

# 2023 Iron Butt Rally



Known as the “The World’s Toughest Motorcycle Rally”, the Iron Butt Rally (IBR) is an 11-day scavenger hunt that covers the USA and Canada—The Superbowl of long-distance riding! This international event is held every 2 years and limited to approximately 100 riders. It is the pinnacle of the Iron Butt Association’s (IBA) challenges and events.

This is not a race; it’s based on total points acquired. Each IBR has a different theme and provides different route combinations. Along with the start and finish locations, two mandatory checkpoints are included in the 11-day event. There is a time window during which riders must reach these checkpoints, or risk being time barred.

A long list of bonus locations (more than you could ride to in 11 days) is

handed out to riders the night before the event with higher points for more difficult/distant locations. These bonus locations are acquired enroute between the mandatory checkpoints and the end location.

Each rider is required to prove they rode to a bonus by providing a photo, receipt, or other physical object (whatever the bonus list specifies) to obtain points for that location. Specific combinations of bonus locations may increase point values exponentially.

Successful contestants will cover at least 9,000 miles to over more than 11,000 miles in 11 days, trying to score at least the minimum number of points required for “finisher” status. Gold, silver, and bronze medal levels are also awarded based on points accumulated throughout the rally.

In the fall of 2021, I decided that if I didn’t at least apply for the Iron Butt Rally, I would probably regret it. For almost 20 years, I had read books about it, followed it and had several friends ride in it. When registration opened in January 2022, I applied that day! Now, wait!

Three months later (April), I received the email from Lisa Landry: ***Congratulations! Your application was drawn for entry in the 2023 Iron Butt Rally!*** Excited

would be an understatement! Now, I had over a year to prepare!

I really didn't plan on doing much to my 2019 BMW R1250GSA. I'm a kind of KISS (keep it simple stupid) type guy. My main concern was finding the right set of tires that would last the entire rally. My next concern was the remnants of the supply chain issue due to the COVID pandemic.

I asked Big Ben Ernst what tires he planned to use in the rally since he had already finished the IBR in 2021. He recommended Dunlop's Trailmax Missions.

Immediately, I tried a set of these tires. I was able to ride 9,500 miles with plenty of tread remaining before replacing prior to another event.

After riding the Big as Texas Party RAT in September 2022, I decided to take the GSA in for a major service and order some Trailmax Missions. This would be 6-months premature, but I didn't want any last minutes issues with bike parts/tires. Good thing I did! The tires were on back order for 3 months!

During the Big as Texas Party (BAT), there was a IBR rookie meeting. During that meeting it hit me! I'm riding in the IBR! I need to get myself ready!

The day after we returned from the BAT event, I started on a one meal a day diet. Within 4 months, I lost 30 lbs. Plus, I dropped several

medications for blood pressure, cholesterol and heartburn. This made a huge improvement to my health and well-being! I knew this would help my ride performance and physical enjoyment during the rally!

Over the next few months, IBR participants received emails from Lisa with tidbits of rally information and how we should prepare, especially for items that were mandated.

Up to that point, all we knew for sure about the rally itself was the schedule:

#### **2023 IBR June 19 – 30.**

**Start - Pittsburgh, PA - June 19**

**Ck pt 1 – Tulsa, OK – June 21**

**Ck pt 2 – Denver, CO – June 24**

**Finish – Pittsburgh, PA – June 30**

This allowed us to make hotel reservations well in advance. We didn't receive any more information until we arrived in Pittsburgh.

Of course, my main objective was to be a finisher! Along those lines, I wanted to stay within my personal limits. By doing that, I should have an enjoyable 11-day ride unless something unexpected were to happen.

I made 4 daily commitments for the rally:

1. Eat one good sit down meal.
2. Get a hotel room.
3. Take a shower.

4. Ride ~1,000 miles. (Follow my pre-plan)

With the schedule, I figured the hours per leg, minus 6 hours per night (down time) equaled my ride time. Then, ride time times 55 miles per hour average (figured on my average 1,000 miles in 18 hours including one sit down meal), I came up with the following miles per leg that I could ride confidently:

**Leg 1 = 47 hours = ~2,550 miles**

**Leg 2 = 52 hours = ~2,850 miles**

**Leg 3 = 94 hours = ~5,100 miles**

**11-Day Total = ~10,500 miles**



**Goodbye!**

Also, over the months, I practiced route planning with a program named ezYarp (developed by IBR veteran Terry Lahman). This was a valuable tool that I used throughout the rally. I will talk more about this program later.

By June, I was ready! I left home after work on Tuesday, June 13.

It was hard to say goodbye to Karen. She is my biggest fan and supporter. She never tries to discourage me away from these extreme events. I love you, Karen!

I stopped in Nashville to eat dinner with Derek and Marilyn. They bought my dinner to celebrate the upcoming Father's Day. Thanks, Derek & Marilyn!



**Derek & Marilyn**

Wednesday, June 14 - I arrived at the Pittsburgh Airport Marriot. This was a few days early to allow me to physically unwind and to mentally ramp-up for the upcoming event. I had shipped a 5-day supply of clothes to the hotel. I shipped them back the afternoon prior to rally start. This allowed me to have fresh clothes every day and not have to carry them around for 11 days during the rally.

That evening, Sarah & Bob Gregerson (Karen's little sister) showed up to surprise me. We went out to eat at a local Mexican restaurant. It was great! Thanks, Sarah & Bob!



**Sarah & Bob**

Thursday, June 15 – It was a day of routing practice and chill. After an hour of practice, I got up from my hotel room chair and my lowered back tightened up! What? What happened to my back? This was a major concern. Luckily, I walked and stretched several times over the next few days. By the start of the rally, no issues! Whew!

Friday, June 16 - One of my best friends, Craig Moore, and his wife Rhonda, showed up for the pre-rally activities and to watch the start! That meant a lot to me! Thanks, Craig, and Rhonda!



**Pittsburgh Rally HQ**

Saturday, June 17 - A day of in-processing. This year's rally included 118 riders/108 motorcycles (10 two-up couples) from the USA, Canada, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. All

riders had a checklist of inspections, meetings and other required items that needed to be completed before we were considered an "official rider" in this year's rally.



**IBR Check-In**

In-processing started at 0700 hours. There were multiple stations where everyone was required to pass through to complete the process. No specific order. Find a short line, get verified or confirmed, then move to another station. These stations included:

1. Video Waiver - Get videotaped answering questions concerning the risks and dangers of participating in this rally.
2. Spotwalla – Verify your tracking device is properly synced and displaying on Spotwalla.
3. Insurance/Medjet – Make sure you meet the insurance requirements and were covered by Medjet or similar service.
4. Emergency Contacts – Make sure the IBR Staff had the signed waiver and list of your emergency contacts.

