

SAGE RIDERS MOTORCYCLE CLUB, INC.

The Sage Riders..... 28 years old and still going strong!

The Sage Riders Motorcycle Club was formed in 1980 with it's first president being Robert Hutchings. The club's first race was a motocross held at the "Lark" track near Lehi.

Preston Gerber took over as club president in 1981 and the club sponsored it's first desert race in the Jericho area which was won by Don Fuller of Fillmore, Utah.

1982 saw Mike Johnson take over the reigns and at the encouragement of Preston, the club expanded into a new area (Neversweat/Chimney Rock) for a "point to point" Hare N Hound.

Price, Utah resident Robert "Tuffy" Howard won the event by being the fastest to cover nearly 100 miles between Buckmaster and Mounds. The race actually crossed the Price River and the "ford" was a scene of drowned bikes and frustrated riders.

1983 saw Robert Hutchings back in charge of the club and a second event was held at Neversweat. This time the race was a three loop Hare N Hound which was won by Tuffy's 15 year old brother Harvey (also from Price). Brian Hunt of Green River had led for most of the race but fatigue cost him the win as Harvey reeled him in on the third loop. Tragedy struck on the starting flat as Scott Lienbach of Park City crashed and later died from head and neck injuries.

In 1984, Jim McCain took charge of the Sage Riders and directed a change of venue back to the Jericho area. A new form of racing was being tried in Utah that brought motocross racers and desert racers together to see who really was the fastest. This was known as European Scrambles and consisted of a two day format. Terry McGinnis (MX) won the Saturday event with Harvey Howard (Desert) winning on Sunday. Although the race was held in the Jericho area it still maintained the name of "Neversweat Weekend".

Bruce Nielsen took over as club president for 1985-1986 with events held at Jericho. Harvey Howard was the winner in 1985 while a rising star by the name of Corky Maughan won the 1986 event.

I believe that the club president from 1987-88 was one of Utah's fastest and most successful racers of that decade, Brad Strong took over and the races were won by Scott Godfrey in 1987 and Jim Estes in 1988. Scott Godfrey of Godfrey Trucking and current video production fame is from Salt Lake City while Jim Estes was from Grand Junction, Colorado and later moved to California and became a professional "speedway" motorcycle racer.

I was unable to confirm who held the office of President during the 1989 season (possibly Scott Kalipetsis) but I know that was the first year for the "Shawn Gerber Memorial" Hare N Hound which was won by **Corky Maughan**.

I'm also at a loss to whom the President was during the 1990-91 season. This was the year of the club's first AMA sanctioned National Hare N Hound. Maintaining the title of "Shawn Gerber Memorial" the event was won by **Larry Roeseler** of California in both **1990 and 1991**.

The Sage Riders club president between April of 1992 and April of 1993 was another member of the Gerber family, Preston's younger brother Allen took the helm and under Allen's guidance we saw the continuation of the Spring AMA National with a new kid from Nevada beginning to dominate the desert. From his local events in Nevada to Mexico to California to the hills of Jericho, a young kid named **Danny Hamel** dominated all of off-road racing and **won the Shawn Gerber Memorial both years**.

Chris "Officer-O" Orndorff took over as President for the 1993-94 season. At this time I don't have the race results for this time period but will try to find out who won the race that was held under Chris' guidance.

Following Chris was Derek Blaylock who filled the position of club President for part of the 1994 season until Dick Young stepped in mid-term and served as leader from mid 1994 through 1995. It was during this time that the club decided to return to the Neversweat area of Emery County. Getting really ambitious it was decided to put on two races per year. While the Spring race remained at Jericho as an "AMA National Hare N Hound", the club also developed some alternatives for the Fall event. **Danny Hamel** continued his dominance of the Jericho area by **winning the National in 1994 and 1995**. Just as dominant in the local races was Dustin Headman who took the wins at the Fall event during both 1994 and 1995. Continuing to focus on special races, the club brought back the "point to point" Hare N Hound known as "IPP to Eureka" for 1995. A similar race had been held by the Firebirds and the Renegades Clubs during the 1980's, but had been abandoned until the Sage Riders took on the challenge to revive it. This would be just one more example of the many times that the Sage Riders have chosen to go the extra mile for Utah racers.

