



One More Mile August 2002 Information Bulletin

Issue 36,

From Paolo Volpara (volpara@homemail.com)

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A View from the Cockpit

What happens When? (An article of OMM - Advanced Riding Academy, 2002 Course.)

This is the fifth article of OMM ARA course 2002. The previous ones are available at OMM web site under the section "Read and Ride". This article also closes the introduction part to the Course.

On Thursday August 1, 2002 a biker died on the highway of Istanbul: a sad moment for all bikers and a tragic history for the loved ones and for all his friends.

"According to Hürriyet newspaper, the 28 years old rider suddenly lost control of his Suzuki 750 SRAD and crashed into the highway barriers. The rider, in his 2nd week with his new super bike, was making over 180 km/hr, when the bike hit the guardrail for unidentified causes at 4.00 o'clock in the morning near Bakırköy on O-1. The biker was dragged along 25 meter and died instantly striking his head against the metal rail" To this point it sound like a "repeated" story of fast riders and dangerous bikes... but get the last paragraph: "The biker was riding without helmet."

Every time you listen to a biker's story reporting accidents (missed or real) the word "suddenly" will, soon or later, come out. "I was enjoying my ride when suddenly that bastard taxi..." "I was just reaching home when suddenly the bike went under me..." Naturally the ample use of "suddenly" derives from the same macho nature of biking: speeding along without cage to protect you. But, often, this little adverb is an indicator for a good lack of vision ahead, a limited fantasy for prediction and a small amount of anticipation sense.

It would have been relatively easy to observe that the taxi just picked up a new client, to predict that the instructions from the passenger may produce a change of direction, to anticipate, finally, that a fast U-turn could be in program. You do not need an oracle to observe the dark signs at the center of the road when paying your motorway ticket, you do not need a sixth sense to predict that several trucks, stopping on the same spot for the same reason, left a long streak of diesel, you only need good common sense to anticipate the lack of traction you will find there. "Suddenly" should appear more infrequently in our bike stories and reality should move at a more reasonable pace when we are riding. It is true that "you never let a motorcycle take you somewhere your brain didn't go five seconds earlier". As we said on the first chapter of OMM course, it is all matter of time: think about and you will agree. How many times after an accident you

cursed the timing: "if only I had 3 more seconds for closing the corner... if I reached that crossing 2 seconds later... and so on". Can we gain more time? Can time be expanded? Can somebody donate to us those additional seconds? The first obvious "yes" answer is on the right end of everybody's handlebar. If speed is a result of time and space, reducing speed gives more time for analysis, selection of options and action. On this assumption comes the first rule for emergency situations: "When a hazard looms ahead the first thing to do is to reduce speed". You may spend nights and days listening or telling stories or accident avoided by accelerating, swerving, jumping and (best of all) putting the bike down to the ground. Still you have to train for one only automated reaction to emergency situations: select and apply the best method of reducing speed according to the conditions. You have to take into consideration the initial speed, the position of the bike in respect of the vertical line to the road, the surface, the camber, the traffic situation and the distance from the hazard. Keep your vision high, look where you want to go (escape line) and reduce speed. Re-align the bike close to 90 degrees vertical, dial the throttle down, shut it, apply smooth front braking, apply emergency tapering braking, engage your ABS... the options are few and they should be analyzed in tenth of second to be applied "automatically" (remember saturation training). Any other choice will reduce your time of reaction and will take you close to the hazard at higher speed. It is worth to remember that if one has to crash it is better to do it at 30K per hour than at 50 K per hour: any speed you can bleed will reduce the results of the impact. I said that this is the first rule but I forgot to mention the "Real First Rule" of Advanced Riding: "Avoid putting yourself into an emergency situation". I remember years ago a TV program where the host was interviewing an ancient and serious Master of Martial Arts. At the question: "How your defense techniques work in a street fight?" the Master gave a simple and disconcerting answer: "If one of my student cannot see a street

fight coming and cannot walk away before it develops- he said- he is a very bad student". The expert rider, like the expert fighter, knows how to read the sign of a dangerous situation and how to steer away from it. Still accidents happen and even the most advanced rider cannot sometime avoid them: the solution would be to proceed at walking pace preceded (as the first cars) by a servant waving a red flag. But what's good in riding as a turtle burdened by terror of accidents? We must find a reasonable compromise or give up biking: this is when a good course in advanced riding can be of help. The objectives of a professional course are easy to list: a) To give the student more time to react to the traffic/road conditions. b) To give to the student practical tools for maximizing the results of each input. You do not need to trust my words. Just think of a difficult situation recently encountered in your riding: all you needed was an appropriate action and sufficient time to apply it. Classical

Safe motorcycling requires that you constantly look for signs of trouble. Experienced riders "read the road ahead" to plan their steering path and maintain traction, especially on curves.

Every move you make depends on your tires' grip - losing it leads to disaster. Look for anything that takes away traction. Sand, debris, oil buildup, potholes, painted or plastic lines, railroad tracks and manhole covers are things to avoid. If you can't, slow down and cross them as close to upright as possible, and as close to 90 degrees as possible. Stay off the brakes and keep your throttle steady while you're going over them.

BRITISH COLOMBIA SAFETY COUNCIL

<http://www.safetycouncil.bc.ca/>

example: "Too fast into a right corner... your brain and body tell you that you will not be able to steer the bike around, the apex approaches fast... you decide to brake... the bike continue in straight line toward the left side of the road... your back wheel locks... your front suspension has too many things to do... the asphalt keeps rushing under you". The end of this story may vary:

you are lucky, no incoming traffic and enough space to stop before running off road, you are not so lucky and you slide crashing on the left side of road... just pride and plastic, if it is not your day this can be the last mistake you make. For this exercise the result is not important: just consider what you could have done with a little (very little) more time to “read” that corner and with the right line position and countersteering technique. **The Motorcycle Roadcraft Police Rider’s Handbook** present an advanced riding system well proven and easy to apply: while continuously taking in information the rider moves flexibly and permanently along four phases: **Position, Speed, Gear, and Acceleration**. The “System” reflects the simple fact that on the bike you can only play with two variants: you can modify the speed (up or down) and you can modify the direction. As result a training course for bikers must focus on two major parts:

1. How to get and to use valuable information. (Effective Time Management)
2. How to modify speed and direction. (Effective Control Management)

“In each ride the expert rider constantly maximizes VISION and REACTION TIME by controlling SPEED and POSITION: this is done by applying RIDING TOOLS to a correctly evaluated SITUATION”. “What happens when?” is a difficult (and sometime) presumptuous answer. Even the most expert rider cannot anticipate all-possible-situations. Even the most expert rider loses control for predictable reasons. The mental process needed to go biking is a severe one demanding at the same time control of the mind, the body and the machine. The required dimensions (presented on the previous OMM ARA articles) can be summarized as follow:

- Curiosity, Desire to learn and Commitment to Excellence
- Attention, Alertness and Concentration
- Relaxation
- Realistic Evaluation (rider, bike and environment)

With these mental tools it is possible to build up Real Experience taking lesson from all the rides we had and building in our brain a large repertoire of scenarios that will make us good evaluator of hazard.

