



By Tom Cutter #6362



Racing BMWs

BMW motorcycles have a long tradition of success in many forms of motorsports, from the memorable record-setting efforts of Ernst Henne to the breathtaking dashes to victory by Gaston Rahier in the Paris–Dakar Rally. Your BMW has racing in its DNA. This column will take a look at who is racing our favorite marque in the various levels of motorsports in the US, and give us a little behind-the-scenes look at their race experiences.

I HAD BEEN DOING TRACK DAYS FOR about five years, and began to find the experience repetitive and unchallenging. I decided to begin road racing about five years ago, at the age of 52. After cutting my teeth on a brace of Suzuki GSXR-based race bikes, I jumped at the chance to race competitively on the brand that I love, as soon the S1000RR became available. This month's column is not about me, though. It's about all the guys and gals who are taking checkered flags with the roundel on their mount, how you can meet them, show your support, and maybe even get yourself involved in the sport. To prepare this column, I have spoken with the racers themselves, and will continue to follow them throughout the season. I'll take in-depth looks at various BMW racing efforts, like Matt Hunt's drag racing, Frank Schockley's racing the WERA (Western Eastern Roadracing Association) Endurance series, as well as more (ahem) mature riders com-

peting in the WERA Senior Superbike and ASRA/CCS (American Sportbike Racing Association/Championship Cup Series) Formula 40 classes. I'll also chronicle the progress of my own racing season, as I campaign the S1000RR in WERA Sportsman events around the Northeast USA.

With the introduction of the S1000RR superbike, BMW has brought a race-ready motorcycle within the reach of club-level road racers around the world. The international press has rightly heaped accolades upon the model, and racers have taken it to the grid at every level of racing in the USA and around the world.

Have you ever marveled at the exploits of the racers you see in magazines and on TV, wondering how they do it, what the experience is like, and how to get closer to the action? It's actually easy to get close to the action at most US club-level road racing events. A day or weekend ticket to the

racetrack (usually \$10–25) will get you into all of the best spectator spots, as well as free access to the paddock, pit and camping areas. (Rules vary slightly at each track; check the website of the track facility.) At many of the facilities, you can ride your street or touring bike right into the paddock and park in any out-of-the-way spot. I've often invited touring riders to stash their helmets and gear in my race trailer while they watch the event, and many other racers do the same. Food and drink are available at the trackside concession stand, and often racers will grill up stuff for lunch and dinner.

For the 2011 season, you can meet and watch the racers at:

AMA PRO RACING:

- **ROUND 1:** Daytona Int'l. Speedway, Daytona, FL. March 10–12, 2011
- **ROUND 2:** Infineon Raceway, Sonoma, CA. May 13–15
- **ROUND 3:** Miller Motorsports Park, Tooele, UT. May 28–29
- **ROUND 4:** Road America, Elkhart Lake, WI. June 3–5
- **ROUND 5:** (tentative) Barber Motorsports Park, Leeds, AL. June TBA



1. KNEE DOWN AND GOING FOR IT! WERA/CCS multiple class novice Champion #725 David Ur on the BioWeapon/ MAX BMW-sponsored BMW S1000RR SubeBike enroute to another victory, at Homestead Raceway in Florida in 2010. **2. LEADING THE WAY:** Mike MacConaghy #24 of Covington, WA, on the FUZIMOTO-supported BMW S1000RR at Portland International Raceway. Photo: Darren Beatty Photography

- **ROUND 6:** Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, Lexington, Ohio, July 8–10
- **ROUND 7:** Mazda Raceway (Laguna Seca), Monterey, CA July 22–24
- **ROUND 8:** Virginia International Raceway, Alton, VA. Aug. 12–14
- **ROUND 9:** New Jersey Motorsports Park, Millville, NJ. September 2–4

Look (and cheer) for these BMW-mounted riders at AMA Pro Series events:

- **ERIC PINSON**, #41, Liberty Waves Racing entry on the TriColore S1000RR in American SuperBike
- **LARRY PEGRAM**, #72, on the Foremost Insurance BMW S1000RR
- **GARY ORR**, #51, on the San Diego BMW Motorcycles S1000RR
- **JEREMY TOYE**, #57, on the Lee's Cycle/San Diego BMW motorcycles S1000RR

There may be others on the S1000RR or R1200HP in other classes at various AMA Pro races, but many teams' plans are not finalized as of this writing.

