

FLORIDA GATOR TALE

Honda Sport Touring Association

March 2004



This & That

Submitted By: Bill Royal

Lunch Rides Report:

We had another two fantastic lunch rides again this month. Phil's "North" ride was to the 3 Bananas restaurant in Crescent City, FL. 24 riders and one pillion showed up there to enjoy lunch as well as the excellent riding conditions all over the state that day. Two non-members - Rich and Keith from Clearwater - who joined up with my group garnered the long distance bragging rights with 198 miles each. Then later in the month, we did it all again, this time to a new place for us called City Seafood



City Seafood - Everglades City, FL

in Everglades City. This one is way down on the western coast, right in the Everglades. The last 20 miles or so of the primary entry route: SR29 is well posted for Panther Crossings, though we didn't see any. Some gators and plenty of the usual birds were spotted though. The place itself was a delight to enjoy. Semi-outdoor seating at picnic benches overlooking an inlet where the

air boats ply their trade of tours and the pelicans abound provided a most scenic view while the food assuaged the hunger from the ride. All too soon it was time to head back, but not before we counted up the 14 riders and two pillions who attended. Long distance honors... Well, that's a story... Bob Fischer came all the way from Palm

Coast Fl, covering 381 miles to make the lunch, but he did so mostly the day before, staying at a nearby hotel overnight. He also stayed that night, before returning the following day. Even still, a 760+ mile weekend is

a serious trip! Then, there was Rob and Joan Medwed who left Sanford, FL at 5:30 AM in order to join up with my group in Sun City Center at 7:45 AM and ended up with 320 miles one-way that day. But they stayed over that evening at the same hotel as Bob so their round trip mileage was split over two days, though they defi-

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This award winning newsletter is produced and edited by:

Bill Royal

HSTA Florida Newsletter Editor

1521 New Bedford Drive

Sun City Center, FL 33573

(813)633-8155

RideFL@flahsta.org

www.SilverstreakST.net

Special points of interest:

- *Group Riding Etiquette—Pg. 3*
- *Membership Drive—Pg. 4*
- *RIH Discounts—Pg. 3*

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!

Robert Bowen - Lake Worth - Triumph Tiger

Sue Roe - Bradenton - Gold Wing Trike

Bill Wilder - Keystone Heights - BMW K75S



Ramblin Around

Submitted By: Phil Ridgdill

Daytona Bike week is here, and you know what that means. Social days, plenty of sunshine (we hope), riding around town/ beach, checking everything out, and what goes with that is a bit of liquid nourishment. We all know what that means: alcohol. Seems like drinking and riding have become a more or less accepted fashion among certain people who just happen to ride motorcycles. I know our members are not involved in this, but keep your eyes open for those that are. Most of these riders are on Harleys, not all of them, but most of them.

Group Riding: I should practice what I preach. I made a big mistake this past week on one of our little back road excursions. If you're leading a group on a ride, there is a certain responsibility that goes with it. We had a visitor, a friend of one of our guys. I met him and had a look at the bike he was riding, a high-powered machine, and I never gave it another thought. I assumed that he would ride at the pace that we all like to ride. BIG mistake on my part. I should've had a chat with him, explained how we ride,

hand signals, where we were going, etc, etc.

To make this long story short, as we came upon a nice little right hand corner, our friend overshot the corner went into the oncoming lane. He recovered and made it back into the proper lane in time to avoid an accident. Lucky, Lucky, Lucky, We were all lucky. This is exactly what we don't want to happen. Had I taken a little more time with this rider, I would have realized it's necessary to change our pace. BIG mistake on my part. Keep in mind, if someone new joins your group, have a chat with him, make sure you understand what his experience is and what kind of pace he's comfortable with.

Hope to see all of you at the HSTA Dinner on Friday nite, during Bike Week.

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

1982 HONDA CB 900F - \$2,500 OBO

Rare bike in excellent condition with 11,955 original miles. Original owner – bike purchased new in 1986. Always garaged and adult-owned and maintained. All original parts (except seat) are included: bar, cables, peg holders, exhaust, shocks, Hondaline back rack & back rest. Engine is all stock. Honda Sport Kit was installed on date of purchase. Vance & Hines SS exhaust – sounds great, not too loud. Eclipse standard tank bag also included. Perfect bike for everyday ride or restoration project. Please call Van in Boynton Beach (S. Florida) at 561-386-2594.

