

The Richmond Rider

A publication of the Richmond Rider's Motorcycle Club ... all makes and models since 1993.

A charter chapter of the Honda Rider's Club of America

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Maine's Blue Ride - Bar Harbor

Eric Myers

Maine. Lobsters, moose, pine trees and craggy coastlines. It's a state rich and diverse in natural beauty. And perhaps no place calls up visions of quintessential Maine more than Bar Harbor.

This is where my ride begins, in Bar Harbor on Maine's Mount Desert Island. Bar Harbor has been a vacation destination since the days of the Abnaki Indians, and was originally incorporated as the town of Eden in 1796. It wasn't known as Bar Harbor until the early 20th century when the town officially changed it's name. Today, Bar Harbor is a well-appointed vacation spot with art galleries, restaurants, boutique shopping and resorts. It is a mix of old money estates and working class merchants. It's also the perfect jumping off point for a full-day tour of some of the best Maine has to offer.



The ride begins in downtown Bar Harbor and heads east on Route 3. After only a few miles into the ride, I decide to take the suggested detour via Park Loop Road. That decision pays off big time as I lean into the final left hand bend that takes me to the summit of Cadillac Mountain. In three and a half short — but twisty — miles, I traveled from a forest of evergreens to this exposed peak; the highest coastal point on America's eastern seaboard. Had I been here several hours earlier I would have been among an intrepid group of travelers assembled to be the first people in the United States to lay their eyes on the rising sun. But now, under a brilliant blue sky, and with a fresh breeze in my face, I'm treated to a spectacular 360° panoramic view of one of North America's oldest vacation destinations: Down East Maine.

The Park Loop is a magnificent one-way parkway — a well-paved, 20 mile twisting treat for the motorcyclist — that winds its way through Acadia National Park, following the eastern coast of Mount Desert Island before turning inland and past Cadillac Mountain (a must!) before rejoining Route 3.

I continue along my way, following the lobster claw outline of Mount Desert Island's coast. The ocean-facing sections of the Island bare only scrubby vegetation and stunted evergreens - the result of timeless exposure to the harsh climate of the northern Atlantic. Heading inland and away for the ocean, however, I find myself in increasingly protected surroundings. In a few short miles from the ocean's edge, I'm riding along leafy, tree-lined streets and past houses trimmed with window boxes.



Having made a full circuit around the island — from rocky coast to mountain summit, from barren seascape to postcard villages — I head across an unassuming bridge and onto the mainland. The ride then takes a quick loop down to Oak Point and up to Ellsworth and Route 1. Following Route 1 for about 6 miles, I turn left and head east down Route 182. Here, the salt air is replaced with the scent of pine and earth; ocean views with lake views. Route 182 pulls me further inland and I find myself winding my way through mighty pines and spruce and evergreens of all kinds. The road is largely shaded with streaks of sunlight piercing through the upper branches. About halfway between Franklin and Cherryfield, I pull over on the wide gravel shoulder past Tunk Lake on the shore of Long Pond where the water ebbs in and practically touches the pavement. I enjoy the stretch and the photo taking, but it seems it's the wrong time of day for moose spotting.



A full day behind me and a setting sun on my back, I find myself replaying the day's ride in my mind — sad to see it go. The ocean to the left of me is lonely now — peaceful, as I roll back into Bar Harbor.

Lobsters, moose, pine trees and craggy coastlines. In one day I've seen it all. Well, except for the moose. I'll just have to plan another trip.

It's considered good practice to give your motorcycle a quick check-over before you ride. The Motorcycle Safety Foundation has developed an acronym for the basic checklist — T-CLOCK. That stands for: Tires, wheels and brakes; Controls; Lighting and electrical; Oil; Chain and chassis; and Kickstand. Even if you are getting on to continue a ride, before you trust your life to them, it's prudent to give a quick once-over to components, such as tires, which can change suddenly. I found a front brake system that had gone flat for unknown reasons just the other day. I have pulled nails out of tires on a few occasions, sometimes before they actually punctured the tire. On two occasions when picking up recently serviced motorcycles, I have discovered loose drain plugs. It didn't cost anything but a few seconds to look, but the penalty for not doing so could have been severe.

But how about one other vital component? Do you conduct an attitude check of the rider before you hit the starter button? Do you ever stop to ponder whether you are as ready as your bike? Mechanical problems rarely cause motorcycle accidents. Rider errors, on the other hand, causes most accidents and contribute to many more.

