

My ST1300's First Long Trip - to Key West

Submitted By: Sam Ulbing

I enjoy reading motorcycle articles by amateurs like myself for one of 2 reasons. A few people are good writers and can make an interesting story. For the rest I try to learn a little from the article even if the story isn't all that enthralling. Since I am not a good storyteller, I'm going to write this to, hopefully, pass along some things I learned on this trip.

The Motorcycle:

I got my 1300 the Saturday before Christmas. 3000 miles later I'm still as impressed with it as I was the first ride. It is so much better than my old 1100 and I thought that was an outstanding bike. Perhaps the best improvement of all is the fact that Lee, my wife, said after a few short runs: "This motorcycle is



Sam & Lee Ulbing—Key West Bound on Sam's new ST1300

much more comfortable than the 1100 was, so I will try a long trip on it". Wow, Hot Dog. 3 years and she wouldn't go more than a 2 hour ride! Right there it became the best investment in motorcycles I ever made. The reason she thinks it is comfortable could be the bike or it could be that the Corbin rumble seat we had on the 1100

pushed her so far forward that there was no room for either of us to wiggle around. For what its worth after the 1300 miles, and she never complained, we decided to spring the big bucks for a Russell seat- with a bike this nice you might as well go first class.

What's better on the 1300? I have gotten used

to the better acceleration and the solid braking. The linked brakes may be part of the reason it stops so well. I don't think I've activated the ABS yet; if I have I haven't felt it. The electric windscreen is more than just a toy. In Key West crawling along in 80 degree heat it was nice to be able to put it all the way down and at speeds up to about 35 to 45 on a bug free day, it lets the rider be more part of the elements. In rain on the way home I put it up to nearly eye height and noticed the airflow was such that the rain on my face shield was blown off. We left Gainesville in 50-degree weather so I put the screen fully up and felt warmer.

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Special points of interest:

- *All ST1300 Review Issue*
- *Plenty of HSTA Events in the South East—See Pg. 6*

WWW Addresses

- ✓ If you're "connected" be sure to check out the National HSTA Site at: <http://www.ridehsta.com>
- ✓ And the Florida HSTA Site at: <http://www.geocities.com/flahsta/>

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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!

Maurice Avera - Orange Park, FL

Craig Pearce - Riverview, FL



Ramblin Around

Submitted By: Phil Ridgill

After all the rain we had during Bike Week, April has been Fantastic weather for the Motorcyclist. We've had few showers here and there; otherwise it couldn't be any better. I could go for this weather & temperature year around.

I guess you could say it's spring now and riding season is in full bloom. Time to really check your machine. Brakes, check the pads & change the Brake Fluid, Clutch Fluid also needs changing. Coolant which everybody forgets, change it every year and your Bike will run cooler, a little bit of water wetter helps it run cooler also. Tires, I've got two sets in my garage, my ST110 needs new tires. If your going to STAR it's always best to fully service your bike before a long trip, don't arrive at STAR and expect to get service there. They may have service available but why waste your riding time. Here is another thought, if you haven't been riding much this winter, I know we ride in FL year around but some people don't ride that much. Summer comes and everyone is ready, it's off to the mountains. Do yourself a big favor, take it easy, you'll get right back in your groove after a few rides. If you ride two up with your wife/girlfriend or whoever, remember how much trust they have in you. Don't waste your Summer, be prepared and get out there and Ride

Last month or the month before, I put out a bit about a weekend

event here in FL and if anyone was interested. As expected, there wasn't any interested expressed by the members. It's well known that the members of this club like to ride and would prefer to have some different scenery other than the flat roads of Florida. Here is something to consider, a long weekend in the mountains for FL HSTA members only. This would be; ride to the mountains on Thursday, Friday & Sat to ride in the mountains, ride home on Sunday. I can arrange some reasonable accommodations if we have enough interest. Anyone interested, send me an email.

www.ridingintohistory.com , The Atlantic Beach Vintage Motorcycle Club puts this event on once a year at the World Golf Village and it's an excellent event. This year it takes place on May 3rd. There will be a Concours de Elegance bike show from 10:00am to 4:00pm, A Bikers Ball at the Renaissance Resort at the World Golf Village, 6:30pm – 11:00pm. The HSTA will have a booth at the event with a few bikes on display. If you have a motorcycle that you would like to enter in the Concours de Elegance you need to contact HSTA member John Duss at 904 268 7227 or jduss@fjbd.com. It's well worth your time just to come have a look.