Without the right mental attitude, hours on the saddle may build up few pleasant memories, some fast and exciting pictures, moments of panic and stories to tell to stupefied friends: only momentary glimpses into what would have been a splendid opportunity to learn more. **At the end “What happens when?” is a matter of metal attitude.**

OMM Rides & Travels

I spent two hours yesterday afternoon listening to Selim report on the **Grand East Tour** conducted by OMM from the 19 and 29 of July. With the usual efficient but friendly manner, **Selim Demirel** (OMM Ankara) supported by **Yakup Icgoren** (OMM Istanbul) completed what will be remembered as one of the best events in our history. Few and minor accidents, a broken shaft on a BMW GS (repaired despite BMW Turkey service) did nothing to reduce the fun and pleasure of new discoveries. We plan to publish next month a full report. Meanwhile Jim Parr, an American long distance rider, who took part in this OMM Historical Ride and after went alone on the south coast, wrote to Selim: *“It took the solo ride on the coast road from Bergama to Cannakale to teach me that having an experienced lead rider is very important to a rider who is only used to riding in the United States. The experience of riding with you and the rest of our excellent group helped me to understand the aggressive tactics that are so common here. I will write up our story and submit it to Mike Kneebone (president of Iron Butt Association USA) and maybe then we will see if there is anyone else interested in taking the most fascinating ride of their lives.”*



The “**OMM Year on the Saddle Award**” is designed to support the use of motorcycle “all year around” and it is traditionally given to the Rider covering in the year 2002 the highest number of kilometers on bike. Again traditional is the reduction of entries as the year progresses: we started with more than 30 riders competing and at June 30 we are left with 11 bikers still registering their mileage. The dominant position, at the end of March, of **Rahmi Barutcu** is now under severe attack from two riders: **Timucin Kanatli** on Triumph Tiger and **Sinan Ozgen** on Aprilia and BMW. **Fuat Domanic** (OMM Rider) on Aprilia Mille is good fourth. The summer months are keeping the competition alive and the riders who withdrew from YoS Award will miss not only the fun of the race but also the surprise of prices. Here the summary:

	Name	Family Name	Bike 1	km. Jun 02	Bike 2	km. Jun 02	First half
1	Rahmi	Barutcu	BMW F650	47,400	BMW R1100GS	21,943	19,988
2	Timucin	Kanath	Triumph Tiger	33,141			15,724
3	Sinan	Ozgen	Aprilia SR150/00	19,350	BMW R850 R	10,500	15,350
4	Fuat	Domanic	Yamaha Thundercat	16,000	Aprilia Mille	8,000	12,100
5	Tugrul	Ozant	BMW R1150GS	34,100			9,800
6	Cevdet	Basacik	BMW F650	11,600	Yamaha FZS 600	5,670	8,570
7	V.Selim	Demirel	BMW R1150 GS	22,500			8,485
8	Ertugrul	Bitlis	BMW R1150 RT	26,357			7,857
9	Tunc	Baruonu	BMW 1100 GS	52,680			6,680
10	Yakup	Icgoren	BMW R1100GS	51,450	BMW R1150GS	1,300	5,891
11	Taner	Celik	HD DWG 1450	51,354			5,587

Rahmi cannot “seat” relaxed on his top position unless he seats on the saddle of his moving bike: even for riders with 6.000 K on the bag the competition is still open. After all, a good ride from Izmir to Dogubeyazit and return is worth over 3.000 kilometers!

Rides and Events Ahead

The readers of OMM Bulletin are surely familiar with the Baku Ceyhan ride called OIL ODYSSEY 2002. OMM riders took part on this event in the last years and the ride is now a "classic" of Caucasus Adventures. Kazim Ozunoglu is offering to all Turkish Riders the opportunity to meet the Oil Odyssey 2002 at the Turkish border riding with the group all the way down to Ceyhan. The program is quite simple:

August 27	Leave with Kazim from Istanbul and ride to Sivas for the night (riders from Ankara can join on the route).
August 28	Meet the group in the afternoon at the Turkgozu border near Posof. Ride to Cildir Lake for camp.
August 29	Ride to Erzurum with a possible stop at Ani. Overnight at Polat Hotel in Palandoken Ski Resort
August 30	Ride in the August 30th Victory Day parade in Erzurum, alongside with tanks. Continue on to Cayirli, Erzincan. Camp. Join the torchlight parade at night.
August 31	Ride to Kangal via Divrigi. Overnight at the Balikli Spa Center.
September 1	Ride on to Kozan, camp by the Crusader Castle.
September 2	Ride a short distance to Ceyhan for the state ceremony at the BOTAS facilities. Tour of the complex. Overnight at BOTAS guest lodgings.
September 3	Ride back home.

This is a real good event mixing culture, fun and biking and here is the chance to use your own bike on a reduced segment of the OIL ODYSSEY 2002. You can get more information on this event at <http://www.baku-ceyhan.com/> and you can book your participation to the Turkish itinerary by e-mail to kazoom_moto_adventures@yahoo.com

OMM – Advanced Riding Academy Course Nine September 2002.

The 21,22,23 September 02 (ARA 9) Course will be a new attempt to raise the quality of OMM tuition: a new system based on two and half days on the road, advanced theory lessons on circuit, radio communication between student and trainer, three qualified instructors with knowledge of the Turkish environment.

For this course we will have with us a new Instructor: Paul Thompson. Paul is 36 years of age with 20 years of riding experience including a little racing and some enduro. A bike Policeman for the last 13 years and currently police motorcycle instructor for the Thames Valley Police Paul rides Honda VTR1000 Firestorm and a Gilera Nordwest. His continental experiences include rides to Spain and Germany, French track days and a Charity ride to Egypt. This will be the first visit of Paul to Turkey and we are looking forward to welcome him in our group. The course is fully booked but you can still contact Apo Hekimhan (bukalemun@turk.net) to check whether some place becomes available at the last minute.

OMM – Advanced Riding Academy Course Ten October 2002.

We are pleased to announce that the OMM Group in Ankara is organizing the first Advanced Riding Course in the Capital opening to local riders the opportunity to join the 10th OMM ARA Class.

ARA 10 will start at 16: 00 on Friday 18 October to close on Sunday 20 October with the award ceremony. The OMM group in Ankara has selected and scouted two days of demanding riding along these itineraries:

Day One

Km	Instruction
0	1 Depart Bilkent Hotel
2,1	Arrive Hipodrom
2,1	Depart Hipodrom
8,5	Bear RIGHT (West) onto D750 for 7,8 km
50,1	4 Arrive Kazan
50,1	Depart Kazan on Local road(s) (North) for 0,6 km
81	5 At Kizilcahamam, return North on 06-82 for 0,3 km
84,3	Bear RIGHT (North) onto Local road(s) for 1,3 km
85,6	Bear LEFT (North) onto 06-88 for 10,3 km
95,9	6 At Güvem, stay on 06-88 (North) for 31,5 km
128,7	7 At Çerkes, stay on D100 [E80] (East) for 15,7 km
144,7	8 At Atkaracalar, return North on Local road(s) for 0,4 km
145,1	Turn RIGHT (East) onto D100 [E80] for 14,2 km
159,3	Turn LEFT (North) onto 18-77 for 7,1 km
166,4	Bear LEFT (North) onto 37-22 for 30,4 km
196,8	9 At 37-22, stay on 37-22 (North) for 11,6 km
208,4	Turn RIGHT (East) onto D030 for 2,8 km
211,2	10 At Araç, stay on D030 (East) for 0,4 km

211,7	Turn LEFT (North) onto 37-51 for 6,1 km
217,8	11 At Pelitören, stay on 37-51 (North-West) for 23,4 km
241,2	12 At Akpınar, turn RIGHT (East) onto 37-75 for 5,9 km
247,1	13 At Daday, stay on 37-75 (East) for 21,0 km
268,1	14 At Subasi, stay on 37-75 (East) for 7,3 km
275,4	Bear RIGHT (South) onto D765 for 2,4 km
277,8	Bear RIGHT (South) onto D030 [D765] for 3,0 km
280,8	15 Arrive Kastamonu
	End of day

Day Two

Km	Instruction
280,8	Depart Kastamonu on Local road(s) (East) for 2,0 km
282,8	Turn RIGHT (East) onto D775 for 13,0 km
295,7	16 At D775, stay on D775 (East) for 13,5 km
309,2	17 At Yaka, stay on D775 (South-East) for 32,5 km
341,7	Turn RIGHT (West) onto D100 [E80] for 0,9 km
368,9	19 At Çeltikbasi, stay on D100 [E80] (West) for 12,6 km
382	20 At D765, stay on D765 (South-West) for 23,9 km
426	22 Arrive Çankiri
426	Depart Çankiri on D765 (South) for 4,3 km
446,1	23 At 18-52, stay on 18-52 (South-West) for 17,5 km
463,6	24 At Sabanozü, turn LEFT (South) onto 06-10 for 14,3 km
506,4	26 At Çubuk, turn LEFT (South) onto Local road(s) for 6,5 km
518,8	27 At Esenboga, stay on Local road(s) (South) for 2,5 km
534,3	28 Arrive Pursaklar

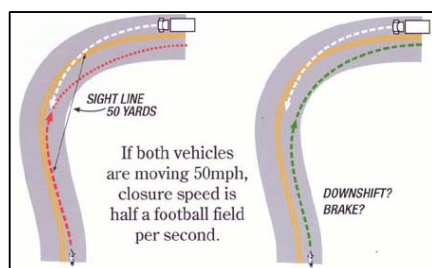
The course is open to all Riders with no previous experience in Advanced Training. If you could not enter on ARA 9 this could be a good opportunity to train before the winter season. The participation form (available at OMM web site) must be returned to Selim Demirel at sdemirel@alterna.com.tr

OMM History Ride to Syria and Beirut.

