



## OMM INFORMATION BULLETIN OCTOBER 2001

NUMBER 24 OF NEW SERIES

From Paolo Volpara on Wednesday, October 24, 2001

Comments, suggestions, ideas, question: [volpara@homemail.com](mailto:volpara@homemail.com)

To receive or to send to riders friends the Bulletin just drop an e-mail request.

Visit OMM site at: [www.ommriders.com](http://www.ommriders.com)

The OMM Web Site, dedicated to Motorcycle Culture, is the virtual meeting point of all Riders interested in Turkey. Updated every month, it offers suggestions for rides in this part of the world, advises on the way to ride in the Country, offers reading material on the Technique of Motorcycling and reports on group activities. From Off-Road to Long Distance Riding we try to cover Biking in all aspects. Join us as [active OMM member](#) and support our activity with [advises and suggestions](#).

Information on OMM Group spirit, organization, financial policy and history can be found on the section ["Meet One More Mile Riders"](#)

**From November 2001 the monthly OMM Information Bulletin will work as front page of One More Mile web site. From January 2002 the Riders currently subscribing the Bulletin by e-mail will receive a brief summary and the list of planned activities. Past Bulletins will be available, as usual, on the [dedicated section](#) of OMM web site.**

### A view from the cockpit from Paolo Volpara

The cancellation of the ARA Training Course planned for October was a good test to verify the attitude of OMM Riders and OMM Bulletin readers toward training. While a small group sent notes complaining about the cancellation and asking to organize an alternative event, the (silent) majority remained totally indifferent. Some of OMM Riders gave a signal of relief: *"We have too many events, they say, dedicated to training and, after all, once trained one does not need new lessons"*.

The group "Just-Ride-and-Enjoy-it" has good reasons for complaining: after all if biking is fun, what fun can you have following or being followed by an instructor? Why bother with lines, positions, cornering and braking techniques? While spending time in a room examining riding mistakes when the sun outside shines and the air is balmy? To quote a recently met new-born rider "It is just matter of going slow and enjoying the road: safety is in low speed". Far from me to criticize this attitude: motorcycling is good because it accommodates different opinions and different perceptions of the same act. Experience provides, sometime in dramatic forms, an indispensable training and, after all, accidents always happen to somebody else. From my point of view (and this is only one of the different opinions inside OMM) I like to dedicate one portion of any one of my rides to training, I like to take part in training courses, I like to read about new training techniques and I like to meet new instructors. In my book (and this is only a personal book) training never ends and it is part of the fun on bike. In this month I had the opportunity, in several rides on and off road, to seat on the tail of untrained riders while acting as "sweeper-

rider” in small groups. Looking at their reaction and at the way they handled road situations I came to a (personal) conclusion that **there cannot be fun in riding a bike without adequate training**. What fun can you have when you ride with short field of vision, when you fight with the bike at any corner, when you don’t know how to handle gravel or other obstacles, when every other road user is a deadly threat, when your body cannot understand the messages from tires? Biking becomes hard work, dangerous effort, a permanent fighting with the machine.

If, like I do, you ride for fun you need three essential elements:

- 1) **A clear plan for riding**
- 2) **Sufficient time to act and react.**
- 3) **A bag of tools to apply in emergency situations**

Without these three components biking becomes extenuating, boring and ultimately dangerous. Riding at 20 K per hour is not a guarantee of safety. If you do not believe me and if you do not believe in training try the experience. Stand in front of a wall and bang your head on concrete as hard as you can: pain? You are only moving at 3/5 K per hour. When you place legs across a saddle the terms of the contract are clear: “hours of pleasure if you know what you are doing or severe punishment for your stupidity”. In my mind the connection “fun-on-the bike” and training is quite obvious and therefore one less session of training is equal to less fun for this year. The debate is now open.

### OMM 2001 Rides

We are now ready for the **Ride to the South Coast of Turkey (26/29 October)**. Organized by **Cemil Turker** this ride has the objective (beside fun) to trace a different route from Istanbul to Fethiye following a less used path, away from traffic and speed trap. We will report on the ride in the next bulletin. Meanwhile we traced some splendid routes for a mixture of off-road and road around the area between **Dalaman and Fethiye**. We plan to insert on our Ride section a full map for adventurous riders (nothing too difficult) visiting this part of Turkey. If you can’t wait just drop an e-mail and I will give you detailed instructions.

### Petrol Warning

During the OMM ride to South-East September 19-23, 2001) we were served “bad petrol” by a **Petrol Ofisi (PO)** Service Station on the road to Kayseri. We issued a warning on our web-site and we directed a letter of complains to the Company. A week later we received a first call from PO announcing the opening of an investigation on our case. Two weeks later we got another call from Petrol Ofisi Fuels Department manager, Mrs. **Nurdan Turanlioglu**. They concluded their investigations and found our claims correct. Petrol Ofisi will take the necessary action against the station involved. Meantime, Mrs. Turanlioglu apologized for the event and confirmed that the all the damages to the bike will be reimbursed. OMM congratulate Petrol Ofisi on the prompt and courteous reaction: PO has proved to be a reliable company, with an exceptional Client Service.