Dave "Stubby" Turner had his turn in the pilot's seat as the first President to serve the newly established

two-year term from 1996 to 1998. **The 1996 Shawn Gerber Memorial was won by former professional motocrosser Ty Davis of California.** Again, the dominant National riders found the Sage Riders' race to be one of their favorites. Quotes confirming that fact could be found in many of the national publications which covered the AMA National Hare N Hound series. For Fall, once again the club decided to expand the racing opportunities for Utah riders. Having been denied a permit for a Neversweat race for the 1995 season, the club remained determined to return to Emery County, which had not seen a race since the Sage Riders (1982-1983) and Pathfinders (1985-1986). Determination and hard work paid off as the club received a permit for a 1996 race. Brad Christensen took advantage of dust free conditions and Dustin Headman's flat tire, to win his first ever "overall" victory. Future Sage Rider member, Alan Peterson, finished 2nd overall.

Now under the leadership of Stubby, the club's **1997 National was again won by "Zip-Ty" Davis** with Mark Lundgreen winning the Fall, "Which Way? Hare N Hound" known as Neversweat. (By far, the low point in my career as a race chairman, as an otherwise excellent race was marred by a failure to change markings at a course split)

Destry Abbott of Arizona won the National in 1998 after taking advantage of the speed of his KX 500 on the snow shortened course. (Little did we know that Destry would soon be dominating the Hare N Hound series and prove that he could win anywhere, anytime under any conditions).

Neversweat was again the site for the 1998 Fall event and with all course splits triple checked we sent the riders out to experience the beauty and challenge of the Chimney Rock area. Former National Hare N Hound champion (and new resident of Fruita, Colorado) Greg Zitterkopf dominated from the drop of the banner and won the race on a borrowed CR500.

From April 1998 to April of 2000, the club was in "uncharted territory" with a WOmAn as president. Kim Orndorff took over with enthusiasm, determination and imagination. The National saw the retirement of the traveling trophy along with the name "Shawn Gerber Memorial". From now on the race would be known as the "Sage Riders National". **A new kid from Idaho was the surprise winner at the Spring National. Brian Brown raised many eyebrows as most fans asked "Brian who?".** Again, this was a sign of things to come as Brian went on to win his first National championship.

Kim's determination kicked in when the BLM told her that they would "never again allow an IPP to Eureka race because of all of the problems that the race had caused in 1995". Well, after many hours of hard work, effort and determination, the 1999 IPP to Eureka race was held and was won by Dustin Headman. This was just one of many challenges that the club would tackle under Kim's leadership. It was the first of many serious land-use battles to be fought by the Sage Riders. The club became a leader in the fight for everyone's right to ride and race on public lands. Another example of this attitude was the "Take your Congressman for a ride" trip with Congressman Chris Cannon and three of his daughters. The ride introduced Mr. Cannon to the Chimney Rock area and showed him areas that SUWA was claiming as potential Wilderness despite containing many miles of roads and trails. Under Kim's leadership, the Sage Riders were instrumental in getting the USRA to create a "land-use fund" in which \$5.00 from each USRA license is deposited to be used for protecting access to public lands. The Sage Rider's Neversweat Level III Archaeological Survey was the first project to benefit from the USRA fund as well as being the first privately funded project to receive a matching grant from the state of Utah OHV fund.

Her leadership during Y2K didn't lead to the predicted computer disasters, but it did bring more successful Sage Riders events. **The Y2K National saw Destry Abbott** as the winner once again and the first annual "Eureka Silver Days" grand prix was won by (Over 30 Expert) Todd Spencer who took advantage of his first-row start to score his first-ever overall victory.