The ride is scheduled for October 4-5-6 and it is open to members of OMM association and friends. OMM will move the participant's bikes from Istanbul to Adana by truck using wooden palettes made on international sample. Riders can also select to move directly to Adana taking into consideration that the distance to cover from Istanbul is 915 Km. and from Ankara 480 Km. Short and hard this ride covers the essential visiting sites: Castle of Krac de Chevaliers, Beirut, Damascus, Palmyra and Aleppo. If you are interested contact one of your friends Member of OMM and check if there is still "room" in the group

Read and Ride: the training line

I was recently surfing the web exploring some Training organization when I came across www.classrides.com the place of **Class Motorcycle School**. The site is very interesting and you should take a look at the section titled "Road Work" where a set of articles from **Reg Pridmore** deals with emergency situations suggestions. I was particularly struck by the article "**Tight Survival**". I sent an e-mail to the school for further development but, so far, I have not received answer. Therefore portions of this article are here reproduced without permission from the author: "... I can't understand why somebody would write about safety on the street but insist on teaching a wide, swoopy, "looky loo" line. At CLASS I teach tight lines. We use them on the racetrack and we urge riders to use them on the street. On the track there are a number of reasons to use them. Of course at school, there's always the reason that faster riders can easily pass a slower rider safely on the outside of a turn when the slower rider is predictably on the tighter line. During a race, a tight line will enable you to pass on the inside of a turn - underneath the wider rider - not to mention being the shortest distance around the track. ... But it's not just about passing. On the track, when I'm coming hot into a turn and need all the braking power I can muster, I know I can brake harder and further in the upright position. Once I begin to lean, my braking power decreases. At that point I will be off the rear brake completely, and better have a good feel for the front, or I could possibly go down. Right? You can use your brakes much harder in the upright position, get the bike leaned and then get out of the turn. I can be upright longer and begin my turn closer to the apex on a tighter line. That's how I ride and that's how I raced. "What's the point?" Okay, what does this have to do



with staying safe on the street you ask? Why would you want to lose corner speed by going in tight, when you don't know what's around the corner and feel the need to take a wide line to take a look? It's your life mate. Who cares about cornering speed on the street if it's your life that will be taken by that car, or SUV or big rig coming around that blind right hander - feeling the need to take part of your lane as well as his own? At a 100 mph closing speed, try adjusting your line quickly enough to get out of the

way - especially on a big touring bike. It won't work as well as you think it will. I enjoy the need for speed as much as anybody. But especially on the street, I might only get one chance. When I see a blind right hander, I know I must slow down. I downshift - get it in the next lower gear to keep my RPMs up for some engine braking. I keep my line tight and my speed under control. Sometimes I (don't tell anybody) slow down more than I needed to. But that's ok, I made it through the turn safely and I'm learning the road. My ego can take it. Sometimes, I'm very glad that I slowed down enough because now and then there's that SUV, ready to make me a hood ornament. Sometimes the corner has a decreasing radius and too much speed would have had me over the double yellow as fair game for that oncoming semi. From the feedback I've gotten from students over the years, this philosophy has saved more than a few riders. **"But I can't see around the corner."** While we were in Norway a couple of years ago, Gigi and I were two up, enjoying a brisk ride through the countryside. The lane twisted and turned and had a magical rhythm to it. The roads are narrow in Norway, and it's even more important there to keep yourself over to the right - for reasons already mentioned... Of course we came a round a right hander, and there it was: a public works vehicle parked in the curve, our side, with a funny little arrow on the ground behind it indicating we were to "go around". No warning. I was glad that I had been following my own advice and going into blind turns knowing that there could be something around the corner. I had my speed under control, downshifted to 2nd gear before the turn, and had my line over to the right. I saw it, and was able to react quickly and stop. If I had gone in there fast, thinking that a line to the left of center would have helped me see that parked truck, we might have hit the car coming the other way, or not been able to stop in time and run into the back of the parked works truck anyway. **"Slow Down?"** Sometimes I read advice telling a rider how to take a turn but never mentioning adjusting speed. It's a crucial factor. It's very important to note that taking a tight line with much speed attached takes more skill than taking a wide line. It can cause you to exit wide if you're not ready for it and don't get the bike leaned. That's why I also talk about slowing down. Usually that involves downshifting and braking. When you go out to practice the tight line, take the time to get a feel for it and slow down..." At the first reading it looks like the Instructor is simply recommending to go into the corners at the right speed and in the right gear (adequate to avoid unseen obstacles) but the title and the opening of this lesson introduce a debatable point: going wide or going tight? At OMM ARA course we teach to take a right hand corner from a starting position wide on the safest line at the left of your side of the road. Mr. Pridmore advocate a different approach: taking a tight line means to stay on the right side of the road on a right corner. It must be said that in the continuation of the article (not reproduced here) the instructions for the left corner go back to the wide line. To the question "Where would you position yourself for a blind left hander?" Reg answers "On the extreme right of your lane. In this case staying out of harm's way would mean adopting a wider line." Inters tenting position creating two rules for cornering lines!

I asked my friend **Jon Taylor**, English Instructor, OMM Master Trainer and competent racer, to comment: "Firstly the race track. Strange how Valentino Rossi enters each corner wide if entering tight works so much better! When a rider is trying to defend his line he takes the tighter line to prevent another rider coming up his inside but this has the effect of slowing him down and as a result you see the rest of the field catching up. You often hear the commentator saying "they're holding each other up" and that's because they are doing exactly that! If a following rider is shrewd he will just follow using the lead rider to get them away from the rest of the field and only then make the overtake by out braking the rider down the inside knowing that once in front the other rider won't be able to get past him again. The actual overtaking maneuver slows them both down, but the goal has been achieved, the lead rider has been overtaken. Because of this they are both slower out of the bend but the overtaking rider is now in front and if he's good enough he clears off. The most important thing is how you leave the bend as any additional speed here is kept all the way to the next bend. The entry line (usually wide) is whatever will give you the best exit speed, end of story. Now let's move to the road. Two things you really need to know: how severe is the bend and what is around the corner?"

If a bend tightens up the wide entry gives you earlier warning, it also makes the bend less severe as you increase the radius of the line around the bend. By effective monitoring of the vanishing point you also get to see the bend opening up earlier and therefore apply acceleration to leave the bend earlier. You do NOT use a wide line exiting the bend unless you are holding position for the next bend of the same type or some other hazard.

The system presented in Reg Pridmore article is sometimes called the 'point and squirt' approach and that's why he's happy to admit to having to slow down more for each bend. 1, he can't see as much and 2, he is effectively making the bend a more severe one. Following someone using this approach you will notice that they tend to be all throttle and brakes and any finesse goes out the window. As I said earlier it's how quickly you get out of the corner after recognizing that the road is opening up, that makes the biggest difference to your average speed. My aims on the road are to see as far ahead as I can so as to see any hazards as soon as possible, to recognize as early as I can what the bend is doing (either opening up or closing down), to get on the gas as soon as is safe for a safe exit, and to make the bend as open as possible by effectively increasing its radius. If you always ride at such a speed as you can stop on the distance you can see to be clear you will never have a problem, it's just that the further you can see the higher that speed can be. All the above is written in my humble opinion, which is no more or less valid than the author of the article." Jon reflects in toto the OMM ARA position: GO LATE and GO WIDE. It is noticeable that most of the school on the other side of the pond do not mention **"arrow head or vanishing point"**. Without this tool of vision going into a corner becomes in any case a case of "tight survival" because the rider has no pre-indication of the development of the radius. Staying on the wide line allows all of us to get a good feeling of the "vanishing point" providing updated information for the right reaction. **At OMM ARA, we would be interested in getting your experience on this subject.**

I have recently been asked about experience with the melting asphalt of most of Turkish roads in summer. Here is my answer: "I am experimenting with melted asphalt quite often here in Gocek and on the coastal roads: I can confirm that what looks like melted tar is quite grippy offering to the tires a viscous/gluing surface. Of course when the melting is extremely deep and the oils on the tar start separating (translucent surface) the traction can rapidly disappear. The problem is to be able to separate the shining on the road: slightly melted tar, deeply melted tar, and diesel. At night it is almost impossible and one has to be cautious; the expression "lean as much as you can" is not generally in my dictionary. While road riding I believe you should not reach the maximum leaning angle under any circumstance. The expert rider always keeps a good margin of traction in reserve for surprises around the corner.

