



Last years Ben and Jerry's Ride got 'hijacked' because most people preferred to do the Vermont Gaps



rather than eat ice cream. This year I planned to do a B&J Ride AND a Vermont Gaps Ride so that everyone could be happy. The B&J Ride was held earlier this year and this weekend a bunch of twisties addicts showed up for a long day on great roads!

The planned departure time was 8:00 and we actually got rolling about 8:20. There were 19 or so who departed from the Seacoast parking lot after Paul had graciously opened the store and provided fresh coffee and Duncan Munchkins!

The initial leg through Derry and up Route 93 to Goffstown only took a few minutes and soon we were on Rt. 114 heading toward Lake Sunapee. There was a little traffic...including another group of Cruiser that we passed in Weare...and we took the time to establish a rhythm and order that worked really well the rest of the day.



We arrived at a nice rest-stop in Newbury at the southern end of Lake Sunapee and picked up 4 more riders. So, a total of 23 riders and 10 UJM bikes, 11 Italian bikes and 2 German bikes, left from Lake Sunapee at about 9:45!



With 23 riders you really need a great "Sweep" keeping tabs on the group from behind and signaling the lead that all are accounted for. Bob B., a veteran from this years Canadian Sport Tour, did a great job. Thanks buddy!

I had just mounted a new Garmin ZUMO 450 and had programmed what looked to be a great route. Unfortunately, user inexperience and stubborn technology had me completely confused somewhere around Croyden Flat and we spent about a half-hour poking around on dead end dirt roads and

miscellaneous parking lots. Finally – I think it was Adam – came up to me, put his arm around my shoulder, and asked, "Where do you want to go?"

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He knew the area well and soon we were back on course. Not the course I had planned. But one that moved us in the right general direction! After a slight miscue in Claremont where the group broke in two, we were back together by the time we crossed into Vermont.

Route 44a, Tyson Road, was a great stretch of road and the pace began to pick up as we wound our way to Rt. 100. From there we swept north along this popular route. The traffic was fairly light and we managed to pass slower vehicles on the way to Rochester with no real drama!

The Rochester Café was already hopping when we arrived around 12:30. Most of us were seated within an hour and the others demonstrated foraging skills that would have pleased Yule Gibbons. There was a general store across the street and another lunch counter next door so soon the town of Rochester had Seacoast Gaps Riders spread out in parks, sidewalks, and at tables eating whatever they could find.



Near the end of lunch a nice Monster pulled into town and Steve introduced himself to the group. When I told him our intended route he suggested that Route 73, Brandon

Gap, was freshly paved and in better shape than Rt. 125. I asked if he would lead and he graciously agreed.

Brandon Gap was indeed freshly paved and would certainly have supported a more spirited pace. Steve led exactly as I would have however, given that he knew nothing about the group, our style, or preferred pace! I imagine some of the folks will find their way back to this route for another go!



We soon found our way to Route 7 North and were wicking along when Steve thrust out his hand and pointed ahead and to the right. There we saw a 30' gorilla holding a full size VW Beetle over his head in one massive hand! Some sight!

A little further we passed a couple of flocks of wild turkeys grazing in the fields bordering the road.

By now the day had warmed a bit and the sky was more clear and less clouds. It was turning into a perfect day for this kind of ride and everyone was really in a groove.

Gas stops were faster than you would think. In part because a lot of folks doubled up on filling their tanks and sorted out the money afterward. Great strategy!

Next up was the Appalachian Gap. Early on we were behind a Suzuki GSX something or other who was behind a State Car of Vermont – a Subaru Outback with a Howard Dean bumper sticker. Before the good part the Subaru pulled off and we all followed the Suzuki and a fair pace. We pulled over at



the top of the Gap and a Matt and Zoltan headed back down to take another run. This always makes me nervous but soon they were back, elated, and no worse for wear!

After a nice break we pointed our way east and down to Rt. 100 where we stopped and had a short conference. At this point it was getting a bit late and some members of the group decided that when we hit Rt. 89 they would keep going toward home while the rest of us decided to follow Steve a bit longer to the Floating Bridge.



A little north we jumped on Rt. 100b to avoid construction. What a fun stretch that turned out to be. Nice sweeping turns in green fields with the smell of hay and wild flowers occasionally drifting through my helmet. Once we hit 89 several booted past and the rest got off at Exit 5 and followed Rt 64 to Rt 114. This stretch turned out to be as fun as the Gaps. The pace was far more spirited and the traffic non-existent. In no time we were in Bookfield at the Floating Bridge.

Succumbing to peer pressure, Chris and I checked out the traction, and decided to take a chance. This in spite of the story related to us by a local fellow, school teacher and road-racer, who was drawn to our group by the note of the Italian twins. Apparently, earlier in the year, a couple of fellows on Gold Wings aimed for the far side of the bridge without giving the conditions much thought. Our local friend had to help tip both their bikes back up after they went down on the slippery boards!



I went first, both feet out like out-riggers, and started crawling my way across. About half way across I heard the distinct rumble of a 'piped' ST2 as it powered past, spraying me in a



shower of water. And to add insult to injury, a couple of local fishermen at the far end commented, loud enough for me to hear over Chris' bike, "Well at least ONE of them has some balls!"

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We turned around and I followed Chris' example and powered my way through the water to the other side where I stopped in a cloud of steam rising from my pipes!



We took a couple of pictures with a statue of a Hippo Father and Son which was created by a local artist, Jim Sardonis.

(<http://www.sardonis.com/piece.php?id=21>) You may have seen his Whales Tails that rise from the earth just outside of Burlington Vermont.

The last stop of the day was at the Boat in a Field. My friend Skip had told me about this a couple of years ago and I had actually found it once while

trying to get to the Floating Bridge. It is less than a mile up the road so we made a quick stop to wonder what motivated the owner to go through such effort. It turned out that that road was an excellent last boogie to Rt. 89 where some gassed up and we all parted ways!



Great day! No tickets, no crashes, no incidents, no fights! That may sound boring to some but it's just the way I like it!

Thanks all....

Regards,

Dave

Dave Michaud
Seacoast Sport Cycle
Summer Ride Leader
(617)285-7154 (cell)
batman@batmanmoto.com (email)
www.batmanmoto.com
www.seacoastsport.com

Ride safe.....
.....ride often!

(For a few more pictures point to <http://www.batmanmoto.com/photo.htm> and Vermont Gaps Ride!)