5. Camera – Make sure you had 3-SD cards (one for each leg) for your camera and they worked in accordance with the rules.
6. Motorcycle Tech Inspection – Make sure your exhaust noise level passed the required decibel level, your fuel capacity was a maximum of 11.5 gallons and any auxiliary tank met certain requirements, no stickers/decals were promoting any commercial entity at all (This is considered an amateur event).
7. Odometer Check/Calibration – Everyone rode the 34.1 mile route to compare their odometer to the standard. Then, a formula was created specifically for your bike, so at the end of the rally, your mileage was documented to the same standard as all the other bikes.



**Camera Verification**

All in all, in-processing went fast. I was done by noon. Later that evening would be a dinner for the riders and their guests.

Another good friend, Kith Burkingstock, was also riding in the

rally. Kith and I had talked about the rally for years! It's great that we were rookies the same year! This year's IBR had a bigger than usual rookie class. There were 50 of us. Several well-known long-distance riders in the rookie class included: Doug Vance, Larry Telling, Carl 'Ksolo' Harris, Shareef 'Reef' AsSadiq, Lionel Ramos, Kerri Miller, and John Anderson, just to name a few.



**Rookies: Kith, Shareef and Me**

Sunday, June 18 - We had a mandatory Rookies Meeting at 10:00 am—Don't be late! At 10:00 am the conference room doors were locked. One rookie didn't make it! His rookie meeting was the following morning after all the other riders were released for the start of the rally.

The meeting was to remind everyone to be safe and remember their loved ones. They expect you to return as healthy as when you left. Danny Dossman spoke to the group about an accident that he had the year prior that could have easily been avoided—Don't allow distractions take your mind off the road!

Later that day at 2:00 pm, we had the Riders Meeting that included all riders. There, we were given instruction of how the start process would work the next morning. Be at your bikes at 8:00 am sharp! Rally staff would come by each rider for last minute confirmation, then all bikes would be quarantined until the 10:00 am start.

The Start Banquet was at 5:00 pm. After dinner, start packets were presented to each rider one at a time according to their flag number. I was number 66. Kith was next with flag 67. The flag was required to be in all our bonus photos unless otherwise specified in the rally booklet.

After everyone received their packets, we were directed to open them. The rally theme was revealed—FOOD!

There was an "All Rally Booklet" for "Gut Bomb Bingo"! All Rally – meaning that you could acquire these points in all three legs of the rally. To claim points for a Bingo square, you needed to take a picture of your flag and bike in front of the specified restaurant, go inside and order something, then save the receipt for scoring. Miss any of the requirements and you didn't get credit!

Completing a row was worth over 600 points. Completing a column was worth over 600 points. Plus, a total blackout was an extra 2,000 points. This Bingo card had a potential of close to 10,000 points

by the time you add up the individual point values, then row and column point values! But, it was also a big time suck!

## GUT BOMB B I N G O

1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

### Bingo Bonuses

Next, the Leg 1 Rally Booklet was discussed. This leg had 28 potential bonus locations. You had 2 days to ride from Pittsburgh, PA to Tulsa, OK and acquire as many points as you could. To be considered a finisher, you should have at least 12,000 points by the end of this leg.



### Leg 1 Rally Booklet

Right after the banquet, Lisa emailed us Excel and GPS files. Per IBR rules, no one could help us with our routing. If you had questions, rally staff provided minimal help.

I immediately went to my room along with everyone else! The elevators had long lines in front of them. Surprisingly, it didn't take long before I was in my room with all my information. It was time to use "ezYarp"!

Lisa sent two Excel spreadsheets. One with the bonus names and point values. The other with the bonus names and location coordinates.

I imported these spreadsheets into ezYarp. This spit out a larger spreadsheet. In it, I manually filtered the point values, then color-coded them into 4 different categories: Very High – Violet; High – Red; Medium – Green; Low – Blue. After that, I entered one of 3 different symbols based on availability of each location: 24/7 – Circle; Daylight Only – Triangle; Specific Time (ex. 10:00 am to 2:00 pm) – Square. It took me a couple of hours to process the data.

Once completed, ezYarp spit out a GPS file. I opened the GPS file in a Garmin program named Basecamp. Inside that program, I had a colored symbol-coded map. I used a routing tool within Basecamp to connect the colored symbols and formed a route. Basecamp showed me exactly how many miles the route was!

Based on my pre-planned mileage and the minimum of 12,000 points for Leg 1, I created a route of approximately 2,500 miles worth over 16,000 points—30% over the minimum requirement. This seemed

like a perfect route for me! Done! I was in bed by 10:00 pm.

For this leg, we had some big point bonuses in the northeast: A lobster pound in Bar Harbor, Maine worth 7002 points, Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream in Burlington, Vermont worth 2833 points and a Post Office in Sandwich, Massachusetts worth 2363 points. In the southeast, the big bonuses were: The peach water tower in Gaffney, South Carolina worth 1545 points, Steamers Clam Bar in Cedar Key, Florida worth 4548 points and Café du Monde in New Orleans, Louisiana worth 1644 points.

I decided to go west for some big points: The cornfield in Dublin, Ohio worth 1267 points and the Buckhorn Exchange in Denver, Colorado worth 6491 points and a group photo bonus in Coffeyville, Kansas worth 1632 points.



### Leg 1 Bonuses

Monday, June 19 - At 8:00 am, IBR staff were in the parking lot. They documented our odometer readings, punched the emergency tags around our necks and attached a small orange dot to our bike's headlight to confirm we were ready to start the rally.

At 9:45 am, Jeff and Lisa held a short Riders Meeting at the side of the parking lot.

At 10:00 am, Dale Wilson aka "Warchild", released the riders one at a time, starting with Ken Andrews, Kerri Miller and Bob Lilly. Warchild had done this many times before. Like a flight deck flagman on an aircraft carrier, he had all 107 bikes out of the parking lot in just a matter of minutes! Remember, one rookie (bike 108) still had his Rookie Meeting to attend before starting the rally.



**Warchild Waves Me Out**



**My Route for Leg 1**

I headed to Dublin, OH for my first bonus, "The Field of Corn":

*Each of these 109 concrete ears of corn was grown from seed.*

*Take a photo of the one concrete ear of corn with the damaged, missing kernel 5 rows from the top of the ear. Yes, you will need to search the field for the correct ear. 1267 pts.*

Luckily, by the time I arrived, there were a dozen other riders there taking pictures. I didn't have to search for the correct ear!

