

# FLORIDA GATOR TALE

Honda Sport Touring Association

September 2003



## Atlanta or Bust!

Submitted By: Sandra Ingram

Upon joining the Florida Chapter of the HSTA I was introduced to a whole new way of riding. Gone were the Sunday drives of an hour or so. These people are into riding: long distances, many miles, covering the road, well you get the idea. I found I liked it. Previous rides, while enjoyable, always left me wanting more. I wanted to hit the highway and take off for parts unknown.

Recently, I had the opportunity (the time off from work) to put this plan in action. Everyone else was going somewhere grand (the STAR rally), riding off into the sunset, and I wanted to also. I had a meeting to attend in Jacksonville with a couple of days to rest up, and after that I would visit a friend in Atlanta. That's not too far. I can do it! Many of my non-riding friends did not hesitate to tell me that perhaps I was not thinking clearly, and therefore doubts set in. Hurricane Bill swept in, and determination set in. Arrangements were made, and I sent my luggage ahead -- my business suit was a little cramped in the saddle bags.

Originally, I planned to ride up through the middle of the state. I-95 was not on my favorite

roads list, because it scares me. Back roads are more my style. However, the best laid plans of mice and women don't always work out, and I was running late by the time I could get out so there wasn't enough time to leisurely cruise. My one obligation was to make a 6:00 pm meeting, so I-95 became my route of choice.



Sandra Ingram "testing the waters" and expanding her horizons!

Luckily, there wasn't a lot of traffic when I started out, and there was plenty of opportunity to adapt. I worried, "is the front wheel supposed to shake so much? Surely, these trucks know they are blowing me off the road, don't

they care!" You get used to it! My 1992 Honda Nighthawk is a fairly light bike, and only weighs about 500 pounds. After a while I kind of enjoyed it. There was a whole "me against the elements" kind of thing going on. I felt comfortable, another challenge answered. It makes me stronger every time I face something I'm afraid to do.

Anyways, I cut over to St. Augustine and took A1A to Ponte Vedra, and I arrived with a couple of hours to spare, having outrun the rain the end

*(Continued on page 3)*

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### Special points of interest:

- *Ride Sign In Sheet data revealed—See "This & That" pg. 4*

### Web Addresses:

- ✓ If you're "connected" be sure to check out the National HSTA Site at: [www.ridehsta.com](http://www.ridehsta.com)
- ✓ And the Florida HSTA Site at: [www.flahsta.org](http://www.flahsta.org)

### Inside this issue:

Atlanta or Bust!	1,3,4
Ramblin Around	2
Free Ads	2
This & That	4,5
Paid Ads	6
Rides/Events	6

## 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!

**Walter G. Schaefer - Punta Gorda FL**



## Ramblin Around

Submitted By: Phil Ridgdill

We certainly had a good representation of Florida members at Charleston WV and of course you all know that Florida won the Award for the Best Newsletter in the HSTA. Congratulations to Bill Royal for all of his efforts on the Newsletter. Believe me it's quite a time consuming job. Thanks to all the FL members who contribute to our State Newsletter, the list is long and this is exactly what makes our Newsletter. Any member here in the State that would like to write an article about his/her motorcycling experiences please do so and forward it to me or Bill Royal. If you have Photo's to go along with your experience on the motorcycle, please forward them to Bill Royal & to me also, wgr@sprynet.com, rfoxrdr@earthlink.net.

You've all read my bit about the Super Sport Bike; some of you may or may not agree with my description of the ultimate in this category. Well, I've purchased another Motorcycle and it's very close to my idea of the Super Sport Bike. I know every one of you have bought a new motorcycle and on the way home with it you think, what the hell have I done here. And on the other hand, there is one on the very first ride, you think my god this thing fits me perfectly and the smile is ear to ear on your face. Personally, I think it's the most under rated Sport Bike on the market, CB1100XX Blackbird. I do think it may be about 60-70lbs overweight but I'll trim that down a bit. From the moment I put a leg over the seat of my ST1100 it was perfect, with the exception of being too heavy, my VFR was absolutely spot on, this Blackbird is perfect for me. After 85000 on the ST1100 and 33000 on my VFR, both are as good as new. I suspect this Blackbird will be the same. OK, the ZX12R is faster; the Suzuki Hayabusa is faster also, after \$1.70 who really cares. Quality and Refinement, they both lose to the Honda. No flames painted on the side, no two-tone paint, nothing plastered on the Bike saying "look at me", the Blackbird just oozes class, believe me ride one of these and you'll

have that smile also.

