

Brett and Barney's BONZAI!!! adventure

The Bonzai Road Rally is put on by the Glacial Lakes Motorcycle Club out of Watertown South Dakota. It is a 12 hour format and is formulated around efficiency per mile format. Bonus hunting can be laid out in different series or individual locations.

I ran this rally for the first time last year and the GLMC also has a late summer rally called the Buffalo Run. This being my third rally with them I finally arrived early enough to get a decent night sleep, after actually getting my bike ready and having some decent nights sleep before I headed over to Milbank. Upon arriving Paul (Hootis) and I met up with the group for dinner at the City Limits supper club, mmmmm good prime rib. The normal bench rallying and liars banquet activities. Eddie James was there promoting the AMA's Smallest Grand tour, smallest incorporated town in each state.

Barney was prepared for battle and getting his first bath of the year while we ate (read, it rained). After dinner the tall tale's continued at the Super 8 till 11ish. Riders meeting at 7am and a cup of coffee with my maps in hand. Typical riders meeting, be safe don't speed, don't speed, and oh yea don't speed, be back by 8 pm. As I am laying out the bonus's on my map I see that the Victor-y lap is Victor Wanchenna's winning 6 hour route from last year, along with the quadrupling city of Hazel. And I also see the Bonzai loop for 1100 points. HMMM I think I got my route, plus a fair sized bonus on the way north from Niobrara NE to Aberdeen SD. All of the bonuses I went after were receipt bonuses other than the ones I describe otherwise.

Starting out in the rain is never fun then adding needing to have a map and bonus sheet and it makes it even worse. Starting off with 14001 miles on Barney at 8:05am. So off to Big Stone City SD for my first stop, get receipt from any business to prove you were there, . Kens Fireworks is the only place open 14011 miles at 8:22. Off to the extra bonus in Big Stone, as I get closer it is looking like this bonus is a waste of time. On a dead end road for minimal points, skipped it and went across the border to Ortonville MN for another receipt, 14014 @ 8:30. That in hand I headed to the north to get the additional bonus at Ortonville looked closer and saw the same issue too far for too few points. I am outta here back through Milbank and to the freeway to turn south as I get closer to the freeway I see Marvin and realize that there is a bonus there so I peel off the highway and run into Marvin to find the Blue Cloud Abbey bonus. Dang nabit I saw a sign for that a couple miles back. Oh well skip it and maybe I will have time to get it on the way in.

Off to I-29 and south to catch the first of the Victor-y lap/Ladies loop bonuses. Florence is my first stop so I peeled off the freeway and onto some county roads which ended up turning to gravel then the GPS wanted to route me down a non existent road, well it wasn't completely non existent it was a field road. Barney is NOT an off road bike. So I continued on the county gravel road and it bypassed that mess really well and ended up right in Florence, 14081 forgot the time. Gas receipt for my proof and I ran into Hootis there; hmmm wonder if he chose the same route as me. Looking at my bonus sheet I realize I have lost my score sheet and the Extra bonus sheet the rally bastard's

handed to us on our way out of the parking lot. <grumble> Crap where did I put that? Oh well don't have time to look for it now. At least the rain has let up and it is just damp now but windy.

So following the GPS I head out of town to the SW only to find out that the road the GPS wants me to take used to go through a dry lake bed, which is now a lake again. Quick look at the map and around I go, which ended up being ok cause that road turned to some nasty gravel on the other end, (I could see when I went past the other end of it). I headed south on county roads to Hazel. Not even sure which roads I was on but I think it was 22. In Hazel the task was to get the phone number of the phone booth west of the Bank. ??? There was not a phone booth in the town. I got a photo of the post office, the bank in the reference, and a picture of the down town area with the local store. I hope that is good enough to get the points. Hazel 14110 @ 10:16 (And I am still wondering where I left my score and bonus sheet.)

Tuck away that stuff and head east to US hwy 81 and south toward Madison bucking a cornering head wind on 81 at least is was fairly dry. Played with the GPS and turned on the tracking so the rest of the trip I know where I actually was along with plugging in the points I need to go to and the finish at this point I was going to be 10 minuets late arriving into Milbank not including a couple of towns and the fact that I need to back track to Big Stone yuk.

So in Madison I got a receipt 14178 @ 11:24. From there I headed out of Madison East and caught State Hwy 19 south and took that all the way to Parker SD where I filled up with fuel at 14226 @ 12:12, before Parker I realized that I had left the sheets I needed at Kens fireworks in Big Stone City, which meant I needed to go past Milbank back to Big Stone and then back to Milbank for the finish before 8 pm. Back tracking is not a good thing when running road rallies. While fueling I called Kens fireworks after the nice lady that answered at the wrong number I dialed got me the number and yes they did have my sheets and were saving them for me. Whew that was a load off my mind.

