



THE BEEMER READER

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Announcing new Lego GS1200 for '17

If your new GS Adventure will be put away for the winter soon, here's something that might cheer you up – a LEGO Technic model of your bike! Good news: It's LEGO and BMW. What else could you want? Bad news: It won't be cheap, and it's not available until after January 1st. Pricing has yet to be announced, but the model has some slick features like an adjustable windshield, Telelever front forks, shaft drive, and a boxer engine with moving parts.

COORDINATOR:

Klaus Kreye
bmwrvi@shaw.ca

TREASURER & MEMBERSHIP:

Peter Juergensen
motonanny@telus.net

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Roy Sweet
gordsboyroy@gmail.com

MAILING:

Bob Leitch
bleitch@telus.net

MAILING ADDRESS:

BMW Riders of Vancouver Island
6-310 Goldstream Avenue
Victoria BC V9B 2W3

Next Breakfast/Brunch

Sunday, December 4



WHERE:

Bill Mattick's Restaurant
5333 Cordova Bay Road
Cordova Bay Golf Course
Saanich

WHEN:

9:30 am



Attempting the Three Flags Classic

by Bryan Harrap

Way back in 1985 when I bought my first Goldwing I heard about a ride called The Three Flags Classic, a 4 day ride starting in Mexico traveling through the USA and ending in Canada that is put on by the Southern California Motorcycle Association (SCMA).

This ride sat in the back of my conscience until 2007 when I had the opportunity to participate on my 1996 Honda ST1100.

That year the ride went from Mexicali up through parts of Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana and ended in Medicine Hat, Alberta.

Last year was the 40th anniversary of the ride. It left from San Diego and ended 5 days later here in Victoria, B.C. An extra day was added to the trip to celebrate the 40 year milestone. I had just acquired a 2013 R1200GSA and this seemed a perfect opportunity to get to know the bike better. None of my riding friends had any interest in a trip of this length so I went and did it again by myself.

2016 came along and after much consideration I decided to go on the ride once more. Again none of my friends wanted to go, but that was almost a blessing in disguise. I find riding 700-800 km days so much easier if you are not trying to keep even a small group together. No riding buddy meant paying full



My newly acquired 2013 R1200GSA became the ride of choice.

price at motels but every decision brings its own cost.

The 41st edition of the 3FC started in Tombstone, Arizona and the end was in Kimberley, B.C. The ride had stopped crossing into Mexico back in 2010 due to security concerns, so "close to Mexico" had become the starting location.

The 3FC is always run over the Labour Day weekend so the prospect of hot weather is always present. This certainly was the case for the first half of the trip! My 1st day was from Victoria to Grants Pass. The temperature down I-5 increased steadily from around Salem to reach a balmy 38C (101F) by day's end. My original plan of heading down through Bend OR was changed when I found that there was a large art exhibition taking place over the weekend and all motel prices had been jacked up. Motel 6 can never be worth \$US 135/night.

On the second day I got off I-5 at Yreka and took a loop west on Hwy 3 through Weaverville and back in to Redding. This was a great detour through rural and twisty roads and a nice change from the super slab. However, the reality of trying to cover a decent distance in a short time forced me back onto main highways as I continued through Sacramento, Santa Maria and Los Angeles before arriving in San Diego. Temperatures were far more pleasant as I headed out towards the coast, but the run through LA was the normal nail biting chaos.

Along Hwy 101 between Sacramento and Santa Maria I pulled into Paso Robles to visit the local museum. My great great Grandfather Jens Hansen who had been born in Denmark in 1838 had travelled to Paso Robles and taken up farming after first traveling to New Zealand in 1872. He left his daughters in NZ when he went to the USA, and after his farm failed



Formal ride started Friday in Tombstone



Scheduled plans put on hold as temperatures rise out of San Diego.

due to a drought never got back to see them again. I had some bits and pieces that I thought the museum might have been interested in, but their main focus seemed to be on those whose farms had not failed!

I also was reminded of the folly of getting off your bike without having the side stand down when I pulled in to Santa Maria. The bike dropped nicely onto its side up against a wall outside the motel I was staying at. The counter clerk must have heard my expressions of happiness at this event as he was last seen rushing into the back room from which he did not re-appear. So I crouched down between the bike and the wall (with my back to the bike) and started lifting. Turns out a loaded GSA is quite heavy! Just as I was getting the thing up to vertical again a man and a woman came rushing up. They had been driving past and had seen me between the

wall and the bike and thought I was trapped. That was very nice of them and their concern helped me get over my feelings of frustration and stupidity. The only damage was a broken mirror which I was able to replace in Tucson.

