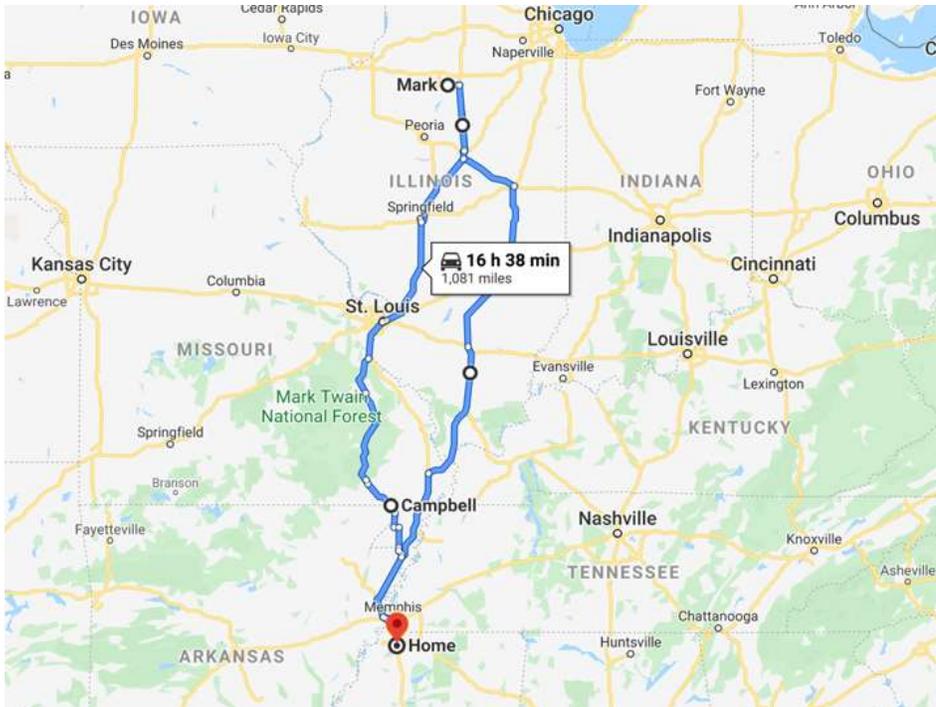


The Mark Campbell 1000



Route to Mark, IL then Campbell, MO

A few years ago, I heard of a town named Campbell in Missouri. Hmmmm, I wonder if there is a town named Mark somewhere? Why, of course! Mark, Illinois! And, from home in Hernando, Mississippi to Mark, IL down to Campbell, MO and back home in Hernando, MS, is 1,081 miles! Perfect for an Iron Butt Saddle Sore 1000!

Karen and I attempted this ride in 2018, but we couldn't get a DBR (Dated Business Receipt) in Mark, Illinois. The town is so small, it only has a few businesses. The Post Office was closed, and the other two businesses could only provide

handwritten receipts. We needed a computer-generated business receipt to officially document the address, date and time. So, we made a mental note to come back when the Post Office was open.

Recently, I have been getting in some seat time on the BMW GSA to prepare for Butt Lite in September. Butt Lite is a marathon 6-day long distance rally (scavenger hunt). How do you prepare? Ride! Ride long distances to condition your body and mind. Basically, I'm getting in shape for the event.

So, I was thinking about where to ride to next, when I remembered Mark, Illinois! So, I looked online

to see the Post Office's hours of operation. Since it is such a small town, they have abbreviated hours 8:30 am to 10:30 am on Saturday. Well, with this COVID19 pandemic going on, I called just to verify they would be open. Yes! The counter is open at the posted times! This would give me a 2-hour window to get the receipt I needed.

Mark, IL is 8 hours from home in Hernando, MS. That would mean a departure time of between 12:00 midnight and 1:00 am in order to make it to Mark when the PO opened. That would also allow for any minor delays along the way.

On the other hand, Campbell, Missouri is four times larger than Mark. It has several businesses which could provide us with an official DBR. And, a wider time window due to the availability of convenience stores. So, no worries there.

When I planned this ride, it was the end of July. And, it's HOT! The heat index had been over 100° all week and August is coming soon! Butt Lite is in September. When can I work in this ride? Well, looking at the forecast, Saturday is looking favorable! The heat index was only going to get up to 98°. After that, the heat index was going to climb back over 100° for as far as the forecast covered. Time to get 'er done!

As I had been talking about this with Karen, she said “Have a good ride!” But as it came closer to Saturday, she started becoming more interested. She started saying that she would ride with me! I tried to give her a couple of outs, but no! She wanted to ride along and complete what we started a few years ago! Decisions made! We’re going!

Now, what are the concerns of this ride? What would be the high-risk elements? The temperature was a major concern, but the weekend forecast knocked that one out. What about the departure time and riding all night? This was a big concern! If we get on the road between 12:00 and 1:00 am, how would we feel at 3:00 am or 5:00 am? Karen and I both agreed that if we could get in at least five hours of sleep, we would be good to go! During the ride, once the sun comes up, we’d be on easy street. Also, we’re starting early enough we should be home well before dark on the end of the ride. The good thing about riding all night in July is the temperature would be comfortable.



