy. at 8AM. (see Map) This year to conserve time we will head South on 85 to 101, the East on 152 toward Los Banos. We will cross the central flatlands in the early (cool) hours of the morning and will find ourselves climbing up 168 toward Shaver Lake (East of Fresno) by lunch time. After lunch, we travel South on those exciting backroads that twist thru Wonder Valley and past Pine Flat Lake, arriving at Hwy 180 about 2PM. Then the fantastic rush up the mountain toward Grant Grove in Kings Canyon Park. We will take a break, dump off the excess baggage and head down into the Canyon. We will take a break at Cedar Grove and come back up in time to shower and head for dinner at the lodge at Grant Grove Lodge. (314 miles)

Sunday, September 22

Sunday morning we mount up at 8AM and head back into the Canyon a 2nd time, this time we will turn around at Boyden Caverns and come back to Grant Grove for breakfast. Then, back down the mountain, thru the Wonder Valley twisties again and back to Shaver Lake. This time, however we will go 20 miles further up the mountain to an area called “Lake Shore.” We'll grab lunch up there somewhere, then return back down the mountain and cut over to Hwy 41. Then up Hwy 49 over that good section (Rick's Pick) North of Mariposa. At the 49/120 junction we will head up the mountain to Groveland, its only 8 miles (near Priest) but for those of you who remember, its a “great 8 miles!” After a break at Groveland, we churn back down the hill again, and cover the remaining 28 miles to Sonora. (326 miles)

Monday, September 23

Monday we will do a familiar old loop. Over Sonora Pass (SR 108), down to 395, north to Monitor Pass (SR 89), back over to Carson Pass (SR 88) then down to our SR 26 cut-off at the “dairy queen” and then back down 26 toward home. (344 Miles)

Get those bike's tuned up, and remember *keep the rubber side down*

See Ya soon,

Regards

‘PJ’

The 21st Running of the "PJ-1000"

September 1996 came around and Terry had his Suzuki all put back together (quite beautifully). Kerwin finished up reconstruction of his very clean 83 Honda CB1100F, and Rick was back from Italy and really "up" for the ride. Martin Hester decided to bring Terry's 82 Suzuki 650 again this year. This amounted to the largest group ever, planning to participate in a PJ-1000.

Initial Roster

| | | | | |
|---|-----------------|------|----------|-------------|
| 1 | PJ Naumchik | 1994 | Kawasaki | Ninja ZX-9R |
| 2 | Dave Sweetman | 1994 | Honda | ST1100 |
| 3 | Nick Henneman | 1985 | Yamaha | FJ1100 |
| 4 | Bruce Farley | 1983 | Honda | CX650-Turbo |
| 5 | Rick Allan | 1993 | Honda | CBR900RR |
| 6 | Luis Drumond | 1985 | Yamaha | FJ1100 |
| 7 | Terry Tuohy | 1985 | Suzuki | GS1150 |
| 8 | Martin Hester | 1982 | Suzuki | GS650 |
| 9 | Kerwin Schetter | 1983 | Honda | CB1100F |

By September 20th the Roster had undergone numerous changes. Martin had a business trip come up, Luis had some family matters to attend to, Rick's friend Maurice decided to go, a young fellow from the C-Cube Engineering group, Roy Franz, signed on, and at the last minute Nick got sick. However, with 8 guys slated to go it was still the biggest crowd to attend a PJ-1000.

Actual Participants

| | | | | |
|---|-----------------|------|----------|-------------|
| 1 | PJ Naumchik | 1994 | Kawasaki | Ninja ZX-9R |
| 2 | Dave Sweetman | 1994 | Honda | ST1100 |
| 3 | Bruce Farley | 1983 | Honda | CX650-Turbo |
| 4 | Rick Allan | 1993 | Honda | CBR900RR |
| 5 | Terry Tuohy | 1985 | Suzuki | GS1150 |
| 6 | Kerwin Schetter | 1983 | Honda | CB1100F |
| 7 | Maurice Flores | 1992 | Kawasaki | ZX-7 |
| 8 | Roy Franz | 1992 | Yamaha | Seca II 600 |

Saturday, September 21

San Jose to Los Banos to (lost?)

The excitement level for this year's event was as high as I can remember. Rick seemed very 'up,' and Terry and Kerwin really busted their collective butts to get both bikes together and rung out before the PJ-1000. (Kerwin's Mines Road Shake-Down ride the weekend prior, was more of a 'Shake-Off' ride). Roy Franz signed on at the last minute and also seemed really excited to be going. Needless to say, Friday at work I had a tough time keeping focused on my work. Going to a movie with Florinda on Friday night really helped distract me. I was up a little too early on Saturday, considering the Colonial Inn is very close to my house, but I managed to kill a little time topping off the fuel tank and checking tire pressure. I got to the restaurant at 7:30 and only Roy was there. The balance of the group straggled in around 7:45. After a light breakfast and not too much coffee, we mounted up and jumped on 85 heading Southeast. It was bright and sunny as we turned South on 101, 3 brilliantly colored Hot Air Balloons soared overhead as we passed by Morgan Hill. Soon we were slicing our way up 152, heading over Pacheco Pass. I thought about a stop at Casa de Fruta, but it seemed as though we had just started, so I pushed on toward Los Banos. I wasn't real certain about the distance to Los Banos, so a few miles past the San Luis reservoir I led the group in for a 'pit stop' at a gas station near the highway. As it turned out we were only 6 miles from Los Banos, so when we did get to town, we decided to keep on moving. Looked like no one was going to need gas that soon.

By 10AM we were nearing Madera, and the second exit was marked "Yosemite and Millerton Lake." It sounded familiar, so I took the turn-off. There was a large shopping center and a Burger King on the east side of the freeway so we took a break there. I scouted out a Texaco Station across the street, and after our break we all went there for gas. Little did I realize that leaving from that side of the shopping center put us on the wrong road. We started out across the straight flat landscape heading East (or so I thought).

The road look pretty familiar (they all look alike out there)

A few miles of this straight boring stuff inspired me to try a “top speed” run, but I got a little uncomfortable at a registered 150 and shut the Kawasaki off well before the top. Terry’s Suzuki’s side cover blew off during the run, so we stopped while he ‘tie-wrapped’ it in place. It was not a problem thanks to Bruce who came prepared for such emergencies with tie-wraps and duct tape.

A few miles later we arrived at an intersection. I thought this would be Hi-way 41, but the sign across the road said “Not a Through Road”!! . . . That can’t be right!?? After two more stops to check the map, and a lot of confusion, we ended up back on Hi-way 99, north of the 152 intersection. As it turns out, had we exited on the right side of the shopping center, we would have been fine. Leaving on the left took us North. My error added 31 miles to the trip. We took the Yosemite - Millerton Lake exit a 2nd time, and this time we stayed right! A couple miles on this road dead-ended us into 145.

Finally on 145, we quickly arrived at the Junction of 41. Crossing that and continuing on Road 145, to Millerton Rd. we passed the big Casino, turned right past Friant Dam, and headed out for the intersection of Hwy 168.

168, Shaver Lake, Toll House - Wonder Valley

The run up the mountain on this fast 4 lane is always fun, but our typical pace makes very short work of the 8½ miles to Toll House Road and the point where 168 narrows to 2 lanes. The charge up the final 6 miles was slowed by a few cars, most we were able to pass with reasonable ease. We had lunch at the small Burger place we discovered in ‘94, and by 1PM we were gassing up and ready to start the “really fun stuff!”

There was even more traffic on the way back down to Toll House, including a large truck or two. I pulled up to wait for the rest of the group. I crossed to the top of Toll House Road to get ready to start the next leg, and noticed Rick as he lined up behind me. We started down Toll House Road, a twisty decent from 4500’ to 2000’ in about 8 miles. The high end of the road snakes down the hill, then runs along the edge of a sharp grade. I could see Rick in the mirrors, he was keeping my pace but hanging back a bit. At the bottom of the Toll House grade, Rick and I waited for the rest of the group, to make certain everyone made the same turn. Somehow a mile later, I failed to see the exit to Burrough Valley Road, my planned route. I wasn’t aware of the mistake until I past another intersection, and noticed that I was on Pittman Hill Rd.(??) At the following intersection I stopped to check the map. Sure enough, I had blown right past the turn-off. However, the current intersecting artery, Watts Valley Road, cut right back across to the intersection of Burrough Valley Rd and Maxson Rd, which was where we were going anyway!

What a Fine Mistake!!” The road began much like all the others in this valley. Good surface, a little bumpy, some pretty good corners and then . . . what’s this(?), brand new, smooth black asphalt! Undulating switch-backs, consistent corner curvature and camber. The only slightly disagreeable aspect of this road; the terrain always seems to slope away just beyond the sight line, so you can’t see the sharpness of turns until you’re in them. But there are few surprises, so once we get to know this road it will only get better! Again in Watts Valley, I noted that Rick was on my pace, but staying back, not right on my back tire. (as usual). Stopping at the Maxson - Burrough Valley - Watts Valley Road Intersection, the group gathered once again.

Straight ahead on Maxson Road, we twisted our way up over the tight narrow part of our 168-180 connection. Dropping down the hill to Trimmer Springs Road and Pine Flat Lake, we collected the hoard of 8 and took a short break before continuing along one of the our favorite segments of this route.

Mounting up again, we stormed the corners of Trimmer Springs Road. The 10 miles along the edge of Pine Flat Lake consists of flowing combinations of left and right hand curves. The corners bending to the left (my personal favorites) are clearly visible, with positive camber. Most of them tighten just beyond the apex, encouraging the addition of more lean angle and a gentle twist of the right wrist. The new Kawasaki responds to these antics with reassuring stability, a loud roar of carburetor music, and easy lightness a the bars as the front gets light on the exit. The curving rights are outside sweepers (a little hard to see around) with clean surfaces, and most of them maintain a consistent arc. Once you get into the rhythm of this road you can really fly. Rick and I sliced our way along Pine Flat Lake and arrived at the Piedra Bridge well ahead of the others. When we stopped, Rick told me that he had never seen me ride so comfortably and quickly. That really made my day! Years past, on roads like these, I would have felt I was holding Rick back, but I hadn’t felt that today. I felt ol’ PJ and the Kawasaki had finally been validated - a compliment from a rider of Rick’s caliber means a lot!

Soon Roy came along, then Rick’s friend Maurice. We waited a bit longer. I always begin to worry when the group takes too long to gather. This time it was definitely taking too long. I pulled my jacket back on, and started back up the road.

A mile back I spotted Bruce and Dave resting in the shade at a small park just off the main road at the Pine Flat Dam intersection. In front of where they were parked a small yellow sign announced “Not a Through Road!” But, Terry and Kerwin thought it was “the turn,” so they went to check it out. When they returned I explained that I always wait at any “Critical Turn.” So if they don’t see me - it’s probably not the right corner!!
(But after 2 mistakes already that day, maybe they had lost confidence.)

Everyone had a short break, we crossed the Piedra bridge, then turned right on Elwood Road toward “Wonder Valley.” I finally figured out why they named it “Wonder Valley!!” It’s because you always ‘Wonder’ how much livestock will be on the road. Over the years on this route, we have encountered herds of horses and cows. This year’s obstacles included a cow, 2 pigs, some turkeys and a dog! This 10 miles from Piedra to the 180 junction also has the highest cattle guard density in the state of California, some of them are pretty bumpy.

A stop at the junction of 180 once again collected the group. A few miles up the road we took our break and gas stop at Clingan’s Junction. It’s a good idea to rest here, because above this point is the very finest set of fast corners in the state. You want to be sure to be fresh enough to really enjoy it! The 20 miles of road from here to the Sequoia National Park Entrance bring you up from the heat at 1800’, to cool fresh air at 6000’. The road is smooth, filled with fast sweeping turns, and has plenty of open passing areas.

On to Kings Canyon

The whole group pulled out while I was still suiting up. Rick and Maurice led off, Terry and Kerwin followed. Then, Roy, Bruce, and Dave. They were all out of sight before I started up the road. Oh boy, a challenge! A few fast minutes later, Dave waved me by. Bruce and Roy were caught behind a car, Roy got past, and Bruce signaled me to pass ahead of him. Three corners later the big Kawasaki motor pulled easily past Roy’s 600, and I headed off up the hill in pursuit of Terry and Kerwin. I spotted the two of them well ahead as they are slowed by a car. I was gaining, but they both were able to pass before I could catch up. The car held me up a few turns, and by the time I passed, I could only catch the occasional glimpse of the red and blue bikes. Two miles later I began to close again, this time I was able to catch Kerwin and sweep past. But Terry cleared another car and disappeared again. Both Kerwin and I passed the car and really stroked in an effort to catch Terry. Kerwin was hanging on to the Kawasaki very well as we finally got the Blue Suzuki in sight. I caught Terry and passed him just before we entered the ‘slow-down’ area approaching the park gate. Rick and Maurice are already through. Wow! What a great hill!! What a great ride!!

At the park gate, the group decided to split. Rick, Maurice, Roy and I wanted to stay with the plan and ride the Canyon. Terry, Kerwin, Dave, and Bruce are thinking about the nice cool swimming pool waiting at Monticeto-Sequoia Lodge.

Four for the Canyon

Four turned right, and the four of us headed for the Canyon. I offered Rick the opportunity to lead us down into the Canyon - he declined, again reassuring me that I was doing fine. We cruised through the cool, green redwood groves heading for Kings Canyon. I was feeling really relaxed as I started down the twisting canyon highway. Corners are clear and predictable, the Kawasaki handles with stable precision. Oops! About halfway down I ran wide in a decreasing radius right hander cutting inside one of the overlooks. A couple miles later, I missed a downshift and overcooked into a tight left turn - time to slow down a little!

At the bottom of Kings Canyon we took a break at Boyden Caverns. Originally I had planned to go to Cedar Grove, but I was concerned about making the dinner schedule at Montecito Lodge, so we took a few pictures and decided to head back up the hill. I mentioned to Rick I made a couple of mistakes and was getting tired. I told him I was going to ‘turn it down’ a couple of clicks on the way up. It’s OK he says, he’s going to hang back with Maurice and try to encourage him a bit on the way up.

We fired up the bikes and started back up the Canyon. I led out, not so hot this time, maybe 90% of my earlier pace. Soon I couldn’t see any headlights behind me. Up past Kings Canyon Lodge, sweeping up the hill, holding some good lines. I added a little extra caution as I swept left past the overlook, this is where I ran wide coming down.

A couple of twists further up I noticed the flash of the headlights of Rick’s CBR in my mirrors. He was closing pretty quickly. . . . three corners later he’s right behind me, . . . three more turns and the CBR whizzes past. I tucked in behind the Honda, to see if I could match his pace. He was going quickly, but not too fast, I’m holding on pretty well, only loosing a few feet here and there.

