

Iron Butt Iowa BGG 1500

In order to qualify for the IBA “Mile Eater Silver” status, you must complete at least FIVE certified rides, of which 2 must be GOLD or INSANITY level or greater than 48 hours in duration, in ONE YEAR or one certified ride per month during a one year period (12 rides in 12 months - one per month).

Hmmmm in the past 11 months, I have completed six certified rides and one is considered “Gold”. Here is the list:

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|----------|---------------------|
| 07/27/18 | 1,500 miles/36 hrs |
| 08/02/18 | 2,000 miles/48 hrs |
| 10/19/18 | 1,000 miles/24 hrs |
| 10/26/18 | 1,500 miles/36 hrs |
| 03/14/19 | 1,000 miles/24 hrs |
| 05/18/19 | EggSanity 1000 Gold |

If I would complete one more “Gold” or “Insanity” level ride or a certified ride “greater than 48 hours in duration” by July 27, 2019, I would qualify for Mile Eater Silver. This sounds like a plan!

Even though Karen and I had stopped by Dennis Powell’s hog farm near Webster City, Iowa for a picture of his famous “Iron Butt Iowa” sign. I thought a certified ride there would be more appropriate!

Dennis Powell was an avid long distance rider that has completed the Iron Butt Rally 3 times. The Iron Butt sign on his farm is his tribute to the IBA. I have visited with Dennis several times at Long Distance events years ago. I have heard that he retired and moved to Florida

since then and that his son now runs the family farm.

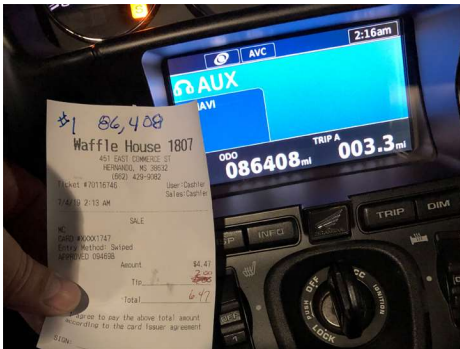
Karen and I had planned a nice European river cruise this summer to celebrate our 41st wedding anniversary (40th anniversary a year late). So, my plan was to complete a BGG after that trip. That meant I had about a month long window to get’er done or my 12 month time period would expire.

I was thinking maybe the day of the 4th of July would be a good day to complete it since it was a holiday. Hopefully, all travelers would be at their destination and the traffic would be relatively light.

Part of my strategy was to start at 2:00 am. I normally wake up at 5:30 am, so this would be a little early for me, but I would rather do most of my night riding while I’m fresh versus doing it all at the end of my ride.

I figured the worst part of my route was the stretch of I-40 between Memphis and Little Rock. This stretch of highway is usually busy with tractor-trailer traffic. If I ride that leg first, I should avoid a lot of truck traffic. This would leave the I-55 leg south from St. Louis to home as my final leg. I have ridden/driven this leg many times and traffic is never an issue. So, that would leave the easiest leg at the end of my ride! Of course, you never know if your strategy is good until after the fact. Now, I can say it worked perfectly as planned!

I woke up to the alarm at 1:30 am and jumped in the shower to wake-up! I was out of the house by 1:50 am. I rode down to the local Waffle House for a quick bite to eat since this may be my only warm meal in the next 24 hours. The bike was already fueled up, so I would use the Waffle House receipt as my start receipt.



Official start time 2:13 am

I pull out of the Waffle House and head up I-55. I see some fireworks as I ride through Memphis at 2:30 am. The 4th is starting early here!

From Memphis to Little Rock traffic is light. The rest parks are full of tractor-trailers! I was so glad! My strategy was working!

I was entering the Ozarks on the west side of Arkansas as the sun was rising. This is my favorite time of the day! I enjoy watching the world wake-up from the seat of the motorcycle! I did see a few deer eating on the side of the road. Their heads down in the grass posed no threat to me! I stop in Alma, AR for a gas receipt. This would verify a corner of my route.

From Alma, I head north on I-49. This was a great ride up through Fayetteville, Rogers, and Bentonville (Walmart Country) and then into Missouri through Joplin. The weather is great, the sun is up and traffic is light! Life is good! When I was within 50 miles of Kansas City, MO, it starts to rain. Nothing serious just a light rain. Actually, the rain was a good thing to keep the temperature down. At this time of the year, temperatures and humidity can be brutal! Temperatures were my main concern for this ride. So far, so good!

Traffic picked up in Kansas City. By now, it was about 10:00 am. Traffic wasn't terrible and was expected for a city this large. But, once outside of town, traffic lightened again and the rain ended!

