

**W**HAT CAN YOU say about Americade that hasn't been said before? This year's event was blessed with near-perfect weather (though it was a little too hot early in the week, with temps in the 90s), and though some thought attendance might be down due to a time overlap with Laconia, I'd guess it was a record-breaker, with around 50,000 motorcyclists in attendance.

Of course, that crowd was obviously swelled to some degree by the the nearby Orange County Chopper exhibit (see Contact Patch, this issue). The downside was that traffic, especially in the evenings, was a nightmare on Canada Street, made worse by the "Klingons" with their burnout and wheelie antics.

The TourExpo trade show has gotten so big it now exists in two locations, with shuttle busses running in between, and every available campsite and motel room within a 50-mile radius is booked months in advance.

Even event organizer Bill Dutcher notes that Americade may have grown as large as is physically possible for the area, and will either have to start looking for ways to downsize, or move to another locale. That would be a shame, as I still feel it is the greatest motorcycle rally on the planet.

For details, see the Americade website at [www.tourexpo.com](http://www.tourexpo.com).

—Fred Rau

# Americade 2004



Clockwise from top left: 1. A pristine early Honda 750, festooned with balloons for the parade up Prospect Mountain. 2. The staff of CIMA (Nolan Helmets) models their latest offering—"Utilikills." 3. The Red Knights always attend Americade *en masse*, along with Sparky the fire dog. 4. A BMW test rider demonstrates what happens when you panic stop on wet pavement without ABS.



Clockwise from above: 1. Brian Rathjen from Backroads magazine kneels and offers last rites to his BMW GS after it developed a wiring fire on a ride through the Adirondacks (not the bike's fault—Brian wired in one too many accessories). 2. The Purple Peddlers precision drill team is always a hit on their trikes. 3. What is it? I'd guess a highly-modified Tri-Hawk.