

2021 Senior Butt Rally
Saturday, September 25, 2021
Day -1

The Senior Butt Rally, and its new companion for 2021, the Junior Butt Rally, will jointly get underway at 8:00 am CDT, Sunday, September 26, 2021 from the parking lot of the Hilton Garden Inn in Denison, TX. The “SBR” as it has become known is a two-bike team event, which requires one rider to be an Iron Butt Rally finisher who is at least 55 years old. The Junior Butt Rally, or JBR, operates under the same structure and rules, and is open to any licensed motorcycle rider. The JBR is making its first start as a new rally this year. The riders began assembling at the host hotel as early as Thursday night with most making their way in by Friday evening. Those on hand early enough to make the “no-host” dinner (meaning pay your own way) partook of pizza and beer at a local establishment within walking distance of the hotel.

Two years ago at the first running of the SBR, there was a large block of would-be riders that could not get to the starting line for medical reasons. Did I mention this is the Senior Butt Rally? This year the dropouts seem mostly related to work or family issues. Is that a sign we are taking care of ourselves better, or is this year’s class just bored, restless, and riding in spite of their ailments? We should find out over the next few days.

Friday night before the Saturday Start Banquet is the rider’s last free night to blow off steam. Saturday night after the hotel banquet meal the riders receive for the first time the bonus locations and point values assigned to them. There is no time after that for hanging around the bar and shooting the breeze with fellow riders unless you do not intend to do well or even finish the rally. Therefore, that’s what Friday night is designed to accomplish. As the adult beverages were served up at the hotel bar, the riders and volunteers looked back at the year behind them, determined to make the SBR/JBR a fitting notch in the LD Rally scene after its two-year absence from the calendar. Having been both a rider of rallies and a volunteer, I am keenly aware the night before the big bonus reveal is a great time for speculation. This event stayed true to that course. What will be the theme of the rally? What will the puzzle be? How many miles do you think we will have to ride to do well? All great questions that will be answered in time.

SBR teams receive “official” team numbers based on the IBA three digit number of “lead dog” 55 year old or older Iron Butt Rally Finisher. This year they almost cover the full length of the history of the IBR. The lowest team number is claimed by Al Greenwood at #18, as a result of completing the second ever Iron Butt Rally in 1985. Fittingly, to honor that accomplishment, Al’s bike along with teammate Cory Ure, will be the first to leave the starting line Sunday morning. They have chosen the team name, “The Bearded Blunders”. Hopefully, the blunders will be few.

Making up the other end of the IBR spectrum, interestingly, six members of the field received their three digit numbers by notching Finisher status in the 2021 Iron Butt Rally held in Provo, Utah earlier this year. The IBA restates original membership numbers with three-digit numbers for riders who successfully complete the IBR. This is often referred to as the “coveted three-digit number”. The SBR awards a not so esteemed but still important three-digit Senior Butt Rally number to all SBR Finishers who are previous IBR Finishers and at least 55 years old. In 2019, the first 13 SBR numbers were awarded.

The six 2021 IBR Finishers, or the “SBR Six Pack”, are (in order of their newly assigned IBA three-digit numbers) David Uhl (627), James Jackson (628), Bobbie Jackson (629), Mike Hall (634), James Handley (640), and Dannette Sifford (647). Dannette holds the highest three-digit IBA number at this time and will do so until a rider who not having previously done so, completes the next Iron Butt Rally to be held in 2023. James Handley made it into the field as a last minute replacement for Marc Beaulac’s teammate

Alex Schmidt had to drop for family related reasons. Things happen, but Alex is pulling for them to do well even as he sits out this ride.

Many of the riders have tracking devices and have linked to them to the SpotWalla group rider page for the event. To follow along click on the following link:

<https://new.spotwalla.com/lp/d2b5-4b1ff-f1f4/view>

There won't be any activity on the page until Sunday morning. After the riders leave the parking lot, you can join in the fun and follow their tracks as they seek the winning route.

I'll close the Day -1 report with a note of thanks to some of the volunteers that have helped up to this point to pull the rallies together in one fashion or another. There are others of course that will come into the picture as the days go by. Thanks to Dave McQueeney for Rally Book editing and GPS waypoint quality control. And to Jim and Donna Fousek and Bill and Jeanie Cumbie for their enormous help with rider check-in and start issues. And to Bill Thweatt for, well, being Bill Thweatt, the Finisher check-in guy and for appearing at the Start Banquet to give the riders a look at their last check-in stop at the Finish. And of course to Mike Kneebone for his steady hand at the controls.

The Day 1 report will post tomorrow as soon as we can digest the results from the field. We'll introduce you to the field of riders and provide a little insight on the rally puzzle they are trying to solve. Stay tuned.