

New Jersey Shore BMW Riders

CLUB NEWS - Damn Near Spring! - 1997

FIRST K1200RS Rider Review published in the US! Exclusive to the NJS-BMW-Motorcycle Riders! See Page 2!

How to join the IBMWR electronic mailing list by Bob Berto

If you have an Internet E-mail address, you can join the Internet BMW Riders club. Membership is free and everyone is a President.

One of the most attractive features is to be a part of the maillist. A maillist is like a never ending rally campfire. If you don't want full-fledged Internet service, consider joining a local Bulletin Board System.

Often, for around \$20/yr, you can get an E-mail account from a BBS. Also, if AT&T is your long distance company, you can get five hours monthly Internet service for free thru 1997 from AT&T Worldnet if you sign up before March 31, 1997.

There are two versions of the list ; digest and individual. I strongly recommend digest mode. That way, you'll get about 15 large messages each day instead of 300 individual ones. If you subscribe at your work's email address, be sure to check company policy (*although FIRED=More Time To Ride*).

The following is "borrowed" from the IBMWR web page at www.ibmwr.org

What is the BMW mailing list? A mailing list is a group of people who trade mail on a subject. They do this by sending email messages to a central location.

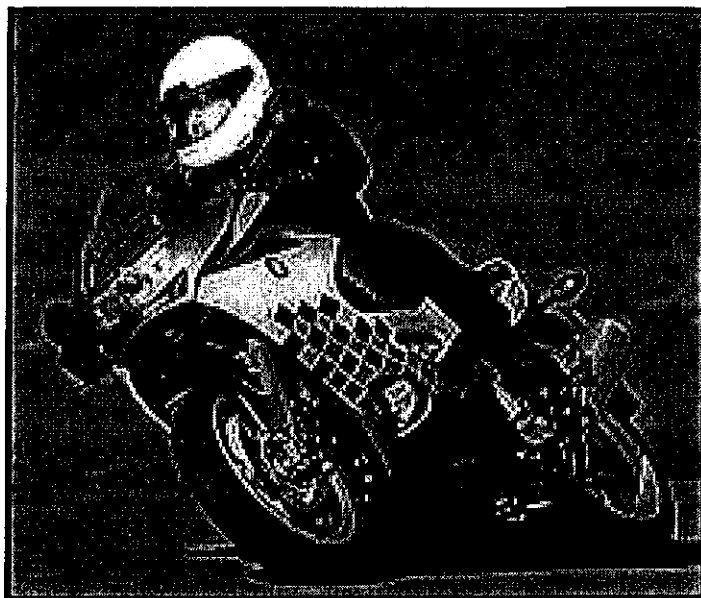
The mail server is a system at that central location that receives email from individuals and forwards that mail, with some special mail header changes, out to all other members of the group.

The IBMWR mailing list was started in 1993 by Joe Senner, who is still the list owner and administrator.

The club started soon after. All subscribers to the mailing list are, by default, IBMWR Presidents. At the beginning of 1997, there are about 1600(!) Presidents, scattered all round the world.

The BMW mailing list is run on an Internet service provider (The World, out of Brookline, MA) by Joe Senner. The BMW mailing list is a semi-moderated list, meaning that the list owner/administrator can control the messages that pass. However, Joe limits his moderat-

Continued, next page



President's Corner Glenn Martin

Don Surfs Net, Scoops Worldwide Moto Press

Fellow Jersey Shore BMW Riders, you are holding history in your hands. Don Eilenberger (Prez #1) has propelled our humble club news letter out of obscurity, into the moto-journalism Hall of Fame. He's scooped everyone with the FIRST PUBLISHED rider review of BMW's new kahuna, the K1200 RS.

Don is a denizen of the Internet (as many of you may know), and a valued contributor to the Internet BMW Riders Club mailing list. This club hosts a worldwide "electronic campfire" chat for the social and technical exchange of BMW motorcycle experiences. Through Don's Net contacts, I am proud to present a first hand review of the next step in the fine line of BMW motorcycles, the K1200RS. Thanks and kudos to Don.

The Season Is Here

For some Daytona Bike week marks the beginning of the Season. I'm still trying to stretch last season by attending as many Polar Bear Runs as I am permitted

Continued, rear cover

ing to gently keeping the discussions generally on-topic and reminding people not to take themselves, their email, or others' email too seriously.

