

Vintage Iron Riders

A Vintage Motorcycle Club founded in 2003 whose members are primarily located in Central Illinois

Vintage Iron



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**Next Member Meeting
February 19th**

Meetings held every 3rd
Wednesday of each month at
7:00pm at Top Cats Chill and
Grill located at: 3211
Sangamon Ave., Springfield,
Il. 217-528-4201

President's Prattle

Chapter II: '48 Indian Chief

Warning: This is a continuation of last month's *President's Prattle* in which I described how my motorcycles mirror the parts of my life in which they were acquired and ridden. I am sure many of our members have similar stories about their motorcycles. Please share them with us because – as you all know – I hate talking about me!

The first motorcycle chapter in my life was my '56 Harley KHK. Shortly after wrecking it in March of 1968, a friend called to ask if I wanted to buy his 1948 Indian Chief for \$40. It had a seized engine, but the bike was complete. I knew where I could buy a nearly complete Chief with a good engine; so, I purchased both of them and spent a good part of the spring and summer of that year trading parts back and forth until I was satisfied I had the best of both bikes.

The concept of matching numbers was unknown to me; so, I made no effort to have the frame and engine match. My folly went even further: I was so concerned that my landlord would sue me for making such a mess of the apartment building with all the unused parts lying about that, as soon as the bike was running, I fired it up and headed out of town. That's right: I left a nearly complete Indian Chief for the junkman to take! Clearly, this was not one of my better moves.

I tried to make it to California on the Chief, but the clutch started slipping in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. I figured, if the clutch cannot handle Iowa, it would have no chance at all trying to cross the Rockies. After that, the longest trips the bike and I made were from the U of I campus to the family farm or to the Chicago area.

On campus, I stripped everything off the bike that was not necessary to make it go: fenders, seat, muffler/tail pipe, etc. It was a hoot to ride until the fateful day that raw gasoline found its way to the flames from the header and enveloped much of the bike and me in fire. Fortunately, a local businessman ran out with a fire extinguisher and limited the damage. I was somewhat loaded with a pain killer that was prescribed to help me recover from a nasty injury related to another indiscretion a month or so earlier – so I felt no discomfort from the fire at all.

This was the first part of the Indian Chief chapter of my life. Clearly, I was still running hard and wild, and this fine old motorcycle was part of that lifestyle. One stupid thing I did NOT do, however, was try to turn the Chief into a chopper. More than once, I was urged to chop the bike, but I knew what made the machine cool was the original Indian features. At the time, it seemed wrong to cut up the bike. Now, it sounds like sacrilege!

**Monthly Board Meeting
Reminder March 4th**

Monthly Board meetings held every first Wednesday of each month at 6:00pm at Bernie & Betty's Pizza located at: 1101 South Spring Street, Springfield, Illinois 217-528-8121. All members welcome.

I have rambled long enough on the first half of the Indian Chief chapter. If you want, I'll finish the chapter next month. Meanwhile, share your own stories with us. Mark Morrison would be pleased to put your past to print for the world (or at least our club) to see. These stories will help us, as a club, know each other and our bikes better. After all, motorcycling is not just about motorcycles – it is also about motorcyclists. As the Romans would say, it is about *vir et machina*: man and machine.

Congratulations Corner

Congratulations are in order for our very own Vintage Iron Rider Gus Miller. Gus was the recipient of A.B.A.T.E.'s highest award in Illinois.

Gus Miller was presented with the "Rich Neb Award" at this year's A.B.A.T.E. of Illinois State Seminar awards banquet. This is the highest honor that A.B.A.T.E. can bestow on a member. Gus was recognized for his contributions to motorcycling rights in Illinois that predated the formation of the current A.B.A.T.E. organization and that continued to the present. Gus is the third Vintage Iron Rider to receive this award: Craig Ashbaugh and George Tinkham have also received this award.

Way to go, Gus. We are proud of you!

Projects

Craig Asbaugh reported he has have been casually looking at the auctions for a bone stock 1967 HD XLCH. It's was his first bike and the only one he didn't keep.

