

2010 Iron Butt 5000 Rally, Day 3
Wednesday, August 18, 2010

Leg 2 Begins

A very brief riders meeting was held at 5 a.m. this morning, following a hot buffet breakfast that the Rallymaster had arranged to have the hotel serve at 4:30 a.m. in the lobby restaurant. The restaurant went from fairly crowded to almost empty in a period of about 2 minutes starting at about 4:57 a.m.

At the beginning of the meeting, Michael Kneebone read the names of the top ten finishers. Some were no doubt surprised that Chris Sakala was not leading, but, since this rally is a tribute to Eddie James, it was fitting that a veteran of Eddie's rallies was in the lead. As mentioned in yesterday's report, John Coons has twice finished in the top 5 of the Butt Lite, which has been as close as it gets to the Iron Butt Rally.

The most animated reaction from the assembled riders came when Kneebone announced that 2-up couple, Jim and Donna Phillips, were in third place, only 110 points out of first. Perhaps no one was more surprised at their impressive showing than Jim and Donna themselves. They left the scoring table last night thinking they had only scored 2,820 points, which would have put them in the middle of the pack. They were so tired after their long ride that they failed to notice that a scoring error had cheated them out of the big 682 point bonus in Thermopolis, Wyoming. Bill Watt and Susan Murphy found the error during the auditing process and corrected the score.

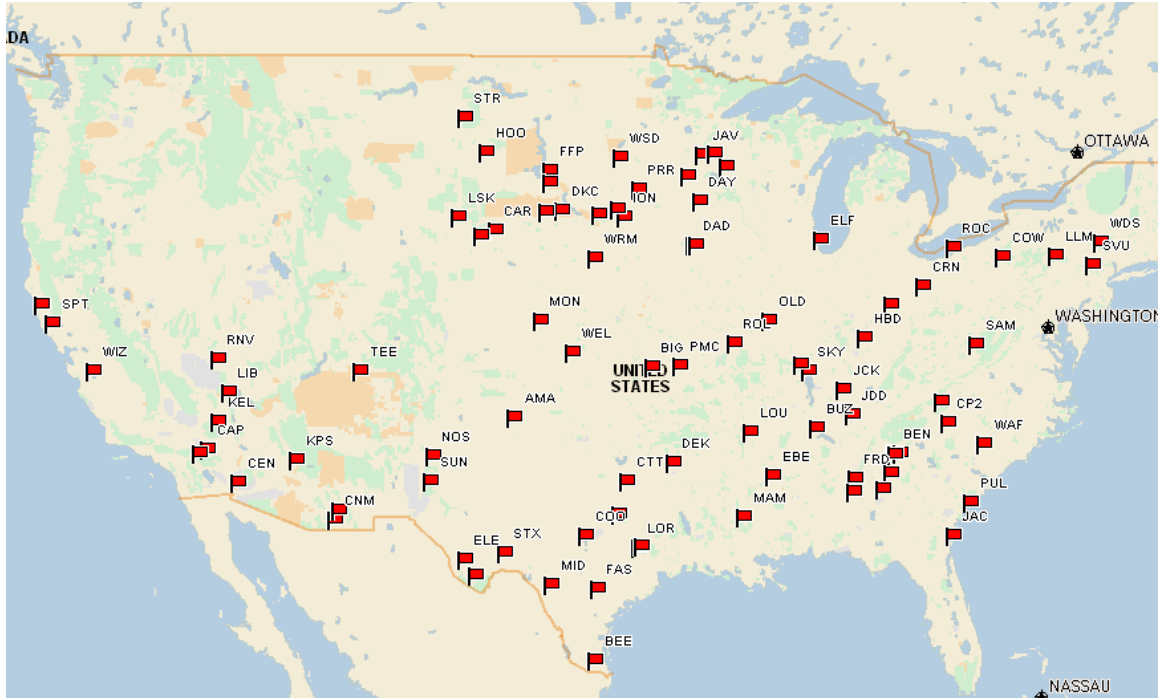
After Kneebone announced the top ten, I announced that the "finisher" level point target for this leg will be 9,200. Rallymaster Lisa Landry then described a new procedure all riders were asked to follow. Each rider would be given a 3 x 5 index card on which they were to write their rider number and route, or at least the highest point bonuses they were planning to go for. The cards were to be dropped in a sealed container placed in the hotel lobby before departure.

By about 5:15 a.m., the Leg 2 bonus listings and the Leg 2 thumb drives were distributed. Riders headed back to their rooms to plan the next 3 days of their lives.

Leg 2 Bonus Locations

As shown on the figure below, the Leg 2 bonus locations are spread far and wide. Three are on the California coast, a couple are on the Atlantic coast, several are in the Southwest, some are in the Northeast, and quite a few are in Texas. It shouldn't be a surprise that quite a few locations are in Minnesota, Eddie's old stomping grounds, and Atlanta, where Eddie most recently lived. The waypoint flag labeled "CP2" is the finish in Spartanburg, South Carolina.