Ride Safe
Phil Ridgill

ST1300 Rider's Review

Submitted By: Terry Brown

When Phil asked if I would do a review of my '03 Honda ST1300 ABS ownership experience I had ridden about 400 miles. We agreed I would wait until I had 2,000 to 3,000 miles on the bike to ensure I would have ample opportunity to experience all there was to the bike. However, I did warn him that I didn't think it was going to be an unbiased review even with that kind of mileage because; I already REALLY liked the bike!

My most recent riding experience had been on a '98 Honda ST1100 for four years and a Suzuki RF900 sport bike prior to that. Two really different bikes but both fun to ride in their own right. The ST1100 gave me four comfortable trouble free years of riding with only normal service and tire replacement. Most of my miles come from day rides in the North Central Florida area with a core group of about 6 riders from the Melbourne/Cocoa area. We also try to attend as many of the HSTA lunch rides as possible. We manage to get in a couple of longer rides each year. We don't start each ride with the goal of putting on as many miles as possible but we don't mind putting in the time for the 500 to 800 mile day. Most of us have done at least a Saddle Sore in the IBA.

Okay, that gets the preliminaries out of the way. Did I tell you I REALLY like the bike? I'll begin by addressing a couple of issues with the ST1300 that seem to be on everyone's mind; at least they show up in the magazines and the chat rooms.

Yes, I do get a fair amount of heat on my leg from the left side of the engine. Also the locking glove box on the left side of the fair-

ing seems to get pretty warm. However, my ST1100 had a similar level of heat coming from the same areas. I don't think other riders are taking into consideration there is a 1.3 liter engine making approximately 125 horsepower at the crank. That's going to generate quite a bit of heat. Also, when the bike has as much plastic on it as the ST, the heat tends to build up and exit wherever it can find a hole. The places to exit aren't that large so you get a concentration of heat in that area that when directed onto a surface (your leg or frame) seems to be amplified. I don't have the tank heating I have heard others talk about. However, I did install the kneepads for the sides of the tank that Honda provides. But, as I said I don't feel any excess heat on the tank.

Yes, the digital information center in the instrument cluster could be easier to read all of the time. I wear a full-face helmet with good quality non-polarized sunglasses with either a clear or light smoke shield. Mine is very easy to see in direct sunlight and at night. The legibility could be improved during the time the sun is on either side of or directly in front of the rider. It isn't that it can't be seen, it's you just have to stare at it to be able to see the data. This isn't a good thing when you should be concentrating on the road and what's going on around you instead of staring at your instruments. I am in the habit of scanning my instruments regularly while riding. I don't like not being able to see the digital display easily and keep up with systems, especially on a new unfamiliar bike. The engine temperature is the one function in the digital display that you need to be able to see easily all of the

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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

1996 BMW R1100RT - BMW's top boxer touring bike, complete with factory bags, ABS, electric Parabellum windshield and a new BMW comfort seat. Just broken in at 38k miles. Beautiful dark blue. Priced well below market at \$7250. Call Bill at 904-730-9719, warrrior@aol.com

1987 Honda Hurricane CBR1000. 39K Corbin, Yoshimura exhaust, K&N, etc. Recent tune up, timing chain, sprockets and chain. Beautiful condition. Always Mobil 1. Regret to sell but lack room for two bikes. \$3200. Call Alan 850-668-0886 or mericke@attglobal.net

ST1100 accessories. Corbin leather seat \$195.00, Ventura Sport Rack w/L brackets \$85.00, Hondaline Backrest w/bag \$85.00, Gen Mar bar risers \$55.00, Haynes Repair Manual \$10.00, Lockhart Phillips Tank Bra \$10.00, Stock windshield good condition \$50.00. Contact: Terry Brown 321-724-4559 or tlbst1100@yahoo.com or tbrown02@harris.com

ST1300 First Long Trip

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But to me the best feature of the 1300 is its low center of gravity and better handling. At normal speeds the turning is quicker, smoother and more precise than on the 1100. At parking lot speeds turning is more stable, the 1100 had a nasty habit of trying to fall to the inside of a slow turn; the 1300 doesn't.