We flick-it right and left through an easy pair of sweepers, the grade increases, we accelerate up the hill toward another sweeping left. It's not a tight corner, but requires a lot of lean at this speed, I had to tuck-in my left toe to keep it from dragging. The corner looks very clean, visibility is fine, everything seems okay. I have a clear view of Rick tucked over sweeping through the turn, maybe 30 yards ahead. We were on the same line, running at about the same speed approaching the apex

All of a sudden I saw the front wheel of the Honda wash-out! (see "why?" Page 77)

The bike slammed down hard on its left side and slid out from under Rick. Bike and rider skidded at a long angle off the pavement onto a wide dirt apron on the outside of the turn. (Thank God it was there!!) A huge cloud of dust billowed up as the Honda flipped end over end along the edge of the road.

I couldn't see Rick because of the thick dust. I grabbed a handful of brakes and stopped the Kawasaki about 20 feet beyond where Rick's bike had come to rest. As I ran back I could hear Rick. Initially, I wasn't sure if he was yelling in pain or swearing because he fell - Whew! He's Swearing!! He was flat on his back, his head and shoulders up against the dirt berm at the outside of the apron. His jacket sleeves had pushed up and he had some road rash on his forearm and wrist.

I checked him thoroughly before I moved him. He complained he couldn't breathe, (had the wind knocked out of him) so I opened his jacket so he could breathe easier. I made him wiggle hands, fingers, and feet, and sit up before I helped him take his helmet off. By this time Maurice and Roy were there too.

Fortunately, Rick did not appear to be seriously hurt. He was conscious and aware, but was having trouble focusing, he couldn't quite figure out where he was. He knew he was in Kings Canyon, but he couldn't figure out where that was! His short term memory was fuzzy, obviously a concussion. There was only a minor scuff on his helmet, so I figured he whacked his head as he slid into the bank. He complained that his back was sore, and his ankle hurt. He had to limp, but it didn't seem broken. I flagged down an approaching car, and asked a very accommodating German driver if he could give Rick a ride. He agreed and we loaded Rick and his gear into the back seat. I asked the driver to take him to Grant Grove. Maurice and I pushed the broken Honda up against the bank - it looked pretty bad, the front end was really twisted. That probably happened when the bike flipped. The three of us mounted up and followed the car up the rest of the Canyon grade.

The driver passed Grant Grove. (I never figured out why he changed his mind, but it was nice of him) and took Rick to Montecito-Sequoia. It seemed to take forever to get there. I could see Rick in the backseat of the car and he seemed to be doing OK. At Montecito, the Lodge folks called the Forest Service Ambulance. Rick's head started to clear, but he was very sore. The medics checked him out for about an hour and released him.

I talked to the CHP by phone and gave them the necessary info for an accident report. I found out where the bike would be towed, Clingan's Junction. The Staff at the Lodge were FANTASTIC! (*see Letter, Pg. 80*) The dinner was a buffet, but because we were delayed getting Rick squared away, they put a large amount of food away for us. We all ate dinner and discussed Rick's options. Maurice agreed to rent a truck, and they planned to haul the bikes home Sunday. I spoke with the Lodge Staff, and they agreed to drive Rick down the hill in the morning, so Maurice wouldn't have to drive the truck back up the Mountain to the Lodge from Fresno.

After dinner, several of us soaked in the Hot Tub near the pool, then we dressed and all sat around a big outdoor fire and drank a few beers. During the night I got up several times to check on Rick, the Medic had 'scared' me about the possible complications while he was sleeping. But aside from being damn sore, Rick survived the night and seemed a little better in the morning.

Sunday, September 22

Kings Canyon (2) to Wonder Valley

Sunday morning we all were up and packed on schedule, except Rick and Maurice of course. We all ate breakfast together, and I checked again with the front desk about a ride down the mountain for Rick. I called our Sunday night lodging and told them we would only be a party of six. They said, no problem. We started a little late, just because of the unique situation, and again headed out to ride Kings Canyon. At one point I almost canceled the second pass at the Canyon, but with a little urging from Terry and Kerwin, down we went. It was a beautiful morning. Clear and cool but already starting to warm up.

The ride was great, a little more subdued than the day before, but brisk and fun just the same. We stopped and looked at "Rick's Corner." Today it was a little easier to judge how fast we were going - probably > 70Mph!!

We turned around at Boyden Caverns again, then carved our way back up to Grant Grove, where Roy and I got gas. The pump was 87 Octane only, and \$1.96/gal., so we only got enough to get down off the mountain. Everyone left for the hill ahead of me again, and Roy, Terry and I got caught behind a big truck on the way back to the Park Entrance. Terry managed to Pass, but Roy and I didn't.

We cleared the gate and I pushed the Kawasaki to catch up with the others, there were a few cars to pass, but the road is pretty clear in spots so I got down quickly. I lost Roy somewhere up the mountain, he was slowing down due to a rear tire which was starting to show too much wear. I managed to catch everyone except Terry, he was already at Clingan's Junction when I arrived. We gassed up and all walked over to look at Rick's bike. Bruce guessed that it was close to "total" because of the amount of cosmetic body panel damage. Mechanically only the front end looked really bashed. As we got back out front, Maurice arrived from the Lodge and gassed up. He was headed to Fresno to pick up a truck. Rick was going to be given a ride down a little later. Sounded like they had everything under control. Because it was starting to get pretty hot, and I knew we would need a few extra stops, I decided to drop the Shaver - Huntington Lake excursion to make up some time. There was too much traffic there yesterday anyway.

Too Many Breaks!

We started out again on Elwood Road, back through Wonder Valley (only 1 pig today!). At the end of Elwood we waited for Dave and Bruce.(9.5mi) Across the bridge at Piedra, we stopped briefly so Dave could put air in his front tire, which was very low.

Then right on Trimmer Springs Rd and back past through the incredible swervy stuff around Pine Flat Lake. We stopped for lunch at the Bar at the corner of Trimmer and Maxson Rd.(13 mi.) (We've stopped here before.)

After lunch we climbed the tight twisty front end of Maxson Rd., then went back to our 'new discovery' Watts Valley Road. At the Watts Valley junction we waited for Bruce and Dave.(6 mi.). Terry and I rode the new road together, it's really a nice new addition. At the intersection, (7½ mi.) we waited again. Up the fairly straight Pittman Hill Rd., then right on Toll House Rd.(4 mi.) Again we waited here a long time for Dave, who almost missed the turn. Up Toll House to 168, I waited for everyone to catch up again.(8 mi.) We shot down the fast 4 lane part of 168, Terry, Kerwin, and I all together.

We collected everyone at the bottom of the hill (8½ mi.) and crossed to the Foster's Freeze at the Auberry Rd. Junction (3 mi.) We took a long break for Root Beer floats and other cool treats.

Following our break we proceeded down to Millerton Rd and waited again.(9 mi.) Then, on to Friant Dam and stopped again (5½ mi.). Then a short shot on Rd 206 (2 mi. - waited) then Rd 145 to 41 and waited (3½ mi.). Even on straight roads where passing was pretty easy, Dave and Bruce seemed to be hanging back. The reason for all this detail resulted from my increasing frustration. (not a new problem!) I was getting impatient!.(Also, not a new Problem!) But, 14 stops in 80 miles! Averaging only 6 miles between stops, it was very hot sitting out in the sun in full leathers, waiting for slow riders. This day differential seemed to be greater. I don't think I was going all that fast. Dave seemed to be really hurting, and needed a lot of rest stops.

We turned north on 41 and rode up to Oakdale to gas up. We agreed that we would stop for a break at the Mariposa drive-in 28 miles up the road. After another long break, I work out with Dave that we will wait at the intersection of 120 & 49. I was hoping we could find a nice shady area for a break. Also, because it was hot and getting late, I discarded the ride up the hill to Groveland. We headed out for the good part of 49.

On the road high above the Merced River, I found that I just couldn't get any rhythm. The curvy part runs up the side of two pretty significant mountains, the corners are a little blind, and the margins are narrow. I can't seem to get comfortable here, I'm on the brakes too long, no smooth lines. But I'm keeping the group together (Terry, Kerwin, Roy) and no one is complaining. A disappointing ride for me, however.

Arriving at the intersection of 120 and 49 I discovered the area I thought might be nice, green and shady, was dry and hot. We took a break in a shaded driveway until Dave and Bruce arrived. Once rested, we all rode to Sonora together. Everyone was equally glad to see our motel, even though it had been a pretty short riding day (283 miles).

We were all splashing in the cool water in the pool within minutes of check-in. Dinner was Pizza that night, at the local Round Table (we've been there before too!) We're all in bed by 9:30PM - and I don't know about the rest, but I was asleep in minutes!!

Monday, September 23

Everyone responded to my request for an early departure, we were packed and ready to find breakfast by 7:15AM - Amazing! A downtown Sonora restaurant, the Flying Pig Café, served as our breakfast place and a good start for what would turn out to be, at least for me, the finest day of the ride.

Leaving the café on schedule, we purchased gas and started climbing 108 toward Sonora Pass in the early cool hours. For the next trip here, I noted there are several good options for breakfast in the small villages that line 108 east of Sonora. The commercialized envelope surrounding Sonora has expanded up the mountain, and now it takes >20 miles to feel like you have left civilization.

It was pretty chilly for the first hour or so. I was cool yet comfortable, but I couldn't help thinking about poor ol' Kerwin's ankles. I had noticed on Saturday following him up to the Sequoia forest, that his pant legs left about 3 inches of exposed ankle above the top of his socks. No problem, when the temperature is 85°F. But it sure wasn't 85 °F Monday morning above 4000'! Betch'a he wears boots next year!!

The Sonora Pass hi-way has always been only moderately challenging west of the Dardanelles. Now, it has a fine new blacktop surface and was a very enjoyable, if not a terribly exciting ride. I turned in for a break at the Dardanelles, an infamous stop to some old time PJ-1000 participants, who remember the year Nick and Wayne failed to stop here! This time I parked the bright green and purple Kawasaki at the driveway entrance - no way Dave and Bruce could miss that!! Bright morning sun, sparking blue sky and crisp cool air made for perfect riding. The last 12 miles of highway leading up to the Summit are exceptional, and the new surface made them better than ever. Running along the edge of the Stanislaus River, the road cuts through solid rock walls, and skirts the edges of green Sierra meadows. We stopped again at Sonora Pass Summit (9624') and took time for some photos. Terry tried to use Roy's cellphone to call in to work, but we found that we were too far from civilization for a connection.

With all feeling refreshed, began our descent down the eastern slope. It's never been better! Always a challenge, the 20 miles down this side of Sonora Pass usually requires a high degree of caution. On past rides there was a propensity for gravel and sand to be scattered in many of the sharper corners. The new blacktop surface extended the road margins and substantially reduced the foreign matter on the road. The ride down was truly exhilarating.

As I descended the mountain, I felt really collected, together, and smooth. I stopped several times, to be sure the leading riders were still coming down the mountain, and to let them close the gap. Even when I thought I was just cruising, I would look in my mirrors and be surprised to find no one there. We took a short stop at the Junction of 108 and 395 - all except Bruce, who decided to get a good head start.

The Last Leg, 395 to 88 to 26

From Bridgport, (to the South), to Susanville (way up North), 395 is a pretty uninteresting. There is one exception. Between the junction of 108 and a little town called Walker, there is a segment of fast sweeping corners built into the wide smooth highway. Blitz is the only way to describe the ride through here!! We managed to get through the first set of turns without being slowed by 4-wheel traffic. That set of sweepers is a really a high speed rush! The second part was interrupted a bit by cars, but most of it was very enjoyable. Bruce was still leading when we got to Walker. I had planned to stop there, but he didn't, so we rode on, taking a break at the foot of Monitor Pass.

SR-89 rises from 395, climbing up the eastern side of the Sierra's toward Monitor Pass in less than 15 miles. The road consists of a series of undulating, smooth high speed corners, which lift you rapidly from the valley floor up to 8000'. There is an overlook at the top of the hill which provides one of the more spectacular views along the eastern edge of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. We took a break again at this overlook, and Dave described his new homestead in Nevada as similar to the valleys we were viewing from our vantage point.

We crossed Monitor Pass (8512') a few miles later. There's a small stone marker there, which probably nobody noticed but Dave and me, as we had made a point to take pictures at every pass marker we found on our trip back in 1981. On the other side of the pass we intersected with SR-4, and continued on to Markleeville. The gas station there was closed down. On toward the intersection of 88 - still no gas. We stopped at the intersection and Terry scouted around - found a local sheriff.

He told us the nearest gas was at Kirkwood. That was only about another 20 miles, and everyone seem to have plenty of fuel to make that. We headed up the mountain toward Kirkwood. Still a fantastic day. Caples Lake was beautiful blue and calm, sparkling in the warm bright sun. We stopped to fill the bikes at a station at Kirkwood, then I sent several riders back to Kit Carson Lodge.

I wanted to stop at Kit Carson for lunch, because it sits on the picturesque edge of a beautiful blue lake. But the restaurant was closed. It took everybody a few minutes to figure that out, and I ended up retrieving Terry and Kerwin from the Lodge parking lot, because they hadn't seen the sign.

We ended up eating at a restaurant next to the Kirkwood Gas station instead. By this time the rear tire on Roy's Yamaha was showing a lot of exposed cord down the center. He was justifiably concerned about it. Terry phoned C-Cube, and found out that a huge order was scheduled for shipment later that day.

We all had lunch, then Roy made phone calls to Jackson to arrange for a new back tire. Dave agreed to ride down with Roy, while Terry, Kerwin and I would do our best to get back to C-Cube before 5:00PM. Bruce decided to come with the three of us, rather than take the slow ride down with Roy and Dave.

We took off down the mountain, the three of us swooping through Carson's smooth corners together. We stopped once to collect Bruce, but soon lost sight of him again. We had agreed to meet at Dave's favorite 'dairy queen' at the intersection of 88 and highway 26. There was construction at the intersection there which confused our exit, but we turned around and made the stop anyway. Several minutes later Bruce made the same U-turn and joined us - we all had Root Beer Floats in honor of Dave. When we were about half done, we saw Roy and Dave go by, Roy was leading and didn't know about this spot. Dave was following so he couldn't signal to Roy. We waved as Dave (obviously envious of our Floats) continued toward Jackson.

We kept our stop brief, then set out up 26 to enjoy the last good corners for this trip. Hi-way 26 didn't disappoint, but the good stuff too soon disappeared in our mirrors as the sun sank low on the western horizon. Somewhere on 26 we lost Bruce again, but not to worry, "I know the way home" he told us just before we departed the 'dairy queen.' We got hung up briefly at some construction in the valley, but we used the opportunity to pass a few cars, and made progress toward 99.

