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Sturgis 2009 Preview The Rally Turns 69 - M

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The Black Hills are alive with thunder. It's 'The Sound of Music' alright. That is, if the rumble of a few hundred thousand V-Twins is music to your ears. August is here, which means it must be time again for the spectacle known as the annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. Wonder what of 'Happy' Hoel would think about this monstrosity he helped create? I'm certain he had no clue that the little motorcycle race he and his friends in the Jackpine Gypsies Motorcycle Club started up would now be the mother of all motorcycle rallies, a week-long affair of races, custom bike shows, vendors, live music, camping, riding, partying and more partying.

Before moving forward to the 69th Annual Sturgis Rally, let's take a look back. The Black Hills Classic began as a series of motorcycle races organized by the Jackpine Gypsies in 1938. Club founder of the Gypsies, got together with some friends and came to competition. The first race had a whopping nine entrants competing. Johnnie Spieglerhoff of Milwaukee, Wis., lapped the half records book as the first winner.



Start with one exotic custom motorcycle, add a Playboy Playmate, etc. and you've got the recipe for another successful Rat's Hole Custom Bike Show.

is one of the custom builders that make up the bunch known as the Limpsville Lot. The guys at the Limpsville Lot have probably inspired a few people to ride, too. The collection of custom builders are the counter-culture alternative to the standard rally scene, attracting a younger crowd by expanding the experience with break shows, skateboard ramps and paintball wars. Besides knowing how to have fun, a visit to the Limpsville Lot will give us an excuse to go over to the Broken Spoke Campground to check out the action at their sunset pool party.

In between bike shows there's more than plenty to do to Sturgis would be complete without a trip down Main people watch and to check out the rows and rows of polished up motorcycles. For a different style of fun, it over to the Buffalo Chip where there will be plenty of shredded tires and burnt rubber smoke in the air at the Record Bike Burnouts on Thursday night. The Chip is host to Michael Lichter's Motorcycles as Art (MCA) renowned motorcycle lifestyle photographer's theme is a "Rider's Paradise - Motorcycle Icons that Inspired us Ride." With a theme like that, I'm sure some of his old shots of Indian Larry will be on display. Indian Larry has inspired many bikers, guys like Keith of Kero Cycles who



Photographer Michael Lichter will be at the Buffalo Chip with his Motorcycle Display.



The V-Rod Destroyer is killing it in NITFA action this year. The Screamer Eagle Performance Parts 'Race at the Rally' will be a fun-filled, nitro-burning affair.

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The Spike will also have a few concerts to pump up the party atmosphere. The list of bands includes the Kentucky Headhunters, Foghat, 38 Special, and Nashville Pussy. Camoers lock out and get to check out the bands for free of killer shows at the Buffalo Chip is even more impressive, though. It will be 'Bad to the Bone' when George Thorogood and the Destroyers take the stage, and I'm sure more than one person will be all 'S.U.Z.' for the Bukcherry show. The biggest night of all though will probably be Wednesday when Aerosmith will rock Sturgis for the very first time.



It will be time to 'Kick the City' when Aerosmith takes the stage at the Buffalo Chip Campground.

Somewhere in between catching as many concerts as possible, there's riding to be done. The rugged beauty of the Black Hills and spine is but 80 miles away. Mt. Rushmore is even closer, and if you're in the area, it's the Crazy Horse Mountain Memorial is recommended. Motorcycle USA will be making the ride to the Crazy Horse monument on one of the new 2009 Indian Chieftains as a part in a benefit ride for the Tribal Hope Foundation. We also be taking part in the Legends Ride from Deadwood to the Buffalo Chip. Besides getting to hang out with a lot of celebrities and custom builders, funds raised from it benefits Black Hills charities.

Will not enough to entice you into packing the saddle and making a last minute dash for South Dakota? Well, there's always the Sturgis Motorcycle Museum and Hall of Fame to visit. Check out its collection of vintage motorcycles and numerous exhibits. Harley-Davidson will have plenty of

The showcase some of the coolest custom bikes around. The caliber of competition is unparalleled. The festivities will get started early with Annual Metzeler Custom Bike Contest. Sanctioned by the Custom Motorcycle Association and with guest judges like custom builder Eddie Trotta, American Iron Editor Chris Meida, the Metzeler contest is top-notch. Following day is the finals of the AMD World Championship of Custom Building. Will Roger Goldammer defend his Freestyle Class title, or will the Japanese and European competitors are always tough international affair. The Rat's Hole Custom Bike Show will invite the talent that always shows up for the Rat's Hole Daytona show, a