

THE
**VINTAGE JAPANESE
MOTORCYCLE MAGAZINE**

14th Annual
**Barber
Vintage
Festival**

WHAT'S INSIDE:
Smart Turn System
Mid-80s Middleweights
A Different Kind of Dream
East Meets West in the South



14th Annual
**Barber
Vintage
Festival**

Arial view of the
Barber Vintage Museum
and festival grounds
(courtesy Barber
Vintage Museum)



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:
Helping with the raffle
Café racers ready for judging
The new museum wing houses some amazing displays.
Vintage racing on the Barber track



by Mike Fitterling / editor@vjmc.org
photos by Mike Fitterling & George Martin



Arriving in Birmingham in the afternoon on Thursday, 4 October, I found almost all preparations had been completed by VJMC volunteers already. That gave me plenty of time to hang out and get reacquainted with members who had arrived early to do set up and get credentials at the will-call area without dealing with crushing crowds that would be there the next day.

The weather that would dominate the weekend had already set in with high temperatures and plenty of sun. While the humidity and lack of wind made for a scorcher of a weekend, it was a far cry better than last year, when I had been obliged to stick around an extra day and then ride almost to I-95 and the Virginia/North Carolina border (thanks, Randy and Warren for the shelter!) to avoid the worst of the hurricane that blew through, shortening the event by a day. The weather was conducive to high numbers of participants this year, and attendance hit an all-time record of 79336.

The VJMC site in the park could not have been better, with three acres of space just inside the first gate into the park, across from the north end of the museum. This switch of location that was made a few years ago really gives us space to stretch



LEFT: BBQ!
RIGHT:
Member and past Word Trials
Champion Curt Comer pre-
sents 2nd place in Café Racer
Show to Doug Kadrovach.



LEFT:
Colin Seeley takes
the mic with Barber's
Brian Slark.

ABOVE:
Ellis Holman's
amazing domestic
CB350

out and will hold even bigger bike shows in the future. The VJMC is one of the featured areas, supported generously by the Barber team, who always go out of their way to make our part of the event a great success.

Board Member and supreme volunteer Randy Mayes developed and managed the volunteer work schedule, ensuring that the booth was staffed the whole weekend. Membership signups, regalia sales, bike show registrations, ballot scoring, and trophy ceremonies all ran smoothly due to her hard work. Volunteers make everything happen, and this year we had a dedicated and thoughtful group manning the tables and making sure there was enough water available (16 cases!), given the sun and heat, and even bringing in fans to help those who needed a little break. Barry Schonberger generously offered the use of his generator providing the fans' and Steve Adam's sound system's power. Activity never really slowed at the tables and on the field, and in the first two days the regalia had all but sold out. A huge thanks to Randy and all the volunteers; it could not have been done, literally, without you!

Friday opened the event with the glorious sounds of motorcycle racing floating through the air from eight in the morning until five in the afternoon. First up for the VJMC, starting at ten, was the Café Racer Bike show with eighteen entries and three trophy winners. This was a first for the VJMC at the Festival, managed by Toby Jones (see "Custom Connection") and proved a big enough hit to warrant a return next year. As soon as the trophies were presented, participants in the every-popular "Sounds of Japanese Horsepower" contest started lining up by single, twin, four, and more cylinders. Smiles passed through the crowds as ears were greeted by the cry of motors straining at their redlines.

Wrapping up the day were two workshops, Building Café Racers with Toby Jones and Norton Muzzone of Dime City Cycles and Revival Parts (see "Custom Connection") and Updating Vintage Electrics with Bryan Bentley, Floyd



Finch, and Rick Shaw of Rick's Motorsports Electrics. Rick had useful information on utilizing the new technology of lithium batteries in our old bikes and how and how not to do common wiring jobs.