The heat forecast for the next few days heading east from San Diego was not nice. I thought that if I started early (4:00am) I might get across to Tucson before it got too hot. Well that was a plan that didn't work out! By 7:30am the temp was 37C and it kept increasing to 42C (107F) by the time I pulled in around noon. Luckily the motel allowed me to check in early and I spent the rest of the day sitting in my air conditioned room cooling off. My original plan of visiting the Pima Air Museum and seeing all the planes sitting out at Davis-Monthan AFB was ditched and will have to wait until I re-visit the area

one winter.

The following day I headed off to Tombstone AZ. There is not much there really; it's just an old town/ tourist trap of interest to those people who have an interest in old gunfights. I guess it was a good enough place to start a motorbike trip though and I'm pleased I saw it.

The ride itself started at 5:00am on Friday September 2nd. Many regular riders were upset about this late starting time. The ride has normally begun at 3:00am but as Tombstone is not close to any major city, and the ride was heading into higher terrain it was felt there would be no significant traffic or temperature concerns.

There were about 200 riders at the starting checkpoint. The bikes quickly spread out across the "route" and broke down into small groups and/or individuals on the highways. While a detailed



One-stop shopping USA style.



Side trips possible on 3 country tour



200 riders started the Three Flags. Next year starts in Abbotsford.

route map is made available for the ride the only mandatory components were to check in at the 3 checkpoints in the USA, and the finish checkpoint in Kimberley BC within the designated times. You could make your own way between each checkpoint and many people did side trips or detours as it suited them. The US checkpoints this year were at Aztec, NM, Rock Springs, WY, and Helena, MT.

I followed the designated route for the 1st 3 days, and had then planned to travel from Helena to Kimberley via Kalispell and Whitefish rather than head into Alberta and go over the Crowsnest Pass. Roads that I particularly enjoyed include the run up Hwy 60 from Globe to Show Low, AZ, Hwy 550 from Durango to Silverton and over the Million Dollar Highway to Ouray, CO, and through Red Canyon UT.

The weather changed as the ride progressed. By mid-day on the

2nd day we were being threatened by mountain rain storms. I found to my extreme discomfort how sudden and heavy such storms can be. It was rain gear on pretty much full time from then on until I got home to Victoria. Day three into Helena, MT was pretty damp all day and the temperature fell enough to warrant the use of my electric vest which after working for about 3 hours decided to quit. Considering I had bought it back in 1987 it had lasted quite well.

As we pulled in to the checkpoint that afternoon there was a "Warning - Snow Advisory" posted on the checkpoint door. Overnight snow was expected down to 6000ft on all the passes heading out of Helena. The pass towards Kalispell topped out at a little over 6000ft, and that quickly became the preferred route for most of the riders. Departure the following morning was generally delayed and I pulled out around 9:30

with a small group of American riders I had previously met. As we approached the top of MacDonald Pass we encountered gentle snow that was only just sticking to the ground. That was certainly enough to keep everyone's attention firmly on the road! We safely made it through and then eventually across the border and on to the finish checkpoint.

There is an end of ride banquet dinner the day after the ride finishes, so that gives everyone a break before people head off to their respective homes. My ride home was completed in one long day, but many others had days ahead of them. Riders had come from most provinces in Canada, and from all around the USA, plus there were a couple of guys from the UK, and a couple from Nigeria.

All in all this was another great adventure. It was hard enough without being ridiculous, travelled some interesting and challenging roads, and allowed me to mix with great people from very varied backgrounds and locations.

Next year the 42nd annual 3FC is going to start in Abbotsford BC, and once again finish in Mexico at Puerto Penasco, a little town at the top of the Gulf of California. This location is considered a safe tourist haven popular with many US visitors and the plan is that the ride will take over a complete waterfront resort hotel as the final destination. I think I will be going again....



Ethanol: Everything you did or didn't want to know

by G. Murray Crosbie

Like it or not, ethanol in pump gas is here to stay. Although it does

reduce pollution in our atmosphere, it can cause problems for many collector cars, boats and motorcycles because of some of the detrimental effects related to its use.