Riding the Web

A new and rich web-site for the Turkish Riders at www.klasikmotor.com **The Chopper Club (Klasik Motorsiklet Denegi)** has gone on line in a grand form: club and club's activities presentations, articles from around the world, useful information for riders, on line membership. The riders managing the Club were so kind to ask to OMM and to me personally a monthly article on training: you can read here the first contribution.

Mentioned in previous Bulletins, **Honda Sport and Touring Association** web-site at www.ridehsta.com is a good place for reading on safety and riding techniques. Read "The Pace" a classic article from **Nick Ienatsch**. In the next bulletin we will present this street riding technique that not only keeps street riders alive, but thoroughly entertained as well.

Nick Sanders "Motorcycle World Challenge Daily Chronicles" at www.nicksanders.com/chronicles.htm are not only funny to read but also full of interesting tips from a master of Long Distance International Riding. The World Challenge Rally is now on its way and the riders will cross Turkey on the return leg. OMM hopes to welcome them in good style.

More and more I go back to the "I-90 Club" web site for the excellent page of links: mark it as favorite and you will have a reliable directory of good sources. (<http://home.sprintmail.com/~sighbercruiser/>)

OMM Ring of Riders

"Bend Swingers" is a very exclusive riders club (on invitation only) directed from UK by the good friend of OMM Mike Parry. Their annual ride normally covers interesting roads of Europe and, in the past, we already reported some of the "Bend Swingers" adventure. This is a summary of the ride of six riders done at the end of May this year. Andrew (Honda Fireblade), Dian (Honda Pan European), David (Honda Fireblade), Mike B. (Kawasaki ZZR 1200), Gordon (BMW GS1100), Mike P. (Honda Varadero) go for Spanish Paradores in Motorcycling Paradise.

Six wobble around The Picos by Mike Parry.

This year the route struck westwards along the Spanish coast to Ribadeo, down to Santiago, swinging southeast to Verin, close to the Portuguese border and then northeast to Santander to catch the ferry home. En route we would take in the technically difficult, tight bends of the Picos, some more open sweepers around Riano Lake and several 100 miles of unknown but promising territory further west and then south into Portugal. Throughout the trip we would stay in Paradores. On two occasions at Ribadeo and Verin we would stay 2 nights in an attempt to vary the pace and offer a little more time to relax.

Sunday 19th May and Monday 20th May: Plymouth and the Ferry

Off to the Ferry Port at around 7am. Whilst the storm clouds were gathering over Biscay they were also gathering in the narrow gallery in which we had to store the bikes. We had hoped that this year The Hell's Angels would not be in evidence. We were sadly mistaken. Around a dozen of them, in different and possibly hostile groups ran their bikes aggressively along side ours in the gallery. There was a shortage of ropes and tie down rings on the deck and as The Angels were on the boat last they strutted around making noisy threats to the effect that those riders that had ropes would 'have to share them around'. If anyone else had said that one might assume that there would be a friendly exchange of words and the brotherhood of bikers would ensure that everyone pitched in to fix the bikes as best they could. Call me paranoid, but in this instance I think the message was rather that non-Angels bikes would end up all in a heap, with no ropes at all! In the event the crew came up with lots more ropes and my worst feelings were not put to the test. The good and bad thing about being locked on the Santander ferry for 24 hours is that you have to surrender yourself to the experience. You can either relax, read books play cards and chat with friends or fret about the fact that you could otherwise be riding down through France. Last year we were lucky and the crossing was relatively calm. This year it was a different story and heavy swells made the boat movement uncomfortable throughout the 24 hours.

Tuesday 21st May: Santander to Cangas de Onis

Disembarkation on Tuesday morning came not too soon for everyone: we finally left the ferry at 10.30 am to be confronted by scores of police blowing whistles, waving arms and generally making life difficult as we tried to find a place to regroup just outside the docks area. Our friends the Angels ignored all directions, crossed yellow lines and swept away dressed in their dirty denims, astride a noisy collection of Japanese and Harley Davidson machines. They did not appear to have any wet weather clothing and I confess to praying for a heavy downpour early in their journey. Someone was listening to my unworthy prayer. My reward came within a couple of minutes. I stalled the engine in the middle of the tight right hand turn, which was intended to take me out into the traffic. The bike gently fell onto its side and I was left angry and embarrassed. Who said there is no God and no justice? After 10 miles or so we pulled off the motorway into a service station to decide on how to link up again with Andrew and David. Within 10 minutes they were spotted following up on the same road and we were re-united for the trip to Cangas. This was a relief as we were looking forward to a much more interesting ride together, than the coastal route that we took a year ago. At Cabezon we headed inland to Cabuerniga, west through Puentenansa to Panes. Then on to Cangas de Onis through Arenas de Cabrales. Much of the route to Panes offered series after series of tight and sweeping bends and a climb up to around 2500 ft. We arrived early at the hotel and all elected to rest before an excellent dinner.

Wednesday/Thursday 22/23 May: Ribadeo

Wednesday morning was gloomy and the forecast was bad. Rain and high winds were promised and we had a longish ride to Ribadeo, which had been planned by Andrew. He kindly agreed to modify the route to again take in the exciting roads around the Riano Lake. Unfortunately the experience was somewhat spoilt by the rain. We stopped in Riano for coffee before moving off in heavy 'mizzle' on a shortened route through Campo de Caso to Oviedo. Several thousands of bends later we arrived at the outskirts of Oviedo, looking for the N634 northwest to Ribadeo. Oviedo proved to be another Spanish navigation nightmare. The road signs were virtually non-existent and half the city seemed to be under demolition or a rebuilding program. We finally admitted defeat when the road was completely blocked by an overturned bus. A kindly van driver put us out of our misery by leading us to the fringe of town in the right direction. The last 40 miles was on fast, wet, dangerous coast roads. We finally arrived soggy but thankfully intact at the Ribadeo Parador at 6.30. A total of 230 miles that felt more like 400. We all perked up somewhat when we were shown to our rooms, which overlooked the estuary. Sunshine was bursting through sullen clouds, a pretty village sat on the far shore and after a shower, a read and a late dinner the world seemed to be a much better place. Sitting by my hotel window, looking in the fading light across the estuary, at the ranges of high hills that we were to ride in the morning I reflected on what attracted me to traveling this way. It's strange but so many long distance journeys seem to generate a wide range of emotions. Whether walking, riding or sailing each memorable trip for me has encompassed moods of elation, contentment, frustration, depression, excitement and sometimes boredom too. This only seems to happen when you are directly responsible for your progress. It also seems to happen more the closer you are to the environment you are traveling through. It does not apply when others are providing the motive power. Perhaps that's the attraction. A week riding a motorcycle with friends in reasonably demanding conditions provides a sharper, more condensed range of emotions than the rest of life, which by its nature is blander and moves at a slower pace. Thursday was our first 'free' day. So, 4 laggards elected to take the morning off to sample the delights of Ribadeo and Andrew and Dian shot off after breakfast to sample the riding around the local hills. The town had little to recommend it: David and I decided that we should take a short ride out in the afternoon, on what promised to be some interesting roads. We shot off south, aiming for Vegadeo, and then turned left up a pass to Pesoz. This was a wonderful

ride, particularly in the company of my son, and it climbed to almost 3000 ft through a series of smooth, sweeping bends. We stopped briefly to look back down the lush valleys to the coast, before moving off onto more minor roads. That was when the rot set in! With only a small-scale map for guidance we headed southwest through Ventosa, then west into the hills. The plan was to describe a small circle and end up back in Ribadeo within the hour. An hour and a half later we finally emerged at Pontenova, still around 30 kms. South of Ribadeo. We had spent that 90 minutes riding a series of narrow roads and tracks through the Sierra de Meira, a region of countless, heavily wooded valleys. That evening, the fish restaurant rewarded us with what turned out to be the best meal of the trip.