## Coming soon on the roads near you

### **OMM 2001 Rally Meeting in Canakkale Peninsula and Assos November 17 and 18**

We plan this ride and this meeting to conclude the OMM Rides and Activities of this year in a friendly and informal way. The invitation is open to all of you and to your friends interested in Biking: you do not need to ride there just be with us. The Canakkale Peninsula and Assos are full of historical, artistic and natural points of interest and you can plan different stops suiting your taste. If you want to ride with us, we plan to leave Istanbul early in the morning of Saturday 17th of November in order to be at the ferry station of Eceabat by 11:30. This is the meeting point for the visit to the Gallipoli sites moving by bike to Abide, Hellas point and Anzac Cove. The tour will take 4 hours including lunch. We will then return to Eceabat to take the ferry to Canakkale and to ride along route 550 to Ayvacik and from there to Assos. The Hotel is Kervansaray (0286 7217093) located on the seashore at Behramkale Koyu Iskelesi. We plan to have a welcome drink at 18:00 followed by OMM Dinner at 20:30. **Ian Johnson** will also present the report of his ride Baku Ceyhan

Sunday we will have time to visit the ancient Assos, to do nothing or to discuss OMM plans for the 2002. To this goal, we will have OMM Riders meeting open to all participants to this ride at 11:00 at the hotel. We suggest leaving by 14:00 in order to reach Istanbul by 20:00. Everybody is free to plan the ride as better suited. You may want to come by car with your friends or to follow one of these routes:

1. Istanbul, Tekirdag, Eceabat, Canakkale, Ayvacik, Assos: 380K in approx. 6 hours
2. Istanbul ferry to Bandirma, Balikesir, Edremit, Ayvacik, Assos: 260K in approx. 5 hours
3. Istanbul ferry to Bandirma, Canakkale, Assos: 250K in approx. 4 hours
4. Istanbul ferry to Bandirma, Biga, Can, Bayramic, Ayvacik, Assos: 200K in approx. 4 hours

You may also plan to start the previous day in the afternoon with an overnight stop on Saros Bay. This is a short and pleasant ride for the weekend with just the pleasure to meet old and new friends. It can be an opportunity for the ones of you interested in knowing more about our OMM to spend time with us in a relaxed atmosphere. Saturday evening and Sunday morning we will present and discuss the Plans for rides and training for the year 2002 including some exciting adventures like the new "Four Corners of Turkey" and the planned Tour of the Black Sea. Off course we will also talk "bikes & gears" with are working for the possibility to see and test some new machines. We need to plan in details the logistic (accomodation and food) and for this reason we kindly ask to send your request of participation (passenger co-pilots are welcomed) well in advance to Taner Celik ([tanercelik@hotmail.com](mailto:tanercelik@hotmail.com)). Some rooms have been already reserved at the Kervansaray but we can find additional accommodations on nearby establishments. The ride will not involve any OMM fee and you will pay only for your personal expenses. **We really would like to see all of you at this Rally Meeting and we look forward to receive your confirmation.**

## Planning the Year 2002

Web open now this section of the Bulletin to anticipate some of the ideas for rides to be included in OMM Calendar of the next year. If you have any suggestion or proposal just write to us and we will present your plan here.

**Kazim Uzunoglu** is a lucky rider making a business out of his passion. He organized a perfect Tour of Turkey on bike at the beginning of this summer for 15 American riders leaving every participant very much impressed not only by the beauties of our Country but also by the perfect organization he managed to sustain for the 15 days. Kazim is a good friend of OMM and he writes to us with an idea that we are sure will find a lot of interest among our riders: *“Just got back from Italy, co-guiding a Lotus Tour in Tuscany with Burt. I had been to Tuscany before on my bike but this time we got to ride on the best twisties with great scenery on great bikes, mainly Ducati and BMW's. I am convinced one more time that Tuscany is Mecca for bikers. There is everything one can want, incredible twisties, perfect landscapes to enjoy while riding, amazing accommodations (we got to stay in very upscale hotels, restored 10th century monasteries, deluxe villas, etc.), delicious Italian delicacies and wines of course, and Italian bikes for these Italian squiggles. I got to ride two different ST2's, a 2001 900 Monster, a 2002 not-yet-released Ducati Monster 620. Dave Searle, editor of Motorcycle Consumer News was on our trip, as the token journalist, and Ducati factory provided him the new 620 and a 1995 900 Monster with carbon exhausts, and race suspensions for a test ride. **I am writing about all these things because I was wondering if OMM riders would be interested in putting up a tour together in Tuscany or even Cote d'Azur and Provence (I was there last year as well, to guide another Lotus Tour, and southern France is equally amazing as you know). I am now in a stage to work out all the logistical details for a tour that would take place in either of these destinations. This includes shipping the bikes, if necessary getting help from our Italian partners in Milan such as domestic transportation of the bikes from Trieste to Tuscany, and accommodations, food, maps, roads, etc.”***

In the year 2000 we rode the **Four Corners of Turkey** in four days (report under the LDR section of OMM web-site). We are now planning to revise and transform this ride in an International Getting Together for Riders of all nationality and we will insert it in the 2002 Calendar. **Michael Kneebone**, president of the Iron Butt Association already announced this events to American riders. *“Next June, there will be a competitive Four Corners of Turkey ride in which we hope to have at least four people from the US ride. One More Mile Riders of Istanbul has been a leader in many areas of motorcycle riding and is reaching out to the Iron Butt Association to put a team of riders together to come over and compete. While they are still putting a package together, they will offer great help for four riders to come over and ride this event. If you are at all interested (George Barnes, Rick Morrison, Gary Eagan and Bob Hall immediately come to mind as the American dream team!) in riding, regardless of your financial position, please send me a note to [kneebone@ironbutt.com](mailto:kneebone@ironbutt.com) with 4 Corners of Turkey in the subject line. I will establish a mail list to keep you posted on updates. For those looking for a real challenge, this is the ride you want to be on! Turkey is gorgeous, you will be stunned by some of the sites you will see there! The route will cover deserts, winding ocean roads, ancient cities like Troy, and more! The format will be Iron Butt style but with NIGHTLY checkpoints. Rooms will be arranged so you can get a few hours of rest each night. This was done at my request to help equalize the fact that those of us from the US will be at a slight disadvantage. While some riders from around Europe will be competing against us, the riders from Turkey will provide us a great deal of help, including helping you pick*

