

2007 Iron Butt Rally, Day 5
Friday, August 24, 2007

The first 10 rider numbers for this year's rally were assigned to 10 individuals with an excellent chance of placing in the top ten. At the end of a grueling ride to the Gaspé Peninsula and back to Chesterfield, Missouri, rider number 90 is leading the 2007 Iron Butt Rally.

David Derrick, riding a BMW R1100RT, has racked up 112,249 points while scoring 25 bonuses. In addition to the gas log bonus, the call-in bonus, and the rest bonus, he scored bonuses at Perce Rock, Moundsville, WV, Buxton, ME, Todd Witte's house, Prince Edward Island, Louisville, KY (twice), Nashville, TN (twice), Natchez Trace Parkway Bridge, Paducah, KY, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Mentone, IN, Gateway Arch in St. Louis, New York City, Chicago, IL (three times), Grand Marais, MI, Clarksville, IN, Cave City, KY, and Campbellton, New Brunswick.

In 2nd place, just 171 points behind Derrick, is Jim Owen, riding an R1200RT, with 112,078 points. Jim also based his route around the 33,000 point Perce Rock bonus on the Gaspé Peninsula.

In 3rd place is Gregg Burger, riding an R1150GS, who scored 110,752 points with his route based around Perce Rock.

The rest of the riders in the top ten also rode to the Gaspé Peninsula.

Mike Evans, riding an FJR1300, is in 4th place with 110,447 points.

2006 Butt Lite winner Alex Schmitt, riding an ST1300, is in 5th place with 109,469 points.

Marty Leir, riding an R1200GS, is in 6th place with 109,032 points.

Chris Sakala, riding an R1150GS, is in 7th place with 108,861 points.

John Tomasovitch, riding a K1200RS, in 8th place with 104,758 points.

Peter Leap, riding an ST1300, is in 9th place with 103,757 points.

Jeff Earls, riding a K1200GT, is in 10th place with 102,483 points.

The next three highest scoring riders also built their route around Perce Rock. Mike Hutsal, riding a K1200GT, has 100,160 points. Rob Nye, riding an R1200RT, has 100,100 points. Eric Jewell, riding an R1150RT, has 99,719 points.

Brett Donahue, riding a Harley Sportster, was the highest scoring rider who built a route around Key West. Brett is in 14th place with 95,362

points. In addition to the gas log, Brett bagged 40 bonuses! The list of bonuses he got included Birmingham, AL, the call-in bonus, the rest bonus, Kansas City, MO, Biloxi, MS, Homestead, FL, Marietta, GA, Kissimmee, FL, Metropolis, IL, four from Nashville, TN, Natchez Trace Parkway Bridge, Memphis, TN, Leeds, AL, Elberton, GA, Paducah, KY, Hardeeville, SC, Grassy Key, FL, Gateway Arch, Mammoth Spring, AR, Sullivan's Island, SC, Tybee Island, GA, Tallulah Falls, GA, Bentonville, AR, Harlem, GA, Augusta, GA, New Orleans, LA, Talladega, AL, two from Key West, Gainesville, FL, Sciples Mill, MS, Memphis, TN, Greenville, MS, New Orleans, LA, two in Atlanta, GA, and Fayetteville, AR.

Alan Barbic and Tom Melchild are tied for 15th with 92,863 points. They were among the few riders that didn't go to either the Gaspé Peninsula or Key West. Alan and Tom laid out a route with relatively high points per mile. They not only rode significantly fewer miles than the riders who finished above them, they rode fewer miles than all but one of the next 24 riders.

At the other end of the spectrum, Hans Karlsson and Bob St. George failed to make it to the checkpoint before it closed. Bob called in reporting that he has been sidelined with an electrical problem on his FJR1300. The other DNFs reported previously were Tom Loftus, Chip Hyde, Bill Wade, and Don Wescott.

Joel Rappoport is leading the "Hopeless Class." Joel, who has never before competed in an endurance rally, is riding the 1976 BMW R60/6. He bagged Perce Rock and numerous other bonuses for a total of 76,119 points, solidly in the range required to be a finisher. He is in 55th place.

Donald Jones, riding the Hopeless Class 1978 GL1000, is also doing well. Don has 75,782 points and is in 59th place.

Mark Collins, riding the 1972 Harley, came in with 66,346 points, just a bit below what he will need to be listed as a finisher. He bagged high point bonuses in Biloxi, Key West, New Orleans, and Homestead. Mark, who is currently in 80th place, will need to do just a little bit better on Leg 2 to be listed as a finisher.

Alan Bennett on the Ninja 250 is having more of a problem keeping on a finisher-level pace. He scored on 53,225 points, riding 2,919 miles. He is in 87th place.

The leading two-up team is Reiner and Lisa Kappenberger, who are in 33rd place with 82,585 points.

Rebecca Vaughn, who is in 29th place, is the leading woman rider.

Rebecca scored 83,356 points on her ride to Key West and back.

Leader David Derrick rode 5,399 miles, which was the second highest mileage for the leg. The rider with the highest mileage was Marty Leir, who rode 5,417 miles. Third highest mileage was George Barnes, with 5,198 miles. However, George wasn't very efficient on this leg and is only in 41st place.

Dick Fish was another rider thought to have a good chance of placing near the top that is well back in the pack. He scored only 72,973 points on his ride to Perce Rock. Dick is expecting that Goose Bay is again likely to be a bonus on Leg 2 and, if it is, he says he is going for it this time. He is going to be disappointed when the bonus listings are handed out at 4 a.m. on Saturday morning.

Leg 1 has been a humbling experience for a number of riders who were expecting to be at the front of the pack. On the other hand, several of the riders in the top ten are newcomers to the Iron Butt Rally who are turning in Jim Owen-level performances.

Eight of the top ten riders are from east of the Mississippi. That may have given them some advantage on Leg 1. It's now time to head west.

Tom Austin

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