

## Mt Hamilton Test Run

We had a total of 6 bikes show up for the 'test run' of Mt Hamilton. We had Gary Helm, Larry Jackson, James Mickens, Frank White, and myself. New to the group was James Clark on his Honda VTX three wheeler.

Good news:

Well today was just gorgeous. The weather was a little cool in the morning. It was just fantastic during the day. And it got a little cool for the way home. The route works. We kept to near the speed limit on the highway and good thing as there were three CHP -- two with radar guns. Once off the highway, there were some nice roads and great views. It felt weird to not have much of a clue as to where I was, when I KNOW the area. The roads I picked were mostly sweet. There were a couple of stop-light laden sections to get from one sweet road to the next, but not overly obnoxious...just a little obnoxious. The roads were mostly dry and mostly clean. We did hit a couple of damp and dirty spots on Mt Hamilton, but we slowed down and traversed them safely. Mines Rd was just lovely. Sweet! And yes we hit the usual water runs across the road.

So-so news:

The planned gas station stop in Alum Rock, Rotten Robbie, had gas, but no facilities. The gas station across the street, Shell, does have bathrooms -- and candy bars! The dining options in Alum Rock are measly tiny joints and parking sucks eggs through the hen house floor. But that said, we hit a Mexican joint, Las Delicias Restaurant. The prices were mild, the service was pleasant, but a bit slow and 'odd'. They did not have any American sodas, just the Mexican ones (they just don't do it for me). They had to go outside to get more ice. The chips were tough, but the salsa was tasty. Not the usual tomato salsa with jalapeños. The food was tasty. Gary left his I-pod in the restaurant and went back and they had it waiting for him. GREAT! I am thinking (I know dangerous) that the 'best' place to eat will be at KFC. It's adequate, albeit greasy, food. The plentiful and easy parking is the one and only great benefit. Eh ... bleh ... but it is a known. If, when we do this run in August, we have small numbers, then we will hit Las Delicias as a thank you for holding the I-pod.

Bad News:

James Clark crashed. He was in a tight left hand turn on Calaveras Rd, near the lake, somewhere around 15 mph, and ran wide. His right rear tire left the road and hit the embankment, scuffing a tree root. The bike must have then 'dug in' a bit and launched him over the handlebars, before it meandered down the road a few more feet and stopping against the muddy hillside. His yarmulke helmet (I only wanna protect the top of my head) was muddy, but unscratched. The bike is fairly well off except for some minor damage to the fenders. James was taken by ambulance to the hospital. Known injuries: He has a well broken index finger on the left hand. He has a 2" x 2" road rash on his left wrist -- oh it will hurt for awhile. He has a smaller road rash on his ankle. Unknown whether he re-injured his pelvis. His pelvis is causing him a lot of pain, but the x-rays are inconclusive for the docs. He will be moved back up here where his orthopedic doctor will do further analysis.

With the delay, we skipped the stop at the observatory -- well, that and I just plain missed it. I overshot it (I know -- it's hard to miss!). We skipped the Morgan Territory fun as time was getting late and the light was soon to be fading. We went home via 580 to 680...got to play in rush hour traffic -- oh boy! We made it to Walnut Creek/Concord as the sun was setting.

Overall for a 'test run', I only made the one 'wrong straight' at the observatory. No wrong turns or other wrong straights. I had a few moments of "Am I on the right road?", but Frank's GPS had the answer -- yup, on the right road! It was a nice long day with plenty of twisties. Plenty of shifting and braking.