

FLORIDA GATOR TALE

Honda Sport Touring Association

June 2004



Helen 2004

Submitted By: John Watts & Pat Stiles

This was a wet one!!! Came down from Hotel room on Sunday morning and found the corpses of two over-hydrated frogs, Yep you guessed it, they drowned! There was rain to one degree or another on all three days. Pat had sunny weather all the way from Florida to the property in North Carolina on Thursday. That went downhill on Friday morning as we donned raingear for the drive over to "The Dragon".

Sure is nice being only about 61.4 miles from Deal's Gap. Endured light to moderate rain for the first part of the drive northbound on US129, however the roundtrip through the

636 curves of the dragon was (1) FUN, (2) Dry, and (3) uneventful (that's my story and I'm sticking to it). HAH!! You call popping a wheelie at 70mph two-up UNEVENTFUL? I'm sure the Harley riders we passed are still up there with their mouths hanging open! (Ed.)

Next was a little backtracking to the Cherohala Skyway (SR 165) where we spent the entire time in the clouds (there are mountains out there I

know there are!) (Ed.), with a turn at Tellico Plains southbound on TN SR 68 then a jump over to NC SR 294 back to the property to pick up gear and head to Helen. We managed to arrive at the Alpenhof Hotel just in time to help cleanup the wonderful (so we heard) BBQ dinner put on by our hosts Eric and Tammy Larsen. The 42mile trip down to Helen utilized US 19/129 to



John Watts and his ride somewhere near Deal's Gap

SR180 to SR384, the Richard Russell Pkwy (I'll bet this is real pretty when you can actually see something) (Ed.)

It was Pat's idea to have her van and the motorcycle in Helen, that way if I made her mad she could just leave and with the forecast looking mighty wet it seemed a wise move. It was the van that got the mileage added both Saturday and Sunday. Neither of us enjoys riding in the rain and we took the opportunity to visit with friends instead. Some riding was done by the membership but probably not the mileage that would have had the sun been out.

All in all I think we had 9 members from Florida
(Continued on page 3)

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Special points of interest:

- *Lunch ride in June - Pg.4*
- *Still time to make STAR04 - See Ads Pg.2*

Web Addresses:

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

Alan "Terry" Neiman - Palm Bay - ST1100
Michael Sistrunk - Ocklawaha - ST1300



Ramblin Around

Submitted By: Phil Ridgdill

Addiction: Motorcycle Magazine addiction, ever thought about that? I guess I'm guilty, at least Carmel tells me " you are addicted to these bloody magazines and I'm tired of seeing them all over the house" and with that she usually throws a few in the trash. You know, your reading this magazine and you got to stop and do something else, you come back and you can't find it. Its gone, in the rubbish. Does that sound familiar to you guys. Lets see now, I subscribe to, Cycle World, Motorcyclist, Sport Rider, Rider Magazine, Motorcycle Consumer News, Motorcycle News UK, and Bike Magazine UK " Britain's best selling Bike Magazine". I go to Barnes & Noble, get myself a cup of tea and read all the other Bike magazines, free of course, after all one does have to economize now and then. Ok, I admit it, I'm a 100% Motorcycle Magazine junkie.

You ever notice when you get your monthly issues, they're all testing the same motorcycles. I have to give it to Rider, they usually have something different. I'm not sure but maybe, just maybe, the major manufacturers do not trust the guys at Rider. Most all of the other bike magazines I read will have some sort of FLASH on the front page, a gimmick. May issue Motorcyclist, **Shock & Awe, 162 hp, 186 mph.... Think you know fast?? You ain't seen fast!!** Who do these guys think we are, a bunch of illiterates. I don't know about you guys/gals but 162hp and 186 mph is bloody fast to me and they say " you ain't seen fast" come on guys get real. All these magazines do the same thing. I will have to say this about Sport Rider, when they do a test, they tell you how to set up the bike properly, how they set the preload, rebound & compression and how to change the ride height. They also go into great detail about the tyres, Kent Kunitsugu does a good job on their comparison tests. If your only going to subscribe to one magazine, make it Motorcycle Consumer News (MCN), it's a bit dear but worth every penny. This Publication has no advertising, they don't care what the major motorcycle manufacturer say about their products. MCN will tell you what the actual specs are,

Engine, Suspension, Brakes, Wheels, Performance data, GVWR, Carrying Capacity, Electronics and the actual wet weight, not what the Manufacturer says but what it actually is. To me the wet weight is important. I've heard a lot of argument about wet weight vs. dry weight. Personally, I don't care what the dry wt. is, I don't ride a bike without fuel and all the other liquids that it should have and I don't know of anybody that does. I guess if you have a bike that's for display only and you have to move it now and then you might want the dry wt, but there again I don't know of anybody that does that. I would say that MCN is the best American Motorcycle Publication. One other magazine is at the top of my list, Bike Magazine, this is a British Publication and their style of writing and tests are superb, the road tests are on the roads not the track and they do it right, I like this one.

We're all looking for the perfect Motorcycle. You can read all the publications and one will say this and another publication will have a comment that is a direct conflation. Believe me, all the major brands are good and that goes for Harley also. I'm as guilty as the next guy, we've all knocked Harley at one time or another but I've got to admit, these new Harley's are bloody good. They don't leak, don't break down, very fuel efficient, excellent tyre mileage and they're damn comfortable, excellent motorcycle and they are quiet, believe it or not. It's the riders that put the pipes on, can't blame the motorcycle. The perfect Motorcycle is the one you are riding, you picked it out, paid for it, clean it, service it and ride it. Its your baby, it doesn't matter what the make is, it's the perfect motorcycle for you. You want to make a change, fine, buy another one, now you have a new perfect motorcycle.

