

The Void 3 – 2007

At last I spotted the perfect specimen. He was lying on the paved shoulder of a relatively quiet highway in Kentucky. I applied the brakes and pulled over, stopping just short of the target. With the bike shut off and in gear, I opened the top case and withdrew the weapon, then approached with the cool indifference of professional marksman. I studied the position, decided on the best angle, threw the I.D. tag down on the ground beside the beast and lined up the shot. I pulled the trigger, and the deed was done. It may not have been his good side, but he could rest comfortably knowing his mug shot looked better than Nick Nolte's did. His aspirations of becoming part of a fur coat or at the very least shaped into a legendary Daniel Boone cap ended suddenly one night. With the photo the final indignity was complete: life was reduced to a 193 point roadkill bonus in the 2007 version of the redneck-themed VOID 3 Motorcycle Rally.

I returned to the bike to store the camera and flag in the top case. As I closed the lid I watched helplessly and in disbelief as the '02 RT, top heavy with luggage, a tank bag, fuel cell, and extra lights, fell slowly away from the side-stand nose first into the ditch. With a crash the right mirror went flying as bike parts and rally tools were strewn about. The beast managed to get the last laugh!

With my mind moving a million miles a second, I attempted to lift the bike, managing only to rock it on the valve cover. In an instant a man pulled over to lend a hand; then a lady stopped her car in a protective fashion with emergency flashers on to warn others approaching the scene.

“Are you OK?” she asked stepping out of her vehicle.

“I'm fine”, I said referring to my physical state, ‘Luckily I wasn't on the bike at the time.’ It sure didn't look good. The bike was wheels up, just off the shoulder, next to a rock cut, on the apex of a rising right-hander. Seeing the bike in this position was a lot like watching Wayne Newton on Dancing with the Stars: it hurt to look. I had obviously misjudged the road's camber that sloped steeply to the ditch. The lady was studying me to make sure I was sober and truly uninjured.

“What can we do to help?” she asked.

“Help us get it up.” I said. With a grunt or two, three of us managed to get the bike back on its side stand in roughly the same area as it was before the fall. It stood, but precariously.

“It's going to fall over again unless I move it to flatter ground,” I reasoned. I carefully worked my way around the bike, got on and rode it fifty feet ahead. With the bike stabilized I could assess the damage a little better. The mirror itself was cracked but still on the housing, which I was able to snap back into place. The turn indicator worked, although the bulb holder no longer locked into the mirror housing. The body panel

suffered some mild cosmetic damage. The mirror aside, most of the damage was on the valve cover and the side bag, where hard contact was made.

The lady helped me collect all the odds and ends that fell out of the top case into the ditch. I picked up what looked like a part of a handle, and sure enough noticed my brake lever was broken in two, leaving me just two fingers worth of grab. It felt fine and more importantly it worked perfectly. All was not lost after all! I thanked those who pulled over to lend assistance profusely before getting back on the bike.

“Do you want me to call the police so that you can report the damage?” the lady asked, now being overly helpful. Not wanting to wait around, and not wanting to explain why, I told her my insurance deductible was too high, and waived as I sped off. I had a job to finish.

That job of course was the 25-hour version of the Void Rally. Why my riding partner and I decided to sign up for it I'm not exactly sure. It was over five hundred miles to the start of the rally in Altoona, PA, and it would involve more than 1000 miles during a rally set in at least 12-hours of darkness. From the finish point in Lynchburg, VA, it was another 850 miles home. Sounded like a great way to kill a weekend, I guess.

My partner in crime was none other than Cameron “feed this body” Sanders, the closest thing North Bay, ON, had to a celebrity rider. Fresh from a win at the inaugural Rendez-Vous Rally in Sutton, QC, in September, Cameron was eager to use all of the rideable portion of his tires in Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee.

We left North Bay, ON, at 8 A.M. in the rain, he on a Honda ST 1300 and me on a '96 BMW 1100 RT, on Thursday October 11th, headed for my dealer in Newmarket, ON, to pick up the “rally bike”. The '02 1150 RT could officially be called a rally bike now that it sported big bug-like “rally lights”, a set of Hella FF200 HID lamps. In addition, it was fitted with a BLM auxiliary fuel cell that was affixed to the seat pan in the pillion position.