We took a short gas and rest stop at the junction of 26 and 99, then mounted up and joined the freeway full of 4-wheelers toward the bay area. We pulled into C-Cube at about 5:50PM.

I called Rick, and found out they had loaded the bikes without difficulty and made it home by 7:30PM Sunday. He was still pretty sore, and hadn't seen a doctor - but claimed to be healing OK. I left Kerwin and Terry working away on their big shipment, and I rode home, arriving about 6:30PM.

Final Mileage for Monday = 370

Total for the 21st Running of the PJ-1000 = 1,018

Comments:

It was unanimous EVERYBODY LIKES MONITCETO-SEQUOIA LODGE!! I have been chartered to plan a ride using this place as a base camp. I have some good ideas, need to check distances, etc.

I really enjoyed Monday in the mountains. Maybe next year we'll do the whole ride in Mountains,

Let's see: 50 to Tahoe, 49 over Yuba Pass, 89 to Carson Pass, 4 over Ebbetts Pass, 89 over Monitor Pass, 108 over Sonora Pass, 120 over Tioga Pass, 168 to Huntington Lake then on day 2

Addendum 1 from Page 3 “Why?”**Why did Rick Crash!**

I saw it happen, and I keep trying to figure out what went wrong. These things happen so fast, it's hard to be 100% certain of all the factors. Here's what I know: (or, think I know)

- 1) It was a moderate, uphill, left hand, sweeping corner. It was a fast corner, and based on riding it again on Sunday, I would estimate we entered the turn at about 70 Mph.
- 2) I'm pretty sure I was just about the same pace as Rick, and I didn't feel uncomfortable with the speed.
- 3) We were leaned over pretty hard, but the corner radius was consistent, so there was no need to change lines much.
- 4) Rick was approximately in the center of his lane, so I don't think anything along the road margin could have been a factor.
- 5) Maurice and I checked the corner carefully Saturday evening, and we found nothing on the road surface that could have impaired traction.
- 6) The point at which I saw the CBR front tire slide, was just about at the apex sight line of the corner.
- 7) Rick's front tire had reasonable tread, but both sides had worn to a 'bevel.' I rode a tire like this coming home from a northern ride in '92. It really affects how the front end tracks.

My hypothesis:

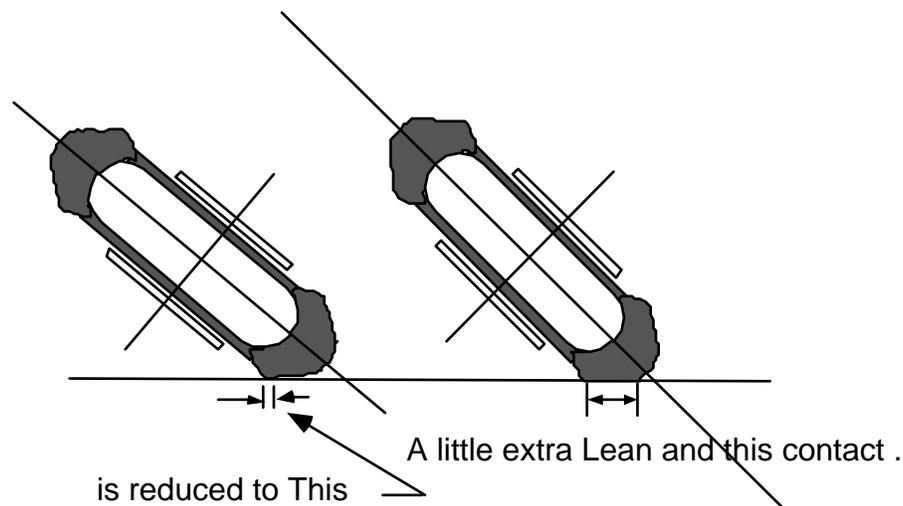
Rick is leaned over well to the left and the tire has settled on the 'flat' area on the left side of the front tire. Rick has been riding quickly, so he is probably ready to accelerate as he sees his 'way out of the corner.'

As his view of the corner exit comes into view (just about the point where it happened) he eases back into the throttle, and adds a little more lean. Because the tire is worn non-uniformly, the 'ridge' just above the flat bevel has a very narrow surface area, compared to the tire's normal rounded profile. Combining the extra lateral load, and being unweighted slightly by acceleration it can no longer hold the chosen line, and slides out. (The CBR has a very short wheelbase, and, at these RPM, lots of available BHP)

Bang, down he goes! That's what I saw, the front just pushed out from under the bike, the bike slammed down on it's left side, skidding in a straight line until it hit the dirt at the edge of the roadway.

My assessment; Tire Wear not Rider Err!

The only rider error in this incident was running hard on a marginal tire!



Addendum 2 - Thank You Letter to our Hosts at Montecito-Sequoia

Montecito-Sequoia Lodge
P.O. Box 858 Grant Grove
Kings Canyon National Park CA 93633

To The Staff and Management,

I am writing on behalf of the group of 8 motorcyclist who visited your excellent establishment on September 21, 1996. Montecito-Sequoia Lodge was the first stop on our 3 day 1,000 mile motorcycle tour. This ride, (the PJ-1000) which I have conducted every year for the past 20, has taken us all over the State of California. We have visited many Parks and Lodges, stayed in numerous private and public facilities. But, our short stay at your facility stands out as the "finest accommodation" we have ever encountered.

The lodge is in a beautiful setting, and the facilities are very nice, but

IT IS THE STAFF, let me repeat, IT IS THE STAFF that makes the Montecito-Sequoia Lodge stand out.

Rick, one of our fellow motorcyclist had suffered a pretty nasty 'get-off' down in the Canyon late that afternoon. While the forest service and the National Park folks bickered about jurisdictions and authority, your people, ALL OF THEM, were concerned, gracious, helpful, and exceptionally accommodating of our predicament.

I wish I had the presence to note names, because I would really like to make my thanks to each of you more personal. The two nice fellows we met out back when we arrived, and the really neat ladies working the desk - and everyone in the kitchen that saved dinner for us - the person who drove Rick down to the Junction on Sunday,

without exception, EVERY STAFF MEMBER we met was EXCEPTIONAL.

To Management who had the foresight to establish policies which encourages such behavior,
THANK YOU

To the wonderful people who were so considerate - THANK YOU

We will be back - and we are telling all of our friends about your fine establishment.
By the way, Rick is recovering quickly, no permanent damage - he'll be riding again soon!

On behalf of all the "PJ-1000" Participants,

Dave, Bruce, Maurice, Roy, Terry, Kerwin, and especially Rick,

THANKS AGAIN - YOU WERE FANTASTIC

Kind Regards,

'PJ' Naumchik
instigator of the infamous "PJ-1000"

The 22nd running of the PJ1000

This has been the hardest of all PJ-1K's to write about. '89 was disappointing too, we got rained out on the first day, but then ride was rescheduled and we went a few weeks later. This year we had two good days, actually two great days, followed by unexpected rain on the third day and the fourth day was cut. We ended up covering over 1,000 miles, but with a totally unsatisfactory conclusion. I took me until the end of '99 to finish writing about the 1997 event.

| | | | |
|-----------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1997 | <i>The 22nd running of the PJ1000</i> | <i>September 12,13,14,15</i> | <i>1,085 Mi.</i> |
| PJ Naumchik | 1994 | Kawasaki | Ninja ZX-9R |
| Chris Patterson | 1995 | BMW | K75RT |
| Carole Le Gall | 1996 | Honda | NSR250 |
| Bruce Farley | 1983 | Honda | CX650-Turbo |
| Rick Allan | 1995 | Suzuki | GSXR750 |
| Terry Tuohy | 1985 | Suzuki | GS1150 |
| Maurice Flores | 1993 | Kawasaki | ZX-7 |
| Roy Franz | 1992 | Yamaha | Seca II 600 |
| Nick Henneman | 1985 | Yamaha | FJ1100 |
| Martin Hester | 1982 | Suzuki | GS650 |

DAY 1: Friday, September 12, 1997

1997 was the first PJ-1000 to be co-ed. I was very pleased to have Carole Le Gall join the group, but I must admit, to a bit of discomfort with the management of sleeping accommodations. As it turned out, I needn't have been concerned. Carole, accustomed to traveling with a bunch of motorcycle racers, was very much at ease with this type of situation.

So, on Friday September 12, the largest of all PJ-1K crowds gathered at the traditional Denny's starting point just north of Milpitas. Most ate breakfast and began to get acquainted. Big groups always take a little longer to get organized, and as a result we were a little behind schedule when we mounted up to head eastward. Immediately, I noticed how hard it was to keep track of 10 motorcycle headlights in my mirrors.

During the past year I had discovered the Hwy 4 connector between I-5 and 99. Unfortunately, I wasn't all that familiar with the highway markings, as a result I led half the group right past the exit. I quickly realized my error, as did the other half of the group who made the turn correctly. We exited at the next off-ramp, turned around, and back on the correct route with minimal delay. We caught up with the others at the Hwy 26 exit.

We cruised at 75 mph on the straight two-lane bisecting Central Valley orchards, enjoying the few corners that led us out of the flat land toward Valley Springs. Even with the slightly delayed start and the minor error at Stockton, we arrived at Valley springs only 10 minutes behind schedule. We fueled up, most consumed some liquid refreshment, and the group continued east toward the mountains. From 12, a left turn on 26 took us up into rising twisting route toward the Sierras. Across 49, the undulating curves of Hwy 26 rang with the song of 10 motorcycles just beginning to warm up. About midway between 49 and 88, I stopped by "Big Oak Corner" to collect the riders. It seemed to take a long time for the group to reassemble. Then we were off again, slicing through the scrubby firs along the twisty sunlit highway. The group gathered again briefly at the end of 26, before we began the ascent on 88 toward Carson Pass. Traffic was light, we made quick progress up the mountain and the temperature dropped to a very comfortable range as we gained altitude. Hwy 88 is a fast road, and over the years an increase in passing zones have made it easy to avoid following cars for extended periods.

At a big sweeping overlook above the Bear River Reservoir, and I pulled off to allow the parade of brightly colored bikes to regroup. I noted previously how difficult it was to identify 10 headlights in the mirror. As it turned out, it's even hard to count ten parked motorcycles at once. We had all been hanging-out for 10 minutes before anybody noticed that Martin was missing! Thinking back, we realized that we hadn't even seen him at the 26/88 intersection. We waited what seemed an eternity. Finally Martin arrived. Somehow, he had lost the key to the bike's gas cap. Stopping to look for it left him behind. Later, he read the trip plan where I had picked "Cooks Station" as an arbitrary break location. He waited there until it became clear that we were beyond that point. He finally rode on, locating us at the overlook. 15 miles further up the mountain we stopped for lunch at a PJ-1K favorite, Kit Carson Lodge. Being a large group we decided to eat outside, it was a beautiful day, clear and warm.

After lunch, Martin and Terry (Martin was riding Terry's 82 Suzuki) decided to break off and go directly to Carson City (Terry's home town) to get a new key or a new gas cap for the older Suzuki. So the other eight of us followed the PJIK plan and went on to Tahoe, while they continued straight on 88 toward Carson City.

The Tahoe area was congested as ever. Even though my chosen route skirted the edge of the main business route on the "Pioneer Trail," it was still slow and tedious. The point of this routing was to go over Kingsbury Grade to Carson City. It was very warm near Tahoe, especially moving slowly in traffic. Finally we arrived at the N207 turn-off, and started up the hill. After just a mile or two, I noticed that I had lost the group.

I pulled off, and after another long delay, all riders finally all caught up. It turned out I passed a school bus, which was about to stop, and they got caught behind when it turned on the flashing lights to unload children. Just too much traffic around Lake Tahoe! Over the top of the mountain and down the eastern slope we fought to get free of the traffic congestion. We followed another county road back to 88, which led to Carson City.

Arriving at Carson City we tried to could locate Terry and Martin. We saw a Suzuki Dealership just across the highway on the way into town. It looked to be a real possibility. Crossing to the other side of the busy highway was a major undertaking, but we managed. Pulling in, we inquired about the "gas cap guys," but the dealer hadn't seen them. Carole was worried about her 2-Stroke oil consumption, but they didn't have the brand that she was using. We hung around awhile, hoping that Terry and Martin might show up, but they didn't.

Knowing that they could meet us in Truckee, we departed, heading further east to take the high road up through Virginia City. It seemed to take a long time to get to the SR341 turn-off, and it was still very hot. But the twisting climb up Gold Hill soon caused me to forget about the extreme temperature. We took an Ice Cream break on Virginia City's main street to cool down.

After ice cream, we slashed our way down the western slope of Geiger Summit (6790') in a spirited rush. All day my mirrors had been full of Carole's day-glo pink leathers, and the dash down toward the California state line was no exception, the 250cc NSR stayed hooked to my rear tire all the way as it had been for the best part of the day. (Actually, the only way I was ever able to put distance between me and the little 2-Stroke, was on steep inclines with long straights between corners. This was where I could use the sheer horsepower of the Kawasaki to compensate for the significant difference in our cornering capabilities.)

We crossed 395 and ascended Mt. Rose as the September sun began to sink toward the horizon of Sierra peaks. Cresting the summit we enjoyed a spectacular view of Lake Tahoe gleaming in the late afternoon sunlight. We carved our way down to Crystal Bay, then turned North on 267 toward Truckee.

We had a bit of difficulty finding the Alpine Motel, an older group of cabins situated at the far west end of town on a street broken by the passage of I-80. After 20 minutes of searching we arrived to find Terry and Martin already there. We allocated the accommodations, and Carole was a little perturbed that she was separated, relegated to her own separate unit. But it was really only a last minute fix as the number of participants changed as the ride date neared. I don't think there were any hard feelings. We all decided, although far from elegant, this was a good place for a group like us. A nearby restaurant provided a great meal, and the local gas/convenience store had plenty of beer. As usual, I didn't last too long.

Saturday - September 14, 1997

Breakfast at a nearby coffee shop help chase the chill off, always present on September mornings in Truckee. We cut back through town, then turned North on SR 89 toward the intersection of 49. Its always hard to 'get going' early in the cold mountain air, and this area always populated with an unfair share of CHP. In spite of such obstacles the 30 miles to the junction of Hwy 49 passed quickly. Spirits picked up as we started up the smooth wide grade toward Yuba Pass. We took the obligatory stop at the scenic vista point just a few miles up into the trees. Then over Yuba Pass (6701') beginning the decent toward Downieville. 20 miles or so down the twisty road, Carole and I had put a fair distance between us and the next group of riders when we came upon a slide area where the road had narrowed to 1 lane. A huge flatbed truck was stopped there. After a long wait for the oncoming traffic, he started to move toward the narrow corner, then stopped. I mistakenly thought he was pausing to let us pass. As I accelerated toward the narrow corner, the truck lurched forward, the trailer slanting abruptly across the road. I grabbed a handful of front brake and steered toward the concrete barricade on the left of the lane. The road, at the bottom edge of the cement buffer, had accumulated loose gravel.

