

Joe Denton's 2001 Utah 1088

First, a big thank you to Steve Chalmers and crew for letting me enjoy their most excellent rally. It was a first class event I can guarantee.

I spent a good part of the week before trying to get ready, tires (last time I was there he even measured tread depth on everyone), plumbed a fuel cell (tried many different options and ended up with gravity fed to the vent line) and general checking things.

I had planned on leaving Thursday, but ended up leaving Friday morning due to family items. It had been very hot in the Sacramento valley and I was looking forward to the coolness of Donner pass. That was about the only coolness I found all weekend.

After a breakfast and missed connection in Reno (Chuck knows where his rally flag is but not the keys to his office :)) I pointed the K-bike east and settled in...until just after Lovelock. Lovelock has a special attraction for me, it seems I can't head East out of there without something happening. This time the bike was coughing and sputtering. I checked the things I could and found I could ride slowly, which I did to the nearest exit with life forms. I had determined it to be fuel related so I pulled the filter. It was plugged. I ended up bypassing it (the gas in a K-bike in triple digit heat can damn near fry a hand) and headed east again. This time to a real town with a Kragens.

I called the motel and left word for Steve that I would miss tech inspection but would show up. Swapping the filters on the K-bike is a lot easier than the Oilheads, and I can do it in a matter of minutes now.

From about Winnemucca until late Sunday it seemed like the wind never stopped blowing, and usually at a good pace. I arrived in Salt Lake and expected to have a beer, visit, stay the night and if Steve didn't need any extra help go to new Mexico to visit my brother since I was late for tech. Didn't happen that way. Tech and the mileage check happened. I was going to be riding. I think other folks showed up even later than I did and

Steve handled it with what I've come to see as his normal professionalism and took the care of them also.

After the mileage run I checked in to find Brian Boberick busy on the laptop, with the colored dots, notes, and the face of a serious ralliist. I tried to find some of the bonus locations on the map but since I had left my glasses at home couldn't. Since it had been a while since I had eaten I decided to enjoy the hotel's 10.99 prime rib special.

I read the bonus locations (most of them) and ate, planning on riding the main route. I stopped by Joe Zulaski's room after supper and he was planning a much different route. One that took him to several states and challenged his time/speed management. It turned out that he was the only one that raised his hand the next morning when it was asked who had chosen that route.

6am was the riders meeting, and the handing out of the secret bonus, be back at the hotel and have a rally worker sign the sheet in about an hour. That would mean back tracking for me, and I didn't feel like doing that, although it was worth the points.

I headed to Wendover to pick up some Keno tickets. It turns out that not all of the casinos in Wendover sell them. About 5 stops later I was headed back (after a short where the hell is USH 36? I'm putting a magnifying glass in the tank bag today). There was a bonus on the way to Wendover and I put to use something that I think saved a lot of time for me during the rally. Filling in the answers while on the move. Later I passed some riders at a gas station. They caught me at a stop sign and proceeded to the next bonus. I managed to pass them while they had stopped there. I wrote the answer, time and mileage while riding. They passed me again, and again I passed as they were stopped. If they had been writing while riding they would have been far ahead of me. The sign at the first checkpoint listed the temp at 101 I think. Drinking quite a bit kept me going ok, but the heat can wear on a person. I got a little relief just after finding the cemetery up the dirt road (Gaston?). Turning onto the road there was a rider stopped. I asked how the road was and he said it was ok, as long as it didn't rain again, otherwise it would be like grease. Exactly.

Just after starting back the clouds that were making light and noise decided to dump a few buckets on the road. In 5 minutes I was on grease. I stopped for a bit and walked down the hill, my Kalahari boots slipping. In another few minutes it stopped and I started again after a couple more. The ground was getting drier by the second.

Back up to Beaver to checkpoint 2. Mike Heren is there with Dave McQueeny. Mike rode out just to visit on his CBR. I decided I wanted to head north for awhile. The clouds were lighting up the sky pretty good, with the wind making sure my tires didn't get too bad a flat spot. I watched the storm for quite a time, taking one breather at a gas station where one of the locals told me that lightning had struck across the street from him and he felt electricity go up his arm.

I went north to Roy, where the bonus had close (was supposed to be 24hrs but they were doing a re-mod or something so I took down info and got a gas receipt) and came back south. I got lost in all the construction so I visited the state capital and went by the temple, neither of which I had seen before.

Checking the GPS I saw I was close to 1088 miles. I thought it might be nice to make it a true Utah 1088 and headed back to the barn. I missed by less than a mile (1089).

The next morning after checking in and submitting paperwork it was naps the lies. Dan Cohen (who seemed well rested and feeling pretty good despite a major incident the day before) has a great memory and told about some of his 100 days, 48 states and his Alaska trip.

At the awards banquet we found the ST4's of Eagan and Morrison had tied for first. Quite a few riders put in a very good rally, and some had quite a ride even if they didn't quite make it back in time.

The Chalmers were presented with a special gift as appreciation for all the work they have put into the 1088 for the 10 years it has been going, with the understanding that the helicopter part of the gift was not to be used for scouting bonus locations.

I headed home afterwards, catching Mike Heren in Wendover at a gas station (after he passed me, that CBR goes well but sucks some gas at speed or into a headwind). We decided to ride home together (after he thought about having a gas station riding with him) and we fought the wind most of the way to Reno. There was one spot, just after some rain, that we saw the most impressive full double rainbows that I have ever seen.

Again, Thanks Steve, and if any of you want a first class ride be sure to sign up early for next years.