*bonuses (which will be easy to find - no Iron Butt tricks here!) and advise you on road and city conditions. So if you are tougher than tough and want to make America proud, send that e-mail!"*

We are also planning an **“Off-Road” training course** in UK in April. This will be a very special event combining the learning of off-road riding techniques with moments of guided meditation designed to develop self-awareness and inner-discipline.

2002 or 2003? We are dreaming of a **Fraternity Ride around the Black Sea** from Istanbul to Istanbul in 15 days. It may prove impossible to fit this ride in the 2002 calendar and next year may be only the planning period. Our friend and OMM Rider Frank Campbell just sent us a piece of information: *“Riding from Turkey to Russia may present a problem. Abkhazia is closed to all traffic for the foreseeable future. The only road from Gurjistan to Vladikavkaz (Old Russian Military Highway) is open only to Georgian or Russian nationals. There is an excellent travel agent in Tbilisi who has agreed to keep us informed. The rest of the way around the Kara Deniz is a piece of cake, except for some security problems in Bulgaria and Romania. It won't be easy but not impossible.”* The ones of you who want to help OMM in the planning process are invited to contact us.

Two ideas examined this year deserve a place in the 2002 calendar:

- **21 June From North To South Ride: From The Sunrise on The Black Sea to the Sunset on The Mediterranean.** Done This Year by **Selim Demirel and Nuri Danisman** the ride from Sinop to Anamur deserves to become a classic of OMM Rides.
- **The Republic Ride** celebrating on May 19, with a LDR, the historical events leading to the proclamation of the Turkish Republic: 19 May Samsun arrival of Atatürk, 19 June Amasya protocol, 23 July Erzurum congress, 4 September Sivas Congress, Ankara proclamation. What we propose is one day ride Samsun Amasya, Erzurum, Sivas, Ankara.

### Calendar Update

2001	Category	From	To	Km.	Riders	Notes
1-Jan	Day Ride	Istanbul	Kiyikoy	301	1	Kiyikoy and Cave Monastery
7-Jan	Day Ride	Istanbul	Armutlu	297	11	Armutlu Coast and Iznik
12-Jan	Day Ride	Istanbul	Igneada	450	1	Saray, Demirkoy Igneada
3/11 Mar	Europe Ride	Istanbul	Sicily	4500	3	Epyrus, Calabria, Sicily, Puglia
18-Mar	Day Ride	Istanbul	Domanic	550	4	Karamürsel, Iznik, Inegol, Domanic
23/24 Mar	Training	Istanbul	Korfez/Izmit Circuit	300	60	ARA Circuit H. Dilthey
6/8 Apr	Training	Istanbul	Bolu	850	22	ARA2 with J. Taylor
4-May	Conference	World of Motorcycling			30	Meeting with C. Fisher and T. Goltz
5/6 May	History	Istanbul	Amasra-Ankara	1800	7	Ride with Court Fisher

8-Jun	Conference	World of Motorcycling			50	Meeting with M.Kneebone /B. Higdon
8/9 Jun	LDR	Istanbul	Istanbul	1600	5	OMM IBA 1000X24H
15-17 Jun	History	Istanbul / Ankara	Cappadocia	1600	12	Ride with M. Kneebone/ B. Higdon
11/12 Aug	Training	Istanbul	Bolu	850	24	ARA3 with J. Taylor
24/31 Aug	Training	Istanbul	Nurburgring		7	Nurburgring Riding Course
20 to 24 Sept	History	Istanbul/ Ankara	Urfa			Malatya, Nemrut, Gazi Antep
25/28 Oct.	History	Istanbul/ Ankara	Fethiye, Selcuk			Ride to the South
17/18 Nov.	Rally	Istanbul/ Ankara	Abide Canakkale			OMM Riders and Friends meeting

## Riding the Web

### New 2002 BMW R1150GS Adventure.



A new GS is announced for the year 2002 by BMW. These are the modifications from the standard R1150 GS: "Optimized" spring travel and suspension settings to cope with gravel, sand tracks, rough terrain or even Tarmac. The spring travel is up 20mm to 210mm at the front and 220mm at the rear. Rear suspension is a WP strut which has suspension deflection-related damping, meaning that the more the spring is compressed the more damping is provided. The engine can now cope with both unleaded and lead petrol. You just need the option coding plug. If you find yourself in a remote area, you can insert the 'coding plug' into a relay box to alter the ignition mapping to cope with a lower grade fuel. Shorter 1st and 6th gear. It comes with EVO brakes, braided steel hoses and ABS (which can be switched off for off-road riding). The screen is bigger, the front mudguard wider and longer and it comes with a foam handlebar cross-brace pad as standard. The bash-plate is bigger than on the GS and there's a 12 volt socket on the dash to link up to a GPS, road book, CD player or reading light. A larger 30 liters tank (standard is 22 liters). A new single-section seat that can accommodate two people. Additional Options: Curvy cylinder protection brackets, headlamp protector, fog lamps, knobby tires for genuine off-road riding, luggage system with 105 liters of space in total. This includes a new 75 liter (39 right, 36 left) pair of aluminum panniers and 30 liter top box. The lid surfaces are at the same level of the seat. The attachments also fold out to be used as "suitcases". Waterproof inner bags in panniers. Available colors: white-aluminum metallic with Grey/red seat, black with black/mandarin seat. More information at <http://www.bikersweb.co.uk/New%20bikes/bmw/adventure.htm>