Marion, IL 4 am First Fuel Stop

I set the alarm for 12:00 pm and we’re in bed by 7:30 pm. I wake up at 12:02 am! What happened to the alarm! Oh, it was set to pm instead of am! Glad I woke up! Karen jumped up too! We were out of the house and on the way! We stop for our initial start receipt in Hernando. Official start time 12:31 am. Time to ride!



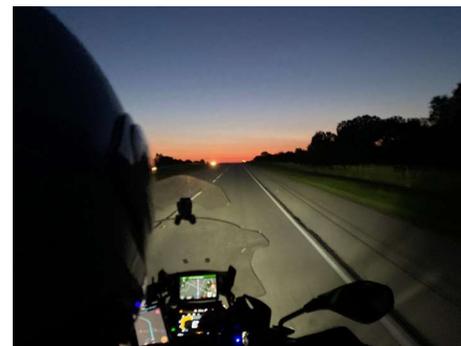
Somewhere Illinois

Some people don’t like to ride at night, but I like it! Night riding is fun! It offers somewhat of a dramatic effect to the ride. Plus, typically the traffic volume is down, especially after midnight! And in our case, summer temperatures can be much more comfortable at night. But night riding can wear you out due to staying more focused and alert!

One of my favorites things in life is to be on the bike and watch the sun rise! This time of day is when the world starts to wake up! It doesn’t get any better than this! Especially with Karen behind me!

A bonus for night riding is the chance to see wildlife. On this trip, we saw some deer. I also saw a coyote and big brown/tan bird fly in

front of us. I assume the bird was an owl.



Sunrise

We make it to Mark, IL at 8:46 am. We take some pictures next to the town Welcome sign, then head to the Post Office. We go in, I buy a book of stamps. I ask if I can get a receipt. The lady said “If you use a credit card, you can.” So, I pay with a credit card and check the receipt to make sure it meets our needs. Address-check. Date-check. Time-wrong! The time is off by an hour and a half! I could ask the lady to write the correct time on it, sign it and provide her phone number so if the IBA has any questions. But, I hate faulty receipts and the hassle that goes with it. If nothing else, I could use my satellite tracking system as a backup. The Spot can verify the time we were here.



I was bummed a little but not too concerned. Let's eat breakfast! So, we go to the restaurant in town, Coal Miner's Cafe. I don't know if the café had the same name when we were here in 2018, but it does have new owners. I ask if I could pay with a credit card (for a receipt) and the young lady waiting on us said "yes!" What? Last time we were here, we had to pay in cash or check. So, I pay with a credit card. We're in luck! The receipt was accurate! It had all the information we needed! Now, thinking about it, we could have left home later with a wider time window to shoot for. Nah! That would not be any fun! Time to head south!



St. Louis Arch

Now, we head for Campbell, Missouri! It's 9:30 am. Campbell is 400 miles away. That should take us about 6 hours.

On the way, we ride south on I-55 through St. Louis to Highway 67. This 4-lane divided highway takes us through the Mark Twain National Forest. It's a beautiful ride through the Ozark mountains of rolling hills and trees.

We arrive in Campbell around 4:00 pm. We stop at the Welcome sign for some pictures. We get gas. The receipt shows 4:22 pm. Time to eat!

The local Sherriff walks by as I'm fueling the BMW. I ask him where to eat. He's says "Well, you have two choices and neither one is very good. One is fast food, The Sugar Shack (no inside dining) and the other is a package liquor store that sells food too. The liquor store has places to sit inside. Oh, but there is a Mexican Restaurant downtown. I don't know if they are open or not". Well, Karen and I wanted a place to sit down to eat. So, we ride over to the liquor store. Once we got there, we just rode on by. We didn't even stop. One of those kinds of places! So, let's try the Mexican Restaurant. They were open! Busy too! But, they served a good meal. We took our time and enjoyed a break from the heat!



Mark in Campbell

After we eat, it's after 5:00 pm. We have 150 miles to our home in Hernando. We arrive in town and fuel up to get an official end receipt. Time 7:36 pm. The odometer reads 1,091 total mileage.

Total time for this ride was 19 hours and 5 minutes. That included two sit-down meals and plenty of picture taking at our two destinations. We had a ball!

During the pandemic with social distancing and the hot weather, there just hasn't been that much to do! So riding is our answer! It keeps us active with minimal social interaction! Another great ride! Best of all, Karen went along to enjoy it with me! And, she puts up with a lot! This wasn't the Gold Wing! It was the BMW GSA Adventure bike! A whole different animal. But, Karen endures it with a smile on her face! She's one tough biker babe!

The Mark Campbell 1000 was an awesome adventure! Waking up early and riding all night puts a memorable spin on this Iron Butt ride! Breakfast in Mark and dinner in Campbell equals a fun day on the bike with Karen! Priceless!

Note: Since this ride, Butt Lite has been cancelled due to the spike in COVID 19 😞.

BMW R1250GSA Ride Stats

Distance: 1,091 miles
Time: 19 hrs, 5 min.
Average Speed: 57 mph
Fuel Used: 33.006 gal
Fuel Mileage: 32 mpg
Low Temperature: 66°
High Temperature: 96°