

DAY TWO

In the morning Eddie kicked me out of the house, ah... one can only appreciate a true rally buddy when they tell you to shut up and get moving! It was O'dark thirty yet as I left their place and headed a short ride up to Marietta to get a picture of the 'big chicken' KFC, come to find out it was not always a KFC, not sure what else would use a giant wooden chicken with a moving beak. Even though I was well within an hour of daylight I struggled to get a decent photo, so I topped off with fuel to document the time and headed back into Atlanta, the traffic now beginning to pick up, yet another reason I wanted to get the big chicken as early as possible.

Back to the 'Varsity', it just seems so counterproductive to go back to the same place I was the night before, but that is rallying! There I was to get a daylight photo of the Olympic torch which was to be taken from the parking lot that I had raced into around 11 the night before, I guess going back there is better than sleeping there, not a real pretty neighborhood.

From there I had a busy day, going to Tallulah Falls, GA. The falls are in a park and a hike was required to get to a photo of a certain plaque and falls in the back ground, it was a pretty empty place that morning and it was an easy in and out, other than the hike. It always is fun to see the looks on faces when I show up at a bonus location and am either wearing my 'stich or my LD longs and a goofy looking long sleeve shirt. But Tallulah falls park is definitely another place I would like to visit AFTER I spend some more time working out as it looks like there is some pretty cool places to hike, although the warning sign to anyone with a heart condition should not venture down makes me kind of nervous. I had no idea that Georgia had such terrain.

From there the next was to Elberton, GA for the Georgia Guide stones, Great big rocks sticking up in the middle of nowhere Georgia, that translate between 16 different languages, this one had a slight twist to it. The directions said that you needed to have the stone that stated what they were all about not the standing stones but the one flat on the ground next to them. It's only a couple days into the rally and already I have to re-read the bonus instructions a few times to make sure I get it right, better safe than sorry, but it can be really frustrating only being a couple days into a rally and my brain just doesn't want to comprehend what my eyes are reading. It must have taken me 7-8 times of reading this before my brain would actually acknowledge what it was I needed to do... geez!

After that it was a scenic ride through the Georgia countryside to Harlem, GA to get a picture of the mural on the outside of the Laurel and Hardy Museum. I made a mental note of this location and I hope to ride here with my dad someday, Laurel and Hardy are one of his favorites, this brought back great memories of sitting around on a lazy Sunday with dad watching those shows, wish I had time to go in and look around but saving it for a later date when I can share it with him will be cool.

From there I rode on to Augusta where the confederate monument resides in the center of the main drag in town, a memorial to the dead confederacy. That is one of the great things about rallying, going to all of these places that I would never think of visiting, which creates the desire to travel more around the country at a little more relaxed pace to take in some of the history, and sights of this great country! From there I continued east to fort Moultrie on Sullivan's Island, SC to take a photo of one of the cannons. There were several of them all lined up, so again I read and re-read the instructions a few times to make sure I get the right one! I always get a kick out of the looks that I get when wandering around someplace like that with my 'stich and helmet on, carrying a Polaroid and a white flag. ☺

Then south from there through Hardeeville, SC for a picture of two life size elephant statues a pink one and a blue one, and I cannot help but chuckle to myself as I see other rally riders talking with bystanders, helmet off, wandering around. After the first day I have gotten into real rally mode. I have the system down now, wheel in and the flag on a coiled cord stuffed into a compartment on the front of my tank bag, the other end of the coiled cord is attached to the key, as to not leave the flag behind! It works for me. I just stretch the flag and cord across the windshield hook the other end to the mirror stem or windshield, step back snap a photo, set in on the seat, grab the sharpie, write down the Odometer reading bonus number, the time, then as soon as I can make out the required object and my flag I stuff it in the Ziploc baggie, fold the flag stuff it back in the pouch, stow the camera, hop back on and gone... TIME is the enemy on this type of event, so making bonus and fuel stops as efficient as possible is the key to creating time for miles and rest!

Having the right kind of technology can make a rally like this quite entertaining as well. Before going on to Tybee Island, I had called into the 'call in bonus phone number' to give a report on where I was and where I was headed, at some point I saw on my phone that Tom Austin posted that the rally master Lisa referred to Tybee Island as a sucker bonus, which ended up not being anything of the sort for me, an easy in for a picture of the turtle statues at the base of the water tower. Mostly 2 lane roads into and out of I can see how this one would be a real time consumer if done on a busy day, lucky for me it was middle of the week so traffic was minimal and was well worth the time it took.

From there it was a long ride to Key West down the Florida autoba...er... I mean turnpike. It was at some point after dark that I ran into my second mechanical issue, some time on day one, the left hand side cover fell down and was hanging by the hook it has on the bottom... I struggled with that damn cover in 05 too. Thought the new clip I installed would have cured this issue but it has proved to be PITA although a minor one, it is still a PITA. So I am cruising along not much to do for a dozen hours or so, and I go to move my feet to the passenger pegs, as I swing my feet back I felt something on the back of my foot, then this funny grinding noise, not metal on metal but not a good noise, look down and said side cover has wedged itself into the swing arm and the end of it is grinding away on the sidewall of the tire!!!! NOT GOOD! Jump on the brakes and I just happened to be at the entrance of a rest area! Thank you God for taking care of me yet again! Got it stopped on the entrance, wrestled the side cover out of the jam it was in, drove into the rest area and stopped next to the trash can... NOW it would seem that I could just toss it while rolling by, but since I attached my Heat Troller for my heated gear to it, I had to take a little time...I am so very thankful that it didn't rip the wiring for the Heat Troller off! Thank God again! Later in the rally having heated gear will prove to be beneficial! This was going to be one of the longest days on leg one, wanting to be at Key West at or before sunrise I was hoping to make it straight through and I even tried a rest area nap, which didn't get me enough rest to help. So after struggling for a while I got a room for a couple hours of real sleep, not even sure where it was but I think near homestead, of which I will need to return to on Day 3, After a couple hours of real sleep, I was able to safely get to my next bonus, albeit a little later than I would have liked. But I arrived at the 'southernmost point of USA' shortly after sunrise then fueled up in Key West for another small bonus before starting Day 3... Did I mention that the whole south eastern area was experiencing record heat? And trust me GA and FL does not have 'dry heat'. So from here we are headed north to the south... stay tuned...