From there, I headed to Cincinnati, OH for the Kroger mural:

*Take a photo of the large produce mural on the east face of the Kroger office building. 541 pts.*

It was raining in Cincinnati when I stopped for the mural photo. After I left, I saw Robert Long with his Victory Vision on the sidewalk just a few blocks away. I stopped to check on him. Due to the rain, the trolley tracks going down the middle of the street were very slippery. Robert slipped on them causing his bike to go down and throwing him off! Then, his bike popped back up and rode onto the sidewalk before it fell over. Robert told me he was okay. He thought he and the bike were able to continue. I was glad he wasn't hurt.

Next stop, St. Louis, MO, Fried Ravioli:

*Mama's on the Hill claims the origin story on fried ravioli. This St. Louis favorite was purportedly invented here when a chef named Fritz accidentally dropped some ravioli in hot oil.*

*Take a photo of the Mama's on the Hill sign on the Edwards St. side of the building that includes the phrase "Home of the Toasted Ravioli". 225 pts.*

From here, my next stop was Denver. But, I made it a point to stop at a hotel by 10:00 pm that night in order to keep my natural body rhythm in sync by going to bed at my regular time. I stopped at a hotel in Columbia, MO for about 6 hours.

Tuesday, June 20 - I was up and out of the hotel by 4:00 am. I made it to Denver around noon. The temperature was around 90 degrees with the bonus located right in the middle of the city. I passed the Broncos football stadium on the way to The Buckhorn Exchange.

*The Buckhorn Exchange is Denver's oldest restaurant, founded in 1893 by Henry H. Zeitz. Included in their appetizer menu are rattlesnake, alligator, and oysters (the Rocky Mountain type).*

*Take a photo of the Buckhorn Exchange façade. 6491 pts.*

During each leg, we had the opportunity for some easy points with a Call-In bonus worth 1,000 points.

Before I left Denver, I did my Call-In bonus. You were required to call the specified number between the hours of 11:00 am – 11:00 pm on June 20.

*Call and leave the following information:*

- (1) Your name
- (2) Your rider number
- (3) Your location (city/town and state/province)
- (4) The last bonus you scored
- (5) The next bonus you are heading for

Any information missing would result in a penalty or no points. After I said my spiel, I listened to the recording before sending the information to automated answering machine.

Now, I needed to head toward the first checkpoint in Tulsa. I stopped around 9:00 pm in Hugoton, KS for an 8-hour rest bonus.

During each leg, we had the option of taking a rest bonus. Keep in mind that over the 11 days, there were only 4 rest bonuses. To claim the bonus, you had to stop, get a receipt to start your rest time. Then, get a receipt from the same area to stop your rest time. No other bonus points could be acquired during that period of rest time and you could not be moving. The leg 1 rest bonus was worth 6 points per minute for a minimum of 4 hours and a maximum of 8 hours.

Wednesday, June 21 - I was up and got a receipt around 5:00 am. This was 7 hours, 59 minutes for 2872 points. Time to ride!

Just after sunrise, I was just entering a small town in Oklahoma, when I noticed a small herd (12-15) of cattle running down the middle of the road toward me! I stopped the

bike. The cattle turned off the road and ran to the town outskirts. Wow! I'm glad it was daylight! I continued on to El Reno, OK.

*El Reno has been home to the Fried Onion Burger Day Festival since its inception in 1989. Sid's Diner, along with two establishments in town, created a ten-foot circular grill that could grill, raise, flip, and lower a monstrous hamburger patty.*

*Take a photo of Sid's Diner with the "Onion Burger" text on the façade clearly visible. 702 pts.*

When I arrived, Sid's diner had a new awning that no longer had "Onion Burger" displayed on it. I called the Rally Master, Jeff Earls, to explain my dilemma. Jeff was aware of the situation and told me to take a picture of the building as directed. They understood the awning had been replaced. As I hung up the phone, James and Bobbie Jackson pulled up. They were a 2-up couple. I told them that I just spoke to Jeff. They appreciated the heads-up!

I jumped back on the bike and headed to Coffeyville, KS a timed bonus location.

*Coffeyville was home to Omar Knedlik, who invented the ICEE slushed-soda machine. Omar's soda fountain broke down, forcing him to put his sodas in the freezer to keep cool, which caused them to become slushy. The result was popular with customers.*

*Have your photo taken by IBR staff as part of a group in front of the Coffeyville mural on the west side of the building. Reminder: You must sign in with IBR staff on location prior to 1500, June 21, 2023. 1632 pts.*



**Kith and I at Group Photo**

It was great to meet up with other riders and spend a few minutes visiting prior to the group photo. All latecomers were sad!



**Coffeyville Group Photo**

Kith had ridden to Denver too. He took a more northern route that included several different bonuses than the ones I captured.

Everyone had stories to tell of their adventure so far. A lot of excitement and energy in the air!

After the picture was taken, everyone headed toward the Tulsa Checkpoint just over an hour away. We had until 8:00 pm to arrive.

Then, we would start losing points per minute up to 10:00 pm. At that time, you were disqualified.

I arrived in Tulsa around 5:00 pm, checked-in and waited for scoring. After scoring, we had a nice buffet waiting for us in the adjoining room. Then, I went in my room for a good night's rest.

Thursday, June 22 - The 4:00 am Rider's Meeting. During this meeting, the IBR staff announced that one rider had deliberately took someone's rally flag that was left at one of the bonus locations. This was a NO-NO! One of the basic rally rules was to leave a flag where it lies if it's not yours. Then, if the owner comes back looking for it, it's where they left it. The rider not only took it, but he called the Rally Master. The Rally Master told him to leave it there! The staff said new rules would be created for this situation prior to the next rally. Also, there were social media posts with information only a rally rider would know about! All were reprimanded on the serious consequence of providing rally information to the public due to the fact, the public could interfere or become a distraction to the riders. A condition that should be avoided, due to the social media blackout rule.

The top 10 riders were announced. It was also stated that riders would need a minimum of 36,000 points by the end of Leg 2 to be considered a finisher. Rally packets for this leg

were handed out. Lists of all rider standings were hung outside the meeting room for all to view. Excel and GPS files were emailed to all riders. Now, it was time to route and ride!



### Leg 2 Rally Booklet

I looked at the standings on the way to my room. I was in 74<sup>th</sup> place with 16,689 points/2493 miles. I was happy with that. We still had nine more days to ride!