He has also sent his 1975 z90 (little Aermacchi HD) to Sonny's M/C Repair in Lowell, MA. He is writing up a work order in the next few days. Craig will be shipping him parts that he has accumulated. It is a 'survivor' and will do mechanical restoration. Sonny's has a shop full, so it will be a couple months before he starts on it, but plans to accumulate all the necessary parts and gaskets ahead of the time it goes on the lift.

Craig also has his 1985 HD FLHT in Florida. He entered it for the AMCA Sunshine Chapter meet in March to be judged. It is 95+% stock, so it should be a good example of a 'survivor'.

Past Event Follow-up

12 members made to trip to Saint Ann, MO. To attend this year's Donelson Cycle Customer Appreciation Event. A good time was had by all.

The purpose of the organization is to promote the motorcycling interests of its members in an atmosphere of fellowship and civility.

It includes helping establish contacts and communication with others whose experience, knowledge, and access to parts and materials might assist those members in the acquisition, restoration, maintenance, and use of antique and vintage motorcycles.

Above all, the purpose of this club is to have fun!

Member Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2020

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at Top Cat's Chill & Grill.

- Recited Pledge of Allegiance
- George led members in prayer
- No December 2019 meeting notes to approve due to Christmas Party.

Reports:

- Treasurer
 - Current Balances
 - Jeff White Memorial Fund \$1,838.00
 - General Fund \$2,035.87
 - Total \$3,873.87
 - Motion by Leroy Solomon to accept as presented. Approved by unanimous voice vote.
- Events
 - 2/1/20 – Customer Appreciation Event - Donelson Cycles-St Ann, 9851 St Charles Rock Rd, Saint Ann, MO 63074
 - 2/9/20 – [A.B.A.T.E of Illinois Swap Meeting](#), Orr Building, State Fairgrounds, Springfield, IL
 - 6/7/20 – Annual Club Picnic, Chatham, IL 11:00 am – 2:00 pm.
- Newsletter/Facebook/Website
 - Trying some new features and looks to improve usability. Member feedback is greatly appreciated.
- Products
 - We still have t-shirts and other products available. See table in back of room or contact Branden.
 - We have a few 2020 calendars left for sale. Contact Branden to purchase. Also Branden is holding several calendars ordered by members but not yet picked up.
 - There have been several inquiries about purchasing club hats by members. Branden will try and get a consensus for style and color to order.
 - Contact Branden if you would like a specialty ordered t-shirt or other products.
 -

Old Business:

- Still have a number of members who have not paid their 2020 dues. Please get them into the Secretary ASAP.

New Business:

- Mark suggested trying to work with one of the local schools to develop a motorcycle related mentor opportunity. Some possibilities include: An educational opportunity to teach high school students valuable life and interpersonal skills while working on motorcycles under the guidance of volunteer bike-building mentors. Students could have opportunities to learn trade skills including design, welding, fabrication, mechanical repair and machining as they relate to the motorcycle industry. Mark asked the club to think about it before the February meeting. If there is interest, the club will put together a committee to explore it further.
- Sickness and Distress. Please keep the following members in your hearts and prayers.
 - Grant Sims
 - Bill Follis
 - Hank Charles
- Bob Ramsey has a room in his van for members who want to go to Donelson's annual customer appreciation event.

Meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Upcoming Club Events

- 2/19/20 – Member Meeting
- 3/4/20 – Board Meeting. Our books will be audited at this meeting. All Members are encouraged to attend.
- 3/18/20 – Member Meeting
- 6/7/20 – Annual Club Picnic, Chatham South Park, Chatham, IL 11:00 am – 2:00 pm.
- 9/5/20 – 9/6/20 -, VIR Park and Display at the Springfield Mile, Springfield, IL. Fairgrounds
- 9/13/20 - [Tail O'The Possum Ernie Langheim Memorial Hospice Benefit Ride](#). Chatham, IL
- 11/29/20 – Sid Wood Memorial Toy Run. Springfield, IL

