



MULETOWN NEWS

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Muletown Chapter 2033

Columbia, TN

www.muletownrider.com

Sponsored By:

Harley-Davidson of Columbia

1028 Nashville Hwy.

Columbia, TN 38401

(931) 540-0099

www.hdcolumbia.com

"The Second Year"

Muletown HOG Chapter II

"The Second Year"

It is official!! The Muletown HOG Chapter has completed its first year in existence. Our membership grew to over 150 members during our first year. That alone is an impressive accomplishment. Being a "charter" member is starting to mean more to many chapter members as we see our chapter continue to grow and welcome in even more new members.

From the position of Assistant Director, I have seen a lot of things develop. Believing in leading by example, I have only had a few things on my agenda since day one. I never want anyone to feel unwelcome into the Muletown HOG Chapter. I see HOG as a social club. A place to meet and greet others with the same interest in motorcycling. I want to provide the newest of riders, as well as the most seasoned, a place where both can share the same great experiences with each other. Finally, I want to provide a safe and family friendly environment. A place where the whole family can enjoy the sport of motorcycling. That's it!! Everything else is gravy!!

The membership of this chapter has been the bread and butter of all its success. That is not a cliché either. Every time the membership has been called upon to pull together to help support the chapter, the membership has risen to the occasion. The pancake breakfast for example. The total net profit from the breakfast was over \$1500.00. When your selling tickets for only \$5 a piece, it doesn't take a mathematician to figure out the tremendous support that was given by the membership. Many members have jumped in to become road captains as well as chapter officers. This is allowing for the chapter activities to grow and for the organization to be enhanced. Many suggestions have come from our membership, all of which have been tried and/or implemented through the first year. This is your chapter! We want to make it fun you and everyone else as well.

As we begin our trek into the second year, and my last year as Assistant Director, there is still some more to come. Here are just a few examples of some things to look forward to in the near future:

Weekday Dinner Rides – this will be an effort to give our members who have other obligations on weekends a chance to participate. The rides will be close to Columbia, but still provide the fellowship that many of us do so much enjoy.

New Destinations – We plan on implementing a TEAM of Activities Officers this year. This will greatly assist the road captains in the planning of rides and also will prevent the "repeated destination syndrome" that is so often adopted. We want to go places you may not have ever been to before.

Overnighters – The plan will be to throw in some more overnighters in the months to come. They will be inexpensive but fun and comfortable ways to get out of the house.

As always we welcome all of your suggestions. The above mentioned ideas are all suggestions from chapter members. 100 minds are better than just a few! Please let us know what your mind is saying?

The summer of 2006 is still rolling on and we have several more chapter "first" coming around the corner. The Tennessee State Rally in Johnson City, TN. will be here on August 9th thru 13th. This will be the first year Muletown will represent itself at the annual State Rally. I am very pleased to learn so many chapter members are planning on attending. I believe we will be turning some heads in Johnson City!!! If you have never been to a State Rally before, just get ready for some fun!! For those of you that know me really well, I will try very hard to keep my cloths on this year! (Did I just say that??) Anyway, in September we will be having our first ever MDA fund raiser. Since MDA is Harley-Davidson's national charity, we are going to do our party to support the MDA in the Maury Co. area. Cindy Sanford and the Ladies of Harley are planning this event and another chapter picnic to go along with it!

Finally, please remember our chapter website address: www.muletownrider.com. Also, if you have an email address, please make sure that I have it in the chapter database. We communicate via these two sources. We want you to stay informed about what's going on. This information is important for you to stay involved in the chapter. Just the other day while in Murfreesboro, a member of the Murfreesboro HOG Chapter complimented our chapter website saying how user friendly it was to use. Arnold Conner has done a great job with this site. We rely on it heavily. If your email ever changes, I need to know. Feel free to email me at anytime. glshearerjr@netzero.net or call me at 615-218-8868.

Ride and Have Fun!

Gary Shearer – Assistant Director

Chapter Officers

Director - Bill Isom
 Asst. Director - Gary Shearer
 Secretary / Webmaster - Arnold Conner
 Treasurer - Ken Steverson
 Membership Officer - Linda Darch
 Head Road Captain - Ron Miller
 Randy Kinsey - Safety Officer
 Newsletter Editor - Hope Conner
 Ladies of Harley - Cindy Sanford
 Activities Coordinator—OPEN



- COMING SOON -
TENNESSEE STATE HOG RALLY
AUGUST 9TH - 13TH
JOHNSON CITY, TN
www.tnstatehogrally.com

**Sometimes You Can Almost
 Hear It Calling From
 The Garage!**



Muletown Chapter 2033
Membership Total As Of July 18th Is:
152



SAVE THE DATE !!

MDA / Amazing Ride
 &
 Chapter Picnic
September 16th
 White Oak Shelter
 Maury County Park

All Chapter Members and Family
 Welcome!