The bike looked awesome at the dealership, as the attendant walked it out and backed it into a gently sloping parking space then put it onto the center stand. I began transferring the tank bag, top case and bag liners of my '96 RT to the new one immediately. All of a sudden the impossible happened: as I was installing the top case, the bike nudged itself off the center stand and proceeded to fall over ever so slowly onto its right side. Although this happened in slow motion it was still too fast for the three of us to react.

I was crestfallen. I had just had everything prepped for the rally. The thought that the bike was possibly not fit to ride was racing through my mind and impossible to accept. It was the first fall for the bike, while in my possession at least, and my immediate concern was the new lights. They were fine, although there were some scratches to the areas that hit first and supported the bike on its side. A cursory examination declared the bike was good to go! It was officially baptized, and what's a “rally bike” without a few scars anyway?

From Newmarket, we made our way under sunny skies around the western tip of Lake Ontario, then quickly through customs at Niagara Falls. From there, we dropped straight south, passing through Buffalo and Ellicottville, a funky little ski town, on our way along highway 219, a mostly two-lane highway that took us through rural sections of western New York and Pennsylvania.

Along the way we paid special attention to some of the wildcard bonuses we knew were part of this year's rally: we saw a variety of roadkill ranging from a black bear, to deer, to an assortment of smaller varmints. We were also on the lookout for John Deere businesses, Salvation Army locations, and Laundromats. Less than an hour from the hotel we passed a perfect drive-in theatre bonus, though we would never be going back in that direction the next day to claim it.

Cam and I decided to go all-out this trip and booked-in to the Motel 6 in Altoona, PA. As we were checking in we met a lonely LD rider (are there any other kinds?) on BMW's version of the Edsel, the R1200CL, a touring cruiser; that made him doubly lonely. We told him we noticed the Hooters as we pulled off the freeway, and would meet him there for supper, an easy walk from our hotel.

J. Burford Fields was an international man of mystery, a single man with his own blog, who worked in some top-secret capacity with the U.S. government. Debonair, articulate, and mannered, he was staying at a classier address more befitting his stature and importance, the Econolodge just down the street. His only rally experience to date had been a DNF (did not finish) in the Cape Fear. Apparently his appetite got the better of him.

Putting his considerable interrogation skills to work, developed over years at the State Department, he plied us unsuspecting Canadians with beer, forcing us to unwittingly divulge all of our riding secrets, learned the hard way over several different rally attempts. Like a sponge, he soaked up the sum total of our knowledge, which we're the first to admit couldn't fill the first page of his note pad. He feverishly scribbled information on bonus locations, our Void 3 strategy and goals, our method for computing where and when a rider should take a rest bonus, not to mention our way to control global warming, never once losing eye contact with his loose-lipped mentors.

When he figured he obtained enough from us, or perhaps after he'd exhausted the plate of wings in front of him, he excused himself and disappeared into the cool dark night. Cameron and I looked at each other and realized we'd sold our soul for a jug of draft.

After dinner, we headed back to the hotel to work on our real routes and get a good night's rest. The color-coding of our bonus locations pointed to an ideal route through Kentucky and Tennessee, however time would be a factor if riders tried to bite off more than they could chew. Late points were assessed at 85 points per minute so being just ten minutes late at the finish could wipe out one of the big Tennessee bonuses. I thought it

was better to err on the conservative side, while I knew Cameron could never resist “the big ride”.

Early the next morning we loaded the bikes and decided it was Denny’s for breakfast. The BMW cruiser parked out front told us J.B. was there, with a corner table saved for us. “I’ve been expecting you.” Men of mystery are able to predict where hungry motorcyclists are going for breakfast the next day.

Apparently we had not burdened him with enough rally tricks the night before, so we unloaded a torrent of info again that morning. When he showed the proper amount of unadulterated enthusiasm combined with signs of mental confusion and emotional instability, we knew he was as “rally ready” as we were.

There was a bit of business to look after before heading up to the Home Depot for the start of the rally. Gas tanks had to be topped off, and we had to scout out a couple of early stops – a Laundromat, and a Salvation Army depot in Altoona. We figured it was important to get on the board early and to test the systems in place at bonus locations close to the starting point.

The three of us arrived at the start location almost two hours before the call-in time. J.B. suggested we find a restaurant to relax in. Cameron and I wanted to locate the bolt we needed to buy. We compromised and stood around the parking lot talking bikes and travel. Soon we were joined by another early bird, Bob Lilley, on his K1200 LT. Bob was a great storyteller with a wonderful sense of humor. He was fresh off a win as well. During the two-day event called the Tinbutt, Bob rode over 3000 GPS miles. J.B and I were feeling the added pressure of being bookended by rally winners.

