

The 2013 Iron Butt Rally: The Finish

Dawn

Steve Bennett was the first to arrive. It was 3:15 a.m. He had been the first to arrive at the checkpoint in Rancho Cordova. When we send out invitations to apply for the 2015 running of the Iron Butt Rally, Steve will be the first to apply.

The trickle began. Matt Wise. Tony Osborne. Paul Peloquin. Rob Nye. The tap opened wider. Bailey. Stanforth. Fox. Anderson. Hogan. By 5:11 there was a cascade. Miller. Good/Bergman. Allen and Allen. Vaillancourt. Blewett and Blewett. Bachman. McPhee. Runk, Jr.

At 7:57 a.m. today Bob Lilley's bike arced toward the porte cochère of the Marriott hotel. Whistling, cheering, and clapping greeted his appearance. That was nice. As he slowly unwound himself from the bike, he was attacked from three directions by his wife and two teen-aged daughters. They looked as if they would not let go until they were truly convinced that their warrior had really returned. For Bob Lilley that was the greeting that really mattered.

Anyone coming in after Bob was late and would pay 20 points per minute.

8:01: Sam Liles
8:02: Dave Legnosky and Rex LeGalley
8:03: Scott Thorton
8:36: Alex Ciurczak
8:48: Mark Starrett.
9:18: Michiel Kerkhof
9:19: Alan Hatcher

They took their hits, but they finished. Howard Entman and Tony Hudson were too far out to make it to the finish by 10:00 a.m. and will be time-barred.

Rick Snyder had a near miss. His clutch failed as he was inbound on the Pennsylvania turnpike. He called Lisa, who asked for volunteers to form a rescue squad. John Ryan, David Boyer, and Jack Cheasty stepped up. Ryan rode his bike 140 miles to the east to meet Snyder as the others followed in a van, donated his motor to the stranded rider, and returned to the hotel with Cheasty and Boyer. The bike switch at the last moment will cost Rick half his points, but he still will have enough to be classified as a finisher.

Ken Meese has again ended his Iron Butt Rally in a hospital. He crashed out early this morning on I-95 north of Richmond, Virginia. Details remain sketchy as this report goes out, but his condition is not believed to be serious.

Jungo Road: An Error Corrected, A Final Note Sounded

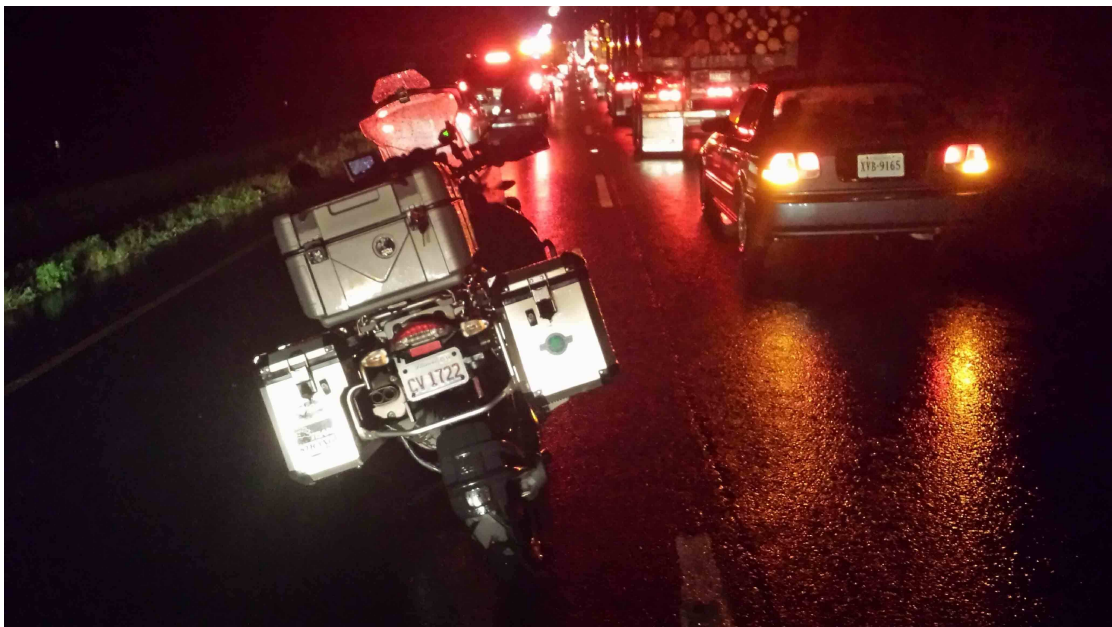
I knew I would do this. My notes were clear but my head evidently was not. I failed to note the other day when I was listing those who had either accidentally or by design traveled the length of the infamous Jungo Road that Rusty Bachman had ridden the trail with Tonie Cowen. My bad, Rusty. If you can handle that kind of misery, the world needs to know about it.