I will not be organizing a lunch ride in Sept; we will be in California for my daughter's wedding. With regards to Oct, we are off on another Edelweiss Trip with the group. Hopefully Bill Royal and I will be able to organize a joint North & South lunch Ride, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of Oct.

Ride Safe & Smart

Phil Ridgdill



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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

**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 tlbtst1100@yahoo.com or tbrown02@harris.com

### **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.

## Busted Butt and Iron Butt

Submitted By: Alan Singer

Where's Phil Ridgdill? He busted his butt. No, really. Having been attacked by his sciatic nerve, Phil was forced to beg off leading the August lunch ride. Replacing him turned out to be a two man job. Alan Singer headed up a group that left Green Cove Springs on the prearranged route to Suwannee, way over on the Gulf. Bill Robinson and an earlier departing group traveled by way of Lake City to take in the arrival of the Iron Butt rallyers at that checkpoint.

We had about the best weather we've had in the past month, for once not dodging thunderstorms all day. Bill's group spent an hour or so checking out the bikes and riders as they clocked in. Each year the equipment gets more sophisticated, the bikes better prepared, and the riders more daring. Most all of the serious competitors are on Honda or BMW motorcycles with a few oddballs tossed in. As he does every year Mike Kneebone, the rally organizer, and his staff come up with diabolical bonus point offerings designed to separate the winners from the pretenders. For all the details check out [www.ironbutt.com](http://www.ironbutt.com).



The "northern gang" attending the Suwannee Lunch Ride  
Photo courtesy of Moto Euro Garage—Alan Singer

[ironbutt.com](http://www.ironbutt.com).

Our plan was for the two groups to meet at an intersection just west of High Springs and then to complete the ride together. Amazingly, it worked out perfectly and we rode the final hour or so together to Suwannee. Arriving at the Salt Creek Shellfish Co. restaurant we found that Royal Bill had led a few of his cohorts up the coast and beaten us there. We settled in, enjoying the air conditioning, and while lunch service took a bit of time, the friendly staff was busy keeping us hydrated.

As is usual, after lunch we broke up into groups for the ride home, the largest of which headed due east on Rt 26 with riders dropping off all along the way. Sixty seconds of rain two miles from home was all it took to require a

bike wash. Grrrr.

Hurry back Phil, we missed ya.

## Atlanta or Bust!

Continued...

*(Continued from page 1)*

tire way. Did I mention I'm usually an expert at predicting rain? OK, I can read the weather channel like a map. Yes, I can read a map, although you couldn't prove it by this trip. So, while basking in the glow of many raindrops that weekend, I rested up for the next leg of my journey.

Monday morning I was on the bike by 7:00 am. I wanted to be out of Jacksonville and on my way. There was valuable time to be lost in traffic, so I thought. I was just plain lost! Reading a road sign while riding a motorcycle is multitasking at its highest form. They were whizzing by while I was maneuvering through traffic. I had this great plan to go up A1A and cut over on 9A -- it was simple. There was NO ferry! Where did that come from? What do you mean I missed the turn 20 miles back? I didn't see no stinking sign. The only ferry I recall seeing was the one in Canada that sunk -- it was on the news. Well, I guess I'll be able to swim for it. I certainly won't get trapped in the car. Alright, let's go. I don't like to turn around. Push forward.

The ferry was somewhat anticlimactic -- we didn't sink. Well, it was cool. How many people have ridden a ferry?

Still, I needed to make some time because there was a long way to go. Did it dawn on me that I should head west? No! I kept going along A1A, it's really pretty though: long white stretches of beach right next to the road. Did you know it's a dead end? I turned around and finally asked directions. I had to!

