



FLORIDA GATOR TALE

Honda Sport Touring Association

March 2006



Chapter News

Submitted By: Sam Ulbing & Bill Royal

North News:

Remember the **Spring Fling** is coming soon, April 7, 8, 9. The hotel will only hold rooms for us until 7 March but you can still get a room after then - IF they have any free rooms. As of mid February we had 20 of our 40 rooms booked. For more details see the event schedule. I have put the loop I plan to ride on Saturday on our Yahoo Group as a Garmin file (Sat Loop.gdb). Lee and I rode it last week and there are some really nice roads and a good place for a picnic lunch - it includes the canopy roads around Tallahassee. On Friday we are planning a welcome party with National HSTA providing snacks. At least 3 out of state HSTA members plus some of the BMWNEF group are joining us.

Speaking of the **Yahoo Group** 47 of our members are on it, about half. If you are a member it is free to join. One member recently asked me how he could see if anyone else in his area was riding to a north lunch. The Group is designed to do exactly that, you can email everyone else in the group. Plus you can post pictures, files (like I did) for the entire group to see. Ask me to send you an invitation to join or go to the site and ask to join.

The **February north lunch ride** suffered a setback with nasty weather so only 11 people attended and several of those went by car. The reports supported earlier reports that it was a great place and I will be scheduling another ride there soon. Once again, on the second attempt, the weather

conspired to defeat a T-shirt lunch ride but still a dozen intrepid bikers braved the elements and we had a nice lunch at Gator Joe's. I was able to get rid of 6 shirts and hopefully the others soon. If you are in a hurry send me \$4 and I can mail it to you.

March Lunch ride - Phil Ridgill is running the March lunch, see the ride schedule on Page 3. I am not planning a regular lunch ride in March but might do a spur of the moment mid week ride if the weather is nice. I will send out emails if I do.

April lunch ride is part of the Spring Fling but you can join us just for lunch if you want. It is at Rhodes BBQ in Lake Butler 11:30. See my Spring Fling web site for directions.

FI HSTA T-shirts - 37 people bought T-shirts this year. Some long sleeve, some short and some white and some gray. I hope all of you with FI HSTA T-shirts will wear them to our events!

South News:

Boy, did we get lucky with the weather compared to Sam's rides. Our day was sunny, warm, and the new location brought out another near record attendance with some 42 attendees. We had a huge group show for the ride from Sun City, so many I had to break it into two groups of ten or so. Although the 2nd group missed a turn on the way there, they didn't get too far off track and the 1st group managed to catch them from behind as

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This 2 time award winning newsletter is produced and edited by:
Bill Royal
HSTA Florida Newsletter Editor

Web Addresses:

If you're "connected" be sure to check out the National HSTA Site at:
www.ridehsta.com

And the Award Winning Florida HSTA Site at:
www.flahsta.org

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Welcome to the Club!

We would like to extend a hearty and sincere welcome to the following recent new members. Thank you for choosing to join our group. Many long lasting friendships have begun here and we hope your experience will be a satisfying one!

Name	Location	Ride	Introduced By
Bill & Shirley Groleau	Largo	'98 Honda Shadow ACE	Member Ed Lynch
Kevin Sreenan	Delray Beach	Multiple/BMW	Member Joe Rankin
Scott Bills	Boynton Beach	'04 FJR1300	Member Bill Royal



Free Ads

Motorcycle related items - wanted or for sale, riding buddies or room mates for events can be placed right here - for free! Just send them to arrive by the 15th for the next month's publication. Send to Bill Royal, 1521 New Bedford Drive, Sun City Center, FL. 33573 or email to ridefl@flahsta.org.

For Sale

1997 Honda Magna - Yellow/black, full windscreen, crash bars, luggage rack, sissy bar backrest, 47 mpg, 54K. New chain/sprocket on 08/02/05. \$3500.00. Call 813-633-8155 or email: eblueday@mindspring.com.

Tour Master Cortech GX Air mesh summer riding pants. Women's size small, tag says small 8-10 but this is a very small 8-10. Removable padding, washable, sold as is, great condition. \$80.00 & you pay shipping. Paid \$169.00 new. Pants legs are too short for me, but provide great air circulation for summer riding. Contact me by email: eblueday@mindspring.com or phone: 813-633-8155. I can send a photo or bring them to a lunch ride.