There are NO DUES OR FEES for using the list. Joe is personally responsible for all the costs involved with providing the list. It is, he says, truly a labor of love. However, most users of the list feel that we should all help out, so, as a club, we maintain a checking account. This account is used to provide seed money for club projects (T-shirt printing, for example) and to help cover the cost of running the list. Currently, the list costs about \$30 per month or \$360 per year to operate. If you would like to make a donation to the IBMWR account, you can send your check to:

- **Internet BMW Riders**
1803 White Oak Cove
Round Rock, TX 78681

What's the "digest?" A digest of a mailing list is one large message that contains several "regular" mail messages.

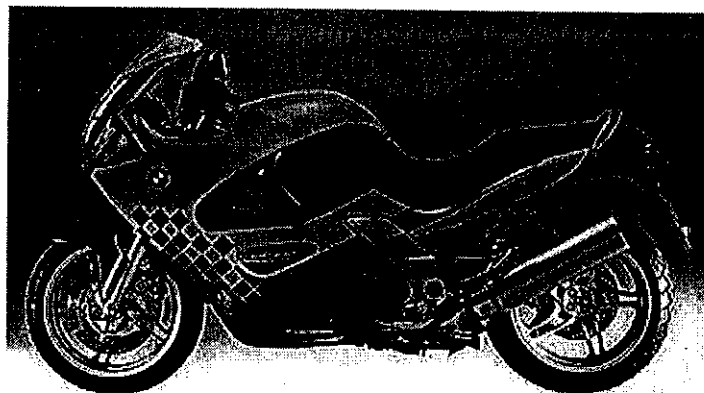
When you subscribe to the digest mode of the list, instead of getting each individual message one by one, you'll get one large message every now and then, typically a few each day.

The list server stores up the individual messages until they reach a certain file size and then sends the bundle out to you. Some people prefer digests, some don't. It's like those bikes we know and love: some people prefer Ks and some Rs.

To subscribe to the BMW mailing list (and become a President of the IBMWR), send an email message to majordomo@world.std.com (the request address). Put only the two words "subscribe bmwmc" (without the quotation marks) in the body of the message.

To subscribe to the BMW mailing list digest (and become a President of the IBMWR), send an email message to majordomo@world.std.com (the request address). Put only the two words "subscribe bmwmc-digest" (without the quotation marks) in the body of the message.

To unsubscribe to the BMW mailing list, send an email message to majordomo@world.std.com (the request address). Put only the words "unsubscribe bmwmc" (without the quotation marks) in the body of the message.



FIRST! Riders Review!

FIRST(!) Riders Review of the K1200RS - read it HERE, before ANY moto magazine!

Thanks to Jeff Bacon of the Internet BMW Riders for his firsthand RIDERS review of the K1200RS. Jeff is in Germany, and the NJS-BMW-MR has beaten all the moto mags with a first-hand review of the K1200!

Yes folks, a real live first-hand ride report on the K1200RS... and since it was such a generally good time, I'm going to make you all suffer through the whole story to get the ride review.

OK, if you really don't care, skip down to -- RIDE REVIEW-- though I've tried to keep the rest reasonably entertaining and informational)

Actually, it almost didn't happen. I was out taking Darth for a ride to warm up the oil for an oil change - normally I head down the autobahn an exit or two, turn around and come back; that plus the 4km to get to/from the bahn is plenty enough. Well, one of the exits is the one to Wardenburg. For some reason I decided to turn around there... then decided to take the side road through Wardenburg back home instead. Nice day, after all, sun shining, nice breeze, all that. Somewhere along the line,

Continued next page

Late Breaking Sad News (3/04/97)

(c)The Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (AP) - Longtime motorcycle racer Roger Reiman, who won the first Daytona 200 motorcycle race, died Tuesday after crashing during practice for the BMW Battle of the Legends racing series. He was 58.

The Harley-Davidson dealer from Kewanee, Ill., crashed on the infield of the Daytona Speedway's 3 1/2-mile road course. One rider partially lost control of his motorcycle, and bikes behind him slowed down, causing a chain-reaction collision involving at

least five bikes, said track spokesman John Story. Reiman was thrown from his bike, Don Emde suffered a leg injury, and Mark Brelsford injured his finger in the crash.

Reiman won the inaugural Daytona 200 in 1961 and repeated in 1964 and 1965 to become one of only five racers to win the famed motorcycle race three times in its 55-year history. He also won the AMA Grand National Championship in 1964.