Other Upcoming Events of Interest

- 2/7/20 – 2/9/20 - [Progressive International Motorcycle Show](#), Chicago Motorcycle Show, Donald E Stephens Convention Center
- 2/9/20 – [A.B.A.T.E of Illinois Swap Meeting](#), Orr Building, State Fairgrounds, Springfield, IL
- 3/25/20 – A.B.A.T.E. of Illinois Legislative Day, Wyndham Springfield City Centre, Springfield IL
- 5/15/20 – [Niehuas Cycle Sales Open House](#), Litchfield, IL
- 7/10/20 – 7/12/20 – [AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days](#), Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, Lexington, OH
- 8/22/20 – [Peoria TT](#) – Peoria, IL

Tech Tip

Motorcycle Tires: What You Should Know

Most of us have a passing understanding of our motorcycle tires. We spend only enough time on them to keep riding, but we want to keep riding on them all the time.

Most of us have to force ourselves to check the air pressure as often as we should — and even that will go out the window as soon as most bikes start coming with tire pressure sensors. Here are some quick points to know about motorcycle tires – tips that will keep you safer and riding longer.

Though modern motorcycle tires are manufactured to very high performance and durability standards, taking them for granted is a mistake. And assuming they are all alike or basically the same as tires for your car, is wrong. Motorcycle tires are unique and absolutely critical to your safety and long-term enjoyment of your motorcycle.

Here are some of the key things to know about motorcycle tires.

1. Tires that appear to be the same can be very different in terms of how they are designed to be used safely. One of the key factors in this age of superbike performance bikes is the speed rating.

This is the letter (alphabetical) code number at the end of the tire size code imprinted on the sidewall of the tire, for example: in the code 120/90B-19 60 H, the “H” means the maximum safe speed rating is 130 mph (210 km/h). Here is a table of the speed ratings:

Code	Max. speed (mph) / (km/h)
• L	75mph / 120kmh
• M	81/130
• N	87/140
• P	93/150
• Q	99/160
• R	106/170
• S	112/180
• T	118/190
• U	124/200
• H	130/210
• V	149/240
• W	168/270
• Y	186/300
• Z	>149/>240

2. The majority of motorcycle tire sizes are expressed in metric dimensions.

Those dimensions and other information are molded into the sidewall of the tire. Using the same example above, 120/90B-19 60 H, here's what the dimensions mean:

- “120” is the section width or the overall width of the tire in mm when installed and ready to ride.
- “90” is the aspect ratio, which is the expression of the sidewall height from the tread to the bead of the tire as a percentage of the section width. In this case, it is 90 percent of 120 mm or 108 mm.
- “B” indicates that the tire is of bias-ply construction; an “R” indicates it is a radial.
- “19” is the rim size diameter in inches.

3. In addition to the speed rating, there is a code for the safe maximum load called the “load index.” In this example, “60” is the load index rating code, meaning the maximum load rating code means 551 pounds.

Here's a table of the DOT load index codes:

Load Index	Load in lb.								
33	254	44	353	55	481	62	584	73	805
34	260	45	364	56	494	63	600	74	827
35	267	46	375	57	507	64	617	75	853
36	276	47	386	58	520	65	639	76	882
37	282	48	397	59	536	66	661	77	908
38	291	49	408	56	494	67	677	78	937
39	300	50	419	57	507	68	694	79	963
40	309	51	430	58	520	69	716	80	992
41	320	52	441	59	536	70	739	81	1019
42	331	53	454	60	551	71	761	82	1047
43	342	54	467	61	567	72	783	83	1074

4. Each motorcycle is designed from the ground up with specific chassis specifications and suspension components that are intended to maximize handling, braking and stability with a specific type of tire in mind.

Changing from bias ply to radial tires or vice-versa may adversely affect the handling of the bike, so don't make that kind of change without consulting a professional.

5. Never mix bias ply and radial tires on the same bike — as with point 4, the bike's handling could be adversely affected.

