

# Okanagan TRAIL RIDERS



February 2006 Edition

## Presidents Ramble

By Ken Umbargar

Another month has gone by and riding is just another 40 or 50 sleeps. I know you are all getting so itchy you can hardly stand it. Given the overwhelming support OTR has been getting from the off-road community and the tireless volunteer work of our executive one thing is for sure..... we will all be riding Bear Creek this spring! Many key people took part in the February General Meeting. Many past leaders of our association were in attendance or have recently renewed memberships for their entire families. We welcomed the "Kokanee Boys" to the party with their motorcycle blender and "make it happen" attitude. (Ok guys it wasn't really a party, we just lied to get you out and on the team J ) Every organization needs some personality and fun and you guys just tipped the scales in our favour. We welcomed once again George Madarasz and "ODR Racing". Your efforts over the decades to promote our sport are commendable. The ever increasing success of your Hare Scramble Series provides a forum for high achieving off road local riders to finally get the recognition and opportunities they deserve. What a dimension you add to this association (not to mention giving us "middle aged" guys hope that we still have a few good years in usJ). We welcomed Terry Poirier of Kelowna Yamaha. Terry won our 50/50 draw and donated his winnings right back to our cause as did Bob Ames the meeting before. On another note where are the "Woodchucks"? Here is another great bunch of responsible guys who love to ride and promote our sport. I guess our meeting



**There's nothing like the memory of your first trophy or prize win. Whether it's a fun event like a poker run or enduro or a race event - it's great to see the next generation of riders and possible ISDE contenders out at events.**

was to close to "Groundhog Day" for them to make it this time or maybe they were too busy planning their annual trip to ride the Juniper Forest Dunes in Pasco at the end of the month (visit the Events tab at our website if you can't wait 40 or 50 sleeps). I have enjoyed many rides with these kindred spirits and am hopeful we can secure their support and others in the near future. Many of you know other riders and clubs who share both our protest and a passion for our sport. Have them join. Once this objective is realized OTR will conduct a choir singing a loud and clear message to the public and government that the sport of off-road motorcycling and motorized recreation in general has social and economic values too great to be dismissed and shoved yet further out into the wilderness!

Let me talk about our riding areas or

lack thereof. How is it that our available riding areas continue to be decimated steadily without much more than a few overworked and under-funded off-road advocacy volunteers screaming foul? How is it that decisions continue to be made to shut riding areas without any consideration or consultation to this great community of off-road riders? Don't these bureaucrats and politicians understand what it means to share a day out in the backcountry on a motorcycle with your kids or good friends? You all know the answer. Many of you share this writer's conviction that it is time to take a STAND and organize a forceful OFFENSE. It is time to think bigger than a few loosely knit clubs and individual riders with our voices dispersed throughout our diminishing forest.

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## *Presidents Ramble* (continued from page 1)

For the 45 or so of us who attended the meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup> we all got a sense of our collective potential and a taste of encouragement from each other. I am more encouraged by the quality and resolve of the new members than the growth itself. Did anyone notice the confidence of the youngsters in the room to stand up and speak their mind? My guess is these kids have spent more time in front of a podium collecting trophies than in front of the 7/11. I am encouraged with the commitment of those who signed up to various volunteer positions and others who have offered financial support and material donations. I am encouraged that we have engaged our own consultants to establish firstly that responsible, managed and sustainable off-road riding can exist congruently with all other stakeholders within the Lambley Creek watershed. This model, once purring quietly like a well tuned 4 stroke, will make a strong case for Re-staking claims to other areas needlessly lost in past years!!!

When can all this happen? It has already started!!!! Let's make sure the rest of the off-road community is wide awake and has the coffee right under their nose.

How will this happen???

Look in the mirror. No longer can we just rely on a few to fight our battle. There is No Free Ride. Pay \$20 or \$30 dollars and join this fight now. Don't think about

it.....Don't leave it up to someone else..... Just Do it. Lots of you have! Take no prisoners!

EDUCATE yourself about what responsible off-road practices are. We must become more responsible and considerate of others who have an interest in the same land. SHARING - A simple concept we all learned as children.

