

2009 Iron Butt Rally, The Finish
Friday, September 4, 2009

In one of the most dramatic finishes in history, Jim Owen has won the 2009 Iron Butt Rally. Riding a BMW R1200RT, Jim scored 139,833 points. In 2nd place, with 136,090 points, was Jeff Earls, riding a BMW K1200GT. Owen and Earls ran neck and neck for the entire 11 days, during which Earls maintained a slim lead for the first two legs.

Rounding out the top ten were the following riders:

- 3rd place was Eric Jewell, riding a Honda ST1300, with 130,338 points.
- 4th place was Chris Sakala, riding a BMW R1200RT, with 126,481 points.
- 5th place was Greg Marbach, riding a Yamaha FJR1300, with 122,021 points.
- 6th place was Mike Hutsal, riding a Honda ST1300, with 117,843 points.
- 7th place was Rick Miller, riding a Honda GL1800, with 114,326 points.
- 8th place was Bob Lilley, riding a BMW K1200LT, with 111,836 points.
- 9th place was Ken Meese, riding a BMW K1200GT, with 111,129 points.
- 10th place was Peter Behm, riding a Yamaha FJR1300, with 109,350 points.

The final hours of the Rally were marred by an accident about 100 miles from the finish. Australian Davo Jones had just crossed the Canada/U.S. border and was heading south on U.S. 95 toward a final bonus stop when he hit a deer. Davo sustained serious injuries and had to be transported to the nearest hospital via helicopter. Many of the top riders returning from Canada, including Owen and Earls, were detained as a result of the temporary road closure at the scene of the accident.

Prior to the road closure the riders returning from Canada were on schedule to make it to Zip's Drive-In in Sandpoint, Idaho for the following bonus:

Zip's Drive In	2,327 points	Friday, September 4
1301 Highway 2		5:00am – 7:00am
Sandpoint, Idaho		
N48 15.112 - W116 36.446		

Enjoy something to eat or drink here and obtain a receipt.

Category: Espionage, prison escape.

Christopher Boyce (the "Falcon" of the true-crime book The Falcon and the Snowman) frequented a nearby Sandpoint restaurant while on the run after escaping from a federal prison in Lompoc, California in January 1980. Since the actual restaurant doesn't open early enough, we're giving the business to IBR veteran Michael Boge.

Date: _____ Time: _____ Odometer: _____ Code: SDP Approved: _____

Although the routing options on this leg were considerable, it was expected that all of the riders attempting to place as high as possible would make Sandpoint the last bonus on their route. Valued at 2,327 points and being located just 75 miles from the finish, it was a “must do” bonus. The only issue was the 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. time window. To avoid penalty points at the finish, riders had to arrive in Spokane not later than the close of the bonus time window in Sandpoint. For this reason, every rider had to know that they needed to be at the bonus location at the beginning of the time window. This would ensure that sufficient time would be available to make it to the finish without incurring penalty points.

Crossing the border into the U.S. before dawn this morning, about a dozen riders were on schedule to make Sandpoint by the opening of the bonus window. Just when they thought they had it made, they came upon the accident scene where they were delayed for about 45 minutes. Michael Boge did an excellent job of processing riders through the bonus at his restaurant, but the trip from Sandpoint to the finish was anything but leisurely.

Colin Tanji was at the Sandpoint bonus when the riders arrived and rode with the top riders on the back of a Gold Wing ridden by IBR veteran Eddie James all the way to the finish. Based on Colin’s progress reports during the ride in, it became obvious that many riders were probably going to arrive after the start of the penalty window. To minimize the check-in delay, Michael Kneebone and Ira Agins moved the check-in table from inside the hotel to the parking lot and Steve Hobart used his Highway Patrol experience to clear a path from the parking lot to the check-in table.

Just minutes before the beginning of the penalty window, several motorcycles could be seen approaching the hotel. Jim Owen and Jeff Earls screeched to a halt at the front of the hotel and literally ran to the check-in table to stop the clock. They were both logged in at 6:59 a.m., a whole minute to spare.

Owen’s Leg 3 point total was 78,166, exceeding the 76,000 points for the entire rally needed to be classified as a finisher. Earls had the second highest Leg 3 point total at 74,652 points. (It should be noted that Earls received 1,000 penalty points at the finish for failing to turn in the rally flag he lost on Leg 1; however this did not affect his finishing position.)

Owen obtained an advantage over Earls at the very beginning of Leg 3. Within minutes of opening the Leg 3 bonus listing on Monday morning, Owen determined which bonuses made the most sense for the first day and got on the road as quickly as possible. He didn’t walk to his bike upon leaving the lobby of the Doubletree Hotel in Santa Ana; he ran. He was on the road by 5:30 a.m. and got out of the Los Angeles area before the worst of the morning rush hour. The early start made it possible for him to get to a 4,568 point bonus in Rand, Colorado, in time to take a photograph in daylight hours. This was quite a challenge because Rand was a 1,020 mile ride from Santa Ana. Jim was cutting it so close to make Rand during daylight hours that he deliberately passed up the 1,464 point bonus for Doc Holiday’s grave in Glenwood Springs, Colorado. That bonus is only 1 mile off of the Interstate!