6. Staying with the same type and size (even if by a different manufacturer) as was specified as original equipment (OE) for your bike is the easiest way to assure consistent performance. Going with wider tires to try to increase cornering performance, for example, may cause interference

7. Racing tires, while designed for high stress, high performance applications, don't necessarily make good street tires. This is because they are designed to function best at the higher tread operating temperatures than will occur in normal street riding. Also, high-adhesion racing slicks lacking rain grooves of normal street tires may perform poorly in wet riding conditions.

8. Consider tread pattern in selecting tires because the tread pattern, the size and positioning of rain grooves affects how well the tires perform under the diverse road conditions encountered out on the road.

9. Monitor the condition of your tires carefully. Bulges in the sidewall or tread most likely indicate a ply separation inside the tire and a catastrophic tire failure could be the result.

External damage such as cuts or cracking in the tread or sidewall should be checked out; while so-called “dry cracking” in the rubber of the sidewall may not indicate deeper tire damage, a split in the rubber down to the cord in one spot may indicate impact damage inside the tire. Check the rim for deformation or cracking if this type of damage is present.

10. The old saying is that “the tire doesn’t carry the load—the air does.” The point being that maintaining proper tire inflation is crucial to proper performance, tire service life and safety.

Under-inflated tires overheat, are more prone to blow-outs, sidewall failure and premature wear. Similarly, over-inflated tires may fail prematurely and wear improperly. Whatever you ride and wherever you ride, tires are the thing hooking you up to the ground, so take good care of them. Check your motorcycle tires before every ride, and be careful out there!

So let’s get you started on finding new tires for your bike! First of all, do you need new tires?

Maybe you’ve recently entered a second childhood or just been hit with a newfound desire to burn some rubber on the old SV650 that’s been sitting in the garage for the last 5 years. You changed the tires on it before you put it away last time you rode (5 years ago), so they should be fine, right? Wrong! Rubber loses its elasticity over time and you’ve likely lost a lot of traction. Best to consider tossing those treads.

Here are some tire shopping tips:

1. Tires vary depending on what riding you do, what surface your on, etc. Primarily a street rider? Go for standard sport tires. Racing tires (while they sound cooler) wear out more quickly.

2. Want traction? Go for softer rubber, it’s soft and grips the road, although on the downside it wears quickly and takes longer to warm.

3. Thinking mileage? Get firmer rubber, this way you can plan multiple road trips without worrying about how your buns will stand up.

4. Buy new, not used. Your tires are the interface between your bike and the road – this is no place to pinch pennies, cheapskate.

5. Size Does Matter.

Be absolutely positive you are buying the right size tires for your bike! Some models only fit a certain size, and unless you need a new swing in the backyard for your kids, the wrong size could leave you with a useless piece of rubber.

Bigger isn’t always better...

Just because you can squeeze on a wider tire doesn’t mean it has a proper fit, a situation in which the tire profile is forced to be altered from its natural position. Also, wider tires almost always result in a less nimble bike – a fat tire may look bad-ass, but it comes with penalties.

Contacts

Vintage Iron Riders

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A Note on Hot Air

Once you've got your new tires, keep track of the air pressure. Most riders don't maintain their tires. Keep the p.s.i. at recommended levels and your tires will last longer and provide the optimum performance. After all, replacing or purchasing tires is an investment for all riders – you may as well get the most mileage for your money!

Warren-who?

Putting some thought into your **tire warranty** might save headaches in the future. Whether it's a manufacturer's warranty or a store-bought one, find out the details to decide if it's worth the extra cost for the additional peace of mind.

Product of the Month

Bike Rentals Gone Viral

What if renting a streetbike in just about any North American location you visit is as easy as clicking on a web address? Thanks to a new service known as Twisted Road it is. The newly-launched web site offers up some 2000 privately owned streetbikes for rental, each fully insured and ready to ride.

Unlike most bike rental services, Twisted Road has a broad range of bike available, from 1940's Indians to the latest modern iron. Prices are based on the popularity of each bike and are billed on a flat per-day charge set by the motorcycle owner.

Interested in either renting or offering one of your own steeds for use. Check out www.twistedroad.com .

Classified Ads

No submissions this month. Send submissions to Mark Morrison at mmorr26407@aol.com