### Leg 2 Bonuses

This leg had basically two choices—head south and west for the big bonuses at the Santa Monica Pier in Santa Monica, California worth 16431 points and the Concrete Donut in Tucson, Arizona worth 6155 points or head north for big bonuses at the Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center in Manitowoc, Wisconsin worth 12334 points, the Boathouse Restaurant, Brewpub in Ely, Minnesota worth 4788 points

and another group photo in Hastings, Nebraska worth 3668 points.

Like before, I used ezYarp. It took a couple hours to come up with a route for Leg 2. I chose the cooler weather to the north!

Using my pre-planned mileage, I came up with ~2,800 miles worth ~34,000 points for a total of ~50,000 points at the end of this Leg. Again, well over the 36,000-point minimum to be a finisher.



### My Route for Leg 2

I left the hotel parking lot around 7:00 am headed for a café in Topeka, KS.

*Sourcream Raisin pie is a Kansas specialty and Bradley's offering is highly regarded.*

*Take a photo of Bradley's Corner Café. 1331 pts.*

After bagging that bonus, I headed for Sac City, IA. As I rode through Iowa, I got behind a National Guard convoy. Behind the convoy were 12-15 tractor-trailers. So, one by one, I leaped frogged around these tractor-trailers on this 2-lane road until I passed the convoy of another 8-12 vehicles. Whew!

Another rally rider, Matt Wise, caught up with me. 10-15 miles later, we rode up on another National Guard convoy with a line of tractor-trailers behind it! Together, we leap frogged around that line of vehicles. I think I rode up on a least two more of these convoys! Wow! I think the Rally Masters called out the National Guard to slow us down! I was glad to get all that behind me. Somewhere along the way, I stopped for fuel and Matt continued on his way.

In Sac City, I bagged the World's Largest Popcorn Ball.

*The popcorn ball size battle has been intense between Iowa and Indiana over the last two decades. What stands before you is the victor in its 9,370-pound glory.*

*Take a photo of the World's Largest Popcorn Ball. **1002 pts.***

From there, I headed up to Matt's Bar in Minneapolis, MN.

*Matt's Bar is the home of the Original "Jucy Lucy" hamburger featuring cheese inside the meat. Fear the Cheese.*

*Take a photo of Matt's Bar showing "Home of the ORIGINAL" Jucy Lucy" on the awning above the Cedar Ave. entrance. **954 pts.***

Not far away was my next stop, the Minnesota State Fairgrounds.

*On the Minnesota State Fairgrounds, you will find the stand for Sweet Martha's. Starting as a*

*single 9x11' booth in 1979, they now produce 3 million cookies each day of the Fair. The gates at the entrance to the fairgrounds are open 0600-2200.*

*Take a photo of the Sweet Martha's Cookie Jar building. **877 pts.***

When I arrived, the gate was shut with a sign saying the fairgrounds were closed today through the weekend. So, I rode to two other gates, which were shut due to construction. I called the Rally Master. I was well within the time restraints of the bonus. Jeff told me to take pictures of the gate closures and present them at scoring.

Next, I looked on my phone for a place to spend the night and called for a reservation. Since my next stop was in Ely, MN, I found a resort that had a room available. I told them that I would be late. The lady said that as long as I got there before midnight, they would hold a room for me. I arrived around 11:30 pm.

Ely was in northern Minnesota close to the Canadian border. It was a remote area. As I headed that way, the sun was setting. Over the next few hours, I must have seen hundreds of deer on both sides of the interstate. Then, I exited off on to a two-lane road. It was dark and raining as I rode up through the northern Minnesota forests. I spotted a timber wolf just before it ran into the tree line. Later, a bobcat crossed the road in front of me.

When I arrived in Ely, I took a few photos of Boathouse Restaurant and Pub.

*Boathouse in Ely, MN, has been rated as one of the top places to get a walleye sandwich in Minnesota, and that's saying something, don't you know.*

*Take a photo of the Boathouse Restaurant and Bar with your motorcycle in the photo. **4788 pts.***

Then, I headed for the Grand Ely Lodge and Resort. When I arrived, there were a few people waiting on me. I checked in and told them I was coming from Tulsa. Oh my! You traveled the farthest of all our guests today!

This was the latest that I had ridden so far during the rally. I carried my things to my room. I got the shower as hot as I could stand it. Just after I got in the shower, the smoke alarm went off! It was blaring!

What do I do? What if the fire department comes? I finished my shower and decided the steam from the shower set off the alarm. I opened the sliding glass door and fanned the steam out the door. Finally, the alarm went off! Whew! But I let in a lot of mosquitos! They were everywhere!

I called the front desk. Did you hear my smoke alarm go off? I think the steam from my shower set it off. They said 'No, but that happens all the time!'

When I arrived, I was tired. Now, my heart is pounding! It only took a few minutes before I calmed down and was asleep.

Friday, June 23 - After 4 hours of sleep, I was back on the bike. I stopped at the Boathouse again for a few more pictures. I wanted to make sure the photos were clear since it wasn't as dark as it was just 4 hours before. Then, I headed toward Green Bay, WI. As I rode south in the remote part of northern Minnesota, I enjoyed the beautiful ride!

At my first fuel stop, I did the Call-In bonus for this leg. My next stop was a timed bonus in Manitowoc, WI.

*The Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center is an interactive museum that explores and celebrates agriculture in the state. It includes the Land-O-Lakes Birthing Barn where staff works to be able to present a cow giving birth each day the center is open.*

*Get a photo of yourself, with your flag of course, operating the combine driving simulator on the second floor of the facility. The simulator runs for approximately 1 minute on each "drive". **12334 pts.***

When I arrived, there were three or four rally bikes in the parking lot! One rider was working on his score sheet. He didn't look very happy. I grabbed my flag and went inside, paid admission and headed up stairs. A father and his two sons

were at one of the two combine simulators. The father asked if I needed my picture taken. He had been taking pictures of the other riders. Thanks! That was a big help!

Back out at the bike, I saw other riders arriving. Robert Long and Boomer Behrens just pulled in! A quick "hi" and I jumped on the bike and left!

Next stop, Cream, WI.

*It's only right that a state that touts its dairy industry would have a community named Cream.*

*Take a photo of the "Cream Unincorporated" sign on northbound WI-88 just south of town. **532 pts.***

As I rode through western Wisconsin and crossed the Mississippi River into Minnesota, I headed north a couple miles before crossing back into Wisconsin on my way to Cream. I caught myself in deep thought, thinking about the rally—where I'd been, where I'm going, etc. Then, something caught my attention out of the corner of my eye! I looked around to notice just how beautiful the area was! This was awesome riding, I thought to myself! This happened several times during the 11-day rally! Getting out of rally mode for a few minutes, absorbing and enjoying the ride for what it was! Memories that I will never forget!

