



San Francisco Motorcycle Club

Est. 1904

Vol. CVI

Newsletter - Issue #4

December 2010



Over 850 people found their way to Pismo Beach on September 19th and formed this historic panorama. We had a great time, saw old friends, and made some new ones. In the process we raised money for Optimist Youth Homes, The Association of Amputee Surfers (AmpSurf), and the James Cornell Fund.

Thank you to everyone who participated, to the clubs and supporters for their hard work, and to our event sponsors for their enthusiastic support.

TTXGP's Inaugural Season

By Jennifer Bromme

2010 has been a very exciting year for the Werkstatt Race Team, based here in San Francisco. I got the #2 plate in the all electric motorcycle eGrandPrix US TTXGP this year, and I got to race that same bike internationally in Albacete, Spain, for the World Final of TTXGP.

The whole story started when Azhar Hussain, founder of TTXGP and CEO of Mavizen Motorcycles, walked into the SFMC late January to promote the first ever electric motorcycle race series to take place in the US. The first round was to be at Infineon, right in our back yard. The other rounds were held at Road America, Wisconsin; Toronto, Canada; and VIR, Virginia. The World Final would be in Albacete, Spain, for the Top 8. Wow, racing in Spain? Hell yeah! We were really excited about the proposition and immediately started scrambling to figure out what to race, and how to get the funds together. Infineon was in May with AMA, so designing a bike, testing it and having it race ready in just over three months seemed impossible. We decided to lease a Mavizen, an electric factory race bike.

The season was awesome, we met a lot of great people, and we were basically helping to R&D brand new technology. Besides having a great time and finishing with the #2 plate in the US, we also experienced fun stuff like blowing 900 Amp fuses to complete cut outs, and pushing the bike back to the pits to controllers that had stuck on. Still, we were part of a pioneering era and problems are there to be overcome. By the end of the US rounds though, a lot of the issues had been fixed, and the bike was shipped back to Mavizen in the UK for more upgrades while we were getting ready to fly to Spain and race.

Apart from racing in Spain also on the program was an appearance to speak about my TTXGP experience at the InterMot, the biggest International Motorcycle Show in the world, only held bi-annually. These two events were two weeks apart, so we had to figure out how to keep ourselves busy in the meantime. This turned out to be no problem. We visited Belgium for the beer, Switzerland for the twisty mountain roads (unfortunately in an underpowered rental car and not a motorcycle), Italy for the Moto Guzzi factory, Munich to see my family; and then toured Spain for the ocean, the tapas, more Guzzi people and of course the racing in the end. A great trip!

Unfortunately when the bike was back in England it was loaned out to a Moto2 rider at Brand's Hatch who proceeded to crash it, so instead of installing improvements, the little time they had left before Albacete was used to get it back into shape, and thankfully, it looked shiny and new when I arrived in Albacete on the Thursday before the race; exactly the way it looked when I first got it!

Friday morning we went to the track early to get our bearings, check over the bike, unpack tools, etc. We pitted with the other Mavizen teams in a big tent. We said our hellos to the people we had met in the US at the previous races, like Arvind Rabadia from Agni motors (whose DC-brushed power plant was in most bikes at Albacete including mine), and Alex Jones-Dellaportes, who had been my electric engineering help at the US races. We got introduced to the other Mavizen teams, Peter Linden, racing for Morris Mavizen bike, and Pete Ward, rider and owner of the Electric Hussar team. Linden is a Swedish fighter pilot still flying for the Swedish Royal Air Force, and Ward is employed by The British Army's Queen's Royal Hussars. Fierce competition! Ward's bike sported many upgrades, like water cooling, which allowed them to crank up the horsepower by 15% over the one that I was riding.



I had gotten an email earlier in the week that my international race license was in the works. Alas, when I tried to register I was informed that I had not been granted a license to race in Albacete. The UEM required international AMA race insurance, which I didn't have. No begging and pleading and nor pledging to sign my life away helped. Faced with Spanish bureaucracy and the fact that I couldn't even call the AMA until the afternoon to straighten things out (because of the 6 hour time difference), I decided that it would be a shame to have the Mavizen sitting idle in the pits, and started looking for a European Championship competitor that was keen on giving an electric bike a try. Turned out that Peter Linden knew a Norwegian guy named Torge who was racing with his sons in Sweden, so I found his pits and asked him about the prospect of giving the Mavizen a try. He was all over it. He already knew the track and was circling at an impressive pace within a few laps only about 15% slower than on his gas bike! He was another instant convert to the electric motorcycle race paddock. First one's free...the smooth power delivery, not having to think about shift points and the silent ride that feels a little bit like flying makes it a very easy and enjoyable bike on the track.