Ethanol is ethyl alcohol which is the same alcohol found in your glass of beer or wine. Ethanol is added to gasoline to reduce carbon monoxide emissions and boost octane levels.

Nowadays most cars can run on an ethanol fuel blend of up to 10% which is the most common gas sold in the US. This is known as E10 fuel.

You might also have heard it referred to as gasohol or renewable fuel, as the ethanol comes from renewable sources.

Ethanol is refined from grain alcohol; most

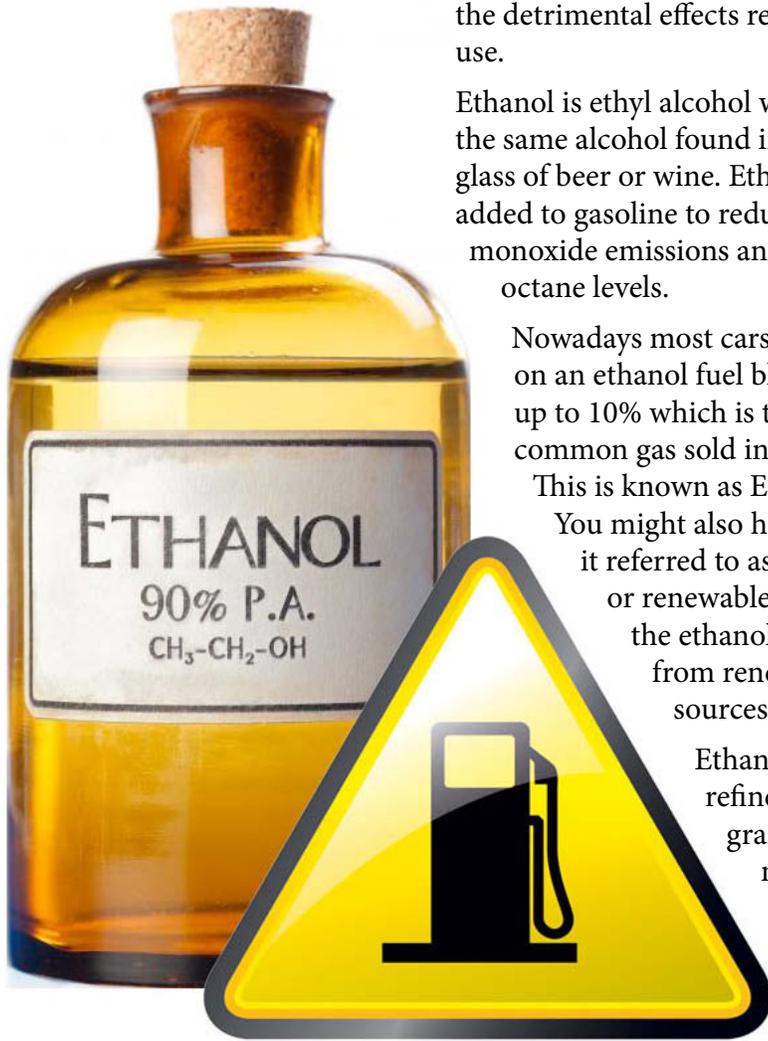
specifically corn here in North America, but it can also be made from switch grass, manure, willow trees, and even sugar cane in some countries.

The use of ethanol will only increase. Federal law in the U.S. mandates the use of 36 billion gallons of an alternative fuel per year by 2022. The only way they would get there is to buy more gas – which is unlikely to happen, given the cost of a gallon these days – OR - increase the “ethanol content” in each gallon. Many recent production motorcycles are able to accept E10, but unless your owner’s manual states specifically that it is an E85 or Flex Fuel compatible, you cannot use E85 fuels.

* Two points to remember as you read:

OCTANE RATING: The higher the octane number, the more compression the fuel can withstand before detonating / igniting.

BTU - as a unit of Power: One BTU per hour converted into horsepower equals = 0.00039 hp or 1 horsepower is approximately 2544 BTU/h



Club 2016 Event Schedule

Date	Event	Location
Sunday, December 4, 2016	Monthly Gathering	Bill Mattick's Restaurant
Sunday, January 1, 2017	TROC	Island View Beach / Bob's House
Saturday, January 7, 2017	Monthly Gathering	Cherrie's Breakfast Bistro