Friday evening as members wandered off in search of dinner in town, your Board of Directors met to discuss the current state of the Club and how we can improve it for all members as we move into the future. While we meet monthly by phone, many of us live across the country from each other, and this one time each year is our opportunity to meet and talk face to face about progress we are making and issues we need to address. It is always productive and a great team building experience, as we each share our concerns and the status of the jobs we have been slated to undertake.

Saturday was the big day for the Bike

Show, and the area quickly filled with excellent examples of beautiful and often rare Japanese bikes. The show started rolling at 10 and would not wrap up until 4PM with the awards ceremony. That gave me time to head out across the 880-acre park to see other areas, such as the greatly expanded swap meet, with the addition of another large area at the south end of the track this year and totaling 700 spaces. Treasure hunters had their work cut out for them if they wanted to thoroughly investigate the whole thing. I also had the chance to visit the museum—always a treat—and see the new addition, this year filled with bikes and open to the public. With the new addition, the museum is now an astounding 230000 square feet filled with 1600 motorcycles, which saw over 5000 visitors over the weekend!

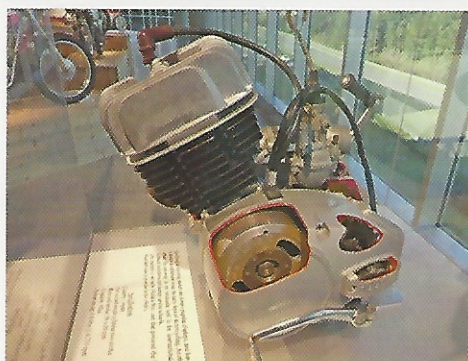
All day long the track was humming with activity, and I sat on the brow of



TOP ROW LEFT TO RIGHT:
Bryan and Rick, of Rick's Electrics, talk about lithium batteries..
Toby and Norton discuss building café racers.
President Tom Kolenko and Curt Comer chat about his Honda TLR200.

CENTER ROW LEFT TO RIGHT:
Swap meet bikes
Hodaka cut-a-way, Hodaka cut-a-way in the museum
Twins line up for the Sounds of Japanese Horsepower contest.

BOTTOM:
Saturday's Bike Show



RIGHT:
Honda row

BELOW:
Bike Show winners



BARBER FESTIVAL BIKE SHOW TROPHY WINNERS

PEOPLE'S CHOICE: TIDDLER UNDER 100CC

1ST PLACE	1962 Tohatsu	Barry Schonberger
2ND PLACE	1969 Suzuki AS5	Bob Pickering

PEOPLE'S CHOICE: 1950s-1980s YAMAHA

1ST PLACE	1970 XS-1 650	Norton Muzzone
2ND PLACE	1984 RZ350	Chip Tucker
3RD PLACE	1973 RT3 360	Jack Pranzarone
SPECIAL MERIT	1974 DT125	Ian Pitt
SPECIAL MERIT	1970 RT1 360	Rob Shearer

PEOPLE'S CHOICE: 1950s-1960s HONDA

1ST PLACE	1969 CB750	Buck Mitchell
2ND PLACE	1968 CB350 Domestic	Ellis Holman
3RD PLACE	1967 CL77	Richard Harms
SPECIAL MERIT	1964 CL72	Gordon Bass

PEOPLE'S CHOICE: 1970s HONDA UNDER 500CC

1ST PLACE	1970 CB350	Lloyd Kneller
2ND PLACE	1975 CB400F	Janet Lunsford
3RD PLACE	1971 SL350	Greg Murray
SPECIAL MERIT	1974 XL250	Roy Kneller

PEOPLE'S CHOICE: 1970s HONDA OVER 500CC

1ST PLACE	1979 CBX 1000	Bobby Pack
2ND PLACE	1971 CB750	Keith Perry

PEOPLE'S CHOICE: 1980s-1990s HONDA

1ST PLACE	1983 CB1100F	Ronnie Lunsford
2ND PLACE	1990 RC30	Gordon Salisbury

PEOPLE'S CHOICE: BEST SUZUKI

1ST PLACE	1979 GS1000S	Russ Briney
2ND PLACE	1975 TS185	Jack Pranzarone
3RD PLACE	1974 GT750	Thomas Harman