As we were standing out in the near-empty parking lot an announcement came over the P.A. system. “The parking lot is for Home Depot customers only, if you are not a Home Depot customer your vehicle will be towed”. Nothing like making us feel welcomed. I went inside to explain to an associate that we would indeed be customers soon. She was very helpful, showing us how to use the self-cash machines in order to save time. We checked the computer time and date to make sure they were accurate, and then we were ready. We restlessly hung around the aisles until the start time finally came around.

I purchased the required bolt at a self-cash machine and my start-time was exactly 12:50 P.M. The next step was to call rally headquarters and let them know my starting info. Funny how hard it was to dial a cell phone when the pressure was on. The first number I called was not in service. I got an answer on the next number, and after giving my rider number, name, start location and receipt time, I was officially able to put the helmet on and get rolling. Many were still trying to get a call through as I left. J. B. was cursing into his cell phone, “The number’s out of service!” Cameron was already on his way.

The first stops were relatively easy because we had located them in advance. At the Laundromat I pulled out my cardboard “Just Married” sign and lined up the shot. I had not used the Polaroid for some time, so two photos came out simultaneously. I could tell

they were not well exposed so I retook two more, at slightly different angles, just to be safe. Four films at the first stop! At this rate I would need about four more boxes of Polaroids to get through the next day! I tucked away that ugly sign until the end of the rally.

Next stop was the Altoona Salvation Army. One photo was all I needed this time. I was getting into the groove. The goal now was to head towards the Ohio bonuses in Pickerington and Springfield, and hopefully pick up a few more wildcard bonuses along the way. I headed south of Altoona, then west along Hwy 22. I was hardly out of the city when I noticed a John Deere dealer on the other side of the road. The location was better than the one I had planned to stop at, so I decided to grab it right then and there. A photo of the sign and equipment, then a photo of me standing on the equipment taken by a fellow rider gave me 700 points.

My fears of an impending Friday afternoon weekend traffic rush were unfounded, and it never became an issue. The westward progress was steady and eventually I hit I-70, which sped us along nicely. Once in Ohio, I paid close attention to the firecracker business signs, and my patience was rewarded with the perfect photo op just off a freeway exit. The AMA museum in Pickerington, LD riders favorite organization, was not far way, and at 5:57 I was there, joining a fellow on a Ducati. This stop was common to both Cameron and J.B. as well, the latter coming close to committing the ultimate rookie mistake: forgetting one's rally flag.

I checked the distance and time to Springfield on the GPS and it showed just over an hour to the monument. Along I-70 I headed directly into a sunset softened by some dark clouds on the horizon. I was surprised that there was no heavy rush hour traffic to speak of around Columbus, OH.

Just as the sun melted into the horizon, I exited for Springfield passing a drive-in theatre in the process. I rushed to get the photo of the Heroes monument then I doubled back, desperate to get to the theatre before darkness set in. My photo of the large screen, taken at 7:15 P.M., was too dark, so I took what I could of the non-illuminated sign by the road, and then one of the entrance booth. One of them would have to work. Rick Miller, and his riding partner Ed Day, riding together as Team Hoya de Monterrey, joined me at that time. We would be bumping into each other, riding similar routes, for the next 18 hours.

After Springfield, the goal was a photo of the grave marker of Daniel Boone in Frankfort, KY. Apparently he wasn't just a TV character. To get there I headed west along I-70 then southwest along I-675, eventually finding I-75 south. In Ohio, I stopped for gas at a Shell station north of Cincinnati, where I was rewarded with a fuel receipt that did not have the city or state printed on. I added them manually, though adding the state would cost me 55 points off the fuel log bonus. In the convenience store I looked for beef jerky and Moon Pie, although no one there seemed sure what a "Moon Pie" was. I was imagining something like a Twinky in the shape of a crescent moon (or a half moon). I found out later it was round like a full moon not a crescent shape. Although beef jerky was easy to find, there was no full moon in sight.