Joe Denton, who runs two popular long-distance riding e-mail lists, wrote late last night about an experience he had had on the road. Noting that he owns a BMW dual-sport motorcycle because he is comfortable riding on any kind of surface, he recalled the first time he had ridden one of those bikes, that being the time he rode Ron Ayres' motorcycle to Gerlach after Ayres' accident. Joe concluded, "To those that have used Jungo as a real road on this IBR, I salute you."

Misses and Near Misses

In 6th place after the first leg of the 2011 rally, John Coons went down on a rain-slicked interstate, becoming a non-finisher on his first IBR. This time, needing and producing a monster ride from Grand Junction, Colorado, in the rally's closing hours, he is relieved to have arrived at the Marriott on time and within the budget. "Finishing," he notes, "is better than not finishing."

He has five hours to reach the hotel parking lot, U.S. 29 has come to a standstill, and Gerhard Memmen-Kreuger is looking at this scene before him:



He made it through this mess to the finish, but it was close.

Dan Roth had a close call as well. Stop me if you've heard this tale of woe before, but his BMW's final drive started leaking fluid. He limped into Bob Woolridge's dealership in Atlanta and was back on the road in two hours. When this happens to you, even if you're toes up in North Dakota, my advice is for you to head for Atlanta. There is a dealer in that town who really takes care of the traveler in distress.

Robert Koeber went missing a few days ago after he began to experience gear box problems with his Honda XBR. Imagine our surprise last night when we went into the hotel's dining room and found one of our favorite German riders contentedly eating dinner and having a glass of wine. Excuse me? Where did you come from? He explained that he had never been able to get the bike repaired, so he just learned how to jiggle the shift lever around enough to keep rolling toward Cranberry Township. He's a non-finisher, but he's here and that's all that matters to us.

We reported yesterday that Michiel Kerkof's Harley had died and gone to heaven, giving its owner a DNF. Through the operation of spirits unknown to us, Michiel this morning appeared at the finish with time to spare. Unhappily, his trip was in vain. Sixty thousand points was the minimum required to be considered a finisher in this year's rally. Michiel was 1,828 shy of the mark. So our first report was true, sort of.

There's not finishing and then there's not finishing the Scott Thornton way. He's the rider who lost his camera during the second leg and with it all the bonus points he'd accumulated for two and one-half days. The only points he did receive on the second section were for keeping a Spot tracker, resting, and a call-in. Was it possible that he could achieve sufficient points on just the 1st and 3rd legs of the rally to total 60,000? No. He came in 237 points short. That kind of disappointment doesn't even have a name. If it did, it would be called Iron Butt.

Chris Purney similarly was never far from the cliff. Standing 88th and 76th after the first two legs, it seemed that he would need nothing short of celestial intervention to rope in the necessary points to secure for himself a three-digit Iron Butt Association number, something that is not available in any store. I have been authorized by the powers that be to report that Purney is within 183 points of the magic 60,000 number, but on which side of the line he sits I am in too much of a hurry at present to reveal.

Our final entry of the day will appear shortly after the conclusion of the banquet this evening, probably about 8:00 EDT. You say you can't wait for this to be over? You're not alone, believe me.

At the Banquet

*Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.*

Robert Louis Stevenson

Earlier reports had noted that Tom Austin had told riders to target for 60,000 as the minimum score to be considered a finisher. When scoring was completed early in the afternoon, it became evident that a natural break lay at the level of 55,000. Austin concluded that the minimum finishing score should then be adjusted slightly downward.

Rick Snyder, the rider who had been saved by the rescue party led by John Ryan, was the dead-last-but-finished rider in 67th place. He had 31,788 points, below the 55,000 minimum. What had occurred was that he had switched bikes during the event. The penalty for that is the loss of half his total points and the effect is to throw him down the well of finishing places, but for the purposes of whether or not he can claim to have finished an Iron Butt, he's good to go. The same is true of the rider just ahead of him, Marc Beaulac, in 61st place.