The Legends race for motorcycle racing greats was scheduled for later in the day but was canceled. Instead, Reiman's bike was parked at the pole position, and participants rode a three-lap tribute.

it occurred to me "Hey, it's March 1st. I remember someone saying that the German K12 rollout was in March... nah, they'd NEVER have it here on the *1st* of March, especially up here in the boonies...well hey, I'm nearby now, I'll just drop by and say 'hey, it's March now, where's the K12?' and find out when it'll actually get up here." So, I take a left and head over.

Twin's Inn isn't in Wardenburg proper, it's well out of town and the road there goes past some nice farms and such, makes for a nice diversionary trip in any case, though it took me forever to find the damn place to begin with - I scoured Wardenburg, never found it, then blundered across it weeks later while out randomly riding around.

The shop sits at a crossroads, and so faces two roads, with the main door facing the crossroads. I normally approach the shop down one of the roads that the shop sits on, and park on the sidewalk, so I don't ever see what's on the other side til I'm well off the bike.

The shop seemed a little busier than normal (in other words, there were actually a couple of customers there - it doesn't seem to be the busiest shop in the world from what I've seen). there were bikes parked outside, looked like demo models. cool. well hey, nice day to have bikes outside. My first tipoff however was when I walked to the main door, which was plastered with this huge BMW poster saying something I didn't understand but generally involved "it's time to buy a BMW" or something. Turned my head, and lo and behold, here's this blue K12 sitting on the other sidewalk - woops, so much for Plan A of asking when the K12 is getting here! Hey, this thing looks a hell of a lot better in blue than yellow... *drool*

So, I go inside. Here's this red K12 sitting in the "main show spot" (they had a F650 there before, guess it got displaced, oh well). Hey, ya know, it looks a hell of a lot better in red than yellow... *drool*

The Twin's Inn staff are out in full force. hmmm. I chatted a bit with some guy who was also there to look at the bike, and just generally tried not to make too much of a fool of myself while attempting to ask questions in broken German ("Haben Sie bitte die..um...taschen dafuer hier?" "Ist die um... gesitz? jetzt oben oder unten? Wie kann man das um... move.. oben or unten?" fortunately, some of them spoke at least some English, and we both managed to get our points across). After a few minutes, I look at the backdrop display (which actually looks halfway decent), which is saying all sorts of things about "the new K1200RS is here now!" and realize that today is the actual official rollout day, this red bike sitting here has oil in it and has been road-prepped, and these bikes are For Sale Now. d'oh. (Hey, I'm not known for being the quickest on the uptake. :)) A little asking produces the fact that the two bikes actually only got here a day or two ago... but hey, someone at BMW made the effort to get these two bikes here for the official rollout, to what seems to me to be a relatively small, out-of-the-way, low-volume BMW dealer in the far north of the country. Score one for BMW Sparte Motorrad's German dealer support.

But of course there's only about so much one can talk about - I've already drooled over it at the Oldenburg Motorcycle Show, OTL has already run a zillion articles of facts and speculations, and Dr. Curve has had his say...all that's left is to RIDE the bloody thing. that is, if they ever even let anyone test-ride 'em here... after all, this is the first day of the official rollout, wouldn't they want the bikes to be here so people can look at 'em? and of course I've heard stories about how German dealers aren't too free with test-rides... and worse of course I'm an American, and don't even have my proper German "fuhrerschein" (driver's license) yet... but you never know if you don't ask... and if nothing else I can try waving my credit cards and offering to buy it if I crash it...

(Paraphrase broken German) "so can I possibly take one for a test ride sometime?" "sure, that's what that one outside is for - Hey, is the K12 there?" "no, it's gone right now" "it'll be back in a little bit, you can take it out when it comes back."

WHAT?? NO!! WAIT, um YES!!!! (hey, it's not supposed to be this easy!)

