

## Bun Burner Gold to the Black Hills Stampede



I just returned from the Black Hills in South Dakota. It was a great trip and I enjoyed the riding in the hills. This was not my first trip to South Dakota.

In 2003, I went to the Black Hills Rally, the Sturgis Rally on a 2003 BMW R1200CL. I learned that during Sturgis, riding was not the thing to do. It is too crowded, not just in towns and at attractions such as Devil's Tower and Mt. Rushmore, but on all the roads in the Black Hills.

So, when I bought my BMW K1200GT, I decided that I would return to the Black Hills but not during the Sturgis rally. I decided that I would go to the Black Hills BMW Stampede in Spearfish, SD, sponsored by Sturgis BMW. It was scheduled one month before the Sturgis Rally, July 8 – 10, 2005, and the majority of bikes would be BMW's. The planning began.

I decided to attempt a Bun Burner Gold, 1500 miles in 24 hours. The key was selecting a route. My previous visit to Sturgis in 2003, I completed a Saddle Sore 1000. That route took me off Interstate Highways between Kansas and Nebraska and in the western part of Nebraska to my ending point in Chadron, NE. If I extended that route to Spearfish, SD, I would be a several miles short and the mapping program indicated that travel time would be longer than 24 hours. Using Garmin's MapSource software that came with my Garmin 2610 GPS, I chose a route that took me north on I-35/I-135 from Austin, TX to Salina, KS, west on I-70 through Kansas to Denver, CO, north on I-25 to Buffalo, WY, then east on I-90 to Gillette, WY. The route would cover 1510 miles in less than 24 hours. I checked the mileage with another on-line mapping program that showed 1512 miles also in less than 24 hours. The route was set.

Next I began acquiring equipment for the ride. Since my GT does not have cruise control, I installed a Throttlemeister. I received a black sheep skin saddle cover as a present from my wife. The stock GT saddle was comfortable for no more than 200 miles. I found a Corbin saddle, my all time favorite saddle. I bought bicycle shorts which whisk away moisture and help avoid chaffing. I updated my GPS from a Garmin V to a Garmin 2610 and a 2 gigabyte CompactFlash card that holds all the maps of North America. I highly recommend a GPS for the serious long distance rider.

Several months before this endeavor, I purchased a BMW top case, especially designed for the K-GT. It locks onto the rear rack and it is lockable to secure the contents. I rode for several months, at least a couple thousand miles with no problem. Then one month prior to this ride, that locked top case came off somewhere along US290, never to be seen again. Bummer. I got paranoid about loosing luggage and I installed bungee buddies on my side cases

and strapped my system cases to the bike. I used a leather roll from T-Bags strapped with four straps and two bungee cords. I also installed the deep covers on the side cases. All of this easily held what I needed with room for souvenir T-shirts purchased along the way.

On Thursday morning, July 7, 2005, I took off on my ride. First I went to Lone Star BMW for my witnesses, Gary and Robert, time 09:30 AM. Then I went to the nearest Shell gas station, 10500 N. Lamar for my first

receipt and starting time, 09:38 AM Central Time. The ride north on I-35 was easy. It rained in Ft. Worth, which helped cool me off. At the Texas, Oklahoma state line, I ran into several miles of construction, single lane north and south. I did not worry this early into the ride. I would track my time and make up time in Kansas, Colorado and Wyoming where the speed limits on the Interstate Highways were 75 MPH. All I had to do was maintain a minimum overall average of 62.5 MPH for 24 hours. No problem.

Getting to Denver, CO was easy. There are plenty of gas stations and the traffic was light. I did encounter two 18 wheelers side by side for several miles at 55 mph in eastern Colorado. Nothing I did would get their attention. Following trucks is a bad idea, unsafe. With a little planning and thought I was able to get around them. The smoothness and power of the K-GT helped.

I reached Denver, CO around midnight Mountain time, 1 AM Central. I did a little mental arithmetic and estimated that I was on schedule with a hour to spare. Once in Wyoming, I found open gas stations, when I needed them, a bit rare. So I began looking for stations more frequently. I stopped at a small "town" named Chugwater, WY. The station was closed, as was everything else in sight, which was only three businesses. However, two of the gas pumps were on and accepting credit cards. The receipt printed the correct date and time and the business name, but no address.

Around daybreak, I pulled into a Shell station in Buffalo, WY. Since it was a corner on the route, I needed a receipt. I checked my time and distance remaining and determined that I would easily make this BBG. One of my concerns while riding at night, is wildlife. During this ride, I saw a coyote, a dog, a pheasant, several road runners, and one brave buck, cross the road in front of me. That buck was slowly and calmly walking across I-90 near the intersection of I-25. He stopped in the left lane and looked at me. I slowed to less than 25 MPH and coasted by. That was the only close call I had with deer.

After 22 hours 20 minutes and 32 seconds, indicated on my GPS, I got my final receipt at a Shell station in Gillette, WY. Odometer miles – 1525. GPS miles – 1510.6. After fueling up, I went to the local police station and obtained

my final witness, a police officer named Rebecca. Thank you Rebecca.

I checked into the motel and got a few hours sleep. Then I was off to see Devil's Tower again, ride through Hulet, WY and surrounding area, then off to Spearfish for the Stampede registration.



*Sturgis BMW located off I-90, exit 32*

On this trip, I visited the usual sites, Mt. Rushmore, Devil's Tower, Crazy Horse, Deadwood, Wild Bill's grave, the Boondocks, Keystone, Hwy 16A. Most importantly, I tool my time and found most of the roads to myself, except for an occasional RV.

My trip home was more leisurely. I took two days. I wanted to see Chimney Rock in Nebraska and the geographical center of the lower 48 states.



*Geographical center of the US, near Lebanon, KS*

Oh yeah! It rained again in Ft. Worth on the way home.

---

---



*Downtown Spearfish, SD*



*Chris Campground, Spearfish, SD, chuck wagon from 1910*



*Devil's Tower road side marker*

Here are some pictures of the BMW Stampede in Spearfish, SD.

~ Robert Odendahl

---

---