On the way home we made use of the air temperature display and the 4-way flashers. A cold front had stalled out over Florida so when we left Key Largo it was 76F but as we drove north we could watch the temperature dropping until it was down to 57F in Titusville. It was 'interesting' to know just how cold it was as we stopped to put on more heavy clothes!

Early reviews had me worried that the 1300 would be a gas hog.

Not true. It does want 91 octane but we averaged 46 mpg for the 1307-mile trip 2 up, with full saddlebags, a Ventura backpack and tank bag. The 'instant mpg' computer (every 15 seconds) showed that at 45-50 mph we were getting better than 50 mpg. At 80-85 it read 38 to 40 mpg and based on fill ups I found it reads about 3 mpg low. The average was only 1 mpg less than I got on the 1100. A good trade off for the added power I think.

What's bad about the 1300? The 'luggage rack' on the back looks nifty and ideal to tie down a bag. The problem is there is no way to fasten it down. On top of that Honda does not offer a backrest for the passenger, at least so far in the US. Lee was not about to go on a trip without one so I solved this by going to a machine shop and having a plate made with eyes for tie downs and stubs to allow me to attach the Ventura pack rack. I put a

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ST1300 Rider's Review

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time. The other functions like the trip meters, odometer, clock, gas gauge, etc. can always be checked when you have time to give them a longer look, not a glance. All of the warning/idiot lights are in a separate module from the digital information center and are very easy to see under all light conditions. The side stand "down" light is missing on the ST1300.

I also like what Honda did with the seat. I'm 5'11" with a 30" inseam and the ability to adjust the seat height to my liking is great. I sometimes had a problem paddling around on my ST1100 because of the seat height. When riding the ST1100 alone I had to be careful when parking to make sure I didn't park down hill and have to back out. I don't have any problems moving the ST1300 around either sitting on it or walking it. Being able to adjust the seat height is a good feature on a longer ride to vary the seating

position by two additional height settings. The seat is generally very comfortable, I don't have an all day, 800 miles on it yet but so far I'm satisfied with it. At this point I don't anticipate adding an after market seat.

Did I tell you I REALLY like this bike? Since I have the ABS version that means I have the electrically adjustable windshield. What a great feature to have on a motorcycle! I knew I wanted the ABS version of the bike from the beginning even though it carried a pretty hefty premium. Well, I did have a pretty good asset in a paid for ST1100 that was in "as new" condition even with high mileage. I rationalized that would ease the blow of the \$14,499.00 price tag on the ABS. I was happy with the deal I made at Champions Honda in Cocoa and my experiences with them since then are all favorable. I negotiated the first service out

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of them at the time of the purchase. They did a good job with that service. I haven't had an opportunity to test the ABS. I do like the linked brake feature as well, but I'm telling you that windshield is worth the whole difference in the price of the Standard and the ABS! I have found that I can make myself comfortable in almost all situations by adjusting the windshield. I had a plus 2" Clear-view with Stealth edging on my ST1100 that I kept on the bike during the cooler months and I switched to the stock windshield in the warmer season. Now all I have to do is hit the switch and stop where it feels the best in rain or shine. With the windshield in the lowest position I can experience the full effect of wearing a Joe Rocket Phoenix jacket and man, it makes a difference.

My bike is an October 2002 build, which should have had all of the known issues taken care of at the time of manufacture and not in the warehouse. That includes the new oil pan without the projections, extra insulation against the heat, and taking care of a high speed "weave" caused by incorrectly tightened engine mounting bolts. My bike also came through with Bridgestone BT 020's. I don't have any complaints about the handling and they seem to be wearing no better or worse than other tires I've used. I

had really good results with Avons on my ST1100 and I'll probably switch to the new Avon Sport Touring tire when I need tires. I run the Bridgestone's at the recommended 42 lbs. and the tires work fine. Oh yeah, it was also delivered with the crankcase over filled with oil. That seems to have been another problem common to most of the early bikes but the dealer took care of it as soon as I brought it to their attention.