**Antonio Giuliani** ([antoniogiuliani@tin.it](mailto:antoniogiuliani@tin.it)) announces the creation of a new Club within the Gold Wing Club of Italy: 30 Goldwingers are now opening the Goldwing Club Italy Top Rider to accommodate a personal way of planning tours. The address of the new club is [www.goldwingclubitalia.org](http://www.goldwingclubitalia.org)

## News from OMM friends biking around

We tried to provide help to several bikers crossing Turkey on their way to East: we wish we could be of more assistance but our resources are pretty stretched. Here we salute:

**Mervin and Ruth Omer** ([mervhomer@hotmail.com](mailto:mervhomer@hotmail.com)) on October 24: *"We are now back in Istanbul preparing to ship our bike to India."*

**Douwe Veenstra** ([dkv1954@hotmail.com](mailto:dkv1954@hotmail.com)) on October 8: *"I am still in Bulgaria and meet some nice people over here, it depends on the latest news what I shall do but Istanbul will be part of it"*

**Chris and Kirsten** ([TriumphChris@netscape.net](mailto:TriumphChris@netscape.net)) on October 19: *"We are in Ankara, trying to extend our Iran visas. Today is holiday for them, so we must try again tomorrow. Meanwhile Harley Davidson, Ankara are being very helpful, and are going to help us change our oil. Please let Taner know that it was a good tip. However, Emre is out of town so his nephew is helping us. Very kind. Still planning to go to BandaraBas, (wrong spelling) Iran to try to ship to India. Fingers crossed for good luck. Cheers again to all the guys at OMM, for great time in Istanbul"*

Do not miss on our web site **Ian Johnson** Report on Baku-Ceyhan Oil Odyssey 2001 or With a Ural Across the Caucasus. Ian writes with wit and humor on his personal experience: *"Are you the type of person for whom your cup is half empty ? Or is half full? Only the latter types need apply to take part in Thomas Goltz's much trumpeted Oil Odyssey's from Baku on the Western shores of the Caspian Sea to the Turkish Mediterranean oil terminal at Ceyhan. The original concept was first tried in September 2000 when an intrepid group literally broke in a collection of Ural motorcycle combinations to ride as close as possible the route of the planned Baku-Tables-Ceyhan oil and gas pipeline across the Caucauses and down and through Eastern Turkey."*

**Ahmet Buharali** ([ahmetb@alum.mit.edu](mailto:ahmetb@alum.mit.edu)) is an old friend of OMM: one of the first to get in contact with us from America where he lives. Ahmet is a passionate biker with a "penchant" for Long Distance Riding and as such he planned to join the Iron Butt Rally this year. We received via **Michael Kneebone** (President of IBA) a note from the Canadian rider **Yvon Gauthier** showing once more that, thanks to Ahmet generosity, we are all truly a part of a very special family.

*"Michael, when we talked in Alabama, you mentioned that a lot of people from Turkey were cheering for Ahmet Buharali to do well in the Iron Butt Rally. Unfortunately, at the last minute he was unable to ride in the rally but as you noted, he was able to participate by helping me! On Wednesday evening September 5th around 11.00 PM, after leaving the Gorham check point, I experienced problems with my BMW R1150GS motorcycle at the corner of I-95 and I-90 in Boston. Luckily the two riders with me, Lisa Landry & Dean Tanji, had the LDRider help list with them and even though I had mechanical problems and they didn't need to stay to help me, they insisted on calling a local rider and make sure that I was OK before getting on their way. Lisa picked Ahmet's name out of the list as a rider that could help and insisted in calling him, instead of the BMW service center. Ahmet was more than pleased to help a perfect stranger just because I was part of the Iron Butt Rally that he could not be in. No more than an hour later he showed up with his trailer, to pick me up and drive me to the nearest BMW dealer about 45 minutes away. While we were introducing ourselves in the car, Ahmet mentioned that he was supposed do be in the rally but had to cancel at the last minute. I asked him about renting his GS but he said he didn't want to put mileage on it as it was for sale. I mentioned to him that my wife, Pierrette, was putting my other bike on the trailer, and that she would drive all*