I had emailed the AMA earlier and when they opened their doors at 3pm Spanish time I had an answer back within 5 minutes. Thank you AMA! I feel a lot better about being a member now. They totally came through for me. All I had to do is fill out a bunch of paper work, send them my credit card information and I was ready to go! Still, I had missed a whole day of practice.

My Dad had flown into town from Munich, Germany, to watch me race, and Saturday morning, race license in hand, we went back to the track. I got my first practice, slow at first, since it was early morning and the track was partially damp and cold, trying to learn the track. Albacete is very flat and has lots of tight corners, and not too much of a straight away. It reminded me a little bit of Sears Point, just flattened out. There was a Turn 7, and a Carousel, just a flat one. All corners opened up, and were a lot faster than they first looked, and eventually the track started to flow for me. By the second practice I dropped 8 seconds. Still, I was far off the pace. Having had less practice than my competitors really showed.

I was also still having the cut-out problem when getting hard on the throttle, something they were trying to fix when it was back in England, but apparently weren't able to. I was hesitant to what to expect every time I got on the throttle, would it go or fall flat? The other Mavizens weren't having that problem, it was frustrating. Eventually we got ahold of the chief engineer who suggested to take off the heat safety switch, since it was the last race anyway and we didn't have much to lose. Voila, that worked! On Sunday I would be able to wring the Mavizen's neck with more confidence. I watched a lot of You Tube videos between my two only practices to get a better grasp on the track. I went over the corners in my mind again and again to see where I could go faster.

On Sunday all we got was a 10-minute warm up. I learned a lot again, trying to stick with competitors that were faster than me. The race was at 3 in the afternoon. I had a decent start and stayed with a couple of the racers in a pack for a little while, but I made a mistake and couldn't make it up before the checkered flag. I finished in the back of the pack, still in the Top Ten, and I had gone another 11 seconds faster than in practice. I really wished then that I had that extra practice day! Still, it was a great race.

I was also very impressed at the high level of competition. First place was Matthias Himmelmann with the Münch Team, who had a motor from an abandoned Siemens hybrid project; second was CRP Racing, a professional race team that is also involved in MotoGP. Third was taken by Jenny Tinmouth, who was also the UK TTXGP Champion. I was happy to see a woman on the podium, even if it wasn't me. She is very fast, gracious, very shy and she also owns her own shop in the UK, so I felt immediate kinship with her.

Werkstatt Mavizen was the only team from the US that made it over the pond. It's an expensive proposition, and I would like to thank everybody that supported our racing efforts, especially Ohlins, Carolina Motorcycle Rentals, Luscious Garage SF, Kilowatt Bar, Jeremy LaTrasse, Tony Wang, and the many more individuals, also Laura for making food for the fundraiser, and of course everybody at the SFMC. Thanks for being there for me!

Not sure what the racing plans are for next year, but maybe we can get a ringer like Hoogerhyde to race a SFMC supported team. Whatcha' think, Jim?

All in all, getting to race in Spain topped off the whole year racing in TTXGP just perfectly. I am very glad to "Be Part of It", as the TTXGP slogan goes, ushering in a new era. These machines are getting reliable. Once battery prices drop, electric bikes will be a very viable alternative to fuel bikes on the track and in the street, with lots of possibilities like being able to dial in more or less torque, horsepower, different power curves, traction control, two wheel drives, silent and green dirt biking, etc. Seeing the development from the beginning of the year to the end of the season is mind boggling! My Mavizen is already vintage. The 2011 model will be vastly different. The new bikes on the horizon are a far cry from the pioneering motley crew of home built machines in the beginning of 2010 and the amount of money being poured into electric vehicles for 2011 is snowballing. Batteries, controllers, and motors are getting bigger and better by the minute. Bigger players are coming into TTXGP now. Next year should be exciting again! I'm looking forward to it and will do my best to keep everybody updated!

Trip Report: Panoche Hills - Carrizo Plain

By John Sweeney

Awhile back my friend Kalle and I took a few days to explore the Panoche and Tumey Hills and the Carrizo Plain. We were lucky with the weather and with the fact that there was a herd of 5,000 sheep grazing in the Panoche Hills, which meant that the shepherds had a permit, and many of the gates on the BLM land were unlocked to give them [and us! Ha!] the access they needed. It was the spring wildflower season in California, and the vistas were spectacular.