I stopped at 10:00 pm that night at a hotel in Sioux Falls, SD for my 8-

hour Rest bonus worth 10 points per minute.

Saturday, June 24 - I got my receipt to claim the full 8 hours of rest worth a total of 4800 points. The sun rose as I headed to Freeman, SD! It was a daylight only bonus.

*You owe it to yourself to stay long enough to enjoy a helping of chislic. Unless you're vegetarian, that is.*

*Take a photo of the Meridian Corner building including the sign on the fence that includes the word "Chislic." **1441 pts.***

I continued on to the group photo in Hastings, NE.

*Kool-Aid was invented in Hastings by Edwin Perkins*

*Have your photo taken by IBR staff as part of a group in front of the Perkins Products Company building, including the Kool-Aid posters in the windows. Reminder: You must sign in with IBR staff on location prior to 1100, June 24, 2023. **3668 pts.***



**Group Photo in Hastings, NE**

After the picture was taken, everyone headed west on I-80 to

Denver, six hours away. Well, everyone but me!

Unknowingly, I selected the checkpoint in Tulsa on my GPS instead of the checkpoint in Denver. They were one on top of the other due to being close to the same mileage (Denver 401 miles, Tulsa 429 miles). This had me going directly south. I thought to myself, I must be going south to I-70, then head west. I rode backroads for over 200 miles. When the GPS had me going over I-70, I knew there was a problem! A big problem!

I stopped and checked to see exactly where the GPS was taking me. Tulsa! Oh no! When I selected Denver, it jumped back over 400 miles! I immediately looked at the time! It had me arriving in Denver at 6:30 pm. Whew! Knowing that I wouldn't be late to the checkpoint was a big relief. I just sat back and enjoyed the extra miles!

Whether or not it was caused by fatigue, I couldn't tell you. I know that I am so confident with the GPS, that when I select something, I don't double-check it. I usually have a good idea of the mileage. In this case, the mileage was very close to one and another. Close enough for me not to question it.

When I arrived in Denver, there was no line for scoring. After I was scored and had eaten, I checked into the hotel and went to my room.

Sunday, June 25 – At the 4:00 am Rider's Meeting there were no

reprimands for bad behavior. But we did receive some bad news about a couple riders.

Gerry Arel had gone down in South Carolina. Evidently, he hit some construction debris. He got busted up pretty bad. They life-flighted him to the hospital. No life-threatening injuries, but several broken bones. Once stabilized in the local hospital, Medjet flew him to his hometown hospital for recuperation. Gerry's a great guy. We all hated to hear this news.

Also, a mother/daughter 2-up team hit a deer. Both were okay, the mother got the worst of it. She would decide the next day if she would continue. They needed another bike since the one they were on was totaled. The father was on separate bike. Their family was riding together as a team. It was decided that he would continue on solo, but a penalty deduction would occur since the team split up. We found out later, the mother/daughter pair dropped out.

Again, the top 10 riders as of the end of Leg 2 were announced. All rider standings were posted outside the conference room. Rally packets were handed out and files emailed to each rider. The minimum number of points to be considered a finisher at the end of Leg 3 (the end of the rally) was 80,000.

As I headed to my room, I noticed that I had moved up in the standings to 62<sup>nd</sup> place with 50,182

points/5,513 miles. This was awesome!

In my room, I put ezYarp to the task!



### Leg 3 Bonuses

The big bonuses in Leg 3 were in the four corners of the USA and beyond:

California: Pea Soup Anderson's in Buellton worth 2428 points, the World's largest artichoke in Castroville worth 1113 points, the Jelly Belly Candy Company in Fairfield worth 1687 points, the Oasis Camel Dairy in Ramona worth 3040 points, the Flying Pig Restaurant in Oceanside worth 2814 points and the Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco worth 3194 points.

Washington: The Table of Diversity in Everett worth 2106 points, the Largest Frying Pan in Long Beach worth 2155 points, the National Lentil Festival in Pullman worth 2005 points, the Geoduck in Olympia worth 1266 points, Lee's Produce worth 1235 points and Pike Place Market worth 1109 points both in Seattle.

Northern Canada: The Honey Capital of Canada in Fahler, Alberta worth 6831 points, the Sombe K'e Park in Yellowknife, worth 20818 points and the Hay River Fisherman's Wharf in Hay River worth 6304 points in the Northwest Territories.

Eastern Canada: Thunder Bay Persians in Thunder Bay, Ontario worth 3129 points, Le Roy Jucep Restaurant in Drummondville, Quebec worth 2005 points, the Canadian Potato Museum in Prince Edward Island worth 5616 points and Meat Cove in Capstick, Nova Scotia worth 13731 points.

Florida: The Key West Key Lime Pie Company in Key West worth 12430 points, the Kumquat Capital of the World in Dade City worth 3811 points and the World's Largest Orange in Kissimmee worth 2270 points.

2023 Iron Butt Rally

**2023 Iron Butt Rally**  
**Leg 3**  
Denver, Colorado to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



This packet describes the bonuses available for Leg 3 of the 2023 Iron Butt Rally. Each destination bonus entry provides the following information:

- Bonus Code
- Points Available
- Bonus Name
- Street address or nearest intersection/cross-street
- City and State
- GPS coordinates in decimal degrees rounded to the nearest 0.0001 degree
- Available Hours
- Bonus description including important notes as needed
- Bonus requirements in *italic type*
- A photo of the bonus object

**Leg 3 Rally Booklet**

I was very familiar with eastern Canada. Karen and I spent a week riding around there in 2008. In 2018, I did some Iron Butt rides to and from Nova Scotia on my way to Newfoundland. And, Karen and I were through there again in 2022 on our way to and from

Newfoundland. So, that's where I chose to go!

Using my pre-planned mileage of 5,100 miles, I created a route worth over 50,000 points. This, plus my points so far, would total over 100,000 points for the rally. Or, at least 25% over the 80,000-point minimum! Perfect!



**My Route for Leg 3**

At 7:30 am, I was at my bike. I saw David Uhl in the parking lot watching the riders depart. David is an IBR and Hoka Hey finisher. In the 2022 Hoka Hey, he hit a deer. His injuries from that accident have left him wheelchair bound. I made it a point to ride over and give David a fist bump. He's a great guy with a great attitude! Then, I headed east to Kansas City, KS.

*Jones Bar-B-Q is rated among the top five in Kansas City. They open at 11am, five days a week, and the BBQ is so popular that they are usually out of meat by noon.*

*Take a photo of Jones Bar-B-Q.*  
**1842 pts.**

Since Jones BBQ was closed on Sunday, I snapped a picture and continued on to Gates BBQ in Independence, MO for lunch. A co-worker at Delta was from that area

and always talked about Gates BBQ. It was worth the stop!