The next five riders --- Paul Peloquin, Robert Bolger, Michiel Kerkhof, Dave Legnosky, and Scott Thornton --- had been saved by the reduction of the minimum score to 55,000. Chris Purney was thought to be at the edge of a cliff when last we met. He stepped back and with the minimum points adjustment can breathe a sigh of relief. He is 60th overall.

Bobby and Dianne Fox ran together as a team and have virtually identical mileages, but she came in with 192 more points than her husband did. Can this marriage be saved?

In 25th place with 10,238 miles and 70,953 is John Frick. I might not have mentioned John's middle-of-the-pack finish but for the e-mail I received this afternoon from his daughter. She reminded me that when he accepted his trophy tonight, he became at the age of 70 the oldest finisher in the history of the rally, breaking the record formerly held by the late, great Garve Nelson. Mr. Nelson, however, continues to hold the record for being the oldest rider ever disqualified from the event. We laugh about that absurdity to this good day, but no one ever laughed harder about it than Garve.

With a 23rd place finish Gerhard Memmen-Krueger, Germany's happiest export, finishes his 7th IBR.

John Coons survived a long, brutal final day to finish 10th overall. He was one of the riders who'd taken the route north out of Sacramento, a decision that cost him two places in the standings.

The fact that I have not mentioned Greg Rice's name in these reports to date and that tonight he was the 9th overall rider means one thing: he runs silent and he runs deep. Steady from start to finish, this is a well-deserved conclusion for a fine rider.

Taking the northern route into Canada on the final leg of the rally cost Alex Schmitt five places in the overall standings, but in winding up 8th overall it was his best IBR finish to date. Vancouver was an especially tough rest stop for Alex. While he slept one of the city's crackheads removed most of the gear attached to the sleeping rider's bike. I thought theft was not only illegal but unknown in Canada.

At the start of the rally John Harrison told me to keep an eye on rookie Eric Bray. John promised that the rookie would do some surprising things on the rally. I'm rarely comfortable with surprises, but in this case it was indeed pleasant to behold. Eric moved from 16th on the first leg to 11th on the second. Tonight only six riders are ahead of him. Are you happy now, John? I know that Eric is.

Tim Pawlowski finished 6th on his FJR. He had remained steady, starting in the middle of the top ten and staying there to the end. When we observed in one of our early reports that the Team Strange crew was a solid presence this year, Tim was one of the reasons why.

Matt Watkins took 5th place, a loss of four positions from his overall lead in Sacramento. Again, it was attributable to his decision to ride north on the last leg. Once he had cleaned out the big bonuses in Canada, there was nothing left for riders in the northwest to do except to ride endlessly back to Pennsylvania. There are a lot of debatable points in this rally but whether riding to Canada on the final leg was a good idea is clearly not one of them.

Craig Brooks, a rookie pilot --- well, a rookie IBR pilot but a very experienced United Airlines pilot --- ran a unique route in the final leg, one that was clever enough to lift him six places to 4th overall.

Wendy Crockett took 3rd place, the highest finishing position for a woman since Fran Crane's 2nd place result in 1987. Steady from start to finish, she was a fixed star. If anyone thought that her win on the Spank rally a month ago was a fluke attributable to a rather small field, they should look at what Wendy did to her competition on this event. She was one of 96 in the starting gate; now she's on the podium of the hardest street motorcycle rally there is.

What is it with these pilots? Jim Owen, Eric Jewell, Paul Taylor, and Chris Sakala. Every one of them has a win, a second, or a third in the IBR. Add another pilot to that list tonight, J. P. Mountain. You've previously known him as Rider X (my description) or "Nutjob" (Jerry White's appellation). Tonight you can call him the

2nd place overall finisher of the 2013 Iron Butt Rally. With 12,963 miles his route was highly inefficient. But as I wrote in 2003, "More than any other factor, a winning ride almost invariably correlates with total miles ridden. There's no getting around it: Efficiency looks great, but sloppy most often takes home the bacon." Mountain took that advice to heart. He was the only rider to hit Key West, a route that was literally in a class by itself. And it was a classic Iron Butt finishing leg. Congratulations, nutjob. You were cleared for takeoff and you did just that.