The Kawasaki was nearly stopped when the front wheel found the gravel. The bike skidded the last foot toward the cement wall. I lost my balance momentarily and the bike tipped slightly as it stopped. Crunch! The left turn signal and a 2" piece of the fairing gave way to the hard wall's edge. No serious damage! The truck driver was very upset until I explained that I misunderstood his maneuver. By the time all the commotion was over, the rest of the group arrived and we were able to continue to Downieville. We took a long break in Downieville. After examining the damage more closely, I decided I might need the broken piece from the fairing. I went back up the road to the area of the incident. Getting off the bike I looked for the broken pieces. Finally I located the piece of white and purple plastic on the outside of the barricade. Near the wall on the road was the rest of my broken turn signal. Back in Downieville, I did some black tape patchwork on the broken signal lamp.

After gassing up, we headed southwest again on the fantastic northern end of 49. I thought some about the broken fairing incident, wrote it up to impatient experience, and decided not to let it bother me further. The day's ride had been too fantastic to that point to let a minor scuff dampen my enthusiasm.

We cut through the back roads between 49 and Oroville. This was the first time I had used this shortcut, and I had taken pains to select the roads that looked best on the map. Unfortunately, none of the selected roads were very interesting. After finding gas for Carole's NSR 250 which had a pretty limited range, we did the obligatory charge up 99 to Red Bluff. Lunch at the now institutionalized Burger King on 36, followed by gas across the street, prepared us for the next leg of the trip.

SR 36 from Red Bluff to the Pacific

To this point the day's ride had been damn good. It was about to go from good to fantastic. Just west of town, we took the left turn across the railroad tracks and shortly we began to experience the natural rise and fall of the Bald Hills. As had been the pattern for the past day and a half, I led with Carole's red and white NSR Honda close behind. My usual companion near the front, Rick, was hanging back with his friend Maurice. Also slowing him a little might have been last year's Kings Canyon incident and his adjustment to his new GSX-R750. We stormed the fantastic curves and flew airborne over humps of the "Concrete Roller Coaster." I was having a ball, and so it seemed, were the others. Beyond the "Coaster," we climbed towards the mountains, to find the sweeping uphill road had just been resurfaced. I mean, just resurfaced. It looked so fresh it was hard to believe that another vehicle had ever been on it. The fresh black rough asphalt stones provided great traction, smooth surface, sweeping uphill corners climbing from the Dry Creek flatlands (<1000') up to the summit of Goods Mountain. (3810'). A few miles further west brought us to our next break at the Wildwood store.

Beyond Wildwood is my least favorite segment of this road, the 11 miles that cross Dukabella Mountain. This is logging country, and the twisting mountain road forces the trucks to drag their trailer's wheels across the inside shoulder of every tight turn. Each time, scattering loose shoulder gravel out on to the road surface. In addition the heavy winter rains wash tan clay and sand across the road. The result is the most uncertain of traction conditions. Having been the victim of 'loosing the front' a few too many times, I am paranoid of such conditions. So, I go Slow! I've seen Rick and Chris zip over this mountain without difficulty - but it's only 11 miles and I know there is lots more good stuff ahead.

Once across "Dirty Mountain" we are on the relatively new climb over South Fork Summit (4000') past Mad River.

This road, which in the early 80's was akin to the west side of Mt Hamilton, is now a smooth, wide uphill raceway. This is Rick's favorite part of this road, but this time I led the group through here. The ride today was fantastic!! Beyond the uphill raceway, the road deteriorates to what it once was, a lane-&-a-half of old twisting mountain trail. But this section, which nearly wore me out on my first trip here in '83, now lasts less than 15 miles.

On over the mountain, down toward Bridgeville, we drop down near the Duzen River's gravel bed. Crossing the river several times we exit through the quiet redwood forest of Grizzly Creek, popping out on the other side to the cool late afternoon winds blowing inland from the Pacific. 20 miles later we pull into the Motel Super 8 in Eureka and end one of the most fantastic motorcycling days on record! Everyone is stoked!

After hassling with the Motel management about accommodations (I had reserved a roll-away for one of the rooms) we put away a few beers and hung around our upstairs balcony. Just across the street, was a small informal Mexican restaurant. They were very accommodating of our large group, and we all ate to bursting. We picked up a few more six packs and headed back to the rooms. I think maybe I lasted 45 minutes before lying down, and I was asleep instantly, dreaming of green forests, sweeping curves and fast motorcycles.

Because I went to bed early, I first awoke at about 5:30AM. My initial awareness was of a sickening sound, Rain! Rain?? There had been no rain in the forecast!! I had a hard time accepting the fact. Even during the prior evening there had been no indications of rain. Arising early, I studied the moving gray-black mass of rain clouds overhead. Which way was it moving? Could we find a way out?

This didn't look good! We went back to our previous night's restaurant for breakfast, watching the storm outside. The rain subsided, but the threatening overcast lingered. I still was hoping to figure out a solution. The ride had been so good for the first two days - two more to go - there must be a way!!

I gazed at the mountains to the north, our passage to 299. The storm seemed centered there, thick fog and blowing mist hung above the mountain. It seemed that 299 was not an option. Those of us that brought rain gear suited up and went for gas. Terry announced, no matter what, he was heading home. After an agonizing deliberation it was finally decided. We would head south on 101 and hope the weather might clear. The road was very wet, and although it didn't rain on us very much for the first few hours, the ride was miserable nonetheless.

I don't like the rain or wet roads so I kept my speed about 70. Chris, an experienced all-weather rider, finally grew bored with my cautious speed, passed and disappeared in the mist ahead. We motored on, fat rear tires spraying rooster tails behind each bike.

It began to rain hard as we neared a small town. I no longer remember which one. Willits? Cloverdale?? I don't know, it doesn't matter anyway. We stopped at some old burger joint seeking shelter, out of the rain. We stood around under a large metal awning to wait out the torrent. It just kept raining. We lingered, then decided to brave it and continued south in the rain.

At a junction where Highway 20 cuts to the west from 101, I pulled off and stopped the group under the freeway overpass. We discussed heading west from here, wondering how extensive the storm was, and if, just beyond the misty mountains there might be sunshine and dry roads. Only Chris, the most experienced foul weather rider in the group, was game for giving it a shot.

Even though I hated to give in to the situation, I was dubious of crossing another set of mountain roads in the wet. Consensus, it's over! Dejected, we continued south. We stopped for gas in Petaluma.

It was gray and overcast but it stopped raining. We were all pretty wet. Carole's leathers were totally soaked as was Martin, who early in the day had refused my offer to wear my rain suit pants.

Carole said her good-bye's at the Petaluma gas stop.

I don't remember much about the rest of the ride home. The sky was still overcast and threatening, but I don't think it rained anymore. It was clear that the 22nd running of the PJ-1000 had come to an unsatisfactory end.

Ahhh, the highs and lows of motorcycle touring!

The 23rd running of the PJ1000

September '98 approached. Trip Plan? – no problem, pretty much the same as last year. I really wanted to do the prior year's 4-day plan, which had been cut short by rain. So, this was the year! Early on, it looked as though we would again have a similar large group of riders. Then it was down to 8. By event day, we were down to 6. Both Terry and Carole were scheduled to participate in this year's ride. Last minute work schedule conflicts kept Carole home, bad electric on ride morning sidelined Terry. A broken transmission halted Chris' ride mid-day Sunday, 31 miles west of Redbluff.

So of the 8 that signed up, 6 started and only 5 finished.

| | | | |
|-----------------|--|--|---------------------------|
| 1998 | <i>The 23rd running of the PJ1000</i> | <i>September 18, 19, 20, 21</i> | <i>1,520 Mi.**</i> |
| PJ Naumchik | 1994 | Kawasaki | Ninja ZX-9R |
| Chris Patterson | 1995 | BMW | K75RT |
| Bruce Farley | 1983 | Honda | CX650-Turbo |
| Rick Allan | 1995 | Suzuki | GSX-R750 |
| Scott Murnan | 1995 | Suzuki | GSX-R750 |
| Craig Knudsen | 1998 | Yamaha | YZF-R1 |

**** 1,520 Miles Longest PJ-1000!!**

Friday September 18, 1998

The standard gathering point for an eastern departure is Denny's just off 680 at Mission Blvd. The weather, which had been questionable earlier in the week, was shaping up to be very promising. I was, as has long been my habit on ride day, up early and ready to go by 7AM. Arriving at Denny's I found Craig already there, with Chris, Rick, and Scott arriving shortly thereafter. Bruce even came in a little early, but 8AM came and past, with no sign of Terry. I called his house, but there was no answer. I decided that he knew the plan well, and could easily meet us in route. So the 6 of us headed out across the Central Valley, 580-680-15-99-26. We took a short break at the 99/26 Jtn, then on to Valley Springs. We arrived right on schedule, 123 miles, 10:03AM.

As we rolled out of town I caught glimpse of the local Sheriff entering the roadway behind us, so we were very 'cool' until we turned off to follow 26 just east of Valley Springs. Fortunately our 'shadow' continued east on 12.

We accelerated up through the gentle twists of 26, crossing 49 and moving on to the more demanding corners of 26, which lead to the intersection of 88. We took a brief stop at the infamous "Dairy Queen" and observed a huge number of Harleys throbbing past on their way to Reno via Carson Pass. Their presence, as in years past, accounted for an abundance of black & white vehicles we observed with unusual frequency. We proceeded with moderate caution as we threaded our way past groups of Harley riders and slow 4-wheel conveyances. The generous number of passing zones on 88 make the process easy and relatively low risk. Somewhere near the summit we encountered road construction, where a long line of vehicles was waiting for a Pilot Car. We moved up in the line and placed ourselves behind a group of about 20 Harley riders. I overheard the group talking about having lunch at Kit Carson Lodge, so I told the guys to make an effort to get past them so we wouldn't find overwhelming congestion at the restaurant. Fortunately, everybody got past the Harley group. Unfortunately the other 250 Harley riders already ahead of us were camped out at the Lodge making it an unlikely 'efficient' lunch stop. I pulled over a few miles further to check out the Silver Lake Lodge. (dumb move, it's never been open in September). We attempted to re-enter the highway, however, a long line of slow moving cars, trucks and motorhomes (all that had been behind us at the construction site) used the opportunity to pass us while we pondered the alternative lunch site. Our discussion of alternatives led to Markleville. I had forgotten that Markleville was not on our current route, and as I whizzed past the turn-off, I wondered how clear the decision had been to the others. Stopping about 5 miles past the 89 turn-off a 5-minute wait convinced us that Bruce and Chris had made the turn and headed for Markleville. Rick, Craig, Scotty and I turned back and followed the left toward Markleville.

We ate again at the same café as in '90. We were informed by the proprietor that the restaurant was closing for good. We had a good lunch, not a great lunch. I suggested that as long as we had come this far, we might as well go a bit further southeast and go over Monitor Pass. I've always loved that pass highway, and everyone seemed up for it.

Detour - Monitor Pass and a new Front tire for Rick

At lunch, Rick told me he was worried about his front tire. I certainly understood his discomfort with a marginal front, and remembering that the Suzuki dealer we stopped at the year before was just up the road, I told him it wouldn't present a problem and we headed off to Monitor Pass. An enjoyable roost over Monitor soon had us at the junction of 395. We buzzed up 395 and 40 miles up the road we stopped at the same Suzuki dealer ('97 stop) in Carson City.

It turned out that they had one Metzler Z1 just the right size for the GSXR-front, and they sold it to Rick, mounted it while we waited, and did it all for a bargain to boot. It cost us a little time, but I had scheduled us for a long break at Virginia City, so we decided to cut that short and just pass through and head for Mt. Rose. After a lengthy break at the Suzuki dealer in Carson City we continued west on Hwy 50, then turned left on 431 to Virginia City, passed through town and enjoyed the fast curves down the west side. After a long traffic light wait at the intersection of 341 and 395, we started up the East Side of Mt. Rose.

“Citizen with a Cell Phone”

There was a lot of traffic. The first few miles up the mountain the road has 4 lanes, so we skirted a bunch of slower vehicles. But soon the road narrowed to 2 lanes (double yellow) and we caught up with an endless line of SUV's. Slowly, we worked our way through the line, each rider looking for opportunities and passing one at a time. We all tried to find safe passing areas, apparently Scotty forgetting the altitude change, pulled out in the wrong gear (no poop!) and ended up making a marginal pass. 4 of us finally got clear of the traffic and enjoyed a spirited ride over the top and down the west side of the mountain toward the Lake. As we approached Lake Tahoe I noticed a Sheriff's car on the left side of the road. As we passed him he turned on his lights and made a U-turn pulling the 4 of us over. We obediently dismounted and waited for the officer to collect licenses and registrations. Soon a second officer arrived. The officer explained that a "cell-phone citizen" had called in a complaint accusing us of passing over a double yellow line. The officer told us right up front that; “ I didn't see anything.” To that Rick wisely said “Crossing the double yellow? We didn't cross any double yellow!” We waited awhile longer and a guy with his wife in a fancy new SUV finally showed up. He talked to the Sheriff for a long time. At one point I heard him say “ the green one, he's the leader!!” He conferred with his wife a few times and after a long drawn out discussion with the officers, he finally left. The police informed us he wasn't willing to sign a complaint and show up in court, so we were allowed to leave. In total we were probably detained about 45 minutes. Bruce and Chris, still held up behind the SUV's, passed us while we were pulled over, and waited for us down the road. Once we all got together again, we started up the north side of lake. We noticed a Sheriff's car behind us, so we stayed the speed limit, which is posted 35 mph all the way. Finally we stopped for gas and lost our shadow. 15 miles later we arrived at our day's destination. A message was waiting from Terry that he had suffered an electrical failure and wouldn't be making the ride. We went to a new restaurant near the Alpine Lodge. The meal was pretty good, and after a few brews we were all pretty ready to give up on the day.

Day 2 - Saturday September 19, 1998

Saturday morning was cold. Heavy frost covered seats, tanks, and fairings. We decided to wait for breakfast until Downieville. All suited up in our maximum warm gear we started our day in Truckee. It was a good thing we dressed warm, because the morning air was damn cold on 89 as we headed north. The sun began to warm us a bit as we turned west on 49. We stopped at my favorite overlook on 49 to thaw out a bit and let Bruce catch up. From there it 5 of us engaged in a spirited ride through the fantastic curves on this far end of Highway 49 as it twists up over Yuba pass and then drops down to Downieville. Turns out there was only one breakfast place open in Downieville. We found we had to compete with a town full of antique shoppers attending the Annual 'Bottle Convention' at the Civic Center/Fire Station across the street. After our long breakfast stop, we stripped off our cold weather gear and continued our excursion on 49. Like last year we again turned off at Log Cabin and began our transit toward Oroville. Disappointed in the choice of secondary highways I chose last year, I had planned a new set this year. Unfortunately when we encountered Oregon Hill Road it looked real risky, so I improvised and we found our way through the backroads toward Oroville. After the third time I stopped to check the map Scotty asked me “are we lost?” I assured him that we weren't and we found our way to Oroville.