2002 BMW R1150R - Blue - 14,000 miles - sm BMW wind-

screen - heated grips - accessory port - Warranty 'til 8/04 - exc cond - \$7,900 - Contact: Jim McClure at 352-324-0569 or jamclur3@aol.com

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 904 287 9654 or rfoxrdr@earthlink.net

Riders Wanted

STAR'04 - OK, the time for talk is nearly over! Some Florida members are planning the RIDE to CA for STAR04 and if you'd like to tag along now is the time to start planning! Eve and I (Bill Royal) are planning five 575 mile days each way to STAR04 and back. So far we have one other rider going. If you'd like to join us, please let me know so we can make the appropriate plans (hotel rooms and the like). We have time constraints this year so have to take mostly interstates to make the 2900 miles in 5 days. There are other folks who are planning a bit more leisurely ride, starting as early as the 15th from Louisiana. It's not too late to make plans to ride in a group but you need to let us know soon!

Stay tuned to your email and next month's newsletter. I hope to have the route published on the website by then.

Help Wanted

Wanted - Articles about rides, roads, trips safety, whatever is associated with riding. Also, lunch ride destination suggestions. Know a great place, with good food, reasonable prices and maybe even something to do after lunch? Drop us a line with the details, Name address, phone# etc.. Send email to: rideFI@flahsta.org

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MOTO GUZZI

CASCAS



HSTA Members Get Riding Into History Discounts

Submitted By: William Robinson

The Fifth Annual Riding Into History will be held on Saturday, May 15, at the World Golf Village. It is presented by the Atlantic Beach Vintage Motorcycle Club, and benefits Buddy Check 12 and their battle against breast cancer.

Riding Into History consists of several events. Charity motorcycle rides to the World Golf Village originating in both Jacksonville and Daytona Beach begin at 10 AM. The Concours d' Elegance features vintage, custom and race bikes from all over the country on display from 10 AM to 4 PM.

That evening, the Biker's Ball will be held at the Renaissance Resort at the World Golf Village, from 6:30 PM until 11 PM. The Ball includes dinner, drinks, dancing to a Mid-Life Crisis, silent and live auctions and a talk by Craig Vetter, the event's Grand Marshall.

Admission to the Concours is normally \$10, but HSTA members can get 2-for-1 vouchers. Also, HSTA members will be given a \$10 discount off of the normal \$95 price for the Biker's Ball. Just contact HSTA member Bill Robinson at RIH2004@aol.com or 904-730-9719.

Adamec's Harley-Davidson/ Buell will once again be the main sponsor of the event. Other sponsors include BMW motorcycles of Daytona Beach and Sargent Cycle Products. The featured motorcycles this year will be "Beautiful British Bikes". Special hotel rates are available at the Renaissance Resort and the Comfort Inn at the World Golf Village for those wishing to stay the night.

This is one of North Florida's premier motorcycle events, and you don't want to miss it!

For more information go to: www.RidingIntoHistory.org

Group Riding "Etiquette"

Submitted By: Bill Royal

As I read over Phil's part of this month's Ramblin Around about group ride leader responsibilities, it prompted me to give some thought to that whole thing. Leading group rides certainly does have its responsibilities, as well as potential liabilities. It's why many won't "lead" a ride, or publish routes, etc. It also prompted me to reflect upon an incident a few months back where an HSTA rider was riding in a group on a NON-HSTA ride. The rider went off the road at a corner and although the rider in front noticed him missing and went back for a look, he failed to find the missing rider, as did the sweep rider and the whole crew - minus the one who went off the road. It was hours later that they all learned that the missing rider had gone off the road, been injured, and thanks only to a motorist who had seen him go off the road—he was rescued and treated at a hospital for broken bones. This has to be a ride leader's 2nd worst nightmare, exceeded only by having a rider killed on a ride. But my point here is NOT about the ride leader's responsibility. To be sure he/she has many, but rather I want to focus on the individual rider's responsibilities. Yes, that means YOU (if/when you're in a group ride).