Friday 24th May: Santiago de Compostella

Friday morning started with poor weather and on a discordant note. Mike B, Gordon and I elected to take a short route to Santiago and the other three would follow Dian's planned 200 mile journey. Dian understandably felt that the group should stay together and we thought that it was a matter of personal choice as to whether one wanted to risk riding swiftly for most of the day in the rain. After a heated debate the two factions agreed to differ and went their separate ways. We followed the busy coast west and then turned southwest to Santiago on the N634. The rain started to fall soon into the ride and continued to fall until we reached the outskirts of Santiago. The traffic was most of the way and we were glad to see Santiago by around 1 o'clock. We were all curious to see this internationally renowned pilgrim city, with its fine cathedral standing on the perimeter of an elegant square. The Parador, built in 1499, claims to be the world's oldest hotel and stands elegantly at 90 degrees to the cathedral. To reach the square one has to drive carefully through a pedestrian area and park the bike right outside on the ancient stone cobbles. We three wet bikers did just that, under the watchful eyes of the police, who were protecting politicians also staying in this impressive old hotel. Despite our grimy appearance at the busy reception desk the staff did not flinch and we were quickly and thankfully allocated twin rooms, rescinding the threat that this would be the only hotel at which we had to share king sized double beds. A quick wash and brush up and we were out to have a snack and a quick look around the cathedral. By the time we returned our three friends had checked in safely, having cut short their route due to the very wet weather. We all agreed that the cathedral was massive, over ornate and above all vulgar. It was full of tourists, including us, and wispy bearded pilgrims. Many of the pilgrims, who walk to Santiago from locations all over Europe, seem to try to ape the image of their mediaeval forerunners. It struck me as bordering on 'pilgrim chic' and no doubt there will soon be a feature on the fashion implications of 'the Santiago experience' in a glossy society magazine. I am glad that we visited Santiago, but have to admit that this beautiful historic town, like so many others has been ruined by greed. Hardly the right message for one of the world's most famous Christian locations. Every shop is a tourist trap, every café and restaurant hustles for business and the proliferation of gaudy, shiny pilgrims' mementoes does nothing to enhance the elegant old buildings or the spiritual atmosphere. After a noisy night, due to traffic noise trapped by the high walls in the town, I lay in bed listening to a beautiful, complicated peal of bells from the Cathedral, overlaying the cries of seagulls, reminding me just how close Santiago is to the sea. I also reflected on how big and relatively wild Spain is, compared with the neat, claustrophobic England we are used to. Casting around for areas of Britain that even approach those we had ridden through to reach Santiago and only the remote areas of Scotland could compare. Last night at dinner I asked David what advice he would give to his UK biking friends before they undertook their first riding trip to Spain. He suggested that a reality check on the true level of their existing riding skills was essential if they were to avoid trouble.

The alternative Ribadeo to Santiago - The Men's' Journey (170 miles)

Early morning tiff resulted in the 'real men' taking Dian's pre planned route to Santiago from Ribadeo across the interesting twisty roads, and the 'big girls' blouses' taking the more direct, less bend swinging route. Started off well with a bit of sunshine and a quick squirt to local petrol station. After only a few miles of heading towards the petrol stop, there was the first indication that this was to be an eventful day. Entering a seemingly innocuous left hander, the rear of Mr Lund's 'Blade decided to let go and give a vicious kick in GP 'high side' style. Looked good from where I was. The incident was dismissed at the petrol station as being a simple case of cold tyres. After the fuel stop, we headed up the excellent twisty road out of Vegadeo to Fonsagrada. Rapid progress was made up to the top of the hill where the weather took a decided turn for the worse. Blanket mizzle followed for the next stint until the first stop in Fonsagrada for a defrosting, first coffee of the day. Dian led us off over the mountains to some slightly drier weather at lower altitudes. This did not last though as we climbed back up again and headed further west. Not only was it wet but the mizzle got thicker and reduced visibility. The rain became more persistent and would stay like that for the rest of the day. The route was changed slightly to allow us to take a slightly more direct route over bigger roads, so off we went to Lugo. From there we picked up the autoroutes to get to Santiago, this accounted for the last 100kms.

Saturday/Sunday 25/26th May: Verin

Now we were to ride southeast to Verin: the day's route would take us around 150 miles through Lalin, Chantada, on to A Rua across a range of high hills to A Gudina and then after a short motorway spurt to Verin. We rode slowly out of Santiago, in dry but overcast conditions and quickly hit open country again. We rode through big valleys covered in green shrubs and dazzling yellow gorse bushes, some as big as trees. Many of the roads were series of big, smooth bends, initially not quite tight enough to test your riding skills at sensible riding speeds. The climb and decent riding south over the 3,300ft Alto de Covelo pass was great fun and we arrived at the Verin Parador at 4 o'clock. The Hotel is set on a hill overlooking Verin and the plains that roll away to Portugal, which is about 10 miles away. Set several 100 yards away on a slightly higher hill is an impressive medieval castle, inside which was built a more modern and now deserted villa. We walked up to the castle and spent a pleasant hour climbing the tower and being escorted around the villa, which is now used as a museum. Sunday morning, a free day and its raining again. After a rather poor breakfast by Parador standards, we chat, hang around and try to motivate ourselves to take a ride into Portugal. By 11 o'clock we have decide to go and David has volunteered to lead, for the first time. We drop down onto the plain, headed south and were quickly over the border through an unmanned border post. David struck east from Chaves along the N105 to Braganca. This was a wonderful road full of fast, smooth demanding bends and we stepped up the pace to take full advantage of them, as they took us into The Parque Nacional. After an hour we caught a glimpse of a sign for a Harley Davidson café. This was in a small non-descript village miles from anywhere. Intrigued, we turned around and headed for the café, which was at the back of a small filling station. As we arrived a small, brown woman came across to greet us. She was the owner of the café and became an enthusiastic Harley owner, after spending a few years living in The States with her husband. She told us her husband, who was unfortunately not around, had a collection of old motorcycles. After cheery waves we left this very hospitable lady, who had added a great deal to our day and continued the ride East towards Braganca. From Braganca the plan was to strike North through Portelo, cross the border and be home for an afternoon tea and a snooze. However it's the unpredictable that makes life exciting. Braganca was another chaotic road and house building site in which the usual poor signposting was almost non-existent. Signs for Spain kept appearing, but they drove us ever eastwards on the road to Zamora. Eventually we reached the border at Quintaniha and crossed towards Trabazos, which the map indicated was the next place to find a route North back into Spain. More road works confused the issue but we dropped down off the main road to see the hillsides and the small road that climbed them covered with cars. Trucks and market stalls. It was the mother of Sunday markets, the Grand

Euromarket, perhaps the shape of things to come in England? We eventually slipped through a small tunnel and found our way out on very small, badly surfaced and twisty roads, which led us, back into the 15th century. It took us almost three hours to cover the next 50 miles as we threaded our way through remote, scruffy villages, rode through fields of wild purple flowers and acres of what appeared to be, but were not, cultivated dog roses. We climbed to a spectacular summit at St. de la Culebra and stopped to admire the wild countryside that rolled away in every direction. This was a truly wonderful place and it was savored all the more as a result of the difficulty in reaching there. Photo opportunity over, and with the afternoon slipping away we rode on past a beautiful lake to finally hit the main road back to Verin. The road system from there to Verin proved to be a nightmare. The new motorway appeared to intertwine with both the new and the old A road. So, we seemed to fluctuate haplessly between all three before finally arriving back at Verin at 7.30pm. Everyone was cold and a little tired, but enjoyed what was probably our most memorable day, riding in strange but beautiful country, country that seemed untouched by the 21st century and is all the more striking and interesting for that.

Monday 27th May: Cervera

This was a red-letter day. Gordon was to lead the group east back to Cervera, our last overnight stop before joining the ferry for home. He made a rather worrying start by riding the first 500 yards down the road from the Parador on the 'wrong' side of the road. The next 100 miles or so, initially taking in motorways and then flat relatively straight roads, was cold, windy and somewhat boring. We passed numerous bleak, remote villages interspersed with tumbledown mud houses, which seemed almost surreal amongst their modern, functional "contemporaries". Not wishing to break with tradition we stopped for a ham and cheese sandwich before pressing on to Cervera, arriving at around 3.30. The hotel looked ordinary enough from the entrance but the rooms offered spectacular view north over high hills to The Picos in the distance. Just below the hotel was a beautiful reservoir and off in the distance to the northeast we could just see the 2700 meters Pico des Tres Mares. Dian, always the one with an appetite for another ride, took off for solo tour around the hills. After a short walk down towards the lake the rest of us sat on the terrace, drank a little too much white wine and then withdrew, tired and a little emotional to our rooms for a siesta, before dinner. It certainly is a hard life.

