

**"...taking it to the bike. "**  
**Davenport '05 edition.**

In the classic Moby Dick Herman Melille says, '...whenever it is a damp,drizzly November in my soul ... I quietly take to the ship." Change only one word and that quotation fits me . Replace " ship " with " motorcycle " and I'm there. No therapists, no shrinks, no librium ; don't even need alcohol - just one kick ... Vroom! ... point me down the road. A few miles, half a dozen nice 60 mph sweepers and I'm set to battle the "rat race" for as long as it takes to afford my next ride. Ahab chased a white whale – I chase white lines.

I didn't realize how far up society's tailpipe I was until Fri. nite at the big dirt ½ mile that is Davenport's racetrack when the announcer talked about Cliff Eckes being out here in the hand-shift as well as foot-shift class for WL-45 HD flatheads. He said how amazing it was to see an 81 year old battling it out with all these 50 year old youngsters and I remember thinking, " 81 ... ? already ? ...I was here just last .... wait , no , the year before ... ! Crap , has it really been 6 yrs since I was here last ? No wonder I felt so disconnected. Note to self – don't let it be that long again. The races were overall a little tamer than others I've watched , but there were still some good battles taking place. One change from other years had haulers and campers as well as racers in the center area of the track. This is convenient for the racers and support teams, but unless you're sitting way up in the nosebleed seats you won't get to see the action in turn 2, down the back chute or coming into turn 3. Kind of like reading Cliff Notes instead of the real book – you get the general drift , but miss the subtle stuff.

If anyone tells you that Iowa is flat and full of corn and that's it – well, you know they've not been on Iowa's east coast. We headed south out of Winona Friday A.M. to the 34th. Annual AMCA fall national event at the Davenport fairground. Highlights are the dirt-track motorcycle races, a truly excellent bike show ( both static ... inside the main building ... as well as dynamic ... more unusual motorcycles than a person is used to seeing, much less being ridden; all over the grounds of this impressive venue ) and last, but certainly not least, a swap meet in the truest sense of the word. Very little in the way of gee-gaws and jewelry . Jawa, Ossa, Bultaco, BSA, Norton, Royal Enfield ... well, you get the Idea. If unique is what you seek, this is your kind of place.

We camped in the grassy section by the animal barns and my traveling buddies Jack and Dick got double earfuls of my snoring. Guess I shoulda slept inside the sheep barn instead of beside it. I had rather hoped my late partying with the Wisconsin crew – Animal's family , Spike and the Aussies would have got me too sleepy to snore. Wrong! All in all there were good races, an edifying bike show and a fruitful swap meet (I was lucky to be able to have Wally haul my spoils home in his Ford PU instead of trying to bungee a rear fender and three fat-bob tanks onto my bike. Thanks, Wally, you're a good bloke.

**By the way, this has been newbie Winona Bob with my first installment of "...taking it to the bike. "**  
**Remember, " you never see a motorcycle parked in a psychiatrist's lot. "**

**Update on Abate of Louisiana:**

The motorcycling community from across the United States has been very generous in answering our call for relief donations and we are deeply grateful for their generosity. Although I would like to mention all the people and Organizations that have made donations to this effort here they are too numerous. For a complete list of the Organizations, Businesses, and Individuals who have donated to this cause go to this link: <http://www.abate-oflouisiana.org/katrinasmupporters.htm>

On October 6th A.B.A.T.E. Of La., Inc. held it's first committee meeting to set the ground rules for providing relief and to start identifying those who were displaced and affected throughout the state of Louisiana. Although we have stated that we will help all motorcyclists we can throughout this state affected by the devastation left behind by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita the first seven people we have approved are members of A.B.A.T.E. Of La., Inc., three of these individuals were left virtually homeless, the others have suffered great loss and are receiving no federal help whatsoever. We are starting to realize how daunting of a task this is. Although the motorcycling community has been quite generous in their contributions we have realized through our Internet Conferencing discussions that we only have enough funds to help approximately ten families so far. We are not disheartened by this fact; these are ten more families than we would have been able to help otherwise.

I wish to personally thank everyone in the motorcycling community for their incredible outpouring of support in our time of need. This outpouring of support means nothing in the sense of dollars and cents, but everything in the spirit of community, a community that cares and takes care of it's own, a community that is unlike any other and one that I'm very proud to be a part of.

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