I crossed the state line into Iowa. The sun was shining and the temperature was in the low 80's. In Des Moines, I got off the interstate and onto some nice backroads. The remainder of the ride to Dennis Powell's farm was great! Since I grew up on a cattle farm in Indiana, I enjoy riding through agricultural areas. You can take the boy out of the farm, but you can't take the farm out of the boy!

I arrive at Dennis Powell's farm around 1:30 pm. The weather is great! The temperature has increased to 88 degrees. This would be the warmest part of the day for me.



Dennis Powell's Farm

After a couple photos, I jump back on the bike to head home! I fuel up in Webster City, IA, just a few miles away, to get a fuel receipt. This receipt would verify my most northern stop.

I jump on I-35 south to Des Moines, then head southeast on hwy 163 to hwy 63. This takes me down the center of Missouri. The road was divided four-lane part of the time and two-lane part of the time. Very light traffic and a nice scenic ride!

I arrived in Columbia, MO around 6:30 pm. Again, I stop for a gas receipt to verify a corner. From here, I jump on I-70 eastbound to St. Louis. It starts raining again. Light rain. It was excellent timing again as it kept the temperature down!

Since time is a major factor during IBA rides, especially an extreme ride like a BBG, you don't have time for a sit-down meal. My plan was to eat beef jerky and cashews on the road. And, I only drink water. Water and protein are a great food source while on long distance Iron Butt rides. This keeps your blood sugar levels flat. Carbs are not good for this kind of riding since it will

spike your blood sugar and can make you drowsy. Up to this point, I had been drinking water and eating a few cashews during my fuel stops.

In St. Louis, I stop at a Quick Trip to get a fuel receipt to verify a corner. As I went inside to use the restroom, I walked right by the roller dog display. That aroma caught my attention! When I walked back by, I couldn't resist. I grabbed a roller dog, added some ketchup and onions, paid for it and scarfed it down by the time I walked out to the bike. Believe me, it tasted pretty good!

Now, its 8:00 pm. The sun is starting to set. The light rain has kept the temperatures down. It has been a great ride so far! As, I jump onto I-55 south in St. Louis, I knew I only had a few more hours left to finish this ride! I was feeling great! My energy level was great! This was the perfect day to do this ride!

As the sun set, I start to see fireworks light up the sky! This was what I was hoping for when I planned this ride... to enjoy fireworks during the final leg of my route. And, I wasn't disappointed!

I rode through Cape Girardeau, then Sikeston, MO. I virtually had the interstate to myself most of the time! Especially after passing Sikeston.

As I crossed the Mississippi River over into Memphis, I could see the walking bridge and the "M" bridge were lit up red, white and blue! I could see fireworks in the sky all

around the Memphis skyline. It was a great sight to see! Especially, from the Gold Wing seat!

As I was getting closer to home, I was getting excited! For whatever reason, I love long distance riding! I enjoy riding during all times of the day and all weather conditions! I love sharing these rides with Karen. But, I also enjoy the solitude of a long ride like this! It's hard to believe that I have covered 1,546 miles in the past 22 hours! I went through some major cities, agriculture areas, backroads and interstates. That's why I ride! I really don't have to go anywhere in particular, I could do the same ride again the following day (after a good night's sleep, of course!) and enjoy it just as much! These are thoughts I have as I end a ride like this. Good thoughts!

I stop in Hernando at the Shell Station on Commerce Street for my final gas receipt to stop the clock.



Official end time 12:10 am

From there, I ride home. As I pull into the garage, the other garage door opens up! Karen was at the Waffle House waiting on me since she knew I would be ready to eat!

She saw me ride by and followed me home. She had been watching me on the satellite tracking website all day! She jumped out of the car to welcome me home! She was as excited as I was that I completed the ride! She gets it! And, I'm a lucky man to have her as my wife!

Now, I was tired and hungry. I didn't need to leave the house again, I just wanted something simple to eat, so I fixed a bowl of cereal. Then, I jumped in the shower. The hot shower felt great! I'm sure it didn't take a minute for me to fall asleep as I hit the bed!

To me it's very satisfying to accomplish a ride like this! No traffic issues, no physical issues and no bike issues. Everything worked as planned! "Plan your ride, ride your plan!"

Ride Statistics
2016 Honda Gold Wing
1,636 miles per Odometer
1,546 miles Corrected
(per Google Maps)
Time: 21 hrs. 57 min
Average speed 70.27 mph
49.7 gal of gas = 31.1 mpg