Finally, route 1 & 23, that's the road I want. The scenery's starting to get nice: rolling hills, lots of pretty Oak trees and highway stretching out before me. I'm diggin' it. Wait, when did this road turn into 82, that's not right, oh no, not again! Alright, I planned on this contingency. There are so many back roads to take. This could have been my planned route. Since it was most definitely lunch time I stopped at Waylon's in Pearson, a local joint, and chatted with some nice Georgia boys. Then I turned north on 221 heading for 441 and dared the road to lose me again!

Stop snickering, Emerson said "Leave the path and make your own trail". At least I was still on pavement. Tip: You really need to look closely at a map, sometimes there's a little black connecting line that is actually a road. While exploring the various ways to

*(Continued on page 4)*



# Atlanta or Bust!

Continued...

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find hwy 212, I discovered Milledgeville, GA. What a lovely town, built on the side of a small mountain. Perhaps it was actually Mayberry. If I'd come through a week ahead I would have attended their first annual bikefest -- it will prosper. What a coup that would have been. Oh well, timing is everything! Onward, Ho!

My butt's getting sore, my knee's, well I think they're numb, do I still have all the fingers on my right hand? There are still how many miles to go? The thought passes through my mind "There's no iron butt ride in my future."

Monticello is an old town built around a square park. It's a real funky traffic square. I enjoyed it so much I rode around twice! Then, an hour later I pulled into Montclair, Doo doo doo doo, (that's the twilight zone theme, no I'm not musically inclined). Did I make another wrong turn, these look like the same buildings, the square park, what, what? Wait, they're different roads, I'm not crazy, just verry tired. Perhaps, I should stop, naw I can make it. Plop plop, here comes the rain. It's not too bad. Ride more miles. I stopped, "Where's the nearest motel?"

"About 30 miles north in Covington, ma'am," the nice convenience store lady said. Isn't it wonderful that just 6 hours north

people are still polite, nice and remember how to smile? How refreshing.

Well, shoot! If I can make it Covington, it's on the freeway (hwy. 20), then I can just keep going. Yeah, I hit Atlanta at 5:00 pm on Monday. Stop, go, Stop, go, well, you get the idea. Plop, Plop, more rain, but it's not too bad. Finally, 10 miles from my destination, Roswell, deluge. What? Rain gear, what's that for? I'm already soaked. There were puddles in my boots, puddles in my pants, and I created my own puddles at the stop lights. It doesn't get any better than this! But, you know what? I made it, in a record 10 1/2 hours! So, my nickname isn't "speedracer."

The trip back was a piece of cake, 2 leisurely days on the road down I-75. This time I learned. I started at 6:30 am and went straight through Hotlanta. There was still traffic, but I was long gone when that town woke up.

Yeah, I was stiff and sore and wet and scared and a few other emotions, but I know now I'm not a Sunday rider. I have to credit my dad for telling me when I was young, I could do anything if I tried hard enough, and my late husband for believing I actually could! But, you know, it was me that rode every mile. Just do it!

## This & That

Submitted By: Bill Royal

### Lunch Rides:

Though we had a little lower turnout than usual to the North lunch ride (there were 17 attendees signed in), we more than made up for it at the South lunch ride. There were 30 riders, along with 12 passengers who showed up at the Lake Susan Lodge, despite a somewhat overcast day. Those that came seemed to have the usual good time, and several folks commented to me how good they thought the food was. The service was also better than previously as they had extra help on in the kitchen and the dining room for us. The picture shows not all the bikes because there were some that arrived a little later, and there wasn't room for them all to be lined up together! Nobody made it down from Jacksonville, but the Melbourne crew was there with friends and a good sized group of riders from central Florida who are not yet HSTA members, though we hope some of them will join. There was a couple Bob & Cheryl Fischer from Palm Coast who were scouting us out and said they would be joining. I had a good group from the Tampa area as well and we had a real fine ride,



doing different routes coming and going with a good time had by all.