So, here is our trip report: Kalle and I left town after having coffee at our local cafe [the Mercury Cafe], and decided to take the Bay Bridge and Mines Road past Frank Raines OHV park. When we got there, I noticed that I'd lost the nut on the steering stem ... D'oh!



I looked in the bag of spare bolts Phil gave me when he sold me the bike, and sure enough, an extra steering stem nut ... Thanks, Phil! Always prepared, that one...

So Kalle helped me tighten the steering-head bearings and install the spare nut. We had a wonderful, Sierra-Club-approved snack/lunch, and then we took a short spin around the trails there, watched a military helicopter fly by, and then took off south.



We had fun exploring the orchard roads and the road along the California Aqueduct in an effort to stay on dirt and off I-5, and were successful ... Yay, us! Then it was up and into the Panoche Hills Access Road ... We wound up way high in beautiful, typically Californian rolling green hills, blanketed with spring wild flowers, and found a campsite up around 2,000 feet with views of the Central Valley and the snow-capped peaks around Yosemite. We chatted with a shepherd from Peru who gave us some tips about where to explore in the morning.

Supper was managed with a Jet-boil camp stove that was really designed just to boil a little bit of water, but Kalle managed to make it work for dinner, and he would feed us for the next four nights, before the fuel ran out.

The next morning we finished exploring the Panoche Hills, where Kalle found a recently departed mama sheep, which he documented photographically for posterity.

We had lunch at the Panoche Inn, where Larry, the owner, showed us some Benitoite [say Benito-ite] a fluorescing gem supposedly only found in San Benito County. A tiny chip was priced at \$120! Larry had some for sale behind the bar, which he's owned for nine years. He told us about the new 4,500 acre solar farm planned for the valley, and about the few "most vocal" opponents down the other end of the valley - one of whom just happens to be our friend Maxine, who works with Cary.

After saying goodbye to Larry, Kalle and I promptly rode past Maxine's ranch and found her setting up a new gate with her husband Kevin. We chatted for a bit, before Kalle and I rode to the Apricot Cafe rest stop at I-5 for gas. We had fun on Panoche Road with its water crossing and vistas of the surrounding hills.



Tumey Hills is south of there, and after opening and closing a zillion cattle gates we got up on top of the ridge where we found a bunch of down-hill mountain bikers heading home after racing down the huge hills. We found another brilliant campsite atop a wildflower covered hilltop, ate a Sierra Club approved dinner, had a very nice camp fire, watched the full moon rise, and hit the hay.

The next morning we managed to get to Coalinga by avoiding I-5 and hitting the orchard roads. We chatted with a bee keeper from Colorado who told us we'd be okay sticking to the access roads at the edge of the orchards, so that's what we did. In Coalinga we stocked up on food at the grocery store before heading over to Parkfield for lunch. We herded a bunch of cattle for about a quarter of a mile, which Kalle captured on video, in case one of the cows knocked me down as I tried to barge my way past them. The cafe in Parkfield, where Cary and I stopped on our way back from Baja, was besieged by about 100 HOG'ers, so we had to wait a bit for our burgers, which was fine, since it's a nice place to rest.

After a beautiful run down Bitterwater Road, with its fields of poppies, bluebells and daisies, we entered the Carrizo Plain at Elkhorn Road, made our way to the top of the eastern ridge up Hurricane Road, and found our third wonderful campsite to the north. We were amazingly lucky, because we were able to camp in super-exposed places due to the fact that there was hardly any wind. Another fine meal and campfire, and a good night's sleep for Kalle, who had been able to find a patch kit for his Thermarest at the Ace Hardware in Coalinga.

The next morning turned epic as we tried to find our way out of the park to the north by Hwy 58. It turns out that Kalle had purchased the “locked gate locator” version of the maps for his GPS, and we proceeded to find all the locked gates in the park, all of which were at the very bottom of super steep, KLR unfriendly, rutted jeep trails. Kalle’s bike protested this state of affairs by throwing itself to the ground in a tantrum several times, but Kalle rose to the occasion by marching it up the hill just as I got there to help him pick the bike up... nice timing! Ha.

It was then off to Taft after backtracking to Hurricane Road, where we got gas. We got a tip about the forest service road up through Los Padres National Forest, which climbed up to about 5,000 feet, just below the snow level, before turning westerly again to head down to the Carrizo Plain.