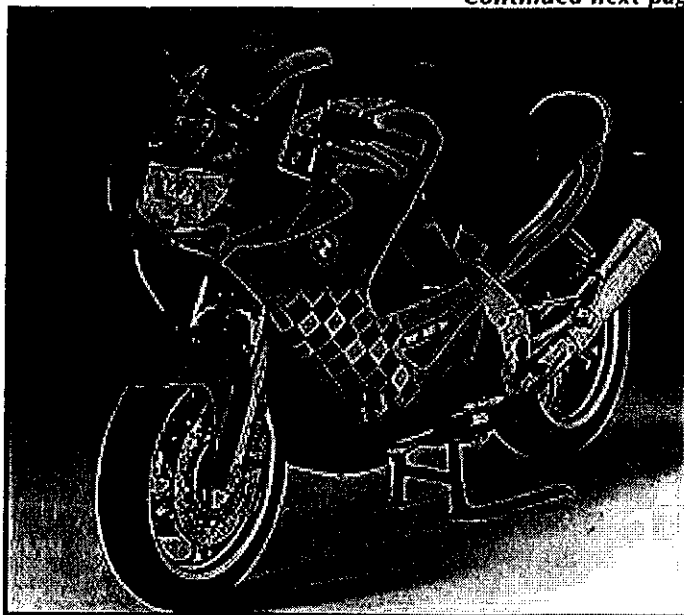
Suddenly it occurs to me that there were a couple bugs on the windscreen of the one outside...

So I end up sitting around a good while waiting for the bike to come back. even the guys at the shop start wondering where the bike went... though I did have time to check into a F650 for my SO and looked at the (very few) used bikes they had and chatted with the shop guys about getting some work done on Darth. eventually it comes back. a quick once-over of the controls, and off we go!

K1200RS - RIDE REVIEW

(Note: I'm no professional. I don't go out and ride lots of different bikes all time time, I've had little opportunity. I've ridden most of the recent BMWs at one time or another, but it's not something I do every day, so one must take what I say with a grain of salt. On the flip side, I guess you could say I provide the "Joe BMW Rider" viewpoint. Sorry, no instrumented tests, only seat-of-

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pants - but I don't believe much in the importance of numbers anyway; it's how it feels under you, and whether or not you like riding it and whether the bike will do all you want it to... oh, and of course the tires were brand new, so I didn't push it too hard in corners - the bike had 300km on it, including all the test rides it had been through today, further reinforcing the story that it only showed up here a couple days ago.)

First, some salient points. It's been said: - - the German 98hp version doesn't give up very much - - it weighs considerably more, but still handles well - - BMW's finally managed to beat the vibration problem - - the transmission works really well - - the 6th gear is/was unnecessary - - the K12RS has gone more sporty

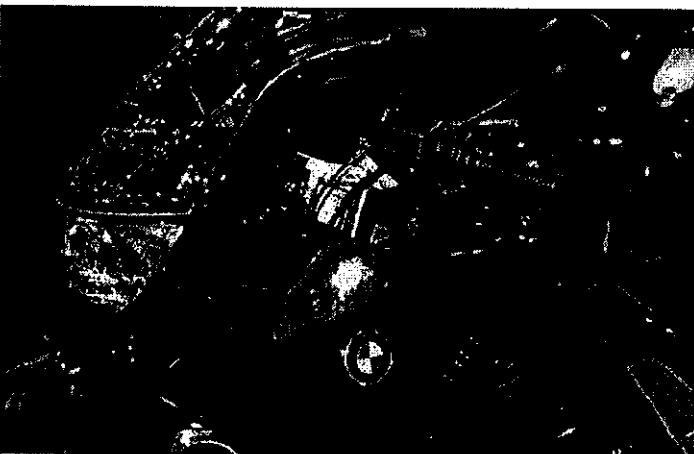
1) One of the salesmen, upon questioning, was actually disappointed with the K12, in that they didn't really change the engine; he thinks it's not strong enough and that they should have redone the engine. *shrug* could be. I would have thought they would too, but given the number of new models lately, one can understand why they wouldn't from a cost standpoint.

From my point of view though, that engine's plenty strong enough, even in 98hp trim. Like many of the new high-performance motors coming out of Detroit lately, it doesn't seem to have a torque curve per se - it just has Torque.

This thing will pull from 20kph in 6th gear straight to speed far faster than I wish to contemplate, hard, and with no hesitation. I didn't try a burnout or anything like that (it's not my bike after all), but it definitely feels like it's got enough power to do all the damage I need, and it delivers it in a very wonderfully smooth fashion.

I'm not quite sure what's changed, but the noises this thing makes are... nice. It's still a K-whiner, but the mechanical noises seem even more pronounced. It is, IMO, a very quiet, tame-sounding motor. I really like it.