Classifieds

If you have any Motorcycle related items that you would like to list in the next newsletter please e-mail your information to

hsconner@msn.com

Muletown Safety Zone

Getting Loaded: How Much Weight Can Your Motorcycle Handle?

Putting too much weight on your motorcycle compromises handling and can overtax some components. How much weight is safe and when is it time to leave something behind? From the October 2000 issue of *Motorcycle Cruiser* magazine. By [Art Friedman](#).

As this is being written way back in May, I can tell summer is approaching. We are beginning to get queries from readers asking how much weight they can carry and what will happen if they overload their bikes and head out for that summer trip.

There is a simple way to tell the maximum weight that your bike is rated to carry by its manufacturer. Just subtract the wet weight (that is, the bike's weight with the tank full of fuel and the other fluids topped up) from the gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR). The GVWR is the maximum allowable total weight of motorcycle and its load, including riders, luggage and other debris.

We print wet weight and GVWR together on our specification forms for test bikes to make it easy to see how much weight the bike can carry. If you can't find these figures for your bike in our pages, any serious magazine test probably includes wet weight, and GVWR is included on the vehicle-identification-number (VIN) plate (usually found on or near the steering head) on all current bikes as well as the owner's manual. If you still can't find a wet weight, add about 50 pounds to the manufacturer's specified dry weight. If the weight you are dealing with is for a partially-filled tank, add six pounds for each additional gallon of fuel. For most big current cruisers, the available payload turns out to be about 400 pounds.

That's Gross!

Take a longer look at the VIN plate, and you will see that it also lists GAWR (gross axle weight rating) for the front and rear wheels. In other words, this is the maximum total weight that the manufacturer wants you to place on each wheel when the bike is at rest. This gives you some idea of the area of concern for heavy loads and the limiting factor for payload -- wheels and tires. The GAWR is usually listed as applicable to a certain size wheel and tire at a certain air pressure. This is critical, since a reduction in [tire pressure](#) reduces the load that a tire can carry, and it reduces it pretty rapidly. A 10 percent reduction in pressure probably reduces the tire's carrying capacity by more than that. When you consider that about half the bikes on the street are rolling around on under inflated tires, this is not an insignificant issue. It is the air that supports your bike and its load. Without air, the tire simply ceases to hold the bike up. Reduce the volume of air and you reduce the load capacity of the tire. Keep that maximum pressure in your tires when you add a load.

One more thing: Note that the pressures are specified as *cold* pressures. As a tire heats up, usually from the various types of friction that it encounters while you are riding, but also from the environment, the air inside expands and the pressure increases. This hot-pressure increase is accounted for in determining the specified cold pressure. If you ride 15 miles to a gas station and check the pressure, you are now measuring the higher hot pressure. If your tire is supposed to have 40 psi of pressure in it, and it indicates 40 psi hot, it is actually under inflated. How much? That depends on a lot of factors. But the more weight you put on it, the faster and farther you traveled, the hotter the day, and the greater the degree of under inflation you started with, the more it heated up. So check your tires when they are cold, and use a dependable gauge -- not the notoriously unreliable gauges still found on some gas station air hoses.

You may be tempted to consider a different size tire as a ploy to handle more weight. That might work, especially if you are also going to install a wider rim to go with a bigger tire. But consult the tire manufacturer first. Mixing and matching tires and rims can create additional problems that might actually worsen the tire's lot rather than improving it.

Overload

So now you know what the maximum weight limit is that you are supposed to observe. How precise is it? What happens if you go just a teensy-weensy bit over? How about a lot over?

As you might suspect, the GVWR/GAWR numbers are somewhat conservative. Manufacturers don't seem to take a lot of effort to make it easy to adhere to them either, since they never supply wet weights and don't give you any idea of how much of the weight of the rider, passenger or luggage goes on each axle.

But you still pay a price for overloading. Additional load causes additional tire wear. Weight also puts strain on many other components, including suspension, brakes, drive train, etc. That extra bag that your passenger unexpectedly brought along probably won't show up as anything more than a slight deterioration in handling and tires that you have to replace a few miles earlier. However, when you combine extra load with other factors that gang up on your tires -- a long, hot day at high speeds, a road strewn with lots of potholes, lots of braking and accelerating, and somewhat low inflation pressures -- you have a situation that does put a lot of stress on your tires. This sort of scenario could cause a catastrophic tire failure, which is what the bike and tire manufacturers are worried about.

You are a hefty guy, say 300 pounds, and your brother-in-law, who has the annoying habit of calling you "little fella," is coming to town and you have promised to take him for a short ride on your new ThunderScoot 1900. You figure with old Tiny on the back, you will be carrying about your own weight more than you are supposed to. What's going to happen if you take him around a couple of blocks and come right back? Frankly, your biggest concern is going to be that, with all that muscle or blubber perched on the back, your bike is going to be a real handful to ride, especially at low speeds. If he gets antsy back there, you may have to fight the bike the whole way. Pulling out of the driveway might be more excitement than you want. Assuming you have the specified pressures in your tires and the

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Muletown Safety Zone - cont.

rest of the bike is properly maintained and that you can keep your bike upright, little besides the compression bumpers on your rear shocks are going to bear any scars from Mr. Tiny's Wild Ride. Your tires won't have a chance to build up much heat in a four-block ride at modest speeds. However, if you agree to deliver his 250-pound sister (and luggage) to a location 700 miles away, and plan to make it in eight hours running on poorly maintained back roads with the mercury hovering just over 100 degrees, you may not get there.

