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**A Mile  
a Minute**  
Stephen Berner



## Ligaments

ligament | lig' ə mənt | *noun*, a short band of tough, flexible, fibrous connective tissue that connects two bones or cartilages or holds together a joint.

I make notes in a journal about the things that cross my radar, and to deliver this regular blast of empirical insight, I sift for the connective tissue in my largely incoherent scrawlings. I look for the ligaments.

Identifying the connective tissue this issue was easy. I was reminded recently that as much as *this* is about V-twin-powered motorcycles and mechanical madness, it is more about the people who fuel the passion, make it happen, and whose shared traits of enthusiasm, capability and generosity keep it going in a positive direction. By and large, you aren't going to get insight into what makes people tick if you only see them at bike events (Daytona, Sturgis) and at press-the-flesh business events (V-Twin Expo). It is like only seeing your friends at holiday and birthday parties—it just ain't right.

If you leave your hidey-hole and make the effort to meet people on their turf, you get the good stuff. You make important connections, get to know folks beyond a few days hanging out at an event and you get to make friends. How do I know this?

Well, *IronWorks* has been out visiting. I've seen some really interesting

*continued*

You owe it to your self to see what we have for you

Matching instruments available

1" 1 1/4" 1 1/2" 2" 2 1/4" 2 1/2" 3" 3 1/4" 3 1/2" 4" 4 1/4" 4 1/2" 5" 5 1/4" 5 1/2" 6" 6 1/4" 6 1/2" 7" 7 1/4" 7 1/2" 8" 8 1/4" 8 1/2" 9" 9 1/4" 9 1/2" 10" 10 1/4" 10 1/2" 11" 11 1/4" 11 1/2" 12" 12 1/4" 12 1/2" 13" 13 1/4" 13 1/2" 14" 14 1/4" 14 1/2" 15" 15 1/4" 15 1/2" 16" 16 1/4" 16 1/2" 17" 17 1/4" 17 1/2" 18" 18 1/4" 18 1/2" 19" 19 1/4" 19 1/2" 20" 20 1/4" 20 1/2" 21" 21 1/4" 21 1/2" 22" 22 1/4" 22 1/2" 23" 23 1/4" 23 1/2" 24" 24 1/4" 24 1/2" 25" 25 1/4" 25 1/2" 26" 26 1/4" 26 1/2" 27" 27 1/4" 27 1/2" 28" 28 1/4" 28 1/2" 29" 29 1/4" 29 1/2" 30" 30 1/4" 30 1/2" 31" 31 1/4" 31 1/2" 32" 32 1/4" 32 1/2" 33" 33 1/4" 33 1/2" 34" 34 1/4" 34 1/2" 35" 35 1/4" 35 1/2" 36" 36 1/4" 36 1/2" 37" 37 1/4" 37 1/2" 38" 38 1/4" 38 1/2" 39" 39 1/4" 39 1/2" 40" 40 1/4" 40 1/2" 41" 41 1/4" 41 1/2" 42" 42 1/4" 42 1/2" 43" 43 1/4" 43 1/2" 44" 44 1/4" 44 1/2" 45" 45 1/4" 45 1/2" 46" 46 1/4" 46 1/2" 47" 47 1/4" 47 1/2" 48" 48 1/4" 48 1/2" 49" 49 1/4" 49 1/2" 50" 50 1/4" 50 1/2" 51" 51 1/4" 51 1/2" 52" 52 1/4" 52 1/2" 53" 53 1/4" 53 1/2" 54" 54 1/4" 54 1/2" 55" 55 1/4" 55 1/2" 56" 56 1/4" 56 1/2" 57" 57 1/4" 57 1/2" 58" 58 1/4" 58 1/2" 59" 59 1/4" 59 1/2" 60" 60 1/4" 60 1/2" 61" 61 1/4" 61 1/2" 62" 62 1/4" 62 1/2" 63" 63 1/4" 63 1/2" 64" 64 1/4" 64 1/2" 65" 65 1/4" 65 1/2" 66" 66 1/4" 66 1/2" 67" 67 1/4" 67 1/2" 68" 68 1/4" 68 1/2" 69" 69 1/4" 69 1/2" 70" 70 1/4" 70 1/2" 71" 71 1/4" 71 1/2" 72" 72 1/4" 72 1/2" 73" 73 1/4" 73 1/2" 74" 74 1/4" 74 1/2" 75" 75 1/4" 75 1/2" 76" 76 1/4" 76 1/2" 77" 77 1/4" 77 1/2" 78" 78 1/4" 78 1/2" 79" 79 1/4" 79 1/2" 80" 80 1/4" 80 1/2" 81" 81 1/4" 81 1/2" 82" 82 1/4" 82 1/2" 83" 83 1/4" 83 1/2" 84" 84 1/4" 84 1/2" 85" 85 1/4" 85 1/2" 86" 86 1/4" 86 1/2" 87" 87 1/4" 87 1/2" 88" 88 1/4" 88 1/2" 89" 89 1/4" 89 1/2" 90" 90 1/4" 90 1/2" 91" 91 1/4" 91 1/2" 92" 92 1/4" 92 1/2" 93" 93 1/4" 93 1/2" 94" 94 1/4" 94 1/2" 95" 95 1/4" 95 1/2" 96" 96 1/4" 96 1/2" 97" 97 1/4" 97 1/2" 98" 98 1/4" 98 1/2" 99" 99 1/4" 99 1/2" 100" 100 1/4" 100 1/2"