And then there was one left standing, the winner, Derek Dickson. He crashed out of the Iron Butt in 2009. Last year he crashed out of the Butt Lite. As he sat on his bike in the parking lot minutes before the start, I told him that his days of ending rallies with an IV needle in his arm had better be over. "They are," he smiled.

He ran the most boring route imaginable but he made no mistakes. He was utterly unshakeable. Jeff Earls maintained that the second leg on this rally should be taken easily to maintain reserves for the last leg. That's always, *always* good advice for this event. With Eric Jewell going out early on the second leg, Dickson was 4,149 points down to Matt Watkins. But Derek was fresh and Matt was baked. The rally was very likely over at that point, although no one knew it. So Derek did what every rider without many options must do: Plan the best ride you can, then ride your plan to the end. And don't crash.

Tonight he has joined an elite club. Even better, he did it without an IV needle in his arm.



Nancy Oswald Scoring the Champ

Bob Higdon

Place	Rider	Total Miles	Total Points	Motorcycle
1	Derek Dickson	11,799	92,524	2005 Yamaha FJR1300
2	Josh Mountain	12,963	90,065	2006 Yamaha FJR1300A
3	Wendy Crockett	11,363	89,217	2005 Yamaha FJR1300
4	Craig Brooks	10,770	86,939	2011 BMW R1200GS
5	Matt Watkins	11,621	85,615	2005 Yamaha FJR1300
6	Tim Pawlowski	11,065	85,260	2006 Yamaha FJR1300A
7	Eric Bray	11,166	85,200	2012 BMW R1200GS
8	Alex Schmitt	11,275	84,693	1998 Honda ST1100
9	Greg Rice	11,083	81,703	2012 Honda Gold Wing
10	John Coons	11,594	81,502	1994 BMW R1100RSL
11	Perry Karsten	10,667	79,975	2007 Yamaha FJR 1300
12	Kevin Lechner	10,465	79,361	2007 Honda ST1300
13	Todd & Diane LeClair	10,956	78,780	2007 Honda Gold Wing
14	Philip Weston	10,634	78,327	2005 Yamaha Fazer1000
15	Daniel Roth	10,332	77,099	2005 BMW R1200GS
16	Tim Masterson	10,484	77,051	2013 BMW R1200GS
17	Rex LeGalley	10,265	76,943	2012 Harley Davidson Street Glide
18	Jon & Ande Good/Bergmann	9,798	76,676	2013 BMW K1600GTL
19	Brian Walters	10,700	76,174	2012 BMW R1200GS
20	Anthony Osborne	10,288	75,932	2005 Yamaha FJR1300
21	Tonie Cowen	10,896	75,113	2012 Yamaha Super Tenere
22	Jim Abbott	11,080	74,385	2003 Honda ST1300
23	Gerhard Memmen-Krueger	10,435	74,162	2012 BMW R1200GS
24	Mike Heitkamp	10,027	71,946	2011 Kawasaki Concours14
25	John Frick	10,238	70,953	2009 BMW K1200LT
26	Roger Allen	10,055	70,883	2011 BMW R1200GS
27	Kathy Allen	10,081	70,858	2010 BMW R1200GS
28	Connie Gabrick	9,295	69,938	2009 Victory Vision
29	Ian McPhee	10,041	69,232	2000 BMW R1100RT
30	Bob Lilley	13,380	69,205	2011 BMW R1200GS
31	Rob Nye	10,669	69,032	2012 BMW R1200GS
32	Steve Bennett	9,878	68,222	2010 Yamaha FJR1300
33	Greg & Pat Blewett	9,677	67,418	2007 Honda Gold Wing
34	Matt Wise	10,799	67,269	2012 BMW K1600GTL
35	Kevin & Lynda Weller	10,043	66,618	2011 BMW R1200GS
36	Jeremy Loveall	9,179	66,280	2007 BMW R1200RT-P
37	Allen Hatcher	10,842	66,070	2003 BMW K1200LT
38	Rusty Bachman	9,774	65,968	2012 Yamaha Super Tenere
39	Sal Terranova	9,479	65,111	2002 Honda ST1100
40	Gregg Lenentine	10,332	64,879	2010 Yamaha FJR1300
41	Peter Hogan	10,152	64,629	2009 Yamaha FRJ1300
42	Kevin Sawatsky	10,074	64,324	2003 Yamaha FJR1300