Human factors in motorcycle operations could fill a few books (and they have). But for all the attention the subject gets, we motorcyclists still continue to do things that make accident investigators scratch their heads and wonder. There are a few common themes that show up.

The most common method of preparing to have an accident is to have a few drinks first. A bit over half of all fatal motorcycle accidents involves riders who have been drinking. The law prohibits a pilot from flying an airplane within eight hours of drinking. Though flying an airplane involves more judgement before taking action than riding a motorcycle, it rarely requires the instant response to a problem that piloting a motorcycling does. It's rare to have someone turn left in front of your airplane. Yet many riders think nothing of riding home in traffic after a couple of beers.

Illegal drugs also take a toll, but people who use them and ride probably don't read a column like this anyway. But how about legal drugs? There was quite a stir of resentment several years ago when the maker of a cold remedy showed a TV ad with a rider impaired by a cold medication, but few of the protesters pointed out that all vehicle users, motorcyclists included, have a responsibility to know about the stuff they use. If you have taken a cold medication, there is more than one reason to follow a doctor's advice and stay in bed.

Just riding can cause problems. I sometimes forget that not everyone is used to spending hours on a motorcycle. A few years ago a friend who had joined us for par wat through transcontinental ride apparently fell asleep and ran off the road and through a fence a few days into the ride. Don't plan schedules that your body can't keep.

Long days of motorcycling can be more fatiguing than you might anticipate. Besides the fatigue created by just sitting in one position, you have the wind pressure to combat, vibration, and the occasional adrenaline rush, glare, all of which tire you. The air rushing past can also tire you. You can become dehydrated much more quickly than you would while standing still. The noise of the wind is also tremendously fatiguing, though few people recognize the toll it takes. A good windshield, a top-quality helmet and earplugs can do much to lessen the mental drain created by the noise. So will a quiet exhaust system.

If you are planning a long trip this summer, work up to it by riding to work every day and taking progressively longer weekend rides in the month or two leading up to it. Don't schedule a long ride your first day. The second and third days are probably the ones where you can rack up the most mileage. After that you will probably get more tired each day, unless you take a break for a few days and relax. During the trip, eat lighter breakfasts and lunches that won't make you sleepy, and allow time for breaks. Drink water before you get thirsty. Schedules should be even looser if you are riding with other people. You should all discuss your plans ahead of time and be prepared to accommodate anyone who is feeling tired or stressed. One rider's problem can be dangerous for the entire group.

These days "road rage" is hot topic. Consider a day I had recently. It was the day before I left for Daytona, and I had an overwhelming number of things to finish. That morning El Nino had finally overwhelmed our roof. A camera I'd just bought for the trip wasn't working, and the maker's customer-service people didn't seem to care. The battery in my wife's car had chosen that day to become reluctant. By the time I'd dealt with those pleasures, I was late for a meeting. Naturally, I got behind the president of the local Speed Kills chapter, who apparently felt that anything over 60 percent of the speed limit was an affront to man and nature. It would have been easy to go psycho on her. Instead I converted my annoyance to amusement by shouting to myself in my helmet, "It's the pedal on the right!" When she finally decided to stop completely and get out of the way, I didn't get a half mile before a bozoid in a Buick attempted to bunt the Yamaha and myself across the median. I could have loudly raised questions about his ancestry, and I considered directing him to a Remedial Driver Clinic when he pulled up next to me at a light shortly thereafter, instead I just ignored him.

Richmond Ride 4 Kids 2007

Even in the pouring down rain, hope remained alive at the Richmond Ride for Kids®, which attracted more than 170 supporters and raised over \$84,000 for the PBTF's medical research and family support programs.

The hearty crowd gathered at Brook Hollow Shopping Center in Glen Allen before the motorcyclists and their police escort left for the Richmond Times-Dispatch facility in Mechanicsville. The rains grew heavy along the lovely countryside route, but that didn't quench the joy of the Ride for Kids® stars.



Seven local brain tumor survivors were honored at the Celebration of Life program after the ride, including three PBTF scholarship recipients—Allie, Bailey and Tiffany.

Two doctors from Virginia Commonwealth University—radiation oncologist Ted Chung and neurosurgeon William Broaddus—were also on hand to thank the motorcyclists for their fundraising efforts. “Being involved in research ourselves, we know how very important the support of the PBTF is,” said Dr. Broaddus.

Sunday, June 3 was also proclaimed Virginia Ride for Kids® Day by the governor's office, represented by Bob Crouch.