NATIONAL-LEVEL CLUB RACING:

For club-level racing on the national level, there are the WERA National Series and the ASRA Pro Series. The ASRA events usually run in conjunction with regional CCS races, so you get a lot of bang for your spectator buck at those events. Most BMW MOA members have heard of Nate Kern and his racing successes in ASRA/CCS. Joining Nate on the ASRA/CCS grids this year will be Tim Bemisderfer, #511, and teammate David Ur, #725, on the bright-red Bio-Weapon Fuels/MAX BMW-sponsored S1000RRs.

The ASRA Pro Series Calendar for 2011:

- **ROUND 1:** Roebbling Road Raceway, Faulkville, GA. March 12–13

- **ROUND 2:** Heartland Park Topeka, Topeka, KS. April 22–24
- **ROUND 3:** Summit Point Raceway, Summit Point, WV. May 28–30
- **ROUND 4:** Loudon Classic-NHMS, Loudon, NH. May 17–19
- **ROUND 5:** TBA, July 2–3
- **ROUND 6:** Motorsports Park, Millville, NJ. August 12–14
- **ROUND 7:** Virginia International Raceway, Alton, VA. September 24–25
- **ROUND 8:** Daytona Int'l Speedway* Daytona, FL. October 14–16
*28th Annual Race of Champions

Tim Bemisderfer and David Ur will also be competing in all rounds of the WERA National Series and a few of the AMA Pro events in the East. They are both hard-charging riders, capable of consistent top-level finishes. The National Series consists of a series of sprint races in different classes, featuring some of the fastest racers in the USA, and culminates with the Grand National Finals in October.

WERA Michelin National Challenge Series 2011 calendar:

- **ROUND 1:** Roebbling Road Raceway, Faulkville, GA. March 18–20
- **ROUND 2:** Talladega Gran Prix Raceway, Talladega, AL. April 8–10
- **ROUND 3:** Miller Motorsports Park, Tooele, Utah. June 17–19
- **ROUND 4:** Summit Point Raceway, Summit Point, WV. July 29–31
- **ROUND 5:** Virginia International Raceway, Alton, VA. August 4–7
- **ROUND 6:** Barber Motorsports Park, Leeds, AL. September 9–10
- **ROUND 7:** WERA GNF*, Road Atlanta, Braselton, GA. October 26–30
*Grand National Finals

WERA ENDURANCE SERIES

The WERA Endurance Series consists of a dedicated schedule of 4- to 6-hour races, in which multiple classes of motorcycles compete simultaneously. Usually held on the same weekends as the WERA National Series events, these endurance races draw some of the best-funded and equipped teams in America. The racing is close, exciting and fraught with suspense. A lot can

happen (and it usually does) in a 4–6 hour race. The BMW S1000RR SuperBike will be represented in the WERA Endurance Series by the #175 Fast Frank Racing Team, led by Frank Schockley. In the closing days of 2010, the FFR team took a bone-stock S1000RR and put it on the podium for a second-place finish at the WERA GNF.

WERA Endurance Series Calendar:

- **ROUND 1:** Roebbling Road Raceway-4 hr., Faulkville, GA. March 19
 - **ROUND 2:** Talladega Gran Prix Raceway 4-hr., Talladega, AL. April 9
 - **ROUND 3:** Miller Motorsports Park 6 hr., Tooele, Utah. June 18
 - **ROUND 4:** Summit Point Raceway 6 hr., Summit Point, WV. July 30
 - **ROUND 5:** Virginia International Raceway 4 hr., Alton, VA. August 5
 - **ROUND 6:** Barber Motorsports Park 4 hr., Leeds, AL. September 10
 - **ROUND 7:** WERA GNF* 4 hr., Road Atlanta, Braselton, GA. October 28
- *Grand National Finals

In addition to the national-level race series, WERA, CCS, and many other motorcycle road racing organizations hold region-level series at a few tracks in one geographical area. I have listed the web addresses of many of these organizations below. These series are well attended and very popular among racers. This is where the real family-fun

atmosphere of club road racing shines. The series all have both cash and points prizes that accumulate for regional championships. Some series, like the LRRS, are all held at one track and fill a whole season for local racers. Others, like the WERA West series, cover a multi-state region, almost one-fourth the area of the USA, requiring those participants to travel long distances to race.

