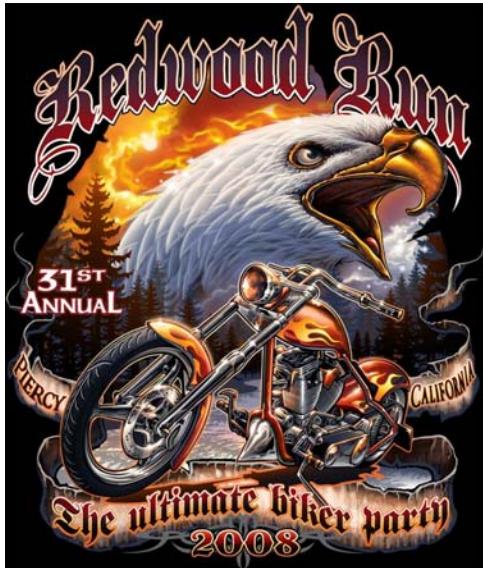


The adventures of **Ratbike Milo**



Wednesday evening, the 11th, Tom Pierce and his brother Gary showed up to spend the night before we leave for the Redwood Run # 31. Tom took his primary cover off to replace the gasket on his Shovelhead. He was riding his 1976 Shovel and let Gary ride his 2002 Springer Softtail. He adjusted his primary chain and slapped it back together to get the leak to stop.

Thursday morning found me putting on another oil cooler that Mark had brought me. It was a small unit that I hung in front of the train horns. By the way, Tom is the engineer for the railroad that got me the train horns some 20 something years ago. We were about to leave when Gary had a minor problem with gravity. It seems that the bike and he fell over in a slow speed turn around. These new bikes have sensors that will not allow them to start right away after a fall down. After a while we were on the road.

We have been stopping there for a few decades. We next went to Crescent City for lunch. And the next stop was in Orick, at the old Lumberjack tavern. It is now called Hawg Wild and owned by a good guy named Mark. He called me a couple of days ago and suggested that I see Lois while we are there. She has had cancer for a while. Before we left, Joni printed a copy of our recent trip so I could take it to her and visit a bit while we were there. George and Lois is a couple who we have been visiting for years on our regular stop at the tavern. Their house is not very far from the bar, so I rode up and blew my train horns. George came out and was very glad that I stopped by. Lois was very glad that I took the time to come over and visit. She said that she is sad that she can't get out of bed to see everybody at the tavern. I told her that I wish that I had the time to read our story to her. She was just happy that I stopped by. As we were getting ready to leave, Mark ran out and put a wooden carved statue on the front of my bike. It was a business card holder that had an invitation to take a card written on it.

Eureka was our regular night stop at the Super 8 Motel. Tom wanted to go to the Redwood Harley Davidson as soon as we got there. His bike was still leaking quite a bit between the solenoid and the inner primary. Redwood HD has a big new beautiful location on the north side of town. Everyone working there is very friendly and glad to see all of us stop in. When we got to the parts counter, I was greeted by Vince, who called me by name! He got Tom the gaskets that he needed. We visited for a while longer and went to the motel. I helped Tom take his solenoid off to find out that there was no gasket where there should have been. Tom said he was the last one to put it together. OOPS! We got 2 gaskets in there and buttoned it all back up. It seemed to be good and not leak. Tom needed a new starter button on his handle bars. Of course a 1976 starter button was obsolete. I suggested that he leave the rubber cover off of the solenoid and use a screwdriver to start it. I have been starting my bike like that for years. We then went to Stanton's Coffee Cup Restaurant for dinner in the lounge. Back in the room, the news was showing all the flooding in the Midwest. A few of the towns were some of the towns that we were just in a couple of weeks ago!

Friday morning found us almost ready to go at around 8:30 and under unusually beautiful blue skies! Gary made it about a foot and fell over again! He forgot about the rear disc brake lock that Tom had put on the night before. (So did Tom)! Gary and I went to breakfast while Tom fixed his other bike. We headed south for the last leg of 75 miles before the run. They opened the gate at 10:00 and there was no line. Tom went to will call to get his \$130.00 each tickets. The second person that I came to had some tickets for sale. I did not get a ticket in advance as I didn't know when we would return from our back East trip. I gave him \$100.00 for one and got down to our regular camping spot in the Apple Flats area. I was greeted by Gordon & Vickie, Keith & Rachelle, and Gordon's dad, Harvey. They had saved me a tent spot like normal. The attendance seemed down a little bit as they did not sell out this year. It was VERY hot down there. Our camp area is in the trees by a little creek, so it stays cooler than down in the

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pit area. I can't understand why people 'choose' to camp out in the hot sun. I hope they don't discover our tree area anytime soon! Terry Allen showed up in the late afternoon. It was his first time to the run in 10 years. A few of us rode to Garberville for snacks and beverages. Ray's market is doing a very smart thing now by selling tents, fold up chairs, sleeping bags and a lots of food.

