

AZ Bike Week Celebrates 27 Years

AZ Bike Week #27 took place at WestWorld from April 3rd to 7th, 2024. There was a lot positivity in the reviews for this year's AZ Bike Week. Yes, there are always some who think they could do it better. That just goes with the territory. The ABW team is open to hearing constructive comments.

There were Vendor Booths indoors and outdoors; offering much of what you'd expect to see. There was a variety of apparel, bike accessories & parts, jewelry, leather goods for bike & bod, patches, stitching, and much more.

The Armed Forces Tribute Bikes, on display in the HandleBar Saloon, were extraordinary. Each was unique, created by a different custom builder.

The Used Bike Corral, set up in the PowerYard, had about 50 bikes on display; a significant increase from last year's inaugural Corral.

The various stunt riding teams were fun to watch, as always! Some of the performers on Friday were paying special attention to the wind, as their high-flying jumps could go 'sideways' in a very wrong way if caught by some of the big gusts that were blowing. The weekend lineup included the return of Brigade FMX Extreme Stunt Show. The Yamaha Factory Stunt Team performed. The Globe of Death was back. This time it was indoor, allowing for some cool 'light

show' effects... But I think in some ways it was easier to watch the stunters when it was set up outdoors. New this year was the Della Crew All Female Stunt Team, sponsored by Harley-Davidson. They all put on some amazing exhibitions.

In addition to the stunt shows... TEAM Arizona had demonstration rides of real-life, day-to-day Safe Riding Skills; presenting slow maneuvering techniques & more.

The year's Demo Rides area hosted a record number of manufacturers represented... with Harley-Davidson, Indian, and BMW being joined by Suzuki, KTM, Slingshot, and Kawasaki.

Nearly 30 bands performed throughout the weekend; a mix of local favorites + each night's headliner. The RockYard concerts were back outside; presenting Yelawolf [& guest Cowboy Killer], Brantley Gilbert [w/ guest band Last Train to Juarez], George Thorogood & The Destroyers [with Everclear as opener], and Godsmack [with guest Sin|Shrift].

ABW was the destination for three charity rides during the event. There were also three bike shows ... Iron Goddess on Thursday, BadAZ Performance on Friday. Bikes N Bass Custom Bike Show and Sound Bullies audio competition were on Saturday.

Sunday was a free admission day... with a swap meet, more music, shopping,

and stunt shows before the gates closed at 6pm.

Organizer Lisa Cyr sent along this message, "We had an incredible vendor and demo turnout this year, with a hundred more vendors than our 2023 event and twice as many factory demo trucks. We had five different stunt teams performing and four bike shows. The addition of bull riding and micromania wrestling seemed well received. We had some bad weather on Friday, but other than that, it was a smashing success!"

Event organizers have to have tough skin. I'm unsure there has ever been an event throughout history that has been universally raved about. There will always be some who enjoyed it and others who complained about one thing or another. In this case, some were happy the concerts were back outdoors. Others want them inside again. Many were ecstatic about the music line up. Others said the choices sucked. Such is the life of an event planner. There will always be trolls. There will always be people who are most happy when they are unhappy. But the overall %... from reviews I've seen, people I spoke with, and the positivity I observed during ABW... It looks like 2024 was enjoyed by a WHOLE LOT of people! Congratulations on a job well done!

Betsy

