

Hoosier Hysteria



The Land of Hoosiers

Hoosier - A native or inhabitant of Indiana.

A theory attributed to Gov. Joseph Wright derived Hoosier from an Indian word for corn, "hoosa." Indiana flatboatmen taking corn or maize to New Orleans came to be known as "hoosa men" or Hoosiers.

Hysteria - A psychoneurosis marked by emotional excitability and disturbances of the psychogenic, sensory, vasomotor, and visceral functions.

Hoosier Hysteria - A native of Indiana (men of corn) emotional excited about their homeland!

I enjoyed growing up on a farm near Fairmount, Indiana and have always been proud to be a Hoosier. Karen and I currently live in Mississippi and make a trek back to Indiana to visit family a couple times a year. On this visit during Memorial Day Weekend, I wanted to attempt the Iron Butt Association's (IBA) "Ride Around Indiana".

It was very windy and rainy as I left the town of Matthews, Indiana after a day of visiting family. My sister, Pam, had bought my lunch earlier that day in Noblesville. I got a chance to hug my older sister, Leslie, at a campground where her family was spending the weekend.

My sister-in-law, Sharon, had a Wicks' sugar crème pie (an Indiana exclusive) as a surprise waiting for me. And, my brother-in-law, Floyd, had made some homemade beef jerky for my ride. A day of great memories as I rode south to Richmond, Indiana to prepare for the ride around Indiana the next day!

On the way, the wind was wicked! A big tree was blown down across the road just south of Wheeling. Several men in pickup trucks were just starting to cut up the tree with chainsaws as I approached. I immediately turned east at the intersection nearby as a detour. This country road led me over to a main road heading south to Richmond. The rest of the ride down to my staging point was uneventful. There, I had a hotel room reserved.

The IBA requirements are as follows:

The Ride Around Indiana (which includes a visit to Indianapolis) is roughly 1,025 miles. You must ride your motorcycle in a path that traces the geographic borders of the state.

You must start and end at any required city. You must start and end the ride at the same location, i.e. same DBR (Dated Business Receipt).

You may not leave Indiana.

You must visit each of the listed jurisdictions. You must use a satellite tracking system. At a minimum, you must have a starting and ending DBR indicating the city, date and time.

*Richmond
Fremont
Whiting
Terre Haute
Mt Vernon
Tell City
Jeffersonville
Rising Sun*

You must visit cities in the order listed. You must also visit Indianapolis and obtain a DBR, but you may not start your ride or end your ride in Indianapolis. Either order (clockwise or counterclockwise) is fine but they must be in order, e.g. Richmond MUST come immediately before or after Rising Sun.

The ride must be at least 1,000 miles and completed in less than 24 hours.

My strategy on this ride was to start early in Richmond, then go to Indianapolis and back. This would knock out the Indianapolis leg, plus it would be an easy ride at night allowing the sun to rise as I started north on state road 27 afterward. I would ride counterclockwise in order to get the northwest corner requirement out of the way fairly early. I figured this would be the pain point for this ride.

I was in bed by 9:00 pm and up at 3:30 am getting ready to start my ride. I was out of the room and fueling my bike at the gas station just down the street. Official start time according to my Richmond DBR was 4:10 am.

The Richmond to Indianapolis and back to Richmond was uneventful. It was 46 degrees and slight mist in the air. No traffic on I-70 at this time in the morning made it a nice, easy ride!

Back in Richmond, I headed north on state road 27. The sun was slowly rising. Perfect timing! I enjoy watching the sun rise as I ride through the countryside!

As I rode over the overpass in Winchester, I looked for the Wicks pie company. Wicks' sugar crême pies are very popular in the Hoosier land. One of my favorites! Thanks, Sharon, for the surprise!

A little later in Berne, Indiana, I saw a few Amish horse and buggies on a side road. It looked like they were headed to the same destination. I saw several others headed for that road too. I wondered if they were gathering somewhere on this early Saturday morning. I also wondered what they thought of the big Honda Gold Wing as I passed them on the road. Good thoughts, I hope!

South of Ft Wayne, I jumped on the bypass. This 4-lane divided highway took me around to I-69. Smooth sailing up to Fremont. After getting my required receipt, I got on

the I-80/90 toll road that took me west across the top of Indiana. The Indiana State Troopers were busy on this road! I made it to the East Chicago area ahead of schedule! Life was good!

As I snaked my way up through East Chicago to Whiting, traffic was light. There was some road construction that had me diverting from my planned route a few times. But, all in all, no problem in the area I thought would be the pain point of this entire ride.

After I got my required receipt in Whiting, I hit highway 41 south. This road took me down the west side of Indiana. It was a great 4 lane divided highway most of the way! And, hardly any traffic to speak of! As a matter of fact, the whole day was light on traffic! I wonder if this was normal or people still aren't out and about due to the pandemic?

The skies were bright blue with a few clouds and the temperature rose up to 61 degrees as I rode south. A great day to be on the bike!