I loved crossing the historic bridge at the Ohio-Kentucky border at Covington, KY. There seemed to be more activity in Kentucky, and I could sense an immediate surge in my energy level. The interstate pace through Kentucky was more to my liking as well, and good time was made. North of Lexington, KY, I exited off for Frankfort, and headed west along a back road through horse country. With beautiful stone fences on each side of the road and overhanging trees, it was the perfect time to try out the new Hellas.

I waited for any sign of traffic to disappear then flipped the high beam switch. The lights immediately brought a smile to my face, then I watched in amazement as they continued to light up over the next 15 seconds, getting progressively brighter. It was unbelievable! They threw a cone of light down the road as powerful as a mobile movie set. It was as good as daylight out there at 10 P.M. in Kentucky.

I giggled all the way to Frankfort, KY, where the GPS led me to the gate of the cemetery. Within minutes I was joined by Rick and Ed, then by Cameron, who was fresh from the Lexington bonus. Together we headed up to the far corner of the cemetery, where we located the grave marker. We brought many portable lights to get our photos, which luckily turned out in the dark of night. Leaving, I saw the only live deer I would see the whole trip; they were happily roaming the cemetery and did not seem to be bothered by our presence.

From there Cameron ducked off to the Corvette plant in Bowling Green, KY, while I was heading into Lexington, KY, to get a photo of the Bondurant Pharmacy. At this juncture, I had committed to a slightly shorter more conservative route, while Cameron was heading for the larger bonuses, taking him further away from the finish line.

J.B. showed an aggressive side, opting for big distance and points by heading to Louisville, KY, after Springfield, OH, to take a photo of the five-story tall Louisville Slugger, the World's Largest Bat. Our international man of mystery needed the bat to beat off the single women who approached him freely at the bonus location, curious as to his latest mission. By maintaining his singular focus, he managed to extricate himself from a potentially sticky situation.

I arrived at the pharmacy, shaped like a mortar and pestle, shortly after 11 P.M. Although I was unsure if a photo was possible, there was indeed enough light on the subject to get a clear shot. The Valley View Ferry landing was next in my sights, just over an hour away. To get there, the instructions said to ride to Richmond, KY, then backtrack northwest along Rte 169.

The ride to the ferry landing was slow due to that narrow road but I arrived at the closed gate shortly before 1 A.M. There was total darkness when the bike was shut off. With flashlight, camera and flag in hand, I hopped around the fence and headed down to locate the sign in question, really a series of four signs one on top of the other.

I put the flag on the lower sign, lined up my shot, pulled the trigger and nothing happened. The Polaroid camera was out of film. So up the hill I went back to the bike to re-load the camera in complete darkness. Back down I went, this time taking four shots, some closer, some further away, trying to show the flag and the signs. I returned to the bike making sure I did not forget the rally flag.

I put the camera on the seat of the bike while I wrote down mileage and time. As I was writing, the camera slid off the seat and smashed onto the pavement. With a flashlight I tried to collect the pieces of plastic and put things back together. Without a camera I was pretty much sunk. My next stop was at the original KFC in Corbin, KY, about an hour south, and I could not do a thing about it until then.

After the original KFC was located, I pulled the broken camera out and turned it on. The light came on, that was a great start. I placed my flag over the KFC historical plaque and took a photo. The flash lit up and the film got exposed though the grinding noises coming from inside the camera told me that nothing was going to make it out. In desperation, I ripped the broken pieces off the front of the camera and yanked out the film container, finding the one that had been exposed but wasting another five films. Amazingly, that picture worked, but the camera had lost a series of wheels and springs and was officially dead. What to do?

It felt like a good time to take a deep breath and a 3-hour rest bonus. I knew I had to start the bonus by 3:00 A.M. in order to make it back to Lynchburg on time. I found a 24-hour gas station not far from the Corbin exit off I-75 that boasted a convenience store and a Krystal burger restaurant. I purchased a bottle of water to start the rest clock then asked the store attendant if he sold Polaroid cameras. He didn't but there was a 24-hour Wal-mart a few blocks away that might. I was excited because I knew that Wal-mart was a supplier of rally gear, especially Polaroid film. I thought, "rest be damned, I'm going to Wal-mart to do some shopping".

With a new Polaroid 600 and fresh film in the top case I could finally relax. Being the only one in the restaurant at that time I was able to spread the rally stuff out on a table to do some paperwork and plan out the balance of the ride. I ordered a couple of Krystal burgers, burgers so small people have been known to eat 85 of them at a time (I'm not kidding!). Sitting at the table I was able to text message Cameron, who I assumed was having a break about the same time.

