

# Kickstand

News and views of the Toronto Wings – Chapter T of the Goldwing Touring Association  
Volume Two Number 2 June 2004



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Spring finally came. As the long – seemingly endless – winter ground on, I am sure that some of us believed that cosmic forces had cancelled spring. But it finally came. We know it came because the ultimate harbinger of spring – the spring warm up- has taken place.

Thanks to the generosity and effort of a great many people, it took place with a smooth efficiency and effectiveness that belied the complexity of the event. Our thanks go to Linda Pennock for providing the following report, and to Kevin Welch for the photography:

We held our “annual” spring warm up at Honda Canada in Scarborough on Sunday May 16th, 2004. There was a great turn out with 19 bikes and another 10 for the demo rides. Honda Canada had provided us with 4 bikes: two 1800's and two ST1300's for people to take out and try. Everyone made use of this availability.

We were fortunate to have Ted Torance as our HEAD instructor. There were a total of 5 stations and 4 were for bikes. Braking, bike control at slow speeds and turns were stressed. I was in awe to see our drillmaster go through one of the maneuvering stations with ½ the regular maneuvering distance. Awesome. He made it look so easy. This is something for me to work towards.

Also several White Knights manned the 5th station. Many of the riders were very enthused with this first aid station. They stressed you should buy stickers that go on the front of the

helmet above the visor .....“only a trained paramedic may remove this helmet”. They reviewed and then went through a demo of how they would remove a full-face helmet and splint. It was very informative.

We had riders of all calibers: from a drill team rider to the fairly new. There was lots of space and the drills were well run at all stations. There was more than adequate time to review and practice the expertise shared.

One of our members brought his air compressor so that during registration we could check tire pressure. It was shocking to see so many people riding on under inflated tires.

Please have a safe season and do your basic safety checks on your bikes before leaving home. It may save a life, yours or someone you care about.

In closing I would like to thank everyone who volunteered their time to make this day the success it was. From the people at Honda, Canada to Ted Tarence, Jack Baker, Rik & Val Robinson, Ian Wisdom, Doug Colquhoun, Nedda Lash and Bill Hobbs. Finally to Kevin Welch, our Toronto Wings Chapter Director for having the wisdom, contacts and foresight recognizing everyone's need(experienced and new) to improve their skills. Thanks Kevin, for your limitless dedication to the Toronto Wings.

Your “Wingette” Reporter



## **Motorcycle Oils vs. Automotive Oils Surprising Evidence on the Viscosity-Retention Question**

Walk into any motorcycle dealership parts department and you are virtually guaranteed to see prominent displays of oils produced specifically for use in motorcycle engines. Since dealers are not about to waste valuable floor or counter space on a product unless it produces a decent profit, it is obvious that motorcycle-specific oils have become one of the premier parts department cash cows.

Of course advances in lubrication technology have resulted in some fairly expensive premium, synthetic and synthetic-blend products for automobiles also. But as you can see from our pricing research at a half-dozen auto parts and cycle parts stores, the average purchase price for the motorcycle-specific lubricants runs about 120 percent higher for petroleum products and 185 percent higher for synthetic products than do their automotive counterparts.

The companies marketing these high-priced motorcycle lubricants would have us believe that their products are so superior to the automotive oils as to justify paying two and three times the price. But are we really getting the added protection promised when we purchase these products?

MOTORCYCLE CONSUMER NEWS decided to look beyond the advertising-hype, specifically to see if the claims of prolonged and superior viscosity retention could be verified. What we found may very well change your mind about what should go into your motorcycle's crankcase in the future.

### **So The Story Goes ...**

Many motorcyclists have long doubted the need to pay the inflated prices asked for most motorcycle-specific engine oils. An

even larger number of us have harbored at least some degree of skepticism about the claims made for motorcycle oils, but have been reluctant to turn away from them, for fear of damaging our precious machines if the claims should happen to be true. Most of this fear comes from very successful marketing campaigns mounted by the manufacturers and distributors of motorcycle-specific lubricants.

For example, a monthly trade publication for motorcycle dealers recently published an article suggesting, "negative selling techniques" to "educate customers" against purchasing automotive oil for their bikes. The example in the article begins with the benevolent dealer looking the poor, dumb customer in the eye and asking, in an incredulous voice, "You're not really using that in your motorcycle, are you?"

The idea, of course, is not so much to educate as to frighten the customer into paying for the more expensive motorcycle oil that only guess-who sells. Such techniques have played on our fears with great effect, to the point where high-priced, motorcycle-specific lubricants have become staple profit producing items in the majority of motorcycle dealership parts departments.