My next stop was at a hotel in Evansville, IN. There was a daylight bonus 100 miles away in Mitchell, IN that I would bag the next morning.

Monday, June 26 - After 4 ½ of sleep, I was back on the bike watching the sun rise.

*Mitchell, Indiana hosts an annual persimmon festival to celebrate this local fruit. It's hard to find delicious persimmon pudding outside Indiana.*

*Take a photo of the Mitchell, Indiana water tower clearly showing both the name "Mitchell" and the persimmon image on the tank. In order to get this photo properly, we recommend taking it from the parking lot at the corner of W Main St and Old State Rd 23.*  
**1143 pts.**

The sun was directly behind the water tower, so I took several pictures to make sure I got a good one. The sun was causing me havoc! Next stop, Louisville!

*Louisville's most famous dish, the Hot Brown, is an open-faced sandwich created by Fred K. Schmidt of the Brown Hotel in 1926.*

*Take a photo of the Brown Hotel clock on the corner of W Broadway and S 4th St.*  
**1020 pts.**

I loved the miles between these bonuses! You could stretch your

legs out for a few hours and roll! My next stop was The Roadkill Café in Artemas, PA.

*You kill it, they'll throw it in a chowder.*

*Take a photo of the restaurant building showing either of the "Roadkill Cafe" signs on the front of the restaurant and your own face with your helmet off. Yes, we want a selfie photo here. Your rally flag is not required for this photo. 3505 pts.*



**Roadkill Cafe**

As I documented this bonus on my score sheet, it started to rain. So, I got under cover on the patio and filled out my paperwork. All of a sudden, a man opened the door asking if I needed help. It spooked me at first since the place was closed on Monday. The owner must have lived inside. He was friendly and concerned that I was broke down. No sir! I explained what I was doing. He enjoyed hearing about the rally. Before going back inside, he said if I needed anything, he would like to help.

This part of southern Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Maryland area was beautiful! I really enjoy riding

through the hills and hollers of this area! From here, I headed north toward my next bonus in Vermont.

I stopped in Wilkes-Barr, PA for an 8-hour rest bonus. I got my start receipt before I stopped and ate at Chili's. Then, on to a hotel for a shower and some sleep.

Tuesday, June 27 – I was up and got my rest bonus end receipt before heading on. This rest bonus was worth 12 points per minute for a total of 5760 points. Well worth the stop!

It was foggy as I rode north through New York state. The sky had cleared by the time arrived in Bennington, VT in the Green Mountain National Forest.

*Classic American Diners don't get any more classic than the Blue Benn. This diner was built in the late 40's by The Paterson Vehicle Co. in New Jersey and delivered to its present site in 1948.*

*Take a photo of the Blue Benn diner. 878 pts.*

It was a beautiful ride heading north through Vermont into Canada. The border crossing at Stanstead, Quebec only took a few minutes. Then, I continued on to Drummondville, northeast of Montreal.

*Poutine lore asserts that Le Roy Jucep may be the original birthplace of the cheese/potato/gravy dish. Did you know that poutine had lore?*

*Take a photo of Le Roy Jucep including the "Poutine" signage on the front of the building. 2005 pts.*

Karen would have loved that restaurant! We're both fans of good poutine (French fries and cheese curds topped with brown gravy).

Remaining in Canada, I headed north around the top of Maine before entering back into the U.S. at Van Buren, ME. At the border crossing, the officer asked if I was on a scavenger hunt. I said "yes!" He turned around and pointed down the street. There's a statue at the end of this road. I think that's what you're looking for! It was!

*Moxie Cola is a Maine favorite. This moose has his Moxie. Do you?*

*Take a photo of the moose statue. The small can of Moxie on the base of the statue must be visible in your photo. 2841 pts.*



**Van Buren, Maine Bonus**

After bagging that bonus, I fueled up at a nearby gas station. I asked where a good place was to eat. The man at the counter pointed across the street to a food trailer and said they have some of the best

cheesesteak sandwiches! I headed that way!

I sat down at a picnic table and enjoyed my dinner for the day. The sandwich and French fries were excellent! They didn't have ketchup for the French fries, so they gave me a small cup of mayonnaise and a small cup of their homemade BBQ sauce. They said everyone up there dips their fries in these! Both dipping sauces were great!



**Big Daddy's for Lunch**

After a quick meal, I crossed back into Canada headed for Prince Edward Island (PEI). I had a room reserved at the Mill River Resort near my next bonus.

As I crossed the Confederation Bridge between the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick and PEI, I had forgotten how long the bridge was!

The Confederation Bridge is 8 miles long. It is the longest bridge in the world crossing ice-covered water. Pretty cool!

After I made it to PEI, the resort was 70 miles inland. I followed another rally rider most of the way. He was headed to the bonus. I was

headed to the resort. He probably thought I got lost once I peeled away from him. I enjoyed the shower and 4 hours of sleep.

Wednesday, June 28 - I jumped up before the alarm went off ready to ride! I rode over to the Potato Museum in O'Leary about 6 miles away.

*What, you thought you would be visiting Idaho for potatoes?*

*Take a photo of the giant potato in front of the Canadian Potato Museum with your motorcycle in the photo. 5616 pts.*



**PEI Potato Museum**

Then, I headed back to the Confederation Bridge to New Brunswick, then east to Nova Scotia.

Once I crossed into Nova Scotia, the next bonus was 310 miles away, off the Cabot Trail.

The Cabot Trail is a scenic highway on Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia, Canada. It is a 298 km (185 miles) loop around the northern tip of the island, passing along and through the Cape Breton Highlands

and the Cape Breton Highlands National Park (Wikipedia).

This was one of the unusual times that I used both Google Maps on my iPhone and my Garmin XT GPS to navigate to a bonus. When I got close to the Cabot Trail each device told me to go a different direction. Looking at both of them, the GPS looked like it would save me some time crossing over a bridge on a bay. So, I followed the GPS. Well, it wasn't a bridge! It was a ferry crossing! A short little ferry crossing.

Of course, the ferry just departed from my side. So, I had to decide whether to wait or turn-around and go back. Ah, it shouldn't take long for the ferry to return. So, I waited. While I was waiting, I took a few pictures. A lady in the car behind me asked if she could take a picture for me. Sure! I appreciate it! She and her husband were riders! They did long trips too!

So, I told her what I was doing. Oh my! She said she had never heard of such an event. But, she knew her husband would know about it! She couldn't wait to tell him!

