

IBR Day -3 - The Cathedral, Trickling News & Iron Butt Rally 101

Things are starting to come alive at the Sheraton Uptown in Albuquerque. The rear parking lot has been cordoned off for the 89 motorcycles expected over the next 72 hours. The “Welcome to the 2015 Iron Butt Rally” greeting has been added to the sign in the lobby. The hotel staff is preparing for the 250 or so guests and visitors anticipated for the Start on Monday. But, beyond that, the Sheraton Uptown in Albuquerque looks like it did last week for the Pipe Fitters Local conference, and what it will look like next weekend for the Dumbrosky –Chiller wedding.

Riders have started to trickle in this Friday, some competitors, some rally staff, some spectators. Already there has been breakage. Tom Spearman, notified the Command Center this morning that he was again dropping out before the Start. Tom had been drawn for the 2009 IBR, but had to withdraw prior to Start that year as well. Itching to rewrite that particular history, Tom has longed to get back to the Start finally getting drawn for the 2015 dance. Apparently he was overcome by the heat along the way from his home in Mooresville, IN, suggesting that after paying full freight for two IBRs so far, he didn’t have enough coin left for the optional ride air conditioning accessory offered on his BMW K1600GTL. But Tom’s an experienced rallyist, completing numerous IBA rides and regional rallies, including a finish in the 2014 Butt Lite 7, sponsored by Team Strange. If he has reason to believe he won’t finish before he even starts, better to swallow hard and make the call before the real pressure of the clock clouds judgment. A man’s got to know his limitations. Hopefully his recovery will be quick so he can begin flogging himself for another two years.

John Coons is likewise out. After a DNF in 2011, John came back to finish 10th in 2013. This morning, the pressures of life outside the IBR conspired to force him to withdraw before he got the chance to test himself once again. Like Spearman, John will have some 300 nights to replay the decision in his head before being able to apply again. We hope to see him here in 2017.

Mike Langford failed to finish in 2009, after racking up over 8300 miles on his K1200LT, the same bike he rode to 26th place in 2007. As of this morning, Mike was still in Chula Vista, CA, (750 miles from the Start) assembling plastic parts on his 2013 Triumph Trophy after having had a major service performed earlier this week. Or, maybe he just hasn’t packed yet. Either way, he still has a 12 hour ride in triple digit high heat to knock out just to get to the Start of a grueling 11 day ride. The Command Center hopes he is thinking about banking some sleep to start Monday well-rested. Time will tell.

Jim Owen’s IBR rallying resume reads like a Big Dog’s should: Heartbreaking DNF while in the lead just hours from the finish in 2005, 2nd (2007), Winner (2009). Owen is a Vegas bookmaker’s dream, favored to be on the podium again this year, or any year he gets to play. So, why is this accomplished rider sweating in the parking lot, furiously trying to fix a failed

auxiliary fuel cell mount? Could it be because the accessory was recently installed and his ride from Easton, PA, was the shakedown? Nah...that can't be it. It's not like Jim hasn't been here before like 2009 when his auxiliary wiring harness caught fire in the parking lot at the Start. Of course, he did still go on to win...

The spigot will open tomorrow. More riders, more activity and, guaranteed, more issues. By Sunday afternoon, the Sheraton Uptown in Albuquerque will be bustling with the activity of a major league sports event or Broadway production. But, on this Friday morning, it is what baseball players call the Cathedral. A quiet, holy place.

This is a good time to go over some IBR basics.

The Iron Butt Rally is a long distance motorcycle competition that pits rider against the map and his or her wits, to accumulate as many points as possible in a fixed period of time. Unlike a race, finishing first is not analogous to winning. In fact, it almost guarantees a low final standing. Nor does riding the most miles matter much. Just ask Jim Frens. He rode a monster 14,185 miles in 2011, surpassing the next closest finisher, Curt Gran, by 328 miles, and *still* didn't win. Neither did Curt. Both were bested by Winner Peter Behm riding "just" 13,544. Even Eric Jewell placed higher with just 13,162 miles, more than 1000 miles less than Frens. No, the Iron Butt Rally is about maximizing the *point* value of those miles. While the format has evolved since the 1984 inaugural event, the emphasis on smart and efficient routing for points has not.

For this 18th IBR, 89 motorcycles will leave the Sheraton Uptown in Albuquerque at 10 AM on Monday June 29. All they know today is they will need to be back in the same parking lot 84 hours later. They don't yet know where they will have ridden in those 84 hours. They won't start to see that piece of the puzzle until Sunday evening's rider's banquet when each will receive a list of several hundred possible destinations to visit, each with a different point value reflecting its difficulty to attain. Then the theme for this year's rally will become clear. Past rally themes have including Famous Crime Scenes and National Monuments. In 2013, riders had to touch all 48 contiguous states to be considered a finisher. Bonus points were extra.

Equipped with digital cameras and rally flags bearing their assigned number, riders will follow detailed instructions to prove having ridden to their chosen destinations and bonuses. A photo of the historic Hotel del Coronado in San Diego, some 778 miles to the west, may be worth 500 points. The ride there and back within the allotted 84 hours would require an average speed of 18.5 mph, barely the equivalent of the daily commute on the Stevenson freeway in Chicago traffic for 3 ½ days. Even allocating 10 hours of every 24 for sleeping, fueling, eating, peeing and checking in at home, the average required speed increases to 31.75 mph, or the pickup truck speed through any Home Depot parking lot on a Saturday. Detour north for a photo of the

Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, worth 1500 points, and that needed average speed rises to 48.4 mph. Since excessive speed on public roads is not permitted (nor effective), the time to sleep, fuel, eat, pee and call home starts to matter.

After scoring is tabulated in Albuquerque, riders will again receive another list of bonuses to be considered in the 62 hours to ride to the Meadowview Conference Resort in Kingsport, Tennessee. A photo of the East Gate at the Outdoor Symbolic Memorial in Oklahoma City may be good for 50 points. After all, it's on the way, easy to get to and available 24 hours a day. However, the same photo taken *from inside* the Memorial Museum there may be worth 250 points as the museum is only open between 9AM-6PM, requiring more precise time management. At the far extreme, a photo of the continental marker in Key West, 90 miles from Cuba, may be worth 5000 points, vaulting you to the lead, assuming you don't need to sleep, fuel, eat or pee as often. After scoring again in Kingsport, riders will have 102 hours to return to Albuquerque, choosing bonuses from yet another list of multiple options.

The potential combinations of bonuses are incalculable, limited only by the rider's ability to accurately project timing to each location and still remain within the allotted time to arrive at each checkpoint. Oh, and, the rally gods do not care that you hit Atlanta in rush hour, followed an RV through a national park over the holiday, final drive failure in Fargo, Montezuma's Revenge on Day 5, a bow echo of severe storms while crossing Kansas, road closures, an inability to calculate time zone conversions, a tank of bad gas (or Diesel!), hangnail, etc. Show up on time or go home.

Many will, go home that is. Historically, attrition will claim 25% of the field. Some will fail to make the first checkpoint, some dropping off within sight of the Finish. Others will ride many miles, yet still fail to Finish. In the end, the rider with the most points at the Finish, wins. No money, mind you. The Iron Butt Rally is an amateur event with no prize purse, corporate sponsorship deals or other such professional inducements. Riders pay to play, risking DNF, machine and marital harmony for the selfish satisfaction of having accomplished what fewer than 506 other motorcyclists have done. More people have circumnavigated the Earth in space than have finished The World's Toughest Motorcycle Rally™. It's rarified air. The ultimate bragging rights.

If this is your first IBR, I highly recommend you read the reports from prior years, along with much of the content available at www.ironbutt.com, the web home of the Iron Butt Association. Even if you are not (yet) a long distance motorcyclist, it will provide deeper context for the discussion here as the next two weeks unfold. Also, if don't already instinctively know where Interstate 40 separates from its underlying US Route 66 origins, or are still unsure of the number of curves on US 129 between Tabcot Bridge and Deals Gap, or can't plot a speed route around Sedona when 89A is closed for landslides, without Google, you might also keep a

map handy, maybe with some way of marking rider locations. As with every IBR before, there will come a time when you will need a visual reference to fully appreciate a rider's predicament. Just make sure it covers Canada. Alaska, too.

Of course, there will be snafus and epic Fubars. There are rules, and there will be those who attempt to stretch those rules. Where appropriate, or just damn funny, we will highlight some of these attempts. There will be drama, disappointment, displays of exceedingly poor judgment, heartbreak, tedium, heroics, exalted victories over adversity – all the pathos that accompanies human endeavor and achievement. Over the next 14 days, we will report what we see, what we hear, what we know, what we think we know and ultimately what we learn. We will offer up conjecture and theory, hopefully, with a fair amount levity, to feed the estimated 50,000 IBA members riding along on their keyboard devouring this year's rally through these reports. Along the way, I also intend to focus attention on just some of the many extraordinary people who put this event together and pull it off.

Stay tuned...

Chris Cimino

Iron Butt Association ©

IBR -2 – There’s an IBR Code, But Rules Ain’t Guidelines, Matey

As expected, Saturday has been a flurry of activity. The morning started with the 3:45 AM call for help from Robert Bolger stranded 27 miles east of Rally Central with a blown trailer tire. Why he called Lisa Landry (at 3:45 AM) is still a mystery. At 3:45 AM, Lisa may not have been the most sympathetic choice. If Robert is lucky, Lisa will forget about the interruption to her beauty sleep, at least until she proofs this post before upload. (Sorry, Robert.)

Such requests for help on the LDRider forum are usually met with immediate multiple replies and this was no different. Within 3 hours the issue was resolved. It didn’t hurt that Robert announced he was in the parking lot of a Dairy Queen. Mike Kneebone and Ed Otto reportedly drove out to supervise. Bob Lilley later eloquently posted about 2013 finisher Eric Vaillancourt’s generous offer to loan Bob his Super Tenere if Sandia BMW could convince the fuel pump in his R1200GSA to not think the 8.7 gallon tank was empty at 7 gallons and sputter to a halt. Such is this community of LDriders.

The staging area had filled in overnight with 72% of the expected field present when Registration opened at 8 AM, with all but 8 riders by 12 riders completing check in as of 5 PM. The lot is now a sea of Wings, Beemers, FJRs, auxiliary lights, fuel cells and Cordura. While the final tally of motorcycles by make and model won’t be known until tomorrow afternoon, the stroll poll revealed more Honda Gold Wings than any other model, followed by R1200GS and Yamaha FJRs. So far, Harley Davidsons out represent BMW’s luxury GTL1600 and K1200LT combined. We’ll see when the dust settles.

Riders are equally diverse, with a field of 46 returning veterans and 42 rookies, although it misleading to call some of these rookies as such.

“Rookie” Will Barclay is a serious motorcyclist, with serious riding experience. He’s traversed several continents on two wheels and lived to tell about it. In the US, he won the Hoka Hey Motorcycle Challenge, twice, on his Harley Davidson CVO Ultra Classic. What is unknown at present is how well Barclay will see the whole board when the pieces are revealed Sunday night. LD riders around the world may criticize his choice of weapon, but short memories forget how Brett Donahue muscled his H-D Sportster to 3rd Place in 2007. At some level, it’s more about the rider than the machine.

Rookie Troy Martin included an impassioned plea in his application, chronicling his obsession with long distance riding since drinking the Kool-Aid in 2010. He has the credentials you would expect from a rookie stepping up to the IBR – numerous IBA certified rides, a few shorter rallies like Heart of Texas, Poison and Hoagy’s Heroes Six Shooters. He claims to have read everything, every ride report, the IBR rules, everything. He must have missed the many, many stories of riders failing to follow instructions (and how we love to write about it). After receiving his Tech Checklist with explicit instructions from Lisa Landry to NOT write on the first page, he promptly went outside and proceeded to fill it out. It’s *possible* that he was just trying be efficient and help the tech staff with paperwork, but I don’t know. We’ll see if his comprehension improves or if he offers to score himself at the first checkpoint.



Troy Martin begs for forgiveness for trying to do Warchild's job.

Rookie Paul Tong has similar riding pedigree, with numerous IBA certified rides and a few shorter rallies, including the 2014 Heart of Texas 2-up with his 9 year old daughter. For rookies like Martin and Tong, the challenge can be overcoming the overwhelming pressure of an extended multiday rally. Of course, Paul is currently a police officer, after serving 13 years as a US Marine with multiple deployments. That kind of stress may be what he eats for breakfast.

Rookie Drew Dill may be sweating bullets the next 12 days. His 2012 H-D CVO Road Glide snapped a front pushrod in Conway Arkansas on his ride out from Bradenton Florida. A new top end later, he has to be wondering if they got all those tiny metal pieces out of the oil. (Of course if he wasn't, he is now...) That's a heavy load to deal with before the Start, especially with his shiny new K1600GT sitting the garage at home.

And, while some of the rooks may seem a little nervous in the shadow of the Big Dogs, Dave McQueeney reminded me last evening that 8 of the 16 IBRs to date have been won by rookies. (That also reminded me that I miscounted yesterday when I referred to this being the 18th IBR when it is clearly the 17th.)

The Big Dog kennel of returning IBR veterans is impressive as well. Ten are former Top 10 finishers; Eric Bray, Craig Brooks, Eric Jewell, Bob Lilley, Tom Loftus, Josh Mountain, Greg Rice, Chris Sakala, Kirsten Talken-Spaulding and Jim Owen the 2009 winner. No one will be surprised if this WAS the podium at the End. Neither would anyone be surprised if Daniel Roth or Perry Karsten were on that stage as well, after each secured Top Twenty finishes in both 2011 and 2013. Jon Good & Ande Bergman could also continue their 2-up climb up the rankings.

2007 finisher Mike Langford is reported to have buttoned up the Tupperware on his Triumph Trophy and left Chula Vista for Rally Central. He should arrive in the morning. Sam Liles finished 55th in 2013, yet rode more miles than the 27 other finishers before him. At the last minute today, he talked his lovely wife, Sydney, into joining him this year riding 2-up in their K1600GTL. I don't know if it will help his routing, but they sure look good.



Sam Liles is about to trick his wife, Sydney into joining him 2-up

Lynda & Terry Lahman finished 2-up in 2007. Then again 2-up in 2009. Lynda & Terry are now Lynda Lahman (BMW C650GT scooter) and Terry Lahman (R1200GSA). They have declared themselves a team for IBR purposes. As such, they must *each* ride to each bonus location or *both* will lose 50% of the points for that leg. Individual screw-ups (lost flag, missed Call-In, lost receipt, etc.) will impact the affected rider alone. The “team” can divorce at the end of a leg and continue on solo, which makes one wonder what Lynda is thinking...Could there be a repeat of that other famous couple, the Langs, blissfully riding together in 1997 until Fritz said Left and Phyllis said Right. Phyllis finished. Fritz did not.

On the other side of the table are the many, many volunteers and staff it takes to put on a production at this level. An Iron Butt Rally doesn't start with some freckle faced “Hey, Gang. Let's put on show” rally cry (although it is kind of amusing to imagine Mickey Rooney having played Mike Kneebone in **Hard Miles – The Beginning**). It takes high levels of commitment, organization and energy, coupled with the ability to Execute. But after years of sweating every painstaking detail since resurrecting the event in 1991, Kneebone may have finally found the right combination of leadership and skill needed to run things. Over the next two weeks, riders will come to love, hate, despise, worship, fear, respect and ultimately appreciate Lisa Landry and Tom Austin in what should prove to be one of the most challenging and successful IBRs to date. Lisa and Tom are supported by a cast of many, each contributing time and talent for a sport of passion.

Dave McQueeney has spent the entire last month proofreading ALL of the rider materials and verifying bonus details. He will also work with each rider during Registration to ensure correct digital camera settings, in addition to downloading all rider bonus images at each checkpoint for the scorers. A Big Dog himself, it's not like he's never done this before. Dave has been working the Command Center since 1993. He is a steely eyed missile man.

Jim and Donna Fousek have been unpacking boxes of material and stuffing rider packs to make the check in process go more smoothly. The Fouseks are a fixture at IBR Rally Central, having worked

each event since Mike Kneebone took over the reigns. Ira Agins has been meticulously going over each rider's information for the master database in addition to reconciling each rider's odometer test. He will be the first person riders look for at checkpoints to stop the clock. By the close of Registration tomorrow, Ira will have the final run down. Steve Hobart and 2007 Tobie Stevens continue to snap images around Rally Central, uploading to the Iron Butt Facebook page and here.

While Bob Higdon surrendered his keyboard for the daily reports this year, he was back at the QWERTY today furiously working through the spot tracking software with Joe Denton and Tom Austin in advance of the checkpoint use. It's fun to watch old dogs learn new tricks. (*"In my day we didn't use Spot or GPS clocks, Austin. When the church bell rang, we just looked around the room to see who was there and they were the Finishers."*)



"Put the X in the center square, Bob. Right there! In the center!"

The only sight funnier had to be Bob explaining spot tracking to Al Holtsberry. At 79, Al is attempting to be the oldest rider to finish an IBR. Al's no slouch. He's finished 3 IBRs; 1986, 2001 (Gold Medal) and 2005. Yeah, he's THAT Al Holtsberry. His IBA number is 27. It will be an incredible accomplishment for him to finish. But, just leaving the lot on Monday he will surpass Garve Nelson as the oldest rider to Start an IBR. Here's hoping he survives Ed Otto's insurance discussion.



Al Holtsberry thinking these instructions sure have changed.

There are Rules and then there are Guidelines. Shortly after being drawn for the IBR, riders received the 25 page book of ***IBR Rules, Tips and Information***. 25 pages! Evolved over many years of refinement, the IBR rules outline the requirements for riders, motorcycles, necessary equipment, specifications pertaining to auxiliary or aftermarket equipment, along with tips and guidelines to help set expectations.

The rules are straightforward. Wear appropriate rider gear, carry proper documentation, don't dis the rally staff, and so forth. No need to delve into all 25 pages here as there will no doubt be ample opportunity over the next two weeks to discuss particular items in detail, usually when someone has stepped way out of bounds. For now, let's turn our attention to the rules pertaining to paperwork, motorcycles and accessory equipment. These rules are particularly well-defined, some with detailed information including charts, graphs and specific measurements. The rules are not subject to discretion or situational ethics ("I didn't stop to help a rider because I didn't *know* it was an emergency..."). Yet at every IBR Registration, some rider having had 17 months to prepare, arrives with a documentation or technical issue that could have easily been resolved up to 17 months in advance, longer if they had studied prior rallies which they presumably had. Almost all are resolved so the rider can still compete, albeit with some frantic repairs, heightened stress and some expense. In the case of Quek Cheng Chye in 2003, the expense was more than just "some" as he was ended up purchasing an entire exhaust system for his BMW K1200RS when his aftermarket pipes exceeded the allowed noise level. While several riders still had to take 2-3 attempts at proper documentation before getting it right, there have been surprisingly few tech issues this year.

Dale Wilson, Chief Technical Inspector. “Warchild” placed 5th in the 1997 IBR before retiring from competitive riding in order to throw stones at riders. He is a fixture in the FJR community. Yamaha’s Motorcycle Development executive, Kunihiko Miwa, is rumored to troll Warchild’s posts for needed FJR improvements on future models. He is a barrel of a man, as serious as the bullet he resembles. When Honda coined the “Stupid Hurts” campaign in 1998, Warchild was who they envisioned wearing their T-shirt. My guess is that riders have finally learned that arguing with Dale at tech check-in is like watching a pig roll around in the mud; eventually you realize the pig enjoys it.

Jeremy Loveall came close to having a bad day. Finishes in the last two IBRs on his R1200RTP were easier than proving the fuel capacity on his FJR with auxiliary fuel cell. After preliminary measurements suggested it would be close, Tom Austin (former executive officer of CARB), administered the official fuel capacity test, a combination of specific gravity determination, weights and volumetric calculation, concluding Loveall’s total fuel capacity was 0.15 gallon under the limit. Crisis averted.

Will Barclay wasn’t as lucky yet. The auxiliary fuel cell on his H-D failed to contain proper baffling and venting as required under the rules. But the fixes aren’t complicated, certainly easier than making repairs in the jungle like he’s done before. Just like a hundred times before, a plea for help and help arrives. Terry Lehman may have enough foam to fix the baffling, leaving just a minor vent fix. Hopefully, he can make the necessary adjustments in time to clear Tech on Sunday.



Will Barclay tries to convince Warchild and Jeff Earls that the fuel cell was stock

New this year, the fuel log bonus has been eliminated. Long a staple in the bonus realm, fuel log and receipt snafus have been the undoing of many a promising IBR ride. Ron Ayres clawed his way back to a 5th place finish in 1995 after losing his receipts in the desert. Others weren't so lucky. The fuel log requirement was later limited to just riders with greater than 7 gallon OEM tanks, or any auxiliary fuel cell. With the advent of more readily accessible satellite spot tracking technology to prove the rider's route, fuel logs became less essential with riders in 2013 having the option of providing IBR access to their spot tracking in lieu of the fuel log. For 2015, riders who provide access to their spot tracking will receive considerable bonus points, enough so that not providing the access would all but eliminate that rider's chances of placing well. Rookies Jim Orr, Kit Chunhawong, and Neil Hejny were so concerned about what to do if the tracking unit fails, they have installed back up trackers. I wonder if the Navy's testing of the GPS system based in Nevada will cause any issues. The FAA thought it might and issued warnings of potentially unreliable or unavailable GPS signal throughout the southwestern United States through Tuesday. Pilots were advised to test backup navigation systems and notify the FAA when air traffic control assistance is needed. IBR riders will probably call Lisa.

Tonight, all will (try to) relax and socialize among friends. For those who checked in today, Sunday morning won't need to come quite that early, maybe even time for a mani/pedi. For the few remaining riders yet to complete that process, tomorrow will be a bit more harried clearing tech inspection before final meetings for all. Back in the Command Center, Tom is adding the finishing touches to a diabolically masterful route while Lisa arranges for lockable storage for 80 or so laptops possibly to be left here for the duration.

Finally, a correction from yesterday's report: Derek Dickson and Josh Mountain reminded me that the 48 state theme was in the 2011 IBR, not 2013. The theme for 2013 was Planes, Train & Automobiles. I guess when the Number 1 & 2 riders call you out on something, it warrants noting. Thanks, Guys.

Chris Cimino

2015 Scribe

Iron Butt Rally©



Rain cover and waterproofing testing Saturday night. IBR technical testing is nothing if not thorough

Day -1 Game Face, Ritual & Tradition

Sunday before the Iron Butt is a transitional day. Saturday is about camaraderie. Sunday is about Game. Monday is all business.