The campaigns promoting motorcycle-specific oils have successfully indoctrinated an entire Generation of motorcycle riders and mechanics. The doctrine is now so ingrained in the industry that questioning its veracity instantly marks you as an ill-educated outsider. Even MOTORCYCLE CONSUMER NEWS has fallen victim to the hype, espousing the superiority of such products in these very pages. Our own technical experts from the American Motorcycle Institute have repeatedly advised our readers against the dangers of straying from the straight and narrow path.

What we, as well as the AMI, your local mechanic and all the other motorcycling publications have been doing is simply repeating what we have been carefully taught to believe over the years. The only problem with this approach is that our only source of information has been the people who stand to profit from our faith in the superiority of motorcycle-specific oils.

### **Stretching the Truth - Just a Bit**

Motorcycle oil producers make a multitude of claims for their products, some of which are extremely difficult to substantiate, and others, which are simply outdated and no longer applicable. This is not to say that all claims made for the superiority of motorcycle oils are necessarily false, only that the actual differences between them and their automotive counterparts may be considerably less than we have been lead to believe. For example:

**Claim** - Since the introduction of catalytic converters in automobiles, the best anti-wear agents have been limited by law to the amount that can be used in automotive oils, but are present in greater concentration in motorcycle oils.

**Fact** - Phosphorous deteriorates the catalyst in converters and is therefore restricted to a very small percentage in automotive oils. Phosphorous is also an essential element in one of the best anti-wear agents, ZDDP (zinc dialkyldithiophosphate), which is a primary component of such over-the-counter engine additives as STP Engine Treatment.

While it is true that slightly increased concentrations of ZDDP are found in some motorcycle oils (such as Spectro products), it is also true that these concentrations still fall under the governmental limits, otherwise these oils could not be used in the new converter-equipped motorcycles from BMW and Yamaha. Also, it should be noted that ZDDP is a "last line of defense"-type

additive, generally only coming into play under extremely severe conditions where actual metal-to-metal contact occurs within an engine, something that should never happen under normal operating conditions.

**Claim** - Motorcycle engines run hotter and rev higher than automobile engines, therefore requiring oils with more expensive, shear-stable polymers and additives than automotive oils.

**Fact** - This is one of those statements that was much more true in the 1970s than in the new century. The big, slow-revving Detroit automobile engines of the past have mostly been replaced with smaller, higher-revving four-cylinder and six-cylinder engines that have much more in common with their counterparts running on two wheels. Keeping pace with the development of the small, high-revving, automobile engine, automotive oils have improved considerably, to the point where the newer, SG-rated automotive oils are nearly identical to motorcycle oils.

In most cases where motorcycle oil producers show comparisons between their products and automotive oils, you will find them using SE- or SF-rated oils as the "automotive standard." These are oils that were designed and rated for the cars of 20 to 30 years ago. We have yet to see motorcycle oil compared in testing to the 1990's standard, SG-rated premium automotive oils.

### **The Viscosity-Retention Claim**

By far the loudest and most-believed claim made for motorcycle oils is that they retain their viscosity longer than automotive oils when used in a motorcycle. The standard claim made in most advertising is that motorcycle-specific oils contain large amounts of expensive, shear-stable polymers that better resist the punishment put on the oil by the motorcycle's transmission, thus retaining their viscosity longer and better than automotive oils would under the same conditions.

This quote comes directly from the back of a bottle of Spectro 4 motorcycle oil, and is similar to the advertising line used by nearly all motorcycle oils: Because of its special polymers, Spectro 4 maintains its viscosity, whereas the shearing action of motorcycle gears quickly reduces the viscosity of automotive oils.

We've all heard it a thousand times before. Our transmissions are the culprits that force us to buy special, \$6-a-quart motorcycle oil instead of the 99 cent special at Pep Boys. We hate to have to do it, but we all know that it's true--or is it?

The question begged an answer, so MOTORCYCLE CONSUMER NEWS went looking for evidence that motorcycle oils really are more shear-stable than their automotive counterparts.

### **Help From the Scientific Quarter**

About the same time we began looking into the oil viscosity retention question, we received a letter from John Woolum, a professor of physics at California State University - and a motorcyclist - who noted that he was investigating in the same area on his own. Not being ones to look a gift horse in the mouth, we contacted Dr. Woolum and encouraged him to expand his research on our behalf.

Dr. Woolum explained to us the laboratory procedures he used to generate the statistics used in this article, but for the mean-time let's just take a look at the bottom line when five popular oils (three automotive and two motorcycle) were compared for relative viscosity retention after use in the same motorcycle.

