

## Open Letter to Sheetiron 300 Dualsport Riders

May 21, 2014

I would like to thank each of you for participating in this year's Sheetiron 300 Dualsport. I hope you had a great time, and I look forward to seeing each of you in Stonyford next year.

There is one item I would like to discuss with you regarding this event: rider behavior and courtesy.

### **Rider behavior and courtesy:**

I know that the vast majority of the riders on our event are responsible, considerate, and the salt of the earth. I wholeheartedly appreciate meeting you each year, and it is people like you who keep the Oakland Motorcycle Club eager to put on this event next year. It is you who make this event so special. If you are one of those in the vast majority of our riders, you can skip this letter. Otherwise, read on:

This year there was an incident on Bartlett Springs Road out of Nice on Sunday. A couple of riders on KTMs performed an impromptu hill climb that short cut a switchback on the road. A couple of other riders were spectating on the road below. This just happened to be the left turn in the road where two Upper Lake USFS Forest Service Rangers were monitoring our event. The rangers turned on their lights and siren, and the hill climbers took off up the road to elude the rangers, reportedly narrowly missing a vehicle coming down the road in the opposite direction. The spectators fled in the other direction down the road. It should go without saying that this is unacceptable behavior. It is illegal, dangerous, and rude. There are plenty of opportunities during the 300+ miles of the ride to have exuberant fun without angering the rangers, endangering other motorists, or irritating the residents along the way. Moreover, this is a permitted event. It is only with the forbearance of the USFS and BLM that we are able to provide this experience. The behavior described above is unwelcome, and it will not be tolerated on our ride. If you must engage in behavior of this type, please do not come back to the Sheetiron 300 Dualsport.

Next, if you followed the roll chart when you rode the course, you must have noticed that there are several locations where we wrote "SLOW PAST FARMS," "SLOW PAST HOMES," and even "POSSIBLE LAW ENFORCEMENT NEXT 8 MILES." We put those notices there for a very important reason. Occasionally, we get angry letters, calls, and e-mails from the residents who live on the roads we use. There are undoubtedly others who do not bother to contact us, but who are angry nonetheless. We cannot avoid irritating people when we send 500 motorcycles down their streets over the course of a few hours. But we can minimize the impact on the peaceful enjoyment of their lives by slowing down when we go by occupied private property. Keep the dust down, keep the noise to a minimum, stay on your own side of the road when there may be oncoming traffic, don't roost people as you pass them, etc. This is just common sense, especially if you don't want to see the event canceled, and if you don't want to see roads closed to our use.

Case in point: As you are probably aware, Navarro Ridge Road was gated on the far side on Sunday morning, forcing us to reroute everyone down the paved bailout. Coincidentally, it was opened later Sunday morning. The gate was very probably closed by a resident along the route who took it into his own hands to deny us access to the road, because the Mendocino County DOT website says the road was opened on April 10 until further notice. I will be following up with the county to ensure that this does not occur in the future, but please keep in mind that this is the kind of thing that happens when we do not practice common courtesy on the road. Again, if you like this event, please act in such a way that

we can keep putting it on. If you would like to see our permits denied, and if you like to see roads closed to us... As I said before, there are plenty of opportunities to have all the fun any person could desire – just do it in an unpopulated area, and don't make your own trails, and everybody will be happy.

By the way, the above does not apply only to the Sheetiron 300 Dualsport. All organized dualsport rides are jeopardized by bad behavior. Just a word to the wise...

Thanks again for participating in the Sheetiron and for riding responsibly! I look forward to doing it again and seeing you next year.

Sincerely,

Brent Snyder, Chairman  
Sheetiron 300 Dualsport  
Oakland Motorcycle Club