

## Orlando Tech Session February 2, 2008

The weather gods were more than kind for this Airhead tech session in Central Florida. There wasn't a cloud in the sky when the Florida Air Marshal, Gator Balough, and I left the Space Coast for Orlando. We chaperoned a neighbor, Terry Knudsen on his Road King who wanted to see what the noise about tech sessions was really about. Think we are in process of rescuing that poor soul. Brisk ride since it was only in the upper 50's and Gator on his naked R90/6 had to admit it had been a while since he had ridden without a shield.

When we arrived at Michele and Jerry Watts' abode for the session, the coffee was ready and work was already in progress. It was only 9:30 but Tom Gaitanis already had his 77 R100RS in the stall to do a fork rebuild. He ended up replacing the gaiters and installing new brake pads too before finishing. This bike has been in his stable for some time but not ridden much because he was uncomfortable with the bars. After installing a set of K bars, he has fallen in love all over again. The other project already started was Randy Summers' R100RT. He had one carb off and was pulling the other for a complete rebuild. He had never done it before but had the Bing book and a lot of confidence. He (and we) had the good fortune of Joe Katz, a truly experienced BMW wrench, showing up a little later. It was super watching Joe give Randy gentle advice on the finer points and cautioning when necessary.

Glenn Dobkin showed up to show off his newly acquired 84 Motoguzzi LeMans and Larry Meeker, President of the BMW North East Florida club rode down to make sure we were properly supervised. We had a multitude of talkers and gawkers who had nothing to do on their bikes so we just watched, offered comments and lent a hand when it seemed appropriate. Daniel Ashline, president of BMW Riders of Tampa, rode his 100/7 in and Dan Franzmeier had his recently acquired 95 100RT. Linda had assisted Glen Eash in getting his 100RT all the way across the state from Venice and for a while they appeared to have the distance award. Doug Mildrum had to explain why his 77 R75 was so clean. He had done a bead blast in his own shop while the engine was out for a rebuild due to a bit of piston-valve interface problem. Tough when it makes noise within a ¼ mile of a valve adjustment. When he pulled the plug to look, he saw shiny metal flakes.

We had a multitude of Airhead wannabes on their smooth and efficient (read complex) Oilheads. Larry Meeker seemed to set the rules since he, Eric Groves, David Mottin, and Jose Rodriguez were on GS's. Tom Reeves was on a 95 1100RS, while Gary Woodson did the cruiser bit with a 1200CLC. Joe was on a 1200ST and Don Stabile was on a 12R. Another good looking non-Airhead was Mike Victor's F21.

While we were either working or gawking or talking, Michele, with the able assistance of daughter Christine, supervised by grandson Peyton prepared a super lunch at the grill. Hot dogs, hamburgers with super baked beans sure tasted good and were quickly devoured by the horde of Airheads. Woody, their chocolate Lab patrolled in the event a clumsy rider dropped anything.

Ed Sabin thought he had the only R100 GS/PD until A. J. Ciapont showed up after lunch with his 94. The latter was laboring on only one cylinder. Jerry quickly eliminated it being a carb problem by pulling the throttle cable up by hand with the bike at idle. No response so, fuel was not the issue. From there to the plug wires. By simply exchanging the caps without removing from the coil, the dead cylinder switched sides indicating a bad plug wire. This was confirmed with a resistance check to prove the faulty lead was truly open. After an improvised cap was installed, the bike really did run on two cylinders as designed. A. J. was advised to buy new plug wires as soon as he could because the improvised cap was only a "get it home cure".

Another notable Oilhead was Tom Lowdermilk on his 1200RT. Tom and our host, Jerry Watts co-host the internet radio show Side Stand Up. This is a streaming audio web show ([www.sidestandup.com](http://www.sidestandup.com)) that is live from 9-11 EST on Tuesday nights. They interview notable two wheeled personalities (Nate Kern in the near future) and provide an interactive format through a companion chat room. Very interesting, contrary to popular misconceptions, Airhead's can use new technology. Give it a listen and you'll be hooked.

Late arrivals included Kirk Schulte (R100R) who is working in Orlando and missing Mardi Gras at home in Baton Rouge and Bruce Spottswood on his good looking R50/2. Bruce rode from his home in Venice and has been at every Airhead event the author has attended since he bought this bike. However, his ploy to obtain the distance award this time was just too obvious. He explained that the reason his odometer showed so many more miles than Linda and Glens mentioned above was a single wrong turn while still in the rural outback west of Orlando. I guess we will just have to give Gator time to figure that one out.

Many thanks to Michele, Christine and Peyton for letting Jerry invite us all into your home. The day was fantastic, even better than last year!!

Bob Messer  
#9053



**I TOUGH LOOKING GROUP**



2 JOE KATZ INSTRUCTING



3 RANDY LEARNING



4 TALKING/GAWKING/MILLING



5 SERIOUS WORK



6 BRUCE WORKING HIS R50/2



7 DOESN'T GET ANY BETTER THAN THIS