The best-performing oil of the group tested was Mobil 1 automotive oil, a fully synthetic product. In today's market, virtually all oils sold are to some extent para-synthetic, since even standard petroleum products usually contain at least some synthetic-

derived additives. However, for the sake of simplicity in this article we have listed the products as petroleum if the primary components are from basic petroleum stock. Those listed as synthetics have their primary components derived from basic synthetic stocks, and may or may not contain any additives derived from petroleum products.

### **Preliminary Conclusions**

The results of these tests seem to support some of the long-standing theories about oils while casting serious doubt on others. Going by these tests it would seem logical to assume that:

1. The viscosity of synthetic-based oils generally drops more slowly than that of petroleum-based oils in the same application.
2. Comparing these figures to viscosity retention for the same oils when used in an automobile (see later text by Prof. Woolum) would indicate that motorcycles are indeed harder on oils than cars.
3. The fastest and most significant drop in the viscosity of petroleum-based oils used in motorcycles occurs during the first 800 miles (or less) of use. All of these results (1-3) agree with everything the oil companies have been telling us all along. However, the same test data also indicates that:
4. The viscosities of petroleum-based oils, whether designed for auto or motorcycle application, drop at approximately the same rate when used in a motorcycle.
5. There is no evidence that motorcycle-specific oils out-perform their automotive counterparts in viscosity retention when used in a motorcycle.

These last two results (4-5) definitely do not agree with what the motorcycle oil producers have been telling us. In fact the test results not only indicate the two motorcycle oils being outperformed in viscosity retention by the two automotive synthetic products. but even by the

relatively inexpensive Castrol GTX, which is a petroleum product. This directly contradicts the advertising claims made by the motorcycle oil producers.

### **The Oil Companies Reply**

At Spectro Oils we talked to three different company spokesmen, all of whom were helpful and provided us with a great deal of information about their products. Unfortunately, despite our repeated requests for the testing data on which their advertising claims were based, the 15 pages of "Lubrication Data" they supplied us contained nothing that could not be found in their regular advertising and marketing packages. No verifiable testing data has been forthcoming.

The Spectro spokesmen were not pleased when informed of our test results, but when pressed, none could come up with a valid reason why their product should have scored the lowest, either. The only comment we got was, "We only wish you had tested our Golden Spectro synthetic instead of the petroleum-based Spectro 4."

Undoubtedly the Golden Spectro would have outscored the regular Spectro in our tests, though how well in comparison to the Mobil 1 and Castrol products we can only guess at this point.

When asked why the Spectro 4 petroleum product sold for \$5.00 a quart when comparable automotive oils could be found at less than \$1.50 a quart, a Spectro spokesman insisted theirs was "a superior, premium petroleum product, with expensive, shear-stable additives that should outperform automotive oils." That being the case, it should have been the perfect product for our testing.

We made half-dozen calls to several different divisions within American Honda,

but could find no one willing to make any statement regarding their HP4 motorcycle oil. All of the Honda employees we reached were friendly, and tried to help as much as they could, but you must keep in mind that Honda is a huge conglomerate and sometimes the person with the right answers to a question is difficult to track down through the corporate maze. Their Accessories Product Management Division noted that they had a lubrication expert that might be able to help us, but also that he was out of the country on vacation for the next month and could not be reached before this article went to press. Should someone from Honda wish to comment at a later date, we would certainly make room in a later issue.

Spokesmen at both Mobil and Castrol were a bit surprised at our questions, since neither makes any claims for their products in a motorcycling context. However, when we explained the test results, neither company spokesman seemed the least bit surprised, both noting that automotive oils in general had made a quantum leap in viscosity retention technology in the past decade. Both companies claimed to be using the very latest in shear-stable polymers for viscosity retention, and while claiming no knowledge of the motorcycle-specific oils' formula, expressed serious doubt that they could contain some type of additive that was superior in this context to that already being used in their automotive oils. Our test results support their assertion.

### **THE TEST**

As we noted earlier, the viscosity-retention figures reported in the table were the result of a series of tests conducted by Dr. John C. Woolum, Professor of Physics at California State University. Since the validity of these tests is likely to be called into question by motorcycle oil marketers, we will supply notes and methodology descriptions at a later date if this information is requested.

## **Motocycle Consumer News Conclusions**

In speaking to a number of people involved in the production, marketing and distribution of motorcycle-specific oils, we could not find anyone who could present a valid argument for discrediting the testing done by Dr. Woolum. In general, they all tried to turn the conversation another direction by bringing up other possible advantages to using their products, while ignoring the viscosity-retention question. Yet without exception it is their own advertising that consistently brings the subject up, touting the special shear-stable polymers as the primary reason motorcyclists should purchase their products.