night to meet me at the BMW dealer, in case that we could not get my GS fixed in the morning, and that I had 1200 miles to go and didn't know if I could make it in time to finish the rally. Ahmet said, "I have a K1200LT that you can have to finish the rally if you want it." I wasn't sure if he was joking or not, and told him that I couldn't ride such a big bike. To that he said that if I could ride a GS I could ride a LT, and we turned around to go back to his office where his bike was. Ahmet's LT is a brand new bike with only 8000 miles. Equipped with everything a long distance rider needs! We hooked up my GPS and Ahmet gave me a quick idea of how everything worked. I loaded all that I need until the finish point, and by 2.00 AM, Thursday morning, I was back riding again towards the finish line 1200 miles away! My wife, after another cell phone call, was surprised to find out that she didn't have to ride all night and could go back to bed because of the generosity of Ahmet, a perfect stranger until a few hours ago. I don't have the words to express all the gratitude I have towards Ahmet for his kindness. I really don't know if I would have completed the rally without his help. I feel we both finished together, I certainly didn't feel like I would have finished at all without him. I would like to express my most sincere thanks to Ahmet for his act of kindness, he is the kind of people that should be an example for a nation, during these difficult time, trying to work together to obtain world peace. He is an example for all of us to help others in need as we would like others to do in our time of need. Thank you Ahmet for helping me accomplish my dream, and may I someday do to others as you have done to me."

By the way... OMM has a new Turkish American friend and rider from the S. Diego area planning to visit Turkey next year: welcome **Ken Dinckan** at [kdinckan@tns.net](mailto:kdinckan@tns.net) member of BMW club at [www.bmwocsd.com](http://www.bmwocsd.com).

**Frank Campbell**, OMM rider from USA, was with us last year and returned to Turkey at the beginning of this summer. Unfortunately we did not have the opportunity to meet him this time while he was zooming on the Black Sea on his way to the Silk Road on a BMW F 650. In the last months I have been opening the mail in my computer with great expectation of his travelling notes: they come in an erratic form but are always full of wits and surprises. Here a brief selection:

**"From Frank Campbell ([flafrank@hotmail.com](mailto:flafrank@hotmail.com)) 2 October, 01:** *The Great Silk Road has seen everything in the last few thousand years. Peace will prevail once again, I am sure. Do not write off this destination on your future motorcycle endeavors. To view photos click on: <http://communities.msn.com/MotorcycleAdventurers> and select the Caucasus and Central Asia albums. I will be happy if these photos help you take your mind off recent tragic events even for a few minutes.*

**5 October, 01:** *The Art of Stalin-mandering.: When the USSR "acquired" the vast territory that comprise Kazakhstan, Uzebistan, Kyrgystan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan they were faced with a small problem. Rather than true nations, this heterogeneous group of people speaking mostly Turkish languages (with exception of Tajikistan, which speaks a derivative of Persian) accepted at first grudgingly the "protection" offered by the Soviets. As time went on, with the advent of large numbers of ethnic Russians, the Cyrillic alphabet was imposed upon the various dialects with varying degrees of success. The language that Saint Cyril devised in the XIII Century worked wonders for the Slavic tongues, but did little for the Turkish and even less for Tajiks. Then came Stalin, who decided the region (mind you, about the size of the continental US) has to be "re-*

*districted", obviously not with votes in mind. During his times there was only one slate of party candidates that won with a 99% majority (the other 1% mysteriously disappeared). After the demise of the USSR, these various countries are keen to regain their natives languages, which are quite similar to modern Turkish. But we are they are still stuck with local "Cyrillic", where a simple Turkish name such as Mustafa Pasha is spelled ÌÓÑÒÀÔÄÏÀØÀ. Try reading this street signs through your fogged face shield on a dark evening. Oh, Kemal Ataturk, where are you when we need you?*



**6 October, 01:** *Franco Polo?* There are some similarities. Franco, as his great-great-grand-nephew Marco, also departed from Venezia on his trek East. He is a tad older (and wiser) than Marco, who was nothing but a 17-year-old whippersnapper. Franco is, well, old enough to qualify for senior's discounts almost anywhere. Marco got on the Great Khan's good side, and ended up staying as his advisor for 20 years.

*Franco has no intention of sticking around nearly that long. For one, Medicare doesn't cover while abroad. And Franco, although not lacking in enthusiasm has some doubts whether he could do justice to the Khan's eligible daughters, of which Naryn is merely the first of twenty-six other eager ones. On the photo, Franco does an improvisation of O Sole Mio for Naryn. She prefers Michael Jackson's stuff, but Franco's repertoire goes only as far as "I Did it My Way". The cool shades did help. 15 October, 01:* After some 1,000 miles today I finally crossed the provincial boundary from Xinjiang to Gansu.. Xinjiang, in the extreme NW of China is a VERY big place, and home to a sizable Muslim minority, the Uyghurs (pronounced wee-wours in China). These people are of Turkish ethnicity, although mixed throughout the centuries with many other nations. They retain their language, which is akin to an 800 year old Turkish. In China it is written using the Arabic alphabet, as it was in Turkey until the time of Kemal Ataturk. Kazakh Uyghurs across the border must settle for a variant of Cyrillic, although their languages are perfectly understandable to each other. The Uygurs reflect their Turkish heritage in their way of dress, customs and the arts. Their musical instruments are very similar to those used through Muslim Central Asia and the Middle East. The dances are equally similar, with a bit of belly-dancing and Russian folk tunes thrown in for good measure. The Uyghurs are exceptionally kind, hospitable and friendly people, sharing these traits with the entire Turkish world. In Xinjiang they comprise about 50% of the population, and have their own Radio/TV stations, newspapers and school. The Province, by law, is fully bilingual. Uyghurs are practicing Muslims, and unlike the Chinese, eat no pork. They tend to be quite liberal in their Koranic interpretations and daily lives. Head-dress is observed by most Uyghur women, but facial veils are not required. Men wear a traditional squarish cap. Uyghurs are rapidly joining the 21st Century along with the rest of China. Many young couples can be seen riding around town on their brand-spanking-new motorbikes. **19 October, 01:** GANMAO? No, it is not another Chinese town, or the name of a government official. It is the dreaded China Syndrome, better known in the West as the CRUD. Every year starting about now, 1.5 billion Chinese (and a few hapless foreign motorcyclists) get it. The symptoms? Just imagine being beaten up with a