It was a nice little break! I enjoyed the short ferry ride. I think it did save me a little bit of time! Once on the Cabot Trail, I headed up to the bonus at Meat Cove.

*How could we not send you to a place named Meat Cove? Be aware that the last 11 road miles or so leading to Meat Cove are unpaved.*

*Take a photo of the Lawless Lobster Seafood Trailer with your motorcycle in the photo. 13731 pts.*



### **Ferry to The Cabot Trail**

While I was there, I sat on a picnic table and enjoyed the view while eating a lobster roll. Best one ever!



### **Best Lobster Roll Ever**

While I sat there eating, Bam Baker pulled up on his Gold Wing. Bam was an IBR rookie from Canada. I knew that 18 miles of partial asphalt/partial pothole-covered dirt road was rough on that Gold Wing. The GSA was the perfect ride for that stretch of road!

I rode back to the Cabot Trail and continued the full loop, I saw a few other IBR riders headed toward the Meat Cove bonus.

The Cabot Trail was beautiful! Everything was bright green and

colorful! Riding around the perimeter of Cape Breton next to the Bay of St Lawrence was breathtaking at times! When Karen and I were here in 2008, we were too early. Nothing had greened up or blossomed by the first week in June.

Now, I was headed toward my last bonus in Maine. I stopped in Moncton, New Brunswick for an 8-hour rest bonus. Like before, I stopped for my start receipt before eating dinner. Then, I got a hotel room, showered, and crashed!

Thursday, June 29 – I was up again before the alarm went off. I rode down the street to a gas station for my rest bonus end receipt worth 14 points per minute or a total of 6720 points for the full 8 hours! I headed southwest!

It was raining as I rode across New Brunswick. The rain steadily increased into a torrential downpour, so hard it was puddling up on the interstate. When I stopped for gas the lady behind the counter felt sorry for me. I said no problem, I get to see my wife tonight. This rain won't stop me from doing that! Well, it wasn't the rain that stopped me from seeing Karen that night. More about that later!

No problem crossing back into the USA at Calais, ME. No line at all! I rode up to the booth, handed the lady my passport and was on my way in a few minutes!

The rain slowed down to just a drizzle with fog on my way to my last bonus "The World's Largest Blueberry" in Columbia Falls, ME.

*As you might guess by this structure, folks in these here parts are proud of their native blueberries.*

*Take a photo of the "Wild Blueberry Heritage Center" building including the chef statue in front. 1851 pts.*

By now, it was around 7:30 am. The Heritage Center was closed. A gate was locked at the street entrance. There was no statue of a chef in front of the building. I wasn't going to breach the locked gate looking for it, so I called the Rally Master again. Yes, Jeff had already heard the chef was no longer there. Just take a picture of the building. It's very recognizable! Picture taken, I headed toward Rally HQ in Pittsburgh 879 miles away! I had already ridden 227 miles, so it turned out to be an 1,100-mile day.

Just after this stop, Karen called. She was at the Memphis airport waiting on her flight. The emergency lights on her plane were not working. The flight was down, but Delta was flying parts in from Atlanta to fix it. Well, this would cause her to miss her connection in Atlanta! So, she went back and forth trying to reschedule. She thought they had it worked out where she would fly to Atlanta later that day, then catch a connection to Pittsburgh the next morning. Well,

come to find out, she didn't have a confirmed seat on the connection to Pittsburgh, it was a standby situation. It was also 4<sup>th</sup> of July—Delta's busiest weekend ever! We decided that wasn't going to work! She said she'd drive up. She could drive all night and be in Pittsburgh. No, don't do that. Traffic is awful due to the holiday. It was finally decided it would be best if she'd stay home! She was so upset!

Thanks to Chris & Kathy O'Neal for taking Karen to and from the Memphis Airport. We appreciate their help during a difficult time! Also, a big thanks to Bob & Linda Wakeham! They offered to pick Karen up in Atlanta, keep her for the night, then run her back to the Atlanta Airport if necessary!

It was a nice ride south through Maine. I stopped in Kittery around noon-time. Oh! Just in time for lunch at Bob's Clam Hut! Luckily, there was no line at this popular seafood joint! Good for me! I enjoyed a great clam plate! It was so good! This was the third time in 3 years that I stopped and enjoyed some clams here!



**Bob's Clam Hut**

Meanwhile, Craig Moore had been texting with Karen and found out she wasn't going to make it, so he asked about her banquet ticket. She said to check with me. Craig called as I was riding down the interstate. He asked if Karen's banquet ticket was available. I told him that it was! He said he could ride up from his home in North Carolina tomorrow in time for the banquet! That would be great! See you then!

Back to the task at hand, it was typical Boston traffic around the I-495 loop. Traffic was bad around Hartford, CT and then again around Newburgh, NY. I was glad to get out of that mess!

I did notice the overcast skies and haze in the air got worse as I rode toward Pittsburgh. I could even feel it in my lungs. This was caused by fires raging all across Canada. Funny thing is that I didn't see any of this in provinces of Quebec, New Brunswick, PEI and Nova Scotia.

I finally arrived at the Airport Marriot in Coraopolis, PA a little after 10:00 pm. The parking lot was dark. There were some bikes out there, but no one was around. So, I parked at the front door and went inside to see where to check in for the rally.

As I walked in, I see our good friends, Jimmy & Toni Burns! They had ridden up from Mississippi to see me finish and stay for the Finish Banquet and activities! It was great to see them! I told them, I needed to see where I check in. I saw some

other IBR finishers at the bar. They said check-in started at 5:00 am in the morning! Thanks!

Toni grabbed a cart for me. I loaded it then they pushed it inside the hotel while I parked the bike. Food was still being served, so we ate together. After that, I was tired! Time for bed!



**Finished!**

Friday, June 30 – At 5:00 am, I was in the parking lot getting my bike. I pulled it up to the front door where the IBR staff was checking-in riders. They documented my odometer reading and gave me a slip of paper to turn into Bill Thweatt to stop the clock. What a relief! I finished the IBR! Well, as long as I get all the points I claimed, I would be a finisher!

Once I checked in with Bill, I had an hour to report to scoring or be disqualified. I was ready! So, I checked into scoring immediately. After about a 30-minute wait, I was scored! It was a clean run with no points left on the scoring table! Just like my previous 2 legs, I got points for everything I claimed! 101,146 total points/10,636 miles! I was

ecstatic! Now, we wait for the Finisher's Banquet at 6:00 pm.

For lunch, Jimmy, Toni and I went to Primanti Brothers. It's a Pittsburgh thing! Their sandwiches are huge and include French fries on the sandwich! No matter which one you choose, all sandwiches have fries!