The only disconcerting thing - to me - is how pronounced the engine-braking effect is; this bike requires more smoothness with the throttle than my bike. but that's no particular shocker either, and certainly not unique to this bike; it's just that my old KRS is looser and lets me get away with more.



2) it weighs more? I thought so when I first sat on one at the motorcycle show; indeed, it seemed almost cumbersome somehow, and it seemed like it'd be downright clumsy around town.

I was wrong.

Sure, it's a large bike; it takes its share of space, and it has that sense of having significant mass. but once you get it off the showroom floor and RIDE it, it comes off as being much much better balanced than any K I've ever been on. the CG seems as if it's been moved down several inches; indeed, the whole bike seems lower, and not just the riding position.

Just walking it around in the parking lot, it seems very tractable. ok, you want the motor to help you; it still has mass after all. but besides that, it's no problem to cope with, indeed it seems very sure-footed and reasonably easy to keep upright.

On the road, it's even better. it doesn't have that top-heavy sense that the older Ks had, there's no initial resistance to turning; it gladly tips right over, takes a set in a curve, and just sticks there. Bumps don't upset it at all. it feels very competent, very solid. Yet it's considerably more "flickable" - playing footsie with bumps and lines on the road is, dare I say, fun, and takes zilcho thought.

Yes, it's got the Telelever. Yes, the handlebars are farther apart now. yes, the suspension dynamics have been changed. experts can debate about what changed what and why; I don't care - all I know is that the package, as a whole, for me, Just Works. Frankly, it's got the most solid, comfortable, confidence-inspiring suspension I've ridden yet.

3) Wrong, actually, if you want to pick nits; at idle, the bike shakes a good bit. it's not hyperbad, but IMHO it's as bad as my '85 K.

Once you're moving though, it smooths right out. at any speed I tried, engine vibes weren't noticeable. and it's all accompanied by that wonderful mechanical cacophony that reminds you it's still a K-Whiner... and all that wonderful power.

4) Yup, the transmission works. it "snicks" like you'd expect a good Honda (car; that's my reference point, anyway) tranny to, and the action feels very positive. I found it a little stiff at standstill, but hey, the thing only had 250km on it, how much can you expect out of a new bike.

I've never had a lot of problems with mine, though, so I guess I can't say a whole lot, other than I didn't blow any of the fast 1-2 upshifts I tried.

5) Is 6th gear necessary? *shrug* prolly not. it's another gear to shift through though, which with this thing is always fun. :)

6) Well, it certainly looks very modern and sporty, and the riding position seems geared to match. when I first tried sitting on it at the show, it seemed like I was in a very impractical position; forward-leaning and bunched up. this bike was a little different, but still involved leaning forward a bit and having the legs tucked up. it seemed impractical at first, but once on the road, well...it

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was different. what was impractical became practical. what seemed uncomfortable quickly turned into ride-all-day comfortable. maybe not the best for people who need to stretch/move their legs a lot though; shifting the feet to the rear pegs doesn't seem like it's an option, or indeed, moving the legs around much at all doesn't seem entirely practical - the bodywork and high footpeg position combine to leave you with little option but to put the legs where you're supposed to.

But for me... maybe it was just because it was new and cool and I wanted to think it was comfortable, but I don't think so; it just felt right somehow; a nice neutral position, with the legs safely tucked up and in. sporty perhaps, but it's still something I'd be happy touring with, I think. Really, that about sums up the whole bike. it just FEELS right, somehow.

I don't know how it'd be on a racetrack, or against a UJM900XX or whatever, and I can't say as I care.

- **Of course, no bike's perfect. nits:**

The new switches work slightly differently; not only are they "melted" (to keep with the "futuristic" look), they now "click" slightly, presumably so you know they worked. eh. the older controls were second-nature; these don't seem to function quite as well, IMHO. esp the turn-signal cancel; more than once it didn't cancel, even though I felt a "click" - you have to hit it pretty hard.

The upper-body wind protection at speed (120kph), well, sucked rocks. it was impossible to ride at over about 160kph; the wind kept shoving my helmet in my face, no matter where I put my head. protection for the rest of the body, though, was pretty good. having the knees tucked up and into the fairing is pretty convenient too.

However, after I got back, one of the salesfolks pointed out that the windscreen is adjustable. I looked, and lo and behold, I'd had the windscreen down the whole time. d'oh.

