

Dave Cwi



Raider Karma Confirmed

I AM CONFUSED. SOME OF YOU STILL have doubts, and I'm not sure what it will take to convince you that Raider Karma is real. Mike was with us and he started out just like you. He'd heard about Raider Karma but was not a believer until the recent "Out West Trip." Then he saw it play out first hand. So did Joe. If you'd been along, you too would have smelled the vapors and become a believer. Joe was on his new K1600 and, if his story proves true for other K1600 owners, you best hope for Raider Karma on your next trip. Bet that teaser gets you reading more.

Stop cackling. I don't know why folks like you continue to give me that look and assume I'm just messing with you. Sure, it's easy to be a doubter. It takes a real rider to face the cosmic reality all around us.

Let's start with the small stuff and then move on up the food chain until we confront total cosmic intervention aimed at saving Raider butts. Experience it first hand and you, too, will believe. There is no substitute for up close and personal, so I'll do my best to put you into the picture. But if upclose and personal is your cup of

tea, get in touch by e-mail if you're eager and serious about joining the "Cosmic Rush."

I digress from my tale. Recall we need to start you small to ease you into it and not shock your system. So here goes.

By the time we reached Cody, Wyo., new Raider Mike was already a believer, as he had seen first hand the "Shoulder Joe" experience. So the events at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center came as no surprise. The center is outstanding, and we thought to be there for three hours - they open at 8 a.m. - before rolling up to Red Lodge and back over Beartooth Pass at mid-day to capture the sun and higher temps at 11,000 feet... setting up the next Raider Karma event later that day.

But right now try to imagine Mike and me entering a huge diorama-theater about "Plains Indian Life" with the show already started. When it was over, we waited to catch the start, supposing that we had missed a bit of the show. Turns out we wandered in "by chance" at the very start.

"What are the odds of that?" I asked.

"Raider Karma:" was Mike's instant response.

Still cynical and not convinced?

Later that day we were running the Beartooth as weather moved in. At elevation in the West it's hard to judge distance. That dark and threatening mass of towering clouds seemed farther away than it probably was.

There is a store on the Beartooth called the "Top of the World:" Naturally we stopped, as this place was the ideal tourist stop. Admit it, isn't there always room to pack a sticker or two or maybe a fox head or souvenir shot glass? So we were stopped and were just hanging out.

"Dave, we have to move now. Look at those clouds. The front is coming in fast:" said Raider Blood and Guts (who is also a pilot), who was standing outside agitated.

I'm thinking that old BG is overreacting, but it was time to move anyway so we headed out toward the Chief Joseph Highway and the southeast ride back to Cody. The wind picked up. The sun went away. I was in the lead. This was not good and not because I was in the lead.

It is 11 miles from "Top of the World" to the start of Chief Joseph Highway. As we rolled along we got hit by a drop, then another and then lots of other drops. We dove left on the Chief Joseph and began a descent 5,000 feet toward Cody. Within a mere foot of that left turn - or so it seems - the sun came out. We hustled along and looked back at the spreading dark clouds. What are the odds, I ask you... what are the odds that we would leave "Top of the World" at just the right moment to beat the storm off the Beartooth? Raider Karma.

I have one more tale before getting to the real story: the K1600 total proof of concept story. Picture us at the end of the trip. We've rolled from Denver, all across Kansas on US 36. If you ever wondered why you need a big tank and at least seven gallons of gas, you just roll that piece of Americana one night. Nothing. We almost ran Raider Smoke out of gas. That did it for Smoke. Between the heat and a "Smoky" bit of attitude, we were going to stop every 100 miles until we got to the motel, which was only a couple of stops away anyway.

Recall, I'm in the lead. Therefore, my GPS rules and I decide that the next stop is going to include cold hazelnut coffee at a McDonalds. Smoke wants to stop in 100 miles? No problem. There is a McDonalds exactly 100 miles away. What are the odds? Well, okay, I'll grant you that one, so let's get to the heart of the matter. Let's make you experience the event that removes all doubt. Stay with me now.

We were in Iowa at the gathering. He- Who-Names looked at the treads on Joe's rear tire on the new K1600. Joe is confident that the tire will make the trip just fine because, after all, he could get 12,000 miles out of rear tires on his old LT.

As the trip rolls on, Sir Namer keeps an eye on that stock-delivered Metzeler tire. We are on a roll coming out of Buffalo, Wyo., and doing the loop through the Ten Sleep Pass and then heading north to run Route 14 east to Ranchester. He-Who- Names points to Joe's rear tire. Cord. As in, well cord. Decision time. This tire has 5,000 miles on it at most and is now toast.

Naturally, the nearest BMW dealer is 178 miles away in Sturgis. We

need a tire. Where's the nearest motorcycle store?

The Yellow Pages at the gas station revealed a Honda store in Sheridan 16 miles away. To cut to the chase.

"Do you have a 190/55/17 tire of any kind?"

"No, we don't. But we do have a 180/55/17 Sportmax."

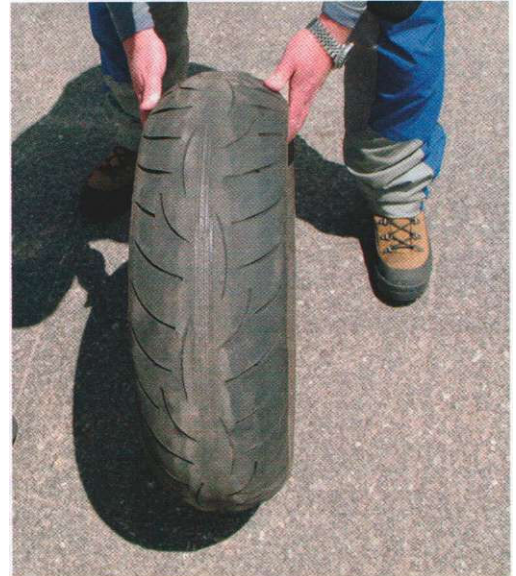
The assembled Raiders heard this and told Joe to put that tire on the bike. It gets better.

"How long should we expect to wait?"

"Can you get here in 30 minutes? We'll put it on right away."

It turns out that this fabulous dealer is more about ATVs and sells few Honda motorcycles, with those in stock not needing that size /17. The dealer just knew that once in a while somebody coming through would need a /17 rear of that sort, so he has one in stock.

It gets even better. We arrived and across the street is a great restaurant in a building once frequented by Buffalo Bill himself. We have buffalo burgers for lunch, you know, ground buffalo. It was great.



Okay, fess up. What are the odds? Come on now. You are in the middle of nowhere.

You need a tire unique to BMW. There are no BMW stores anywhere near you. A Honda shop happens to have one tire. They put it on in an hour and that's your excuse to stop for a great lunch.

What are the odds?! I rest my case. That is Raider Karma.

See you down the road! O



August 2012 BMW OWNERS NEWS 23