baseball bat and thrown in a ditch. Funny thing though, that's where you WANT to stay. Riding a motorcycle (or anything else) has as much appeal as a stroll across Kabul wearing a Stars and Stripes T-shirt. Treatment? Simple. Chicken soup and aspirin. Regrettably, both rather hard to come by around here. The former is generally spiced with things you'd rather not know about. Aspirin comes in generic-looking unmarked tablets kept dangerously close to other medications labeled with a skull and crossbones. Hopefully I'll find myself a Chinese-Jewish mamma who can prepare real Penicillin-soup with Matzos. Come to think of it, I don't even know if they HAVE Chinese Jews. But that's another story. From the sick bed in Wuwei, Gansu. 21 **October, 01**: The young pharmacist listened attentively to my complaints nodding his head. Yes, GANMAO very common. He produced a number of pill boxes which he stacked on the counter, all bearing Chinese names, with an occasional GANMAO on the box. The other ingredients read like a long laundry list. I shook my head asking for just IBUPROFEN. Ah! He turned around and retrieved a bottle labeled BULLUFEN in western lettering, but the rest was just as mysterious as the other boxes. "Maybe what I need is just a tonic, eh?" I suggested. He paused and replied in a very professional tone: "you regular? Big shit... at least twice a day? For a man your age important". What chutzpah, a man my age! I nodded non-committal in agreement, thinking if I could keep the trips to the bathroom to somewhat LESS than 20/day I'd be happy. But never mind the details. I walked out with a package of finely chopped fresh ginger and other innocuous-looking herbs. But I did turned down a bottle with an embalmed lizard in it. The "fuyuwen" (floor lady) back at the hotel solicitously prepared a tisane with the ginger, which she urged me to drink in small sips. Then from my sick bed I watched on ESPN Valentino Rossi beat Max Biagi for 0.013" in the Odaliya (that's AUSTRALIA for you foreign devils) Grand Prix in a neck to neck race. Good enough to wake up the dead. Like the Clockwork Orange character said: "Oh, I AM feeling much better now." Xi'an, here I come.  
PS. I think they have Chinese Jews after all. I'll tell you more some other time."

### Timur S. Travel notes Summer 2001

**Timur Shindel**, OMM Riders, dedicated all Summer 2001 to fulfill one of his dreams. A long, ample and solo ride across Turkey and the European Continent on a BMW F 650. After riding "the four corners of Turkey" in July, Tim moved to Europe at the beginning of August: below you will find his travel notes. At the end Tim decided to have a taste of Africa and from Spain he crossed to Morocco. The comments on this Country come from an e-mail exchange between Tim and Frank Campbell.

*" 6 August: Istanbul-Asprovolta, Greece. 570 KM.*

*7 August: Asprovolta- Igoumenitza, Greece 540 KM. Ferryboat to Italy. I strongly suggest using 'Superfast' ferry lines. Overnight ferry to Brindisi*

*8 August: Brindisi- Reggio South Italy, 540 KM*

*9 August: Reggio-Palermo (Sicily), 400 KMs. Overnight ferry to Napoli. Visited Etna during the day. Fresh lava still smoking and smelling, many surrounding towns were still ghost towns, all gas stations within 25 km. closed, work in progress to clean volcanic ash every where, dramatic sight. I was also surprised by the difference in standard of life*

*between mid-north Italy and the south. Had heard about it but did not expect such a big gap.*

*10-11 August: Napoli-Prague through Austria and Germany. Did an overnight ride, on the go from 6 AM on the 10th to 4 PM on the 11th, 1750 KMs, stopped by in Rome, Florence, Innsbruck.*

*11-15 August: Prague*

*15 August: Prague CR- Kaunos, Lithuania, through Poland. 1070 KMs. Obey speed limits in CR, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. These countries have almost no separated roads, but there is little traffic on the two way roads, which means that high speed is possible and safe, yet speed limit is 100-110.*

*16 August: Kaunos- Tallinn, Estonia. 650 KMs. Through Latvia, visited Riga, must see!. Tallinn one of the top 5 cities in Europe in my opinion.*

*17 August: Estonia- Finland by ferry, Helsinki to Lahti, 100 KMs.*

*17-22 August: Finland*

*22 August: Lahti- Helsinki (100KMS), ferry boat to Stockholm*

*23 August: Stockholm- Lübeck, Germany, 930 KMs.*

*24 August: Lübeck- Weibern, Germany, 570 KMs. Met the Turkish group in Weibern.*

*25-29 August: Weibern, NURBURGRING.*

*(In Nurburgring Tim met other OMM Riders for the annual Training Course in the Circuit). 600 KMs on the track and the surrounding notes on the GSX600. I have to say that when I finished the course, I had decided that this was not for me. The bike simply did not give me the confidence that it was going to hold around those bends at those speeds. I was uptight, and simply could not let myself go. It turns out say that the Suzuki contributed to this, the R1 I tried later fitted around me like a body glove. Another contributing factor to my discomfort was the intransigent Ibrahim, the Turkish origin Instructor. The German assistant instructor, with whom I had some private laps, was almost able to loosen me up. Yet I am perfectly aware that had I been able to do mind over matter, I could have ridden around that track on any bike at twice the speed, and much better lines. I was afraid of crashing!. Two months later, I still think Nurburgring is not for me. Yet it is possible that something may call me back to the track.*