Leaving Oroville I suggested that Craig lead, after all, this was his home territory. He showed us the way out of town and soon we were on 70 turning north on 99. Just past the turn-off to 99 Craig did a 'huge' wheelie at about 50mph! I'm not sure if I was impressed, or if I disapproved (?)

The usually distasteful ride up 99 was made remarkably more pleasant this year by mild temperatures. We ate lunch at the old standard Burger King in Redbluff. Being much cooler than usual, I was really looking forward to riding 36 in moderate temperature.

Out of town, turn left, ready to roll. It was fantastic. The 'roller coaster' starts with a few teasing undulations in the lower plain just outside of Red Bluff. During the past few years this area has accumulated a light colored dust covering on parts of the highway, especially in a few nasty corners, this always spooks me and I am overly cautious. Then up the hill, to the top of the first plateau. Flat wide pavement snakes into tight uncambered right and left bends - oops what's this?? Gravel in my favorite corners?! Sure enough, for the first time, my favorite route has some scattered gravel. But it didn't persist. Down the back of the first hill, over several humps, around a few slashing corners and we are moving. Then come the airborne whoops!! Whizzzzzzz - the rear tire winds up as the Kawasaki goes airborne over the first of the good humps, landing just in time to hook up for the next blind right or left. A short straight, then . . . "Road Narrows" the small yellow diamond sign declares, down a gear and the right hand twists up a bunch more revs - here we go again. Right, left, another small rise - Oh shit! where is the road going to be? right or left . . . oh there it is, no problem!! Gas it! And so it goes for 20 odd miles. 4 or 5 separate sections, each marked by it's own announcement of fun coming; "Road Narrows!"

Unbelievably the temperatures remain cool! It's always been hot out here. This is so much more enjoyable - if that is possible!! On to the big sweeping hill, with it's 1-year-old rough black asphalt with lots of grip and very few bumps. Up the hill we go at max lean, fast high-speed sweepers, nothing like it - up hill is always so comfortable. Soon we arrive at Wildwood for a break.

Then on to dirty mountain. Nothing ever changes here. I hate this hill. Such a neat road, but always contaminated with gravel strewn corners, especially the blind tight right hand ones. There is no way I can go fast here. Rick and Craig don't seem bothered much by it, fat rear tires spitting small stones high in the air behind.

Scotty, like me, goes slowly here. Chris isn't bothered much by it either, but is content to follow behind. Bruce is back there somewhere. After crossing dirty mountain, we regroup. The next section is the relatively new Mad River section. This has always been Rick's favorite. He and Craig set a scorching pace, the rest of us push to hang on, it's fast but the road is wide and it's easy to see. There are few surprises. We press on, through the tight lane-and-a-half section, down the hill by passing Old Bridgeville, soon in the redwoods dark and quiet. Then the cool air of the pacific and the chill wind and overcast typical of Eureka. This was the best highway 36 day on record!!!

Dinner at an Italian restaurant near the Super 8 Motel, a few beers and I'm history for another day.

Day 3 - Sunday, September 20, 1998

Morning in Eureka! What's this my 5th time in Eureka? It's always the same, cold and overcast in the morning with heavy fog on the mountainside to the west. We get up and pack up. Group decision - breakfast at Willow Creek. Up 101. Right on 299, up the mountain, the Fog is thick and wet. Visibility Zero. Keep climbing, 45 Mph. Crest of the hill, little flash of sun, then dazzling bright sunshine, blinding, as it reflects off the water spots and mist of the face shield. We fight to clear our visors. Visors warm and clear, then it's on the gas down the twisting path that dives toward the river. Willow Creek comes into view quickly. Time to thaw out, time for hot coffee and a filling breakfast.

After a leisurely break to warm up and fill bellies with eggs and toast, we pulled on our leathers and headed out for Weaverville. The weather remained fresh and cool. 299's lanes curved along steep mountain edges just above the foaming river to our right. Around fast sweeping bends, leaning hard right and left as the sun climbed slowly onto its midday perch. Weaverville, time for gas and a break.

Down Hwy 3 to 36 again, over dirty mountain - headed for the 'coaster' then Chris' bike grinds to a stop on the side of the road more than 30 miles west of Red Bluff. After a short period of pushing and cranking, Chris comes to the conclusion - this is serious! Chris mounts up behind me and we head into town, lunch at Burger King while Chris starts calling for a truck. Finally after about an hour, he found a truck rental agent just outside of town. We all rode out together. Chris rented the Truck and we headed out to the site where the BMW sat idle beside the road. The only good part was, 'another ride on the Roller Coaster'!

It was no longer cool like the previous day. We waited in the hot sun by the side of the road for Chris to arrive with the truck. Once he arrived we all pushed the bike up into the truck and helped Chris lash it in place. We wished him well, and we departed, now just 5, for points to the east.

With all the extra time involved in finding the truck, driving back out to the broken BMW and getting Chris set, it has gotten very late. We set out down 99 toward Chico. Just north of town we stopped for gas. It was still quite warm, about 5PM. Craig led us south on 99 to the Durham-Pentz cutoff and over to Hwy 70. As we crossed the peak of the foothills leading down into the Feather River Canyon, the temperature seemed to drop 15 degrees. There was still plenty of good sunlight, and the cool air seemed to refresh all of us.

Craig led, with Rick right behind him. Me, then Scotty, and back there somewhere was Bruce. Craig's blue R1 was setting a really aggressive pace, and the four of us rode like we were connected. The Feather River Highway is 50 miles of sweeping fast curves. Along the river, visibility is great and passing the few remaining cars on the highway was accomplished with ease. Swoosh-Swoosh-Swoosh-Swoosh, must have been the sound of the passing train of Yamaha-Suzuki-Kawasaki-Suzuki as we blistered past cars and trucks. We were all feeling the elation of the cool air, the last of the good road after a very long and fantastic riding day. I can't remember a more exciting riding experience.

It took us a while to find the El Ranchito Motel, we forgot that Quincy is split into two sections. I was nearly dark when we arrived. The Motel is a collection of small cabin groups set back in the woods on a small stream. Very peaceful and quiet. We walked a short distance down the road to find a Chinese restaurant. We enjoyed a great dinner. I don't know how good the food really was, but at the end of this day, it tasted fantastic.

On the way back to the motel, we picked up some beer. I bought a half-pint of brandy. We sat around for awhile sipping brandy and drinking beer. We didn't stay up too long. It had been a long day.

I woke the next morning with a tough hangover. Oh - dumb idea to drink brandy with beer!

I felt really rocky as we packed up our gear. We decided to ride to Downieville again for breakfast, and started our southern ride on 89 toward junction of 49. Craig took the lead again at one point, and we just cruised along behind him. The next think I noticed, we're entering a small town - - what's this?? Portola?? We aren't supposed to be in Portola!! Damn, Craig led us right past the 89 turn-off. We stayed on 70 by mistake. We turned around and went back. Bruce noticed our error and waited for us at the turn-off.

On toward 49, then up the mountain toward Yuba Pass. A picture stop at my favorite overlook, then Craig led us over the Pass and down to Downieville. A very fast ride!

We had another breakfast in Downieville. No bottle shoppers this morning. We hung around for awhile and then gassed up and departed for Nevada City. I don't remember who led this last leg, may have been Rick. We thoroughly enjoyed the rest of 49 as it twisted it's way south to Nevada City. We stopped in town, and took another break. The good stuff is almost done.

We gassed up once again, and took SR-174 south toward I-80. This was a big mistake! Traffic was heavy in both directions, with many slow trucks. A few construction zones. Very hard to pass. Rick, Craig, and Scotty passed a big gravel truck, I was caught behind it. Bruce was even further back in the slow traffic. Several miles passed before I found a place to pass the truck, and the other 3 riders were long gone. I felt no urge to try to catch up, only a few miles from the end of 174, there wasn't any reason to push now. I relaxed, a little too much I guess.

Up a steep incline, bending slightly to the right, flattening out into a moderately tight left-hand turn near the top of the hill. I gassed the Kawasaki up the incline pulling a few revs and clicking up a couple of gears. As the upcoming left approached, I pulled in the clutch, added a little brake and coasted a moment toward the turn. I let out the clutch to engage a gear going into the corner. Oh Shit! The rear wheel locked and came around to my right. I had absent mindedly downshifted into 1st instead of 2nd. The Kawi's high compression motor abruptly halted the rear wheel's rotation and a wild tank-slapper resulted. I should have been able to push my way through, but I didn't save it. The bike slammed down on it's left side and spit me off in the middle of the lane. I wasn't going too fast, so my leathers suffered minimal abrasions, and I was unhurt. But the bike, skidding as motorcycles do, on a few slippery contact points, continued to skid toward the edge of the road. . . then over the edge, out of sight. Panic! How far down did it go? I picked myself up and jogged to the steep edge of the tree-lined embankment.

Whew! There was the bike just about 6 feet down the hill resting in the soft dirt and grass. It was hard to tell how bad the damage was. A TV Cable guy in a pickup stopped to help, then Bruce came along. Shortly after the other 3 riders had returned to see what was keep us so long. After a couple of failed tries using a length of TV cable, we all were able to right the bike and push it back up on to the road.

Aside from some plastic rash, the only mechanical damage was a broken shift lever. Bruce handily fixed that by tie-wrapping a medium sized Allan-wrench to the stub of the shift lever.

As bad as I felt about falling down, the ride had been so fantastic, that it really didn't phase me much. The bike was totally rideable and aside from being embarrassed for the scuff marks on the side of the bike I didn't really let it get to me. We finished the ride on the predictably boring California Freeways and arrived home without further incident.

Summary

A lot of things went wrong in '98. The 'cell-phone' double yellow incident. Chris' BMW transmission. My crash on 174. But in spite of all of that, it was one of the best rides I can remember. At times I thought Craig's pace was a little too hot for my taste, but most of the time we were all comfortable and together. One of the best things was the cool weather on Hwy 36. A rare occurrence.

1999, PJ-1k #24

Just like '98, the sign-up list for the 1999 PJ-1K indicated a large group. Rick, Scotty, and Chris were definite. A new guy, Mana, a friend of Scotty's also sounded committed. Carole, on tour in Italy with her Dad, planned to return just in time for the ride. Nick sent in his Motel advance early. Luis, who hadn't made the ride since '95, said he planned to attend. Kerwin scheduled his hunting weekend around the trip dates and Terry, a little concerned about the reliability of his Suzuki, was planning to go. My son Steve, who had just purchased a new bike, indicated an interest in participating this year, but a 'check-out' ride in August determined that he needed a bit more bike time to be ready for the kind of pace that this group would set.

On the "couldn't make it" list; Bruce, recovering from a broken shoulder, was doubtful. Dave who would have been questionable anyway, was on holiday in Hawaii. Craig, was recovering from a broken hip resulting from a nasty get-off. Even without them it looked like 10 riders would be going:

PJ, Rick, Chris, Scotty, Mana, Carole, Nick, Luis, Terry, Kerwin

The week before the ride Nick fell off a horse broke his arm. Terry continued to be worried about his Suzuki. Luis and Kerwin both ended up with unexpected company. Carole's trip dates changed and she couldn't get back in time. So we were Five!

| | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|------|----------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| 1999 | The 24th running of the PJ1000 | | | September 17, 18, 19, 20 | 1,404 Mi. |
| | PJ Naumchik | 1994 | Kawasaki | ZX-9R | |
| | Chris Patterson | 1995 | BMW | K75RT | |
| | Rick Allan | 1995 | Suzuki | GSX-R750 | |
| | Scott Murnan | 1995 | Suzuki | GSX-R750 | |
| | Mana Coste | 1998 | Suzuki | TL1000S | |

Friday, Sept. 17, 1999

We gathered at Denny's on Mission Blvd. Shortly after 8AM, the five of us headed out of Santa Clara Valley, using the traditional routes; 580-680-15-99-26. We took a short break near the 99/26 junction, then on to Valley Springs. We arrived right on schedule, 122 miles, 10:00AM. After a reasonable break, we continued east on 26, crossed 49 and enjoyed the freshly prepped asphalt curves of 26. Our back road loop on 26 terminated at the intersection of State Route 88.

Because of the SUV traffic, the "Cell-Phone" incident of '98, and the hassle in around Carson City, I planned an alternate first day this year. Rather than our usual excursion over Carson Pass, I plotted a route back through Jackson, South on 49, then over Ebbetts Pass (Hwy 4).

From 26 we swung left, back to Jackson. Leaving Jackson, the first 10 miles of 49 heading south rises and twists over a small mountain. Unfortunately, we did not make it through this area without encountering traffic. The rest of 49 was uneventful, and it was getting hot. We stopped for lunch in Angels Camp. The restaurant I chose in the middle of town was not a particularly good.

After lunch we gassed the bikes and began our trek over Ebbetts Pass. As with most of the Sierra pass highways, I noticed a significant growth of civilization along the mountain road. Quaint little roadside villages had grown much larger with increased congestion. (The last time we visited Highway 4 over Ebbetts Pass was in '91.)

The road surface had been improved significantly, but because of the better road, we encountered increased traffic. Unfortunately, the passing opportunities were more limited than 88, so this alternate 1st day route was not turning out to be a winner. We took a break in Markleville, Mana's Suzuki twin needed gas.

Years ago, I really enjoyed the road on the West side of Lake Tahoe. Later, we found increased, traffic and the road lost it's appeal. This year I had no illusions, I expected it to be slow, but better than the 'South Shore' routes. Surprisingly the twisty lakeside route was really fun for about 5 or 6 miles. Then we caught up with a couple of retired couples in a '60's Mustang cruising along at 40mph, and unable to fine a good passing opportunity, we followed them all the way to North Shore.

We fueled again in Tahoe City, turned north toward Truckee, and made the last 15 miles pass quickly. We settled in once again, at the Alpine Village Motel. Wasn't long before the first 6 pack of stout beer arrived, after a few brews and some 'Black & Tans' we went off to dinner.

The first day of our the tour ended pretty much on schedule, having logged 359 miles. In review, I don't think I would repeat this route again.

Trip Plan said: 368 miles, Actual = 359 miles; 97.6% accuracy!