Tuesday 28th May: Santander – The Ferry again.

By 7.15 we were all packing up the bikes, in a subdued fashion, for the trip north to the ferry. The day was overcast and cold. I led off out of the hotel and as I turned right down into the town a large stag ran out of the gloomy woodland at the side of the hotel. He quickly doubled back, as the bikes pulled away. We had 90 odd miles to do to reach Santander, and barring any problems had plenty of time to do them in. The first 30 miles ran through flattish open countryside. At one point we were over flown by a couple of large storks and I saw a large bird of prey swoop down on its prey in a field on the left. At this time in the morning we had the roads to ourselves apart from a few drivers on their way to work. We made excellent time until we hit the N611, which takes all the traffic north into Santander. It was a dangerous nightmare of a road for motorcyclists. It rose and fell through a series of hills was often restricted by solid white lines and was packed with business traffic. Heavy lorries struggled up the hills and frustrated commuters tried in vain, often performing very risky maneuvers, to pass them. Thankfully we managed to thread our way through safely, as the run rose and ironically gifted us the warmest weather we had had during the whole trip. Eventually we hit Santander in the rush hour, but managed to arrive at the ferry terminal by 9.30am, with plenty of time in hand.

FROM KEVIN AND JULIA SANDERS

Guinness has just officially confirmed the Globebusters fastest circumnavigation of the world by motorcycle as the New World Record in 19 days, 8 hours and 25 minutes.

Very rarely is a new world record set that smashes the old record so convincingly. The new record cuts 12 1/2 days off the previous record. Even more extraordinary is that it ranks faster than the current car record - extraordinary because the car record has a team of three and rotates two drivers. The bike record demands one rider all the way. To everyone who provided kit and services, a very big thank you. You all helped make it happen.

There is definitely a change going on into the Biking Community worldwide and nostalgia of the "old good times when bikers were bikers" is not the good attitude to keep. New (or newly born) bikers come into the scene and we must be ready to welcome them and to share with them on equal basis the passion for our sport. Eyewitness of these changes in Neal Karlen who, after his visit to Sturgis, for the classical Haley Davidson Rally, wrote this fascinating article (reproduced without permission).

Roaring Into Town and Saying, 'Excuse Me' By NEAL KARLEN

The man who called himself Texas Heartbreaker was 6 feet 3 inches and 260 pounds, with hands the size of Texas steaks. Even at 55, he was one of the fiercest-looking bikers at a rest stop on Interstate 90 last Sunday, taking a break on the way across South Dakota. Leaning against his muddied 1969 Harley-Davidson motorcycle, he watched, with simmering disgust, the "squares," as he described them, pulling into the parking lot, towing Harleys. "We call them weekend warriors," he said, pulling at the beads woven into his gnarly beard as the couples and children wearing T-shirts from the San Diego Zoo, ankle-length summer dresses and Little League hats left their shiny late-model recreational vehicles and headed into the service building. "They're like Clark Kent going into a phone booth," he muttered. When the squares emerged a few minutes later, they were wearing leather chaps and jackets, with bandannas wrapped around their heads. Fathers suddenly looked dangerous, with their three days of family vacation stubble, and some mothers perhaps should have changed into tank tops two sizes bigger. Heartbreaker, sweating heavily through a T-shirt with text extolling a certain sexual activity, had a ready assessment of what he saw: "These yuppies are ruining Sturgis." Sturgis is the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, which takes over Sturgis, S.D., a town of 7,000 in the Black Hills, for 10 days every summer. This year's rally, the 62nd, began last Friday and ends on Tuesday. It is expected to attract almost half a million people, said Lisa Weyer, a city employee who is this year's rally director. "Call us scooter trash, but the whole point of Sturgis until not too long ago was to ride," Heartbreaker said. "Sturgis didn't mean dragging your buffed \$30,000 bike you picked out of a Harley catalog, changing clothes at a truck stop, then motoring into town crowing: 'Look at me! I got a Harley! I'm a two-wheeled cowboy riding near Deadwood, South Dakota, just like Wild Bill Hickok in the Old West!'" There is still riding at Sturgis, where a group called the Jackpine Gypsies began it all in 1938 by inviting about 200 friends and acquaintances for drag races and runs through hilly terrain outside of town. But the crowd has changed — more than once. Sturgis soon became an annual event, its reputation grew, and by the mid-60's it was a lawless bacchanal, attracting gangs and tens of thousands of self-styled outlaws. About 15 years ago the city took over, imposing law, order and organization. There are still hill climbs and runs, but most people come for the rock concerts, shopping and trading and, above all, the ritual of admiring one another's motorcycle. Now between a third and a half of the bikers at Sturgis are not rebels defying social mores with noisy engines, but professional or white-collar workers, who, like Civil War re-enactors, have found psychic relief or status by acting out fading romantic images.

Many acknowledge the fantasy element. "I admit it's a mainstream rebellion, but people in the office always get an envious look in their eye when you tell them you ride a Harley, like you're free in ways they aren't," Robert McGee, 59, a federal labor relations lawyer from Bremerton, Wash., said on Wednesday in Sturgis, when the rally was nearing peak level. "For a lot of us," he said, "it's about our pasts, when everything seemed possible." In the eight years since he first came to Sturgis, he said, he has noticed a marked drop in "drunken or pharmaceutical-induced rowdiness." Women, biking or walking, are no longer routinely asked to bare their chests, at least not during the day and outside a few campgrounds. The rally Web site lists the fine for indecent exposure: \$90. Even Heartbreaker has made concessions to modernity: he works 60 hours a week as a union tradesman outside Austin, Tex., and carries a cellphone. He also gave his real name (though he refused to let it appear in print), until recently an act as unthinkable among bikers as in the Blaze Starr subculture of strippers. Baby strollers now show up on Main Street during the rally, though at every moment since Friday, the promenade of motorcycles has been so thick that it seems it must be visible from space. Lined on both sides by vending booths and parked bikes, Main Street causes an instant sensory overload that somehow recalls Steinbeck's much quieter Cannery Row: "a poem, a stink, a grating noise, a quality of light, a tone, a habit, a nostalgia, a dream." Delaney loves it, "Sherri Greenway, a schoolteacher from Los Angeles, said on Monday, pointing to her 8-month-old daughter, peacefully asleep in a stroller in the Main Street crowd. "We both are bikers, but we came in a motor home because Delaney is so young," said her husband, Sean, 30, who in his other life organizes companies' 401(k) plans. In the 1954 movie "The Wild One," Marlon Brando famously answered, "Whaddya got?" when asked what he was rebelling against. At Sturgis in 2002, what can be got are a deerskin bikini top and skirt (\$275), a buck knife inlaid with a Sturgis medallion (\$149) and a "crib set for that special baby biker in your life" (\$200). Next door to the Dungeon Bar Tattoo Parlor, an espresso bar offers a mocha latte for \$3.50. "Even if you don't know if a guy is a Hell's Angel or orthodontist, now at least everybody says, 'Excuse me,'" said Chris Mahoney, 37, who owns an electrical contracting company in Sturgis. He and his brother Dan, 42, a schoolteacher, grew up in Sturgis and knew a different time. "Our parents bought groceries for the length of the rally, and we planted ourselves inside," Dan said. They well remember the moment in 1982 when Sonny Barger, a Hell's Angels leader, brought his followers down Main Street at 80 miles an hour. "The entire town stopped," Chris Mahoney said. "Nobody spoke." A prime beneficiary of the trend toward older, more steadily employed riders is, of course, Harley-Davidson itself, the Milwaukee company whose bikes remain religious objects to those who come to Sturgis like pilgrims. Though Harley motorcycles can cost up to \$25,000 before being customized, and there is a waiting list of up to a year, they retain the illusion of outlaw chic. Malcolm Forbes rode one into Sturgis one year (though sans Elizabeth Taylor, his sometime motorcycle mama). Sturgis isn't completely sanitized. Members of the Hell's Angels, the Sons of Silence and the Sundowners can be seen wearing their colors. The number 13 — for M, the 13th letter of the alphabet — is still sewn on vests to signify that the wearer smokes marijuana. Tequila is still slurped from the navels of women lying atop bars, and on the street, one can have a picture taken with Miss Nude South Dakota for \$5. (She's wearing a tiny, silver-spangled bikini.) The rally may no longer be all theirs, but the bikers who still aspire to the outlaw lifestyle seem to be having fun. Texas Heartbreaker expressed the subdued but general satisfaction. "No one's disrespecting me here," he said.