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people in the past few months and you will be meeting them through the newly launched **Spotlight Series**. Lock Baker from Eastern Fabrications is our first victim in what will be a series of vignettes, monographs, what have you, on some of the folks doing distinctive work, who are following their own path. Showing a body of work (not a single bike) from a builder is something no one else is doing and we think it is a better way to learn about the craftsman's talent and capability and to get a sense of *what they are about*, and yes, to build some connective tissue between us as V-twin enthusiasts.

**Stories**

I have never seen a group of folks who love their stories as much as bikeriders. We love pictures, we love words, we love the richness of a hearty laugh and a good tale (with or without a happy ending). It is great serving up this type of editorial vittle and it forces *IronWorks* to dig deeper than if we were just covering the machines. The rich stuff isn't in tech sheets, it is in the story behind the machine: the people, the hassles, the laughs, the favors and help, the back-story, if you will.

Sitting through a dinner this past weekend with some of my very best friends recounting road tripping stories to non-riders, I realized that most of the good stories included some sort of mishap; a thrown chain, an electrical gremlin that caused belching blasts of farting backfire and smoke (to the hysterical delight of the rest of the pack of riders), bikes losing parts, and my favorite visual of all time burned into my brain—Nelson at 60mph in New Hampshire in the rain with his garbage bag rainsuit. And all the other good stuff that happened when you left home on a machine that was simply not as reliable and well baked as the appliances we ride now. Interestingly, all of these stories are from the "pre-Bagger/ windshield" era, when fewer of us rode the rolling refrigerators we seem to favor at the moment.

Listen to a group of new riders on new bikes and you will see what I mean. The lack of trials and tribula-

tions these folks face due to the quality, reliability and technology of their gear and machines means they don't have those "precious" moments to bond on the side of the road. I remember when everyone I knew rode with a single adult beverage in their saddlebag. You just *knew* at some point in the day, you'd find yourself on the side of the road watching your friends crawl around on their bellies fixing some jingbinger or nutboggler that was drizzling vital fluids or causing some other manifestation of abject malfeasance. How cool was it in the middle of glum-headedness to crack a warm beverage and toast the good fortune of the group? That shared can was the best, and it was a bonding experience as much as it was a toast to meeting the challenge.

That type of challenge just doesn't rear its head as often in the Twin Cam era and when it does, you almost always have to call the hog-u-lance. The story rarely has a "and he rode off into the sunset, gaffer taped, zip-tied and smiling" kind of ending. So where do new riders get their stories from? How do they build connective tissue that will keep them in the saddle long past when others get bored with their "motorcycle hobby" and move on to mastering chainsaw juggling or playing lawn darts?

I have a feeling in time these riders will pick up a used machine to noodle with—Flattie, Pan, Shovel, Evo—and begin exploring the terrain. They will rebuild it, customize it and not be afraid to try new things and have some fun with it. They will find out that once you get on a machine that doesn't have the "always on" gene baked in, things can get interesting. When the machine has had its owner's hands on it, things get personal. Questions are asked and subsequently are answered in the first person ("I did this..."), stories about the development path are shared, scars are shown, breakdowns happen, and they are survived. And in the end, connective tissue is made. The hand-off is complete, the relay is made, the circuit activated, the ligament grown.

How cool is that?

See you on IWBlogger or FB.

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