Day 2 - Saturday, Sep 18, 1999

Saturday morning in Truckee was overcast, and to my dismay we were greeted with rain. Sprinkles at first, followed by a light shower. I grumbled a bit, but we persisted and packed the bikes in the damp morning shower. The rain subsided in about 30 minutes. The group elected to have breakfast in Downieville, and we headed out. Within 25 miles the sky cleared and we were on our way in sunshine. The ride north on 89 was uneventful, it was cold and the road there is only good in a few places. The scene is tranquil, high mountain 2-lane, surrounded by generous clusters of evergreen. Bright sunshine broke through light scattered clouds, but filtered by the trees it provided only minimal warmth. Soon, the road split at the 49 junction, and we took the left fork up the mountain toward Yuba Pass. The first few miles of this highway are among the very best segments on this route (actually among the best anywhere). Climbing the moderate grade, the road rising from the high valley is wide and smooth. The corners are challenging, but hide few surprises. This is the kind of road that is well suited to my Kawasaki's broad powerband, and by the time we arrive here I've warmed up enough to begin to really enjoy the corners. We took a short stop at my favorite overlook, the mounted up again to head off for breakfast.

Leaving the overlook, I asked Rick to take the lead. Mana followed, then PJ, Scotty and Chris. Rick set an aggressive pace up toward Yuba Pass. With Mana glued to his rear tire, they flew up the mountain. The group stretched out a bit as we struggled to maintain the pace. Over the crest of the Pass, Rick eased the pace and the group stayed tight on the way down to Downieville.

Breakfast in Downieville, not as long stop as last year, but everyone seems to like this place. Mana has got to learn how to order breakfast in the US. The french just aren't used to so many choices!

After gas, we continued down the mountain following the Yuba River. This is one fine road! Rick continued the lead until we got near the Marysville Road Turn-off. I followed a less complicated route through the back country to Oroville. Scotty didn't worry that I was lost this year.

Leaving Oroville, we were faced with the long haul (64 miles) up to Red Bluff. It's really not all that far, but the high temperatures and often windy straight Hwy 99 is never a pleasant ride. Chris suggested that we try to locate an alternative (from Burger King) for lunch. When we arrived, we looked, but failed to find anything interesting in downtown Red Bluff, and decided to continue to Wildwood for lunch.

Ahhh!! Hwy 36!! The Concrete Roller Coaster!! My favorite Road!! It was real warm, (last year spoiled us 'cause it was unusually cool) but I was feeling comfortable, and this is my kind of road. It's a real point-and-shoot course, and that suits me and the power of the Kawasaki very well.

The 'roller coaster' starts with a few preparatory undulations whose corners were once again littered with that nasty looking tan dust. Then, up the rise to top of the plateau. Hard on the gas, then hard on the brakes, following the flat wide pavement snaking through the tight right and left bends. Once again, as I discovered last year, there was gravel contaminating some of the corners on this first leg of the 'coaster.' Once off that first hill, the road was clear again. Down the off the hill and around a few slashing corners and we are moving. Flight time! The Kawasaki catches air over the first of the good humps, landing just in time to hook up for the next blind right or left. The road settles into a short straight, then the small yellow sign announces; "Road Narrows" I shift down two gears and twists up some more revs - here we go again. And so it goes, through 4 more separate sections, each marked by it's own announcement of fun coming; "Road Narrows!"

After the 'Coaster' we took a short road-side break and then Rick led up the fast winding mountain toward Wildwood. We had a nice lunch at the Wildwood store. The folks that run this 'hunters place' were very friendly. Chris met the wrong end of a bee on the way out, and the ladies fixing lunch helped me put together a "Baking Soda Cure" to sooth the damage. After lunch we gassed up and headed out to "Dirty Mountain." The corners were, as usual, peppered with that nasty pea gravel and sand. It bothered Scotty and me a lot more than Rick and Mana.

Once over the hill its all good stuff until you hit the cold Pacific air. Rick led most of the way, screaming as usual up the Mad River hill. I was back to really exercising the Kawasaki motor on the straight parts to make up for not being able to keep up in the corners. Damn those guys are fast!

As we headed up 101 toward Eureka it was cold and windy as usual. We found the trusty Super 8 Motel and tucked into our favorite covered parking places. After a shower we wandered out for dinner. We went for Pizza, but somehow the Pizza place we remembered didn't seem to be in the same place any more. We settled. In was OK. At least the beer was great!

Trip Plan said: 355 miles, Actual = 363 miles; 97.8% accuracy!

Day 3 Sunday, Sept 19, 1999

Cold and overcast! Typical Eureka September morning. I can't remember it ever being different (except when it rained!) Everyone gassed up and again elected to go to Willow Creek for breakfast. 20 miles north on 101 to the 299 exit, then up the mountain into the gray wet blanket of fog that 'always' hangs on the mountainside above the Pacific. Driving through the thick gray blanket, I had to open my faceshield to see, and the cold wet air stung my nose and cheeks. Once over the summit the bright sunshine suddenly illuminated all the droplets on the face shield causing temporary loss of visibility.

Down the hill- what's that blue haze? The air was heavy and the sun faded as we dropped down the western slope of the mountain toward Willow Creek. Then I realized what the smokey blue haze was the result of forest fires up north. We had breakfast in Willow Creek. Same coffee shop as the last year.

Hwy 299 was great as ever, the smoke in the air did take a little of the edge off, and there were several Fire Camps along the highway which required extra caution, but this highway is always a pleasure. We took a long gas break in Weaverville, then Rick led us down the hill to the Hwy 3 junction where we turned south to rejoin Highway 36.

We took a short break at the 63/3 junction and then followed Rick over 'Dirty Mountain' once again. Another break at Wildwood, down the mountain and then another shot at my favorite roller coaster.

It was hot again and we took a long break at the infamous I-5 Burger King. Then we again faced the arduous task of 99 South to Chico. A stop to ingest some liquid refreshment at the north end of Chico got us ready for the last leg of our Sunday ride. It seemed to take forever to get to the Durham-Pentz turn-off toward Butte College.

Then up to 70, over the mountain to the Feather River Canyon. At Hwy 70 I waved Rick and Mana passed. With Rick leading, the pace was very brisk. When I follow Scotty in the tight twisty stuff, I'm all over his rear tire. But on this fast road like Feather River, it was just the opposite. I kept trying, but halfway through the Canyon I completely lost sight of Rick and Mana. Those guys are just too fast for me. I probably should have let Scotty pass, he really likes these fast sweepers. I was just a little too aggressive for him to get by, but not as fast as he would have liked to go.

Near the East end of the canyon, we found Mana & Rick on the side of the road waiting for us. Also it turned out that Mana's Suzuki had shaken out the bolt holding the chain guard in place, and it was dragging on the chain. Mana took it off. While he was doing this minor repair, a CHP stopped to see if we needed any assistance.

From there it didn't take long to get to Quincy. We settled in at the Ranchito Motel, and went to the Chinese restaurant for another great meal.

Trip Plan: 357 miles, Actual = 351 miles; 98.3% accuracy!

Day 4, Monday Sept 20 1999

In the morning we found our gas stop across the street not open for business. It took a short tour of Quincy to find gas. Once the tanks were topped off, we headed out south on 89 to Hwy 49 and targeted a Downieville breakfast. Down through the chilly tree lined highway, we moved somewhat cautiously. This area seems a haven for CHP. I've never quite figured out why, but there are always a lot of them between Truckee and Quincy. At one point as we were threading our way through some traffic, a logging truck ahead caused a fair back-up. 4 of us got by, but a few miles up the road we noticed Scotty was missing. We pulled off and waited a long time. Turned out, just after we got by, a CHP came up behind Scotty and he dared not pass the truck. Forced to chug along at 55 with lots of double yellow on the road, it took a long time before he was able to get by the truck.

It pays to be alert on as you travel south on 89, because if you keep on the primary route it continues as Hwy 70 and dumps you in Portola (that happened last year). Following a well marked right turn, keeps you on 89. Not many miles beyond the 89 split, the road meanders across a high mountain plain, sometimes lined with Fir and Pine, other times open ranch land. The roadway that winds through the trees is particularly good, swervy and undulating. Unfortunately, this early in the day, the long morning shadows discourage real spirited riding, keeping visibility just below the optimal. There are a lot of deer in this neck of the woods, so shadows can present some real dangers. Hwy 49 turn-off splits off and heads up the forested route to Yuba Pass. This is the same route we took just two days back, and we again enjoyed the climb up through the wide smooth turns. The surface is light gray-white, and clear of gravel and dirt. A short distance up the hill, one of my favorite overlooks provides a nice rest stop and a great place for pictures. After a reasonable break, its back on the road headed for Downieville's historic buildings for a second time this trip.

Again, I found it difficult to match Rick's pace up the mountain toward Yuba Pass. I had to cheat, continually squeezing the top end of the Kawasaki's generous power on the straight uphill links between corners to regain yards lost in each corner. Scotty faded back a little, but was always in view in my mirrors.

Once we crossed Yuba Pass, the decent began down the western slope toward Downieville. The road is quiet and clean, and Rick kept the pace hot, but finally 'I found the groove' and was able to keep the leaders in sight most of the way. Watching Rick enter corners ahead was impressive. He looked so at ease and smooth, entering the twisty corners relaxed, very little brake light and leaning in easily, disappearing to the right or left, I was working way too hard. Breakfast in Downieville again. I think it's becoming a ritual.

I suggest that we drop in on my sister-in-law Silvia and husband Don near Lake Wildwood. At first the group seems agreeable, but after breakfast the general decision is to go to Nevada City instead. The last 40 miles of good road for the trip passed too quickly.

As we got near to Nevada City traffic got heavier. At one point I was stuck behind a large truck with nowhere to pass. The group had disappeared ahead and the road was frighteningly similar to route 174 (from last year). I got real nervous, and later a few of the guys said they were worried too. It was too much de ja vu!. But I managed to get to Nevada City without incident.

In town on a Monday, it was hard to find a place to park the bikes. Once that task was finally accomplished we looked for a place to have a nice break. We finally settled on an old hotel (Nevada City Hotel, I think). There was a great veranda above the street, and although it took some effort to get some service on this quiet Monday, it was an enjoyable place to relax before the long ride home.

Finally we mounted up for the last leg of the trip. I was taking the group down Hwy 20 for at least there was about 5 miles of curvy stuff on the way to Marysville. As luck would have it, Road Construction!! A long line of cars and a convoy vehicle led us through the only good piece of Hwy 20. The balance, straight, congested and boring.

We took a final break in Marysville, then set out to defeat the remaining 160 miles or so to get home.

Trip Plan: 332 miles, Actual = 331 miles; 99.7% accuracy!

Total Trip Plan: 1412 miles, Actual = 1404 miles; 99.4% accuracy!

Summary of 1999

This was a great ride. Weather cooperated, and except for the minor sprinkle in Truckee and a bit too much heat on 36, we really couldn't have expected much better weather. The group was tight and worked well together.

Rick led the majority of the ride, (My efforts to encourage him to assume leadership seem to be working) and his pace was usually great. He made a real point to set a pace to keep the group together, but always 'pulled' us a little to have us riding up to our potential. I really enjoyed riding in the middle, but often felt very challenged to try to keep up with Rick and Mana. The only times I felt 'really strong' was on 36, both west and east on the roller coaster.

Again I was disappointed in the first and last day's ride plan. I'm not sure how much I can do about that, but I will keep trying to find a route that does not make those days include such a small percentage of good road.

Appendix A

Rider Biographies

A few years ago I asked the PJ-1K participants to submit a “Bio” of their history with motorcycling. A few have, and hopefully in time more will send some material to be included.

PJ Naumchik "the Organizer"

D.O.B. 10-6-1944

Beginnings: 1967-1976

In 1967 I encountered my first motorcycle. Thanks to a car racing friend of my room-mate Ken, a '64 Honda CB305 Dream was loaned to me for 6 months after my Corvette was stolen. In 1969, I moved to Massachusetts. While living there I had the opportunity to ride several bikes belonging to friends; Barry's 650 BSA, and my only off-road experience was acquired on Brad Marshall's 1963 Bultaco 200. Later after moving to Ottawa, Canada '72-74, another friend owned a Honda CB350, and a Kawasaki KZ500 2-Stroke triple. On two occasions, I had the opportunity to sample each.

I was definitely hooked, but conditions back east, particularly in Eastern Canada (10 months of winter) were not conducive to motorcycle ownership. In 1975 I returned to California, and in May '76, with my first income tax return, I purchased my first motorcycle, a 1972 Honda CB450T. The moss green Honda taught me numerous important motorcycling lessons:

- 1) Never buy a bike you haven't ridden. The owner took me for a ride behind him, and it wasn't until I rode the bike aggressively I found it wouldn't stay in 2nd gear under acceleration.
- 2) Motorcycle parts guys don't always have all the right answers (even though they Always think they do.)
- 3) Never leave the fuel tank petcock @ 'run' on an old Honda. (fills the crankcase with gas)
- 4) You really don't steer a motorcycle by pushing with your knees.

1977 - 1978

Between '77 and '78, my interest in motorcycling increased orders of magnitude. The motorcycle press, particularly Cycle and Cycle World magazines, introduced me to the awesome world of modern street bikes. Once my awareness was raised, I quickly became disenchanted with my 450 Twin. At National Semiconductor I worked with a fellow who owned a metallic orange '75 Honda 750SS. I really like the look of his bike, and began to shop for a similar motorcycle. After months of studying the want-ads I located a bright yellow '76 for sale at a San Jose Toyota Dealer. November, 1977 in one lunch hour I talked the salesman down to \$1175, and thus began my "Cafe Racer" craze.

1980 - 1981 Attitude Adjustment

Between '80 and '81 I went through another motorcycling 'attitude adjustment.' For my birthday in 1980, my wonderful wife arranged an opportunity for me to attend a Bob Bonderant's 'Defensive Driving School' (for Cars). I had just finished reading about Keith Code's Superbike School, which was coming to Laguna Seca in November. I asked if she would mind if I attended Superbike School instead, and she agreed.

I had no idea this experience would completely alter my approach to motorcycling. I went to the School intent on just cruising around the circuit, in a nice safe environment, improving my steering and braking skills.

After a few hours of classroom instruction we mounted the school's modified 1980 Kawasaki KZ550's, and followed the instructors through several warm-up laps. At 'the Flag' I started out, according to plan, just cruising around, getting the feel of the bike and the track.

Then, one of the other students passed me!! The adrenaline started pumping, and in the next 20 laps around Laguna Seca Raceway, my entire appreciation of motorcycle sport riding changed. I found that motorcycles didn't need to wobble in the corners, or 'stand-up' under braking, I also found that after that, no-one else in that class could pass me!!

By December of 1980, I was the proud owner of an almost new (4800mi) 1980 Honda CB750F.

That bike, when introduced in 1979, set an entirely new standard for handling. In the months following I added low bars, rear-sets, a Kerker 4-1 Exhaust, and a sport fairing. During the ensuing 2 year period I rode in excess of 17,000 miles, gaining experience - dragging footpegs.