### Ride Statistics:

Well, since I have been quoting and collecting statistics for a while now, I thought I would share some more with you now. As anyone whose been on a lunch ride with us in Florida in the last year knows, I have been passing around a "sign-in sheet" and asking attendees to fill it out with various data about their rides. The following information all comes from those sheets.

For the 19 lunch rides I have the data for, we've had a total of 396 riders with 76 passengers, for a grand total of 472 attendees at our rides. The average lunch ride has 21 riders with 4 passengers. The average miles ridden one-way to an event is 118.8 and the riders only have racked up an impressive 47,045 miles ONE-WAY to the events!

*(Continued on page 5)*

## This & That...

Continued...

Date	City	Place	Riders	Passengers	Attendees	Rider Miles (ONE Way!)	Avg. Miles Per Rider
9/21/2002	Clermont	Lake Susan Lodge	28	5	33	2751	98
10/12/2002	Sebring	Sherriane's Runway Café	22	3	25	2481	113
10/13/2002	Trenton	Ye Olde Boarding House	17	4	21	3200	188
11/9/2002	LaBelle	Flora & Ella's Restaurant	14	7	21	1849	132
11/23/2002	Cross Creek	The Yearling Restaurant	38	7	45	5069	133
12/14/2002	Ona	Solomon's Castle	15	7	22	1051	70
1/18/2003	Frostproof	Jack's Diner	14	1	15	1297	93
1/25/2003	Bunnell	Hijacker's Café	14	1	15	1000	71
2/8/2003	Arcadia	The Clock Restaurant	15	1	16	1710	114
2/15/2003	Astor	Blackwater Inn	25	3	28	3142	126
3/22/2003	Okeechobee	The Clock Restaurant	17	1	18	2064	121
4/12/2003	Labelle	Flora & Ella's Restaurant	15	2	17	2108	141
4/26/2003	Trenton	Ye Olde Boarding House	31	5	36	4399	142
5/10/2003	Sebring	Sherriane's Runway Café	27	5	32	3183	118
5/24/2003	Crescent City	Three Bananas	31	6	37	3519	114
7/12/2003	Bunnell	Hijacker's Café	15	2	17	1450	97
7/26/2003	Frostproof	Jack's Diner	13	2	15	1211	93
8/16/2003	Suwannee	Salt Creek Seafood	15	2	17	2522	168
8/23/2003	Clermont	Lake Susan Lodge	30	12	42	3039	101

*(Continued from page 4)*

Looking at the table to the left, we can see that the 11/23/02 ride to the Yearling restaurant in Cross Creek drew the most attendees with 45, most riders with 38 and most miles ridden in total of 5069. But not to be missed either is the 10/13/02 ride to Trenton where 17 riders rode an average of 188 miles to attend. Way to go Florida HSTA!

The next table below on the left shows the top 10 longest rides to lunch ride events. It has 10 names, but it's actually a list of the top 20 longest rides with the non-HSTA members

ruled out. Hey, membership has to have it's privileges once in a while! ;-) Note the most miles ridden to attend an event was 235 miles for Gerry Stellwagon. And what the stat doesn't tell you is he did that ride on a day when the air temperature at the start of the ride was just 35 degrees and it never rose above 45 all day! 470 miles round trip to have lunch with your riding buddies—who says Florida riders don't ride.