Ride Safe & Smart

Phil Ridgdill

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 wgr@sprynet.com.

For Sale

RoadGear Riding Pants size 30/34, worn 1 time, \$100.00,

BMW Air-Flow 2 pants size 38R (Euro) approx 34 US size, vented, worn 1 time \$150.00

Leather Jacket- Fieldsheer, excellent condition, size 40/42 White/Blue/Black \$150.00 obo

MOTOPORT Spyder Jacket, Red & Black, size Med \$150.00 obo
Phil Ridgdill 904 287 9654 or rfoxrdr@bellsouth.net

Riders Wanted

STAR'04 - There ARE riders going from Florida! They are hooking up with LA State Director Bob Chappuis and his entourage and departing from Louisiana on June 16th for a 5 day, ~400 miles a day trip. If you want to get hooked up call or write Bill Royal ASAP at (813)633-8155 or rideFL@flahsta.org



Helen 2004

Continued...

(Continued from page 1) at this event:

Bill Royal & Eve Blazsur
Bill & Jackie Tribble
John Watts & Pat Stiles
Elliot & Janet Parsowith (I don't care if they reside in GA now, Florida has claimed them for so long we can't help ourselves.)

Plus the "Saint of the Day"; Bob Henry and his Ford pickup truck. Mr. Bill Royal had a problem with his 91 Honda ST1100 and couldn't keep the battery charged. I guess you all know where this is leading. Enter one Bob Henry and a pick up truck ride to Florida for one each ST



Deal's Gap—The kind of riding we'd all hoped for but didn't get due to the weather

1100. Bill then rides Eve's 750 Magna home and Eve rides back with Pat in the van (Thanks Eve, I enjoyed the company on the way home). This little episode speaks volumes for why we maintain our membership in the HSTA. Fellow riders helping others in need, no questions asked.

Thanks to our hosts, Eric and Tammy Larsen, a lot of work goes into sponsoring these events and that deserves a hearty THANK YOU!!!



A reminder of those who have made a mistake on the Dragon

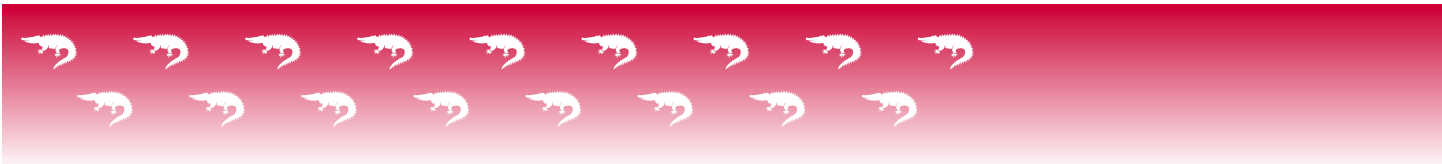


The "Florida" attendees: From the left—Elliot & Janet Parsowith, Bill & Jackie Tribble, Bill Royal & Eve Blazsur, Pat Stiles (John Watts taking the picture!)

All in all the riding was very limited but the good times and the laughs more than made up for the weather.

I want to apologize if I missed anyone, but you know how it is when dementia is your new hobby. Best to all and be safe!

John Watts
Retiree Extraordinaire
Pat Stiles
Still working non-extraordinaire ☺



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 - NO Planned ride this month** as we are in California. We'll have a State Wide membership meeting in July. It will be in Deland FL at the Dublin Station on July 17 2004. I would like to see our FL Membership at this meeting but I know that's not possible. But if you can, please make this meeting as we will have a few things to discuss.

♦ **HSTA Florida South Lunch Ride - Saturday, June 12th - Jaxson's - Lake Placid, FL.** OK, despite the fact that we're leaving the next weekend for the Honda Hoot, I didn't really want to let two months go by without a lunch ride so here it is. We tried this place once before and didn't get much of a turnout. It was really a nice spot so I am hoping this time will be different. 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

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

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
June 20-23	STAR '04	Sierra Nevada Rodeway Inn - Mammoth Lakes, CA	Jim Alexander (925) 458-4596
August 27-29	Mail Pouch Fly-by	Knights Inn - 506 Pike Street Marietta, Ohio (800) 526 5947	Jon Campbell (513) 932-3341
September 10-12	Ozarks BS Rally	Theodosia Marina & Resort - Highway 160 Theodosia, Missouri (417)273 4444	Ed & Linda Young (417) 926-3075 magna@fidnet.com
September 17-19	SE-Star	Holiday Inn Express64 White Oak Lane Dillard, Georgia (706)746 3585	Trey Hall (615) 574-9927 strey1100@aol.com
September 24-26	Byway Boogie	Location unconfirmed	Robert Bashaw (870) 460-9570 Robert.Bashaw@ocse.state.ar.us
Oct 1-3	River City Ride	Baymont Inn - 2495 Landmark Avenue Corydon, Indiana (812) 738 1500	Don "Moose" Parish (317) 936-5818 mparish@hrtc.net
Oct 8-10	FOF - XII	Tradition Inn - Farmington, MO (877)355-6205	Bob LaMear (636)938-3788 racerboy@fms4u.com
Nov 4-7	Texas Hill Country Ride	YO Ranch Resort - 2033 Sidney Baker Kerrville, Texas 78028(877)967-3767	Joe Paolilli (830) 537-5552 joep@beecreek.net

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