

I Rode Mine

By Donny Phillips



I took a few days off this August to ride up to the Sturgis Rally. As you may recall, the temps were rather harsh in 2011 during the drought, most of Central and West Texas had sustained temps of 105-108 degrees. Not my favorite but I endured. I took a longer route this year going through New Mexico, Colorado, and Wyoming (to see Devil's Tower) and saw some radical temperature changes, including a day of rain in Southern Wyoming. Most of my fellow IBA'ers (Iron Butt Association members) would dismiss this as no big deal, as would I except for the fact that my wife rode along on her HD Sportster with me on this trip and endured a fiery initiation to the extremes of long distance riding. I dialed it back a bit for her; nevertheless, we averaged about 500 miles a day. We had one 600+ mile day that wore her out, but she was up and running fine the next morning. I have made quite a few trips like this by myself or with her riding pillion. This was the first long distance ride we have taken together.

The adventure began with us leaving La Porte around 5:00 in the morning and stopping in

northwest Texas around 6:00PM. We rode into New Mexico the following day and spent the night there. We woke up to great weather and beautiful scenery as we rode through New Mexico into Colorado. I particularly enjoyed the 75 MPH speed limit. We pushed it a little that day and stopped in Cheyenne, Wyoming for the night. We left Cheyenne and headed for Moorcroft/Sundance (Highway 14 loops you through Keyhole State Park). We were able to get pictures with Devil's Tower in the background just before it started to pour down rain. We rode about 50-70 miles south to a small bed and breakfast (B&B) I was lucky to find on my iPhone in a small township called Four Corners. Wet, cold, and exhausted, we enjoyed the hospitality of a homey B&B before heading off to the rally on the following day.

The weather was perfect as we crossed over into South Dakota the next day. We rode through the Black Hills National Forest and got pictures at Mt. Rushmore. We rode into Hot Springs that evening and spent the night. Side note: Hot Springs to Sturgis is a 2-3 hour ride

through some awesome scenic spots and filled with wild life (watch out for buffalo). You can do it in less time by taking the interstate to Rapid City, but why would you? (Actually, I did once when it was dark and raining.) Finally, WE DID STURGIS, see the pictures (next page).

After a couple of days in South Dakota we headed back to La Porte, stopping twice along the way. The temperatures in Kansas and Oklahoma were absolutely brutal. We also had a long rain session between Dallas and Houston (go figure); of course La Porte was high and dry.

I have to admit, I get a rush when I tell fellow riders that my wife made this trip. I know a lot of guys who trailer their bikes up there or fly and rent. It is fun to see the expression on their faces when they learn that my wife rode her bike up there. I am hoping she gets an itch to do an IBA qualifier run this year.

Ride safe!

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Photo Album