Ken Hatton would sleep sitting atop his motorcycle, feet over handlebars, hat over face, with the peace of a criminal finally caught. He'd say it was his most relaxing time. Eddie James, the Iron Butt's immortal mischief-maker, once spent 3 hours on Sunday methodically covering his oversized GS fuel tank with strips of black electrical tape. "Reflects radar," he'd tell rookies. (I learned it does not). Jim Owen routinely disassembles his BMW just to time how long it took. Rick Morrison would sign autographs. Eric Jewell and Mark Crane wait until the last minute on Sunday to check in. All Big Dogs sniff.



Thanks to Terry Lahman's abundant preparations, he had extra fuel cell foam for Will Barclay to solve for his auxiliary tank baffling. Tech completed, Will then felt the need to disassemble his H-D, reportedly to polish the back sides of the fairing. "Improves the MPG," he said. Somewhere, Eddie James is smiling. WOOF!

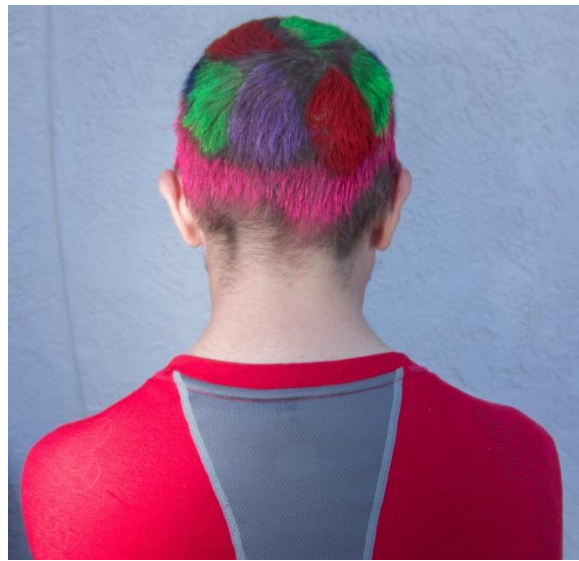
Andy Mackey resumed his off-again, on-again search for an electrical gremlin in his 2009 R1200GS that allows the auxiliary driving lights to work just fine during the day, but not at night. With 201,612 miles on the ODO, the driving lights may be the least of his worries.



Rookie Eric Edelman's FJR has been renamed the Munro Special. Eric shipped the bike ahead and flew in yesterday from Concord, California only to learn his FJR had been damaged in shipping, like Bert Munro's famous Indian. After 5 hours of welding and reassembly, Bobby J's Yamaha had him back in the game, with Eric wondering why he didn't just ride the damn 1000 miles from his home in the first place. (left) Warchild identifies the BMW-riding sons of bitches from the shipping company.

Unfortunately, Aussie Peter Hogan has had to drop out due to a back injury. Peter wrenched his back Saturday when his FJR started to fall into the Gold Wing parked next to him. He categorically denies the rumors that his loss of balance was associated with late night drinking with Marc Beaulac and Chris McGaffin, who appear to have their own ritual for rally prep. While Peter averted what would have been minor damage to both bikes, he aggravated an existing back injury, leaving him unable to sit, something that the rest of the field will be doing for hours upon hours for the next 11 days. Peter will still have a place setting at the banquet, but no chair. At least he can be drugged for the 24 flight home to Dangar Island, Australia.





Nineteen courageous (?) riders volunteered for to have their heads spray painted with lead-based paint manufactured-in-China, basically just non-FDA approved hair dye all to curry favor with the sadistic Warchild to earn the opportunity to leave the parking lot first in the morning, gaining a strategic advantage of exactly zero over the field. Ah, such are the trappings of ritual.

With Registration complete, 87 riders plus 5 pillions, straddling 87 motorcycles are poised to leave the Sheraton Uptown at Albuquerque at 10:00 AM (MDT) for the Start of the 2015 Iron Butt Rally. The starting riders are as follows:

First_Name	Last_Name	MC_year	Make	Model	Age	Veteran
Jim	Owen	2015	BMW	R1200RT	59	Y
Kirsten	Talken-Spaulding	2009	BMW	R1200RT	48	Y
Chris	Sakala	2013	BMW	R1200GSA	55	Y
Greg	Rice	2012	Honda	Gold Wing	58	Y
Josh	Mountain	2006	Yamaha	FJR 1300AE	42	Y
Tom	Loftus	2015	BMW	R1200GSA	60	Y
Bob	Lilley	2011	BMW	R1200GS ADV	52	Y
Eric	Jewell	2007	Yamaha	ST1300	51	Y
Craig	Brooks	2011	BMW	R1200GS	46	Y
Eric	Bray	2007	Yamaha	FJR1300	43	Y
Kurt	Worden	2003	Kawasaki	Ninja 250	52	N
Matt	Wise	2012	BMW	K1600GTL	46	Y
Jeff	Wilson	2010	BMW	R1200RT	59	N
Phil	Weston	2013	Triumph	Tiger	65	Y
David	Walls	2014	Yamaha	FJR1300	52	N
Paul	Tong	2012	Honda	Gold Wing	38	N
Jonathan	Tan	2014	Honda	NC700XD	38	N
Mark	Starrett	2006	Honda	Gold Wing	57	Y
Garry	Springgay	2005	Honda	ST1300	56	N
Nahum	Sloan	2010	BMW	R1200GSA	71	N
Paul	Slaton	2008	Honda	Gold Wing	52	N
Robert	Scott	2013	Harley-Davidson	Road Glide	49	N
Rod	Schween	2013	BMW	R1200GSA	48	Y
Daniel	Roth	2011	BMW	R1200GSA	36	Y
Christopher	Ross	2012	BMW	R1200GSA	39	N
Christopher	Rooney	2013	H-D	Road Glide	40	Y
Mike	Riley	2012	Kawasaki	Concours	61	Y
Chris	Purney	2014	Harley-Davidson	Street Glide Special	53	Y

Margaret	Peart	2007	BMW	R1200GS	66	Y
Glenn	Pancoast	2013	BMW	K1200GT	69	Y
Anthony	Osborne	2005	Yamaha	FJR 1300	53	Y
Jim	Orr	2007	Honda	Gold Wing	58	N
Phillip	O'Conner	2008	Yamaha	FJR 1300	51	N
Brant	Moteelall	2008	Yamaha	FJR1300	35	Y
Olaf	Moon	2014	BMW	R1200GS ADV	59	N
Lyle	Monroe	2014	Honda	Gold Wing	59	N
Gerhard	Memmen-Krueger	2014	BMW	R1200GS ADV	58	Y
Larry	Meeker	2014	BMW	R1200GSA	63	Y
Ian	McPhee	2000	BMW	R1100RT	51	Y
Chris	McGaffin	2003	Yamaha	FJR1300	45	Y
Steve	McCaa	2012	Triumph	Tiger	48	N
Tim	Masterson	2013	BMW	R1200GS ADV	64	Y
Troy	Martin	2013	Triumph	Trophy SE	47	Y
Andy	Mackey	2009	BMW	R1200GS ADV	56	Y
Jeremy	Loveall	2014	Yamaha	FJR1300	38	Y
Erik	Lipps	2012	Yamaha	FJR1300	34	N
Sam/Sydney	Liles	2015	BMW	K1600GTLE	0	Y
Gregg	Lenentine	2010	Yamaha	FJR 1300	55	Y
Dave	Legnosky	2003	Honda	Gold Wing	51	Y
Nancy	Lefcourt	2009	BMW	R1200RT	55	N
Mike	Langford	2013	Triumph	Trophy SE	66	Y
Terry	Lahman	2013	BMW	R1200GSA	61	Y
Lynda	Lahman	2013	BMW	C650GT	62	N
Michiel	Kerkhof	2014	H-D	Ultra Limited	66	Y
Perry	Karsten	2007	Yamaha	FJR 1300	49	Y
Scott	Jones	2007	BMW	R1200RT-P	63	N
Rob	Jaime	2014	Honda	NC700XD	61	N
Neil	Hejny	2012	Honda	Gold Wing	55	Y
Allen	Hatcher	2003	BMW	K1200LT	55	Y
Joe	Green	2008	Yamaha	FJR 1300	60	N
Jon/Ande	Good/Bergman	2013	BMW	K1600GTL	0	Y
Pat/Rebecca	Ford/Martinez	2007	Honda	Gold Wing	0	N
Greg/Wini	Farmer	2006	Honda	Gold Wing	0	N
Eric	Edelman	2014	Yamaha	FJR1300	44	N
Don	Duck	2014	Triumph	Trophy	62	N
George	Doughty	2004	BMW	R1150GS ADV	70	N
Danny	Dossman	2014	H-D	Ultra classic Ltd	63	N
Drew	Dill	2012	H-D	CVO Road Glide	45	N
Brian	Dent	2014	Yamaha	Super Tenere	48	N
Mark	Crane	2015	BMW	R1200GSAW	58	Y
Tonie	Cowan	2012	Yamaha	Super Tenere	40	Y
John	Cooper	2006	Honda	Gold Wing	55	N
Chris	Comly	2006	H-D	Sportster	51	N
Alex	Ciurczak	2013	BMW	R1200RT	42	Y
Kit	Chunhawong	2013	Yamaha	FJR1300	54	N
Al	Holtberry	2008	BMW	R1200GS	79	Y
Eric	Chernin	2012	Honda	Gold Wing	58	N
Jack	Cheasty	1995	BMW	R100GSPD	67	N
Jerome	Byrd	2010	Honda	NT700V	70	N
Brian	Bumpas	2001	Honda	Gold Wing	57	N
Bob	Bowman	2007	Honda	ST1300	53	N
Robert	Bolger	2008	Kawasaki	Concours	47	Y
Greg/Pat	Blewett	2008	Honda	Gold Wing	0	Y
Ted	Black	2012	Honda	Gold Wing	54	N
Barry	Bertram	2006	BMW	R1150GS ADV	38	Y
Marc	Beaulac	2008	Honda	Gold Wing	58	Y
Will	Barclay	2014	Harley-Davidson	Ultra Classic	55	N

The motorcycles will be arranged in the staging area for tomorrow's departure, with no bikes in or out after 8 AM until the Start at 10. Somewhere in that selection of (33) BMWs, (22) Hondas (16) Yamahas, (8) Harley-Davidsons (5) Triumphs and (3) Kawasakis, there is guaranteed to be at least one that will need fuel in the morning. So sad.

Equally sad (at least for my purposes) is the lack of entries in the Hopeless Class, traditionally the designation reserved for the entries so poorly suited for reliable long distance riding as to be devoid of any hope of finishing. Prior members of distinction have been Leonard Aaron's 1946 Indian Chief in 2001 (after 3 prior attempts); Joel Rappaport's high mileage BMW R60/6 in 2009 and, of course, the granddaddy Ed Otto with his Honda Helix 250cc scooter, Floppy, in 1995. The last Hopeless Class entrant was 2011's 1975 Triumph Trident piloted by John Young from the United Kingdom, finishing 73rd much to the chagrin of Las Vegas odds makers. For this year, only three entries seemingly fit the bill: Jack Cheasty's 1995 BMW R100GSPD and Kurt Worden's Ninja 250. Both riders are IBR rookies. Cheasty's Beemer is pristine and he reportedly is carrying a spare drive shaft, that model's Achilles Heel. Worden's Ninja has seen IBR duty before in 2013, although DNF'd – it's the rider, not the bike, as Kurt freely volunteers. The models themselves are not necessarily suspect as similar models have certainly finished in the past. But it would be rude to suggest hopeless riders...

"Okay. Before we start, nobody's on the line here yet. What I'm about to propose to you happens to be both highly rewarding and highly difficult. If that doesn't sound like your particular brand of vodka, help yourself to as much food as you like and safe journey. No hard feelings. Otherwise, come with me." – Danny Ocean

The Sunday banquet is another tradition. Part business meeting, part last meal for the condemned, a ritual dating to feudal times when lords, having pretty much ruined the prisoner's day, would honor the condemned with a final meal. The gesture was based in the superstition that if the prisoner accepted their last meal, they would not return as a ghost to haunt those responsible for their execution.

Once the last 3 course meal any of the riders will eat in the next 11 days is consumed, the meeting gets down to business with recognition of the many, many people it takes to make an Iron Butt Rally happy, followed by introductions of each rider and assignment of rider number. Jim Owen, as the only former winner (2009) in the impressive field, is honored this year with the coveted Number 1. After the introductions, the theme for this year's event will be confirmed as National Parks. Riders will receive their rally packs with bonus information and the game will be afoot.

Once the riders have started in the morning, I will provide more information on the theme with description of bonuses and requirements to be considered a finisher in this year's event. Between now and then, I am certain to have more fodder for additional reports.

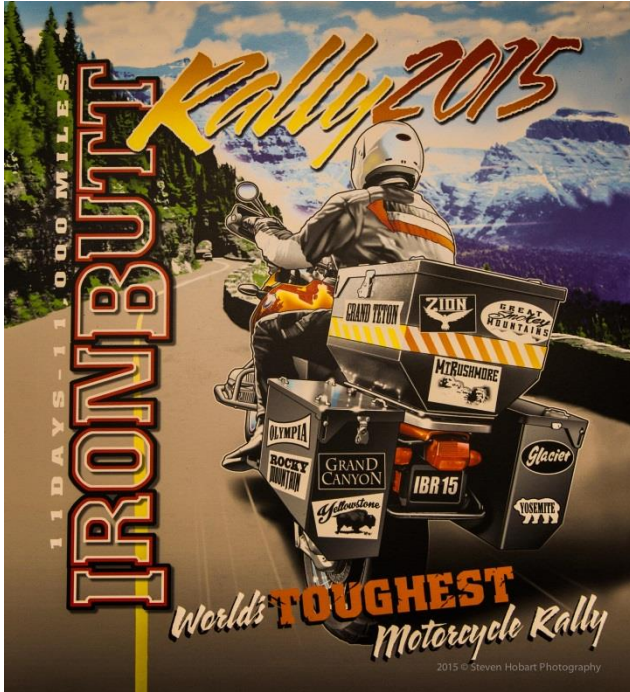
*Chris Cimino
Iron Butt Scribe
Iron Butt Rally©*

Correction: I inadvertently referred to 2011 Finisher Neil Hejny as rookie in yesterday's report. My apologies to Neil. No disrespect was intended.

Day 1 Not What Muir Had in Mind - (see Update Addendum as of 7:29 PM)

“Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity”

– John Muir, *Our National Parks*



At 7:32 PM Sunday evening, a collective silence befell the main conference room at the Sheraton Uptown. Over the preceding 90 minutes, Lisa Landry graciously introduced the 87 riders and 5 pillions in the 2015 Iron Butt Rally. Each walked like graduates to receive their rally pack, flip their tassel and get a private word of encouragement from Dean Kneebone. 79 year old Al Holtsberry, appropriately assigned Rider No. 79, received a warm standing ovation. After Will Barclay received his Rider No. 90 packet, the tone shifted. The architect of this year’s ride, Tom Austin, took to the podium.

For the next few minutes, Tom described the high level approach to an abbreviated, accelerated IBA National Parks Tour (NPT). The IBA NPT ride, itself a variant on the

collection of National Parks Passport Stamps started in 1986, essentially provides for riders to visit at least 50 national parks, historic sites, monuments, battlefields, etc., including provincial parks in Canada, within a year. If the objective of the IBA NPT is to “take some time” to visit these awe inspiring places of preservation and remembrance, Tom’s plan essentially amounts to speed dating for your next vacation. Then the clock struck 7:32 and Tom declared:

“To be a finisher of the 2015 Iron Butt Rally, a rider must visit 50 US national parks in 25 states¹ before 10 AM (MDT), July 10, 2015.”

(cue crickets)

Rookies looked at Big Dogs for reaction. Big Dogs sat poker faced. Tom went on to describe that he, Bob Higdon and Dave McQueeney had meticulously narrowed the population of 407 possible locations to just 347 different US national parks, meeting the criteria of being accessible by motorcycle. In addition, all but 3 parks would be available on all 3 legs. The 3 exclusions represented one park on each leg where the bonus would be earned by appearing in a group photo to be taken at a predetermined time as detailed in the rally packs. For Leg 1, the Group Photo bonus is:

¹ For purposes of this event, the District of Columbia is considered a “state.”

PEFO

Petrified Forest National Park

I-40 Exit 311

Chambers, AZ

Coordinates: 35.0719 -109.7795

June 29, 2:30 pm



Petrified Forest National Park contains the fossilized remains of a forest from the Triassic Period (over 200 million years ago). It is a unique and spectacular landscape.

Have your Rider Number recorded by IBR staff not later than 2:30 pm at the roadside parking area at the specified coordinates. Be in the group picture taken by IBR staff at 2:45 pm. Your flag must be visible in the photo.

Riders were given a beautifully prepared spiral bound reference book containing the name, location and description of each eligible park in each US state, excluding Hawaii. The book itself is really quite stunning, a souvenir of the highest caliber, which I will excerpt over the next 11 days as appropriate.

Following the usual spate of questions, the riders quickly dispersed to their chambers to begin researching what the hell Woodrow Wilson was thinking and why he wasn't more focused on things other than signing the act that established the National Parks, like, you know, World War I. Nineteen rookies stayed behind for the opportunity to seek routing counsel from Tom, Lisa, Mike, Bob and Dave. Several surrounded Tom. They appeared to be sizing him up for a body bag. I couldn't watch.

By this morning, most riders seemed to have settled down and realized this wasn't going to be a picnic. Foolish are they who ever thought it would. But there were signs of confidence and resolve. Surely all have identified Petroglyph National Monument as the closest qualifying national park, just 12.1 miles to the west.

PETR

Petroglyph National Monument

On Western Trail, north of Unser Blvd.

Albuquerque, NM

Coordinates: 35.138 -106.7117

8a-5p



Petroglyph National Monument protects one of the largest petroglyph sites in North America, featuring designs and symbols carved onto volcanic rocks by Native Americans and Spanish settlers 400 to 700 years ago.

Take a picture of the Visitor Center.

A show of hands Sunday night suggested as many as 20% of the riders may not yet have purchased an Annual National Parks Pass. Bob Higdon rode out to the Visitor's Office at Petroglyph on Sunday, sauntered inside with his helmet and was greeted by an attendant with "I'll bet I know why *you're* here." They had sold 51 passes since Friday with just 4 left in stock. The local REI sold out Saturday. Petroglyph is shaping up to be a repeat of the Gateway Arch bonus from the in 2007 IBR, just a few miles from the Start, with the entire field likely to arrive within minutes of each other. We thought about calling the Visitor's Center to warn 'em. Thought about it.

A stroll poll through the staging area suggested most riders had designed reasonable routes for this first leg: 6-10 states; 12-20 parks, 2,700-3,900 anticipated miles. A few Big Dogs pointed towards 4,000-5,000 mile routes, which could be a big bite. Or, just dogs marking territory. 49% hinted at routing to the Group Photo bonus for this afternoon.

The usual pre-shotgun activities were fairly unusual. Warchild explained the staging process. Riders were confused. Warchild yelled. Riders walked in circles. Warchild had a stroke and passed out. Riders applauded and lined up, with the 19 Hair Dye Challenge riders in line first, winner Danny Dawson to lead the parade.



No major last minute repairs although Andy Mackey from yesterday's report asked me to stop writing about him. Seems he was pinged all night by friends concerned for his auxiliary light issue offering to send parts. He didn't get any sleep and now intends to hold be responsible if he has crappy Leg One. Yeah, right. 201,612 miles on a used BMW and it'll be *my* fault if he has a problem.



Kirsten Talken-Spauling, Rider No 2 this year, finished 6th in 2011, her rookie rally. An employee of the National Parks Service herself, she is supremely happy that she purchased her Annual Parks Pass on Friday.

"I know you all love this man. But, the law is the law. He must come with me. Our BMW RTP officers tell me he is a wanted man. I'm sorry."



Tom Loftis started his 10th Iron Butt Rally today. He is a Big Dog by any standard. He has finished 7 and DNF'd twice. In 2013, he finished 5th. He is one of a handful of proven riders who could one day win it all. Sadly, Tom, there are no points for your photo with the police motorcycles.



9:45 AM. Riders gathered around Dale, Lisa and representatives of the Albuquerque Police Department for last minute instructions and well wishes. Then all headed to their bikes, with only Robert Bolger and Chris McGaffin not allowed to leave with the field. Bolger's electrical system blanked during his ODO test. The Connie 14 did eventual fire, but too late to be in the parade. I'm sure it's nothing. I'm sure Robert won't give it another thought. McGaffin failed to present his ID card at the ODO as it was locked safely in his room, along with his incomplete routing for Leg One. While rookie Bolger was bummed, 2009 finisher McGaffin was thankful for the extra time to build his route and recover a little from his sleepless night.

9:55 AM. Eight cruisers and two motor officers from ABQ PD and New Mexico State Patrol took up positions to halt traffic to make way for the imminent parade of bikes.

9:59 AM. Canadian Nahum Sloan protected his falling R1200GSA from damage by selflessly throwing his 71 year old body between it and the tarmac. After all who rushed to help realized the large pool of red on his glove was ink and not blood, over the side he was pushed overboard to make way for departing aircraft and calm his nerves a bit. Sloan started in 2013 only to withdraw after 2400 miles. He knows the Code.





9:59:30 AM. READY... SET...

10:00:00
(AM)
GO!



At 79 years old, 3 time Iron Butt Rally finisher Al Holtsberry becomes the oldest rider to start an Iron Butt Rally.

Jack Cheasty, 67, wanted into the Iron Butt Rally so badly, he offered to ride his 20 year old BW R100GSPD instead of something with, say, modern electronics. Welcome to the Hopeless Class, Mr. Cheasty!



2015 Miss Mississippi Hannah Roberts wishes Mark Crane a successful ride.

By noon, reports from the Petroglyph Visitor's Center reported 30 some motorcyclists had come through to collect passport park stamps and take pictures. "They were just wonderful," said Ranger Dianne. "Maybe a little overdressed for the heat."

We are watching the Spot tracks to see what discernable routing begins to reveal itself over the riders' first few hundred miles. You can follow the tracks as well with the link on the same www.ironbuttrally.com/2015.cfm page with this report. Rider numbers are scrambled to protect their individual routes. We will upload an additional report this evening with initial analysis.

Chris Cimino

Iron Butt Scribe

Iron Butt Rally©

Day 1 – Addendum – What the Hell Are These People Thinking??

First, a few corrections:

Correction 1: Tom Loftus did not finish 5th in 2013. That was Matt Watkins with his 2nd monster ride after finishing 13th as a rookie in 2009. Tom did not finish 55th either. That was Sam Liles. Tom did not finish at all in 2013 after the fuel pump on his ST1300 croaked. My apologies for not being able to read. No disrespect intended to Mr. Watkins. On the other hand, it was kind of fun to again point out Sam Liles' 55th finish after riding more miles than the 27 riders that finished before him.

