

RELIABILITY RALLY 2020

WYTHEVILLE, VIRGINIA

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It is mid-July 2020, and the Reliability Rally enters its fourth year of sub-\$1000 motorcycle competition. 20 riders signed on to test their low-buck machines against some of the best roads Appalachia has to offer. The ride covers approximately 400 miles over 2 days of riding, with a bevy of contests to determine who has dug up the absolute finest jalopy motorcycle.

On Friday night, a welcome cookout was held while the reliable riders poured in from across the Eastern US.



Bikes begin to arrive at the Palace of Reliability



The diverse roster of jalopy bikes continues to impress with nearly all styles of riding represented. Amazingly, all were purchased for \$1000 or less.

RIDER	BIKE	PRICE
Charles P.	1980s Honda Shadow 750	\$300
Todd B.	Kawasaki 750 SPECTRE Chopper	\$400
James W.	1980s Honda CB750K	\$400
Chris D.	1980s Kawasaki KZ440	\$400
Travis C.	1980s Yamaha MAXIM X 700	\$580
Jim G.	73 Kawasaki S3 350	\$650
Yonekura	1982 Honda CX500C	\$700
Chris S.	1980s Honda FT500	\$700
Scott S.	2000 Honda ST1100	\$750
Colin G.	2007 Honda Shadow 600	\$750
Jim C.	1970s Kawasaki KZ750	\$750
CJ D.	1990s Ninja 500	\$800

RIDER	BIKE	PRICE
Irv H.	1990s Honda PC800	\$800
Tina G.	1966 Honda Dream	\$800
Mike L.	1980s Suzuki GS850	\$925
Paul D.	2004 HD Sportster 1200	\$995
Alex L.	1970s Kawasaki KZ750 B3	\$1,000
Hattori	1999 Honda Rebel	\$1,000
Lou T.	2006 Yamaha Virago 250	\$1,000
Ian S.	1980s Honda CB750K	\$1,000
Justin S.	Honda Odyssey Chase Van	-

Saturday morning lit the fires immediately; with the very first portion of the ride covering famous VA-16 “Back of the Dragon” motorcycle route. 32 miles of relentless curves and smooth asphalt reward both nimble bikes and skilled riders.



The day's ride continued through the rolling Virginia countryside, with a quick lunch stop at the natural wonder Burke's Garden. Amish made sandwiches and roadside espresso helped power the ride group onward.



At a fuel stop mid-ride, the reliability gremlins began to rear their heads. Todd's Kawasaki Spectre throttle was sticky and the cable finally gave up. A frantic slew of phone calls were made to try and locate a replacement part. As if summoned by magic, fellow Kawasaki rider Jim C. presented both spare throttle and clutch cables, waiting in the wings for just the occasion. Duly impressed, the Spectre was patched up and the ride group carried on.



Ride day 1 wound down with the first rider contest, a fuel economy run over approximately 50 miles. Hattori's tiny Honda Rebel proved to be the most miserly, pulling an impressive 81 miles per gallon.



Ride day 2 began with some good old home cookin'. Bacon and eggs breakfast fueled our riders for the challenge ahead. Sunday's mission was to tackle US 421, the "Tennessee Snake." One of the premier motorcycle routes in the Eastern US, the Snake's perfect asphalt and light traffic lit up smiles across the entire RR crew. We enjoyed rolling into the Shady Valley Country Store, a classic biker hangout. An acceleration test was performed with each bike being timed over 1/8 mile. Scott's big bore ST1100 tourer was sneaky fast, whose nearly silent run was the quickest. Todd's 750 Spectre was just barely behind, ripping through the 1/8 mile with glee. The acceleration test invited the cable gremlins to return, this time crippling Paul's Sportster after a thunderous 1/8 mile run. Some clever noodling was employed to repurpose the throttle return cable, and all was well. While repairs were under way, the group took laps over the mountain pass while swapping bikes and comparing the merits of the machines.



Big Thank You to the RR2020 Crew!

The final riding test was a classic slow race, a balance test held in a parking lot. This is where the lightweight bikes truly shine! Jim G. employed his copious dirt riding experience to run away with the slow race win on his small bore two stroke Kawasaki classic!



Chris D. running the slow race

Ride day 2 closed with the reliable riders feeling accomplished after covering serious distance and crushing thousands of corners on absolute jalopy motorcycles. When asked if our neighboring Harley, BMW, or sportbike riders were having more fun than us, the cheer was a resounding “NO WAY!!!”

At the conclusion of the second day, each rider was asked to cast two votes: the first for their favorite bike of the bunch, and the second for their favorite customization or accessory.

When the dust settled and the scores were tallied, it was Todd’s Kawasaki Spectre chopper that performed well enough and won the hearts of the RR voters. Jim G’s Kawasaki S3 ranked second, buoyed by the slow race win, rider’s choice win and lucrative two stroke bonus points. Yonekura turned in some very smart riding aboard his Honda CX500, whose consistent performance rounded out the podium.



All this fun worked toward a greater good. Thanks to all of the reliable riders, RR2020 was able to make a donation of \$500 to the Neighborhood Resilience Project, an organization based in Pittsburgh dedicated to helping children and families in trauma informed communities. They do tremendous work, learn more at

<https://neighborhoodresilience.org/>.








Since the beginning, our ride motto has been Competition, Camaraderie, Misery. Reliability Rally 2020 delivered all three in spades (yes, the misery too). Getting out on the road together and challenging convention by riding our jalopy bikes, we created our own adventure. Each rider contributed a piece to an incredible experience.

Thank you to all the riders who came out and made this year a success!

Cheers!

The Reliability Rally is looking to grow! If you’d like to join us at future Reliability Rally events, please join the email list at www.reliabilityrally.com.

Final Contest Winners

CONTEST	WINNER	BIKE	RESULT
	Todd B.	Kawasaki KZ750 Spectre	Most Points
	Charles P.	1980s Honda Shadow 750	\$300
	Hattori	1990s Honda Rebel	81 MPG
	Scott S.	Honda ST1100	1/8 Mile: 8.44 sec.
	Jim G.	1970s Kawasaki S3	90 sec.
	Jim G.	1970s Kawasaki S3	Most Votes
	Todd B.	Kawasaki KZ750 Spectre	Most Votes