Although it would be nice if every rider in a group were equipped with communications gear, that is almost never the case. Likewise, it would be nice if we could limit group sizes to only 3-5 riders, but that isn't always practical either. Group riding really relies on **each individual member cooperating together as a TEAM** to ensure a safe ride. In addition to knowing your own skill level and riding your own ride, you need to do that in conjunction with the other riders around you. That means, picking an appropriate spot in the pack. If you like to run "hot" you need to be near the front and if you like to cruise gently, you need to be more in the middle, and if you like to slow way early at turns and keep a large following distance, you need to be more towards the rear of the pack. This is only the beginning! All my rides, as well as most other HSTA rides I've been on rely on the "rider behind you" strategy to keep from losing anyone. That is, YOU are responsible for keep-

ing the rider BEHIND you in sight, if not at all times, at least such that you KNOW they are there and when you exit that last turn, they should be exiting within a timeframe you know. If they don't or you see them falling back, you need to slow down and even STOP if necessary to keep them within your sight. If everyone does this, the group may string out, but in the event of a problem everyone will stop and the leads turn around to investigate. If you DON'T do this, it's entirely possible for the front of the group to lose track of one or more riders for at least a little while, if not altogether. The bigger the group the more important this becomes!

Although I remind folks of this before every ride, some still ignore it and I had one case where we did lose three riders off the end of the group. Even though I noticed them missing within 5 minutes and doubled back to look for them, they had already turned the wrong direction and thus I wasn't able to locate them. Fortunately they all found their way home, but not before I worried for some time about their safety. Which brings up another individual responsibility - if you're on a group ride and come to a turn where you can't see the rider in front of you and you're not absolutely positive the direction the group went in, the proper thing to do is stop, pull off the road to a safe spot and WAIT, at least 15 minutes before considering heading off on your own route. That gives the lead a chance to notice a shortage of riders and return to find them. One more thing of critical import is to **NEVER EVER leave a group without having communicated your intent to do so** with the ride leader. If you decided after you began the ride that you need to drop out, the proper thing to do is to STOP, thus stopping the entire group, and then when the ride leader is face to face with you, tell them you need to leave the ride. Don't just drop out. Although it isn't uncommon for folks to need to drop out for one reason or another, you owe it to your group and the lead to let them know beforehand so they know not to still be looking for you. I have put together a bulleted list of ride etiquette items you

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This & That

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nately garnered the one way honors for the day of the lunch ride! New member Sue Roe had 187 from the beaches of Bradenton and a new non-member from Tampa, Doug, had 203. Way to go gang with the miles. If there's one thing that defines this club it's the ability and desire to rack up miles in the saddle! And before I forget, a BIG thanks go out to P. "Van" VanSteelant for scouting and setting up this ride! Only question is where were the rest of the southern Florida members?

New Members:

I've been asked to include a bit more about new members in the newsletter so I've added their bikes in the Welcome to the Club section and I will try to mention whatever I know/can when I can. To that end, this month we have three new members. Sue Roe, who now hails from Bradenton, FL, and formerly from PA. Sue rides a gorgeous and slick '04 Gold Wing Trike. The only reason we don't see her on more rides is because she's always off attending one ride or another all over the country and racks up the miles at an incredible rate. I hope we can entice her to one or more of the HSTA national rallies in the future. The other new member is Robert Bowen. Bob hails from Lake Worth, FL—that's just south of West Palm Beach. Bob rides Triumphs - alternating between a Tiger and a Daytona. He's usually in the company of Van and together they are fast forming the "anchor" of the South Florida lunch ride attendees! The third addition to the club is Bill Wilder from Keystone Heights, FL. That's somewhere up there around Jacksonville. Bill has shown up for some of our lunch rides already on his BMW K75S, which as I understand Beemers, is an older "classic" model. My apologies if I don't have that quite right ;-)

State Membership Drive:

You may have noticed several references in recent newsletters about growing the club membership. This is mostly a direct result of your State Co-Directors—Phil and myself - conspiring to try to add membership because we believe that is necessary to maintain a healthy club. More members means more potential volunteers to lead/organize rides, write articles, and introduce more

new members. To that end I'd like to announce a recent major effort to that end. Phil had an idea about mailing post cards to potential members in the state. He got Terry Balara, who is in the direct mail business to obtain for us a DMV list of motorcycle owners in the state. Terry paid for and then donated the list to us. Even though the list didn't have any Harley Davidson owners, it DID have in excess of 65,000 names.