The gas tank holds 7.7 gallons which is .3 of a gallon larger than the ST1100. The gas mileage has been comparable to what I had experienced on the ST1100. Most interstate riding (80 to 85mph) will yield 42 to 45 miles per gallon and spirited riding on the back roads will get down to the 40 miles per gallon range. The big difference between the ST1100 and the ST1300 is the ST1300 needs 92+ octane. My '98 ST1100 ran great on 87 octane however; the ST1300 lets you know very quickly it does not like lower octane gas.

At 35 liters, the saddlebags are the same size as the ST1100. This means they will still hold a full face helmet. I wear a large Shoei RF800 and it fits right in the bag. I saw the Honda Line bag
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ST1300 First Long Trip

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piece of high-density foam in the rack's frame and Voila a pack with a backrest all for \$75.

The Roads:

We planned to visit friends on the way so we needed to make some time but not enough to force us to do all Interstate thank heavens. From the north side of Gainesville, we did I-75 to Micanopy and then back roads most of the way. The road from Micanopy (I wrote about it in an earlier issue) connects to 225 and although the AAA map does not show it, you can take it all the way to route 200. 200 to 41 down to Floral City is nothing special but roughly parallels I-75. Often when taking back roads you'll come across something unusual and interesting. Turning onto 48 in Floral City we were surprised to find a mile of the road was lined with many old oaks, which formed a lovely canopy. Rt 575 off 48 is not shown on the map but was a nice road with some twists, then 476 and 476-B past a prison so watch your speed, to I-75. I was tempted to try a road I found on MapQuest (a free on line mapping service which I think is the best and they let you print out the maps) that went from Nobelton on Rt-467 through Croom to Rital on Rt-98 but was afraid it might turn to dirt half way through. If anyone is familiar with this road I'd like to know if it is paved or not. From I-75 we got back on 98 to Dade City. This is a busy road but there is a fairly pleasant bypass around Dade City and Zephyrhills, 35A and 535 (Chancery Rd). After Plant City you are pretty much back in the boonies and 39 south to 62 is straight road going past the phosphate mines. Check out the size of the equipment they use to dig the stuff and the size of the dirt piles. The best roads are often not on the map and Bill Royal came to my rescue for this area with maps and a

suggested route. Duette Road which heads south just a mile east of where 37 comes into 62 is a dandy little road and it allowed us to then ride 665, 661, 761 and 769 all great back roads into Punta Gorda where we spent the night with friends. All those roads south of 39 are open with light traffic and there were many good spots to 'point the needle north' or north east if you want! It was here I confirmed that the high speed 'weave' reported in earlier reviews has been eliminated.

The land south of Punta Gorda is largely swamp and open country with few roads to choose from. Rt74 east out of Punta Gorda is flat and straight. Swamp areas mixed with large open flat land with cattle reminded me of the midwest. Oddly the speed limit was only 55 but it seemed 60 or faster would have been more appropriate so I drove accordingly. Rt74 connects to 29. Signs along this route urge caution as the Florida panther is reported to cross here but with only 30 remaining, according to the sign, I figured the chances of seeing one were nil. Everglades City, an old fishing town, is worth a stop if for no other reason than the seafood. Their annual seafood festival had been the weekend before, Feb 1 and 2, and there were still many places serving really fresh fish. The Stone crabs must also have been in season as everyone had them on the menu (for a rather steep price).

Rt41 goes east through Miccosukee Indian country and there are many opportunities to take an air boat ride through the Everglades or, at the intersection with 997, you can stop at their casino and try your luck. We headed south to Key Largo.