It is this practice to which we take exception, as we have been unable to find evidence to support these claims. In short, it seems to be nothing more than a clever marketing ploy designed to enhance their products' image and separate motorcyclists from their money.

MCN is ready to print any research or test results provided by the oil companies to support their claims of superior viscosity retention, with this one proviso: The comparisons must be against actual, SG-rated oil products that can be purchased off the shelf at the average auto parts store. Tests against generic, basic-stock mineral oil or against the lower-rated SE and SF oils would lack any credibility in a real-world context.

Despite more than six months of research, reading all the claims and counter-claims printed by dozens of industry experts and lubrication experts, MCN cannot and does not purport to know all there is to know about the differences between automotive and motorcycle oils. However, what we do know is that we can find no substantive evidence that using a high-quality, name-brand automotive oil in an average street motorcycle is in any way harmful or less effective in providing proper lubrication and protection than using the more expensive, motorcycle-specific oils.

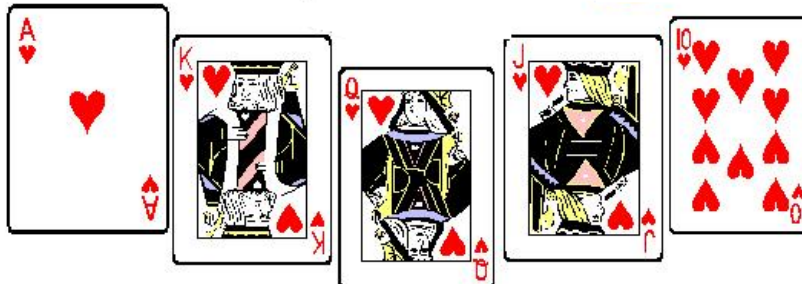


# Wings and Wishes Poker Run To Support Kristopher's Wish

[www.kristopherswish.ca](http://www.kristopherswish.ca)

## July 18, 2004

Rain or Shine



Starts at St. Louis Bar and Grill, Southeast Corner of Hwy 10 and Derry Road,  
Mississauga  
(Registration 10:00A.M. – 12:00)

**OR**

You may start at St. Louis Bar and Grill 408 Dunlop West in Barrie (registration  
12:00 – 2:00p.m.)

All Riders Finish at St. Louis Bar and Grill Mississauga location  
Live Entertainment, Finger food and Soft Drinks Provided at Finish  
50 / 50 Prizes Awards

Cost: \$ 20.00 per rider / \$ 35.00 two up / \$ 10.00 per additional passenger  
Each Registered Person May Draw a Hand

For More Information Contact: Kevin at [kevv@interlog.com](mailto:kevv@interlog.com) OR Deborah at  
[deborah1@bellnet.ca](mailto:deborah1@bellnet.ca)

All Proceeds Go Directly To Kristopher's Wish  
Save A Life! Support Organ and Tissue Donations



**Manitoulin Island Weekend  
July 30, 31, August 1, 2, 2004**

## **The Response Has Been Overwhelming**

*As of this writing, there is still accommodation available for our Manitoulin Island Weekend, but it will not last long! If you want to take part in a great ride/rally you will not soon forget reserve now.*



**Manitoulin Island is one of the best-kept secrets in Ontario. The island offers the friendliest people and several attractions often missed by most visitors. If we travel off the beaten path (Highway 6 north) we will find many interesting paved roads ideal for motorcycles.**

**This weekend is also the International Pow Wow in the south end of the island. Come see the fantastic handmade costumes and traditional dances.**



**Cascading waterfalls, small waterfalls and high waterfalls that you can swim in are a great way to cool off in the mid summer heat.**

**Join us on some challenging hiking trails with high vistas overlooking the green rugged terrain. Some trails are designed for the casual walker, others for the true adventurer.**

**Various restaurants along the way with superb homemade meals will keep you going for the duration of the day.**

## The Details

*There is no registration fee. This is a free event.*

We ask that you inform Rose at Toronto Wings once you have made plans to go. As we look at the number of attendees, we will plan for tours and possibly a parade in Little Current to coincide with the town's festival. We have motorcycling friends living on the Island to help us with the arrangements.

## Golf Shirts for the weekend

We have Manitoulin Weekend golf shirts available on pre orders only. They are red with black trim; with a front left pocket and the GWTA emblem on the left sleeve. The design is the same style as the Friendship Rally Shirts. The shirts are available in Small, Medium, Large, X Large, XX Large & XXX Large. All shirts cost \$25.00 taxes included.