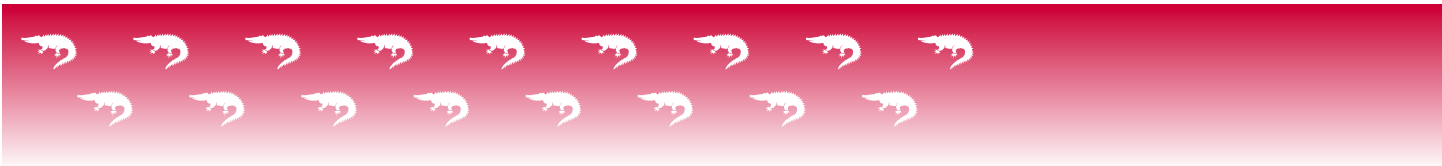
Name	Home City/State	YR	Make	Model	1 Way Mileage to Event
Gerry Stellwagon	Venice, FL	02	Honda	VFR	190
Gerry Stellwagon	Nokomis, FL	02	Honda	VFR	218
Russ Sage	Rockledge, FL	92	Honda	ST1100	189
Terry Brown	Melbourne, FL	98	Honda	ST1100	219
David Conner	Palm Bay, FL		Aprilia	Mille	200
Mitch Louis	Hollywood, FL	97	Honda	ST1100	206
Bill Royal	Sun City Center, FL	91	Honda	ST1100	186
Gerry Stellwagon	Nokomis, FL	02	HD	FLHTCH	235
Bill Peterson	St. Augustine, FL	96	BMW	R1100RT	215
Bill Royal	Sun City Center, FL	91	Honda	ST1100	190

Model	BMW	Ducati	Honda	Kawasaki	Suzuki	Yamaha	Grand Total
ST1100			75				75
Gold Wing			39				39
VFR			15				15
R1100RT	14						14
ST1300			13				13
PC 800			13				13
FZ1						11	11
R1150RT	10						10
Concours				10			10
V-STROM					10		10

This last table shows what we ride. More specifically, it shows the top 10 make/model appearances at our lunch rides and it INCLUDES non-HSTA attendees. Obviously, other makes attend the events and they are Aprilia, Ducati, Harley-Davidson, Kawasaki, KTM, Yamaha, MZ, and MotoGuzzi, just not in sufficient numbers to make this cut. Eliminating the non-members only changes the table slightly, dropping the Gold Wing to 8th slot and replacing the Concours with the Honda Reflex. The bottom line is

that, despite encouraging other brands to be members, Honda still makes up, by far, our most active riding members. Maybe we should consider how to encourage more diversity in our membership. At the very least, I'd LOVE to see more of our members making it to the rides. Well, that's all the room I have for now so I hope you found this interesting. If there's anything about our membership/riders you'd like to know, please drop me an e-mail and I'll do my best to get it into a future article.

Ride Safe—Bill Royal



## 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 - Saturday September 13th - Gator Joe's, Ocklawaha, FL.** Lunch at 12:00 Noon. Here's another new place for us. They are located right on Lake Weir, at the end of SE 135th Ave which is at the intersection of CR464 and E. Highway 25 right at the center of Ocklawaha. There are lots of great riding roads around to get to this location and they can easily accommodate our size group. They are also about the most central point in north central Florida, just 100-120 miles from Jax, Melbourne, Avon Park and Tampa by all secondary roads. See you all there! For details/questions, contact: Bill Royal—RideFL@flahsta.org or (813)633-8155

♦ **HSTA Florida South Lunch Ride - Saturday, September 27th - Jaxson's Restaurant, Lake Placid, FL.** Lunch at 12:00 Noon. Located on Lake June Rd (CR621) overlooking Lake June in Lake Placid. This is a new destination for us, one to replace our old favorite the Runway Café that's now moved. Lake June Rd runs west from US27 about a mile north of Lake Placid center. Just 100-120 miles from St. Pete, Naples, Boynton Beach and Melbourne! Hope to see you all there! For details/questions, contact: Bill Royal—RideFL@flahsta.org or (813) 633-8155

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

Date	Event	Location	Contact
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

## Paid Advertising

Below, you'll notice a new advertisement in our FL Newsletter this month, Atlantic Moto Sports, 1400 Mayport Road, Atlantic Beach FL 32233, 904 247 1622-fax 904 247 1013.

Kirt Lynch is the owner and HSTA member. He has Moto Guzzi, MZ and GasGas. He has a huge stock of Moto Cross and off road gear. Kirt has agreed to give HSTA members a discount of 10% on parts, labor and stock. He's also agreed to give HSTA members a 10% discount on mail order. This can be done with a shipment direct to your address. Kirt is a member and has a good business already in op-

eration. You want to order something, give him a call he'll be happy to talk to you. He runs a motorcyclist friendly shop, give him a try.

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