I compete in the WERA Northeast and Mid-Atlantic Regions aboard the Cutter-Bare Racing/ Rubber Chicken Racing Garage/ Hermy's BMW/ MFS-sponsored #311 S1000RR in the Expert Formula One, Senior SuperBike Heavyweight and A SuperBike Classes. My first race of the 2011 WERA Northeast series season will be the Summit Point Round on April 2–3.

Look for WMRRA star Mike MacCoughy of Covington, WA, on the FUZIMOTO-tuned #5 BMW S1000RR at Portland International Raceway as well as the rest of the WMRRA schedule. Mike is setting track records with the Beemer. His plans are to attend the first WMRRA event at Portland International on April 2–3.

Check out John "Jigs" Laconte in the CCS Midwest series, aboard his #461 BMW Motorcycles of Milwaukee/Manheim's Metro Auto Auction-sponsored S1000RR, tearing it up at Heartland Park Topeka and Blackhawk Farms in the midwest. John plans to start his 2011 racing season at Heartland Park Topeka on April 22–23.

Catch (if you can) Gary Orr, owner of San Diego BMW Motorcycles, on board his

SDBMW Motorcycles/Kushitani Leathers/LOCUST-sponsored S1000RR, running many series, including WSMC(CA), WERA West, AFM(CA), and the AMA rounds at Daytona and Miller Motorsports Park. Gary will kick off with a trip to Daytona, FL, to compete in the AMA American Superbike season opener.

These are just a few of the many racers on BMW motorcycles in road racing in 2011. In future columns, I will visit the vintage racing teams, some off-road races, and a few drag races as well!

All of these organizations have their regional calendars online, and it's a good idea to check with the organization when the race date approaches to be sure that no late schedule alterations have occurred.

- **AMA PRO RACING:** www.AMAProRacing.com
- **WERA:** www.WERA.com
- **ASRA/CCS:** www.ccsracing.us
- **AHMRA** (Vintage): www.AHMRA.org
- **ASMA** (Arizona): www.asmaracing.com
- **CMRA** (Texas): www.CMRARacing.com
- **LRRS** (NH): www.nhms.com
- **MRA** (Colorado): www.mra-racing.org
- **OMRRA** (Oregon): www.OMRRA.com
- **WMRRA** (Washington): www.WMRRA.com

Grab your bedroll and get out to the race-track! Let your local BMW dealer know that you are a fan of racing and motorsports, and when you get to the track, go



3. RARING TO GO! Tom Cutter's #311 Rubber Chicken Racing Garage/ Hermy's BMW/ MFS / HYPERPRO Suspension-sponsored BMW S1000RR race bike in 2011 livery, ready to race the WERA Sportsman Series. Photo: Tom Cutter. **4. AIRBORNE EXPRESS!** AMA Pro Racer Eric Pinson touches down after "catching some air" on the Liberty Wave Racing/Blue Moon Cycles #2 AMA Pro American Superbike. Photo: Brian J. Nelson



5. FOCUS! Gary Orr pilots the #517 San Diego BMW Motorcycles/ Dunlop/ Kushitani Leathers/ LOCUST-sponsored BMW S1000RR into a banked turn at Willow Springs Raceway. Photo: www.caliphotography.com 6. PENULTIMATE VICTORY: Frank Shockley's Fast Frank Racing-sponsored #1 BMW S1000RR ready to take on the field at the WERA 2010 National Endurance Series Final at Road Atlanta, GA. Frank and team finished second overall on this almost-stock BMW! Photo: Frank Schockley 7. LET IT DOWN EASY: AMA Pro #10 Chris Peris soars over the crest on his Iron Horse/ESP BMW-sponsored S1000RR. Photo: Brian J. Nelson

Award winning service is closer than you think...

Whether it's an oil change, changing a tire or a major service, our BMW Master Tech, along with the rest of our factory trained staff, is ready to serve you. Stop in and experience the very best in BMW Service. While you're here, check out our great selection of BMW Riding Gear, Parts and Accessories and BMW Motorcycles. Bergen County BMW Motorcycles is conveniently located in Rochelle Park, Bergen County, NJ, just minutes away from New York. We're here to help keep you where you love to be... On the open road.



BMW Motorrad
USA

Authorized
Dealer



BERGEN COUNTY BMW Motorcycles
124 Essex Street • Rochelle Park, NJ
www.bergenbmwmotorcycles.com
201.843.6930