Watch That Corner

Murad Acar, founding Member of OMM was on the Grand East Tour recently organized by Selim and Yakup. Riding a BMW R1150 GS, he found himself stranded on the road with the back wheel disconnected from the transmission: He writes: "Approaching Viranşehir, about 50 km on the way to Urfa, my back wheel bearing spoiled. After finding transport to Urfa, we reach the hotel at 10 o'clock at night. Early in the morning I tried to call BMW biker's emergency service to learn that this service is now closed for bikers operating exclusively for cars riders. I then called BMW Borusan Istinye: they told me that the bearing was not available... it may arrive with in 20 days. As far as the needed gasket my counterpart could not understand which part was needed due to a lack of bike knowledge. Later somebody called from BMW service of Adiyaman and he tried to understand the problem instructing me to call a mechanic in Urfa who may help me. I could not thrust him and after 2-3 calls with BMW Istanbul and Adiyaman I realized that it I was just wasting time. I called Saffet (previous Borusan BMW mechanic) and he understood the problem easily because in last 20 days he had the same problem with 4 BMW. He told me that he can find the pieces within 1-2 hours or he will remove the shaft from his own bike. I arranged the flight ticket for him: he on the same night with the spare parts and the tools: when we remove the bearing we could not identify the brand. Obviously the cheap material created the problem: the bike has just complete 20.000 km. We started repairing at 11.30pm and by 3.30 am the bike was ready to move. I am really thankful to Saffet who refused to charge for labor. Out of this bad experience we learned that: BMW has no urgent service for bikes, BMW can not arrange service out of Istanbul and BMW spare part policy is very weak. The total cost of this operation is at 770 million TL. This is not only my problem but a problem of all Beemers and I would like to get your opinion."

BMW Turkey was quite sympathetic with Murad case and they provided a rapid refund of almost 50% of the total expenses. Still the problem remains not only for BMW but for all brands of bikes outside main Cities (Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir). Importers and Distributors of bikes in Turkey do not have a business large enough to be able to provide good service: the market is shrinking and no one of the major players can set up a decent infrastructure to give the assistance needed. We can complain in any form and tone, we can insult, shout and cry, we can create or use group: the reality will not change if we (the bikers) do not act to provide guidance and help to the industry. All Riders' Clubs must cooperate to face this poor situation:

1. Creation of a private network of good bike mechanics in major centers of Turkey linked by a network of responsible riders. This was the idea behind "OMM Ring of Friends": to have Bikers Friends in all major centers selecting a reliable mechanic.
2. Organize, in association with bus companies, a system of parts delivery covering all Turkey from Ankara and Istanbul. This plan forecast one person in Ankara and one person in Istanbul to take responsibilities for locating and delivering to a bus center parts when needed. The managers of this system can be people professionally involved in bike sale or service.
3. Management of a system of recovery for bikes based on the wood pallets (design already available at OMM). We could ask to the mechanics of point 1 to have one pallet at disposal at any time and then we only have to select a transport company offering reasonable rate for moving palletted bikes.
4. Formation, in Istanbul and Ankara, of a network of qualified mechanics and bike experts. This network must be kept active on regular basis monitoring the general status of the service on the market.

"Still, Importers and Dealers, take good money from us when they sell a new bike and run away when it comes to service it. The poor sales of Turkey cannot be – writes Selim Demirel- neither an excuse nor an explanation in having difficulties with parts like brake pads, hoses, clutch discs etc. Furthermore this is not a justification of importer's ignorance and lack of activities towards the current situation. The bike owners must demand this improvement, show ways to do it, have regular talks with service people, keep the pressure on. What I am mean by "applying pressure" is nothing negative like threatening people, going to the press, shouting or cursing: the aim is to remind the importer that there must be a minimum of correspondence between the words of salesman and the ones of the service people. There is also a concrete fact to respect, namely the law, according to which the importers are obliged to get organized in more 40 city centers (il merkezi) with service and spare parts." One last consideration based on our international experience. The Turkish biker furious at the poor service he gets should take a rest and consider what would have happen in the same situation in an European Country. Let take UK as an example and imagine a BME stranded on the north of Fort Augustus in Scotland. With a call to a Road Recovery Service your bike (after minimum two hours) will be lifted into a truck and taken to the nearest available service: Murat's accident happened on Friday and we keep the same day for our UK example. The Service will list your bike for the next available slot on the next week: presuming the Center is a good and gentle one, they will start working on Monday if they have the part in stock. Otherwise Monday the part will be ordered to arrive in 24 hours, Tuesday your bike will go under "not so expert" hands and by Wednesday you will be able to take the road again: meanwhile you would have received an offer for a low price (or free) car to continue your ride in a "box". Reader of UK bike magazines are well familiar of the poor level of service delivered in Europe and the high cost attached. **To sum up: with the bike down on Friday, in UK you will be on the road on Tuesday or Wednesday much poorer than the 350 pounds Murat spent in Turkey. In Turkey, Murat was on the road, re-joining the group, by Sunday morning and two week later he got back half of his expenses. Something to consider!**

A friend from England writes: "I had a fast ride back from London yesterday. Worst traffic of the year and very hot. On one section of 40 miles dual carriageway I was constantly slipping through traffic in both lanes at 60/80mph. I am sure you have had same feeling when you seem particularly in tune with bike and road and almost a spectator to your own riding. It's an interesting experience as you seem to know intuitively what other drivers are going to do. Do you have similar experiences? Are we fooling ourselves and taking too many risks in these situations?" **We discussed in a past issue of this Bulletin the existence (or not existence) of a sixth sense for bikers: any comment from the readers?**

Ride in Gear

Kevin Cain (kcain@caucasus.net) reports on the first long ride on the BMW R1150 GS Adventure comparing it with his previous GS. "I am based in Tbilisi but am very often in Turkey for short breaks. Concerning the differences between the R1100GS and the R1150GSA, I have had two R1100GSs, and the last one was bought in 19997 as an export model from BMW London, ridden to Paris (where I live) and back and then down to Tbilisi via Turkey and the Black Sea route via Trabzon to Georgia. I then rode back across Turkey via Kars, Erzerum, Erzincan, Ankara, Izmir then ferry to Venice, over the Alps to Geneva and down to Seville. I then rode back from Portugal to London and had the bike shipped to Tbilisi where I am working as a consultant. The R1150GSA is new and I have just ridden back to Tbilisi from Europe. Apart from the 30 liters tank there are not that many initial differences, but once on the road the impression is quite different. The size of the tank is not apparent when riding, and what is immediately apparent is the improved throttle control/engine management. Also, the new suspension is a vast improvement, especially the rear damping and the bike feels very solid and just soaks up bumps in an incredible way. I am running the bike on road tyres. Another vast improvement are the ABSII Evo brakes which are very powerful indeed. The higher screen and one piece seat improve the comfort and I was riding regularly 10 -12 hours a day and managed to average over 100kph for the whole trip which is something I have never managed before (not even on my Blackbird) and the increased fuel capacity is something to do with this. The bike is much faster than the old one and though BMW claim a top speed of 200kph in the manual, I regularly and easily saw 220kph on the clock. I have not yet fitted any extras but am thinking of putting a Remus exhaust to improve the sound. The sixth gear is shorter than on the regular R1150GS as is first (my R1100GS had only a 5 speed gearbox) and there is enormous torque and response even in sixth at high speeds. I am delighted with the bike and can find no faults"

I am sure you came across the need to fix "something" to your handle bar or to your bike: it could be a GPS device or a portable phone or (for non Turkish riders) a radar detector. It could also be that you like to take pictures while in motion and you planned to fix a video camera or a camera to record your "magic moments". **R-A-M, or "Round-A-Mount"** is an incredibly versatile system for mounting several devices in a rocky steady way. You can see the different applications and the long list of accessories to the system at www.cyclegadgets.com/Products/RAM/. **Cycle Gadget** has also a long list of products: Lighting, GARMIN GPS, Safety & Security Devices, Maintenance and Cleaning Gadgets, Books & Software, Helmet Gadgets and special accessories for BMW and HONDA Gold Wing.

