

2011 Iron Butt Rally, Day 1
Monday, June 20, 2011

The Rally is off to a good start. Only one bike fell over in the parking lot this morning and, as Dale Wilson promised would happen, one bike (Greg Guillermo's Yamaha FJR) failed to start due to a weak battery. Greg experienced about a 10 minute delay waiting for my car and jumper cables.

The Starting Grid



This and other photos by Steve Hobart.

Three additional riders had a slightly delayed start due to their failure to follow instructions. After listening to Lisa Landry tell everyone at the Riders' Meeting yesterday to NEVER take off the lanyard with their I.D. card, Iron Butt Rally veteran Mark Crane showed up for the final odometer check this morning with no I.D. card. (He had left the I.D. in his hotel room.) The 5-minutes that he was required to wait after the other riders had left was not nearly as painful as the fact that people are reading this.

Tom and Rosie Sperry were also delayed until everyone else had left because they were not at their bike when it was time for their final odometer check.

Tom and Rosie Sperry Leaving a Few Minutes Late



George Barker was about a half hour late leaving because of the time it took to finish the check-in process that he failed to compete this weekend.

The most significant problem at the start was that one rider, David Fick, left the starting line without getting his odometer checked and without getting his I.D. card punched. After being told no less than three times that he would have to wait until the others had left to get his odometer checked and I.D. punched, Fick left with the other riders. As was

clearly stated at yesterday's Riders' Meeting, leaving without getting your I.D. card punched will make you a DNF (did not finish). Bending over backwards to save his rally, Lisa Landry left a message on his cell phone telling him that he must return to the hotel to get his odometer checked and I.D. punched if he wanted to avoid being disqualified at Checkpoint 1. Fick got the message two hours later and headed back to the hotel.

Teams

Roger and Kathleen Allen, Chris Ogden and Doug Barrett, and Jennyfer Audet and Jacques Titilo declared that they were running the rally as two-person teams. Jennyfer and Jacques successfully finished as a team in 2009. The husband and wife team of the Allen's is typical of what is normally expected with married couples who have no plans of splitting up should one person have an accident or mechanical troubles. Ogden and Barrett apparently decided that the risk one of them having problems was worth the potential benefit of having two heads working on route plans.

Jennyfer Audet Followed by Team Member Jacques Titilo



Off in All Directions

One of the most satisfying things for a route master to see is motorcycles heading in all different directions as the riders leave the start. That's exactly what's happening this

morning. Based on the routes I collected from over 90% of the riders, about half of the field is headed for Blaine, Washington, the first leg of the Four Corners Tour. Most of the others either headed directly east or south to pick up the state capitals in Washington and Oregon.

The most stunning news for most of the IBR staff is that three riders, all IBR veterans, are headed for Hyder, Alaska. Fire up your favorite mapping program and see if you can make that work!

Ken Meese Heading for Hyder, Alaska



The Alaska-bound trio is Ken Meese, Roger Sinclair, and Dick Peek. Based on my brief conversations with them this morning, they all say that they realize they will be cutting it close. That's an understatement. They have obviously all decided to go for an early knock-out punch, which is exactly the kind of strategy that Michael Kneebone advises against. Stay tuned to learn whether any of them can pull this off.

IB5000 Winner John Coons Followed by Dave Hembroff



John Young on the 1969 Triumph Trident



The Keyboard Riders

It is with great amusement that Michael Kneebone, Lisa Landry, Steve Hobart, and I are looking at a variety of posts in which riders of proven mediocrity are pontificating about how easy this rally is going to be. Best yet was the boast of a former bottom-of-the-pack finisher that this rally is so easy that she could have won it. That caused the Rallymaster to laugh so hard that there were tears running down her cheeks.

Eleven days from now, a number of keyboard riders are going to look even more foolish than they do today. From the route plans we have reviewed this morning, several previous top ten finishers have correctly figured out that they will have to ride farther and harder than they ever have before for a podium finish in this rally. Mark my words: the number of miles ridden by the top riders in this rally will be **DOUBLE** the miles that have qualified riders as finishers in previous rallies. And every single finisher will accumulate more miles than were ridden by the woman who claims she could *win* this year's rally.

Tomorrow

Don't hold your breath for tomorrow's report. It's long travel day for most of the IBR staff. We will get a report out, but it may be early Wednesday morning before it gets posted.

Tom Austin

June 20, 2011

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