Correction 2: Eric Jewell is clearly riding a Honda ST1300, not a Yamaha ST1300. Or a Honda FJR 1300. I got nothin'.

First 8 Hours

Around the staging area this morning, Rally staff visited with riders for their plans and initial routing. The consensus seemed to be a conservative loop through the west, with only a few considering more midwest or even eastern pursuits. Overall, riders talked about maintaining some reserves, checking off some states/parks towards finishing, and waiting until the bonus point value increased in legs 2 and 3 before making more strategic moves. 43 riders said they intended to join the group photo at Petrified Forest National Park in Chambers, Arizona, at 2:30 (MST). The final number turned out to be 32. Based on those who arrived really early there, it appears some riders failed to remember that Arizona does not recognize Daylight Savings Time. I'm sure it was a cool and relaxing hour for those who waited.



Based on early Spotwalla tracking, 83 riders were trending towards western/northern loops, projected to check off 6-7 states with maybe 20 parks before returning on Thursday. Some clockwise, some counter. 4 riders, however, appear well off the reservation as of now.

Josh Mountain, the 2nd place finisher from 2013, may be exercising his Runner Up demons with a blistering ride on Day One deep into Rio Grande country to visit Big Bend National Park and its 4th highest points for this leg. Is it possible he intends to then turn north towards Montana to join the others taking the scenic tour? For this aggressive Stonewall Attack to work, he will need to immediately retreat from the bowels of Texas and position himself by morning. Phil Weston may be the rider without a chair when the music stops tonight. He's been dogging Mr. Mountain since leaving Albuquerque, but may be too far behind to cover the same ground for a daylight only bonus.

Further north, and surprisingly east, are Hoka Hey winner Will Barclay, and 2013 finisher Dave Legnosky. Barclay has been leading Legnosky by 2-3 hours all day, but both seem to be covering the same ground, and going the wrong way. Unlike Mountain and Weston into Texas, where the points may seem enticing enough to maybe tempt a rider, Barclay and Legnosky have been tracking through Oklahoma, effectively the same ground they will have to cover again in Leg 2. Unless they are scouting for the next leg, this push east seems ill-advised. At some point (when?) they have to turn north, but to where? Kansas? Nebraska?

With the sun rapidly setting, tomorrow will tell if the four rebels bet wisely.

For the rest of the field, variations on the rotation aside, all seem to have a circular plan with a northern slant. Terry and Lynda Lahman were heading towards Ft. Collins at last sighting. Craig Brooks, Margaret Peart, Robert Scott and Chris McGaffin all see something in eastern Colorado not so clear, or so attractive, to the others. Clearly, chipping away everything that isn't the elephant.

Late note at 6:56 PM, Sam Liles reported a temporary road closure on Navaho Service RD 59, due to a motorhome fire. Sam reported he and Sydney, and fellow riders Kit Chunhawong, Gerhard Memmen-Krueger and Rob Jaime were sidelined waiting for clearance. Jaime, DNF'd in 2011 after colliding with a mountain lion, is reportedly standing between Kit and Gerhard just in case.



Overheard today in Rally Central

Lisa: "Who the hell is going 97???"

Tom: "Stop looking at kilometers."

Lisa: "Oh."

Bob: "Is it possible Nancy Leffcourt could be riding at 798.86 mph."

Chris: "Not with all her luggage."

That's a full lid. Good night.

Chris Cimino

Iron Butt Scribe

Iron Butt Rally©

Day 2 – IBR TV

Keyboard riders following the SpotWalla public page hit ‘refresh’ every few minutes the entire night on Monday, each time trying to track blips from point to point. So did Rally Staff. We will again tonight. And tomorrow. And the night after that. The now universal use of satellite spot tracking devices has greatly expanded the safety *and* the audience appeal of long distance riding events. “I can’t stop watching” was a common comment posted on many online forums. The random rider number generation with each update on the public page helps preserve the rider’s privacy as well as ensure competitive information isn’t advertently disclosed. As some have noticed, not all riders have consented to the public following. Likewise, riders were not required to grant access to the Rally Staff or even use such a system. However, the point value of doing so is such that to not use one would all but exclude a high placing finish. As scribe for this year’s event, I both love and hate the damn little thing.

Like others, I can’t stop watching. It’s addictively hypnotic. I’m not sleeping. My meals are taken in front of the keyboard. There’s no wireless service in the men’s room here at the hotel. There is absolutely no reason I should know that. It’s become *The Truman Show* and, frankly, it’s not healthy. But I do it for you...and Mike Kneebone...and to piss off Bob Higdon. He’s sitting right there across the table, furiously searching SpotWalla for excessive speed violators, vein bulging in his forehead. I know he just wants me to slump over in my chair. I can feel it.

It’s been an eerily quiet Day 2. Lisa Landry’s phone has not been ringing as much as anticipated. That will change as the days wear on. But, for now, it’s a rare treat allowing staff to double and triple check preparations for the Checkpoint in 48 hours. Our day has been good. For some riders, it has not.

Drew Dill’s mechanical problems didn’t end with the motor work on the ride to the Start. After collecting seven bonuses from New Mexico into Arizona, the clutch on Big Blue Beast let go Monday night. He was back on the road Tuesday with a new clutch and with routing adjustments. He may have stumbled out of the gate, but he can bounce back. He has to. Any rider with the class to thank the Rallymaster for putting together a “rally of a lifetime for all of us” while standing on the sidelines on Day One awaiting repairs, has to finish.



No news about the Hopeless Class is good news. Kurt Worden and his Ninja 250 seem to be collecting a good number of smaller and midsized bonuses without having to knock out huge miles or deal with high heat. Jack Cheasty, who was struggling with routing data on Monday,

has been similarly consistent to Kurt, but further west and in higher heat. Perhaps he is taking the Paris-Dakar moniker for his air-cooled BMW a bit too literally? But, for another day, these guys are staying off my radar.

Responsible deer parents drill their fawns often on predators in the wild. They use flashcards of



wolves, mountain lions, hunters, Disney illustrators, Peterbilt's and so on. They should add Triumph's Trophy to the list after Troy Martin hit one just south of Hoback, Wyoming, late last night. Troy was unharmed and his Trophy will continue. Bambi is dead and Lisa is not happy no venison will be at the scoring table. Troy also reported having crashed earlier in the day on a dirt road near Ft. Defiance, Arizona. Seriously? Hopefully, Dale will now lift his curse from Troy's tech inspection faux pas.

Josh Mountain knocked out a monster ride Monday into Big Bend National Park in southwest Texas near the Rio Grande. At the end of Monday, it looked as if he would be close to the end of daylight limit for that bonus. The checkpoint scoring team is already preparing to scrutinize his photo for evidence daylight. Or if it was merely Josh's big smile at the Big Ride he has planned. It will be a critical issue for Josh, the make or break of his entire leg that could have him in the lead Thursday night. By late in the day Tuesday, he had swept his way up the High Plains and seemed pointed towards Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument in southeastern Montana. It is an ambitious plan indeed and, of course, no ambitious plan has ever gone wrong at Little Bighorn. *Ever.*

Phil Weston's big bet to bag the Big Bend bonus before bouncing north went bust when he failed to make the Daylight Only bonus in daylight. He had been shadowing Josh all day Monday, but just couldn't get it in the hole. It's a good thing the 2013 14th place finisher had all night in Alpine, Texas, waiting for the sun to rise. Based on his assault deep into the heart of Texas today, Phil seems to have come to peace with his overbite and made good use of his downtime. Assuming he took his rest bonus last night as well, he may be sipping lemonade tonight from Monday's lemons, near the top of the points tally and far more rested than Josh.

Will Barclay spent Monday in the plush comfy saddle of his H-D heading northeast. With so few bonuses along his route, some had speculated he was headed home to New York for a few more Motor Company T-shirts. Based on his track through Monday night, he should have collected 997 points, riding nearly 800 miles. By comparison, Josh Mountain should have

earned as many points within the first three hours Monday. Barclay swept up a number of bonuses in the Kansas City area Tuesday morning, checking off more parks and states, before continuing north into Nebraska, Wisconsin and finally turning west across South Dakota. His routing strategy remains unclear. He could be knocking down states and saving big point hunting for later legs when the states are, you know, closer. Jim Owen appears to be riding yet another *very* efficient route, concentrated so far in just three states adjoining New Mexico. At no time has he been more than 400 miles from the checkpoint, yet is on track to be in the top five in points. Bob Lilley is riding a similar route, although not as tight as Owen. But Lilley is moving north tonight which gives him some more options Wednesday. Craig Brooks is casting a wider net than either Owen or Lilley and should find himself with Josh Mountain cashing a big points check in Little Bighorn by nightfall, maybe Greg Rice, too. Eric Jewell has already been there. Kirsten Talken-Spaulling may have marked the territory as well. Leading the pack at this very early stage of the first leg appears to be Chris Sakala, having gone to the Sun and back in Glacier National Park and is now pointed south. Wednesday is shaping up to be a very interesting day in the kennel.

Rookie Danny D-O-S-S-M-A-N appears to be having a perfectly lovely ride, scenic in fact. He's not letting the indignity of my rookie mistake of misspelling his name as Dawson yesterday seemingly bother him at all. Then again, he really wasn't enthralled about winning the Hair Dye contest either, once he started to feel the pressure of being the First rider out of the lot Sunday. But, he didn't want to offend Dale. Let's hope his congeniality continues through scoring.

Proving that you don't have to be young to be foolish, Al Holtsberry and Nahum Sloan, at 79 and 71, respectively, both found their way into Death Valley, California, arriving at the Furnace Creek Visitor Center around 116 degrees. Being the experienced elder, Al is smartly wearing his white riding suit from 1986. He should have been cooler. (And, before anyone freaks out looking for penalty points for changing bikes, please note that Al is also riding a Yamaha FJR, not a BMW R1200GS as initially reported.) After retreating from the hottest temps today in the US, Sloan turned north in Nevada towards Reno. Holtsberry turned south and looks to be bedding down in Las Vegas. Maybe these old guys know a thing or two about replenishing liquids.

Rookie (Walter) Jim Orr is very organized. He has two of everything, including Spot trackers. Of course, he left one in Albuquerque that continues to send signals confusing the hell out of everyone. Prior to arriving, he shipped parts for his TPMS to the rally hotel to install before tech inspection. Jim is running a car tire on his 2007 Gold Wing and IBR rules require a tire pressure monitoring system when so equipped. In an absolute freak coincidence even Bob Higdon could not fabricate, the hotel released the package to *another* Walter Orr who happened to be checking out. The hotel staff helped connect Walter Orr(1) with Walter Orr(2) with the former shipping the parts to the latter in time for tech on Sunday. If history is any indicator, Walter Orr(1) won't be the only civilian enlisted before to help a rider before the finish and Iron Butt Rally.

Heard around Rally Central:

10:32 AM.

(rookie) Hammy Tan: "Lisa, the bridge over Snake River is closed. Can I take a picture of the Bridge Out sign to get credit for the bonus?"

Lisa: "The bridge over the Snake River is closed?"

Hammy: "Yes?"

Lisa: "The *only* bridge over Snake River in Idaho is closed?"

Hammy: *(silence)*

Lisa: "Hammy, is your Street Pilot set for dirt roads?"

Hammy: "Oh... *(pause)* Never mind."

Section III(B)(3) subparagraph (4) of Iron Butt Rally rules allows for riders to collect points for the bonus if the *only* access road is unexpectedly closed and provided multiple paved roads don't exist. In some cases, the detour to the next paved road can be hundreds of miles (so sad). In Hammy's case, however, the great Owsley Bridge Eastside Turnout closure detour was 3.23 miles.



Lisa: "Chris, are you checking your facts before you publish?"

Chris: "Yes, Lisa. I upload and 2,000 LDriders immediately let me know what was wrong."

Lisa: "As long as you have a system."

"I swear to God. If Cimino makes one more rookie mistake, I'll beat him to death with my feeble bare hands and take over the keyboard."

That's a full lid for today. Tonight I will be listening to call-in bonus recordings and laughing until I pee. And, hitting 'refresh' on SpotWalla.

Chris Cimino
Iron Butt Scribe
Iron Butt Rally©

Day 3 – Self Inflicted Wounds

I guess I did this to myself. There's no one else to blame really. At the Riders' meeting Sunday afternoon, I drilled riders on the five elements needed to claim the Call In bonus: name, rider number, where you were, where you had been and where you were going. I goaded riders with a promise of public admonition for failing to meet the criteria of a bonus akin to getting points for breathing. The instructions would include a small mirror printed with "Fog here – collect 10,000 points." Everyone laughed, nervously. So sure was I to have dozens of Call In screw-ups to skewer today, I slept in this morning and whittled a wooden spear over my coffee while watching a dozen Save-the-Planet protesters picket our hotel for hosting the New Mexico Oil & Gas Coalition Energy Summit. STOP GLOBAL WARMING! LEAVE ROCKS BE!

I amused myself over coffee imagining the furor if they only knew that in a small 47 degree, starting-to-smell, meeting room in the same hotel as the executives of Death to Mother Earth, Inc., a dozen people were orchestrating an event responsible for the burning of 23,925 gallons of fossil fuels simply for the sadistic entertainment of one Mike Kneebone. Then I began listening to the 116 voicemails Tom Austin had forwarded to my email and my perfect day unraveled. 87 riders had called within the appropriate 12 hour window, eventually leaving perfectly completed messages with the call clarity of a Verizon commercial. To my dismay, not a single one missed giving the required information, 25 even calling twice to ensure their information was received. It was as if they were all accomplices in some plot hatched to leave me with nothing to write about. I swear to God Higdon spent the night calling each rider with what to say. That is the only explanation.

Eric Jewell: "I think I'd rather go to Prudhoe Bay on the #%*(@&\$! Haul Road than have to ride that 5.4 miles to the Northern Bridge again (Glen Canyon National Recreation Area). I need a massage, man. I mean my shoulders are *toast*. Anyway, I guess the Iron Butt Rally wouldn't be the Iron Butt Rally without a little dirt, huh. I also don't recommend Grapevine Road as a cutoff from Highway 91 over to Yellowtail Dam either. But, again I had to see what it was like. Having a ball out here. It doesn't suck being on a motorcycle 18 hours a day."

Drew Dill: "Feeling great. Thank everyone for efforts and support. It's an awesome event and I am enjoying participating in it."

Tim Masterson: "Everything's good!"

Andy Mackey: "I am having a WONDERFUL ride. It is fantastic!"

Mark Crane: "My best day of riding Eh-VER! The HAFO bonus (Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument, Hagerman, Idaho) was a hard bonus, not enough points for the amount of effort. But I've had great roads. No cars, except for the cop for 22 miles before John Day (Fossil Beds National Monument, Kimberly, Oregon). But I wanna know if anyone else goes to HAFO."

Danny Dossman: (calling enroute to the Grand Tetons) "I have had a fantastic day and half. I LOVE it. I'm having a blast." While Danny was happy when he called Tuesday, his Wednesday didn't start as well. The shifter linkage on his H-D Ultra Classic broke outside Billings, Montana. When the local dealer wasn't overly interested in providing assistance, Danny's hometown

Horny Toad Harley-Davidson in Temple, Texas, came to the rescue, convincing the local shop to swap out parts from a used stock unit with replacements on the way. Danny is back on the road.

Hammy Tan called twice. Once with his required information.,then again with a 90 second rambling revelation of lessons learned about stopping to pee when you need to. I can only hope he was about to start his rest bonus.

Pat Ford and Rebecca Martinez demonstrated one of the advantages of riding 2-up. As Pat was giving their information, Rebecca is in background yelling "Rider number! RIDER NUMBER!"

Chris Sakala kept calling until he got everything right. 3rd time was the charm.

(Deerslayer) Troy Martin: "I'm rolling. I'm doing good. I'm feeling good. I'm collecting three more bonuses than I had planned and two extra states. I think I'm doing fairly well."

Garry Springgay also encountered deer coming into Little Baker, Nevada. He says he slowed to 10 mph to creep past it. But as he passed the deer, he swears it jumped right at him. So Garry punched the deer in the face, breaking his watch. Garry is fine. The deer was stunned, thinking these Iron Butts really are the World's Toughest Motorcycle Riders.

Heat was a prevailing theme through many of the calls. Larry Meeker noted that he was in an air conditioned McDonald's in Provo Utah at the time. It was 99 degrees. Al Holtsberry calling from Beatty, Nevada, reported the temp in Death Valley was 122, but "felt warmer." Jon Good and Ande Bergman, doing everything 2-up, even left their message together like an answering machine greeting from the 90's. John added they were having lots of fun, but that it was "Goddamned hot out here."

(Hopeless Class) Jack Cheasty: "Hot as blazes out here. Much cooler once I got into Utah. Coming across the Mojave, I thought my tires were going to melt. They didn't. I think my brain did." Jack forgot his Rider number on the first call, but immediately called again with the missing information (repeating all required info) and adding "My brain has finally melted." *Damn, I thought I'd have at least one. Oh, well. There will be more Call In bonuses ahead.*

Jack: "Lisa, I may have to DNF."

Lisa: "Is everything ok? Is it the drive shaft?"

Jack: "No, the bike is just fine. My brain is melted and I don't think I can get back to the checkpoint in time."

Lisa: "Where are you?"

Jack: "Salt Lake City. My GPS says it will take 35 hours to get to the checkpoint."

Lisa: "You're in Salt Lake City and think it will take you 35 hours to ride 599 miles. Is it possible your GPS is still set on your home in Clarksville, Tennessee?"

Jack: (pause) \$&%#! See you tomorrow night.

Jim Owen: "Thank you for that 8 hour rest bonus last night at Moab. It was sweet."

Jim's restful, efficient leg is shaping up to deliver big points with a dip into Texas today to claim most of the same bonuses as Phil Weston. Except Jim is running clockwise collecting bonuses

on his way *back* to the barn whereas Weston has spent the last two days cutting the branches beneath him as he climbs the tree. Weston has cleaned out everything between Albuquerque and New Orleans, leaving him nothing to do but to ride the 1,200 miles back. It also makes us wonder where he will go on Leg Two when he has to ride through the same general area. Maybe he is planning to take a northerly arc to Kingsport?

Will Barclay has ridden an opposite strategy, blasting 1000 miles into Missouri before turning north and west to start collecting big bonuses. But Barclay may be reaching too far too fast, extending into Washington late Wednesday afternoon, leaving him another 1200 miles to ride to make the checkpoint. And that assumes he stops collecting bonuses and just rides a straight speed route. But can this Hoka Hey winner resist the temptation to drop down into Oregon and California and, as Ebby Calvin "Nuke" LaLoosh said, "*announce my presence with authority.*" If he does, he will be in good company as Kirsten Talken-Spaulling appears on that same route, although a few hours ahead.

More interesting could be the route Eric Jewell is taking, having worked his way up to Montana with others, turning east for the big bonus at Little Bighorn with the rest of the kennel. But, since then he's been riding *way* east towards Kansas City, almost Barclay's route in reverse. Allen Hatcher and Troy Martin are also zeroing on that barbecue capital. Every time I announce another rider going to Kansas City, route master Tom Austin snaps to attention and screams "Why?" Greg Rice seems to get it. Bob Lilley, too. Both have turned south to pick their way through South Dakota, Nebraska and Colorado. Craig Brooks has already seen that ground and is now on the west side of the counterclockwise loop looking at maybe reaching the Lake Mead National Recreation Area before nightfall.

Chris McGaffin, late to start Sunday, appears to be finding his route. After seeming to follow Will Barclay towards the Midwest on Monday, he has turned southerly into Louisiana and finally west to cover similar ground as Jim Owen and Phil Weston. More so than anyone else, Chris will be covering old ground for the first day of Leg Two. But, at least he seems like he has a plan which is more than it appeared Sunday morning.

Day One Breakout, Josh Mountain, is easing into the efficiency stage of this leg and now riding a tight route towards the checkpoint. As long as he stays focused he may have outsmarted everyone with a big lead early to arrive at the checkpoint rested and ready to go again. But, when your nickname is NutJob, it's not because you stop to think things through. There's still plenty of time for Josh to overreach.

A final note of concern is the number of riders still heading north this evening. The checkpoint opens Thursday at 8 PM (MDT), with penalty points assessed at 1% of arrival points per minute. Yellowstone is over 900 miles away, as is Little Bighorn. It's time to start heading home, kids. This is just the first leg.

Chris Cimino

Iron Butt Scribe

Iron Butt Rally©

Day 4 – Flightpath Deviation

While aircraft are on approach to a carrier the shipboard crew runs its checklist of procedures for landing. Fire crews are readied. Sick Bay goes to alert status. Non-essential personnel leave the bridge. The chaplain offers a silent prayer. All crew focuses on the task at hand of safely securing returning flight crews. Nothing else is as important.

A checkpoint in the Iron Butt Rally runs through similar preparations. The pathway into the parking lot is kept clear and the lot is roped off. Official timekeeper, Ira Agins, takes up position at the door so riders can stop the clock immediately upon arrival. Food stations are erected with proteins, carbs, greens and liquids. Rooms are pre-keyed and beds are readied. Some 30 volunteers will be on hand to help riders with bike or equipment issues. 13-14 scorers, trained in Tom Austin's scoring program, will work with riders through the scoring process. Riders must present their assigned identification card to the top the clock. Once their arrival time is noted, they have the earlier of 60 minutes or 10 PM to present themselves for scoring. Once seated at the scoring table, riders cannot leave until completed. The IBR volunteer staff makes this entire process as seamless as possible.

Day 4 has not been without its issues for riders.

Rookie Brian Bumpas called at 7:46 AM, stranded near Lamar, Colorado, with a dead Gold Wing. A rutted county road had clearly shaken something loose, but Brian was dumbfounded on what it could be. Lisa Landry knows more about how to kill a Gold Wing than any 10 men alive and walked him through basic diagnostics, fairly certain the culprit was failed battery connection. Unable to affect repairs himself, rally staff located a shop in nearby La Junta, Colorado for a tow. With the ground cable repaired, Bumpas was back on the road at 12:22 returning to the scene of the tow to resume his ride, just with 4 ½ fewer hours to make it to Albuquerque. As of 3 PM he was still 388 miles from the checkpoint. He may make it back, but most likely in the penalty period. What should have been an easy day has become a nail biter for the rookie rider.