Leg 2 Bonus Locations



How to Become a Finisher with Only One Bonus Stop

The 85 separate bonus locations give the riders a lot to choose from while planning their Leg 2 route. However there is one “easy” choice to insure sufficient points to become a finisher. It’s the infamous Point Cabrillo Light Station bonus in Mendocino, California. The entire text of the bonus is printed on the following page.

As shown on the first line of the bonus listing, this one bonus is good for 9,000 points. Riders who don’t screw up their Call-In bonuses and their fuel log will exceed the points required to be on target for a guaranteed spot in the 2011 Iron Butt Rally by just completing this single bonus and making it to the finish on time. But that’s easier said than done.

From Checkpoint 1 to Point Cabrillo is about 1,340 miles. Depending on how long it takes a rider to plan the route, they may be able to make it to the West Coast in time to get a few hours of sleep before sunrise, when they can get a picture of the Light Station. After snapping a photo at about 6:00 a.m. Pacific Time (a half hour before sunrise), there are 49 hours left to make it to the finish. That requires a 1,400 mile per day pace. However, the pace required for the last two days will be closer to 1,500 miles per day if the rider intends to get the 1,000 point 4-hour rest bonus that “Must start on Thursday, August 19.”

Mendocino, CA area
Point Cabrillo Light Station and Nature Preserve
N39 20.990 W123 48.781

9000 points

Available daylight hours

Take a photo of the Light Station.

From Robert Higdon's 2005 IBR report:

Sometimes they make it too easy for us here at The Daily Planet. Our cub reporters in their capes and blue tights scurry around all day looking for the lead story. Yesterday one of them --- the story, not the cub reporter --- fell right into our lap. Take a look at the scores of Eddie James and George Zelenz, for example. Eddie is in fourth place today, trying to figure out how to ride ten straight miles without cramping, creaking, or cringing. George Barnes tells rookies that they must adapt their bikes so that the machine is the most comfortable place on earth for them to be. Eddie's bike isn't like that these days. He's trying to recover from a terrible accident in the final hours of the last Iron Butt Rally. His isn't a BMW dual-sport bike; it's an ordeal with wheels. His leg locks up; he can't walk without an occasional shiver of pain wrinkling his face; aspirin is another basic food group for him. Instead of being on a motorcycle, he needs to be pruning his skin in the hot tub where George Zelenz hangs out.

At the Cabrillo lighthouse bonus in Mendocino, California, Eddie entered by the handicapped access road and took the required photo. No one at the scoring table would have questioned for one second his right to do exactly that. But some fellow riders saw him and a few predictable razzes were shouted out. Eddie knows a no-win situation when he sees it, having created a few of them by himself in the past, so he curled back around into the main lot, limped a quarter-mile toward the lighthouse to take a second photo, and headed off to his next stop, grimacing a bit as he usually does these days.

That's one way to do it, what we call the good faith effort. George Zelenz took a different approach. In the main parking lot he tossed his identification towel on a bush, took the picture, and departed. Total steps taken: maybe eight. When Zelenz presented the photo at the scoring table last night, an immediate problem arose: No one could identify a man-made structure anywhere in the picture, much less a lighthouse. The issue was bounced up to Tom Austin, the chief scorer. Austin saw the vague, tiny outline of what may have been a tree, but the lighthouse apparently was behind even that. Tom showed me the photo and asked if I could see anything. "I'm sure I'll be able to," I said, "as soon as I run this crap through an electron microscope." Bonus denied. Zelenz said he would protest. "Be my guest," Austin shrugged. I'm not sure how the appeal was decided, but the laughter heard in the chambers of the Supreme Court probably doesn't bode well for the rider.

Eddie James might make it to Maine. He might even make it back to Denver if his painkillers hold out. When it's over, he won't be in fourth place. You can ask only so much of bones and muscles that hurt too much already. He can drive you absolutely crazy, but he can also shine, sometimes as brightly and intently as the Cabrillo lighthouse. REH

It's approximately .5 mile walk to the Light Station. Take the same walk Eddie did 5 years ago.

Date: _____ Time: _____ Odometer: _____ Code: ZEL Approved: _____

Leg 1 Leader John Coons Heads Out on Leg 2



Good Grief! Another Animal Strike

Our riders this year seem to have an above-average level of animal magnetism.

The youngest rider in the rally, 23 year old Brian Bray, is apparently out after hitting a freaking bear early this afternoon near Wolfcreek Pass in southern Colorado. Brian seems to be okay and the bear also survived. Brian's SV650S isn't doing as well. A deer, a moose, and a bear are a bit much considering that the rally isn't yet half over.

Tom Austin
August 18, 2010
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