43	Colin Goodall	9,327	64,038	2005 Yamaha FJR1300A
44	Eric Vaillancourt	9,542	63,830	2012 Yamaha Super Tenere
45	Shane & Annette Cudlin	9,955	63,210	2010 Yamaha XTZ1200
46	Don Stadtler	9,064	63,153	2008 Harley Davidson Softail
47	Bob Rippy	9,496	62,747	2007 BMW R1200RT
48	Jeff Miller	10,602	62,434	2007 Honda Gold Wing
49	Dianne Fox	8,783	61,897	2009 BMW R1200RT
50	Bobby Fox	8,782	61,705	2007 BMW R1200RT
51	Mark Starrett	9,564	61,166	2005 Yamaha FJR1300
52	Mike Riley	9,532	61,134	2008 Kawasaki Concours14
53	John Bailey	10,131	60,985	2010 Kawasaki Concours14
54	Sanjay Dixit	9,784	60,839	2007 BMW R1200RT
55	Sam Liles	10,280	60,776	2008 BMW R1200GS
56	Alex Ciurczak	9,435	60,659	2013 BMW R1200RT
57	Robert Reid	10,108	60,636	2008 BMW R1200GS
58	Betsy Young	9,169	60,440	2010 BMW R1200RT
59	Kendall Anderson	9,420	60,300	2007 Moto Guzzi Norge
60	Chris Purney	9,345	60,183	2007 Yamaha FJR1300
61	Scott Thornton	11,397	59,763	1978 Yamaha XS1100
62	Dave Legnosky	8,483	59,686	2003 Honda Gold Wing
63	Michiel Kerkhof	10,679	58,172	2010 Harley-Davidson Ultra Classic
64	Robert Bolger	9,240	58,170	2008 Kawasaki Concours14
65	Paul Peloquin	10,743	57,191	2003 Yamaha FJR1300
66*	Marc Beaulac	10,147	32,815	2008 Honda Gold Wing
67*	Richard Snyder	10,616	31,788	1995 BMW R1100GS
DNF	Eric Jewell	7,694	51,986	2007 Honda ST1300
DNF	Byron Scott Jones	9,038	51,593	2006 BMW R1200RT
DNF	David Bourdeaux	9,070	51,197	2002 Honda Gold Wing
DNF	Ken Meese	7,041	45,175	2012 BMW K1600GTL
DNF	John Stanforth	10,458	41,098	2008 Kawasaki Concours14
DNF	Shuey Wolfe	6,762	38,615	2010 Honda ST1300
DNF	Robert Koeber	8,596	38,202	1986 Honda XBR500
DNF	Jerry Runk Jr.	10,278	38,153	2012 Kawasaki Vulcan
DNF	Tom Loftus	6,191	38,034	2007 Honda ST1300
DNF	Steve McCaa	6,132	37,797	2008 Kawasaki Versys
DNF	Rony Baenziger	5,789	35,622	2007 BMW R1200GS
DNF	Tony Hudson	5,274	35,103	2005 Honda Gold Wing
DNF	Kurt Worden	5,203	34,944	2003 Kawasaki Ninja
DNF	Donald Jones	8,217	33,739	2003 Honda Gold Wing
DNF	Howard Entman	5,503	33,009	2013 Yamaha FJR1300
DNF	Pat & Rebecca Ford/Martinez	4,969	33,002	2007 Honda Gold Wing
DNF	Cliff Wall	5,270	32,548	2006 Honda Gold Wing
DNF	Joe Green	4,947	31,376	2008 Yamaha FJR1300
DNF	Doug Tessorf	7,368	27,398	2010 BMW R1200RT
DNF	Phil Oconner	5,197	26,906	2005 Honda Gold Wing

DNF	Jerome Byrd	5,040	26,892	2010 Honda NT700
DNF	Keith Keating	5,916	25,866	1994 BMW K75RT-P
DNF	Mark Crane	7,074	23,816	2010 BMW R1200GS
DNF	Dennis Powell	2,345	13,068	2013 Honda Gold Wing
DNF	Neil Hejny	1,930	12,680	2002 Honda Gold Wing
DNF	Brian Bumpas	2,227	11,370	2001 Honda Gold Wing
DNF	Nahum Sloan	2,485	10,534	2010 BMW R1200GS
DNF	Larry Meeker	0	0	2004 BMW R1150GS
DNF	Dave Hembroff	0	0	2008 Yamaha FJR1300A