As early as 8 AM, rally staff began running the math on what it would take for Nahum Sloan to make the checkpoint within the window. Sloan pressed 400 miles Wednesday to the Oregon Caves National Monument in the far southeast corner of that coastal state, only to then backtrack the same 400 miles, all for 322 points. It is a routing conundrum we cannot fathom and suspect he buried something in that park years ago that it was now time to retrieve. For whatever reason, the math just didn't compute. At 12:48 PM Sloan too reached the same conclusion and called Lisa with the bad news. He, too, had concluded that he would not make the checkpoint in time and was withdrawing. Staff was only slightly less disappointed than Nahum.

Despite riding a BMW R1200GS, Margaret Peart went down while off-roading unexpectedly in a rest stop parking area outside Provo, Utah, coming to rest behind parked truck. With bruised ribs and a swelling hand, she was unable to upright the Beemer. So the tired Aussie found a brilliant solution to her two problems. She left a note for the sleeping trucker that she was behind him and asking for his help when he awoke. And then she proceeded to lay down by her bike and take a nap. Both got sleep, both righted the bike, and both went on their way, with

Margaret reporting slight damage to one saddlebag. At 12:55 PM (MDT) she reported in from Page, Arizona, overheated and in pain, and had stopped for a rest. She was moving again by 3 PM, but with 388 miles to the checkpoint. It is not looking good for the resourceful Peart but we're not ready to count out this world traveler.

Sam and Sydney Liles reported intermittent starter failure with their brand new BMW K1600GTLE. While able to continue for now, arrangements are being made to secure a replacement through Sandia BMW in Albuquerque. This may be one of the advantages of riding 2-up although Sydney is reportedly getting tired of pushing for bump starts.

Eric Jewell continues his indirect approach, having ridden due east yesterday to collect the Harry S Truman National Historic Site in Independence, Missouri, just east of Kansas City. Based on his tracking data, Eric's route coincides with a tornado reported in the area around the same time. Unfazed, Jewell has continued to sweep up Kansas bonuses, turning west again. Except, rather than point towards Albuquerque 800 miles away, he headed to Colorado first before turning south. If successful, he should have cleaned up 11 states and twice as many parks in Leg One, and be sitting in the Top Ten.

Will Barclay didn't take the bait in California last night. After collecting the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, he turned southeast towards the checkpoint. For some reason, his spot tracker stopped sending data at 5:57 AM just south of Provo, Utah, not resuming until 6.5 hours later in Mesa Verde National Park in Cortez, Utah, some 307 miles away. It remains to be seen where he rode during that gap, but the lack of consistent tracking data may jeopardize some of Barclay's bonus points. Still, he is on track to nab 15-16 states with two legs still to go. If he takes a similar approach to Leg Two, without any more tracking snafus, Mr. Barclay may meet the finisher criteria by the weekend and spend the last leg big game hunting just for sport. Of course, he still has to check-in tonight within the window.

Kirsten Talken-Spaulding also turned southeast from John Day and is pointed to the checkpoint. She is having a tremendous Leg One and should be in good position when the scoring dust settles.

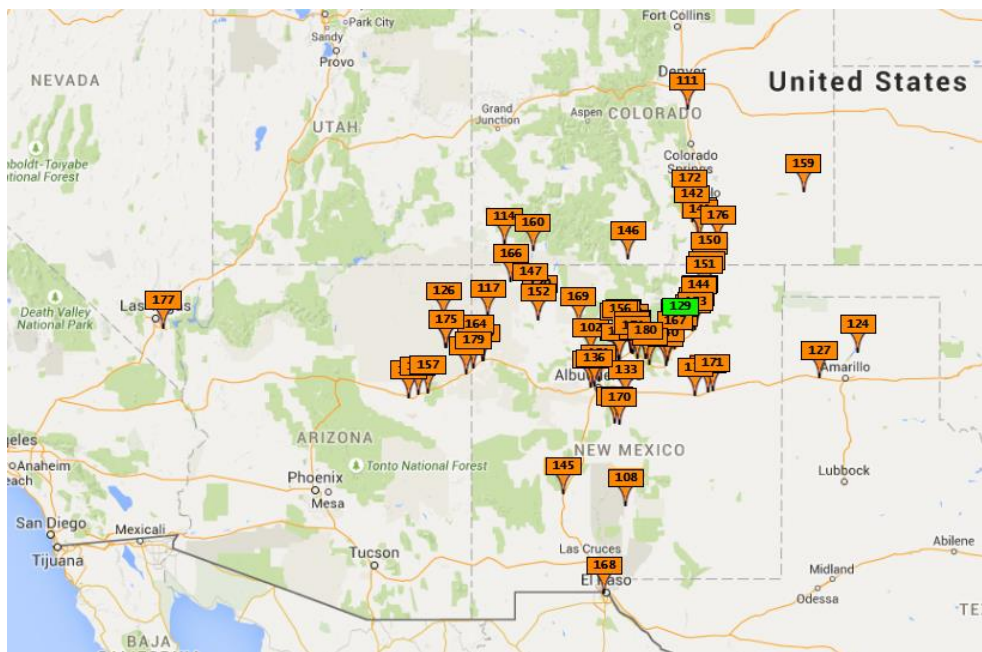
Jim Owen continues to wind down a beautifully efficient route. It may be just 7 states but with 20-22 parks, lots of points and well-rested, Jim is projected to be in the Top Five for this leg, while Josh Mountain, projected to be this leg's leader, will have ridden 1,000 more miles for a 2,000 point lead. Chris Sakala and Eric Jewell are also projected to be near the top, although again not as rested as Owen.

Hopeless Class Ninja 250 rider, Kurt Worden, is on approach. To keep from cramping from the lack of buzz at the checkpoint, he is planning to strap vibrators to each arm. Such is his commitment to finishing on the little MSF training bike. Fellow Hopeless Class rider, Jack Cheasty, must have sorted through his GPS issues from yesterday. After realizing he would not need all 35 hours to ride from Salt Lake City to the checkpoint, he headed off towards Wyoming and Colorado, adding two more states to his leg. Unfortunately, Cheasty may have a self-fulfilling prophesy about missing a checkpoint. As of 3 PM, he was still 350 miles out.

Tonie Cowen may be on the checkpoint bubble as well. She's developed tire problems on her Yamaha Super Tenere while trying to collect the Rocky Mountain National Park bonus north of

Estes Park, Colorado. Estes Park is never an easy area to ride through when it's not near a busy 3-day holiday. She's picked her way through stop and go traffic to get to I-25. But the 3 PM cutoff for this post, Cowen had cleared the beltway around Denver, but was still 434 miles out.

As of 3 PM, 40 rider spot dots were lined up along I-25 heading south for a steady glide path into the checkpoint, right into the mouth of the thunderstorms already firing along that same line, with several riders reporting blinding rain. Current forecasts predict more storms to the west, where another 23 riders are poised to land. The balance of the field, except for Nahum Sloan, is on approach from the south and east, already in heavy rain. The next 8-10 hours will be frenetic as riders cycle through and points are tallied. I hope to post an updated report by midnight with rider standings, along with a link to the list of the available parks.



Chris Cimino
Iron Butt Scribe
Iron Butt Rally©

Day 5 - Reset & Replay

It was a classic Iron Butt Rally checkpoint. In the three hours before the check in window opened, the skies opened and dump biblical amounts of rain, sometimes blowing sideways. Lightning lit up the sky in rapid succession and thunder exploded. Just about the same time as riders lined up on approach from the north, backed up I-25 from Albuquerque to the Colorado state line, the National Weather Service a flash flood warning for the same area. At one point, rider speeds on I-25 dropped into the 50's then the low 20's as the storms rolled through. One by one, sometimes back to back, riders arrived to applause, odometer checks by John Ferber and Dennis Bitner, and hugs from the Grand Dame of sMiles, Voni Glaves, IBR veterans all. Upon arrival, the riders checked in with 1999 IBR veteran Ira Agins and Donna Fousek to stop their rally clock. From that point, the riders had 60 minutes to arrange their documents and present themselves to Kathy Engholm and Karen Van Santen for scoring by one of the 13 volunteer scorers, under the skillful direction of two-time IBR finisher John Harrison. The rider could not leave the scoring table once the scoring process had started.



At the end of yesterday's report, we were anxiously watching three riders projected to push up against the penalty period. Tonie Cowen arrived at 8:08 nursing her damaged rear tire. 2011 IBR veteran Steve Aikens had already arranged for Sandia BMW to effect repairs after hours and, once Tonie was checked in, he shuttled her to and from the dealer for repairs.

(Left – John Ferber checks ODO reading on Cowen's Super Tenere)

Steve had likewise arranged for the dealer to service the K1600GTLE of Sam and Sydney Liles with intermittent starter issues, reportedly caused by a systemwide computer failure on the top of the line German feat of engineering. Hopefully, the Liles will be able to join Leg Two without too much delay. A rental Harley may be in their future as they strive to earn Sydney her three digit number.

(right – Sam & Sydney Liles at the Start Monday. Oh, happier days!)



Margaret Peart rolled in 62 minutes into the penalty period after pushing nearly 400 miles with sore ribs and wrist. She could hardly stand up straight and certainly was in need of some Advil. But after a good meal, a hot shower and still decent scoring, Margaret was feeling much better and ready to go Friday morning. Margaret personifies the IBA's World's Toughest Motorcycle Riders slogan.

Brian Bumpas was the last rider to arrive, rolling up 80 minutes late, but not time-barred. Brian had been waylaid Thursday morning with what turned out to be a faulty battery ground strap rattled loose by 15 miles of gravel county road north of Lamar, Colorado. Unable to diagnose or fix the problem himself, Brian lost precious with repairs, then having to return to the scene of the tow to resume his ride. After adjusting for late arrival penalties, Brian starts Leg 2 in last place but still with 11 parks and 8 states under his belt and still in the hunt to be a finisher.

Troy Martin, however, will not be a finisher this year, despite finishing Leg 1 in 4th place. As reported yesterday, Troy had a low speed get-off near Ft. Defiance, Arizona, followed by a surreal deer encounter later that night in Nevada, both leaving his Triumph Trophy covered in duct tape. Unfortunately Troy's IBR ride ended with a collision on I-25 just 30 miles from the checkpoint. He still made it in time and was scored. But the damage sustained to his Triumph Trophy was just too severe to repair and he withdrew from the IBR, joining Nahum Sloan as the first two DNF's. We hope to see them both at the starting grid in the future.



As is customary for Iron Butt Rally checkpoints, repairs and tire changes are often performed in the parking lot, regardless of conditions.

(left - Rookie Chris Ross)

Hopeless Class (and rookie) Kurt Worden uses the centerstand on his Ninja 250 to change a rear tire...



...while veteran Neil Hejny takes a slightly different approach with his Gold Wing

Three time IBR finisher Chris Sakala works the flashlight while former BMW MOA president, and two-time IBR finisher Paul Glaves helps resolve a nagging issue with Sakala's two GPS units.



Many veterans and volunteers reported the scoring process for this year's IBR was vastly improved over prior years, entirely to the credit of Tom Austin's revised software. Rider scoring was completed within an hour of the final rider checking in. Below are the standings at the end of Leg 1:

Place	First Name	Last Name	Leg 1 Score	Leg 1 Miles	Parks	States
1	Eric	Jewell	23165	4,027	28	10
2	Joshua	Mountain	23009	4,330	27	10
3	Eric	Lipps	22106	3,937	30	10
4	Troy	Martin	21601	3,939	27	10
5	Eric	Bray	21020	3,877	28	10
6	Jim	Owen	20422	3,981	31	6
7	Bob	Lilley	20191	3,758	28	9
8	Jim	Orr	20027	3,790	24	10
9	Tim	Masterson	19902	3,594	27	10
10	Brant	Moteelall	19886	3,768	25	10
11	Jon/Ande	Good/Bergman	19606	3,609	24	8
12	Jeremy	Loveall	19582	3,307	27	9
13	Perry	Karsten	19545	3,726	28	9
14	Chris	Sakala	19519	3,862	19	6
15	Andy	Mackey	19419	3,280	26	9
16	Craig	Brooks	19395	3,968	31	11
17	Allen	Hatcher	19097	3,535	19	10
18	Marc	Beaulac	18992	3,779	26	7
19	Barry	Bertram	18934	3,620	26	10
20	Tom	Loftus	18846	3,691	23	10
21	Eric	Edelman	18633	3,406	25	9
22	Jeff	Wilson	18632	3,390	25	6
23	Rob	Schween Memmen-	18534	3,618	27	8
24	Gerhard	Krueger	18525	3,167	23	7
25	Paul	Slaton	18380	3,717	21	10
26	Bob	Bowman	18304	3,376	22	9
27	Kirsten	Talken-Spaulding	18272	4,285	21	12
28	Paul	Tong	18094	3,647	23	9
29	Greg	Rice	18069	3,537	25	10
30	Chris	McGaffin	17978	3,734	21	7
31	Steve	McCaa	17978	3,295	22	8
32	Anthony	Osborne	17920	3,659	24	11
33	Ian	McPhee	17877	3,125	21	8
34	Olaf	Moon	17696	3,378	22	9
35	Gregg	Lenentine	17649	3,212	21	8
36	Robert	Scott	17589	3,230	23	10
37	Don	Duck	17274	3,750	17	8
38	Danny	Dossman	17252	3,225	19	8
39	Philip	Weston	17184	3,487	19	5

40	Mark	Crane	16975	4,227	21	12
41	Joe	Green	16952	3,340	21	10
42	Daniel	Roth	16919	3,557	19	9
43	Lynda	Lahman	16439	2,910	19	8
44	Terry	Lahman	16423	2,915	19	8
45	Phillip	O'Connor	16301	3,431	17	9
46	Alex	Ciurczak	16104	3,262	19	10
47	Chris	Comly	15809	3,024	16	7
48	Mark	Starrett	15453	3,485	19	9
49	Greg/Pat	Blewett	15333	3,542	17	11
50	Nancy	Lefcourt	15303	3,069	25	7
51	Chris	Purney	15289	3,458	17	9
52	Christopher	Ross	14982	3,367	16	9
53	Kit	Chunhawong	14973	3,162	21	9
54	Michiel	Kerkhof	14880	3,174	26	8
55	Will	Barclay	14450	4,694	18	16
56	Mike	Langford	13972	3,245	21	9
57	Tonie	Cowen	13972	4,327	14	13
58	Larry	Meeker	13749	3,348	19	9
59	Margaret	Peart	13672	3,686	13	8
60	Rob	Jaime	13579	2,367	25	4
61	Mike	Riley	13408	3,338	17	8
62	Drew	Dill	13195	2,909	21	8
63	Dave	Legnosky	13159	3,053	17	10
64	Garry	Springgay	13112	3,913	15	10
65	Lyle	Monroe	13051	2,977	22	8
66	Kurt	Worden	12861	3,024	24	8
67	Sam	Liles	12686	2,576	20	7
68	Matt	Wise	11934	3,546	19	10
69	Greg/Wini	Farmer	11922	3,122	20	8
70	Robert	Bolger	11316	2,982	17	8
71	Jerome	Byrd	11182	2,859	14	8
72	Neil	Hejny	11097	2,898	21	7
73	Eric	Chernin	10826	3,342	16	7
74	Al	Holtsberry	10476	2,704	14	8
75	Glenn	Pancoast	10303	3,348	15	10
76	Pat/Rebecca	Ford/Martinez	10010	3,251	18	9
77	Scott	Jones	9916	3,020	17	8
78	Jonathan	Tan	9744	3,612	15	8
79	John	Cooper	9491	3,860	15	10
80	Brian	Dent	9265	3,189	17	10
81	Ted	Black	9251	3,217	14	10
82	David	Walls	9098	3,479	17	9
83	George	Doughty	8803	3,088	14	7
84	Christopher	Rooney	8388	2,763	19	6
85	Jack	Cheasty	6865	2,896	11	8
86	Brian	Bumpas	6739	3,235	11	8



The long arc into Kansas City paid off for five time finisher Eric Jewell as he sits atop the standings going into Leg 2. Eric also rode 303 fewer miles than 2013's Runner Up, Josh Mountain, despite Josh's aggressive move deep into Texas territory on Day One. Jewell also collected one more national park than Josh. *(left – Eric Jewell makes sure four time IBR finisher Jeff Earls gives him credit for riding through a tornado in Kansas City)*

Rookie Erik Lipps and veteran Eric Bray likewise pounded out stellar Leg 1 rides, finishing 3rd and 5th respectively. "I perfectly executed a very bad plan," said Bray when he arrived. Not looking so bad now, eh, Eric?

2009 winner Jim Owen delivered a strong performance at 6th place, with 31 parks visited but in just 6 states. Jim said he "had a good plan and executed it to a T." He should have ample opportunity in the next two legs to overcome his state count deficit while still nipping at the heels of the leaders.

(right – Jim Owen relaxes as Lisa Stevens scores his ride. Nothing seems to rattle this rally veteran.)



No stranger to being in the Top Ten, Bob Lilley is well within striking distance, as are rookie Jim Orr and vets Tim Masterson and Brant Moteelall. Other notable performances in Leg 1 include veteran Chris Sakala's 14th place standing, notable because Chris would have been seven places higher had he not failed to claim two bonuses on his scoring form. The error is not fatal and he should be able to overcome the deficit as the point values are likely to increase in Legs 2 and 3. Chris also arrived at the checkpoint with failing GPS units. Legendary bench wrencher, and two time IBR finisher, Paul Glaves was on hand to help Chris sort through the issues. Veteran Chris Brooks is currently in 16th place, although tied with Jim Owen for most parks visited at 31. Big Dogs Tom Loftus, Kirsten Talken-Spaulding and Greg Rice are all still well within the hunt, as are a wide mix of rookies and veterans. After all, this is just Leg 1.

It's clear that pilot Will Barclay can ride. He hammered out 4,694 miles in Leg 1, surpassing 2nd place holder Josh Mountain by 364 miles for sheer distance covered. But with just 18 parks, 16 states and 14,450 points, the Hoka Hey winner is sitting in 54th place at the end of the Leg. Barclay may need to adjust his strategy going into Leg 2 if he wants to climb up the ranks in this crowd. *(Right – Bob Higdon goes over the IBR rules with Will Barclay as Helen Austin scores)*



Several other rookies with strong riding resumes like John Cooper, Ted Black, Scott Jones and Brian Dent to name just a few, may also need to rethink their approach if they want do more than just finish. After all, 79 year old Al Holstberry is currently placed ahead of them and he has to stop five times a day to nap. Of course, Al is a three time finisher of this event and experience counts for a lot, as these rookies are finding out. Dent would have been higher if had arrived for scoring on time. You would have thought having been late to the Rider's Meeting on Sunday would have drilled home the importance of time management for this talented rookie. Hopefully, the points penalty assessed for late scoring will get the message through.

That's it for today. On the way to the Kingsport checkpoint, we will be analyzing the very different approaches our Top Ten contenders took in the first leg and what they have in store for the next. Look for more updates as information comes into Rally Central.

Chris Cimino

Iron But Scribe

Iron Butt Rally©

Day 6 – No Good Can Come From This

Leg 2 began 6AM Friday morning with a riders meeting. John Harrison strongly cautioned riders to pay more attention when taking bonus photos and to read the instructions. Mike Kneebone then translated John's distinctive Alabama dialect so Yankee riders could feel shamed as well. After Mike announced the Top Ten riders at the end of Leg 1, the bonus point values for Leg 2 were distributed and the field dispersed. Long distance riding legend Rick Morrison had a simple theory on checkpoints: "Get out of the gate quickly," he'd say, "Pick a big bonus that made sense and head that way." He'd let the rest of the route fill in from there. The man could route with a Malboro cigarette, flipping it across the map. 200 miles. 400 miles, etc. Rick also loved foul weather, especially when he was leading the pack. "It keeps the riff raff out." He's probably uttered some nuggets worth listening to. The guy's only finished five IBRs with a win (1997) and 2nd (1999). Eric Jewell agrees. He was on the road by 6:41 AM. "You got to be riding in daylight hours. You GOT to be riding in daylight hours," he told Austin. Most went back to their rooms to route and enter data. Mark Starrett went back to sleep. Then he went home. He'd finished in 2013, although not without challenges. Four days this year were enough.

Leg 2 wasn't two hours old before rookie Jeff Wilson's day turned to crap. Jeff reported a catastrophic rear tire blowout in Clines Corner, New Mexico, just 59 miles from the checkpoint. He was able to keep his R1200RT upright, but unable to remove the wheel. Lisa reached into her little black book and connected Wilson with Bob Hall living nearby. Jeff arranged a tow to Bob's house where Bob was able to break the wheel free, mount a new tire and get Wilson back on the road by 2 PM. Hopefully, Jeff learned a thing or two watching Hall wrench on his RT. Maybe he even got some advice from the 2001 IBR winner on how to reroute to make up for the lost time.

Wilson's call came to the Rally van, the Chrysler Town and Country minivan Mike Kneebone so generously rented to transport Rallymaster Lisa Landry and her entourage (John Harrison, Steve Hobart, Dave McQueeney and yours truly) to the checkpoint in Kingsport, Tennessee. Lisa circulated the Rally van rules before the start. No farting and only minimal scratching will be allowed. No Sportster bladders. No stopping. We have assigned seats. (Seriously, I tried sitting in McQueeney's seat once and he went all Sheldon Cooper on my ass.) Hobart and Harrison are the designated drivers. One thinks he's still a cop and the other a NASCAR bootlegger. Someone asked if we had a spot tracker. If we had, we'd be disqualified. I was going to upload a picture of Lisa sleeping but she took my phone. I think we should be allowed to pee.

Sydney and Sam Liles' 2-up IBR effort was over after just one leg and 2,576 miles, their 2015 BMW K1600GTLE is dead from a software glitch. It's heartbreaking to see Sam and Sydney end their IBR ride this way. They even tried to rent an H-D Ultra Classic from Eagle Rider as a substitute, but no such luck on a July 4th weekend. There was a time (not that long ago) when you could take your Beemer cross country, down into a canyon, to the track, around the world, or just back and forth to work every day, without a worry. Even if something did break, it could usually be fixed with tools provided in the stock tool kit, which you knew how to use. The stock tool kit today is comprised of a Felo E-Pro All-in-One Screwdriver (made in Germany), a toll-free number and a credit card swiper from Square. Are the days of the Roundel's dominance in long distance riding over? Unfortunately, the Liles will be plagued with this question for the next two years.