Needless to say we weren't prepared to mail them all! That's where I came in with some Excel expertise and some time spent researching the makeup of the list. Several hours of work resulted in a plan where by we would target 687 riders in 10 counties



Everyone was so busy enjoying the food, I couldn't get much of a pose for the camera! But, the guy in the blue shirt and leather pants is new member Robert Bowen and the woman just behind him with her back mostly to the camera is new member Sue Roe. Eve is having way too much fun with her camera, and everyone in the shot was a rider attending the lunch!

ties that were near but not in an area where we already have a strong presence AND near or in an area where we frequently run lunch rides. The counties were—in the north—Putnam, Levy, Suwannee, Baker, Taylor, Madison, Dixie, Hamilton and Lafayette. In the South it was Okeechobee. We had a list of 678 names to send to. We eliminated ages over 60 and under 30, and the list included the makes Honda, Yamaha, Suzuki and BMW and the model years 1991 through 2002. Approximately 10% were women.

I then donated the materials (paper, ink, and time) to create, print, and address the post cards. Phil then donated \$200 towards the postage, and I made up the rest (the postcards were oversized so cost .37 each). The cards went into the mail on Monday, Feb. 26th. So that's the scoop on what a few of us were willing to do to try to help grow the club. If it works out we'd like to do it again in the future but will wait to see how this mailing goes first.

In the meantime, what can YOU do for the club? Every little thing helps. Talk to your non-club riding friends. Invite them to attend a lunch ride, and then attend with them. Write an article for the newsletter. (I haven't had a submitted article in a few months now!) Have a regular ride in your area you like to do? - Advertise it in the newsletter for others to join in. Even a purely non-riding social event would be great. Meet for breakfast, lunch, dinner, etc. Have a favorite ride/route? Share it in the newsletter. Remember, this is YOUR club. It is what you make of it.



Group Ride “Etiquette”

Continued...

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should be familiar with no matter whose ride you may be attending.

Here are some points to keep in mind when riding in any group—remember, safety is up to ALL of us!

Before the Ride:

- Wear appropriate safety gear.
- Make sure your bike is properly maintained—tires inflated, battery up to snuff and tires serviceable, not leaking fluids.
- Show up at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled ride departure time so that the ride leader can address the group.
- Show up with a FULL tank of gas, and be sure to discuss planned stops for fuel/rest along the way. If you can't make the scheduled stops, let the leader know now!
- LISTEN to any pre-ride discussions and know what the expectations are of you and the others. If you expect something not mentioned by the ride leader, bring it up now before you're expecting it on the road.
- Inform the ride leader of any planned departures you may have in mind so they're expecting you to leave at a given point.

During the Ride:

- Pick a slot in the group suitable to your skills and desires—usually faster towards the front, slower towards the back.. If this is done properly everyone can have a safe and enjoyable ride!
- Staggered formation always! - When on the open road, open it up according to speed, when in town/traffic, close it back up and try to stay together through the lights (**without running any!**) Stop where necessary—the group in front of you will slow down waiting for you to catch up after the light. If a lot of traffic turns in between you and the lead group, keep going and watch for the lead group being possibly stopped to wait. Try to catch back up if safe passing opportunities present themselves. If you see another vehicle attempting to pass the group always open up extra space for them to cut in—better they get in than have to force you off the road due to oncoming traffic.
- Ride predictably—this is really related to the last item—riding in staggered formation means staying in your “side” of the lane and maintaining an appropriate distance from the bikes in front of you. As speed increases so should the following distance, as well as leeway to use ALL of the lane. DON'T follow too closely, especially at speed above 30 MPH. Don't meander across the lane, especially at speeds below 45 when folks are trying to close it up a bit.
- NO PASSING on the right—EVER! IF you must change positions do so only with clear signals to the rider(s) in front and behind you. Never more than one slot change at a time. Best practice is to wait until a rest/fuel stop and make the change then.
- Situational Awareness—KNOW which riders are directly in

front and behind you. Ride your OWN ride. If the rider in front pulls away and you can't don't want to—don't! If they lose you in their mirrors they need to back off until they reacquire you. Same goes for you and the rider behind you. Buddy system, wing man, it's all about working as a TEAM!