2003 FunMover 35C (toy hauler w / living space) - Ford F650 / Cat diesel / Allison 6 sp - 8x10 cargo area (2 bikes) - Power lift - Diesel Generator - 1 Slide out - Sleeps <6 - Sat TV - Roof-top observation deck - many, many extras - 37K miles - Ext Warr - Exc Cond - \$93,500. Jim, FL - 352.324.0569 - jamcclur3@aol.com

Adjustable Hook & Loop Heated Grip pads, \$30.00 - Phil Ridgdill 904 287 9654, rfoxrdr@bellsouth.net

1 1996 to 1998 CBR900RR Honda Service Manual including a parts microfiche CD \$10 buyer responsible for shipping. Contact: Doug Pippin 828-684-8488 or dpippin5@bellsouth.net

KBC Helmet - FFR Flip Top silver and black.. This helmet is brand new.. I wore it twice and realized that I do not have a KBC head. \$175.00

Aerostich Tank Panniers - Brand new, used once.. \$75.00

Givi T80 Tank Bag - Magnetic. The bag has a map case and a clear rain cover \$50.00

Kapa top trunk for the Suzuki VStrom - Silver color matched for the '02 Vstrom - \$100.00

Fenda Extenda for Vstrom - Brand new - never installed - \$20.00

Stock regular and Tall windshields for a DL1000 VStrom - \$50.00 and \$75.00 respectively

Larry Fitch at fitchle@hotmail.com or 321-266-8757

Chapter News

Continued...

(Continued from page 1) they came back on route. Some of the Melbourne gang (Larry Fitch, Terry Brown, Alex Nelson) showed up, riding an obviously circuitous route to cover 225+ miles to get there! Way to go guys. Jim & Dianne Park led a nice group up from the West Palm Beach area, and they all got in 150 or so miles too.

The restaurant was a bit overwhelmed, but overall did a great job getting the food out. The prices were decent and the food tasted good to me so I thought it was great and look forward to getting back there again. After lunch, some folks were in a hurry to get

back so by the time we had the group photo, about half had left, but even at that you can see we had a great time.



About half of the attendees of the South Lunch Ride, in front of the Myakka River in Venice, FL.

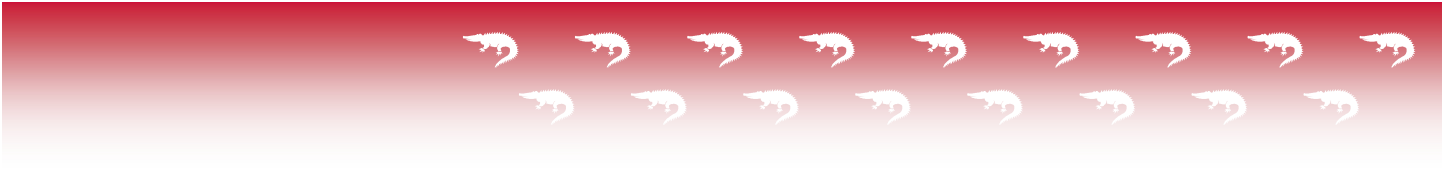
I never even attempted Sam's original North ride due to the weather, but I did make a try for the "T-shirt" lunch. Two riders had said they would meet me, the first calling me at the last minute to

say the wind was too bad and he wasn't coming. I set out to pick up the 2nd along the way, but he wasn't at the meeting point so I turned around and went home. As it turned out, the 2nd guy did go, though apparently by a different route. Oh well. ☺

For a change, I have more articles than space this month, so Jim Park's article about their trip to Europe will have to wait until next month's issue.

In the meantime, I hope you've made your plans and reservations for STAR '06 and if

so, we'll see you there!
Ride Safe, Ride Smart, Ride Home!



Ramblin' Around

Submitted By: Phil Ridgill

Yesterday, while on a ride, it dawned on me, I haven't been writing anything for the newsletter lately. A little over two years ago I wrote something about the way manufactures list the weight of their various Motorcycles and what we needed was a Super Sport Tourer. It kind of came back to me on this ride.