By the Friday afternoon three general routes had surfaced. A number of riders led by Brant Moteelall took the northeasterly route to Kansas City. Again, more riders see something that

route master Tom Austin just doesn't get. Jewell, Mountain, Lipps, Bray, Owen, Orr, Beaulac, Bertram and Talken-Spaulling were all pointed towards the deep Texas route that Owen and Phil Weston just swept in Leg 1, with Schween, Moon, Barclay and Peart in tow. Essentially the rest of the field took a more direct approach east through the Texas panhandle, Oklahoma and Arkansas. The orange mass on Spotwalla for this group was so tight and in such formation at 6 PM, we considered starting a clock to see if they were operating as a team. By this morning, a lot of that orange had spread like a rash, although 20 or so were still clustered along I-40, training like the row of severe storms firing just to their south. Mark Crane is not one of them. At 6:47 AM, Crane was north of Des Moines, Iowa, arcing to the east. Crane goes to great lengths to avoid Mississippi like a man who owes alimony.

The lone man out on Friday's group routing was Phil Weston. After spending his entire first leg in the bowels of Texas, Phil finished Leg One with only 6 states and now needs to play catch up. As much as he'd like to follow the leaders over familiar territory, he needs to clip states, not points, if he wants to finish. He headed north into Colorado before turning east into Nebraska.

Speaking of teams, rookie Chris Rooney called Rallymaster Friday afternoon to let her know that he and fellow rookie Chris Comly intended to ride together for the next couple of bonuses. Rooney assured Lisa this coincidental directional anomaly was not intended to form a team or union of any kind (not that there's anything wrong with that). But it makes us wonder if anyone actually reads the rules which state that any riders reaching the same bonus locations at approximately the same time during a 24 hours period will be presumed to be team members unless the Rallymaster (or Kneebone) determines otherwise. It takes commitment to ride with someone else for a tankful or two, let alone 24 hours. But, two or more riders running to the next bonus or two is NOT considered a team and, in fact rally vets have a great time reminiscing about such times.

Late in the day Friday Chris Sakala phoned Lisa to say he was withdrawing. His GPS issues had returned and he was still in a funk from his rookie scoring errors on Leg One. He will be back in a future event, The IBR taunts him.

Allen Hatcher called at 7:03 PM. He was fried. His 2003 K1200LT was fried. Both were sitting on the side of the road west of Cheyenne, Oklahoma. It wasn't immediately clear which was in worse shape. The exact issue with the LT wasn't clear, but it was mechanical, metallic and, well, shouldn't sound like *that*. "Crunchy" rarely equals "easy" to fix, especially on a holiday weekend. Like so many earlier requests, smoke signals were released and, 113 minutes later, Steve Bracken, family in tow, rolled from his home near Owasso, Oklahoma, to deliver his FJR to guy he'd never met. I won't let my neighbor use my lawnmower. We are watching for Hatcher's next move, although it ought to include signing the Brackens up for the Jelly of the Month Club.

Replacement motorcycles in the Iron Butt Rally have become less unusual (although always dramatic). Prior to 1997, however, it had never happened. After an accident left Manny Sameiro stranded in Houlton, Maine, in the first leg of the 1997 IBR, Manny found himself with an even bigger dilemma than how to tell folks back home in New Jersey that he had filled his bike with Diesel. First, he had to get home to New Jersey. There's no commercial airport in Houlton. There's no Hertz location in Houlton. When someone said it would be cheaper to buy a car than rent one, Manny realized it would be even cheaper to buy a *motorcycle* than a car. And, with a *motorcycle*, he could get back in the game. Manny found a 1983 Honda VT50 Shadow at a local

sports equipment store that catered to snowmobilers, and \$1100 later, he was back on the road. He finished – dead last – but finished. This was before the world of LD rider lists, online forums and Craigslist made it easier to “pull a Manny” in the IBR. It’s a great read. Check it out in the 1995 daily reports.

10:00 PM

Ian: “Lisa, it’s Ian McPhee.”

Lisa: (*yawning*) “Ian, what’s wrong? Are you okay?”

Ian: “Yeah, I’m fine. Why?”

Lisa: “Because it’s a 10 o’clock at night, Ian, and I got 2.5 hours of sleep last night. What do you need?”

Ian: “Where is the group photo bonus?”

Lisa: “What? Have you checked your book?”

Ian: “No.”

Lisa: “Honest to God, Ian. If you make me get out of bed to answer this question, I will tell Cimino to write about it.”

Jeremy Loveall apparently lost his GPS last night along I-40 some 50 miles outside Ft. Smith. Well, he found it, at least what was left of it after it fell off and tumbled at speed. But, he lucked out when rally scoring volunteer Lynn Carey, also en route to Kingsport, was likewise looking for her phone which somehow was escaped the car. Jeremy was able to cannibalize Lynn’s GPS to repair his, leaving Lynn to call John Harrison every 15 minutes for directions.

Overheard in the Rally van:

“Is the reason you don’t remember that I just said that because I’m ‘just a girl’?”

“It’s four of you against me and I do not feel outmatched.”

“McQueeney, you have to warn us when you are going to tell a joke.”

Harrison (upon switching in for Steve Hobart to drive): “Wait, I can’t reach the pedals.”

“Note to self: bring bungee cords to strap all of Lisa’s shit.”

“Elephants don’t take 45 minutes to poop.”

“Is this a private group?”

Moron II should land in Kingsport sometime this evening. We will continue to watch the orange dots and field calls and update everyone again Sunday.

Chris Cimino

Iron Butt Scribe

Iron Butt Rally©

Day 7 – What Could Possibly Go Wrong....

81 riders are currently circling the Meadowview Conference Resort & Convention Center in Kingsport, Tennessee, like aircraft on approach. Within the next 4-6 hours, they will land, taxi, stop the clock and get scored, followed next by food, a hot shower and sleep. At 6 AM Monday they will receive the third and final bonus point value list to begin the last leg in the 2015 Iron Butt Rally. In the meantime, it's well organized chaos in Meadowview as the clock counts down. 20 rally staff and volunteers traveled from Albuquerque to Kingsport, and are joined by another dozen or so additional volunteers. To adequately explain the logistical challenges of managing an event of this magnitude with any level of justice escapes me. Prior to this year, I had only seen the process from the participant's viewpoint, which had improved each time (although my performance did not). Even as a guest at prior events to discuss rider interaction with the media, I can honestly say that was not prepared for the level of organization needed and professionally exhibited, for this event. Every individual involved, and there are dozens upon dozens, remains singularly focused on the experience of the participants. In the end, the Iron Butt Rally is about the riders, and the backroom staff and volunteers never seem to lose sight of that. All kidding aside, this team rocks. (I just thought I'd say this now in case I get voted out of the van.)

"Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around for a while, you could miss it" - Ferris Bueller

Leg Two is rapidly winding down but has not been without some breakage.

Margaret Peart decided this morning to pack it in and withdraw. She conceded that she should not have started Leg 2 and was heading back to Albuquerque. Her challenges were starting to show as early as yesterday when she dialed in for her Call In bonus. She was perfectly pleasant and recited all of the required information to get the points. Unfortunately, she called four hours *before* the window for the bonus opened. She is a tremendous rider with a great deal of heart. We expect to see her in future IBR in the "Unfinished Business" Class.

Perry Karsten was having trouble with his J&M headset. Smoke signals were sent into the sky. In less than two hours, a new headset was sourced to be delivered and installed at the checkpoint.

Chris McGaffin lost his primary Spot tracking unit and a water jug after hitting a wheel swallowing pothole just north of Memphis. His tracking signal went dark at 6:28 PM on July 4. Ever-prepared, Chris is carrying a backup Spot unit and will not lose points for this issue. Let's hope his luck holds out. Sources report he's been leaking oil possibly from the final drive on the high mileage FJR1300. Rick Martin is on hand with a spare unit if needed.

Hopeless Class Jack Cheasty continues his swim against the tide aboard his 20 year old BMW R100GSPD although that is being generous considering the bike's design dates back to 1980. With his navigation issues resolved (Jack purchased paper maps at checkpoint one), Jack can now add the cost of a tow and new battery to his list. Jack has had his share of setbacks but somehow he is still in this. Meanwhile, fellow Hopeless class rider Kurt Worden continues to push his diminutive MSF training bike along as rally staff cheers him on.

Alex Ciurczak reported in his Call In message that he was having some vibration issues with his R1200RT. "I'm hoping it's a tank of bad gas," he said. "It's getting a little better. But I might just be getting used to it." We will see when he gets here.

Leg Two Call In bonuses were, again, well done. Only two riders failed to make the calls, although this is being researched to confirm prior to scoring. Some notable comments from the messages:

Drew Dill: "There's a huge street festival and they have all the roads blocked coming to the George Rogers Clark and I had to walk about a half a mile to get that one. But, life is good. Loving the 2015 IBR. Thanks for all your support back there at IBA central." His Big Blue Beast HD CVO is going through oil every 1200 miles. He got beat up by bedbugs at a "no-tell motel." He was considering dropping out until he found a note of encouragement left on his seat. Head back in the game, he's moving forward. Such is Day 7 in the Iron Butt Rally.

Lynda Lahman reported that LD rider Tim Henderson met them at the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site. He'd been watching the spot tracker and tried to time it when a rider would be there to offer ice water. David Walls had a similar experience with a civilian who rode alongside him outside Indianapolis and held up a paper sign to "ride hard, ride safe."

Michiel Kerkhof called in from a Shell station in Columbus, Georgia, from a lent phone stating his phone has not worked all day. Judging from the girls giggling in the background, Michiel's accent was a hit.

Mike Langford: "Left Ft. Scott Arkansas and it got dark and it was really really great going across the Ozark Mountains. Neat twisty roads. It would have been just wonderful if it would have been daylight, and if it hadn't been foggy and it hadn't been raining and if hadn't been outright scary. Anyway, it was fun to get that over with. Bye."

Perry Karsten: "Today was an absolutely terrible day weather wise. 6 hours of torrential downpour rain. Was actually some of the most standing water I've ever ridden through. Probably a boat would have been better than a bike today. During one of the torrential downpours I couldn't see a thing. There was tons of water on the road and spraying up my legs. Then an armadillo decided to basically walk out into the road in Zion. Obviously I couldn't do anything drastic because of the weather. So I went over to the side of it and went over the poor guy's little tail. But unfortunately my left foot hit him. All I can say is that I understand where they get the name from. That sucker was *hard*. It was like hitting a rock. The foot is a little sore but it's getting better as the day goes on. At first I thought I had might have broke it. It was a pretty hard hit. But it's feeling pretty good now so no worries."

Bob Bowman: "I have been bouncing around the Illinois/Indiana border where time zones are a thing just indescribable. You're in Central, you're in Eastern, You're in central, you're in eastern and you went in a straight line. I thought you should have people leave their tips of the day. So here's my tip: Last night I went to my house east of Kansas City, slept in my own bed and had supper with my wife. Everybody told me not to do that. I went anyway. My tip is don't go home during the Iron butt Rally."

Greg & Pat Blewett: "By the way, we were 5 minutes from home and we did not stop." (*That's the difference between a rookie and a vet, Bob.*)

Greg & Wini Farmer: "Having a good time"

Danny Dossman: "Like everybody else, I've been riding in the rain most of the day, had the same mechanical issue with my shift linkage but I was able to somewhat patch it together. And I'm just having a lovely day in the Iron Butt Rally and I hope to see you soon in Kingsport Tennessee." But there was something in his voice that concerns me. More psychotic than his usual cheery. When he said "I hope to see you soon" it was in the creepy, eerie way that wants me to see if Marriott can set up a metal detector at the front door.

Al Holtsberry: "I wonder if there's good fireworks in Atlanta." Now *that's* grace under pressure.

Fireworks were going off in the background during Tom Loftus' call. He said "No, I am not getting shot."

Josh Mountain: "Natchez Trace was an awful lot of fun. You know, sunset, getting dark, then the fog came in and then the rain started and then the heavy rain, then cars decided that when it was too foggy they would just come onto the other lane and push me onto the grass, which was kind of fun. So, ah, yeah, time for sleep. Good night."

Paul Tong (on the Natchez Trail): "Kinda wet down here in the south."

Mark Crane: "The theme for today is, is, actually, um, shit. I had to deal with the shitty drivers in New Mexico when I was leaving there. Then there was the feedlots in Amarillo. Then there was tweaker hell in Frisch. That was amazing. And the almost ghost towns going through there. The rally does what it's always going to do. It takes you places you'd never go otherwise and places you have been. So, yeah, I would have never gone to some of those dying towns in Texas and how dusty and rundown they were. But up in Minnesota it was just like the inverse, like they knew they were having a 4th of July party so they told everybody "Ok. Clean up. We have people coming." Literally, the whole place just looked like they took a vacuum cleaner, it was just crazy. Anyway, it was really nice day of riding today and such a stark contrast the previous day in look and feel. It was very startling."

Garry Springgay (calling from Vincennes, Indiana): "Everything is going well. I'm ready for about a 5-6 hour sleep. I'm about to take my rest bonus and see you all tomorrow night."

Jack Cheasty: "Next bonus is...let's see...that's a good question....I'm kidding myself. Good ride today. Glad the sleep bonus is coming up. I could use it."

George Doughty: "if you want a real laugh, check my tracking. I went round and round looking for the visitor's center at Natchez (National Historical Park)." I did. It's funny.

15 riders left multiple messages, what Steve McCaa calls "insurance calls." Larry Meeker called in three times from Leiper's Fork, Tennessee, each time giving the essential information, but calling back with a "Let's try this again," and "OK, one more time I hope it get it right." Eric Jewell called in from Marks, Mississippi and then started laughing so hard he had to call back a second time. (Trust me when I say that Mark Crane won't find this particularly humorous.)

Matt Wise: "I made a routing mistake today and rode about 4 hours in the rain for 190 some odd points. Other than that, everything else is going great today."

I don't know how to fully describe John Good's and Ande Bergman's call in message. It was 1:53 minutes. Same sing/song answering machine routine as Leg One, but with a twist. This time they serenaded me with verses from "Saturday in the Park", "Born in the USA" and revised rendition of

“Eastbound and Down” from *Smokey and the Bandit*. I have a few days to figure it out, but I will find a way to play it at the banquet. Now we know what the pillion does when she’s bored...

Robert Bolger reported riding in terrible rain for 4 hours until he realized he was riding under the same supercell. So he stopped to let it pass. He’s soaked. His boots are full of water. But, he’s doing okay.

Marc Beaulac (from Jasper, Texas): “Dang it’s humid.

Will Barclay (from Waco, Texas): “Man, it’s hot.”

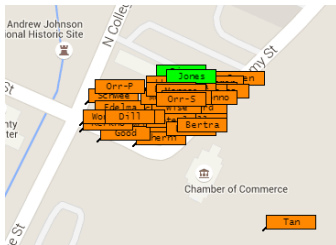
As the second checkpoint is about to open, all eyes are on the Andrew Jackson National Historic Site in Greeneville, Tennessee. The group photo will be taken at 5:30. It’s raining a monsoon at the bonus site. The road into the bonus is partially flooded with a downed tree. Afterwards, riders will land in Meadowview for scoring. Below is the bonus description along with the screen on Matt Wise’s GPS and the cluster of orange dots assembled.

ANJO
Andrew Johnson National Historic Site
101 North College Street
Greeneville, TN
Coordinates: 36.1627 -82.8296
July 5, 5:15 pm



The Andrew Johnson National Historic Site and National Cemetery interprets the life and legacy of the 17th President as he worked to reunify a nation torn by civil war following President Lincoln’s assassination.

Park in the nearby visitor parking lot and have your Rider Number recorded by IBR staff not later than 5:15 pm in front of the site. Be in the group picture taken by IBR staff at 5:30 pm with the other riders present. Your flag must be visible in the photo.



I will post the Leg Two scoring results in the morning.

Chris Cimino

Iron Butt Scribe

Iron Butt Rally©

Day 8 - Where the Weird Stuff Starts to Happen



The group photo bonus at Andrew Johnson National Historic Site was a washout.

40 riders scored the Andrew Johnson group bonus at 5:30 in heavy rain and then rode the 38.7 miles to the Meadowview Conference Center for the start of the second checkpoint. The parade of riders was greeted with applause and cheers by LDriders from around the region who had gathered at the resort. Some of the non-motorcycling guests were also caught up in the excitement. After the initial rush, there was a steady stream of incoming riders until all 81 had checked in. Five riders arrived in the penalty period, with Don Duck the last man in at 8:25.



As described in my report after the first checkpoint, the scoring process is the frenzy of activity. Upon arrival under the porte cochere, riders are met by John Ferber, Dennis Bitner, Joey Lawson and Sal Terranova, who check the rider's odometer and send the rider inside to stop the rally clock with Ira Agins, where the rider must produce his or her identification card. As we began the penalty period, riders were directed to see Ira to stop the clock first and come back for the ODO check. Afterward, the rider is accompanied to the scoring check-in table, managed by Kevin Smart. Once presented for scoring, the rider has 60 minutes to return with all paperwork in hand for

scoring. Some riders chose to wait until closer to the 8 PM deadline before penalty to start the 60 minute clock, giving more time to review paperwork, clean up and eat. Runners Kevin Lechner, Mike Jackman and John Langan ushered riders and paperwork to and from the scoring area. Mary Smart received riders in the scoring room staffed by 14 experienced scorers. Every effort is taken to ensure the integrity of the scoring process. All are volunteers either buying goodwill to be considered for future rallies or just enjoying being a part of the overall experience. Again, John Harrison did a phenomenal job of directing this particular ballet, with the last rider scored completed by 10:18 PM.



Left – Josh Mountain and Erik Lipps avail themselves of the parking lot shuttle.



Below – Robert smells a big tip from Tim Masterson



Left - Bob Bowman has a lot to smile about. He jumped from 26th to 14th place with a strong Leg 2. Here scoring volunteer David E. B. Smith checks over every detail.

After scoring was reconciled, the standings as of the end of Leg Two are:

Place	First Name	Last Name	Leg 2 Points	Total Points	Total Miles	Total Parks	Total States
1	Joshua	Mountain	27,586	50,595	7,595	50	16
2	Eric	Jewell	24,865	48,030	6,929	49	16
3	Rod	Schween	25,055	43,589	6,352	49	15
4	Jim	Owen Talken-	22,343	42,765	6,829	52	13
5	Kirsten	Spaulding	24,094	42,366	7,114	41	17
6	Eric	Bray	20,986	42,006	6,561	46	17
7	Brant	Moteelall	21,874	41,760	6,323	43	17
8	Erik	Lipps	18,846	40,952	6,971	47	19
9	Jim	Orr	20,401	40,428	6,352	41	13
10	Barry	Bertram	21,312	40,246	6,500	45	16
11	Marc	Beaulac	20,277	39,269	6,567	44	14
12	Paul	Slaton	20,670	39,050	6,280	40	20
13	Tom	Loftus	19,442	38,288	6,146	40	16
14	Bob	Bowman	19,923	38,227	5,669	38	15
15	Jeremy	Loveall	18,345	37,927	5,665	44	18
16	Jon/Ande	Good/Bergman	17,991	37,597	6,021	47	18
17	Tim	Masterson	17,562	37,464	6,304	44	18
18	Bob	Lilley	16,679	36,870	6,754	46	21
19	Andy	Mackey	17,031	36,450	5,690	44	18
20	Daniel	Roth	19,039	35,958	6,141	36	18
21	Olaf	Moon	17,900	35,596	6,040	37	16
22	Paul	Tong	17,340	35,434	5,990	46	18
23	Eric	Edelman	16,701	35,334	5,660	45	17
24	Mark	Crane	18,262	35,237	7,243	37	23
25	Craig	Brooks	15,696	35,091	6,907	57	25
26	Steve	McCaa	16,494	34,472	5,646	41	18
27	Greg	Rice	16,340	34,409	6,004	46	20
28	Ian	McPhee	16,518	34,395	5,816	39	18
29	Anthony	Osborne	15,863	33,783	6,743	44	18
30	Greg/Pat	Blewett	18,283	33,616	6,097	39	22
31	Robert	Scott	15,971	33,560	5,438	37	18
32	Gregg	Lenentine	15,722	33,371	5,566	40	17
33	Perry	Karsten	13,807	33,352	6,074	46	20
34	Lynda	Lahman	16,841	33,280	5,129	33	17
35	Terry	Lahman	16,841	33,264	5,154	33	17
36	Will	Barclay Memmen-	18,738	33,188	7,780	33	21
37	Gerhard	Krueger	14,242	32,767	5,641	40	19
38	Chris	McGaffin	14,787	32,765	6,108	39	15
39	Tonie	Cowen	18,601	32,573	7,082	36	21
40	Philip	Weston	14,990	32,174	6,168	33	11
41	Christopher	Ross	16,876	31,858	5,755	38	19
42	Jeff	Wilson	12,721	31,353	5,606	39	15

43	Don	Duck	13,482	30,756	6,170	27	15
44	Garry	Springgay	17,499	30,611	6,321	30	18
45	Nancy	Lefcourt	14,745	30,048	5,401	39	16
46	Kit	Chunhawong	14,786	29,759	5,507	36	19
47	Joe	Green	12,747	29,699	5,382	37	19
48	Dave	Legnosky	16,497	29,656	5,207	33	13
49	Matt	Wise	17,704	29,638	5,944	39	19
50	Danny	Dossman	12,231	29,483	5,448	36	17
51	Larry	Meeker	15,111	28,860	5,621	39	17
52	Phillip	O'Connor	12,543	28,844	5,766	32	19
53	Drew	Dill	15,264	28,459	5,226	34	16
54	Alex	Ciurczak	11,629	27,733	5,442	34	19
55	Chris	Comly	11,581	27,390	5,063	28	15
56	Allen	Hatcher	8,231	27,328	???	27	13
57	Pat/Rebecca	Ford/Martinez	17,258	27,268	5,720	33	17
58	Chris	Purney	11,937	27,226	5,835	32	17
59	Kurt	Worden	14,234	27,095	5,229	42	17
60	Mike	Langford	12,734	26,706	5,554	36	19
61	Eric	Chernin	15,730	26,556	5,717	36	17
62	Michiel	Kerkhof	11,576	26,456	5,557	38	17
63	Scott	Jones	16,497	26,413	5,318	36	18
64	Mike	Riley	12,977	26,385	5,620	31	13
65	Greg/Wini	Farmer	13,813	25,735	5,320	39	17
66	Rob	Jaime	11,751	25,330	4,502	39	12
67	Lyle	Monroe	11,921	24,972	5,257	39	18
68	Glenn	Pancoast	13,722	24,025	5,732	34	17
69	Neil	Hejny	12,916	24,013	5,019	36	16
70	Robert	Bolger	11,849	23,165	5,138	33	18
71	Jonathan	Tan	13,307	23,051	5,949	32	19
72	John	Cooper	12,816	22,307	6,315	32	19
73	Christopher	Rooney	12,224	20,612	4,998	31	16
74	Al	Holtberry	10,091	20,567	4,945	26	16
75	Brian	Dent	11,230	20,495	5,609	31	19
76	David	Walls	11,313	20,411	6,000	29	17
77	Jerome	Byrd	8,744	19,926	4,773	23	15
78	Ted	Black	10,584	19,835	5,039	26	17
79	Jack	Cheasty	11,662	18,527	4,884	24	16
80	George	Doughty	7,678	16,481	5,516	24	14
81	Brian	Bumpas	6,248	12,987	5,182	21	13

Seven of the Top Ten riders from Leg 1 remain in the Top Ten today with some minor reshuffling. Despite their efforts, none established such a lead that it can't be undone in this final leg. Rod Schween and Kirsten Talken-Spaulling had the strongest performances jumping from 23rd and 27th to 3rd and 5th, respectively. But even they know that things can change in a New York minute in the Iron Butt. Barry Bertram also climbed from 19th to 10th, giving the others someone new to think about. Of all the riders, only Craig Brooks has already collected enough states and parks to be a finisher. If he chose, Craig could simply ride straight back to Albuquerque, check in Friday morning and put this year's rally in the books. But, I'd bet my last shot of Tequila that he has other

plans in mind. Unlike the rest of the field, Brooks can go WHEREVER HE WANTS for the next 5 days. I suspect that thought will fill the helmets of a number of riders who may just be gunning for 2nd... Over the next few days, we will be analyzing the routes taken by the leaders to see who is where and why that makes sense or doesn't.