"Where are u?"

"Lebanon. U?" So I knew he made it to the Corvette plant then further south to the Superspeedway in Lebanon, TN. He was a long way from Lynchburg, VA.

"Corbin. Dropped camera". He knew I was closer to home, but in desperate trouble. He didn't need to know about Wal-mart yet.

"Is it broke?"

“Toast”

“Ow!” he replied. Then came: “Shit. Digital or Pol?”

“Polar”

“When you out?” Cameron wondered.

“One hour. U?” For me, that meant as early as 5:25 A.M.

“5:52.” Mr. Sanders was cutting it close indeed. The Colonel would not be impressed!

Unfortunately for Cameron and J.B., the Corvette Plant in Bowling Green, KY, presented time wasting obstacles as they spent many valuable minutes trying to locate the “plant” as opposed to the “museum”. In addition, on the way there J.B. got caught in traffic stalled because of an accident, and needed to cross the median to get onto another highway before forward progress could be made.

After the plant, J. B. took his rest bonus literally and checked into a room on the second floor of a Motel 6. Somehow we’d managed to bring him down to our level. After his wake-up call, he grabbed his bags and proceeded to trip down the stairs, nearly knocking himself out in the process. He would recover, though his cell phone would not.

I didn’t set any speed records getting out of my rest bonus either. After trying to figure out the computer time of their cash registers, loading up the bike, filling the gas tanks, then paying inside, the receipt said 5:44 A.M. Not to worry I thought, I wasn’t under the kind of pressure Cameron and J.B. were under. In fact when I ran a route on the GPS that started from Corbin and ended in Lynchburg, while passing through Hazard and Big Stone Gap, it showed I had close to two hours to play with. As it turned out I would need both of them.

In order to get to Hazard, KY, I had to head north on the I-75 for about 10 miles then head east on the Daniel Boone Parkway, a road that sounded more glamorous than it actually was. It was a cool morning, so I plugged in the heated vest and turned on the grips. At six A.M. on a Saturday morning traffic was light and it only took a little over an hour to get to the steeply curved ramp that descended into town. The GPS dropped me off on the right street, but not at the right address, so I had to stop and read the actual address in the rally book, then try to figure out which direction I should be heading in.

It wasn’t long before Rick, Ed and myself all arrived at the Mother Goose house together. Colonel Sanders, Daniel Boone, Mother Goose, who was next: Howdy Doody? Imagine the absurdity of three clowns in motorcycle gear, at 7:15 A.M, flashing cameras outside a bedroom window, in the fog and darkness, trying to get photos of a house with a giant goose on the roof.

It was still dark in town when I left because much of Hazard was surrounded by tall hills and was immune to a sunrise. Those same hills made the rest of the ride the most scenic part of the rally, as the road rose and fell and twisted around the hills and bends. It was about a half-hour out of Hazard, on my way to Big Stone Gap, that I stopped to get the roadkill bonus.

With the incident behind me, I rode along thankful that the engine fired up as always, and that even the damaged pieces did not prevent me from enjoying the excellent scenery and smooth tarmac. The road to Big Stone Gap, VA, was a joy to ride. Along Hwy 7, and 699, then 463, I passed the highest point in Kentucky (Black Mountain at 4145 feet) while travelling in and out of the light fog. As I approached the town, I waved to Team Hoya as they headed for home.

Nestled in a valley, I followed the Gap's main drag and managed to miss the smallish Miner's statue tucked into the town-square. A few blocks later I turned around and made another approach. I was able to park beside the monument and snap my picture. It was about 9:30 A.M. and time to head to Lynchburg, VA. I had planned things this way, so time was not an issue, even with the twenty minutes spent getting the bike back on it's feet.

The ride to the interstate was outstanding. Along the way, I passed-up a vintage drive-in theatre that would have given me a perfectly clear daytime bonus photo as opposed to the night-time ones I took in Springfield. Once on I-81 it was obvious the police were having a grand time, swarming unsuspecting motorists in an orgy of radar, citations, and flashing lights. This forced all riders to be on their best behavior while heading northeast to Lynchburg.

Cameron also got to enjoy some outstanding roads that Saturday morning, entering and leaving Dayton, TN, the bible-thumpers Mecca. The town's only brush with celebrity happened eighty years ago during the Scopes monkey trial. The technical riding, though more exciting, took a toll on his ETA; it became a case of minimizing the late points, made all the more difficult by the heavy police presence on the interstate.