You ever have this situation happen to you? Get your bike out, check it over, oil, tyre pressure, take a close look at everything and you just have that good feeling. Bikes ready, weather is perfect, Sun is out, it's a still a bit cool but nice. You get your leathers on, get on the bike, stop at your local gas station and fill it up and on your way mate. I'm going to use the motorway, which I don't normally use. No traffic to speak of, I'm on my BlackBird and the article I had written about the Super Sport Tourer came back to me. Ever get that feeling, everything is just right, beautiful day, temp is perfect, on Honda's best, 13000 miles on the clock, conditions are just perfect today and this baby was built to be an Autobahn Burner, hmm. This bike continues to impress me. Its not the fastest machine out there but its up there. Its amazing how stable and quiet this thing is at the upper mach numbers. Although Honda does not bring the BlackBird to the American market, since 2003, I can well understand why the Europeans like this machine. Got the new BMW 1200GS, What a difference between this and the BlackBird, whoa baby, big time difference. It'll never reach the numbers that the BlackBird has, not even close to any good sport bike, but its still the best All Around motorcycle you can buy. One of the really nice things about a GS, is the utility of it. Its so light its easy to turn it around in the middle of the street, tight parking areas no problem and if your garage is as jammed as mine you would appreciate how easy it is to move around. The way it handles reminds me of Yamaha TZ250, if any of you remember those bikes. The power seems to be quite adequate, its no rocket ship but it certainly will surprise you. It pulls nicely out of tight corners and very smooth on the throttle. My bike doesn't have BMW electrically integrated " Servo " brake system, which doesn't work very well if the switch is off and it doesn't have ABS. However, it does have EXCELLENT brakes operated by the rider and believe me they work damn good.

The suspension system front and rear works exceptionally well. Its amazing how well it soaks up the rough roads. When your on the brakes hard, it just comes to a nice stop without any real noticeable nose dive. I had to play with the adjustment on the shocks, not a lot but enough to make difference. Seems like BMW has everything adjusted to max, very stiff. With a few little changes it rides very well. I would think with new shocks, Ohlins front and rear, you could really dial it in any way you like. I have to agree with Peter Egan about the Turn Signals. Odd piece of kit. It still has that stupid turn signal switch, I would hope that BMW would change that way of operating the turn signals, believe me I'm not holding my breath on that. I've heard the BMW faithful say, I think the turn signal switch is as it should be. Don't think so, however they do work but what an odd way. Remember when some motorcycles had right foot shift and others had left foot brake. We had some with a foot clutch and hand shift. Slowly things got sorted out, left foot shift and right foot brake, etc, etc. You would think that BMW would wake up whoever designed that system. The seat on the GS is like all bikes, somewhat questionable. I think it's a bit uncomfortable, others seem to think its ok. My granddaughter rode with me and she wasn't all that happy to be that high on the bike but at 16 she was happy to go for a ride. Carmel is definitely not very happy on the bike. We've tried all kinds of things but it doesn't seem to work out too well for her.

The BMW's are excellent machines and a lot of nice people and good riders swear by BMW. Unfortunately there are a lot of people that eat and sleep BMW and if you're not on a BMW you are nowhere.. I'm not for that attitude.

I still say the BMW 1200GS is the best All Around motorcycle you can buy.

A week ago we went to London for The British International Motorcycle Show at Alexandra Palace. Very nice show, had a look at all the latest. More about that next month.

Ride Safe & Smart
Phil Ridgill

Upcoming Rides/Events

Ride/Events are compiled for your convenience from a variety of sources. HSTA sponsored rides are indicated with the "♦" symbol. If you are considering making any of the rides we suggest you call the contact ahead of time to confirm the ride is still on as listed.