The Weather Holds True to Iron Butt Rally Tradition

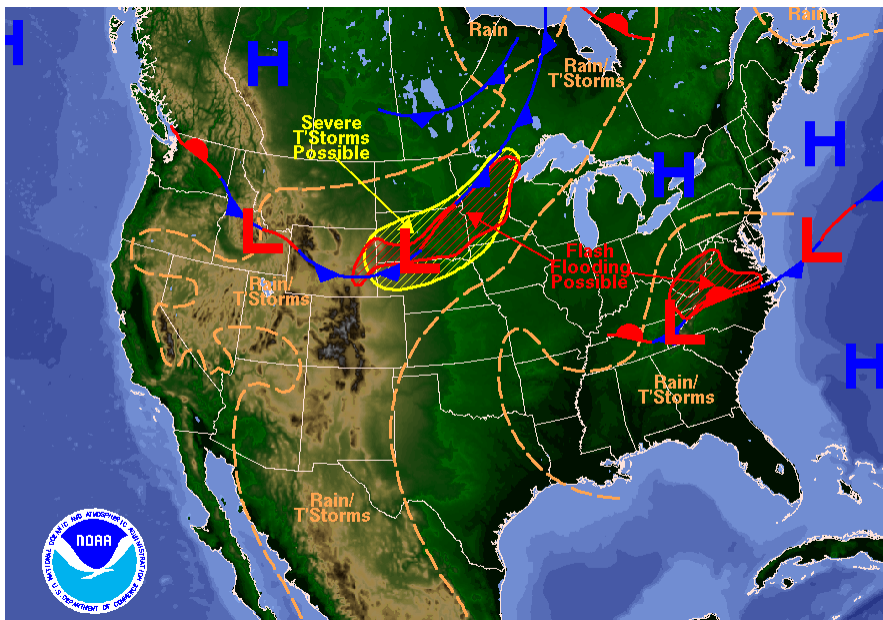
All of the riders reported riding in just unbelievably heavy rain in the last 48 hours, the kind of deluges that make you wonder if there might be some truth to this impending end-of-the-world stuff. Toad strangler. Rain that soaks your bones and permeates every storage cavity. Biblical rain. Even the most durable of riding gear was tested and failed in the repeated downpours.



The Rally van encountered some of the same

conditions on the drive out. You know it's a serious situation when John Harrison won't smile. A more affable a man there never was. But, when we drove into a supercell torrential downpour in Nashville, Harrison became all business. As the van hydroplaned, John remained smooth as glass. He and Steve Hobart fell quickly into pilot-copilot with Steve working dash controls so John could

maintain focus. It was like being a passenger in a World Rally Car with the two up front communicating in 1-2 word commands. If it was nerve-racking for us, imagine how riders dealt with similar conditions.



Many reported issues with GPS units and other electronics, including some surface-mounted satellite tracking units. Sadly, the weather pattern is forecast to continue throughout Leg 3. It wouldn't be an Iron Butt Rally

without it.

In addition to weather, weather and more weather, the checkpoints continue to be the pits for needed repairs. The smell of WD-40 was in the air as many riders were wiping down parts, trying to dry connections and generally wringing out clothing in the parking lot.

In other repair news, the oil leak on Chris McGaffin's FJR turned out to be a deteriorated O-ring for the oil filler cap and has been fixed, much to the disappointment of many, many BMW riders who were hoping to take some of the focus off the tarnished roundel. Also, as a correction from the last report, McGaffin's FJR is not a high mileage bike as initially reported.

The Airhead Beemers Club came to Hopeless Jack Cheasty's rescue tonight and the mighty R100GS lives to fight on another leg. It turned out that Jack's battery issue earlier in the weekend was being caused by a worn starter drawing down too much power. Local Airheads Howard Etkind and his wife Jill came to Jack's rescue bringing a replacement starter and tools to do the swap in the Meadowview parking lot. By 11:30 PM, Jack was bedding down for some much needed rest although he still overslept and missed the rider's meeting. Despite his challenges on Leg 2, Jack managed to climb a rung in the standings to 79th. He still needs one more park and nine new states than he's bagged in the first two legs combined. But, the venerable GS seems up to the challenge.

Robert Bolger held his standing at 70th place. But, he had been having wobble issues with the front end of his Concours 1400 that left him with right turns only. That may have been fine in the south. But, Bolger will have to head to DC for parks and will need the ability to turn left. More



smoke signals were sent and LD rider John Bailey delivered a replacement wheel and tire that will hopefully resolve the issue. Steve McCaa worked through an issue with the fuel pump solenoid shut off valve for his auxiliary fuel cell on his Triumph Tiger Explorer. Hammy Tan finally picked up a replacement cap for his fuel tank. Now he can return the peanut butter jar cap he had been using to the open jar of peanut butter in his saddlebag.

Allen Hatcher completed Leg 2 on the FJR loaned to him in the middle of the night Friday by LD rider Steve Bracken. It is unclear if the starting mileage on the FJR was recorded at the time of the swap. While the penalty points for swapping motorcycles will be assessed at the finish, Allen still needs to collect 23 parks and 12 states to complete the rally.

Pay Attention to What the Architect Says...

At the last rider's meeting of the 2015 Iron Butt Rally, John Harrison reminded riders to review bonus book instructions and check their photos for the required elements before leaving the park. Harrison advised that reading the instructions would pay dividends at the scoring table. Rally architect, Tom Austin gave this single piece of advice:

"Reading comprehension is very important if you are going to the District of Columbia."

LBME

Lyndon Baines Johnson Memorial Grove on the Potomac
Travelling north on I-395 in Arlington, VA, take Exit 8B (Washington Blvd.
- Pentagon); ride past the Pentagon then take the exit marked "To 110"
and "Pentagon North Parking Entrance" and drive to the coordinates
provided.

Washington, DC

Coordinates: 38.8786 -77.0536

6a-10p



From this distance the seat of national power appears pristine across the river, so President Johnson came here often when he needed to escape from the stresses of building a Great Society. After he died, his wife chose this place for his memorial.

Take the footbridge over the channel then walk to the east-southeast about 350 feet and take a picture of the stone monument.

Mike Kneebone read the Top Ten standings as well as Al Holtsberry's 74th position. Al is attempting to be the oldest person to finish an Iron Butt Rally. At 79, he's already the oldest rider to start an IBR, surpassing Garve Nelson who started but did not finish the 1999 IBR at the age of 75. Nelson remains the oldest finisher, having completed the 1993 IBR at 69 years old. Garve beat his own record in 1995 but was disqualified for lending his rally flag to another rider. Al has an uphill battle to reach his goal. He needs to collect at least 24 more parks in at least 9 new states. Every year riders and watchers alike adopt a rider to cheer on and Al is certainly that rider this year. We will be watching him closely as he zeroes in on his dream.

There are a lot of riders in Al's predicament. 18 riders, including Rod Schween and Jim Owen, need 10 or more states to finish. Phil Weston, trapped in Texas on Leg 1, is farthest behind on states and needs at least 14. 10 riders need at least 20 parks. Very few motorcycles had left the parking lot by 7:30 AM, despite Lisa Landry's efforts to push riders into the wind. Chris Rooney overslept and missed the rider's meeting and then sat to talk with Sam and Sydney Liles before Lisa pointed to the door and said "You. Go." Jack Cheasty followed, as did Pat Ford and then Rob Jaime. All came with good questions the Rallymaster quickly answered and pointed to the door.

*"You can have a whole lot of things go right and a few things go wrong and it's still
50% luck."*

George Barnes, 1999 Iron Butt Rally winner

Chris Cimino

Iron Butt Scribe

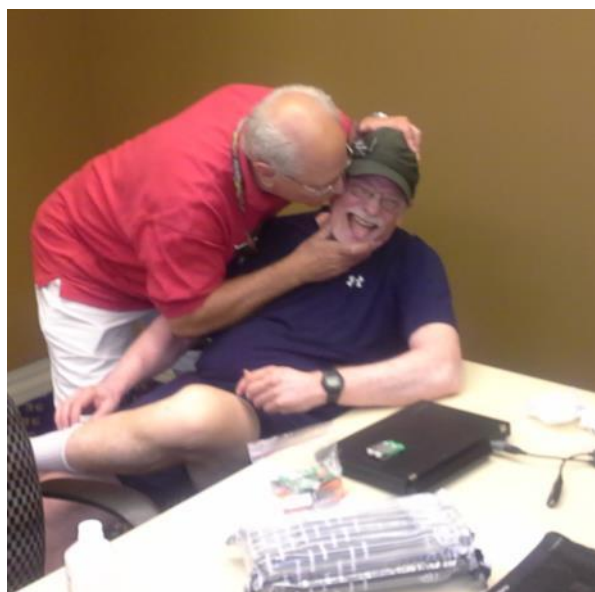
Iron Butt Rally©

Day 9 – Parks & Recreation

Tom Austin is a serious man. He is an engineer's engineer. BMW sends him a Christmas card every year (or should). His photo is on the wall in the design lab at Audi over the caption "This is the Man." He once weaved the history of William Thomas, 1st Baron Kelvin (father of the Kelvin absolute temperature scale) into an argument concluding that "anyone who can't express their position with numbers is flapping his gums." Boom! Drop the mic. He is exacting in a "there's-a-time-and-place-for-spontaneity" sort of way. The Dos Equis Most Interesting Man in the World calls Tom for advice.

He is also an avid, rabid motorcyclist having owned and ridden many BMWs dating back to his first R75/6. After the multiple BMW failures in the 2007 rally, Tom added a Honda Gold Wing to his garage that now has over 85,000 trouble free miles. An accomplished rider but new to rallying, he convinced Mike Kneebone to give him a slot in the 1999 Iron Butt Rally by offering to design the testing procedures for exhaust sound levels for future rallies. Those of us who were new to rallying had to entice Kneebone for slots back then. Mike let me in the 1997 rally with the promise of a feature article in *Motorcyclist*. The concept continues today with the Hopeless Class. Offer to ride something unexpected rather than *another* FJR and your application may stand out. Just ask Kurt Worden or Jack Cheasty. Tom finished 25th in 1999 and made good on his promise by developing the sound testing process for future rallies, thus preventing the blanket prohibition on aftermarket exhaust systems. Then he revamped the fuel capacity measurement testing. Then the call-in bonus. Then the rules. Then the scoring process. Unfinished puzzles taunt him. Tom deserves the credit for many of the efficiency improvements in the IBA today that make for a more level playing field than ever before.

(Right – It's amazing what a bottle of good Chardonnay can do for Tom...)



This year's National Parks theme is the culmination of an idea percolating in Tom's brain for years. Unimpressed with the stamp collecting inaccuracy of the passport program from the US National Parks Service, Tom began looking at ways to improve the Iron Butt Association's National Parks Tour, particularly when he could find no consistency in how national parks stamps were maintained. Park stamps were rarely accounted for and easily lost or stolen. Also, many of the units in the National Parks System were utterly inaccessible by motorcycle. As he continued to reengineer the NPT, the idea began of using a subset of parks more conducive to a rally stop as the

basis for a national rally. He and Lisa Landry pitched the concept to Kneebone in March 2011 and the rest is history unfolding.

Many riders have commented on the cleverness and difficulty of this year's theme. Never before had riders known the location of all the bonuses that would be available for all legs at the Start of the rally. For the rider looking to finish without regard for point standing, he or she could have routed the entire rally after the banquet last Sunday, collected their 50 parks in 25 states over the course of the three legs and claimed their finisher status. Austin projected *that* rider would likely ride 8,500-9,000 miles, with more competitive riders wanting finish higher in the standings, riding closer to 11,000 miles. As of the end of Leg 2, the Top Ten riders had so far averaged 6,753 miles. Only five riders had exceeded 7000 miles through Leg 2; Will Barclay (7,780), Josh Mountain (7,595), Mark Crane (7,243), Kirsten Talken-Spaulding (7,114) and Tonie Cowen (7,082). But, only Josh and Kirsten were in the Top Ten. At the other extreme, only four riders have ridden less than 5,000 miles; Chris Rooney (4,998), Jack Cheasty (4,884), Jerome Byrd (4,773) and Rob Jaime (4,502). Interestingly, Jaime is highest in the point standings although he still needs more states than the other low milers.

Riders were surprised when the bonus point values were distributed Monday morning as the point value for 60% of the bonuses had not changed from Leg 2. The 40% of bonuses that had changed were mainly located in the north and east, but not all. Clearly Tom is hoping to lure riders into the traffic and congestion of the northeast. For the 18 riders who still need 10 or more states, they will need to take the bait. Based on the initial tracking data late Monday, all but 10 riders had chosen northerly or easterly routes. Some of the 10 riders who headed north and west are Big Dogs on the hunt. Hammy Tan went to have dinner with a friend in St. Louis (Sorry Hammy. What gets posted on Facebook during the rally is fair game for your humble scribe.) It will be interesting to see how their routes pan out over the next two days. All will continue to deal with heavy rain for the next 2-3 days.

Robert Bolger won't have that worry. Unfortunately, the front wheel swap on his Connie 14 did not solve the problem and he has withdrawn. Many thanks to the LDriders who helped Robert secure shipping for his bike home to Round Rock, Texas. He'll be back. He has unfinished business. *(Right – Robert Bolger transfers fuel from his auxiliary cell before shipping his wounded Connie home.)*



Tonie Cowen was fighting a fuel leak on her Super Tenere possibly from the bulkhead fitting on the main tank. What started as a minor drip at the checkpoint had grown more steady over the day. Lisa did receive a text from Tonie late Monday that she was back on the road although we're not sure of the repairs made.

Mark Crane reported a stop to a hospital in White Plains, New York, Tuesday morning to deal with a problem with his eyes. But, the doctors couldn't figure out his route either and he is back on the road.

Daryl Doughty reported witnessing a GS riding motorcyclist crash next to him on a highway in a Washington, DC Tuesday morning. Doughty reports the rider seemed to recognize him although he did not know who it was. He doubled backed and determined it was not a rally participant. We are hoping it was not a Spot following admirer. Thank you, Daryl for the extra effort. Now, turn your bike west and get going!

Rider mechanical issues have been few compared to prior rallies. However, we do expect the sustained rains riders are facing may start impacting electronics. It always does. Even Jack Cheasty's paper maps may get wet.

Beyond mechanical issues, the last few days of the Iron Butt Rally are often the most difficult for the rider. Call it the Iron Butt Funk. Multiday rallies wear on a rider, both physically and mentally. Fatigue creeps in. Adrenaline has long since worn off. Failure to properly condition ahead of time, or maintain diet (or other habits) starts to impact the rider. Undeveloped routines breakdown. This is when riders start forgetting to record miles or time at bonuses, or collect necessary receipts or read instructions. What Mike Kneebone described in the rider's meeting as "where the weird stuff starts to happen." I expect the failure rate for the Call In bonuses tomorrow to jump. It always does.

Doubt creeps in as well, nagging in the back of your helmet like an itch you cannot scratch. "I won't have enough states." "I won't make that park in time." "This was a bad idea." The voices can be relentless, amplifying a simple mistake such as losing your rally flag, into an epic meltdown on the side of the road of pent up frustration over a disagreement you had with your spouse, in 2009. Day 9 is when some riders start practicing their "failure speech," the story they will tell others about why they did not finish the Iron Butt Rally. It will be rehearsed over and over until they either believe it themselves and quit, or fight their way out and rally. It's a "dig deep" moment when we learn something about ourselves.

Experienced riders have had more practice on how to develop and stick to a plan, usually gained through prior failure. The rookies have not. 'Plan your ride, ride your plan' is the cornerstone manta of the long distance rider. Any competent rider can pound out miles when the destination is clear or the route prepackaged, limited only by physical condition and bladder control. Riders who have completed a 10/10's ride (10 consecutive 1000 mile days) frequently underestimate this issue because they know they can ride the miles. But, often they aren't prepared for the mental

demands of routing throughout the rally. Riders with high attention demand occupations, such as emergency room doctors, pilots or military may be better prepared initially than riders with more structured daily routines. But, Day 9 is the great equalizer. Little can prepare a rider for the rigors of the Iron Butt Funk. You just need to push through it.

Overheard in the Rally van:

“Don’t pull that strap, Dave. It flips my seat into the floor.”

“The Days Inn sign said Free Breakfast. We should stop there and eat.”

Sorry it’s not more humorous. It’s rather subdued today. I think we all got too much sleep last night. I’m sure by Wednesday there will be to report. Harrison and Hobart have constructed a sign that reads “You’re a Girl” to flash at Lisa every time she asks why men don’t listen to what she says.

Also, I need to post yet another correction. Yesterday I identified Garve Nelson as the oldest finisher of an Iron Butt Rally at the age of 69 when clearly it was John Frick who finished the 2013 IBR at the age of 70. I have two reasons for my screw-up. First, I relied upon information from Mike Kneebone who gave me his master file and said “here’s all the data on finishers and past events.” Yup, keeps biting me in the ass. I think he did it on purpose to mess with the rookie. Second, I just could not believe John Frick was 70 years old. Still don’t.

*Chris Cimino
Iron Butt Scribe
Iron Butt Rally©*

Day 10 – Go Big or Go Home

Wednesday starts with 95% of the field still in the eastern half of the US. Riders have roughly 48 hours to clock in at the Finish in Albuquerque. Plans are either coming together or unraveling in epic failure. For riders with a plan this is the sweet spot of the rally, the Zone, the Happy Place, the stuff remembered with great satisfaction for the rest of a life. For the ones without a plan, where things are unraveling, where a wet sock launches a roadside meltdown worthy of TMZ, the next 48 hours are pure unadulterated torture, the moments relived ever day until death or drawn again for a chance at redemption. Both are defining moments. It's that simple.

At 8 AM (central) there was a front of heavy weather anywhere from 60-120 miles wide, extending from Chicago to San Antonio. Only four riders were on the west side of it. Everyone else will have to punch through. After all, it is the Iron Butt Rally.

“Adventure is adversity told later in comfort.”

- Norm Babcock, 3 time IBR finisher

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Mark Crane notified Lisa late Tuesday morning that his eye problems had not improved and he was stopping to rest. Based on his progress before being waylaid, Mark should have collected enough parks and states to be a finisher, if he can ride the 2,000 miles back to Albuquerque. By this morning, he was moving again. Mark will finish this rally if he has to squint for 2,000 miles. Or get a service dog. But he will be there.

Phil Weston would not be confined to just a few states this leg. Still recovering from his state deficit after Leg 1, he started Leg 3 with just 11 states in the bank. By late Tuesday, he had ventured all the way into Maine by late Tuesday noon, picking up as many as 11 states and perhaps 20 more parks. Of course, he starts Wednesday 2,600 miles from the Finish with less than 48 hours to go. Erik Lipps got dangerously close to New York City at the end of Tuesday's daylight, bravely dealing with the worst traffic and congestion the US has to offer. By this morning, he had continued his push into New England. Like Weston, Lipps will have a long, *long* final 48 hours. But, he's also *half* Weston's age. These two will be exciting to watch to see if age and treachery really can overcome youth and skill.

How does the old dog catch the rabbit? He waits until the rabbit gets tired.

- Old Italian proverb

By now, the riders have moved away from the DC area and are all headed back to the barn. Over the last three days, all but a handful rode into the busy DC area to collect bonuses. Tom Austin advised riders at the rider's meeting that "Reading comprehension is very important if you are going to the District of Columbia." The twelve DC bonuses were worth a combined 4,380 points. Of those 4,289 were available in just 5 locations. In fact, 3293 points were available from a single location, the Lyndon B. Johnson Memorial Grove on the Potomac River.

From this sliver of land within the District of Columbia, but on the Virginia side of the Potomac, an observant rider could see the Jefferson and Lincoln Memorials, the Washington Monument and the LBJ Memorial. With the parking lot for the Theodore Roosevelt Island National Memorial a mile up the road, but still on the west bank of the Potomac, a rider could leave the remaining 91 DC points on the table and save the 1-2 hours it would take to cross the river and play in DC traffic. Of the seven Top Ten riders at the end of Leg 2, only Josh Mountain clued into this unique geography, doing a “hit & run” on DC before moving on. The other six spent between 1-2 hours in the DC area. If the final positions come down to within 91 points, it could make all the difference.

Chris Purney, in 58th place at the Leg 2, also realized this unique geography, calling Lisa to confirm that if he was *within* the District of Columbia, and he could see the memorials over the river, he could take the picture from the west bank. He was hyperventilating like a kid on Christmas unwrapping a Red Ryder BB gun when Lisa confirmed his understanding. Let’s just hope for his sake the photos came out. (right – Chris celebrates his ingenuity with a seegar)



The Rally van stopped at the Bass Pro Pyramid store in Memphis, which just opened this past April. We had to. As we passed on the way to Kingsport, good ‘ole boy Harrison and retired cop Hobart both started panting like Dalmatians passing a firetruck. Harrison said something in Alabaman that Hobart loosely translated as “I can smell the ammo.” The Pyramid, frequently a photo bonus on prior rallies, was built in 1991 as a sports arena for college and NBA basketball but it was inadequate from the start, flooding on its first night due to poorly designed drainage systems. The teams relocated to the newly constructed FedEx Forum in 2004, leaving the Pyramid a venue without a purpose. The arena closed in 2007 and was the frequently topic of heated political debate for the next few years until a deal was struck with Bass Pro in 2010 to open a destination retail store with hotel, shooting and archery ranges, laser arcade, bowling

alley and restaurant. The building was also fitted with the tallest freestanding elevator (320 feet) to an observation deck level with views of the city and the Mississippi River, in addition to another restaurant and an aquarium. The City of Memphis, itself damn near bankruptcy at the time, invested \$30 million to retrofit the building.