### It's A Pittsburgh Thang

When we got back to the hotel, Craig had arrived. It was great to see him again! We all sat around the bar area visiting. I can't describe how it felt to have good friends attend this crazy, major-life event with me! Very grateful for their friendship and support to say the least!

I'm guessing there were close to 500 people in attendance at the Finisher's Banquet! A lot! After credit was given to all the volunteers that made the event a huge success, they got right into the awards presentation—starting with the last place finisher first.



### Finisher's Banquet

Out of 108 bikes that started, 94 finished. The 14 bikes that DNF'd (Did Not Finish), dropped out for various reasons: accident, bike problems, personal reasons, etc.

Congratulations, Kith at 74<sup>th</sup> place! Doug Vance 62<sup>nd</sup> place with teammate Larry Telling in 61<sup>st</sup> place! I came in 46<sup>th</sup> place, a bronze medal finish! The top five were:

1. Jim Owens (3 time-winner)
2. Mike Heitkamp
3. Mike Best
4. Steve Gallant
5. John Anderson

I was so happy for all the finishers! That feat in itself was quite an accomplishment!



### 46<sup>th</sup> Place

I don't think I would have been any happier if I had gotten first place. I

followed my pre-plan and kept within my personal limits. It was an enjoyable 11-day ride for me! I made it to all the bonuses that I routed to, I didn't leave any points at the scoring table, I was up and ready to ride every day with the same enthusiasm as day one. What more could you ask for—A perfect rally for me!

In my pre-plan, I had planned 2,550 miles for Leg 1. I rode 2,493 miles; I planned 2,850 miles for Leg 2. I rode 3,020 miles (Thanks to that extra 200-mile detour to Denver): I had planned 5,100 miles for Leg 3. I rode 5,123 miles. I had pre-planned a total of 10,500 miles. I rode 10,636 miles. How about that!

The next morning, Craig headed home. Jimmy, Toni and I did some sight-seeing around Pittsburgh.



### Pittsburgh Overlook

That evening, we went out for Mexican food and a celebratory toast! The next day, Jimmy & Toni led me home. Thank you!

Karen was waiting in the driveway as we pulled up! Jimmy & Toni had a banner printed up for her to take to Pittsburgh, but we know how that turned out.

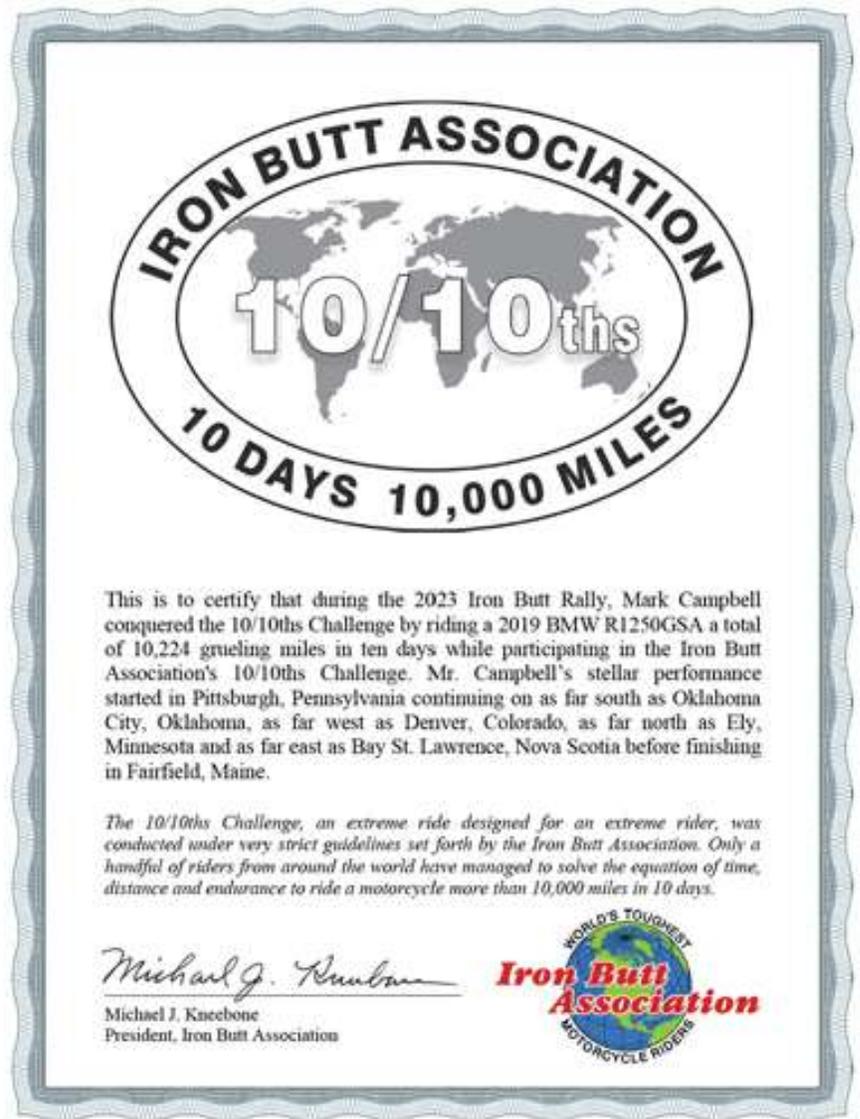


**Home**

The love and support of family and friends throughout this event was a huge motivation for me not only to do well, but to also be safe while doing it! I've got some special family and friends! Thanks everyone! It was an impossible dream come true! I encourage everyone to follow their dreams!



**Smart Car Diesel BMW**



This is to certify that during the 2023 Iron Butt Rally, Mark Campbell conquered the 10/10ths Challenge by riding a 2019 BMW R1250GSA a total of 10,224 grueling miles in ten days while participating in the Iron Butt Association's 10/10ths Challenge. Mr. Campbell's stellar performance started in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania continuing on as far south as Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, as far west as Denver, Colorado, as far north as Ely, Minnesota and as far east as Bay St. Lawrence, Nova Scotia before finishing in Fairfield, Maine.

*The 10/10ths Challenge, an extreme ride designed for an extreme rider, was conducted under very strict guidelines set forth by the Iron Butt Association. Only a handful of riders from around the world have managed to solve the equation of time, distance and endurance to ride a motorcycle more than 10,000 miles in 10 days.*

*Michael J. Kneebone*  
Michael J. Kneebone  
President, Iron Butt Association



**Leg 1 Scoring Check-In**



**Cabot Trail**



**A Good Friend, Craig Moore**