

Perfect Recipe for a Cruise:

Report on the 2nd NorCal SCMC Cruise, Highway 1. April 25, 2004

Dedicated SCMC members rallied around the call of new member Doug Filter to make the first 2004 cruise not only a success, but the harbinger of many more to come. A California dawn sky greeted us as we gathered at the source of Highway 1 in Marin county, North of the Golden Gate Bridge.

Jeff drove his blue 01 coupe, a lowered beauty. Wendy and Chuck brought their white 96 vert on new tires. Doug piloted his lowered red 03 vert with roaring pipes. The late arrival of Mark in a new redfire 04 coupe made a total of four SVT Cobra Mustangs, a small group by TN and NC standards. However, this allowed us to go unnoticed by the CHP officers inspecting a long line of crotch rockets preparing to assault Highway 1.

Fueled and ready, we motored out of Mill Valley and into the twisty roads through the hills to the coast. Climbing, getting warmed up; we saw quite a few 15 and 20 mph advisories for hairpins. No drama at double the numbers in a Cobra. Cresting the ridge, we entered the chute, a twisty downhill with lots of sweeping corners, sheer cliffs and no traffic, save for the buzzing of bikes going in our direction.



We came up on one local on the way down who quickly turned into the pull-off lane to let us by. Later, when she came upon us at the side of the road taking some pictures, she stopped so as not to interfere with our photography - great attitude.



Doug's passenger, Henning Schaefer, a computer artist from Germany recently settled in San Francisco served as general photographer. A supercharged vert proved to be a good vantage point, although the road's corners added an extra photographic challenge, serious g-force.

Sadly, the tarmac was not in the best condition. A few jarring pot holes produced scraping noises from lowered exhaust systems. At one particularly nasty hair pin, Wendy played a version of rock/paper/scissors called rock/tire/wheel. The rock won, causing two scraped wheels and a gashed side wall, which dampened our enthusiasm.

A simultaneous “that could have been me” went through our heads. After making certain the white vert could still safely travel, we took in the rest of the ride to breakfast together at a more relaxed pace enjoying the wonders of the Northern California coastline.



Jeff's '01 Coupe. Wendy & Chuck's '96 vert, Doug's '03 vert, Mark's '04 coupe at rest on the cliffs above the Pacific.

The remainder of the ride up through the pastoral countryside and along the coast was breathtaking, and included stops to admire the scenery (obviously enhanced by the Cobras) and take a few pictures. Knowing the other parts of the country were experiencing snow and chill made it even more delicious.



We stopped in Jenner for brunch and were able to grow our friendships over pancakes, eggs and coffee. Mark had a lot of inside information to share, and he is being recruited to join as soon as possible. Future SCMC cruise possibilities were discussed, all too tempting to pass up, we agreed to reconvene soon. Watch for further details.

Cobra Tails and Cobra tales

Wendy and Chuck headed North, ultimately making it home to Chico later that evening. It looks like Wendy may get her wish for new wheels and Chuck his for wider tires sooner than expected.

The three other Cobras followed route 116 East toward the Highway 101. Route 116 is almost entirely a no passing zone, however the power of the Cobras made use of the rare passing areas easy. In a flash, we were able to jump past slower traffic, using short bursts of supercharger boost.

Once on the divided highway, the three Cobras turned into the Running of the Bulls. We had a nice run south for about 50 miles. Where traffic was very light we were able to wind it up a bit. The usual SUVs and Volvos pretended to run with us from time to time, but once traffic cleared, they never kept pace.



Running of the Bulls



Near the Golden Gate, Doug split off for home and Jeff and Mark continued South.

In all, it was a great day to forge new friendships, drive a fast and almost empty windy road, and enjoy the scenery and company. It was really hard to break up and go our separate ways at the end.

Thanks, all, for a great day.

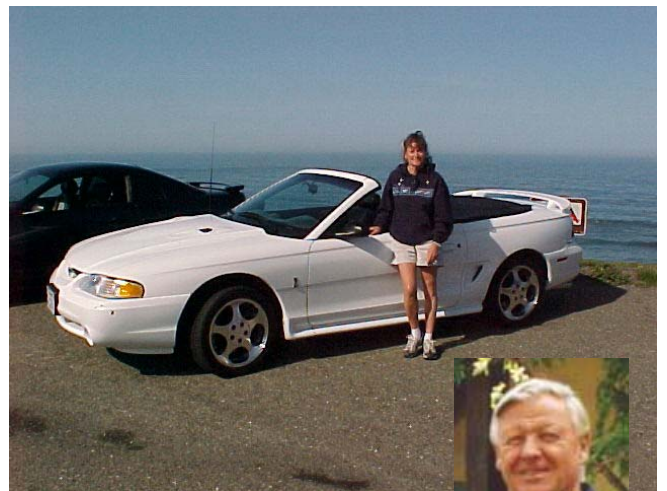
(More pictures next pages...)



Sweet and Low



Doug (Henning behind the camera)



Wendy (& Chuck)



Jeff



Mark



Why it's called the Shoreline Highway.



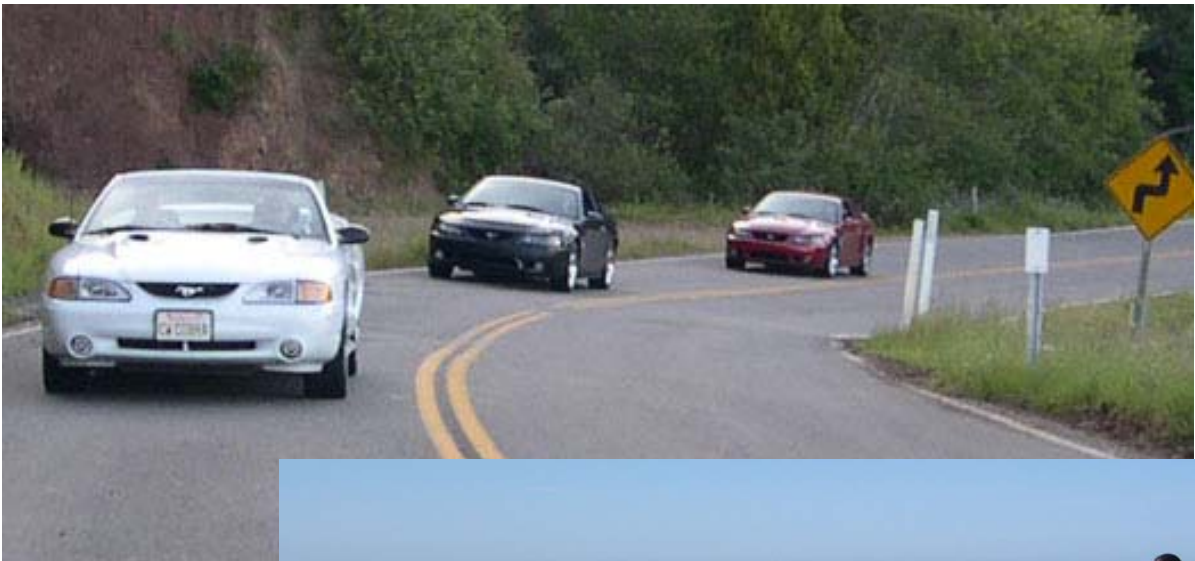
Why verts.



Contemplating Nature.



Henning



Curve signs we like to see. (above)

The Usual Suspects (right)



Gallery

