

Burnout. Cyclists try to pop their tire (right).



By Gayle VanVooren

Mascot Editor

The sound of motorcycles permeated the Minneota air on Saturday as Minneota's ninth annual Memorial Run began.

Motorcyclists signed in early, and yet there was a mad dash for registration as the one o'clock hour approached.

Much like going to church, most of the cyclists rushed in at the last minute.

Organizers did not care, for it was soon evident that this would be one of Minneota's best runs yet.

While the majority of the riders were on Harley Davidson machines, there were a few other types of cycles in the mix, as well. There may have been a little 'ribbing' about this, but it was still a great day for a motorcycle ride.

As the motorcycles headed out of town, some 293 had signed up, but committee members were

sure there would still be a few more.

They were from Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Iowa, Wisconsin and Kansas. This year, the trail took the bikers to the Glacial Lakes Harley Davidson shop in Watertown, SD, where all the riders would enjoy a meal together. They would then hit Highway 212 and head back to Dawson and stop in Taunton on the way home to Minnesota.

Said Sheila Bretschneider, "Some riders like this route because of the straighter distances and fewer stops."

As bikers turned into the area behind Bubba's Bar and C.J.'s Bar and Grill, it was evident this was kind of "old home week" for many of the riders.

People came from Kansas, North Dakota, Iowa, the Twin Cities and Mankato to join their friends in this ride — and the warm sun was shining for them.

Before the riders left, Hilary DeVlaeminck encouraged all the riders to be cautious out on the roadway. She said, "One of the main reasons we ride is to promote motorcycle safety."

Many members of the ABATE (American Bikers for Awareness Training and Education) chapter were with the Saturday riders, and they cheered at her statements.

DeVlaeminck continued, "I want to remind you all to be very conscientious about safety. Be aware of other bikers. And pay tribute to those who aren't able to be with us today."

Proceeds from the Memorial Run are headed to the Compassionate Friends chapter in Marshall. Sheila Bretschneider added, "We hope to be able to help local families through this charitable organization."

The bikers were back in town around supper time, and enjoyed a meal from C.J.'s.

Compassionate Friends representatives gave a short speech and then the traditional "burn out" took place.

When asked about this phenomenon, Doug Stienessen said, "Anyone who wants to takes part in the burn out. You get a plaque if you win it. It's just fun to compete.

The 'wind down' part of the evening then took over, as the bikers relaxed to the music of Decadence Inc.