We rode the short 14 mile distance back to camp. A few people went swimming in the river which is a very good place to keep cool. We ran into Abe & Cindy, and Mark & Denise from Roseburg. Norm & Chris, and Kyle Cannon, and Dwight from over the boarder in Washington, showed up a bit later. I saw a whole lot of people who I have met over the years that are glad to see the good ole Rat Bike make it yet another year. I had a lot of fun telling of some of the adventures that Joni & I had experienced on the road the past month. When the sun went down we ventured up to the 'PIT', a large area where a lot of the food vendors are as well as the beverages vendors. They have an elaborate stage set up there too.

The run has been held there for about the last 15 years or so. It was at Richardson's Grove for a number of years before that. A band was playing when we got there. We usually sit on the hill and people watch and see the bands. It is a good place to see old friends and catch up on happenings. I went back to camp and hung around for a while before calling it a night.

Saturday found me up at the PIT for the bike show. They have been giving me the Rat Bike Award forever. Three years ago they changed the program. They now call the Rat Bike award "The Milo Award" for the Rat class. They have me present it to the winner. This year I presented it to Mark (Godzilla), for his ridged frame Pan head. It has a rusty tank and rusty rear bobbed fender and plenty of grease and oil on it. I told him that I'm proud of him that he has a very good start for a Rat Bike. He said it is an honor to be presented the plaque by the Rat Bike King! We took some pictures and talked for a while. Next, they ran the slow race. There was not anywhere the amount of people to do that as there has been in the past. Then came the very popular "weenie bite" event. The crowd always gets into that. A couple of people couldn't understand the rules that say you can't put your foot down as the passenger tries to bite the mustard covered hot dog. The next event was the loud pipe event. They had a decibel meter set up and a piece of plywood on the ground 50 feet away. I volunteered to test the meter with my train horns. I parked my bike on the plywood and opened the horns up all the way. They could not get the meter to work, so I aimed my bike and the horns at the meter and did it again. After a couple of other bikes got on the plywood and revved up their engines, it was determined that the meter didn't work. They announced that, "Milo broke the meter", with his train horns and had to go by crowd cheers to vote on the loudest pipes. I didn't mean to break their meter! By that time the steak dinners were being served. The line was non-existent, and we got served right away. It was probably too hot for people to think about eating. I took my bike up on top to vendor row to have some more pictures done with Mark and me, for the Rat Bike winner and my bike as well. Then it was back to camp to try to cool off a bit before the night's music.

'Ten Years After' was to play next. They had three of the four original members of the group. The lead guy, Alvin Lee, was not there. They sounded real good as they played a lot of their old tunes and some new ones too. When they were done they hung out in the crowd. I went up and talked to the keyboard guy, Chick Churchill. I told him that I was at the concert where some idiot threw a bottle up on stage and broke on Alvin Lee's guitar and cut his hand. Chick's face lit up as he asked me where that was. He guessed it was in Santa Cruz, California. I told him it was at the Santa Clara Civic Auditorium. He said that Alvin was pissed and they walked off and didn't come back for a couple of hours. He told me that just 2 days ago they were playing in Portland, Oregon, when a guy jumped up on stage and punched Joe Gooch in the mouth. They were talking about how that was the only bad action to happen to them since the bottle thing in the early 70's. What a coincidence that I would come up to them and tell them that I was there. (Kenny Mockel and Kathy R. and Keith Orr were there as well). Chick introduced me to the other members of the band and I got Bonnie to take our picture together. I told them that I saw them quite a few times at Winterland in San Francisco too. They said they always liked to play there. Then it was the Marshall Tucker Band up next. It was very clear that they do a lot of partying on their tour bus. They didn't seem to know what each other were playing, and sounded like a garage band just getting started. Some of the songs sounded familiar, and I will just leave it at that. By that time I had enough and went back to camp. It was pretty quiet at that point in time so I turned in for the night.

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I was up before 7:00 and was packed up to go before 8:00. Terry Allen was ready to go too, so we rode back home to Roseburg together. We stopped in at Stanton's in Eureka again for breakfast and made it home by 2:30. The Rat Bike did just fine with no problems. Another Redwood Run behind me now. This run was #30 that I have been to on the same bike, out of 31 years that it has been happening.

Next it's time to get ready to ride to Infineon Raceway in California. I leave on Thursday and hope to see Brandon Ash and the #02 Dodge qualify for the Cup Road Race on Sunday. I'm very proud that I am a sponsor for the car and that Oregon Tool & Supply is on the car. You can watch it on TV on Sunday, as I will be on pit road for the race. I'll let you know more as the Adventures of Rat Bike Milo continue to unfold!

Ratbike Milo

~ Enjoy my photo's from this year's Redwood Run ~