The total raised in Richmond was \$84,431. Mike and Travis Phillips of Richmond were the top individual fundraisers with \$23,554. The top chapter/club was Star Touring & Riding #208 with \$32,795, while the customers of Burcham's Cycles of Colonial Heights, Va., turned in \$32,469 to make it the top motorcycle business. Keith Lindgren of Chesapeake, Va., won the grand prize, a brand-new Honda motorcycle.

Many thanks to local task force leaders Kerry Abrams and Mike Seibert, visitation leaders Dan Solomon and Linda Carr, the hardworking task force members, and the event volunteers for making the 2007 Richmond Ride for Kids® one to remember.

America's Superbike

Although the Super Hawk hasn't enjoyed a lot of sales success overseas, the bike has sold in big numbers in the United States - primarily because its performance characteristics are perfectly matched to US highways and canyon roads, and the needs of many American customers.

Concept & Transformation

The range of liquid-cooled V-twins embodies an illustrious group in Honda heritage. While recognizing their long-lasting career in different cruiser models, Big Red waited until the end of the eighties to step up with a street model using this kind of engine. The Honda NT650GT Hawk was actually the first sport bike powered by this kind of engine, a model with three-valve cylinder heads. But it didn't sell well in the US at a time when Americans used to go for bigger displacements.

It took until 1997 for Honda to release a new model, the Super Hawk (in Europe VTR1000F Fire Storm), displacing 996cc and challenging the traditional V-twins from Ducati and the new Suzuki TL1000S. Compared with these competitors, the Super Hawk struck just the right balance of performance, driveability, and reliability. Moreover, it was a lot less expensive than the divas from Italy. So, altogether, this Honda became a sportbike for the real world, and you could use it for touring too.

Engine & Transmission

The grunt of the engine has remained the same since its introduction in 1997. You press the start button and get immediate response from the big V-twin. The sound of the huge 48mm carbs inhaling and the deep tone from the two mufflers can mesmerize. Engaging the clutch is an easy game and requires much less effort than the Italian V-twins demand. The same goes for changing gears and pulling the throttle. Everything works just fine.

And the big carburetors don't cause any trouble either; usually these sizes are difficult to tune for the transition between “off the throttle” and load. Just so you'll know, no one else has ever tried...

Brisk Border Run: A New York to Pennsylvania Boundary Ride

A clear, cool day is forecast for this early October Sunday. While most Bills and Steelers fans will be watching football, it's a perfect chance to explore the Pennsylvania-New York border on empty back roads.

It's 39 degrees when I leave home and blast the Suzuki DL650 V-Strom down four-lane NY 400 and two-lane NY 16 the 40 miles to Franklinville, New York. Angling southeast out of town under green-turning orange maples, I climb to the town reservoir and stop to absorb the brilliant cloudless day. It's quiet and cold. Ahead are miles of dirt and asphalt roads straddling the New York-Pennsylvania border. Cattaraugus County 24 floats over round hills, then dips and turns sharply across narrow steel grate bridges toward Cuba Lake. I can't resist the dirt loop over Slab City and MacAfee roads on the way. I stop at Cuba Cheese Company for a pound of three-year-old cheddar and continue south on NY 305 past stately mansions of the late 1800's oil prosperity. I accelerate out of Cuba, by the huge stable and raceway that were the rage at the turn of the last century. At Obi, I climb Coon Hollow Road, happy for more dirt and excited by the tight curves down the other side into Little Genesee, New York, beneath a hilltop near the Pennsylvania line where I cut the engine. The sun feels warm through the cool, midmorning air. I can smell the autumn odor of the Allegheny Mountain woods, very near my birthplace.

East on NY 417, I bend south on Horse Run Road and turn ever higher over loose stone to the Pennsylvania border. Here, smooth asphalt glides down to Shinglehouse, Pennsylvania, where I gas up and talk with a young motorcyclist anxious to ride the vintage Yamaha Maxim 650 he's just bought, cleaned and tuned. East of

Honeoye, Pennsylvania, a dirt road follows Butler Creek through 12 miles of mature hardwood forest south of the New York border. The sun glistens on tree trunks the canopy of which allows dappled light onto the forest floor. In an hour only one driver passes, making sure I don't need directions, and continues on. It's 1 p.m. now, the football parties are in full swing and the open road beckons.