Educate the public, bureaucrats, politicians, vested stakeholders and any one else about our sport and its high value to the social and economic fabric of this community and Province. Certainly no less than baseball, hockey, and video games. Ok scrap the video games. J

*Our first project of the year will focus on all of the above. Get involved. It's a vital first step. Ask Ron Irnie how you can help. [ron-irnie@shaw.ca](mailto:ron-irnie@shaw.ca)*

The rest of the master plan will have to wait until our next meeting in March. It's in progress. It's ambitious. It is going to be hugely rewarding watching it become a reality. The time invested by those who so choose will be a valuable legacy for the next generation. Our kids are worth it. You heard some of

them speak. We could use more executives.....a "Treasurer" for one. Surely we can all agree that after 20 years of executive service Big Bruce deserves a rest. Let's have someone step up to the plate and take a turn for a while.

If you haven't decided how you can best serve our sport go to our website @ <http://www.okanagantrailriders.com> and look up the link to the volunteer sign-up sheet. It is going to be a blast to be involved in the Okanagan Trail Riders Association and bigger achievements are but a few sleeps away!

Yours in Riding

Ken Umbarger - President



## *Sound Check* By Frank Braeuer

I have to admit, I love the sound of raw power. Race cars, muscle cars, Harleys with open pipes, hopped up diesel trucks, whhhhhaaaaaaaaaaaaaa, I love em.

But my attitude about power and the sound that it makes has been changing, especially where off road bikes are concerned.

They first started changing a few years ago when I was involved with the motocross track and club.

Knowing that there had been and was ongoing complaints about sound, some guys just couldn't and wouldn't help themselves, or the club. They had bikes with loud after market exhaust names

like Big Gun and Yosh that produced between 108 and 113 decibels of sound. (You have to hear it to know how loud this is but it is painful if you are anywhere behind a bike like this). These bikes originally came out of the box with 96dB (comparatively, like a kitten purring).  
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## Sound Check *(continued from page 2)*

The result was that within weeks of officially having the track open for practices the track was very close to being shut down and having it's land lease with the B.C. Government pulled.

I spent the next 6-8 weeks, along with others, engaged in a battle to save the track. That battle continues today.

Since that time the motocross club has done a number of things to mitigate sound at the track but it isn't easy for them and they constantly under the microscope or more properly stethoscope.

But I didn't start writing this article to talk about the motocross track. I only reference it because we could be next if we can't change attitudes about sound.

In the areas which our bikes take us (especially dual sport and long off-road rides), it is inevitable that we will come into contact with the public, recreation property owners, hikers, hunters, fishers, home owners, etc. Bikes with obnoxiously loud exhaust notes leave an impression that lingers long after the sound and bike are gone.

### *“Loud bikes are the enemy of our sport”*

Whether you ride in the bear lame Main area, Peachland, Lyton, Hope, Aashcroft, Kamloops or anywhere else – if you are taking a loud bike into these areas – you are polluting those environments with sound – and someone will eventually have to pay. It may mean restricted access or it may mean closure or it may just mean unwanted attention for clubs and riders in those areas.

There has been a drive on for many years to have people recognize that loud bikes are the enemy of our sport. Ya, I know – I used to be one of those too. But that then and this is now. We



**Exhaust systems like the one shown on this bike may sound cool but they also pack a mean punch with the public and can lead to unnecessary area closures. Consider the noise your bike produces.**

need to change. The OTR will be working actively this riding season to increase sound awareness.

In the coming months we will be random conducting sound checks on bikes in the Bear Lake Main and other areas. The purpose will be to educate people about how loud their bikes are and ways to reduce the sound produced. But you don't have to wait until then to do something. If you're bike is loud there are a number of ways to reduce it;

- repack your muffler
- if you have a loud exhaust take it off and replace it with the stock pipe
- if you have removed the silencer, spark arrester – put it back on
- visit your local dealer and have them conduct a sound check.

We all know we're under the microscope, let's help ourselves and be proactive, rather than wait til there are problems and being reactive.

There are other ways to increase the

power your bike makes without increasing it's sound. Next article, I'll give some examples. (hmmmmm, Power Tips from Frank, oh this should be good eh guys). Heh, heh.

Until next time, keep the shiney side up.

Frank Braeuer

