

# BREAKFAST RIDERS

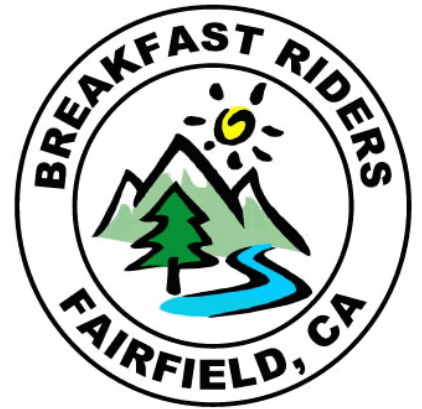
## Hwy 36 Three Day Ride 2009

I got to the gas station Saturday morning and found only Frank White, who said he was going to leave somewhere up the

coast and make his run only one day. We met Steve Wright and Stan Hitchcock at Stanly Ln in Napa. Stan was towing a trailer behind his bike. As a group, we agreed to bypass the race traffic near Infineon. Instead, we headed up Hwy 29/121 aiming for Hwy 128, with Steve leading the way. It was a good idea, but we ran into plenty of traffic anyways. Once beyond Calistoga, we had better luck with traffic and the ride was moving at a better pace, but still very relaxed. We jumped onto Hwy 101 to get to Cloverdale for our first gas stop. We pushed on to Booneville where we tried to get lunch, but the service wasn't slow, it was just not happening at all. We pushed on to Hwy 1, into Fort Bragg, and had lunch at Cap'n Flints down under the bridge. Stan was gracious and picked up the tab -- thank you. We made another gas stop back on Hwy 1. From there, Frank headed for Hwy 20 and made it home about 6. For us three, we headed north on Hwy 1. The traffic was much better beyond Fort Bragg and we got to stretch the throttle a few times. The temps, which had been cool at the coast, slowly started to climb as we climbed into the mountains. We made a stop in Leggett before getting onto Hwy 101. We made another stop just up the road to use the restrooms. Here we were offered a bicycle and pannier by a young, fast talking fella. My guess was the stuff was stolen. He was trying to exchange the rig for a guitar -- despite us not having any guitars or any way to transport his rig. Back on Hwy 101, while not straight, the road was definitely freeway-ish in feel. As we got to Rio Dell, I pulled off and waved goodnight to Stan and Steve as they headed for their campground in Fortuna. I got gas and made it to my aunt's. I was so focused in greeting her and my great grand niece, that I forgot to turn off my electrics and drained the battery dead. With the help of a neighbor, I got the bike started and took it out on the road for some recharge miles. I tested it and it restarted fine, so I parked it for the night. The first leg was 273 miles. As I got settled in for the night, I walked back and forth to the bike unloading gear -- in my bare feet -- and cut my left foot on a piece of glass -- right where the foot peg would rest the next day.

Come the morning, I loaded up the bike, turned the key, and rrr-rrr-thud-snick. Dead battery. My grand niece supplied the jump start and the bike started. As I was reattaching the seat and gear, the bike stopped. Dang! I called Steve and Stan to let them know I was delayed. I undid everything, reattached the cables, and...it would not fire up. Rrrrr rrrrr rrrrr...nothing! I checked my fuses -- all good. I then noticed I had not turned the petcock on. With gas now flowing, the bike fired up! Now I put everything back on just in time for Steve and Stan to arrive. We bypassed breakfast to allow my battery to get really well charged. Now onto the main event...Hwy 36...150 miles of twisted road. It was mostly gentle twisties and wide, smooth pavement, with a few tighter turns on narrow one lanes. The views were outstanding. We took a break at the junction with Hwy 3 before heading into Wildwood for gas and lunch. From there it was just 56 miles to Red Bluff. This stretch was more narrow and had more tighter turns -- nice. I let my throttle hand loose through here. But it ended in Red Bluff and