The western side of Indiana reminded me of the Mississippi Delta. It's flat! Real flat! Corn, soybeans and wheat fields for as far as you can see! But, for the most part that is Indiana everywhere! The "men of corn"!

I stopped in Terre Haute for my required receipt, then back on the road south. I rode through Vincennes where I attended the

University there over 30 years ago. That place has grown!

North of Evansville, I exited off highway 41 and took country roads west and south down to Mt Vernon. The countryside starts rolling with more and more trees. Perfect time of the year! Everything was green and/or blooming with color!

I got my required receipt and snaked my way east to Tell City. When I was young, this town was known for it's superior furniture stores. I didn't see anything furniture related as I rode through town. Probably all the furniture business moved to another country where it's made cheaper, I would guess.

Tell City was a beautiful little town on the Ohio River! It was 5:00 pm, I was hungry! So, I stopped at the Pour Haus Pub & Eatery. This was a busy little place! But, I was served quickly. I had a great meal and was out the door in good time! Awesome!

Again, I got my required receipt and headed to Jeffersonville. This took me to I-64, then to I-265 around New Albany. I stopped again for a receipt and back out on the road!

The scenery was beautiful as I entered Madison and zig-zagged along the river! There was still a little daylight left as I rode along. I watched a brilliant sunset in my rearview mirrors! By the time I arrived in Rising Sun, it was dark. That was my final corner! All I had to do to complete the ride was close the gap back to Richmond.

The last 80 miles were mainly on nice curvy country roads. Like the whole day, traffic was light. The roads were well marked. That made for an easy and enjoyable ride at night.

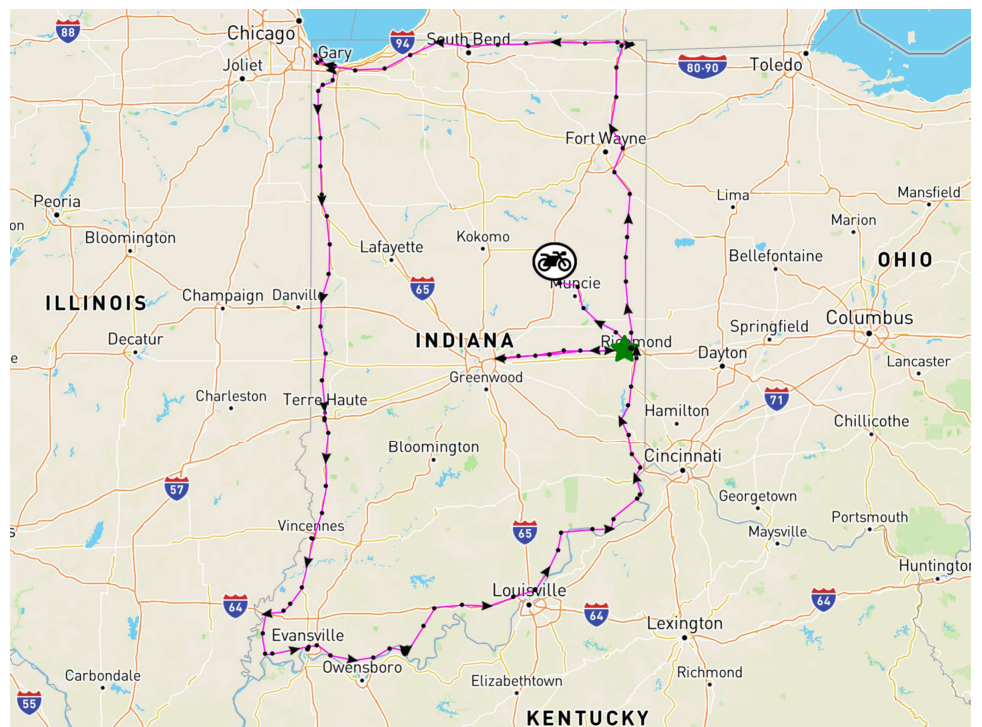
By the time I made it to Richmond, the temperature was down to 46 degrees. Same temperature that I started out almost 19 hours ago!

I stopped and got my final receipt before heading back to Gas City where Karen and I had a room for the next 2 nights. The 65 miles back was great! I thought I might be tired by now, but I wasn't. It had been a great day!

When I arrived at the hotel in Gas City, Karen had a plate of food waiting on me! Her brother, Floyd,

had a family cookout that day and Karen brought me a plateful to the room. It was awesome! Thank you, Floyd! I had a full stomach and ready for bed! Now, I was tired!

The ride around Indiana may be a little too much of a day ride for some, but to me, it was awesome! I thoroughly enjoyed riding through the countryside and seeing the crops in an early growth stage. Farmland everywhere! The big city of East Chicago and Whiting were not as challenging as I thought they might be. The beautiful rolling countryside along the southern border was unforgettable. For this "man of corn", it was an emotionally exciting ride all the way around! Literally!



Actual Route Depicted by Satellite Tracking System