The salesman handed me the key back, but I had to take off, and I have to head to the states for a couple weeks, so I can't try it again for a bit. hopefully the windscreen works better in the 'up' position, though it still seems kinda small for the task at hand. further, the stilts that hold it when it's in the 'up' position don't seem too terribly robust. given the history of the K wind spoiler, one worries a bit about a (more-costly) repeat. more later.

The seating position is ok for me; might be rough for some though.

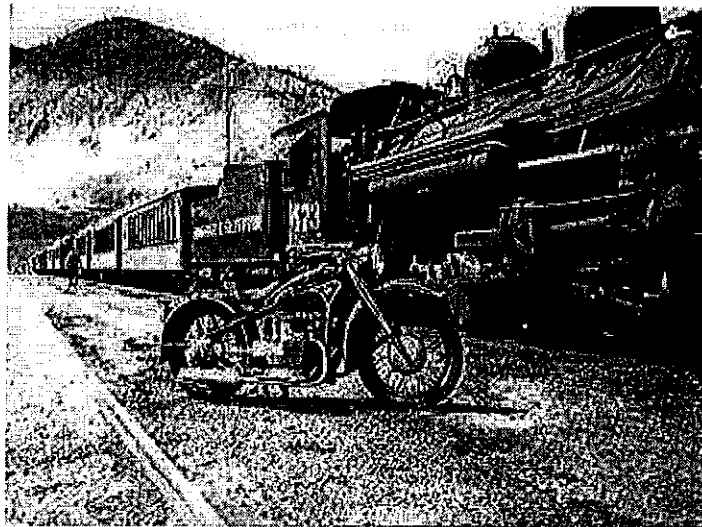
As for the looks, well... I guess it's something that grows on you. the yellow is kinda ugly, but... um, make mine blue; Visa ok?

Jeff Bacon - Twilight Consulting - Oldenburg, Germany and worldwide = = bacon@twilight.org

Appendium: couple of things I forgot to include in the original report:

At long last it seems, BMW finally has mirrors on a KRS that work.

No, this isn't rocket science stuff, it's just one of those little things that are important. For someone who's had to try to use these too-far-in KRS mirrors for too long, the view on



the K12's mirrors are a wonder, and it's nice that it's finally fixed.

I'm sure you've seen pictures of the instrument cluster by now. There are two rows of lights along the bottom; all of which are large enough to see without being too terribly intrusive. Hopefully they aren't so bright as to be annoying at night; dunno yet, first impression is that they're probably not too bad. The ABS lights, which flash at power-up until you actually start the engine, are a little disconcerting at first but that's easy enough to get used to. Small LCD read-out for time and gearshift. I find them both a little small but they're not the most important thing in the cluster either.

The gauges are nice enough. Tachometer reads up to 11 or 12krpm, I forget, far higher than I can breathe. Engine seems perfectly willing to wind all the way up there though in practice there's not much need. I think the numbers on the tach sit at an odd angle - redline starts at around 1 o'clock and goes to 2-2:30 o'clock, 0 is at around 7 o'clock. Not quite intuitive to look at. I didn't bother, it wasn't worth it. I have a sense they were going for style points here, and I'd say they went too much for style and missed on functionality; it's not what we're used to looking for.

The resolution on the speedometer isn't too terribly high - that's what you get for calibrating the thing to 280kph. Fortunately, the German Polizei aren't too terribly concerned about 10kph one way or the other. (I have yet to see a Polizei-Auto wasting time by the side of the road clocking people. Presumably they are off doing less useful things like taking care of accident scenes, chasing criminals, and drinking coffee and eating broetchen.

I have been passed by Polizei-Autos on the autobahn, but this isn't anything especially new to Americans used to police cars whizzing by. I have been stopped once, by a couple of very polite officers curious about the funny American license plate; a quick inspection of my passport and Gruene-Karte and I was on my way, with a helpful reminder that my Gruene-Karte was about to expire and I should do something about it.

I've quit worrying about watching for police since that incident.

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Oddly enough, I find myself more relaxed about the whole riding experience now, and find myself riding somewhat more alertly - when one doesn't continually have to keep an eye peeled for revenue collection agents, one tends to have more time and attention span to watch for more important things, like traffic and pedestrians.

I think there is something to be learned here.)