- If the group makes a turn and the rider behind you isn't in sight—STOP at the intersection to mark the turn. WAIT until you are sure the next rider knows where the turn is.
- If you get to a turn and there's nobody there marking it for you and you don't absolutely know for sure the route. STOP and WAIT—at least 15 minutes before seeking your own route. You need to be there when someone comes back for you! When you get to the destination, have a discussion with the rider in front of you why they didn't mark the turn. If necessary, alert the ride leader to indifference.
- If you HAVE to leave the group for any reason on an unscheduled basis be SURE to STOP and inform the riders in front and/or behind you that you are leaving and why. If it has anything to do with the safety (or lack thereof) of another rider, be SURE to let the ride leader know.
- Ride your OWN ride. You ALONE are responsible for the safe operation of your motorcycle. Set your turn speeds early, look through the turns. Avoid target fixation. Watch for any/all road hazards.
- Set a good example for other riders to follow.

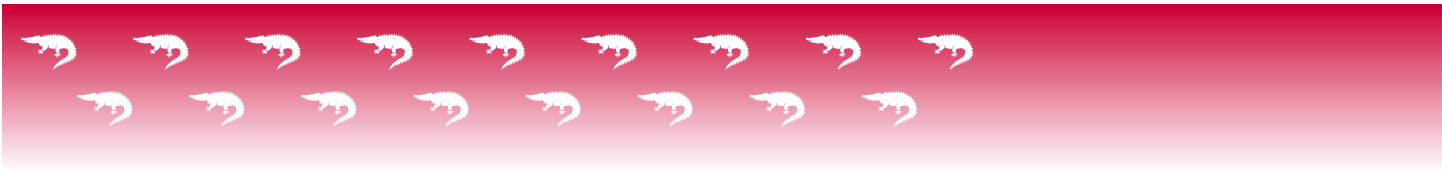
After the Ride:

- Analyze your days performance. What did you do well? What could you have done better? What did you see others do well and what could they have done better?
- Let your ride leader know you got home safe and sound and that you appreciated the ride. It's a lot of work and exposure to potential liability—the least you can do is say “thanks”!
- Consider how and when you might lead a ride some day.

Other:

- If you plan to meet up with a group en route, be SURE to let the ride leader know where and when so they can be on the lookout for you and then be there at least 10 minutes early in case the group is ahead of schedule.
- If there is ever any doubt about ride cancellation due to weather call the ride leader at least 1 hour prior to the scheduled start of the ride to confirm.
- Ride SAFE - Have FUN - Ride SAFE

This list may not be everything, but it does cover many salient points. The bottom line is that it's up to each and every one of us to conduct a safe ride. Do your part. Don't expect that the ride leader can prevent every mistake—they can't. It's up to you!



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 RIDE this month due to Daytona Bike Week.

♦ **HSTA Florida South Lunch Ride** - Saturday, March 20th - Jack's Diner - Frostproof FL. Lunch at 12:00 Noon. Located on Wall St., just off US27A in the center of Frostproof, Jacks is a small but friendly place in the heart of Florida Citrus country. Contact: Bill Royal - RideFL@flahsta.org or (813)633-8155

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

NOTES: Schedule now updated with 2004 events. Events highlighted in gray are still tentative. For those and other events marked as unconfirmed, 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
April 16-18	T-16	Queen Wilhelmina Lodge - Mena, AR (800)264-2477	Danny Gordon (903) 463-4973
April 23-25	Road and Track Rally	The Brass Door Motel - Gassville AR (870)435-2288	Tim Bailey (901) 737-7210 Biking2gether@aol.com Kathy Mellembakken (870) 322-7777 peeweewette@yahoo.com Peter Pietz (870) 435-6777 pggeitz@cox-internet.com
Apr 30-May 2	Helen 2004	Location unconfirmed	Eric Larsen (770) 805- 0607 enlarsen@bellsouth.net
May 22-23	Twistar 2004	Spring Green Motel - Spring Green, WI (608) 588-2141	John Perkins (608) 280-8204 john@cs.wisc.edu
May 28-31 (Memorial Day W/E)	Tri-Star	Allegheny Inn - Sparta, NC (888)372- 2501 (mention HSTA when you call)	Galen Diehl (276)647-3162 gdiehl@kimbanet.com
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