Near Genesee, Pennsylvania, State Highway 244 leads northeast into New York again where it becomes State 248A to Whitesville. Allegheny County 19 leads up Wileyville Creek and becomes Route 124 at the Steuben County line. Just before Wileyville, Steuben 84 turns east and rides high to Alice, where it curves down Squab Hollow to NY 36. I jog north, then east again on curving, hilly Steuben 83, quickening the pace until an unmarked hilltop split drops into rutted blacktop-cum-dirt and

dwindles to a steep washed-out logging road. I ride the hump back to graded dirt on Reynolds and Cook Hollow roads, where Amish and back-to-nature folks farm beautiful countryside 30 miles from the nearest small city. There, Steuben 103 turns north again to Woodhull, where I follow Steuben 129 between Tuscarora Creek and streamcarved cliffs to NY 417 (the old highway to New York City). At Addison, during a water and coffee break, I admire the Western Era store fronts of the still handsome town. Addison starts the run up steep-sided Canisteo River Valley.

With the deepest blue sky above, I admire the green valley floor and sundrenched cliffs as I ride back and forth across the rail line and gushing Canisteo River toward Canisteo, New York. Dirt roads rise steeply to my right, begging to be explored. But in limited light, I continue briskly west, and wave to other riders who show the smiles of sun-warmed backs. Canisteo, New York, is a small, attractive market town and site of Canisteo Castle, the Indian farming village Continental troops laid waste during the infamous Sullivan campaign in 1784. The ruthless scorchedearth raiding against Britain's allies decimated New York's Indian population and opened the land for war veterans and others in the 1790s.

Portageville lies at the south end of Letchworth Gorge, along the former Genesee River canal. New York's "Grand Canyon of the East" is 900 feet deep, and was carved during the last ice age by the north-flowing Genesee River. The Norfolk Southern railway passes hundreds of feet above the upper falls. The original bridge, the world's longest in 1852, took 300 acres of timber to build. The park road was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s and S-curves up and down along the edge of the gorge.

I turn out of the park toward Castile and NY 19A to Silver Springs, of Morton Salt fame. One of the world's largest salt mines lies beneath the Genesee River and its tributaries and supplies road salt to the eastern states. Farther north, NY 19A joins 19 to Warsaw. Here, U.S. 20A—also called Big Tree Road—climbs in and out of north-south valleys and passes ridgetop dairy farms, a pumpkin cannon and a couple of camels.

After 270 miles of dirt and asphalt, on a clear autumn day, I return home already anticipating my next fall ride. Happy riding!

July Club Ride to the Crazy Crab in Reedville

The July club ride will be again visiting the Crazy Crab Restaurant home of the famous softshell crab sandwich. Plan to attend. The ride will be led by your own newsletter editor. Here is the route. We will depart at 0900.

Leave from the Fast Mart on 156 S for 3 miles

Left on McClellan County 628 for 3 miles

Left on Old Church Rd County 606 for 3 miles

Right on Spring Run County 606 to US 360 for 3 miles

Right on US 360 for 8 miles

Right on Mt. Pleasant Rd County 661 for 0 miles

Left on Acquinton Rd County 618 for 7 miles

Left on Rte 30 for 8 miles

Right on Walkerton Rd County 629 through Walkerton for 5 miles

Right on The Trail Rt 14 for 14 miles

Left on 33 to Glens for 8 miles

Rest halt BP station (62 Miles)

Left on Va 198 for 14 miles

Left on Va 3 across the Piankitank River to Hartfield – 5 miles

Right on County 626 for 0 miles

Left on Rt 622 for 0 miles

Right on Rt 3 across the Rappahannock to White Stone into Kilmarnock – 5 miles

Right on Rt 200N – for 20 miles

Right on US 360 to Reedville - 14 miles

Follow to the very end to the Crazy Crab Restaurant for Lunch (Recommend the Soft Shell Crab sandwich) (total 120 miles)

The return will be straight back on US 360 to Richmond

Ride leader is Bruce Hackett Cell 804 943-3615

Trail is Wayne Westbury Cell 804 512-5452

the BMW - the worst of it being to get the Beemer from neutral into first gear for a standing start at the traffic light. If unfamiliar with BMW gearboxes or how to adjust to it, you will fail in the effort. So when nothing happens (often the case) after pulling the clutch and pushing the shift lever down once, you should release the clutch lever half way, pull it again, and shift down a second time. You will be in first gear and ready to get away.

Of course, BMW owners know about this. The fact remains no one should have to deal with it! And the good old Harley certainly doesn't ask for such adjustments from the rider.

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BMW R1200CLC and Harley-Davidson FLHTCI Electra Glide Classic

Rider Report

The BMW R1200CLC is taking the measure of an American touring standard, the Harley-Davidson Electra Glide Classic. Although both rides combine a traditional engine with classic touring dress engineered specifically for U.S. highways, there are some significant differences.