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ST1300 First Long Trip

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Accommodations:

I'm a firm believer in the RoomSaver coupon book and I've saved a lot of money using it. This year we had mixed results. Two motels in Key Largo where I had stayed before gave us the 'we don't have any standard rooms left' routine. One offered us a room that was \$60 more expensive than the coupon rate. No thanks. Last year we got their non-standard rooms for the coupon rate but either these hotels have learned to 'bait and switch' or business is better. I was pleased to see both had vacancies the next morning. On the other hand on the way home we saved \$90 with a coupon. Lee wanted to splurge and stay at the Westin Inn and Resort in Key Largo 'so as to spend one night in a really nice hotel'. The Jacuzzi suite was \$309 that night, Friday (Saturday would have been \$389!). I asked if the coupon for \$119 applied, knowing full well it did not. I was surprised when the lady said yes but there is a \$100 upgrade for that room. \$219 rather than \$309 and the hotel was fully booked only 2 hours later.

We didn't care for Key West, far too busy, too much traffic, too expensive. Hotels are very expensive but a reasonably priced place is on your right about a mile after you enter the island, The Blue Lagoon Motel. They don't take reservations but Thursday night cost only \$59 for 2 people (no coupon needed). The best coupon rate I could find otherwise was in the \$90 range. Blue Lagoon is fine if you plan to spend most of your time in town

rather than at the hotel and there is a nice little restaurant right there. You can sit and watch all the traffic come onto the island and wonder, as we did, where it all goes and why the island doesn't sink. Add to that the people from the cruise ships at Mallory



Sunset seen from the Jacuzzi Suite

Square and you know why we went back to Key Largo for the last day. The view from the Jacuzzi suite made us forget all the traffic on Rt1 and feel we were on a tropical paradise. Next year we'll go south again but stop at Key Largo and just chill out.

ST1300 Rider's Review

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liners at Daytona and they look like they would be a convenient addition for touring. They fit the inside half of the saddlebag and leave room in the outer half to carry the other things you would want to leave on the bike when over nighting like your rain suit, first aid kit, etc. The bag mounting point is much more user friendly than the ST1100 and they come off and go back on quickly. The bags also fit much tighter than the ST1100 and don't wiggle around at all. The fairing pockets are also very convenient and the left side locking pocket is quite large and will hold gloves, glasses, etc. I will consider the heat when deciding what to put in that pocket. My RKA tank bags from the ST1100 fit the ST1300 as well.

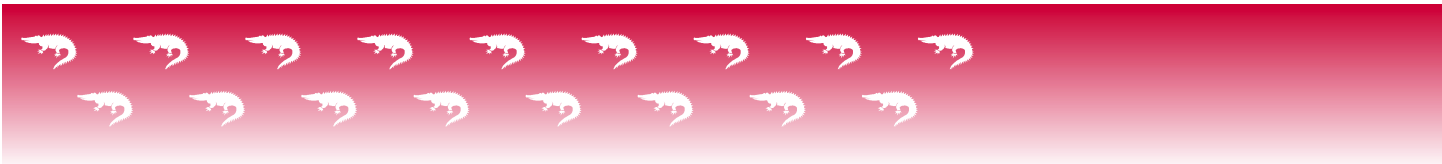
If I had not read about the ST1300 and how it was only 30 pounds lighter than the ST1100, I would have guessed it to be at least 75/80 pounds lighter upon riding it off the dealer's lot. Honda worked the same magic on it as they did on the GoldWing. The combination of lower seating position, shorter wheelbase and improved front end geometry created a bike that is really FUN to ride. In the past if I had a quick errand to run I would usually drive instead of riding my ST1100. It just seemed to be more of an effort to get it ready to ride and it wasn't as much fun around town. Not the ST1300, I make up errands in order to put more time on it. There is a "lightness" to it that makes you want to ride it and ride it pretty hard and fast. I just think about leaning into a curve

and it does it. When I first rode the bike I found myself having to make steering corrections because it was turning in much quicker than the ST1100. It will lean as far as you are willing to push the bars and trust your tires. The bike is much easier to handle in tight places and, for instance, is very easy to make a u-turn on a two lane road. This is a wonderful thing if you go down the wrong road as often as we do.

People often say Honda's don't have a personality; all they do is start and go. Well, if I could have only one personality trait that would be my choice. However, my ST1100 had a rheostat; electric motor kind of feel but the ST1300 has more of a mechanical, moving parts feel. This bike growls when you twist the grip, has a great power rush, and will get you in a lot of trouble with the police protection if you're not careful. Also I found out on a recent ride, by accident, that it will do a serious horsepower wheelie! If that isn't personality, I don't know what is. Oh yeah, and it always starts and goes.