While the Pyramid is not a national park (yet), its origins and history of political controversy is reminiscent of how several national parks came to be, such as Steamtown National Historic Site in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Steamtown had been built around a working turntable and roundhouse replicated from a local railroad defunct in 1960. Opened as a private museum since 1984, Steamtown failed miserably to revitalize the downtown Scranton economy decimated by the decline of the steel and coal industries in the late 1970's and was near bankruptcy by 1986. A Scranton US Congressman, Joseph McDade, pushed for and got \$8 million to begin turning the failing museum into a national historic site. The move was viewed as purely political, dubbed the "mother of all pork-barrel" by pundits. By 1995, the National Park Service had spent \$66 million to improve the facility. Steamtown is worth 1,045 points on Leg 3.

STEA
Steamtown National Historic Site
350 Cliff Street
Scranton, PA
Coordinates: 41.4096 -75.673
9a-5p



Visitors to Steamtown can learn the history of steam railroad transportation, and the people who built, repaired and rode. The site preserves a special era in America's industrial history.

Take a picture of the Trolley museum.

The Charles Pinckney National Historic Site in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, honors one of the original signers of the US Constitution. The site was purchased in 1988 at the urging of US Senator Earnest F. Hollings. It wasn't until 1991 that the NPS realized the house was built *after* Pinckney died. The bonus is worth 1,200 points on Leg 3.

CHPI
Charles Pinckney National Historic Site
1254 Long Point Road
Mount Pleasant, SC
Coordinates: 32.8471 -79.8234
9a-5p



Charles Pinckney was a principal author and a signer of the United States Constitution. This remnant of his coastal plantation is preserved to tell the story of a "forgotten founder," his life of public service, the lives of enslaved African Americans on South Carolina Lowcountry plantations.

Take a picture of the old plantation house.

Former National Park Service Director (1989-1993), James M. Ridenour, wrote about such parks in *The National Parks Compromised: Pork Barrel Politics and America's Treasures*, published in

1994. Oklahoma US Senator Tom Coburn also routinely rails on waste and politics in the NPS, publishing an open scathing report to Congress titled *Parked!*, issued October 29, 2013. When I first interviewed Mike Kneebone for an article in 1997, he said that he picked bonus locations that he enjoyed, that made him think and that he wanted others to discover as well, especially if the ride there was on exceptional roads. Kirsten Talken-Spaulling embodied this wonder when she complimented Tom Austin on his selection of bonuses after Leg 1. “It was devilishly awesome,” she told Tom. “I got to ride on roads I never knew existed!” Kirsten later complimented Tom again on his crafty bonus selection, noting that the road to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore in Portage, Indiana, crosses a busy railway, resulting in delays both in and out of the park. Mark Crane’s comments reported in earlier posts reiterate this sentiment. Some of the bonuses can be profoundly affecting. Visiting the Oklahoma City Memorial in the 1999 rally left Paul Graves and me in a funk that lasted into California. I suspect the Flight 93 National Memorial in Stoystown, Pennsylvania, will have the same effect on riders this year. With this year’s theme, and his awesome souvenir rally booklet, it’s clear that Tom Austin is continuing Kneebone’s tradition of giving riders something to think *about* at the bonus, not just how to get *to* the bonus.



Jim Orr is reportedly dealing with a slow leak on the rear tire of his Gold Wing. Wallace French emailed a note about Jim’s issues along with this photo of Jim working on his tire by the Boston National Historical Park Tuesday evening. Or he could be sleeping, after all he’d been through 11 states by this picture. Wallace reported Jim being in good spirits and chatting with passersby before heading off to Lowell National Historic Park. He also said it wasn’t long thereafter when Craig Brooks arrived, snapped his photo and left. Brooks has nothing to do but bag bonuses and make it to the Finish on time.

Hammy Tan called Lisa Tuesday night after taking a kidney jarring rutted road to Niobrara National Scenic River to ask if there were any more dirt roads he could look forward to. The middleweight Honda riding rookie is getting schooled quickly in what it takes to compete in the World’s Toughest Motorcycle Competition. Let’s hope it’s not a crash course. While we will alert riders to specific areas where a road may be problematic, road construction is an ever changing fact of life while in the Big Show and riders need to adapt.

Daryl Doughty’s Tuesday did not improve after witnessing a motorcycle accident in DC in the morning. Overcome by heat and dehydration, Doughty required medical attention this

afternoon in Harper's Ferry, West Virginia. He informed Lisa Tuesday evening that he was withdrawing. He picked up seven more states since leaving Kingsport, with 10-12 more parks. If he can rally after a good night's sleep and fluids, he may be able to resume on Wednesday and work his way back to Albuquerque and squeak out a finish. As I said yesterday, Day 9 is when you start to see what you are made of. Sometimes it's not pretty. The absolutely infuriating issue with Daryl's situation is that the incompetent motorcyclist whose crash upset him so turned out to be an IBR "fan" chasing down rider spot tracks apparently in attempt to audition for *JackAss 45*. The idiot later posted his x-rays to Facebook showing the hardware store of parts now installed his foot and ankle. When Jeff Foxworthy developed his famous comedy routine years ago about how the stupid should be more easily identifiable, even he didn't expect people would be lined up to ask for their sign.

The 12 hour window for the final Call In bonuses opens at noon Pacific time today. I will be monitoring incoming rider calls for more information to report in tomorrow's update, my last before the wrap up Friday night. I anticipate that some of the calls will not be as complete as prior legs simply because it's Day 10 and, well, people get sloppy on Day 10. I also anticipate 3-5 calls from Kirsten Talken-Spaulling and maybe a telegram. Kirsten failed to collect the Call In bonus on Leg 2 when her call was never received by the rally phone bank, despite evidence of an outgoing call on her phone. After extensive scrutiny at the scoring table, we concluded that she had poor cell signal from where she called that prevented the call from going through. With no way to verify the call or its content, the bonus was denied. Kristin had not placed a backup "insurance call" something I suspect she will remedy this time. If the 1,000 point loss makes a substantial difference in the outcome, it will be heartbreaking for this hard charging rider.

Equally hard charging are Josh Mountain and Eric Jewell. Eric took a southeasterly tour from Kingsport before methodically working his way up the east coast, with surgical precision. He certainly has enough states and parks now to finish although it's about more than finishing for Jewell. This his ninth Iron Butt Rally. He's finished in the Top Ten in seven and failed to finish only once, 2013, when he experienced a low speed get off while leading the field, a spirit crushing incident caused by a loose bolt. He freely admits that he only gets to do this because his lovely wife, Kelley O'Hern lets him. He knows the sacrifice his family makes for his passion. Unfinished business is hard on more than just the rider.

Josh Mountain took an Appalachian route out of Kingsport, also to the east coast before turning west across Pennsylvania. Nine years junior to Jewell, Josh benefitted from the veteran's misfortune in 2013 but still couldn't put it in the hole, taking 2nd to Derek Dickson despite riding 1,164 more miles. He's smarter now. He knows he can ride the miles, but has become more focused, Owen-like in his routing. Josh is not a "wait your turn" kind of guy and may have something to say about Eric's quest. He too, has unfinished business. It will be a battle to the end for these two warriors.



Kirsten, Eric and Josh at the checkpoint after Leg 2 as Kristen told Josh how she became so star struck at meeting up with Eric at the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park that she forgot her flag and had to double back 25 miles to retrieve it, the whole time saying “Leave the flag. Leave the flag” in the hopes some well-meaning rookie wouldn’t pick it.

Rod Schween, 3rd place at the end of Leg 2 has to be giving the front runners something to think about. Rod has taken a different approach to Leg 3, avoiding the congestion of the east coast altogether and heading for Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. *(right – Schween feeling pretty good at the end of Leg 2)*



Kirsten has taken a similar path over the UP, along with Will Barclay, Bob Lilley, Paul Slaton and, Ian McPhee. I am still not sure what these contenders are seeing in that route. But, Jim Owen is heading north as well, of course only after he cleaned out the east coast. He is a methodical bonus predator. Eric Bray ignored the east coast and Michigan, choosing instead to suck up lots of parks in the Midwest. He will have some of the heaviest rains to punch through. Brant Moteelall went with a “go big or go home” approach, cutting a swath midtown Manhattan

between 5-6 PM on Tuesday. We were staring at his blip in disbelief as it dotted through Central Park, imagining the chaotic scene in *Die Hard With a Vengeance* as Bruce Willis and Samuel L. Jackson cut through the Park in a commandeered cab. Let's hope it wasn't exactly like that and that no mimes were injured.

Overheard in the Rally van:

Chris: "I need to pee."

John: "Is that coming out of sleep time or Bass Pro time?"

"Dave, if I lay my seat back into your lap will you rub my head."

"Well I went faster. So I fell down harder."

"Don't call me again about dirt."

"Dave, are you out of jokes?"

"I guess I am."

"Dead weight."

Stay tuned!

Chris Cimino

Iron Butt Scribe

Iron Butt Rally©

Day 11 – Glide Path

The 2015 Iron Butt Rally is in its final 24 hours. Day 11. Everyone always thinks Friday is Day 11. It's not, really. Well...it is, at least for a few hours. Since the rally started at 10 AM on Monday last week, the eleventh 24 hour period ends at 10 AM on Friday. Riders will start arriving back at in Albuquerque Thursday night, with a steady stream anticipated throughout the evening. Rally staff will be glued to the SpotWalla page through the night, tracking riders until all are safely accounted for. The scoring room will open at 5 AM. Coffee will be poured. Tension will thicken. Dozens of volunteers will be on hand as well, running, fetching and milling about as needed. Again, this event just isn't possible without the volunteers. And, then, when the last rider is checked in or 10 AM, whichever happens first, it will be over. Only thing left to do after that is the countin'. And sleep. Shortly after the Finisher's Banquet has ended, I will upload the final chapter of this year's report with the official results.

Riders again outsmarted me with perfect Call In bonuses, with all but one making the call within the window. The messages reflected the wide range of emotions expected on Day 10; denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.

Drew Dill (calling from his 25th state): "Ride is going great. Wonderful roads in Wisconsin. The motorcycle is running much better since she got closer to her birthplace. Not drinking as much oil as she is gas. Life is good on the road. Everything you guys said would happen has happened and all the advice has come in handy at one time or another. Thank you all back at the IBA staff. You're awesome. This rally is just a life dream. Thank you for letting us enjoy it."



Dave Legnosky called from Saratoga, New York, leaving all the required information. Unfortunately, the call was 34 minutes early. Thankfully, it appeared to be a practice call as Dave called in again later within the window. Dave must be in the Zone. Near midnight he was outside Killington, Vermont, some 2144 miles from Albuquerque. At 3 PM he was already southwest of St. Louis...getting soaked....again.

(left – Dave studies weather maps at the first checkpoint.)

Eric Jewell: "This is a fantastic rally, man. Seeing the country, visiting all of these sites, just great fun. Amazing roads. Couldn't be happier. I wish I was scoring better, but that's another thing. DC just kicked my butt. I wasted sooo much time there. By far the hottest Iron Butt Rally I've ever done. Always just a good time just cruising around the country. Again, this is a FANTASTIC rally. It is the world championship of rallying not world championship of riding. Good times." Eric later came across Mark Crane sleeping in a parking lot, so he joined him in room #2 at the Iron Butt Motel. A few hours later, Crane woke him up and they are enjoying the waning hours riding together.



Glenn Pancoast called from Homestead National Monument of America and reported the park ranger was so excited to have IBR visitors, he took Glenn's picture and posted it on the park's Facebook page. *(Glenn, this photo will NOT count as the required photo for points. Sorry.)*

Steve McCaa (calling from Kimball, Nebraska): "PS, it's 55 degrees and raining. If it starts to snow, I think I'm going to cry."

Nancy Lefcourt couldn't help but hear the Harry Chapin classic *30,000 Pounds of Bananas* as she rode into Scranton, Pennsylvania. Couldn't get it out of her head in fact. And now you can't, either. Late word is that Nancy is fighting a leak from a cracked wheel, stopping frequently to keep airing her tire.

Matt Wise: "I want to thank the staff for making this an outstanding event. This has been fantastic again like 2013 the first year I did this. Let Mike know I'm interested again in 2017 already if he's got a list going early. I want to be the first one to get my name in that hat."

Paul Tong was heading to Wilson's Creek National Battlefield "If I don't drown first."

Greg and Wini Farmer (calling from Independence, Missouri): "It's been a helluva couple of days. We haven't seen the sun, raining like crazy, flash flood warnings, fog. Gotta love it." *(right – "We can't take that blue road, Greg. That's a river."*



Greg and Pat Blewett (from Topeka, Kansas): “We’re finally out of the rain.”

Paul Slaton (calling from Canon Falls, Minnesota): “I want to take a minute to tell you I am having a great time. Just really enjoying myself more than I ever thought I would be. I’m having a pretty good leg. I think I got a pretty good plan going. I think I got a nice little route going. Everything is falling into place. No great big surprises or anything or any insurmountable obstacles yet. Now if I could just keep the voices in my helmet from taking over and taking it some place different we should be okay.”

Will Barclay (calling from International Falls, Minnesota, where Will said it was a little chilly): “I hope you guys are having as much fun as I am.” We hope Will is having fun. At 3 PM he was coming through Miles City, Montana. At 960 miles from the finish, he is the one of the handful of riders still more than 950 miles from the finish. There’s an irony somewhere in there, but God help me, I can’t find it.

Gregg Lenentine: “Let me start again. My current location is.....Oh, I’ll call you back.”

Kirsten Talken-Spaulling: “Third time’s the charm.” Good thing she called again. We only received two.

David Walls: “I have not had a great rally. I have had a great time. But everything seems to be not meshing. I dropped my motorcycle today. First time I’ve ever dropped a motorcycle like that. *(laughing)* I was pinned underneath it for a minute before I figured out how to get from under it. I just can’t seem to get some positive inertia. But I will be there Friday for the finish. I thank all of you for everything you’ve done.” Dave was in 76th place leaving Kingsport on Monday. Judging by his track, he should picked up more than enough states and parks to finish. It will come down to the scoring table. It always does. *(right – Dave is fetching bonuses however he can*



Tom Loftus (calling from Weldon Springs, Missouri): “I’m going to get out of here because I have a tornado warning on my GPS and I believe it. Talk to you later.” Smart thinking, Tom. Two years ago, a tornado cut a 22 mile swath through Weldon Springs.

Chris Comly: “My present location is a state of confusion. I’m having so much fun that perhaps the rally staff could stay another 11 days so I could do this all over and fix my mistakes.” *(ed. No Chris. That is definitely not happening).*

Pat Ford and daughter, Rebecca Martinez:
“We are holed up in the Best Western (St. Charles, Missouri). We tried to get a ride with Noah as he came by on his ark swimming down the road. It rained on us most of the day.” *(right – Pat and Rebecca were the hit of the father-daughter dance at the banquet.)*



Mark Crane: “Challenging leg for me. Less than stellar in some ways. I lost 16 hours. Anyway, I’m feeling better now and I am going to soldier on through.”

Brian Bumpus: “I have been through 3 GPS’s. I purchased a new one today. It lasted two hours in the rain even wrapped in a bag. So I have no GPS. I’m coming in with what I have left.”

Perry Karsten: “As far as what’s new? Oh, yeah, it’s raining again. Every single day. Once I get dried out it rains some more. Tell Tom the number of points he assigned that bonus location was dramatically less than it should have been. That was one brutal road in, about 6 miles of gravel, knotty gravel, dirt, sand. Yeah it was a lot of fun to ride. A lot of fun to ride. At the bridge there was a storm coming in. Then the rain started and what was a gnarly, sandy, dirt, rutted and washboard road coming in turned into a much more interesting road coming out. Tell Tom that 631 points for that road was not enough.”

Irishman Chris McGaffin: “It is absolutely pissing down over here in (Springfield) Illinois, utterly pissing down and I am miserable. Utterly and totally miserable. Soaked. Even in Iowa it was pissing down.”

Eric Bray has been fighting a pain in his ears and pinched nerve that has cut into his Leg 3 plan. He believes he has the states and parks to finish and see what bonuses he can pick up on the way in. Eric must be feeling better, or powering through the pain. By 3 PM, he had dipped south to make one more pass through Texas before heading home. He’s not alone down there. Robert Scott, Kit Chunhawong, Don Duck, and Josh Mountain all made the Texas pass. Terry and Lynda Lahman also worked through Texas earlier.

Mike Riley (near Lancaster, Pennsylvania): “This sure has been a heck of a ride. It’s been a lot of fun. See you all in a couple of days.”

Bob Bowman: “I am having so much fun I think it would be a terrific idea if we added a Leg 4 and just rerun Leg 1 and put 4 more days on here. Run that by Lisa and let me know how that turns out.” *(Bob, I mentioned it to the Rallymaster. She has revoked my Man Card. Thanks, dude.)*

Alex Ciurczak (from Sterling, Kentucky): "I'm a little bit worried about the flash flooding in Kentucky. It's going to be a challenging next couple of hours." Unfortunately for Alex, he was back in the rain again today. All day.

Chris Ross: "It's Day 10. I'm doing great. I'm sad this things almost over. I could keep going and am so thankful for having got a slot in this thing."

Danny Dossman: "I lost about 4 hours this morning in the repair shop having to coolant pump and fan replaced. But I have not gone psycho as our scribe indicated. I'm having a great time and in spite of the rain. LET'S FINISH THIS THING! GO IBR!" No, Danny. No psychosis here.

Mike Langford (in Mission, Kansas): "I have been through some tremendous storm cells and it's been a lot of fun." For the rider we were worried about making the start, he looks to be lined up to finish on time.

Garry Springgay: "My estimates have me back in Albuquerque, God willing and if the creek don't rise, between 5-7 AM Friday."

Don Duck (from Vicksburg, Mississippi): "I'm heading for the barn and having a great time."

Jerome Byrd was doing fine. He's always fine. He's a machine on autopilot methodically working his way to finish this time. Jerome struggled in 2013. While taking pictures inside the Henry Ford Museum, the batteries in camera died. He ran outside for replacement batteries, but was unable to get back into the museum as it had closed. He eventually completed that bonus after spending the night in Dearborn, but still failed to finish. He came to Albuquerque with unfinished business. He was even fine when the security guard at the tomb of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. refused to let him take his bonus photo and ushered him away. The bonus instructions directed riders to the take a picture of the slain civil rights leader's tomb at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Site. As it turns out, the tomb is actually on the grounds of The King Center, across the street and operated by the King Family, not the facility



operated by the National Park System. Not surprisingly, the security guard at The King Center was not aware that a bunch of tired and ripe motorcyclists would be streaming through over a week to plant a flag and take pictures. Several riders reported the guard was less than polite. Riders able to demonstrate their presence at the site will still receive credit for the bonus.

At 3 PM, just 17 hours before the penalty points start accruing, the riders are starting to line up for their final approach. Most seem to be on track to roll into the Sheraton parking lot between

4-7 AM. Four riders were already in New Mexico, likely to touchdown before dark. First in is a tough spot. Assuming you bagged your bonuses correctly and are a finisher, you spend the next two years wondering how much better you could have done with the extra time. No extra points for early arrival. More unfinished business. Another dozen were within 8-10 hours out. At least 16 more, including Al Holtsberry, were slogging through yet another series of thunderstorms and torrential rains. Whatever electronics are still working at this point will probably short out. 17 more were working in and out of Kansas, but at least were behind the severe weather.

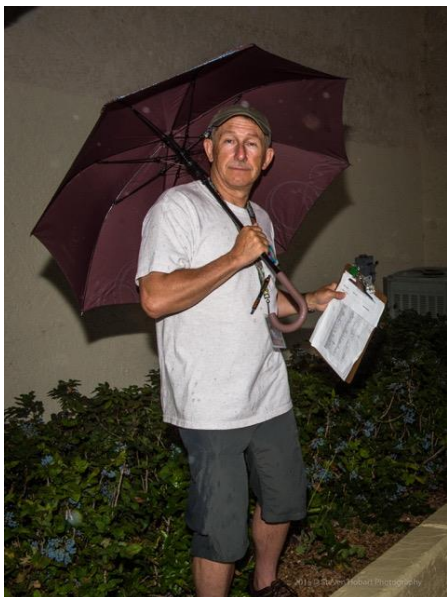
MORU
Mount Rushmore National Memorial
SD-244
Keystone, SD
Coordinates: 43.8761 -103.4607
July 9, 12:45 pm



Mount Rushmore National Memorial is visited by nearly three million people each year that come to marvel at the majestic beauty of the Black Hills of South Dakota and learn about the birth, growth, development and preservation of the country.

Have your Rider Number recorded by IBR staff not later than 12:45 pm at the roadside parking area at the specified coordinates. Be in the group picture taken by IBR staff at 1:00 pm with the other riders who are present. Your flag must be visible in the photo.

(Right – Dennis Bitner scores his rest bonus waiting for riders at the Mount Rushmore group photo location)

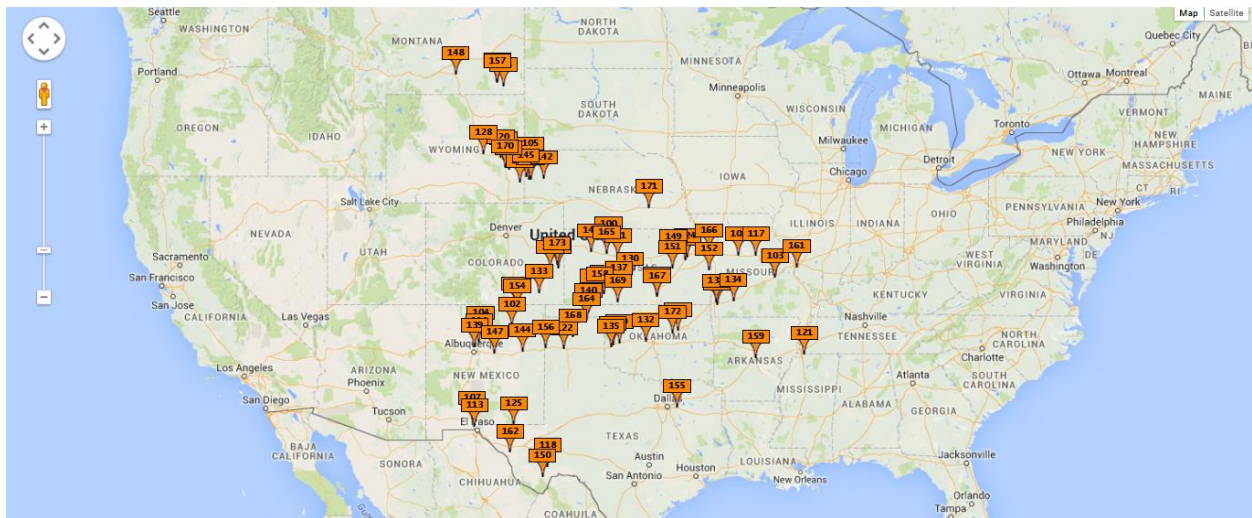


(Left – John Ferber, Bitner's umbrella girl for the photo bonuses)



Based on spot tracking, it looked as if 13 riders gathered for the photo bonus at Mount Rushmore at 12:45. From there, riders have just over 822 miles to the finish. Nine riders turned south, likely to collect bonuses in the area or along the way. But Jim Owen, Tonie Cowen, Bob Lilley and the 2-up team of Jon Good and Ande Bergman all turned north and appear to be trying to reach a handful of Montana bonuses, including the 3,333 points at the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument - *940 miles away*. Will Barclay is likely to meet them there.

