

CLASSIC BIKE RAMBLINGS

FOKKER TRI-PLANES.....F-16'S AND FATHER TIME

I always like the ride over to the Plant City Bike fest the first Saturday of the month, great destination, good food and drink. Radical Randy always has a good show. With my stable of bikes, it's always a struggle as to which one gets the call to duty. It truly comes down to what part of history I want to be in for that ride. Which takes us to the flight over for this particular battle.....I mean ride.

I chose to take my Fokker Tri-plane which looks a lot like a 1975 BMW R90/6 sidecar motorbike. It's worth giving you a bit of history that gives me this mindset for this bike. This bike is named "Dutch" (all my bikes are named but that is for another article). During WW I BMW engines founded a tradition of excellence and reliability.

It was Baron Von Richtofen, the Red Baron, who praised the BMW engines that powered the legendary Fokker Tri-plane of 1917 to 1919. In 1919 an airplane with a BMW engine set the world altitude record and later BMW powered Dornier flying boats travelled the world. In 1923 BMW built it's first motorbike and in 1928 it's first automobile.

In the 1930's their cars dominated the European racing circuit. Then in WW II BMW produced the high performance Focke Wulf FW 190 fighter and it also produced the first operational jet turbine engine. Now back to the Richtofen/Dutch/Black Falcon connection. It also produced the fastest sidecar racing motorbikes in the world between 1954 and 1967 winning an unprecedented 14 world championships in a row.

So, with this in mind we will begin our journey. Dutch and I (the Black Falcon) left the Aerodrome....I mean St.

Pete beach. Down the beach with some low level cruising (30 mph) looking for targets (frauleins). It's now time to gain speed and climb over the bridge an onto the battle in Plant City (the bike show). Which brings me to the petrol stop. I pulled into the fueling station on Rte. 60 and there are 6 to 8 bike of varying nationalities and sizes but all have 23 years plus on my veteran, Dutch. An O7 Rod, Zx11, a gsxr, you get the snapshot. Well, after taking on petrol and about 15 minutes of telling my new found squadron of the epic battles Dutch has won, we are off to Plant City.

Which brings me to phase two of our fable. Whenever I ride Dutch or my other old classics, I have come to find out that these bike should be ridden alone or only with their own kind. I have spent many days and nights riding mile after entertaining mile by myself, congratulating myself on this incredible piece of machinery, speed, handling, power and amazing lines. Which brings me back to the squadron moving towards Plant City. It was an interesting lineup. If I am in front, it looks like my old Fokker is being chased by a group of F-16's trying to set a missile lock. If I am in the back it looks like father time himself chasing the future. Either way, I find in this mismatched squadron that the old technology that I love and admire is so very over matched by the here and now.

Now I am having to give Dutch it's all just to stay in the hunt and driving the sidecar rig to it's top limits (those of you who have driven sidecars know what I mean, they become possessed). Speed shifting, gears burning and the smell of heat and clutch. Dutch and I put on a valiant attempt at holding some pattern in the jet squadron we are riding in, but i knew I had to break off from this squadron for the Black Falcon and Dutch were not of this future. It was with much respect and admiration from both me and my jet friends that I needed to regroup.

With skies threatening I spotted anueral aerodrome (a Mexican Cantina). There in the lot, in the corner I met many friends of Dutch's. A 1968 BSA Lightning, 1957 xlch Harley and a 1982 Yamaha xs 400 Special. Then I told them of my meeting with my former squadron, these super machines of the future. They told me it sounded like an episode out of the "Twilight Zone". But they too had seen such wondrous machines with no carburetors, 6 speeds, liquid cooling, incredible thrust, paint and chrome that blinds, and as it started to rain, in came a machine we had spoke of.

As we sat on our old warbirds in the rain telling tales of battles fought and victory's won, the pilot of the super machine hastily parked. We walked over to it and noticed a flimsy paper tag on it's tail, 08 stood out. It had 6 speeds, EFI, it had a hyper-

charger! It was far more advanced than even the earlier wolfpack I had rode with. It was now pouring and we talked of how this machine outclassed us and outgunned us and we toasted the marvel of the future as we sat there, the rain coming down in buckets, puddles formed over the bottom of our rims. Our warbirds looked like boats heading for the shores of Dunkirk. A short half hour later the skies cleared and we, now named the "lost squadron of 1945", mounted up, water pouring off the bikes like a waterfall. As we sat there warming up our relics of history (This is long forgotten or I guess needed practice of warming dis-similar metals and moving oil around before going into action). We noticed the pilot of the "super machine" was sitting there, dead in the water, so to speak. We asked the good captain if we could be of service, but he just spoke of having to forget to put the bike cover on and it would dry out soon. We tried to cover our glee and not give high fives all the way around. As we pulled away watching that supreme piece of modern technology, sitting in a puddle, it was hard not to respect our simple technology that spotted this bike 30-40 years, a machine stopped by rain and dampness. (We did see the super machine later in Plant City). We rode like kind of birds of a feather to the Plant City Bike Fest. Once at the air space of my battle, my Brit and American comrades broke right for parking in the nuetral zone. As I moved forward to enemy lines, the battle was closed, I was too late tom enter the action, even far away battles have rules of engagement. As I landed in front of a small bar near where the battle raged, a busty fraulein serving ale said, "Hey, I always wanted to ride in a sidecar". Guess Dutch and I didn't miss the battle or the trophy.

TOMORROW'S COLLECTABLE CLASSICS

Based on ride-ability-parts-service-maintenance and near state availability.....

Mid-High Range

CBX1000 (6 cylinder) 1978-1982

Price then - \$4,200 (1979) Now \$4,500 - \$15,000

Entry-Low Range

XS 650 Standard 1968-1979

Price then - \$1,869 (1975) Now -\$750 - \$3,900

SUPERBIKE UPDATE 2009 SUPERBIKE RACING SCHEDULE

Round Date Circuit Race

1 Mar. 1 Phillip Is. Australia

2. Mar. 14 Losail Qatar

3. Apr. 5 Valencia Spain

4. Apr. 26 Assen Netherlands

5. May 10 Monza Italy

6. May 24 Kyalami South Africa

7. May 31 Salt Lake City Utah

8. Jun 21 Nurburgring Germany

9. Jun 28 Misano San Marino - Italy

10. Jul 19 Brno Czech Republic

Mr. 300 All Classic Team



Troy Musser-Troy and his father George put on a great bike night twice a week, great annual bike events and Troy always has a trophy for a deserving vintage or antique bike. And most of all year after year Troy remains # 1 in the nation for individual donations for Toys 4 Tots, this year \$32,000 in cash and 10,000 toys! Here's to you troy for being the second member of Mr. 300's All Classic team.