the high temps well into the 100's. 412 miles covered. We made a stop at a store so Steve could get a towel and more fluids for all of us. I stayed by the bikes in the shade...and roasted. Stan and Steve were going to head inland for camping at lake Almanor. They tried to talk me into it. I could not see myself dealing with that extreme heat, so I opted to continue the course as charted. (their story below) Not only that, I planned to make it all the way home in what was left of the day! I headed up Hwy 5 for Redding. Straight freeway. Hot freeway. I took the Hwy 299 exit and made a stop for gas and more fluids. Hwy 299 quickly proved to be crowded with slow traffic. But along with a few aggressive passes and plenty of passing lanes, I was able to keep my speeds well above crawl. I stopped in Weaverville for more gas and more fluids and was relieved to feel the temps had dropped nicely...to a cool 106. Back on Hwy 299 and was I covering miles quickly...safely...by using the throttle with passion. The road widened and straightened as I got closer to Arcata, and I slowed down to behave in traffic. Another gas and fluid stop on Hwy 101 before I headed south. 580 miles covered -- 307 for the day so far. This is a beautiful stretch of road where the gentle, multi-lane road allows for normal freeway speeds most of the time. I was starting to check the height of the sun to calculate if I could do this. I stopped in Garberville for gas and to put my sweatshirt on -- it was getting cooler with the coastal fog creeping in. As I got closer to Hwy 1, I debated: speed on Hwy 101 or twisties on Hwy 1. My choice was Hwy 1 -- duh! The sun was getting lower as I ran for the coast. No one was in my way and only a few cars going north. Fantastic. I did not make Fort Bragg before the sun set. I just missed it by a few minutes. I planned on having dinner at the fish and chip joint on the south side of town, but it was closed. So I stopped for gas, fluids, candy bar, and to put on my cold weather gloves. 727 miles covered -- 504 for the day. As I headed south, I kept an eye out for any food place that was opened -- none. Darkness settled quickly on a moonless, foggy night. I had to really keep my speeds within my headlight's range. Sometimes it was 10-15 mph. Other times I was able to briefly reach 70 mph. Again the coastal highway was mine and mine alone for long periods of time. It felt almost as if I was granted a magic moment -- just beyond great! My focus was so tight on the road that I came up on Gualala and almost shot through, but I stopped and got gas. Nothing else was open so I could not even get a candy bar or soda. I admit that even I was starting to get tired and butt sore and colder, so I started doing exercises while riding. This helped, but I had to stop a couple of times just to stretch for 5 minutes or so. When I did, I found the night was so dark I could not see the bike under me nor the ground. I did not dare get off as I may not find my bike again! I had planned to take Annapolis Rd, but missed the sign as I was focusing on the road so intently. I even missed Stewarts Pt Rd. Never saw the signs. I did see the signs for Hwy 116 and took that hoping to escape the cold. 823 miles covered -- 600 for the day. I was hoping that there would be someplace open for food, but all I saw was darkened stores...even the liquor stores were closed! I followed Hwy 116 to Guerneville Rd into Santa Rosa. Here I hit the first traffic, light as it was, in many hours before getting off of Hwy 101. The freeway had a lot of cars, so I had to share the road. I pulled off at Petaluma and saw In-N-Out open! When I got the food, I was so tired I almost wasn't hungry. I topped the tank again and pushed



on -- home was closer and the temps were finally getting more comfortable. I hit Hwy 12 and told myself this is nearing the last stretch. My brain was still functioning and focusing quite well. It was my hands, my neck, the cut on my left foot, and my butt that were not happy at all with me. I was stretching and exercising often just to keep going. Finally I hit Jameson Canyon. Fairfield was just ahead. I dipped onto Hwy 80 and then Hwy 680. The last stretch -- and finally home. 908 miles total -- 635 for the day. It was 12:30 -- fifteen and a half hours mostly spent on the bike, mostly twisting in the turns. I averaged 41 mph for the day. The longest I had ever ridden in one day. Tired. Happy to be home. Happy to have rode so much.