For the first time in Iron Butt Rally armchair analysis, it is almost impossible to predict the winner. Even with the spot tracking, it's difficult to determine exactly which bonuses were collected. Anyone of the Top Five could have it. But, don't rule out any one of 10-15 more riders, including Craig Brooks who had met the state and park threshold by the end of Leg 2. Brooks has spent the last 4 days just sucking up points as far north as Boston. *(right - Craig Brooks is all business on Leg 3)*



Stay tuned and hit Refresh often!

Chris Cimino
Iron Butt Scribe
Iron Butt Rally©

The Iron Butt Rally Comes Full Circle

The 2015 Iron Butt Rally is in the history books. Scoring is complete. Riders have showered, slept and eaten, although not necessarily in that order. The celebrating began early and will continue into the night until exhaustion finally wins out. The early morning hours on this final day were worthy of the hype of a world class event. Heavy rain swept through the area as if to give one final Trudeau Salute before moving on to ruin some family picnic somewhere else. Rider families, spectators and fascinated hotel guests and employees gathered in the designated parking area where 87 riders and 5 pillions set out eleven days earlier.

Many riders had returned in the cover of night content with their performance. While those confident 53 riders were queuing up at the scoring table when it opened at 5 AM, the last 25 riders were queued up along I-25, and I-40 making their way to the finish. Penalty points would begin sharply at 8:00:01 AM. The door would slam shut at 10:00:00. Anyone outside at that time would be, well, outside.

One by one, each rider landed safely to cheers and applause from the growing crowd, first walking into stop the clock with Ira Agins, the last riders sprinting. One of the last riders before penalties was 'Never Say Die' Kirsten Talken-Spalding. Kirsten had surprised everyone with a brief excursion into Canada on Wednesday as a shortcut to collect two bonuses in upper Minnesota. When she exited I-25 at Santa Fe a little after 4:30 this morning, we thought could it be? Is someone still hunting bonuses? Indeed! Kirsten was not done. She watched the sun come up at Bandelier National Monument and THEN rode to Petroglyph National Monument collecting 617 points within the last two hours. As it turns, the push right up until the end made all the difference this year. *(right – Kristen checks her paperwork before submitting to scoring.)*



Kirsten was not the only rider playing the entire four quarters. Chris Comly, riding a *stock* 2006 H-D Sportster, was not content with just finishing. Chris was *still* bonus hunting at 6 AM this morning, collecting *another* 317 points before stopping the clock. "I had to," he said. He *had* to. Three words to sum up the spirit of the Iron Butt.

(left –Dennis Bitner checks Chris Comy's odometer)

By that ominous strike of the clock, just five riders were not in the barn: Jon Good/Ande Bergman, Dave Legnosky, Chris Rooney and Jerome Byrd. Ande Bergman sprinted in at 8:01:04, leaping from their bike before it stopped (*right*).



Legnosky would roll in at 9:11:06 AM, his second IBR finish in the penalty period. Dave had been on the low side of the state count at the end of Leg 2 and rode deep into New England before finally turning for home. At 10:30 PM Wednesday he found himself outside Erie, Pennsylvania. All that stood between him and his finish 1,690 miles away in Albuquerque was another stalled weather system dumping buckets of rain. Such is the finish of an Iron Butt Rally.

Rooney would not finish. His H-D Road Glide Ultra finally succumbed to nine days of rain outside Tulsa, Oklahoma, with electrical problems. His wife is already setting aside the money from his allowance for the 2017 entrance fee. For the next 24 months Chris will relive every minute lost this rally to something other than riding. The Iron Butt does not forgive those who do not respect the clock.

Jerome Byrd would likewise not finish although it was not without a tremendous, collective effort in the waning hours. A DNF from 2013, Jerome had ridden a solid rally. 71st place in Leg 1. 77th place in Leg 2. He still needed 27 more parks and 10 more states to finish, provided he also made it back to Albuquerque. He headed northeast out of Kingsport, anchoring his route with a visit to the Great Egg Harbor Scenic & Recreational River deep into New Jersey, before turning south and then west. By Wednesday evening, Jerome had collected his 50th park and exceeded his 25 states. Now, all he had to do was to ride 1,366 miles in 42 hours to the finish. East of Amarillo, Texas, the charging system shut down on his otherwise rock solid Honda NT700V, followed by what was left of the battery. Waiting on a tow truck for four hours had to be excruciating for Jerome. It sure was for Lisa Landry. She easily lost some time off the back end of her life in worry. The Rallymaster's instructions were simple and direct: "Get to Walmart. Buy a battery and duct tape. Tape the battery to the seat. RIDE HERE!" As a precaution in case the makeshift repair would not last, Lisa then enlisted spectator John Huval to ride east ("LIKE NOW") to intercept Byrd in case he needed further assistance. It would not be. The baby Honda died again in Santa Rosa, 113 miles away, with the math not in Jerome's favor to even swap bikes. It was utterly heartbreaking. The Iron Butt can be a cruel and fickle mistress.

When the scoring was finally done, checked, audited and checked again, Eric Jewell had won the 2015 Iron Butt Rally. After one DNF (2013) and seven finishes including 2nd place in 2011, Eric was finally able to scrape that monkey off his back and stomp it into the ground where it belonged. Early in Leg 2, Eric dialed the Call In number leaving a message for Tom Austin. It was a vulnerable, reflective Eric Jewell. “The only way I can beat these guys is to ride more.” In the end, that’s what it took – riding more. Eric clocked in at 7:56 AM. He had ridden 11,087 miles, 899 fewer miles than 2nd place Josh Mountain, but with 161 more points. In true Iron Butt flair, Jewell’s ST1300 was dead on arrival with the fuel pump that had plagued him throughout the final night giving out in the last 200 feet with Eric coasting into the parking lot. Even his bike left it all on the field.



“I used to believe, I still do, that if you give something your all it doesn't matter if you win or lose, as long as you've risked everything put everything out there. And I've done that.”

- Billy Chapel *For The Love of The Game* 1999

Josh Mountain rode 11,986 miles. Even with his bold aggressive move on Day One diving deep into the bowels of Texas, Eric had edged him at the end of the Leg. Many thought Josh slammed the door shut on Eric in Leg 2, with a 2,565 point lead at the checkpoint. But a missed Call In bonus in Leg 3 turned out to be fatal for the win. Josh had called in but the call was not recorded by the Rally phone bank. This was the same bungle that befell Kirsten Talken-

Spaulding in Leg 2, costing her 1,000 points (although only place in the final standings). Similar to Kirsten, Josh had made just one call in each leg confident in the connection. Kirsten adjusted in Leg 3, calling three times although only two calls were received, plus picked up 617 more points in the last two hours. 12 riders made such insurance calls, down from the 15 insurance calls in Legs 1 and 2. Josh was the 3rd rider clocked in at 5:01:48 AM. *(left – a spent Josh Mountain is asleep at the finish at 3:08 AM)*



The final rider standings are:

Place	First Name	Last Name	Total Score	Total Miles	Parks	States	Medal
1	Eric	Jewell	106,653	11,087	108	25	Gold
2	Joshua	Mountain	106,492	11,986	103	25	Gold
3	Brant	Moteelall	100,025	10,364	101	30	Gold
4	Erik	Lipps	99,836	11,121	105	29	Gold
5	Jim	Owen	94,868	11,563	101	27	Gold
6	Barry	Bertram	93,407	10,054	101	28	Gold
7	Craig	Brooks	93,395	10,842	112	33	Gold
8	Bob	Lilley	88,173	11,725	83	30	Gold
9	Jon/Ande	Good/Bergman	87,716	10,364	91	29	Gold
10	Jim	Orr	87,002	10,161	85	27	Gold
11	Marc	Beaulac	86,563	10,388	91	28	Gold
12	Tom	Loftus	84,365	9,531	84	26	Gold
13	Paul	Slaton	83,354	10,328	78	32	Gold
14	Kirsten	Talken-Spaulding	83,083	11,805	65	26	Gold
15	Rod	Schween	82,099	10,796	76	28	Gold
16	Daniel	Roth	81,206	9,933	78	28	Gold
17	Mark	Crane	81,192	10,782	82	30	Gold
18	Paul	Tong	79,364	9,578	90	30	Gold
19	Jeremy	Loveall	78,489	8,946	79	27	Gold
20	Gerhard	Memmen-Krueger	78,302	9,109	82	26	Gold
21	Tim	Masterson	77,896	10,390	79	33	Silver
22	Bob	Bowman	76,605	9,199	82	27	Silver
23	Eric	Bray	75,961	10,744	72	25	Silver
24	Eric	Edelman	75,724	8,962	85	29	Silver
25	Will	Barclay	75,470	12,900	54	27	Silver
26	Ian	McPhee	74,005	10,115	68	29	Silver
27	Greg	Rice	72,391	12,278	69	26	Silver
28	Andy	Mackey	72,148	8,888	81	26	Silver
29	Tonie	Cowen	71,050	11,192	72	31	Silver
30	Perry	Karsten	69,474	9,851	74	26	Silver
31	Garry	Springgay	69,236	10,395	60	28	Silver
32	Gregg	Lenentine	68,272	8,781	71	27	Silver
33	Steve	McCaa	68,243	9,537	62	27	Silver
34	Anthony	Osborne	67,664	11,407	63	26	Bronze
35	Jeff	Wilson	67,334	9,551	76	27	Bronze
36	Olaf	Moon	66,662	9,747	61	30	Bronze
37	Kurt	Worden	65,851	8,768	75	26	Bronze
38	Chris	McGaffin	65,145	9,972	66	29	Bronze
39	Greg/Pat	Blewett	64,874	9,188	66	29	Bronze
40	Matt	Wise	64,230	10,137	60	30	Bronze

41	Danny	Dossman	63,210	9,091	61	28	Bronze
42	Lynda	Lahman	62,703	8,579	57	26	Bronze
43	Terry	Lahman	62,687	8,630	57	26	Bronze
44	Don	Duck	62,414	9,948	52	26	Bronze
45	Robert	Scott	62,346	8,866	60	28	Bronze
46	Christopher	Ross	61,976	9,389	56	28	Bronze
47	Phillip	O'Connor	59,802	9,430	56	28	Bronze
48	Larry	Meeker	59,649	9,546	60	28	Bronze
49	Chris	Purney	59,457	9,429	59	28	Bronze
50	Lyle	Monroe	58,534	9,052	65	28	Bronze
51	Drew	Dill	58,406	8,766	56	25	Bronze
52	Kit	Chunhawong	57,613	9,008	58	26	
53	Mike	Langford	57,414	8,405	63	28	
54	Joe	Green	57,142	8,826	57	28	
55	Alex	Ciurczak	56,219	8,911	56	28	
56	Nancy	Lefcourt	55,914	8,891	57	26	
57	Scott	Jones	55,319	8,674	59	27	
58	Dave	Legnosky	55,238	9,046	56	27	
59	Eric	Chernin	54,880	8,598	63	26	
60	Mike	Riley	54,020	9,083	55	25	
61	Greg/Wini	Farmer	53,375	8,336	63	26	
62	Chris	Comly	53,061	8,744	51	25	
63	Pat/Rebecca	Ford/Martinez	52,880	8,694	56	25	
64	David	Walls	52,484	9,741	56	30	
65	Brian	Dent	52,229	8,361	63	28	
66	Al	Holtsberry	52,044	8,223	54	26	
67	Michiel	Kerkhof	50,129	9,197	56	26	
68	Glenn	Pancoast	48,825	8,885	54	28	
69	Ted	Black	48,809	7,943	54	28	
70	Rob	Jaime	48,099	7,569	56	25	
71	Neil	Hejny	47,285	8,000	53	26	
72	John	Cooper	45,047	9,472	52	26	
73	Jonathan	Tan	44,371	9,095	52	26	
74	Jack	Cheasty	43,317	8,151	53	26	
75	Allen	Hatcher	34,162	???	61	26	Silver
DNF	Philip	Weston	0	10,489	55	24	
DNF	George	Doughty	0	8,563	31	18	
DNF	Brian	Bumpas	0	8,329	28	18	
DNF	Robert	Bolger		5,138	33	18	
DNF	Christopher	Rooney		4,998	31	16	
DNF	Jerome	Byrd		4,773	23	15	
DNF	Troy	Martin		3,939	27	10	
DNF	Chris	Sakala		3,862	19	6	

DNF	Margaret	Peart		3,686	13	8	
DNF	Mark	Starrett		3,485	19	9	
DNF	Sam/Sydney	Liles		2,576	20	7	
DNF	Nahum	Sloan		0	0	0	

Erik Lipps, Jim Owen, Jim Orr and Craig Brooks, Barry Bertram and Brant Moteelall each rode very different yet equally efficient routes in Leg 3 shuffling the podium, but none enough to knock off Jewell and Mountain. *(right - Brant celebrates his Leg 3 scoring with John Harrison and 2007 finisher Lisa Stevens. Below – Erik Lipps celebrates what is truly important – coming home safely.)*



Bob Lilly and the 2-up team of Jon Good/Ande Bergman dug deep in Leg 3 to move up in the standings into the Top Ten, while Kirsten Talken-Spaulding and Rod Schween dropped only a few.

Tara Brooks waited patiently, anxiously by the door for her husband Craig to arrive. At 6:27, the 4th place finisher from 2013 pulled up and Tara finally exhaled. Her next breath would be the first full deep breath she'd taken in 261 hours. "He looks good," she said. "Better than he did in 2013." He had time to get his paperwork in order before stopping the clock and presenting himself for scoring. She made him a plate for breakfast. With enough states and parks in the bag by the end of Leg 2, the National Parks System was Craig's playground for Leg 3, with Craig jumping from 24th to 7th in the final leg.



Riders, staff and the viewing world in general will no doubt spend the next few weeks analyzing these results for meaningful information or answers. Everything from make, model, mileage, routes taken, rider experience, ambient temperature at sea level, oil brand and rider age will be sliced and diced with dozens of self-styled experts offering Monday morning opinions. Riders who gave it their all will sleep well, soundly. Others will replay routes and decisions over and over in a search for answers or peace. But there will be none.

There will however, be peace for Al Holtsberry at least for now. At 79, this now *four* time finisher has become the oldest rider to finish the Iron Butt Rally. To cap it off, Al pounded out 1,283 miles in his last 24 hours to finish in 66th place. I will not be at all surprised to see him in 2017 on the starting grid in his white riding suit. (*right – Scorer Pete Bansen goes through each bonus with Al*)



Jack Cheasty and Kurt Worden did what no rally scribe wants. The two Hopeless Class riders finished the Iron Butt Rally with so little drama that it's hardly been worth teasing them. (*This stuff never happened to Hidgon.*) Ever the gentlemen, Jack even stopped to change a woman's flat tire this morning on his way to the finish. With the rally now over, Jack can finally stop calling Lisa. It may take at least a week.

Kurt Worden joins Leon Begeman (2003) and Duke Dunsford (2005) as the only two riders to *start* and finish the Iron Butt Rally on a Kawasaki Ninja 250. (Before everyone starts ping me about Barry Bertram's 2009 finish on the baby Ninja in 2009, Barry actually started that rally on a rotary engine Suzuki RE5 that died within 16 feet of the start. Then he borrowed a friend's wife's F650GS before picking up the Ninja. Still a huge ride, but it's not like Barry *choose* to start the rally on a Hopeless Class bike.) Now, if only the buffalo in Yellowstone that charged Worden had actually caught him...

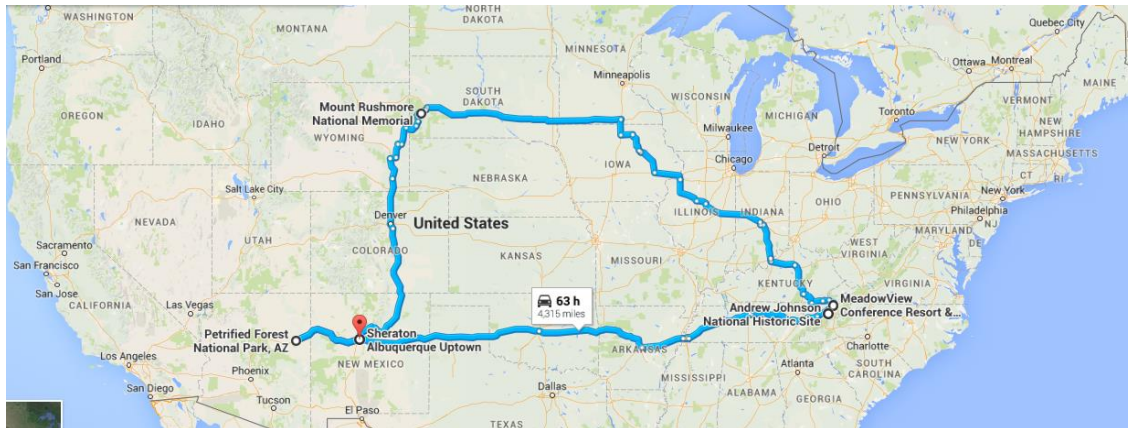
Tom Loftus and Gerhard Memmen-Krueger are now tied, each with seven Iron Butt finishes. Both managed to finish this morning despite each having minor get-off's overnight. They spent the banquet playing Rock Paper Scissors.

The group photo bonus was new this year and, judging by the feedback from riders, staff and followers, is likely to be used in future rallies if for no other reason than it provides for some really stunning images of this sport. The Mount Rushmore photo bonus on Leg 3 attracted 14

riders (seen in photo below). 13 riders bagged the photo, with just Jim Owen missing the deadline by six minutes.



It can't be said enough how the Iron Butt Rally is only made possible through the commitment of volunteers. IBR veterans Dennis Bitner and John Ferber did double duty this year, working the odometer checks at each checkpoint AND conducting the three photo bonuses. While the rest of us were slumped away in our assigned seats in the Rally van, Ferber and Bitner rode 4,315 miles, more than the average motorcyclist will ride in a year, to set up, meet and photo rider at the three locations.





Steve Hobart (*right*) and Tobie Stevens (*left*) provided nearly all the photos used in these daily reports. Both have an incredible eye for capturing the moment. Not being half the writer Higdon is, these reports would have been painful for all concerned if not for the great art from these talented photographers.



Jason Jonas of SpotWalla made the tracking data available for rally staff, family and friends, and the public. Joe Denton developed a special webpage for IBR staff with more detailed information throughout the rally. Thousands of spectators have been hitting ‘refresh’ for the last eleven days. Many have had the tracking page up on monitors at work and big screen TVs in stores like a 24/7 realty show. Those same thousands have begun withdrawal. It’s not pretty. Thank you, Jason and Joe. Our psychiatrists will be in touch.

Beyond just the volunteers who know what they had gotten themselves into are the many civilians who often get enlisted along the way. Howard Etkind, Bob Hall, Steve Aikens, Paul Glaves, Steve Bracken, John Bailey, the UPS guy who helped right Margaret Peart’s bike, NMRodRunner and HotRodZilla who rebuilt Josh Mountain’s forks at the end of Leg 1, John Huval are just a few. I am certain there are more who will be revealed in the ensuing weeks.

It has been a great deal of fun to tell some of the stories heard during the rally, certainly a full circle for me having ridden in three IBRs as material for feature articles. There are other stories that haven’t been told yet, but will come out over time, like

....

Bob Lilley (*right*) waking from a rest bonus to find a “Be Back Later” sign at the store where he needed his receipt.

And...



Olaf Moon being approached by two “hillbilly moonshiners” who offered beer and whiskey to stay the night deep in the woods of Tennessee after he had taken a gravel road to the Nemo Bridge. He swears he heard music. Banjos, perhaps?

Winner Eric Jewell catching a metal trailer fender under his ST1300 outside of Houston. Following the rule of “Whatever you can’t swerve around, you go over,” the fender became lodged between his wheels, scraping as he let off the throttle until THUMP and out it came. No damage except maybe soiled shorts.



And...

Gregg Lenentine getting roused from his sleep bonus in West Helena, Arkansas, at 3:30 AM by an aggressive, drunk hooker looking for a good time.

Erik Lipps having his tankbag raided by a swarm of crows in Yellowstone that had opened the zipper and stolen 15 Cliff bars by the time he took his photo of Old Faithful.

Bob Bowman attributing his 14 position climb in Leg 2 to stopping at home for “some quality rest.”

Mark Crane killing five birds in Leg 1, three more than he’d ever hit in all his prior years of riding. Even with the dead bird juju hexing him, and a medical issue with his eyes, Mark managed a 17th place finish.

Chris Comly crashing his on his way to the Start, which I had promised not to repeat here until he had told his wife Michele first. When Chris rolled up this morning, she was literally vibrating with excitement. Today is their 16th wedding anniversary. All she wanted was his safe return. “Can I touch him yet?” she asked as he ran to stop the clock. “NO.” When she did finally get to give him that hug she added, “I’m not even going to ask you why your jacket’s all ripped up.”

There are of course many more stories to come out over the next few weeks and months. I hope to have an epilogue uploaded over the weekend with overall summary analysis including breakdown by manufacturer. There are also many riders who never made it to my radar during these last eleven days, good or bad, which certainly doesn’t diminish their achievement in any way. They rode solid rides, chasing their dreams and demons. Only they will know if they left it all on the field or if they have unfinished business.

*Chris Cimino
Iron Butt Scribe
Iron Butt Rally©*