PEOPLE'S CHOICE: BEST KAWASAKI

1ST PLACE	1975 Z1B 900	Mike Montague
2ND PLACE	1978 KE250	Matt Celender
3RD PLACE	1973 H1-500	Larry Hunter
SPECIAL MERIT	1973 Z1 900	Buck Mitchell
BEST KZ900	1973 -Z1	Craig Corato

OLDEST BIKE IN SHOW

1960 Honda CB92 Andres & Mary Alice Behrens

PEOPLE'S CHOICE: FUTURE CLASSIC

Honda Shadow Scott Stees

COMPETITION CLASS

1ST PLACE 1975 TL125 Roy Kneller

2018 SPECIAL AWARD TROPHIES

SHOW MERIT

1971 Kawasaki HR1	Mike McSween
1970 Honda CL450	David Waters
1970 Honda CB750	Tim McQuaid

OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS

Melody Adams
Eric Long
Floyd & Geraldine Finch

VJMC SPIRIT AWARD

Bryan Bentley
Toby Jones
Randy Mayes

HAGERTY BEST OF SHOW CHOICE:

1979 GS1000S Russ Briney

BIKE SHOW WRANGLERS:

Buck Mitchell & Greg Murray

SWEET SOUNDS OF JAPANESE HORSEPOWER CONTEST

SINGLE	Honda CB125	Steve Adams
TWIN	Honda CB92	Andres Behrens
TRIPLE	Kawasaki H1	Andy Boulter
FOUR	Honda CB840	Justin Blue
SIX	Honda CBX	Jim Longwith

CAFÉ RACER SHOW

1ST PLACE	1980 Honda CX500	Shad Alexander
2ND PLACE	1979 Yamaha XS650	Doug Kadrovach
3RD PLACE	1971 Kawasaki H1	Mike McSween

the hill behind the stunt shows clicking away at the passing racers. Sitting there it occurred to me the Club must have members on the track and perhaps that is a section of our membership that could use more exposure in this magazine (see my appeal in "From the Editor" in this issue).

As the afternoon waxed I headed back to the VJMC area, where I found ninety-three bikes lined up and being judged. That was down only a couple from last year, due to Hurricane Florence forcing several cancellations. I took as many photos as I thought I could possibly use, then grabbed a pencil and ballot and went out to make my own choices. Just after four the membership gathered in front of the club tents while trophies were handed out to the deserving winners. Those trophies were handed out by none other than Colin Seeley, the famous racer and frame designer and this year's Grand Marshall of the Festival, at least until we thought it wise to give Colin a break due to the heat and sun beating down on him. In between awards, raffle tickets were pulled and swag distributed to the winners.



LEFT:
Bike Show's Suzuki
row with Hagerty
Award winner
front and center

By the time the awards were done, everyone had built up healthy appetites just in time for the Club barbecue, prepared by Rusty's. With the sun settling toward the horizon everyone found seats inside the tents to enjoy their meals as the temperature began to abate. No one walks away hungry from a VJMC meal, and seconds were on hand for those wanting to get their money and their stomach's worth.

Sunday is the day I had most anticipated, as this was the first year I would get to participate in the parade laps on the Barber course. All the years before I either had to leave early or was on a non-Japanese bike. But this year I had

time to stay and had ridden my '78 Suzuki GS550e up. I was grinning from start to finish as we got not two but three laps. While we could not pass as it was a parade lap, it was fun to imagine what it must be like to take those curves at racing speed, and even at parade-pace the corners still offered plenty of fun, especially if you kept the revs up on your way around!

If you haven't been to this epic event, put it on your list. The museum houses the world's largest collection of motorcycles, and at this year's festival there were attendees from forty-nine states and six countries; next year, you should be one of them! ●

Looking down
on the expanded
swap meet area