Concept & Transformation

It couldn't have been more obvious what BMW had in mind when developing the new CL/CLC version of their cruiser R1200C. "Several headlights are important - important for customers in the U.S. So we decided to go for four headlights," David Robb, design chief at BMW headquarters in Germany, announced at the Intermot in Munich in 2002. Unstated or not, the target the Bavarians had sighted with the CL/CLC is Harley-Davidson and their Electra Glide models.

The E-Glide is the typical touring bike chosen for long stretches on American highways. The Wisconsin company has long known the touring features considered important to U.S. customers, and simply measured by the number of E-Glides on the road their success with that time-tested setup has been phenomenal. So successful in fact that the design hasn't changed very much over the last few decades. A revised, stronger engine and minor chassis improvements ushered the bike into the new millennium. And certain anniversary models marking Harley-Davidson's 100 years of operation in 2003 have made the success of the whole range even more sensational.

It's a tall order competing with that, but the guys at BMW knew they'd garner some share of customers shopping the huge market for touring bikes. To beat H-D was never BMW's goal. That's not going to happen because Harley owners are so fiercely loyal to the brand. Nothing short of complete disability or death will wedge them from their American iron.

Engine & Transmission

BMW's starting point was the celebrated R1200C, a modern-lifestyle cruiser with the typical Bavarian engine-chassis combination. The boxer motor with a flat-twin shape, belonging to the newer generation of

BMW bikes, incorporates four-valve heads, short pushrods and cams, which are placed at the bottom of each cylinder and driven by the crank through short chains. This basic engine design is used for all BMW sport and touring bikes, standards and cruisers. An amazing display of diversity.

In the BMW cruiser department one lives with less power compared to the other categories. The 61hp are good enough for the R1200C but for the heavy CL/CLC touring section (328kg/729lb.) it is underpowered. But the E-Glide isn't doing that much better: 67hp for 373kg/829lb. - virtually an equal match, considering the Harley engine isn't as modern as the Beemer's. Without doubt, the Twin Cam 88 represents improvement, but it's still a classic ohv-engine layout with two cams, long pushrods, and an antique bore-stroke ratio. This, however, is exactly what the Harley owner likes, preferring the traditional engine with its load of character to the new-fangled stuff that's on and off the road. In addition, the E-Glide has the advantage of more capacity (1,449 vs. 1,170cc) over the BMW.

The Harley's preferable power and torque band ranges from 2,500 to 4,500 rpm. Here you always get more than 75ft.lbs. That's plenty to play with and good enough to compete with the CLC. But BMW's touring bike always seems to be one or two steps behind. From 2,000rpm on, the Harley pulls away from the Beemer; at its peak point it's more than the claimed six horses that separate the two.

And you know it when riding the two candidates. Whereas the Harley is fun to ride from lower rpm on up to about 5,000, you can feel how the German is under more pressure to keep up with the American. The useful CLC power band ranges here from 2,000 to 5,000rpm, but it gets real loud with the mechanical noise and exhaust note of the short mufflers reflected by the lowers of the fairing. The engine of the Harley has the more pure touch, although its gearbox is rough and emits a deep "clonk" when gears are changed. But it works. And in some cases it works even better than the one on

Minutes from April Meeting

Jerry called the meeting to order.

Guests were Paul Alexander, Kenny Spurlock, Honda House service manager, and Kenny Guy, Honda House parts manager.

Henry said the club treasury has an available balance of \$770.62.

Ride Captain Wayne gave the upcoming ride schedule:

June Ride – to the Bedford World War II Veteran's Memorial

July Ride – Bruce will lead the ride to the Crazy Crab Restaurant.

August Ride – A breakfast ride to Dillwyn.

September 30 – Joe and Kathy Snyder will host a cookout at their new home.

Jerry introduced Kenny Spurlock and Kenny Guy from Honda House. They invited open discussion about service issues. Their presentation and discussion was very positive.

Kerry Abrams reported that the Ride for Kids total at the end of the ride was \$85,715. The Foundation was very pleased, even though we fell short of our goal. Kerry believes the \$92,000 goal will be met by the time all late donations are tallied. Kerry expressed appreciation for the efforts of all volunteers.

A discussion was held about getting more tee shirts. It was suggested that we contact Tiffany about doing a graphic for the shirts.

If the club wants an Experienced Riders Course, a commitment from 8 members is required for the course to be scheduled.