We’d intended to camp at the Sibley campsite, but when we got there it was buggy [thanks to horse corrals for the campers] and crowded [thanks to our recent pristine camping experiences] so we left for a cowboy camp on the eastern side of the park. We discovered a few more locked gates, before finding the “perfect spot” just before dark...funny how that works. We worried about getting caught by the ranger a little, but as it got dark it became clear just how isolated we were out there...finding us to give us a ticket would be like finding a needle in a haystack. The Sierra Club would have approved of how we left no trace, so no worries.

When morning came we took off east on 58 to 33 to I-5 [we caved in trying to get back to Mercy Hot Springs early] to Panoche Road to the hot springs where we spent the rest of the day soaking and riding another three hours in the Panoche Hills [Kalle further documented the decomposing sheep ... Ick.]. I, of course, was worried about riding home the next day in the rain, but Kalle talked some sense into me, and as it turned out the next day was very nice, with just enough sun and drizzle to make for a stunning rainbow over Panoche Pass.

As it turns out, people in the know [who had told us it was OK to ride motorcycles in Panoche and Tumey] now think that it isn’t allowed by the BLM ... humph. The BLM says 4x4s are OK, but no motorcycles. Go figure. Turns out Kalle and I were outlaw bikers all weekend... who knew? Lots of rules but no one to enforce them. Thus, all the locked gates. Such is life.

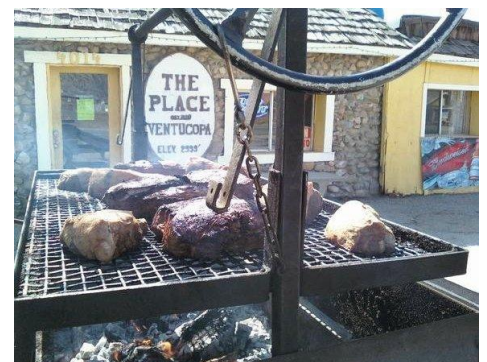
So, I’m not sure when we’ll be back up there, but I do hope it’s soon. I think Kalle would agree. Cary certainly wants to go after seeing our photos...

Road House Report: The Place

By Kalle Hoffman

Give yourself a treat and stop at “The Place” in Ventucopa, California. The Place can be found just six miles south of 166 on Highway 33. Vicky and Alick will be there and have been since 2007. The place was established in 1929 and still stands just as it was back then...now! Prepare yourselves for Vicky’s lemon meringue pie straight out of Wisconsin, and Alick’s super friendly smile and sincere interest in hearing about your adventures.

On the second Saturday of each month Vicky and Alick host an all you can eat country oak BBQ. They have an Omaha connection that provides the most tender cuts you can imagine. Alick will even volunteer tent space out back for travelers who prefer to eat, drink, and spend the night; but make sure you tip generously before asking for any perks. Other things to watch for are the locals talking politics, and the 24/7 Fox news broadcasts at the bar.



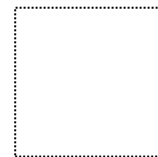
How to find us:

The San Francisco Motorcycle Club is located at the corner of Folsom and 18th Streets, in the Mission District of San Francisco. We meet every Thursday night, and motorcyclists are always welcome! Meetings start at 8:30 PM.

Find us online at <http://sf-mc.org>

The Newsletter Committee is chaired by **Brian Holm**

San Francisco Motorcycle Club
2194 Folsom Street
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SFMC 2010 Official Ride Schedule

The 2010 ride season has officially ended.

Thanks to our Road Captain, "Santa" Bob Hanssen, for a great season, and thanks to all of our members and guests for their participation.

Watch the online calendar, or wait for the next SFMC newsletter, to see what's in store for 2011!

AMA District 36 Official Runs

March 27	P&D Destination Run to San Jose Races
April 24	Rollin' on the River Run / Capital City MC
May 1-2	Yosemite Adventure Tour / FORA
May 22-23	Sheet Iron 300 / Oakland MC
June 26-27	District 36 Progressive Chow Run / District 36
July 10	Hoot Owl Ride / Stockton MC
July 17	Three Bridge Run / Oakland MC
August 8	10th Dam Run / San Jose Dons MC
September 3-6	Hey Dey Rally / District 36
September 12	Fall Fun Run / Capital City MC
September 18-19	Pismo Beach Run / San Francisco MC
September 25	Barney's Poker Run / Richmond Ramblers MC
September 25-26	Yosemite Dual Sport Ride / FORA
October 2	14th Annual Poker Run / Black Widows - Sac.
November 14	Turkey Run / Oakland MC
December 4	Old Timers' Dance / San Francisco MC