*I am thrilled that I did go, the track, the hotel, the biking environment, surrounding nature and towns.... fantastic. I thank Selim once again, it was a complicated organization which he pulled off without one bump.*

*29 August: Nurburgring - Amsterdam, 450 KMs.*

*29 August-1 September: Amsterdam*

*1 Sep: Amsterdam, Holland- Nancy, France, 670 KMs through Belgium, Luxembourg. First and last mechanical failure, flat tire. I pumped countless tubes into the tire until it no longer held the foam. This works even though F650 has inner tube. I was luck enough to be 10kms from Grenoble when the rear tire gave up totally. I went these last KMs on the flat.*

*2 Sep: Nancy-Grenoble, France. 430 KMs.*

*3 Sep: Grenoble- Montpellier, Southern France. Called all 'motorbike' references in the yellow pages to repair the tire.. with no reply. It turns out that they were all closed on Monday! Note that 'Eurostar' chain is open on Monday and does repair all kinds of tires, including bikes. Met my sister Sim in Montpellier.*

*4 Sep: Montpellier- Tarragona, Spain, 450 KMs.*

5 Sep: Tarragona- Almeria, Spain. 760 Kms. All of this part of Southern Spain is industrial and deadly boring, except cities. Overnight Ferry to Africa  
5-6 Sep: Almeria, Spain - Mellila Spain, overnight ferry boat. Mellila is a Spanish city on the eastern Mediterranean coast of Morocco. No customs off the ferry boat. One crosses over to Nador, Morocco. Customs is crowded and chaotic. You will be approached by people offering to take care of your customs procedures. I did it myself in under 1 hour for both Sim & I. It may be a good idea to commission this off to locals, cost should be around USD 10, will save you waiting in line and some push an shove.  
6 Sep: Mellila-Nador-Fez Morocco, 360 KMs.  
7 Sep: Fez- Errachidia, 387 Kms  
8 Sep: Errachidia - Erfoud, 100 KMs  
9 Sep: Erfoud- Ourzzazate, 360 Kms  
10 Sep: Ourzazate- Marrakech, 220 Kms  
11 Sep: Marrakech  
12 Sep: Marrakech- Tangiers, 680 Kms, through Casablanca, Rabat.  
13-14 Sep: Tangiers- Sette France, 2 night, 1 day ferry.  
15-16 Sep: Montpellier  
17 Sep: Montpellier- Genoa Italy, through St.Tropez, Cannes, Monaco. 650 Kms.  
18 Sep: Genoa, Bari, Italy. 970 Kms  
19 Sep: Bari- Igoumenitza, Overnight ferry boat.  
20 Sep: Igoumenitza- Istanbul... 1100 Kms.  
All an all, 30.000 KMs including the Turkish part of the trip, one speedometer, 2 set of chains and sprockets, 3 rear tires, two front tires, 120 stops at gas stations, 3 continents, 20 countries.”

**“Some notes on Morocco...** One week in Morocco is not nearly enough. the country is big, it is easy to travel, and there is much to do. A month would have been much better. People are friendly, one does not feel nervous even in crowded areas, presence of Islam is not felt (less than Turkey I would argue). I suggest the Sette-Tangiers ferry line (Name of the company is COMONAV), saves the ride through Spain. Book in advance, get the best cabin, and do not share with any body! Mostly two way roads throughout the country, (with the exception of freeways around Casablanca- Rabat- Marrakech- Tangiers), generally good surface, not much traffic, well marked for bends, so safe to travel at good speeds. Fuel not a problem. We even found out that one get fuel in towns where there are no gas stations, just ask in one or two of the shops, you will either get gas or help to get gas, nearly twice the normal price. Strongly advice no night riding! French and Arabic spoken by everybody, English spiking people hard to come by, but communication is no problem as it is possible (and people are friendly enough to work at it) to develop a language mixture of French- Arabic- Turkish- English- sign pointing to objects. Around 3 'Dirhem' is 1 USD, and prices are roughly half of Europe (except gas, still around 15% cheaper) for most of the goods and services, much cheaper in some cases, like taxi. Accomodation of all levels available, a '4 star' no-name hotel with AC and pool around USD 70 for 2 people. Chain hotels such as Sheraton or the likes available, more exclusive accomodation like restored palaces can be found. The route we took covers urban area as well as natural wonders, mountains, wastelands, canyons, deserts. The constant and dramatic change of scenery is a great attraction. What it does not cover is the Atlantic, with its Portuguese fishing villages, highly recommended by