♦ **HSTA Florida North Lunch Ride - See Bike Week Lunch Ride below**

Future North Rides/Dates: March - See bike week lunch ride April - Friday Apr 7th - Rhodes BBQ, Lake Butler - then ride to Spring Fling

♦ **HSTA Florida Bike Week Lunch Ride - Thursday, March 9th - Highjackers Restaurant, Flagler County Airport, Bunnell FL.** Lunch at 12:00 noon. Location 3 miles east of Bunnell on FL SR100, 1 mile west of I-95 on FL SR100. If you would like any further information, Contact Phil Ridgill, 904 287 9654, 904 699 2447 or rfoxrdr@bellsouth.net.

♦ **HSTA Florida South Lunch Ride - Sunday - March 26th, 2005 - Jaxson's, Lake Placid, FL.** The address is SR S621 or Lake June Rd. The GPS coordinates are: N27° 19.225', W81° 23.099' The phone number of the place is 863-465-4674 Hope to see you there!
Contact: Bill Royal RideFL@flahsta.org or 813-633-8155

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Upcoming Rides/Events

(Continued from page 3)

Future South Rides/Dates: April 15th - Paradise Harbor Marina - Howie in the Hills
June - No ride due to STAR '06

May 6th - Flora & Ella's - Labelle

♦ And all the rest of the HSTA National schedule...

NOTES: Event schedule is subject to change without notice. Please be sure to check with the listed contact before making your plans!

For non-HSTA members reading this on the internet, be advised that attendance at these National Events requires HSTA membership. You can join at the event and your event fee gets waived (one time only)!

Date	Event	Location	Contact	Web Address/E-mail
April 7-8	T - 18	Queen Wilhemina Lodge/State Park 1933 Hwy 270	Becky Wing 501-824-3413 (h) 501-824-5738 (w)	bwing@pgtc.com www.hpnt.net/T/T-home.htm
April 28-30	Helen North Georgia Classic	Alpenhof Hotel 15 Yonah Street Helen, GA 800-535-8678	Eric Larsen 770-805-0607 enlarsen@bellsouth.net	http://tinyurl.com/cdl3t
May 5-7	AR By Way Boogie	Hot Springs Village Inn 4429 N. Hwy 7 Hot Springs Village, AR 501-992-9600 or 888-922-9601	Robert Bashaw 870-460-9570	artravr@seark.net
May 19-21	Twistar 2006	Voyageur Inn, Reedsburg, Wisconsin		http://www.hstatwistar.info/
May 26-29 (4 days)	Tri-Star	Allegheny Inn Sparta, NC 888-372-2501	Galen Diehl 276-647-3162 gdiehl@kimbanet.com	http://tinyurl.com/bb2k2
June 18-21	STAR 2006	The Christie Lodge Avon, Colorado	Mike Morris (Registrar) 580-745-2294 (w) 580-924-6878 (h)	mikemelody@netcommander.com
August 4-6	Nolichucky Valley Rally	Holiday Inn Express Erwin, TN	Richard Giddish 423-245-5558 (home) rickand-nick@hartern.net	http://tinyurl.com/873z7
Aug 25-27	Mail Pouch Fly By	Best Value Inn (formerly Knights Inn) Marietta, OH	Jon Campbell 513-932-3341 (home)	
Sept. 8-10	Ozarks BS Rally	Theodosia Marina & Resort Highway 160 Theodosia, Missouri	Ed & Linda Young 417-926-3075 magna@fidnet.com	http://come.to/The Ozarks BS Rally
Sept. 15-17	River City Ride	Hotel not yet determined Kentucky	Gary Dehner 606-233-0321 (o) 606-223-9117 (h)	g.dehner@insightbb.com
Sept.- 22-24	SE Star	Holiday Inn Express 64 White Oak Lane Dillard, Georgia 706-746-3585	Trey Hall 615-367-6495 Strey1100@aol.com	http://tinyurl.com/8de29
Sept. 29- 10-01	Friends of Freddie - XIII	Tradition Inn Intersection of Hwy 67 & W Farmington, MO 877-355-6205	Bob LaMear 636-938-3788	racerboy@fms4u.com
Nov. 3-5	Texas Hill Country Ride	YO Ranch Resort 2033 Sidney Baker Kerrville, TX 78028 877-967-3767	Joe Paolili 830-537-5552 joep@beecreek.net	http://www.geocities.com/jfpoulos/THC2006.html