Although Earls scored bonuses that Owen passed up, he couldn't make up for the advantage Owen gained by being able to score the big bonus in Rand before the end of the first day on Leg 3.

The top woman finisher was Nancy Oswald, who finished 20th overall with 103,800 points. Nancy is one of 23 riders in the "Gold Medal" category, reflecting the combination of a very strong ride with very few technical mistakes.

Tom and Rosie Sperry were the top finishing 2-up team, finishing 32nd overall with 94,304 points. The Sperry's were in the "Silver Medal" category.

Listed below are the final results showing, position, rider name, motorcycle model, miles ridden, and total points scored. Gold Medal finishers are those with at least 99,000 points, Silver starts at 91,000 points, Bronze at 84,000, and the "finisher" level starts at 76,000 points. (Please note that there will be some minor changes in the finishing positions resulting from last minute resolutions of scoring protests that I did not have the time to fully address. There will be no changes to the top 20 and no changes to the medal status.)

1	Jim Owen	BMW R1200RT	12,706 miles	139,833 points
2	Jeff Earls	BMW K1200GT	12,153 miles	136,090 points
3	Eric Jewell	Honda ST1300	12,090 miles	130,338 points
4	Chris Sakala	BMW R1200RT	12,238 miles	126,481 points
5	Greg Marbach	Yamaha FJR1300	11,931 miles	122,021 points
6	Mike Hutsal	Honda ST1300	11,321 miles	117,843 points
7	Rick Miller	Honda Gold Wing	11,388 miles	114,326 points
8	Bob Lilley	BMW K1200LT	12,268 miles	111,836 points
9	Ken Meese	BMW K1200GT	11,047 miles	111,129 points
10	Peter Behm	Yamaha FJR1300	11,891 miles	109,350 points
11	Michael Evans	Yamaha FJR1300	11,535 miles	109,020 points
12	Roger Sinclair	Kaw. Concours14	12,365 miles	108,903 points
13	Matt Watkins	Yamaha FJR1300	12,502 miles	108,653 points
14	Andy Mills	Victory Vision	11,410 miles	108,314 points
15	Dick Peek	Yamaha FJR1300	11,401 miles	107,138 points
16	Rick Sauter	Honda Gold Wing	10,282 miles	106,003 points
17	John Jordan	BMW R1150GS	10,302 miles	105,321 points
18	Brian Jack	BMW R1150GS	12,629 miles	105,231 points
19	Mark Crane	BMW R1200GS	11,378 miles	104,405 points
20	Nancy Oswald	BMW R1200GS	11,005 miles	103,800 points
21	Andy Kirby	Honda ST1300	12,135 miles	103,343 points
22	Chuck Gittner	BMW K1200LT	12,669 miles	100,692 points
23	John Langan	Honda Gold Wing	10,858 miles	99,120 points
24	Gerhard Memmen-Krueger	Honda Gold Wing	9,968 miles	98,643 points
25	Kevin Lechner	Honda ST1300	12,001 miles	97,279 points
26	Joseph Leggett	BMW R1200GSA	10,361 miles	96,993 points
27	Wendy Crockett	Yamaha FJR1300	10,500 miles	96,033 points
28	Bill Thweatt	Honda ST1300	10,724 miles	95,251 points
29	Buford Neely	Yamaha FJR1300	9,939 miles	95,073 points

