



By Steve Proctor

Arizona Outlaws Baja Fiesta

The Arizona Outlaws Baja (Southern) group held its Baja Fiesta on St. Patrick's weekend this year. Jeff Gamble and Steve Proctor put the event together with help from route master Jack Allen and Portland transplant Dick Smith who pulled the event shirts together. The event continued the tradition as a driving event with entrants from New Mexico, Texas and California, as well as the local Arizonans.


Outlaws gathered for a "cozy" registration and warm-up party in the motel Friday night while a late breaking emergency parking lot repair was completed despite the semi circle of willing "advisors" around the open deck lid. About 7 pm, entrants made the short walk around the corner to a fine dinner at Miguel's, whose beautiful patio overlooks the city lights of Tucson.

Outlaws awoke to a beautiful Tucson morning and met in the parking lot for a pre-departure drivers' meeting. During the meeting, John Jenkins (National 356 Registry travel help guy) revealed that his A coupe had suffered catastrophic clutch failure and he needed some travel help himself. Dick Smith was Johnnie on the Spot and quickly made a cell phone call to Baja Outlaw Pete Jacoby, owner of Tucson Mountain Motors, a local repair shop. The tour was already planned to stop at TMM for coffee and donuts and Pete said he could fit John into his busy schedule for the emergency repair. While the Outlaws departed for the winding drive through Picture Rocks, Jeff Gamble led John on a clutchless direct route to Pete's shop.

By the time the Baja Fiesta group arrived at Pete's shop, the engine was sitting on the spotless shop floor and TMM employee Rick was headed to the parts store for clutch parts. What a grand introduction to Pete's newly opened business, as coffee and donuts quickly became a 356 tech session. After a neat 356 photo op in front of TMM, the group single filed out to the rural highways

and byways for a spirited drive on the winding roads south to the town of Arivaca.

The trip to Arivaca stopped at the ranch of local car guy Gene Gibson where we enjoyed an exclusive showing of the long lost Townsend Special – a local sports car racer from the 1950s. The car was a contemporary of 'Ol Yeller, another "back yard special." Gene's wife Rebecca treated Outlaws to drinks and homemade baked goods, sending them out to the back roads again with full stomachs. Jack Allen's usual trusty directions kept the group on track over more great Southern Arizona back roads for a 356 parade into Tubac, one of the oldest settlements in Arizona. After lunch and some shopping, we regrouped at Tubac's Presidio park for a chance

to win one of Jeff Gamble's Arizona 356 Outlaw bronze car badges with a reverse drawing craftily performed by host Steve Proctor. Jim Learmonth of Houston was the lucky entrant standing at the end of the drawing. The second half of the tour day took us further south along the old Nogales highway then we headed eastward skirting the Arizona-Mexico border through Patagonia, Sonoita and onto our destination of Tombstone, "the town too tough to die." In keeping with the Baja Fiesta tradition, hospitality continued until the refreshments were gone and it was time to head into town for dining and dancing. Sunday morning's home-bound departure gave quality time to reflect on the great 356 comradery enjoyed again at this year's Baja Fiesta. Oh, and by the way John greeted us in Tombstone with the new clutch installed. Until next year. 



Some Outlaws were actually able to get through the weekend without raising their engine lids. Others weren't. From top: John Jenkin's coupe at Pete Jacoby's shop; Baja Outlaw Steve Proctor discovers piston/plug electrode interaction to the amusement of Jim Learmonth and Tom Reyman; Texas' Jim Learmonth gets a repair status as New Mexico's Joe Almers wields the wrench.