April '83 up to 1100cc

Having now accumulated almost 40,000 peg scapping miles on my two 750's I had become a full fledged "sport bike addict." As a dedicated subscriber to *Cycle*, *Motorcyclist*, *Cycle World*, and *Cycle Guide* Magazines, I was continually bombarded with a barrage of "Liter Bike" reviews and comparisons.

I became convinced, I had to have an 1100cc, 100+ HP Motorcycle. In April of 1983, I located an almost new Honda CB1100F. This bike originally sold for \$3600, I purchased this almost new (3,900mi) Blue and White version for \$2,800.

Ouch!

In October of 1983, I experienced a bad fall on the 1100F. This crash had a significant impact on my motorcycling habits. Although I wasn't hurt seriously, I did lose a lot of skin. I agreed with Florinda that I would significantly reduce my riding miles, which I did. It also slowed me down some, although Dave Sweetman probably wouldn't agree. Another result; During the insurance funded resurrection of the Honda 1100F, a complete metamorphosis took place. It took until February of 1984, but the bike that emerged from PJ's garage was very different from the original. The Honda now sported a custom red, white and blue paint scheme, and was propelled by a freshly tuned 1100cc motor, fed by 33mm Mikuni Smoothbores, and exhausted through an Ontario 4 into 1.

Smaller Bike (exit Honda, enter Kawasaki)

As I talked with riding buddies about my next bike, they were all betting on something like a Honda Hurricane 1000. But by this time the "Magazine Guys" had changed their tune. Instead of pushing the big 1000cc power bikes exclusively, they were beginning to promote lighter, more agile machines. My next decision was influenced by this new media disclosure. I chose a salvaged 1987 Kawasaki 750. Only 85 HP (only weighs 495 lbs). A nice, middle-of-the-road Middleweight. Handled great, and was very comfortable.

Corner Paranoia

After my crash during the 1991 PJ-1K, caused by gravel in an Ebbetts Pass corner, I was very 'tentative.' During the '92 PJ-1K, a wasted front "wedgie" tire caused the ol' confidence meter to register even lower. I just couldn't seem to get my act together in the turns, particularly blind right-handers.

After the '92 ride, I mounted a new front tire. The new Dunlop radial felt so strange (read normal) I almost fell down in my driveway. That's how badly the old tire had worn. With my new tire, I headed out to Mt. Hamilton. The first couple of times I was cautious and nervous and took it very easy scrubbing in the front. Then I began to push-it a little. Several Saturdays, on my way to work at Crosspoint, I donned full leathers and went to work via Quimby and Mt Hamilton Roads. After 4 such trips, I began to feel a bit more confident. Late in November '92, I joined Chris and Rick on an aggressive ride from Livermore out Del Puerto Canyon, then over Mt Hamilton to San Jose. After that ride, I was feeling better about my skill, and I think I finally accepted how much better Rick and Chris can ride the corners. At that time I could hang with Rick when he wasn't 'on the limit,' but when Chris set the pace, there are just too many places where I would back off, and they wouldn't.

1994, A "Repaired PJ" Rides again

Man, the miracles of modern technology. On May 19th 1994, I 'went under the knife' and had my old worn out left hip replaced with a high-tech high-performance, tungsten-carbide-chrome-moly design, good for 15-20 years. After a few months of crutchin' around, July 23rd I took my first ride over Mt. Hamilton. I wasn't very smooth, and not real fast, but it didn't hurt a bit!!

New Kawasaki in 1994

The Sunday prior to the running of the 20th PJ-1000 I located and purchased an almost new 1994 Kawasaki ZX-9R.

2001

I've now ridden my big green machine for 6yrs and more than 18,000 miles. By today's sportbike standards, it's overweight and underpowered (if you can call a 500LB, 127BHP motorcycle by such terms). But it's very comfortable, and I become very used to it's clunky gearbox and stiff suspension. I also realize, that a faster motorcycle wouldn't necessarily make me any 'faster.' There are plenty of riders who could go a lot quicker than I on this very motorcycle. So, I'm content to take my place mid pack, or even at the back of the fast-pack and just do my thing. (which is to continue to try to keep up!). I'm just happy to be still riding my motorcycle!!!



David Sweetman

D.O.B. 30 January 1948

I met Dave Sweetman while working at Signetics in late 70's. I didn't think we had much "Motorcycling" in common because he road a Gold Wing. And, I was right we didn't. But, as it turned out David has been the most consistent participant over the many years of the PJ-1K. Dave has participated on the ride 15 times over the past 20 years. He has logged 16,688 PJ-1K miles.

Dave used 3 different bikes on the PJ-1000:

- ❖ 1978 Honda GL1000 *GoldWing*
- ❖ 1984 Honda VF1000S "V65" *Saber*
- ❖ 1994 Honda ST1100

Dave is retired now, Living out in Nevada, but if his health holds Up, we will probably ride together again.



David's PJ-1K History

| | | | | |
|------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 1981 | <i>The 5th Annual</i> | <i>PJ-1000</i> | <i>August 15, 16, 17</i> | <i>1,034 Mi.</i> |
| | 1978 Honda GL1000 | <i>GoldWing</i> | | |
| 1982 | <i>The 6th Annual</i> | <i>PJ-1000</i> | <i>August 28, 29, 30</i> | <i>1,041 Mi.</i> |
| | 1978 Honda GL1000 | <i>GoldWing</i> | | |
| 1985 | <i>The 9th Annual</i> | <i>PJ 1000</i> | <i>September 20, 21, 22, 23</i> | <i>1,117 Mi.</i> |
| | 1984 Honda VF1000S | "V65" <i>Saber</i> | | |
| 1986 | <i>The 10th Annual</i> | <i>PJ-1000</i> | <i>August 16, 17, 18</i> | <i>1,060 Mi.</i> |
| | 1984 Honda VF1000S | "V65" <i>Saber</i> | | |
| 1987 | <i>The 11th Annual</i> | <i>PJ-1000</i> | <i>September 18, 19, 20, 21</i> | <i>1,407 Mi.</i> |
| | 1984 Honda VF1000S | "V65" <i>Saber</i> | | |
| 1988 | <i>The 12th Annual</i> | <i>PJ-1000</i> | <i>September 8, 9, 10, 11</i> | <i>1,400 Mi. (3 days only)</i> |
| | 1984 Honda VF1100S | "V65" <i>Saber</i> | | |
| 1989 | <i>The 13th Annual</i> | <i>PJ-1000</i> | <i>September 16, 17, 18 (Rained Out)</i> | <i>243 Mi</i> |
| | 1984 Honda VF1000S | "V65" <i>Saber</i> | | |
| 1990 | <i>The 15th running of the PJ1000</i> | | <i>September 15, 16, 17</i> | <i>1,121 Mi.</i> |
| | 1984 Honda VF1000S | "V65" <i>Saber</i> | | |
| 1991 | <i>The 16th running of the PJ1000</i> | | <i>September 7, 8, 9</i> | <i>1,108 Mi.</i> |
| | 1984 Honda VF1000S | "V65" <i>Saber</i> | | |
| 1992 | <i>The 17th running of the PJ1000</i> | | <i>September 11, 12, 13, 14</i> | <i>1,488 Mi.</i> |
| | 1984 Honda VF1100S | "V65" <i>Saber</i> | | |
| 1993 | <i>The 18th running of the PJ1000</i> | | <i>October 2, 3, 4</i> | <i>965 Mi.</i> |
| | 1984 Honda VF1100S | "V65" <i>Saber</i> | | |
| 1994 | <i>The 19th running of the PJ1000</i> | | <i>September 17, 18, 19</i> | <i>1,036 Mi.</i> |
| | 1984 Honda VF1100S | "V65" <i>Saber</i> | | |
| 1995 | <i>The 20th running of the PJ1000</i> | | <i>September 15, 16, 17, 18</i> | <i>1,407 Mi.</i> |
| | 1994 Honda ST1100 | | | |
| 1996 | <i>The 21st running of the PJ1000</i> | | <i>September 21, 22, 23</i> | <i>1,018 Mi.</i> |
| | 1994 Honda ST1100 | | | |
| 2000 | <i>The 25th running of the PJ1000</i> | | <i>September 15, 16, 17, 18</i> | <i>1,426 Mi.</i> |
| | 1994 Honda ST1100 | | | |

David's Bio.

I started riding in 1972 (age 24), when I bought two Honda CB-350's. I was raising my brothers and a sister at the time and I had always wanted a motorcycle when younger, but was not to be. I had ridden once on the back of a friend's father's Harley when I was in the Navy and had tried a Honda 175 once. The Honda dealer was close by and was able to make a deal when I went in and offered cash for the 2 CB-350's. Quickly one of my brothers chose to use my car (a 1970 Dodge Challenger), so I did most of commuting to work on the motorcycle, which in South Carolina at all times of the year (winter used a truck), is an adventure. The other brother chopped the other cycle and eventually it was totaled by a construction truck driver making the famous left turn.

Total miles ~ 11,000 (1972-1975).

After getting married and moving to San Diego, my wife was jealous that I could go riding with some old Navy buddies, but she could not (not on a CB-350 anyway). We had borrowed a friend's CB-500 for a few trips, but that was not big enough (although we weigh a lot more now, even then we were a load for a motorcycle!!). Therefore, the next motorcycle was a CB-750 (1975). This was the first year of the Gold Wing, but we were not ready for that. The CB-750 got a Vetter Windjammer and off we went. Donna & I had our first flat tires (at least 4) and subsequent accidents on the 750. A flat in Mexico, up in the mountains, which took about 5 patches to repair, one for the nail and 4 for the workmanship of the local (friendly and helpful) Mexicans. The next flat I fixed, but had a blowout 30 miles later, got the cycle stopped but fell over in the sand and Donna broke her arm. After getting that flat fixed, riding the cycle home in the wind (out near 29 Palms) was not a pleasant experience. First time on a cycle went over 100 mph. Total miles ~ 20,000 (1972-1978).

In 1977 moved to Milpitas, then in 1978, we got a GL-1000 Gold Wing, added a Windjammer fairing and Samsonite saddle bags, custom seat. Donna & I took many trips about the western USA. Longest trip about 4,000 miles over a 3 week period. Only one major accident, flipped the cycle near Ojai, going too fast for the road, significant road rash that took a few months to heal enough to be able to ride. Only a couple of flats, but did not go down. Most exciting experience when going down Wolf Creek Pass (in Colorado) and met a truck passing a car on the way up. Rode the edge of the road side line when could reach out and touch the truck; that line was the only thing between us and a 500 to 1000 foot drop off. Went on first PJ-1000 in 1980, including the editorial in Rider magazine. Total miles ~ 50,000 (1978-1986).

In 1982, bought a CX-500 for commuting. Commuting on the 750 was OK, but not the Gold Wing. So now had two cycles, one for vacations and one for commuting. This also had a Windjammer and saddle bags. No major accidents 1 flat, though did get rear ended at a stop sign. Total miles about 10,000 (1982-1984). In 1984, bought the VF-1000 Sabre. Increased the height of the stock fairing windshield, added a Corbin seat, steel braided hydraulic hoses. This was to do better in the PJ-1000, as well as a better commute cycle. This also improved my skills, as this was a tall and very powerful (121 horsepower at the rear wheel) cycle. Even kept up with Pete for a while near the Trinity river, when his cycle had some carburation problems. No major accidents (at least one flat and a minor one on wet pavement) until 1994, when a swerving car and oil/sand on the road caused a go-down that pretty much messed up the body work, which by this time was not replaceable. Total miles ~ 40,000 (1984-1994).

In 1986, bought a GL-1200 Gold Wing SEI (with all the bells and whistles) to replace the GL-1000. Added a Corbin seat and did some minor tweaking to the electronics to eliminate the noise in the radio headset. Unfortunately hit a carriage bolt (best guess based on the size of the hole in the rear tire) when only had 317 miles. Neither Donna or I were seriously hurt (scratches, showing what protective gear will do when the cycle goes down a 65+ mph), but Donna became very timid about riding. This cut short some of our vacation times, but we did travel some about the western USA, longest rip about 3,000 miles in 2 weeks. Total miles about 25,000 (1986-1994).

In 1994, bought the ST-1100 to replace the VF-1100. At the same time, got rid of the SEI. Not only was Donna not wanting to ride, but my MD was beginning to affect my strength and 2-up riding may not have been safe. The ST has a Corbin seat, special handle bars, and a raised windshield on the fairing. This is the only cycle I have ridden that I have not been down on or has gotten a flat. Used mostly for commuting, but has seen a few PJ-1000's. This is the best handling cycle I have ridden and has somewhat compensated for my declining strength and lack of ability. Total miles ~ 20,000 (1994-current).

Have never been interested in racing, either watching or performing. Did go to Laguna Seca with Pete once, but did get bored, when was not amazed. Have taken the MSF beginner and advanced safety riding classes. Read "Twist of the Wrist" 1 and 2 and Rider magazine. So virtually all of my adult working life was spent commuting on a motorcycle, with a few trips thrown in. Most trips were 2-up on a Gold Wing, plus 15 PJ-1000's.

Thanks, David

Rick Allan "Rocket Rick"

D.O.B. 5-27-64

Born and raised in San Jose.

Rick joined the PJ-1K circus in September of 1991.

As of 2000, he had participated in 9 annual rides, and has accumulated 10,373 trip miles.

He is the 5th most frequent participant in on the ride, and the one of the most skilled motorcyclist of the group.

Rick has used 4 different motorcycles during his years of participation:

- ❖ 1990 Kawasaki ZX750R Ninja
- ❖ 1993 Honda CBR900RR
- ❖ 1995 Suzuki GSXR750
- ❖ 2000 Yamaha YZF-R1



Rick's Ride History

| | | | |
|------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| 1991 | <i>The 16th running of the PJ1000</i> | <i>September 7, 8, 9</i> | <i>1,108 Mi.</i> |
| | 1990 Kawasaki ZX750R Ninja | | |
| 1992 | <i>The 17th running of the PJ1000</i> | <i>September 11,12,13,14</i> | <i>1.488 Mi.</i> |
| | 1990 Kawasaki ZX750R Ninja | | |
| 1993 | <i>The 18th running of the PJ1000</i> | <i>October 2, 3, 4</i> | <i>965 Mi.</i> |
| | 1993 Honda CBR900RR | | |
| 1994 | <i>The 19th running of the PJ1000</i> | <i>September 17, 18, 19</i> | <i>1,036 Mi.</i> |
| | 1993 Honda CBR900RR | | |
| 1996 | <i>The 21st running of the PJ1000</i> | <i>September 21, 22, 23</i> | <i>1,018 Mi.</i> |
| | 1993 Honda CBR900RR | | |
| 1997 | <i>The 22nd running of the PJ1000</i> | <i>September 12,13,14,15</i> | <i>1,085 Mi.</i> |
| | 1995 Suzuki GSXR750 | | |
| 1998 | <i>The 23rd running of the PJ1000</i> | <i>September 18, 19, 20, 21</i> | <i>1,520 Mi.</i> |
| | 1995 Suzuki GSXR750 | | |
| 1999 | <i>The 24th running of the PJ1000</i> | <i>September 17, 18, 19, 20</i> | <i>1,404 Mi.</i> |
| | 1995 Suzuki GSXR750 | | |
| 2000 | <i>The 25th running of the PJ1000</i> | <i>September 15, 16, 17, 18</i> | <i>1,426 Mi.</i> |
| | 2000 Yamaha YZF-R1 | | |

Rick's Inputs

Born and raised in San Jose. Lived in Bay Area my entire life. (until 2001, Rick moved to Reno, NV.)

