

## Washington State Chapter January, 1999

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### ***January 1-3 - Seattle Motorcycle Show***

Hope you all had a good time at the Show this year. There were a lot of radical bikes out there, but I didn't see Bryce's ST anywhere at the show... wonder why? (Hope you didn't think I'd let YOU slide, Bryce ☺)

### ***Coming Clean by Bryce Ulrich***

About TWO MONTHS AGO on Thursday Oct 29th, 1998 I was headed home to Kirkland, WA via US Hwy 101 near Eureka, CA. This was the final leg of my last big motorcycle trip this year. At the crash, I'd been to 49 states and covered over 50,000 miles on my ST1100 since last March. The weather that day was perfect for riding -- sunny, light wind and a crisp 60 or so. I was well rested and in great spirits. I'd ridden some of the most demanding roads in North America this year and in some frightful weather conditions. No accidents and not a single ticket.

I was headed northbound on Hwy 101 along Big Lagoon, about 15-20 miles north of Eureka. I made a gentle left hand turn at the end as it started to climb the cliffs along the Pacific. After the left it made an easy right hand sweeper along the steep hillside and continued to climb. I'd made this sort of turn thousands of times with no incident. This time I chose to tap my brakes and scrub a little speed. Not that I had to - I just did. I wasn't speeding and I wasn't hot dogging in the least bit. Just enjoying the sunshine and thinking about, well, nothing.

Upon tapping the brakes, the bike straightened up just a bit and went a tad to the left of the lane. At that moment, I saw a car coming around the turn the opposite direction. Nothing was wrong with it - he was in his lane and I was in mine. I stared at the car. I mean I REALLY stared at the car and in an instant I was hitting that car, head on and in his lane. Experienced riders know of the phenomena of target fixation. They also know that the harder you brake the straighter your bike likes to go. Well I tested both of these phenomena to their fullest.

As my bike hit the car, I flew up and to the right a bit, crashing through the upper portion of my windshield. I did a somersault in the air and landed softly on my feet along the double yellow lines painted in the road. Immediately I ran off the side of the road fearing I might be struck by a vehicle coming around the corner. I collected myself and checked everything over. My heart was pounding.

My ST was down on her left side. After impacting the car it must have bounced backwards and slammed hard down on its left and slid a ways. Afterwards, I started removing my riding gear: gloves, helmet, Aerostitch. None of it was damaged. Not a single scratch except for two faint red streaks on the knees, presumably from my knees dragging across the bike as I was ejected.

The late '80's Honda Accord I struck was un-driveable. The impact had left a large dent 15 inch deep in the front bumper, pierced the radiator, and crumpled the hood. My ST had severely bent forks (almost a perfect arc), blown fork seals, and lots of lower fairing damage from the front wheel being pushed back far enough to contact the engine.

A CHP officer arrived shortly thereafter and took statements and helped with the scene. No tickets were issued. I phoned the HRCA and my insurance company about towing and they both assured me things would be covered. My bike and I went to the nearest Honda dealer in Eureka where they helped me rent a Ryder truck to transport me and the bike home. After about 4 hours I was on the road again, albeit in a big yellow truck with a wrecked motorcycle tied up in back.

On the way towards Portland my left wrist started swelling and various body aches emerged. My girlfriend Marie happens to be a physician so I called ahead to explain and kept things iced. I arrived in Portland at the conference site just after midnight and thankful I'd made it.

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### *Coming Clean con't*

The next day it was determined I'd broken my left scaphoid (a small bone at the base of the thumb). I was placed in a cast and told it could take several months to heal as the scaphoid is one of those bones that heels poorly. My muscle aches were to be expected and after about 5 days things were pretty much back to normal with the exception of my new cast.

Several days later I dropped my bike off at the dealer for insurance estimates. It didn't take long for them to determine it was totaled. The insurance company came up with good value for my bike considering it's 72k miles BUT we are still at odds regarding the accessories. At this time we are still going around and around on what \$\$\$\$ they'll pay so I'll save that story for later when it's concluded.

Two months have passed since my accident. As for riding motorcycles I'm not the least bit deterred. For those keeping track I was able to complete my 50 state goal in mid-November. Marie and I spent 10 days on Maui and rented a Honda Shadow ACE for 3 days of riding down the Hana coastline - one helluva beautiful and twisty road!

Thanks to all my friends for their support and understanding in all this. I've been reluctant to tell others as I feel so foolish for making a mistake like this. I will be a better rider for this. I know I will. Last Christmas, my mother gave me a plaque which reads "Never ride faster than your guardian angel." Guess there's truth in that. <grin>

### *HSTA Christmas Party 1998*

As always - a HUGE "Thank You" goes out to Kirby and Adelle for hosting the gig! It's not everyday you open your home to a bunch of rowdy, leather clad, beer drinkin' hooligans such as ourselves!

### *GoKarts - Go Go Go!*

Grand Prix Racing in Fife runs \$20 for 15 minutes during open practice. According to Jim, a couple of sessions are good enough for a full body workout! If we should have any rain days in our schedule, we should consider "feeling the need for speed" on the indoor track! Any takers?

Grand Prix Raceway  
2105 Frank Albert Road East  
Fife, WA 98424  
253-922-7722

### *Events At-A-Glance*

February							March						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28							28	29	30	31			

February 20 - Denny's in Renton (Kennydale) - 12 noon  
Club Meeting / Ride to be Determined

March 13 - Denny's in Renton (Kennydale) - 8 am Meet  
Club Meeting / Ride to Lake Cavanaugh

On the net - <http://www.snwsc.com/hsta/main.htm>