Ride and Think

Taking advantage of Orthodox Easter holidays a group of around 200 bikers from Greece visited Turkey under the organization of Moto Mag Greek Magazine (<http://www.mototech.gr>) and EMOK Riders Club Turkey (www.emok.org) This article is a good testimony of the sentiments, experiences and ideas that made the meeting not only memorable but also "historical".

"The grandfather of Turgay Avci, secretary of EMOK, left from Mosgali Serres in 1923, on the population exchange. As the grandpa is now more than 100 years old and had lost his eyesight, Turgay went back of a ride to Serres, bringing back to Turkey a vase full of soil. When, without talking about the ride, he presented the gift, the grandpa took the soil on his hand, smelled and said "This is ground from my birthplace..."

Many of the Greek motorcyclists who participated to the EMOK Friendship Meeting, had roots of Mikrasia or Istanbul but almost no one knew what to expect of a trip to the neighbor country Turkey.

The welcome letter that EMOK riders were distributing to the Greek bikers, with a map and a road book of the route, as soon as they arrived in Ayvalik or Ipsala, was written in Greek. Stories and people, which so far were divided, them their way, we our way, them there, we here, start to mix into each other. "If I wasn't here, I would never believe it" Turgay told me, narrating the

story about his grandfather. "How can a man remember the smell of the ground he was cultivating, 80 years later?" We, on our side, if we never went there, we would never believe that Turkey could be also like this.

I leave the customs, in a small street in Kidonies, Ayvalik. On the opposite side there is a store and an old Cretan smiles comfortable on his chair, "...it's been 60 years since I've been here, I married and stayed. Have you any Cretan in your company?" In front of us a man dressed in rags, crook-back, maybe the lunatic of the village. I see him bend, picking up a piece of paper thrown to the ground and waste it to the trash can, few meters away.

Back in Piraeus, on the departure of the "sea" group to Mitilini, most of the reporters' questions were of the type they make you wonder "Are you starting an adventure?" "No, for a pleasure trip in Turkey, for a friendship meeting" "Aren't you afraid of going there?" "To be afraid of what?" "You are carrying women too..." Our smiles were of course the best answer to such questions, smiles from all of us who were starting "an adventure to the place we should be afraid of" We had the adventure of course, arriving in Mitilini, where we had to buy tickets for 180 people, to make up a list of the passengers with passport numbers and cycle plates on a small kafenio table, behind some bars, then to start the passport control and then the embarkation. Endless hours. On the contrary, in Ayvalik the custom authorities had a meeting the previous day and the prefect had given strict orders that the procedures would be finished in less than an hour for all of us, something that really happened.

I set off with the last group from Ayvalik, in Turgay company. On the road, olive trees, fields, pine trees, the same landscape – if you didn't know you were in Turkey you wouldn't understand a difference. My eyes are scanning right and left, to find the details, to find out what Turkey is. I find it on the smiley faces of the countrymen who salute us as we pass by, I find it on the flashing lights of the cars, I find it on the Traffic Police that I see in every junction for 230 km to help our passing, I find it on the dusty country streets of the villages, I find it on the tiles of the roofs, on the chicken of the yards, on the smell of the grounds and as the sun sets off on the millions of liras we pay on the gas station.

When the whole story started, after Turgay's email, with the idea of a meeting I didn't expect lot. I was thinking that we would be gathered 20-30 motorcycles and take the trip to see what's going on. Finally, despite the displacements of the holidays that discouraged lots of people, 167 cycles were gathered, over than 250 people, on the most massive trip ever abroad.

02:00 a.m., I pass the long bridge of Bosphorus and my mouth stays wide opened. The 500 km. tiredness, half of them at night, disappears. Bosphorus under my feet, seeing the Keratios entry, Agia Sofia in lights, the Blue Mosque, walls and plenty of other monuments. It seemed to me that I was seeing Istanbul of 500 years before, I could not see any modern buildings, I was feeling flying with a magic carpet like in fairy tails. I was shocked. There is no better time and better spot to enter in Istanbul I imagine. And how can I describe the feeling, a bit later, when we stopped on the empty cobbly street outside of Agia Sofia. Turgay knew, he understood so didn't get us to the hotel straight away. I really thank him for that.



Where the hotel was located, by the beach, a big arch, a gate leads nowhere any more. Old times, it was the place where the Sultan used to have his coffee when visiting the ammunition factory which was located there and the only way to reach it was from the sea. Over the arch, Greek and Turkish flags waved and their view made you wonder how many times these two flags did stand and wave next to each other. We had no big solution plan of our Countries, we were bikers invited by bikers. But it was a really nice feeling when next to the flags people were added, when people on their bikes went there together and parked between Agia Sofia and the Blue Mosque as a symbolic move. We offered flowers and flags to each other, we told our wisdom to the journalists and the cameras but words were needless. Somewhere in that place the similarity of the church and the mosque seems a bit suspect. If you don't know which one is which, it's easy to get confused. As it would be easy to confuse Greeks and Turks bikers if you didn't notice the plates of their cycles.

Our motorcyclists friends of EMOK belong to a small group of Turkey population who can afford the cost. "How can they have so many BMW R 1150GS" a guy asked me. "Why not to afford the cost..." was the answer. A motorcycle is a kind of luxury as I saw, with a huge cost for low budget employees, as most are. The members of EMOK, they have the education or had the luck to find a well paid job, they chose to ride a motorcycle than another status symbol, they consciously get discomforted in mud and snow with their Africa, they climb up dirt roads with GS and camp in deserted places, they have the curiosity to travel in Greece and their own country. They are motorcyclists and that explains everything. What is difficult to understand is the set-up level they have, the gravity with which the deal of their hobby: "We all carry a first aid kit and we're all trained in first aid. Even for free camping we have our own rules – like for example, to buy our supplies from the closest to the camp area, village instead of Istanbul. To support financially the area and to meet new people. We called trainers from Germany for seminars, to teach us how to ride better", they were explaining me among many other things. It was also amazing the direct solving of every problem, always with their cellular phones, they arranged everything.

I saw the monuments only from outside. I preferred to be on the streets, in the little shops, between people, in small boats, to walk along the wooden houses of Prince islands, to talk with father Vartholomeos in Saint George's monastery, to see, smell and touch as more as I could of Istanbul way of living. Monuments can wait for me some other time. "Let's pass by from my flat" Turgay says, "to pick up some CD's for the party" All of the disks were Greek, just a few friends I have in Athens with such a large quantity. We had left our helmets on the bikes outside when a few minutes later a neighbor rings the bell: "you forgot your helmets" he said.

In the pedestrian precinct of Taksim square, a member of our group had his wallet on a waist bag. He feels a shake and till he finds out what was happening a kid runs away. In a moment, policemen took out their guns, caught the kid and brought him back... Another guy forgot his bag on a small ferry that he used to return from Prince Islands: "What can I do?" he was telling us later at night in the hotel. "Why don't you go back tomorrow and look for it?" we proposed. "Hold on a second, I'll call my wife to bring it back" said the captain and a bit later our friend had his bag back, undamaged. We go out to dinner one night, we sit, we order and then we surprisingly notice that upon the kitchen door a wooden Crucifix. "What's that? How is it here?" we wondered. "What's so peculiar? In many shops they have Christ as in Koran he's admitted as a prophet" came the answer. "You mean that even in a village far away of Istanbul we could see something similar?" "Yes, of course, it's a common thing, despite the fact that Moslems don't use icons." The last night in Ayvalik, in Moshonissi, for those who came back that way, everything was a pleasant surprise. A little hotel, excellent service, large rooms on the beach and unbelievable breakfast, fish eating, plenty of mezes, beers, wines. Everyone was thinking to change our tickets and spend one more night there. It's not peculiar that Turkey has so much tourism and it's not just because of the service, the prices and the beautiful places. We found out the main reason, next day in Mitilini, when we sat in a small tavern in Pamfila beach where the waiter had the most regrettable behavior he could, with a style "I should be at least the Prime Minister instead of serving trashy people like you". We came back to our country with the best opinion.

I really cannot speak on behalf of all riders who came to Istanbul, but some moments I felt like we create our own little history, as little and of no importance it was. And if the formal history is always written by victors, in this case they were no

