

2009 Iron Butt Rally, Day 5
Friday, August 28, 2009

Day 5 is Taking Its Toll

At 4,235 points, Miss Laura's Visitors' Center is a very popular bonus location on Leg 2. The bonus reads as follows:

Miss Laura's Visitors' Center 4,235 points See requirements below
2 North B St
Fort Smith, Arkansas
N35 23.521 - W094 25.759

Have Miss Laura entertain you for one hour. She will be available to show you her house on tours at 9:00am, 11:00am and 1:00pm on Friday, August 28, 2009. A \$5.00 fee will be charged – cash only please. If you are late for a tour, you must wait until the next time window. Miss Laura will stamp this bonus listing when you complete the tour.

Category: Prostitution. Miss Laura _____

While it is true that not all houses are homes, this beautiful Victorian mansion is the only former bordello listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Date: _____ Time: _____ Odometer: _____ Code: MLV Approved: _____

The instructions probably seem clear enough, but if you are reading this, you haven't been riding the Iron Butt Rally for five days. This morning, the Rallymaster received a call from IBR veteran John Langan, who asked, "Do we actually have to take the tour?" Lisa politely asked John what part of "when you complete the tour" he was having difficulty understanding.

Another rider had a problem with the bonus at Miss Laura's because of his concern with the time window conflict with the bonus at Shane Smith's house. As can be seen from the language of the Miss Laura's bonus, the earliest a rider can be expected to depart from Miss Laura's is 10 a.m. Since it's a 500 mile ride from to Shane's from Miss Laura's, and since you have to complete the 1-hour stay at Shane's within the time window, Rick Miller decided it wasn't possible to get both bonuses if the time window at Shane's closes at 5 p.m. today. Unfortunately, Rick misread the bonus for Shane's. The time window OPENS at 5 p.m. today and doesn't close until 5 a.m. tomorrow. It's going to be difficult for Rick to hang onto his 11th place position with that mistake.

Leg 2 Routing Options

As noted in yesterday's report, there are two mutually exclusive routing options for Leg 2. Virtually every route will be built around either Minot, North Dakota or Shane Smith's house in McComb, Mississippi. Those who head for the high point bonuses in the vicinity of Minot will probably lay out a route bringing them south through Denver. Riders who go south to Shane's will then be headed west along a southern route.

As explained yesterday, riders can exceed the 27,000 points target for finisher status with a route under 3,600 miles requiring only 15 bonuses stops plus the rest bonus. That route is as follows:

Bonus Stop 1: Head west from the Checkpoint on Interstate 88 to I-80 and on to Iowa City, IA. At Iowa City, make a 15 mile side trip down US 218 to reach a 353 point bonus at Riverside Casino and Golf Resort in Riverside, Iowa.

Bonus Stop 2: Get back on I-80 and head west to Stuart, IA, making a quick side trip to the 363 point bonus at the Stuart Police Department.

Bonus Stop 3: From Stuart, head south on local roads to the 2,135 point Roseman Covered Bridge Gift Shop bonus in Winterset, Iowa.

Bonus Stop 4: From Winterset, take local roads to I-35 South to Liberty, MO for the 254 point Jesse James Bank Museum bonus.

Bonus Stop 5: Continue on I-35 south to Olathe, Kansas for the 236 point bonus at the Garmin factory.

Bonus Stop 6: Continue south on I-35 to US 59 and then go south on US59/US 169 to Coffeyville, KS for the 465 point bonus at the Dalton Defenders Museum.

Rest Bonus: Bonus Stop 6 is 756 miles out from Checkpoint 1. At a 55 mph average (including bonus stops), that's almost 14 hours. Assuming a rider didn't leave the Checkpoint until 8 a.m., it's about 10 p.m. Bonus Stops 7, 8, and 9 are in a cluster about 150 miles further south on US62 and one of those bonuses has a 7 a.m. to sunset time window. Taking the rest bonus somewhere before Bonus Stop 7 makes sense.

Bonus Stop 7: Head south on US 169 from Coffeyville towards Tulsa, OK. Pick up I-44 west in Tulsa and then turn south on 377 to U.S. 62 head east to pick up the 339 point Citizens State Bank bonus in Paden, OK.

Bonus Stop 8: Just east of Bonus Stop 7 is the 374 point Castle, OK Post Office bonus on US 62.

Bonus Stop 9: Continue east on US 62 to the 2,291 point Highland Cemetery in Okemah, OK.

Bonus Stop 10: Just east of Bonus Stop 9, take I-40 east to Ft. Smith, Arkansas to the 4,235 point bonus at Miss Laura's Visitors' Center.

Bonus Stop 11: Continue east on I-40 to the 654 point Martin Luther King bonus in Memphis, TN.

Bonus Stop 12: Go south on I-55 from Memphis to the 4,145 point bonus and Shane Smith's house in McComb, Mississippi. The approximate arrival time at Shane's is 11 p.m., assuming the rider stretched the rest bonus to 7 hours and spent 2 hours at Miss Laura's.

Bonus Stop 13: After leaving Shane's, go south to the nearby Nyla's Burger Basket bonus in Osyka, MS for 3,647 points.

At this point, it's shortly after midnight on Friday. Assuming the rider now takes a 9 hour break, the trip to Checkpoint 2 begins at about 9 a.m. on Saturday, which is 7 a.m. Pacific Time. There are 38 hours left to travel about 1,900 miles. With another 8 hours off of the bike, the average speed required while travelling is about 63 mph. Since it's almost all Interstate, it's doable with only a couple of short side trips to pick up two more bonuses that are right along the shortest route.

Bonus Stop 14: The 360 point Statue of Huey Long in Baton Rouge, LA is the next obvious stop.

Bonus Stop 15: The 1,161 point Swayze Lake, LA bonus is west of the last bonus off of US 71.

At this point, riders concentrating on being finishers already have enough points. They can now make the long ride to Santa Ana without worrying about any other bonus stops. If they build up some time cushion or can get by with a little less sleep, there are a number of additional bonus possibilities along the way.

One key difference between the "finishers" route and the route for the top riders occurred yesterday, on the first day of the leg. The 4,013 point "Hobo Museum" bonus in Britt, Iowa was supposed to be available from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (As it turns out, the museum opened late and closed early yesterday, but the points are still available to any rider who documented that they were in the area during the specified bonus window and took a photo of the museum.) Riders then had to hustle to get to the 2,135 point Roseman Covered Bridge Gift Shop bonus in Winterset, Iowa by 5:00 p.m. In addition to jeopardizing the Winterset, IA bonus, including the Hobo Museum adds quite a few miles to the route.

Other significant differences between the "finishers" route and the route for the top riders will show up at the other end of the route. The stronger riders will be making a number of side trips to score bonuses while riders focused on achieving finisher status are heading straight for the barn.

Based on today's Call-In bonus reports, the majority of the field headed south yesterday, building their route around the Shane Smith bonus. At least 25 riders headed toward the northwest. A few riders seemed to be executing a route plan that was unclear.

Of the top ten riders at the end of Leg 1, only Roger Sinclair headed for Minot, ND. The other nine were all on their way to Miss Laura's and Shane's. As most of the top riders figured out, more points are available with a route based around Shane's.

Tomorrow

The second Call-In bonus is from noon to midnight tomorrow Pacific Time. Based on the spotty performance on today's Call-In, it's hard to tell when the calls will start coming in and when they will stop.

Tom Austin

August 28, 2009

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