How Rick got interested:

I got interested in dirt biking when I was 5 years old when my father brought home a Honda CT70 for me, and a bike for my older brother. My family had a few acres of land in the east San Jose foothills and we built a track around the perimeter with jumps and burms and my brother and I would ride around all day long. I got my first street bike when I was 22 when I loaned \$500.00 to a co-worker and when he had a hard time coming up with the money to pay me back I suggested he give me his RD400, and he did!

Significant Rides:

9 PJ100's

2 Southern California Trips (Willow Springs Track Day and Angeles Crest Highway)

Yosemite (camping)

Tahoe

L.A.

Track Experience:

Willow Springs (Track day 2 times)

Thunderhill (DP Safety School)

Laguna Seca (DP Safety School 4 times)

Races Attended:

Almost every AMA, WSB, GP race at Sears point and Laguna Seca for past 10 years.

San Jose Mile at the Fairgrounds (4 times)

AMA Supercross 2 times

Arenacross 4 times

Dirt Bikes

1970 Honda CT70
1972 Honda Trail90
197? Honda 100
197? Yamaha YZ80
198? Honda CR125
1988 Honda CR250

Street Bikes

1978 Yamaha RD400
1990 Honda CBR600
1990 Kawasaki 750R
1993 Honda CBR900RR
1993 Honda CBR600F3
1995 Suzuki GSX-R750
2000 Yamaha YZF-R1

Approx. Miles

20,000
1,000 (Stolen)
25,000
17,000
500 (won in contest, sold)
12,000
3,000



Always the motorcycling pioneer, Rick has developed some unique fuel tank cleaning techniques

Scott Murnan "Scotty"

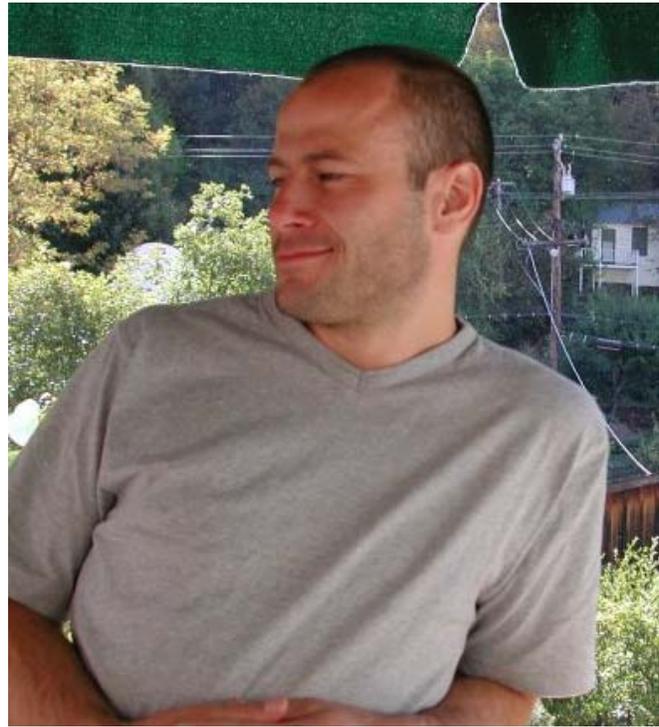
Born on 4th Feb 1964 in Bristol, England.

I met Scotty via email while he still worked for a C-Cube rep in England. He'd heard about the PJ-1k from a co-worker, and when he came to work for C-Cube, we had already decided he would become a PJ-1K Participant.

Scotty has only participated in 3 rides, then unfortunately had to return to England. But we're all hopeful Scotty will return and participate again.

We'll miss ya Scotty!!

Scotty used 2 motorcycles during his few rides, He loved em' both!



Scotty's PK-1000 History

| | | |
|------|--|------------------|
| 1998 | <i>The 23rd running of the PJ1000 September 18, 19, 20, 21</i> | <i>1,520 Mi.</i> |
| | 1995 Suzuki GSXR750 | |
| 1999 | <i>The 24th running of the PJ1000 September 17, 18, 19, 20</i> | <i>1,404 Mi.</i> |
| | 1995 Suzuki GSXR750 | |
| 2000 | <i>The 25th running of the PJ1000 September 15, 16, 17, 18</i> | <i>1,426 Mi.</i> |
| | 2000 Yamaha YZF-R1 (BLUE) | |

Scott Murnan A Motorcycle History.....So Far

My first motorcycle experience was stood on the footplate of my uncle's Vespa scooter at the tender age of 4. I think my mum may even have a photo. At age 10 dad then brought home a battered go-cart with a Villiers 197cc 2stroke motor but he thought it was too lethal for me and sold it. I was so keen to get on it and go fast.

It was on another boy's battered BSA Bantam 175cc, on a disused railway siding that I learned to change gear. I was 13 years old and so proud of myself that I forgot to change down and stalled it.

From there I had fun on another friend's step through four stroke 50cc Honda moped, riding around local fields. That thing took so much abuse. We thought 30mph was SO fast.

My dad bought a seized 2stroke Lambretta GT200 scooter and got it going but would never let me on it. He used it for work and it was very quick for a scooter.

I had to wait for my 16th birthday before I finally bought for £100 an old Garelli 50cc 2stroke moped. I'd just started college after leaving school and intended to commute the 12miles on it everyday. Problem was the thing was good for 70mph but as a result was broken down most of the time with shattered piston rings or main bearings or the like. I never did get it to run properly although it was a great grounding for learning mechanics.

All the lads at college rode mopeds too and although I didn't realize it at the time, I was getting firmly into the brotherhood that surrounds motorcyclists worldwide. I've never left it and hope I never will.

At the tender age of 17, I joined the big boy's league and got my first real motorcycle. A Blue CB250RS Honda single. I bought it brand new and it financially crippled me as I was on an apprenticeship salary of £30 a week. The bike cost £712 and I can remember when Fowlers of Bristol motorcycles delivered it. The smell of a new bike has stayed with me ever since, particularly when you stop and smell the hot engine.

My parents were paranoid but I soon mastered this new beast.....or so I thought. I could get it to 85mph with head on the tank and could get 50yard broadside skids out of it. My friends were all getting RD250s, X7s, DT175, XT250 and we used to go crazy in the college car park. The caretaker hated us.

One day, late for work I took a risk and overtook a slow car in a country lane. As I finished the maneuver the road narrowed across a bridge to one lane.....which was filled by the same type of car I had just passed. "Oh shit" went through my mind. I was braking so hard the front wheel was locking and I hit said car at about 30mph. I smashed the windscreen of the car with my head, rolled across the front of the car onto a wall and onto the floor.

I led there thinking “you’ve really fucked it up this time” but was amazed to be badly bruised and shaken but in one piece. The driver of the car was frightened out of his mind and must have thought I was joining him in the front seat. Anyhow I was lucky, very lucky. I got the bike fixed (handlebars were bent U shape where I’d been forced forward on impact) and slowed down, even sold the bike and bought a car.....yuk.

The car lasted about 6 months before buying a Honda 400-four. Bought from a Roll Royce Aircraft Engineering apprentice. I’d just bought my first lemon. The engine was noisy and so I set about checking the cam chain tension.....there was none. The soon to be Rolls Royce Engineer has cut off a bolt and jammed it into the tension mechanism to get more out of it. The fact was the whole thing was disintegrated internally. I set about a rebuild and ended up with a very sweet 400four engine.

After the Honda came a Yamaha XZ550 Vision vfour. It had a shaft drive and the handling of a slack Harley. Got rid of that very quickly.

I moved onto a Kawasaki KH100EX. It was a sweet 100cc 2stroke I used for commuting. Always the fiddler I bought a 2stroke tuning manual and moved the top speed from a lowly 55mph to 85mph. The thing kicked ass and could kill most 4stroke 250s off the lights. Needless to say it went through main bearings and engine seals like they were going out of fashion.

Then came a Kawasaki GPZ600R. Red and slate grey. Very beautiful with white wheels. I rode all over Europe on it and one time spent 2 weeks touring through northern Italy and the Alps. Every motorcyclist should do this at some point. The Kawasaki was fast when new but was superceded in time by the excellent but boring looking CBR600. Not to be outdone I had the engine ‘tweaked’.

The head was completely gas flowed and stage2 cams fitted. Stainless 4into1 and dynojet kit plus K&N filter finished off the work. It took weeks to get carburation right but the 600R was now seriously fun to ride. Dull under 7000rpm then taking off like a bandit all the way through 12000rpm it was almost like a stroker. I thought it was the best bike ever. My friend has it back in England now and I rode it last time I was home. It feels old and the frame horrible. How technology moves on!

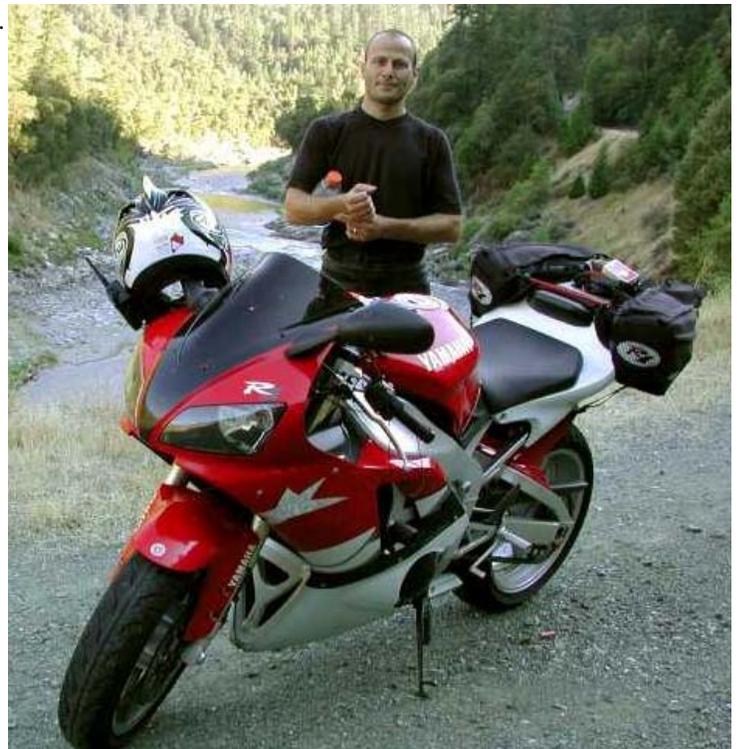
My first bike in the US was a 95 GSX750RW. Ugly purple, black and orange paint job was topped off when I painted the wheels fluorescent orange. I found the ride very hard but handling, brakes and engine were great. I did the 98 and 99 PJ rides on it and had a great time. I commuted every day on it and it never missed a beat. I never used to like Suzuki, the finish always seemed poor but the GSXR changed that perception.

I’ve just taken delivery of a 2000 model blue Yamaha R1. What can I say? It’s suspension and steering are superb and it goes around the corners like it’s on a rail. The engine has so much power you can get yourself into trouble very quickly if you lack respect. I’d say the Suzuki had better brakes and gearbox believe it or not but the R1 is so beautiful it turns heads wherever you take it. I can’t wait to cut loose on the 2000 PJ ride by which time the bike should be nicely loosened up.

So there it is. I’ve been riding for as long as I can remember and have seen the technology improve in leaps and bounds. The R1 feels awesome but you can guarantee it’ll be surpassed in a year or so, maybe sooner with the Honda twin now on the market. I am grateful to all the motorcycle people I’ve ever had the luck to ride with, the PJs being the peak of this experience. I’m a reasonable mechanic and an OK rider but I’ll never be Carl Fogarty.

It’s good to know your limits but I suspect the R1 will help improve my riding, technology does that.

See you at the PJ and above all, be careful
Scotty



*Unfortunately this is not Scotty’s “True Blue R1”
But it’s fitting to have a photo of the Brit with a Yamaha R1*

Terry Tuohy

DOB 09-21-1965 Carson City Nv.

| | | | |
|------|---------------------------------------|---|------------------|
| 1994 | <i>The 19th running of the PJ1000</i> | <i>September 17, 18, 19</i> | <i>1,036 Mi.</i> |
| | 1985 Suzuki GS1150 | | |
| 1996 | <i>The 21st running of the PJ1000</i> | <i>September 21, 22, 23</i> | <i>1,018 Mi.</i> |
| | 1985 Suzuki GS1150 | | |
| 1997 | <i>The 22nd running of the PJ1000</i> | <i>September 12,13,14,15</i> | <i>1,085 Mi.</i> |
| | 1985 Suzuki GS1150 | | |

Terry's Inputs

I've lived and ridden in California, Nevada, Montana, and Alaska

I first became interested in motorcycles when my dad bought me a Honda XL125 street legal dirt bike when I was 15 yrs. old. I owned my first street bike in Alaska which was a Honda CB500T twin.

Bikes I have owned:

- #1 1980 Honda XL125 enduro 3yrs. 25K miles
- #2 1977 Honda CB500T 2yrs. 12K miles
- #3 1982 Suzuki GS650E 2yrs. 20K miles
- #4 1982 Suzuki GS650E 4yrs. 22K miles
- #5 1985 Suzuki GS1150ESF 6yrs. 30K miles
- #6 1985 Suzuki GS1150ESF 3yrs. 10K miles (I still have this one)
- #7 2001 Suzuki GSF1200S Bandit 3 Mo. 500 Miles

Bike # 6 is my labor of love rebuild. I had the crank and rods balanced and polished at Falicon in florida. Other engine mods included valve job for increased flow, new cams, and a Yoshimura pipe. The stock engine made 101 BHP. My seat of the pants estimation after mods is an added 15-20 ponies. This bike is a real drag racer.

Bike #7 is my first ever new vehicle purchase. It is a great all around bike and still has the "stuff" to pass "wannabee" kids on repli racers. Suzuki did a great job on this bike and for \$7399 it's a deal that just can't be beat.

My most memorable rides have been the PJ100's, an event I hope to continue to participate in with my newest steed, Mr. Bandit.

As PJ says, "keep the rubber side down".

T2E