

SOUNDINGS
Trade Only Today
 DAILY NEWS FOR MARINE INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

Menu

[TradeOnlyToday](#) > [Industry News](#) > [Other](#) > HULL OF A TOUR: Pacific Coast rush

HULL OF A TOUR: Pacific Coast rush

Posted on August 1st, 2016

Written by [Wanda Kenton Smith](#)



MONTEREY, Calif., to SAN FRANCISCO — Big Sur conjures up images of natural California beauty, marked by craggy coastlines coupled with the dramatic roar of the blue Pacific.

For motorcyclists the world over, however, it is a dream destination due to its spectacular 90-mile terrain where the Santa Lucia Mountains kiss the rocky coast.

The roadway tightly curves alongside the mountain, delivering an exciting series of twists and turns to challenge even the most pumped-up adrenaline junkie.



A contingency from our tour was thrilled to spend Friday riding from Monterey to San Simeon via the famous Highway One. It was a three-hour trek and our road captain Jim Krueger had enlisted California friends and tour riders Phil and Cam Arnold to lead the pack. They had ridden it the day before to meet up with us at Half Moon Bay, plus they were fully up to speed on the Big Sur region fires, so we appreciated their willingness to take point.



Event producer Wanda Kenton Smith and ride captain and route planner Jim Krueger are already working on Hull of a Tour 4 for 2017.

In case you aren't aware, California is suffering from a terrible five-year drought, which increases the danger of wildfire. The Soberanes Fire sparked July 22 and was still raging while we were in the area, having burned 31,386 acres – more than 49 miles. As we rode through mountain towns all along the route, we saw signs erected by locals thanking all the firefighters for their valiant efforts. There were dozens of firetrucks and staging equipment scattered throughout the area.

We were very fortunate that the main drag we cruised remained open. There weren't many vehicles on the roadway, as the conditions were less than stellar. The mix of fog and smoke was so dense in some spots that you could barely make out the red tail lights ahead. However, there were stretches with occasional peeks of sunshine and splendor, and those moments made it all worthwhile!

We stopped mid route for a warm beverage, then reloaded and sped on to San Simeon where the weather cleared and the temperature was comfortable.

We arrived around noon and Phil took us to a great deli tucked in at the foothills of the Hearst Castle which was commissioned by publishing kingpin William Randolph Hearst. We dined like royalty on the Hearst Ranch, eating Hearst beef burgers while sitting on old wooden picnic tables within a real corral, surrounded by horses and cattle. Pretty cool.



Besides the ride to Big Sur, a highlight was visiting the Hearst Castle in San Simeon, Calif. Photo by Jim Krueger.

When we finished, we hugged Phil and Cam goodbye and then throttled up to climb to the castle, which is situated on 127 lush acres. This National Historic Landmark houses the mansion with its impressive collection of fine art, sculptures and antiques, multiple guest houses, tennis courts, gardens, an outdoor swimming pool under renovation, an airfield and a former zoo. Cattle and exotic animals wander the property, including a herd of wild zebra. Millions of visitors come each year to see how the other half lived. In its heyday, this was the gathering spot for the Hollywood elite. We toured the lower rooms and were suitably impressed by the grandeur and how well the home has been maintained by the Parks Service.

We then saddled back up for a three-hour return ride on the same route, only this time, much of the fog had lifted and we enjoyed a much improved view! We stopped to catch an amazing scene of elephant seals piled up at Piedras Blancas. They grunted, barked and kicked up sand as hundreds watched their moves. We learned that these huge sea mammals return a few months here each year to give birth, breed and molt. It was quite a spectacle to see ... and hear!



Elephant seals were barking up a storm in Big Sur. Photo by Jim Krueger.

We wrapped up our ride with sunset dinner at the marina in Monterey, surrounded by beautiful sail and power boats. It was the perfect setting to toast another ride and another great day!

On Saturday morning, our group gathered at the hotel for our last ride of the tour. We were heading to the Big Basin area of the Santa Cruz Mountains, to Skyline Drive and California Highway #9. A haven for motorcyclists, I had ridden these roads nine years previously and had been counting down the days to do it again!



Title sponsor Freedom Boat Club hosted the grand finale "Sunset Sailabration" for Pacific Rush Riders aboard an Adventure Cat on San Francisco Bay. Photo by Jim Krueger.

In terms of pure riding, this was my favorite of the entire trip. It offered a mix of gentle sweeps with challenging banks, with plenty of switchbacks and tight turns. The fresh, cool air, light streaming through the trees and the breathtaking mountain greenery just can't be beat. I could have just stayed up there and ridden for days. I'd never tire of the beauty!

We stopped at the famous Alice's Restaurant for lunch. It's like a virtual bike show there, as it's the gathering spot for bikers coming and going in the area. It's true what they say ... you CAN get anything you want at Alice's Restaurant ... and we did. The food and service was outstanding and the company, even better!

After stocking up on T-shirts, we began the final leg of our eight day journey. We headed to the Harley dealership by the San Francisco Airport where our private transport courier was waiting with his 72' rig to load up a dozen of the bikes for their return trip to Florida.

We had one final event as part of the official tour. As you know, this is Boaterz and Bikerz of America and part of our tradition is to mix boating activities with our ride. It's what distinguishes our events from any other.

We started off our tour with a brunch cruise aboard a fabulous 78' Ocean Alexander motoryacht in Seattle, courtesy of our sponsors Alexander Marine USA and Regal Boats. For our grand finale, Title Sponsor Freedom Boat Club hosted a "Sunset Sailabration" for us aboard a 48' Adventure Cat on San Francisco Bay. We sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge, past Alcatraz and all over the area, all the while laughing, munching on snacks, toasting our ride and thoroughly enjoying the many friendships we had made. We had a wonderful group of people who made this year's Pacific Coast Rush truly, a Hull of a Tour!

I can't even begin to express how much I love planning this event in cooperation with my great pal Jim Krueger who does such an outstanding job developing an unbelievable ride route. Every day had aha moments and none of that happens by accident. It was months of research and work by Jim and I couldn't be more fortunate to work with him in this capacity.

In addition, we couldn't do the tour without the support of our sponsors. I'm so grateful to John Giglio and Freedom Boat Club for being our title sponsor for the past two years! Freedom hosted a dinner for us and our final sail.

We were also thrilled to welcome our good friends from Regal on the ride this year, both in terms of the sponsorship and several folks who came along for the ride.

I'm very thankful for the support and sponsorship of Bill Sisson, Jack Atzinger and the team at Soundings Trade Only that allow me to publish this blog and share this adventure.

Before you ask, the answer is a resounding YES. We'll be back again in 2017 and the new route is already in planning and under wraps! If you're interested in learning more, shoot me an email and I'll keep you posted!

Thanks for joining along on the virtual ride! If you missed any of the daily blogs, check out the archives at Soundings Trade Only and type in Hull of a Tour.

Wanda Kenton Smith is the event producer and publicist of Boaterz n Bikerz of America: Hull of a Tour. This year's Pacific Coast Rush is presented by Title Sponsor Freedom Boat Club, Platinum Sponsor Regal Boats, Retail Sponsor Alexander Marine USA, Media Sponsor Soundings Trade Only, with Kenton Smith Marketing handling publicity. For information on 2017 plans, email wanda@kentonsmithmarketing.com

Recommended for you