

2010 Iron Butt 5000 Rally, Day 4
Thursday, August 19, 2010

Two Sport Utility Vehicles, loaded to the gills with IBR staff and their equipment, are en route to Spartanburg, South Carolina today. The lead vehicle is a Nissan Armada carrying Steve Hobart, Lisa Landry, and Dale Wilson. My wife Helen and I are about an hour behind. Imagine our surprise at about 6 a.m. when we heard from the lead vehicle that navigator Hobart had plotted a route that had them over 200 miles farther out from Spartanburg than we were. While both Street Atlas and our on-board navigation system were telling us that Denver to Spartanburg by way of St. Louis was just over 1,500 miles, Hobart had somehow come up with an 1,800 mile route through Oklahoma City. He's blaming it on Garmin. After inserting St. Louis as a "via," the lead vehicle is now planning on doing a Bun Burner Gold, arriving in Spartanburg at dawn tomorrow.

More Animal Magnetism

Encounters with animals continue to be a problem. At 2:30 a.m. this morning, Cameron Sanders hit a cow just outside of O'Neill, Nebraska. He has been transported to Sioux City, Iowa for medical care. Cameron was banged up enough to have spent a few hours in intensive care, but we are told that he is going to be alright and should be released within a couple of days.

An Eddie James Moment at Kafka, Inc.

The bonus listing for Kafka, Inc. in Phoenix, Arizona clearly stated "Thursday only, 10 am – 4pm." In an attempt to be helpful, Steve Kafka opened early and started painting bikes before 10 a.m. Here is a verbatim transcript of what the riders were told at the riders meeting last Sunday:

If there is a time window associated with a bonus, you must be at the bonus during the time window. Showing up early is not enough. If the time window is 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and you show up at 8:30 a.m., you have to wait until 9:00 a.m. If you talk a shop owner into opening up early or staying late so that you can get bonus documentation outside of the time window, we will consider that cheating and you will be disqualified.

Even riders who should know better got their bikes painted before 10 a.m. At least one of them had the foresight to call the Rallymaster and ask if was okay. Gee, I wonder what the answer was? The Rallymaster has graciously allowed a post-10 a.m. re-paint.

Point Cabrillo or Bust; Mostly Bust

Two of the three bikes that headed for Point Cabrillo are rapidly headed towards a DNF. Betsy Young called at 11:51 a.m. Pacific Time to say that she was almost to the light station. Mike Relph called at 11:57 a.m. Pacific Time to say that he had just made it to the light station. They are both toast. Relph seems to realize he has bitten off way too much; he said that he might be heading home once he gets to Flagstaff depending on the time he is making. Betsy doesn't seem to have figured it out yet, but she soon will. They are both about 5 hours behind schedule.

Jim and Donna Phillips called in at 6:27 a.m. from Nice, California, which is 76 twisty miles from Point Cabrillo. They have finished a rest bonus, which is good, but they are about 2 hours behind the ideal schedule to make it back to Spartanburg on time. They still might pull it off.

Call-In Bonus Performance is Slipping

The Leg 1 call-in bonuses went fairly smoothly with only two riders missing the time window. Jerome Byrd missed it by 49 minutes. Chris Carr missed it by a bit more than that because he didn't notice that the time window was "a.m." not "p.m."

There were more problems today with the first Call-In bonus on Leg 2. Aaron Konecky was 24 minutes early and Doug Barrett, Bobby Fox, Allen Wilson, Dave Hicks, and Betsy Young failed to provide one of the three requested locations. Barrett probably tried to leave the location, but there was a gap in the recording due to poor cell phone service. He didn't follow the advice given at the riders' meeting to repeat the information and it has cost him some points. I didn't hear from Joe Zulaski, which is a concern.

Riding Due to the Charity of Fellow Riders

Brant Moteelall is not having a good day. During his call-in bonus, he reported that he lost his wallet "somewhere in Nebraska" and didn't have a spare credit card or cash stored anywhere else. He now owes Wayne Boyter and Brian Johnson big time. Wayne has loaned Brant \$100 in cash and Brian has loaned him a credit card.

I'll post an update soon after we get to Spartanburg on Friday afternoon.

Tom Austin

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