Handle This

The most immediate effect of overloading is deteriorating handling. If you have added that much weight to your bike, it's probably above the usual center of mass. It's also likely that much of it is over the rear axle, or maybe even behind it. Your normally mild-mannered scooter is going to start handling, in the words of the great Mike Hailwood, "like a three-legged camel in deep sand." The compressed tires have adopted a different profile. The suspension has little available travel to handle bumps you encounter and insufficient damping to stem the pitching of all that mass. The brakes will also be less effective, and acceleration will be diminished as well.

The best solution is to leave something at home, or alternatively, get your [passenger](#) a bike of his or her own.

How about a trailer? Well, if you are talking about putting all that excess gear on a trailer that's being pulled by a car that's being driven by the rest of the excess weight, that sounds like a great idea. However, I'm not the one to ask if you want someone to tell you that it's OK to pull a trailer with your motorcycle. No motorcycle manufacturer condones using its bike to tow a trailer, and my experiences doing so leave me in agreement. I know that trailer-pullers tell you that they "don't even know it's there." This astounds me. Maybe they have lost all feeling in their glutes. I have never been able to pull a trailer on a motorcycle unaware that it was there. It reminds me constantly and it feels like a warning. Furthermore, the idea of trying to panic-stop a bike with a trailer dragging behind gives me cold chills.

That full-pucker stop is probably a good test for any heavily loaded bike. Are you willing to go out and do two or three practice panic stops with your bike loaded and ready to go? If not, decide what doesn't need to come along or figure another way to get it there. It's not hard to ship a couple boxes of must-haves to your destination. Your tires will thank you, and your skin might too.

You can unload on Friedman at Art.Friedman@primedia.com or at ArtoftheMotorcycle@hotmail.com.



From The Seat of Ron Miller

The first day of July brought the hottest day of the year and our first annual ride to Henpeck Market, South of the city limits of Franklin. Eight bikes and twelve hungry riders (by the time we got to Henpeck--really hungry) finally got away from the Shop after a few avoidable delays. Contrary to expectations, Gary did arrive with a full tank, but his arrival was subsequent to the start of the pre-ride briefing--in other words, he was late. Oh well, at least he was there, and didn't require a fuel stop before getting out of town.

Arnold led us on a two hour tour of the beauty of Middle Tennessee in the summertime, with Hope as the navigatrix, or as the brains behind the operation. Larry Best tried his best to scrape the remnants of his right floorboard out of existence, and I think he succeeded! Didn't seem to bother Ginny, though. I give him my vote for the most fearless rider when he showed the one ton pickup pulling a long trailer in a curve (a curve to our right, of course) that he was the boss of that stretch of the road. Other than that bit excitement, and a few other things, we had mostly an uneventful ride. Donald didn't kick anything, and Gary didn't dance, except one time in some small town, when everyone was watching us (of course). Fortunately the little Yamaha Girl didn't see his gyrations, or she may have had second thoughts about joining the Chapter--and yes, this was her first ride as an associate member. Probably not long until she gets a Harley and changes her membership. We found out today that she actually has a name--Teresa

My wife joined us for lunch at Henpeck and enjoyed meeting the group. She still doesn't understand why it took 2 1/2 hours to make a twenty mile trip from Columbia to the South side of Franklin. She hasn't yet grasped the concept that we live to ride and the eatin' is secondary; it just provides the fuel to keep riding.

Thanks Arnold and Hope for taking us through the valleys and the hills of Middle Tennessee on a well planned and well executed ride. Everyone had a good ride, got fed, and got home safe. An excellent day.

Ride Safe!

Ron Miller
Head Road Captain



UPCOMING EVENTS

July 18th - Chapter Meeting

July 22nd - Millers Grocery Ride

July 29th - Chapter Riding Practice

July 29th - Open House / Sale @ Harley-Davidson of Columbia

August 9th - 13th - Tennessee State HOG Rally

August 15th - Chapter Meeting

August 19th - 3rd Annual Parts & Swap Meet - Smyrna, TN

September 2nd-3rd - Music City Motorcycle Rally - Nashville Shores
www.appletonmotorcycle.com

September 9th - Bikes, Blues & BBQ - Columbia, TN

September 16th - 1st Annual MDA / Amazing Ride & Muletown
Chapter Picnic - White Oak Shelter, Maury County Park

September 16th - Trail of Tears Ride - Chattanooga, TN
www.al-tn-trailoftears.org

September 19th - Chapter Meeting