BTW, did I tell you I REALLY like this bike?

Terry Brown - AMA #588520, HRCR #994261, HSTA #08957, STOC #927, IBA # xxxxxxx



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 South Lunch Ride** - Saturday, May 10th - Noon, **Sherianne's Runway Café, Sebring Airport, Sebring, FL** This is only 114 miles from West Palm Beach, 117 from Melbourne, 95 from Orlando, even an doable 166 from Miami so we hope to see some of you southern Florida riders attend. This ride's for YOU. As always, NON-HSTA members are always welcome. Info Contact: Bill Royal at (813) 633-8155

♦ **HSTA Florida North Lunch Ride** - Saturday, May 24th - Noon, **The 3 Bananas, Crescent City, FL**. Located just east off US 17 at the docks at Crescent Lake. If you need any information concerning this ride, contact Phil Ridgdill at 904 287 9654 or rfoxdr@earthlink.net

4th Annual Riding Into History Concours d' Elegance - May 3rd - **World Golf Village, St. Augustine, FL** - The World Golf Village is located on the west side of I-95, at exit 323 (old 95A). For additional information go to: RidingIntoHistory.com or contact HSTA member Bill Robinson at RIH2003@aol.com, 904-730-9719.

♦ **HELEN 2003** - May 2, 3, 4 at the **Alpenhof Inn, Helen, GA**. Come and enjoy the friendly atmosphere in Helen. Socialize with fellow HSTA members Ride some of the great roads in northern Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Tennessee. Contact:: Eric Larsen enlarsen@bellsouth.net

♦ **TRI-STAR** - May 23 thru 25 2003 - **Sparta NC**
If you've never ridden the roads in this area you owe it to yourself to come to this event. If you have ridden in the area, we'll see you in Sparta Memorial Day weekend.

"Tri-Star" is located in Sparta, NC at the crossroads of US 21 and NC 18 in northwest North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains, nestled between the New River and the Blue Ridge Parkway, offering scenic vistas, unspoiled landscape and friendly folk. Named Tri-Star because you're only a few miles from the States of Virginia and Tennessee.
Event coordinator: Galen Diehl (276) 647-3162 gdiehl@kimbanet.com

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Date	Event	Location	Contact
May. 02-04	Helen 2002	Helen, Georgia	Eric Larsen enlarsen@bellsouth.net
May. 02-04	Huck's Memorial Road & Track Rally	Gassville, Arkansas	Peter Peitz (870) 435 6777 pgpeitz@cox-internet.com
May. 16-18	Twistar 2002	Spring Green, Wisconsin	John Perkins (608) 280-8204 john@cs.wisc.edu
May. 23-25	Tri-Star 2002	Sparta, North Carolina	Galen Diehl (276) 647-3162 gdiehl@kimbanet.com
Jun. 06-08	WeSTAR	Groveland, California	John Button (925) 736-2670 john@buttonhome.org
Jun. 22-25	STAR 2003	Charleston, West Virginia	Jon & Janet Campbell (513) 932-3341 ohiohsta@cinci.rr.com
Aug. 22-24	Mail Pouch Fly-by	Marietta, Ohio	Jon Campbell (513) 932-3341 jcampbell7@cinci.rr.com
Sep. 05-07	Ozark BS Rally	Theodosia, Missouri	Ed Young (417) 926-3075 magna@fidnet.com
Sep. 26-28	Byway Boogie	Hot Springs Village, Arkansas	Robert Bashaw (870)460-9570 Robert.Bashaw@ocse.state.ar.us
Sep. 13-15	SE-Star	Dillard, Georgia	Trey Hall (615) 574-9927 strey1100@aol.com
Oct. 03-05	River City Ride	Corydon, Indiana	Don Parish (317) 936-5818 mparish@hrtc.net
Oct. 10-12	FOF X	Parkshills, Missouri	James Radcliff (314) 213-5854 jradcliff@frenchgerleman.com
Nov. 01-03	Texas Hill Country	Kerrville, Texas	Jim Poulos (817) 268-4620 jamo1935@aol.com