*those who went. Just about everything in Morocco look different. People, fashion, architecture, nature, weather..... Strongly recommended: City of Fez: especially the 'Medina', old city, town of Ifran: See a part of Switzerland, from lush greenery to A-roofed houses (where as nearly all of rest of Morocco is flat roof), to ski slopes (yes there are ski resorts in Morocco, as well as some of the best golfing as the young king is into golf, so they say). All towns along the Sahara (Erfoud, Ourzazate, and others which are the access point to the desert), take camel rides, 4 WD rides, beach buggy tours, hiking tours, into the Sahara, especially to set and rise the sun (both if possible) in the desert is a must. Whenever you step into the desert sand, take along a lot of water, carry it even if it is really hot and you are really tired and you are not going to go too far. Ourzazate is overrated as a town, good point of entry to the desert. Not interesting architecturally, and the kasbah (huge walled in palace-village more like) is a let down, although there are two Italian film lots. You can enter and tour them if you are good to the guards (so they say). City of Marrakech: especially the town square (camaa-al-fnac). No words or pictures can prepare you to the food stands, fortune tellers, henna painters, boxers, cobra wiggling to the tune of music, dancers, musicians, medicine men, the crowd, the smoke, the music of the square. And as fascinating as this is to the foreign eye, %99 of the people patronizing these rare services are locals."*

#### Watch that corner!



From **Timur Shindel and Feza Haznedar** we received an interesting picture of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, founder of Modern Turkey, on side car. We are offering OMM key ring and OMM T-shirt to the first rider able to tell us about the bike in the picture.

From a friend on Internet we received a selection of **strange signs** found travelling around on bike:

**Hotel, Athens:** Visitors are expected to complain at the office between the hours of 9 and 11 am daily.

**Tokyo hotel's rules and regulations:** Guests are requested not to smoke or do other disgusting behaviors in bed.

**In a Bangkok temple:** It is forbidden to enter a woman even a foreigner if dressed as a man.

**Hotel lobby, Bucharest:** The lift is being fixed for the next day. During that time we regret that you will be unbearable.

**Hotel elevator, Belgrade:** To move the cabin, push button for wishing floor. If the cabin should enter more persons, each one should press a number of wishing floor. Driving is then going alphabetically by national order.

**Hotel, Yugoslavia:** The flattening of underwear with pleasure is the job of the chambermaid.

**Airline ticket office, Copenhagen:** We take your bags and send them in all directions.

**On the door of a Moscow hotel room:** If this is your first visit to the USSR, you are welcome to it.

**At a Budapest zoo:** Please do not feed the animals. If you have any suitable food, give it to the guard on duty.

**Information booklet about using a hotel air conditioner, Japan:** Cooles and heates: if you want just condition of warm air in your room, please control yourself.

## Ride in gear

This month this section has a different and important subject. **Robin Helby** is the President of the Nurburgring Riders Club of UK and he was the rider who introduced OMM to the training in this circuit. Robin spend months at the Nurburgring with his bike, riding like hell and helping instructor and students. We received from him an important note and we are asking to all our readers in Turkey to contact us or directly Robin if interested in the subject:

*"When we met you may have noticed that I have only one good arm. This was the result of a serious accident about 10 years ago when a car drove into my motorcycle and injured my spine. Unfortunately I also suffer great pain from walking, which is why I normally use an electric scooter to get around outdoors. This scooter is a bit special. I like to go rambling in the countryside, down old tracks and away from people and roads. I could not find a scooter which worked, so four friends, all disabled, and I got together and persuaded an engineering company to design a scooter from scratch. We paid for one prototype each. I wrote the design brief and checked the design, including extensive testing. The result is a scooter which is way ahead of anything else on the market, in comfort, range and agility. Called the Tramper, it is now available in the UK ([www.tramper.com](http://www.tramper.com)) I attach a photo taken last week during a Disabled Ramble. There*



*were other 14 scooters and I provided rescue and recovery! My scooter is towing the trailer, which may give you an idea of what it can do.*

*The company is now looking to expand, especially in countries where its off-road ability will be beneficial. Sadly, I have yet to visit Turkey but possibly you have both suitable countryside and disabled people! **My reason for contacting you is in the hope you might have some contacts which can help me get information on the rules for disabled vehicles. These are different in every***

*country but the embassies are of little help. I would also like to learn more of what disabled transport is available, especially electric scooters. Of course, it needs to be someone who speaks English and is on email! Do you have any disabled friends I could contact? I would very much appreciate your help.*

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## Ride and Think

This month we are announcing here the closing of one of the best web-sites for bikers: The Interactive Motorcycle pages are not anymore available at [www.activebike.com](http://www.activebike.com)

These pages collected some of the best articles on Motorcycling Culture. After this bad news two good ones: you can order in CD the collection of articles (the entire web site archive) at the same address. You can then move to the new Thinking Rider website, [www.thinkingrider.com](http://www.thinkingrider.com) , that has been activated; the content presently mirrors activebike.com.

If you want to exercise your brain while riding go to <http://www.msgroup.org/TIPS.ASP> Here you will find very good articles on Biking techniques.

## More information about Turkey can be found at these selected web sites:

<http://www.turkey.org> A complete country profile, and notes on government, education, tourism and consular services.

<http://www.ptr.co.nz/turkey> A photographic essay about Turkey with hot spots map of Turkey.

<http://www.kultur.gov.tr/english/main-e.html> This is the web site of the Turkish Ministry of Culture of Turkey covering well museums and historical places.

<http://www.worldexecutive.com/cityguides/istanbul> A practical guide about Istanbul with city map, restaurants and hotels.

<http://www.osmanli700.gen.tr> A site dedicated to the Ottoman history.

[www.about-turkey.com](http://www.about-turkey.com) Offering a good introduction to Turkey

[http://www.focusmm.com/index\\_03.htm](http://www.focusmm.com/index_03.htm) "Focus on Turkey" is one of the best source of information for travelers in this country.

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