I had entered Roanoke, VA on the GPS as a possible stop before Lynchburg, but because of the small amount of points involved I backed off and figured it was better to be early than late. Close to Lynchburg, I stopped for a six-pack of the cheapest beer I could find, then looked for beef jerky and a Moon Pie. Again, the Moon Pie proved elusive and was not located.

The same road that led me into Lynchburg also took me directly to Lowe's, where I joined many other motorcyclists in the parking lot. Locating the nut we needed wasn't as easy as it should have been as there was debate over the proper nut to affix to the bolt, since the code we required did not exist. After a brief delay, it was located and purchased, and the Git-R-Done bonus was in the bag.

When I finally managed to get out of the store it was a mad dash to the hotel, especially after finding the ramp to the parkway leading to the hotel closed, forcing a detour. Once in the hotel parking lot, I gathered the beer and went in to stop the clock. I was pointed down the hall to the rally desk and arrived exactly one minute late.

After the Corvette plant and the rest bonus, J.B. headed for the Colonel in Corbin, KY, and from there made his way to I-81 for the slow ride back to Lynchburg. His timing couldn't have been better: the KFC was still closed, a distraction he could ill afford. The rallymasters could cancel the helicopters and call off the search party. A final gas stop forced a detour and more time penalties before arriving back to the hotel and stopping the clock four minutes shy of the dreaded DNF.

The procession of motorcyclists continued for the next few hours. The ten-hour rally contestants arriving while the last of the 25-hour riders found their way home. The rest of us had time to check in to the hotel, relax, socialize, enjoy a few cool ones, review our bonus sheets and photos, and patiently wait our turn to be scored.

All the extra time didn't help me much. Although I thought I was ready to be scored, I suffered some major paperwork malfunctions that cost me a total of 1500 points. Putting that another way, a top five finish was cleverly averted. Among others, there was the drive-in photo which was too dark to read "drive-in" anywhere on the film, making my ride-past that morning seem like a bad decision, in retrospect.

There was the time on my AMA museum photo which did not match the time listed in the rally books (17:57 versus 4:57 in the book – my translation was one hour off). There was the hat bonus which I didn't bother to fill out in the rally book (hell, I was wearing my hat wasn't I). The worst one though had to be the roadkill bonus. In all the commotion, I neglected to write the bonus number on the photo, forfeiting the bonus. The "dollars of damage" to "bonus point" ratio was obscene.

When asked how he did, Cameron was philosophical: "It depends how they score it", he felt. Having just been crushed at the scoring table, I was in a good position to tell him exactly how they would score it. At the dinner, the rallymaster announced the top five starters from Altoona. Rick finished fifth. That confirmed that my conservative route was the best choice for me. It would be Monday before the rest of us would know how we placed.

We headed for home Sunday along a route that avoided much of the interstate system, taking us along some remarkable roads, and to that motorcycling hot spot – the Waffle House. Cameron was in his glory: all day breakfasts. Memorable were Hwy 501 out of Lynchburg, VA, then a series of roads from Buena Vista to Hwy 250, then 220 north from Monterey through West Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. From Altoona we retraced our steps to the Canadian border, stopping in Niagara Falls, ON for the night, just a quick five-hour ride from our homes.

By the time we got home, results had been posted on the Internet website. My ninth place finish was one spot behind Bob Lilley's, and two behind Ed Day's, albeit not as good as Cameron's sixth place finish. His 2295 late points should have been enough to wipe out half of all of his Tennessee and Kentucky points, but somehow Cameron came out smelling like a goldenrod (the official flower of Kentucky!). J.B. was very happy to finish, getting the monkey off his back, no doubt learning more about the intricate relationship between distance, time, bonus locations, and BBQ restaurants. Discounting his late penalties, he had a very respectable score. In the process those two each rode almost 1200 miles in 22 hours, as opposed to my 1075 GPS miles.

All things considered, it was a great weekend. What great fun it was to ride with purpose to places one might normally never go to, to learn about these areas, learning more about ourselves in the process. And the characters we came across, the personalities we met, the faces we put to names, for me those were the high points of the experience. We look forward to new challenges next year, and to sample more great roads and wonderful scenery, and if we're really lucky, we'll track down the elusive Moon Pie.