Now off to the west to get my next stop, Marion. To get to Marion I had to turn back north off of hwy 44 then backtrack out of town, Marion 14234 @ 12:31. Then south out of Marion I headed south on county road 17 to US 18 east to county 29 south which took me right into the city of Irene my next Victor-y lap/Ladies Loop stop 14263 @ 12:58.

From Irene I headed west on 46 over to US 81 and south to Yankton, across the river to Nebraska, very cool bridge across the river there with an over under set up, then west on NE 12 headed for Niobrara, home of the Team Strange event at the end of July of which I sadly will not be able to attend. Niobrara is also the current home of Arlene Liska who accompanied her husband Danny on there ride around the world. On my way west I see a ROAD CLOSED, DOH! No good. Stop and talk to the flag man, "road is under water up ahead you can get around by going south to Bloomfield and then west to Verdigre then back north to Niobrara, bummer to add 20 some miles to an already marginally route that is too long for 12 hours. Anyway in Niobrara there were 2 bonus tasks one for a gas receipt and one for a trinket from the Two Rivers Saloon. So gas at the station across the street and a can cooler from the bar, 14356 @ 2:26 and I am on my way back north.

I then went east out of Niobrara on NE 12, to a highway that isn't even on my mapping software yet, then north across the Missouri River to Hwy 37 which took me north to county road 20 east. Then north on county 13 through Avon and continued north to SD 46 which I took west a short distance. Then I hopped on County road 3 a.k.a. Delmont road into Delmont where the Firefighter memorial is. The task here was to find out when the Delmont Fire department was established which was in 1903, miles 14404 @ 3:16 pm.

Continue north to Zell and Aberdeen. I followed county road 3 north to SD 44 where I turned west and hopped onto US hwy 281 north, yee haw a US highway where I can set the cruise a little higher and not worry about speeding. Now the wind has switched on me so I am still running into a cornering headwind only it is stronger. So strong that I burned 5 gallons of gas in 96 miles which I fueled in Wolsey SD, 14498 @ 4:28. I hate getting bad fuel mileage. Oh well that is what I get for putting in the cheap stuff in Niobrara.

After Wolsey I headed west to county road 12 where I continued north county 12 ended up being gravel but very nice gravel so I could cruise at 55-60 which is what the speed limit was, or at least until I came over the knoll to find that black soupy clay spot in the road. It was too late to slow down so staying on the gas I sailed through with Barney trying to swap ends on me and just as it settled down I hit another, that scared the crap out of me. On the way to Zell this county road changed to 24 and then a slight jog on US 212 and there is Zell not much there, no place to get a receipt so I ended up getting a picture of my bike with the city sign, 14545 @ 5:08.

I continued north on county road 23 to SD 20 where the gravel across the way didn't look so forgiving any more especially after the episode I had a few miles back. Back east to US hwy 281 north nice 4 lane highway with a higher speed limit with no more stops needed until I got to Aberdeen. 14596 @ 5:48 I fueled on the west side and headed east on US 12 there after leaving Aberdeen the GPS is now calculating that I will arrive at the finish at 7:50 glad I was able to make up some time on 281!

East on US hwy 12 to SD 37 north to County road 13 which changed to County road 4 and that road took me straight east to Roslyn. In Roslyn there were also 2 bonuses, one for the hours of the vinegar museum and one for the receipt for the Victor-y lap/ladies loop, 14650 @ 6:38 hours of the museum 10-6 June 1st until October 31st. I also stopped into a little ice cream store and the nice young ladies behind the counter filled out a receipt for me with the address and phone number since nothing else was open. There are really nice people in SD (other than Lunatic).

Out of Roslyn south on 25 to Webster where I saw Hootis getting fuel when I turned east on US hwy 12 again and headed for the barn.

On the maps there is an old hwy 12 road that just happens to go around previously mentioned Marvin and right past the Blue Cloud Abbey where I needed to get the year of the corner stone on the front of the chapel, which is 1967, 14696 @ 7:20.

Back on the road and right past the finish to Big Stone where I picked up my bonus sheet and the score sheet then turned right back around and drove past the finish again to get the 5 points at the Legion Baseball memorial which was just a few blocks away from the finish. This bonus was on the extra sheet that they handed out as we were leaving and was one of the sheets that I left in Big Stone. So with that I headed over to the finish and had about 5 minutes to spare. Quite the ride! I ended up with 729 miles in

11 hours 50 minuets, 2587 points and the overall winner of the GLMC Bonzai Road Rally.