The seat does adjust, though there's only a "up" and "down" setting and the difference is maybe 3/4"; doesn't seem to matter too much, at least by my seat-of-pants testing. The pegs move somewhat farther, it seems,

I didn't try this because it involves unbolting things and that probably wouldn't have been cool. I imagine the only real difference any of this will make, though, is helping larger/smaller riders fit the bike; it doesn't seem like one is going to be able to change the riding position per se, and judging from the dynamics of the bike, I don't think one is going to want to try to ride the bike in any position than the one it dictates to you.

(I think this is a bit of a departure; it seems to me that the K/K11 both were rather flexible in that regard. However, one can also say that the bike didn't give you lots of support in whatever position you chose.

The K12 dictates a position, but then does more to support/protect you in that position; evidence the sculpt of the bodywork, and it seemed at least to me that the bike made it easy for you to tuck your legs up and in and keep them there. MHO.)

Finance points: cost out the door is DM 27500. Given current exchange rates of around DM 1.68/US\$1, that boils down to around \$16k. Of course you're going to have to deal sharp and know where and how to exchange your money to get that kind of rate; that's spot FOREX rates, and Thomas Cook Travel ain't gonna give you that. (Fortunately, I have a friendly commodities broker. :)) But by that token, it's not all that unreasonable. Note that the R bikes are all in the DM26k range here.

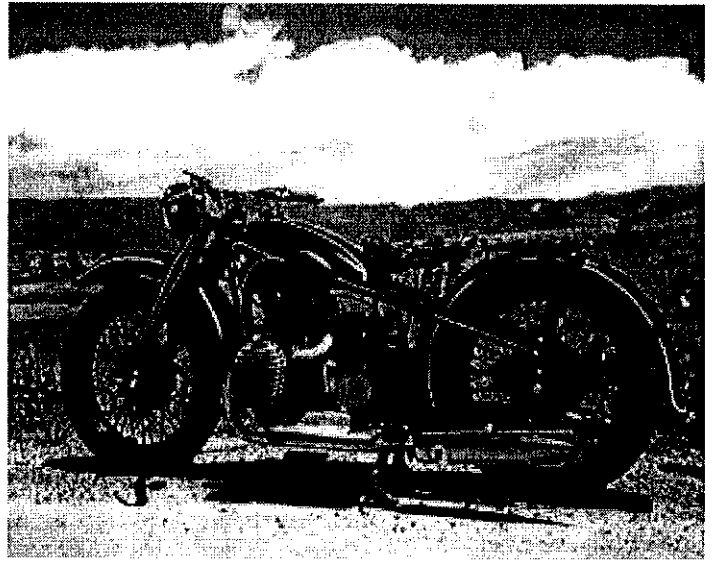
I don't know what the bags cost; they didn't have any there yet (still being shipped). Assume them to be expensive of course. Will find out later.

Anyone happen to know where I might be able to get a decent low-rate loan (8% range, 4 yr, dollar-denominated, to buy one of these things with? :)

Also, Kari et al, any wisdom with respect to importing a German bike to the US, for short periods (< 6 months)? I still live here, but will be commuting back and forth for contract jobs...

I was thinking about keeping my KRS stateside and getting a K12 for Germany, but on the flip side, I can always just commute the bike with me via Lufthansa too, if US EPA/Customs won't give me too much hassle...

Jeff Bacon



President's Notes, continued from front page..

by "She Who Must Be Obeyed". It's been often enough, though, to avoid removing the battery for a recharge on the bench.

Our club members have a wide variety of interests, but we all count two-wheeled travel as high priority. My 1997 wall calendar has most weekend blocks filled in from April to September. These events become targets. Not that I'll get to every one, but it helps to have a goal. As we all know, **"the destination is the excuse, the ride is the reason"**.

If you need help coming up with "excuses", come to Finley's and we can give you a few. Some in the not-to-be-missed category are: the Square Route Rally, Thurmont, MD; Connecticut SuperRide; Hill Climb, Freemansburg, PA; Marcus Dairy, Danbury, CT; Mieh's Cafe, Stockton, NJ, and so on. **What's on your calendar?**

Circumnavigator Ted Simon Speaks **Friday, June 13**

I have arranged a date for the fascinating presentation by Ted Simon of his 4 year around-the-world motorcycle adventure on a Triumph 500. This will be a joint event for the Fossil Riders of NJ and NJS-BMW-MR!

More details will follow. He has received many thumbs-up reviews by those who have heard him so far.

Mark the date on your calendars now.

Glenn Martin

MEETING!
March 12th, 7PM
Finley's, Neptune