30	Bill Wade	BMW R1200GS	9,864 miles	94,594 points
31	Paul Allison	Honda Gold Wing	9,642 miles	94,515 points
32	Tom/Rosie Sperry	Honda Gold Wing	10,233 miles	94,304 points
33	Bob St. George	Yamaha FJR1300	9,613 miles	94,266 points
34	Kevin Healey	Triumph Trophy	9,569 miles	94,222 points
35	Chris McGaffin	Yamaha FJR1300	10,088 miles	93,007 points
36	Jeff/Milinda Bakker	Honda Gold Wing	10,110 miles	92,888 points
37	Greg Rice	Honda Gold Wing	10,962 miles	92,614 points
38	George Barnes	BMW K1200LT	11,146 miles	91,234 points
39	Dennis Powell	Honda Gold Wing	10,342 miles	91,071 points
40	Art Garvin	Honda Gold Wing	9,992 miles	90,992 points
41	Bo Griffin	BMW R1200GSA	9,829 miles	89,967 points
42	Dave Biasotti	BMW R1150RT	10,322 miles	89,814 points
43	Jim Frens	Honda Gold Wing	11,514 miles	89,199 points
44	Vance Keeney	BMW K1200GT	9,440 miles	89,155 points
45	Terry Neale	Yamaha FJR1300	9,861 miles	88,412 points
46	Jeff/Carol Fremder	BMW R1150RT	9,282 miles	88,225 points
47	Brian Roberts	Honda ST1300	9,756 miles	88,172 points
48	Jerry White	Yamaha FJR1300	8,836 miles	87,978 points
49	Terry/Linda Lahman	Honda Gold Wing	9,474 miles	87,341 points
50	Steve Short	Honda Gold Wing	10,981 miles	86,695 points
51	Bob Elliot	BMW R1200GS	8,645 miles	85,813 points
52	David Porter	Yamaha FJR1300	9,400 miles	84,429 points
53	Jim Mulcahy	Yamaha FJR1300	9,546 miles	83,969 points
54	Chris Whitmore	Yamaha FJR1300	9,228 miles	83,633 points
55	Rick Neeley	Honda Gold Wing	9,533 miles	83,481 points
56	Winston Oxley	BMW R1100RS	10,700 miles	82,957 points
57	Maura Gatensby	Honda ST1300	9,436 miles	82,629 points
58	Barry Bertram	Suzuki RE5	9,948 miles	81,855 points
59	Bob Collin	BMW R1200RT	9,440 miles	81,197 points
60	Joel Rappoport	BMW R60/6	10,554 miles	81,106 points
61	David Bourdeaux	Honda Gold Wing	9,244 miles	81,090 points
62	Jacques Titolo	Kawasaki ZX12R	9,527 miles	80,680 points
63	Jennyfer Audet	Honda CBR1100XX	9,525 miles	80,680 points
64	Doug Webb	BMW R1200GSA	8,343 miles	80,131 points
65	Richard Buber	BMW R1150RT	11,401 miles	79,721 points
66	Bob/Sylvie Torter	BMW K1200GT	9,456 miles	79,144 points
67	Thane Silliker	Honda ST1100	10,159 miles	78,967 points
68	Glenn Pancoast	BMW R1200RT	9,237 miles	78,945 points
69	Tom Loftus	Honda ST1300	9,718 miles	78,089 points
70	Margaret Peart	BMW R1200GS	9,502 miles	77,272 points
DNF	David Legnosky	Honda Gold Wing	8,289 miles	74,827 points
DNF	David Nelson	Honda Gold Wing	10,418 miles	74,073 points
DNF	Alan Barbic	Yamaha FJR1300	10,702 miles	73,369 points
DNF	Charlie Clemmer	BMW R1200RT	10,612 miles	72,432 points
DNF	Tom Bisagni	Yamaha FJR1300	8,278 miles	71,303 points
DNF	Don Fitzgerald	Honda ST1300	7,936 miles	70,839 points
DNF	Larry Scalzitti	BMW R1150GS	8,432 miles	69,155 points

DNF	Gary Jarl	BMW R1200RT	7,933 miles	67,066 points
DNF	Sal Terranova	Honda ST1100	9,141 miles	64,941 points
DNF	Mike Langford	BMW K1200LT	8,326 miles	64,168 points
DNF	Bob Mutchler	BMW R1150RT	9,308 miles	63,998 points
DNF	Alex Harper	Suzuki RE5	9,748 miles	63,570 points
DNF	Kevin Smart	Honda GL1100	7,003 miles	54,442 points
DNF	Derek Dickson	Yamaha FJR1300	7,836 miles	49,634 points
DNF	David Hicks	Yamaha FJR1300	7,980 miles	48,930 points
DNF	Bob Lyskowski	Harley FLHT	6,045 miles	45,996 points
DNF	Davo Jones	Kaw. Concours 14	7,323 miles	43,730 points
DNF	Kurt Dix	Kawasaki Concours	6,598 miles	39,795 points
DNF	Tony Hudson	Honda ST1300	6,183 miles	37,465 points
DNF	Mark Dieck	Yamaha FJR1300	6,610 miles	36,883 points
DNF	John Stanforth	Honda Gold Wing	5,842 miles	34,760 points
DNF	Bob Collins	Honda Gold Wing	6,853 miles	34,055 points
DNF	Kent Kidwell	BMW R1200RT	4,664 miles	32,204 points
DNF	Neil Ward	Kawasaki KLR650	6,395 miles	28,207 points
DNF	Scott LaShier	Honda ST1300	2,750 miles	12,103 points
DNF	Phil Becker	Honda ST1100	2,853 miles	12,030 points
DNF	Bill Rauschenberg	BMW R1200GSA	2,777 miles	9,421 points
DNF	Kendall Anderson	Moto Guzzi Norge	2,552 miles	9,097 points
DNF	John Ferber	BMW R1200GSA	2,649 miles	8,586 points
DNF	David Riley	Honda Gold Wing	2,425 miles	7,604 points
DNF	Jim Bain	BMW K1200LT	0 miles	0 points

I may have to correct a few typos in a subsequent version of this report. It's been a rather hectic day. I'll post an epilog providing more details in a few days.

Tom Austin
September 4, 2009
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