The decision to sponsor events in conjunction with Eureka City's local celebration was the brain-child of Chris Dever who led the club from April 2000-02. The fact that the leaders of Eureka City actually wanted a motorcycle race to be part of their annual celebration was a breath of fresh air compared to the treatment we receive from land managers. 2002 saw the first of many organized two-day trail rides on the fantastic public lands of Utah. Tracy Foreman's inaugural "Dual Sport" ride from Castle Dale to Green River (and back) started a new craze amongst club members.

Chris Dever's first National was the 2001 event in which the challenges were many. Beginning with the date which was the same as the first ever Supercross being held in Salt Lake City. Changes were made to accommodate the many club members and racers who planned to attend the Supercross. Lack of coordination between loop chairmen led to an unbelievable number of course changes between the big-bike and mini-bike races. When all was said and done, **Destry Abbott won again!** This time having overcome a one-minute penalty in the pits for speeding. The second annual Eureka Grand Prix saw the city

welcome us back with open arms. The course was complete with water jump, motocross section, paved streets and gnarly trails. Once again Dustin Headman proved to be the best of the best and completed the timed event with the quickest elapsed time for 1st overall.

2002 brought with it a new challenge. The “National” would be just that and nothing more. For the first time the event would not be sanctioned by the USRA and therefore would have to depend upon its reputation and AMA sanction to draw riders. When the dust had cleared (and there was dust), it was **“Zip-Ty” (or) “Short-Cut” Davis** that had defeated not only the course and the competition but had survived the scrutiny of our race referee and a protest filed by Team Green. USRA points or no USRA points, the Sage Riders are a dedicated group of volunteers who pour their hearts and souls into putting on great races. The 2002 year saw the club expand its trail riding activity to a monthly ride schedule with trips to all parts of Utah. Many new members and friendships have been found through these enjoyable trips around the state and beyond.

For the 2002-4 term, the torch has now been passed from “Mad-Man Dancing Dever” to Mark Robbins. Allen Miller has completed his two years as Secretary / Treasurer and has handed the books over to Russ Ridgeway. Under Allen’s directions the club modernized its corporate designation to a better fitting LLC which should provide tax benefits for the club.

In addition to the many excellent “Presidents” that the Sage Riders have enjoyed throughout the past 20 years, the club has also been blessed with some fine volunteers who have devoted endless hours and many dollars serving as Secretary / Treasurer. I don’t have a complete list of these people so I know that I’m leaving some out. But, to fail to acknowledge people such as Bonnie Hutchings, Marilyn Tipton, Kelly Burke, Alan Peterson, Allen Miller and Russ Ridgeway would be an injustice. Without these dedicated and devoted people who provided expertise, commitment and loyalty to our club, the USRA, land use battles, etc. it is unlikely that the Sage Riders could have stayed as strong and influential as we have. The office of Secretary / Treasurer is a very time consuming and demanding position and the dedicated members who have served in this capacity deserve much of the credit for the club’s accomplishments.

Each Sage Rider has many things to be proud of.....for example: The many excellent races that have been held. The annual “sportsmanship awards” which we purchase and award to worthy racers at the USRA banquet each year. The monthly club trail rides to fantastic places throughout Utah. The public land projects with the BLM and the Forest Service. Our political action and involvement such as the “Congressman Cannon” tour. Our donations to groups fighting for motorized access to public lands such as USA-ALL and Blue Ribbon Coalition. Our support of local ranchers and communities. Our education of not only our own members, but also the general public concerning proper OHV use, trail etiquette and the threats against motorized use of public lands.

After 22 years, the Sage Riders Club is stronger than ever and while we continue to sponsor excellent races and enjoy our trail rides, we remain leaders in the fight for motorized access to public lands.

Proud To Be A Sage Rider!

Alan J. Peterson