Please inform Rose at Toronto Wings if you are joining us for the weekend and what size shirt you require. Rose must have your order and payment by June 21, 2004 to be sure your shirt will be ready for the Manitoulin Weekend. Preordered shirts can be picked up on the Island the weekend of July 30, 31 August 1, 2.

## Accommodations

Accommodations are your responsibility and although there are still rooms to be had, it is certain that they will soon be reserved by others. We only recommend these motels due to their location. All are within easy walking distance to restaurants, gas, groceries and downtown Little Current and are reasonably priced.

Please mention the Gold Wing club when booking.

Bridgeway Motel (Little Current)  
Jim & Elain Renton telephone 705-368-2230 or 705-368-2407

Hawberry Inn (Little Current) telephone

705-368-3388

## Sunset Motel & Cottages

Summer Months - 705-368-2186 or other times of the year 705-524-1523

<http://www.sunsetmotelandcottages.com>

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The Shaftesbury Inn telephone 705-368-1945

## Getting There

You can gain access to the Island via Tobermory, then the ferry to South Baymouth (on the Island). Or on an all land route, south from Espanola then across the swing bridge to Little Current.

More information to follow soon.

Book now as space is limited !!

We hope to see everyone there!

The members of Toronto Wings at  
<http://www.torontowings.org/>

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# Toronto Wings Calendar

DATE	Description	Depart
July 1 – 5	Region Friendship Rally, Niagara Falls	
July 4	Indian Days, Campbellford	9:00a.m. Tim Horton's
July 11	Toronto Wings Ride to Dundas Ontario	
July 14	Camp Quality, Sudbury (Chapter S)	
July 15	Toronto Wings meeting	
July 18	Wings and Wishes Poker run (Chapter T)	
July 21	Multi Chapter Coffee night, Pete's Donuts Hwy 9 & Airport Rd.	7:00 - ? at Pete's Donuts
July 24	Northumberland Poker Run	
July 25	Toronto Wings Ride TBA	
July 19 – 22	Gold Rush	
July 29 – 31	Honda Homecoming	
July 30, 31 August 1, 2	Manitoulin Weekend, Little Current Toronto Wings (Chapter T)	
August 8	Toronto Wings Picnic, Elmira Covered Bridge	See Rose
August 13	Port Dover	
August 15	Huronian Wings Poker Run, Penatang	
August 18	Multi Chapter Coffee night, Pete's Donuts Hwy 9 & Airport Rd.	7:00 - ? at Pete's Donuts
August 19	Toronto Wings meeting	
August 22	Falls Tour North Country	See Linda
August 29	Toronto Wings Ride TBA	
September 3 - 5	Cyclefest, Kitchener (Chapter W)	
September 3 - 5	Wing Whirl, Ottawa (Chapter B)	
September 11	Red, White, Blue Knights Toy Ride	
September 12	Toronto Wings Garage Sale Renfrew Toy Ride (Chapter R)	
September 16	Toronto Wings meeting	
September 18	Last Hurrah Ride, Sudbury (Chapter S)	
September 18	Food Drive, Peterborough (Chapter P)	
September 19	Memorial Ride, Garrie Wayne	
September 26	Toronto Wings Ride ??	
October 3	Chapter Directors Meeting	
October 8 - 11	Bancroft trip, Toronto Wings (Chapter T)	
October 21	Toronto Wings meeting	TBA
October 30	Halloween Dance, Pickering (Chapter F)	

**Joe, age 92, and Marie, age 89, living in Florida, are all excited about their decision to get married. They go for a stroll to discuss the wedding, and on the way they pass a drugstore. Joe suggests they go in.**

**Joe addresses the man behind the counter: "Are you the owner?"**

**The pharmacist answers "Yes."**

**Joe: "We're about to get married. Do you sell heart medication?"**

**Pharmacist: "Of course we do."**

**Joe: "How about medicine for circulation?"**

**Pharmacist: "All kinds."**

**Joe: "Medicine for rheumatism, scoliosis?"**

**Pharmacist: "Definitely."**

**Joe: "How about Viagra?"**

**Pharmacist: "Of course."**

**Joe: "Medicine for memory problems, arthritis, Jaundice?"**

**Pharmacist: "Yes, a large variety. The works."**

**Joe: "What about vitamins, sleeping pills, Geritol, antidotes for Parkinson's disease?"**

**Pharmacist: "Absolutely."**

**Joe: "You sell wheelchairs and walkers?"**

**Pharmacist: "All speeds and sizes."**

**Joe says to the pharmacist:**

**"We'd like to use this store as our Bridal Registry."**