

**Craig Moore  
Newnan, GA  
Great Lakes SS3000**

This is a ride report detailing a recent motorcycle adventure I took on September 15<sup>th</sup> thru 17<sup>th</sup> 2005. I named this ride the Great Lakes SS3000. First off, SS3000 (Saddle Sore 3000) is an Iron Butt Association (IBA) sanctioned ride that consists of three days of more than a 1000-mile each day on a motorcycle. I decided to ride along the north side of the Great Lakes; this is where the name came from.

This particular ride started in Wytheville, VA took me into Canada, around the north side Lakes Ontario, Huron and Superior, ending in Newnan, GA. Like most rides of this kind I started planning and thinking about the ride a few months before it actually happened. There is so much to consider when you are going to be traveling 1000+ miles per day for 3 days in a row on a motorcycle, figuring to be on the bike for 16 plus hours each day.

### **Day One**

The first day started early in Wytheville, VA with a destination of Sudbury, Canada which is 1184 miles away. I was up and started to get ready at 3:15 AM with a planned departure time of 5:00 AM. I had to get my witness form signed as I am planning to submit this ride to the IBA and must follow their rules precisely. I approached the night clerk at the hotel I was staying at and she knew all about the IBA; she rides a Harley Sportster herself. So she filled out the witness form and insisted that she get a picture before I leave. So, I finished loading the bike and pulled up front where she took my photo with both her and my camera. My plan was to take a lot of photos during this ride... that was the only time my camera was used during the entire trip!

Started off by topping my fuel tank in Wytheville, VA to get a starting receipt, the time on that receipt was my official start time of 4:45 AM EST with an odometer reading of 102,652. I was taking I-81 North all of the way into Canada. Although the scenery in Virginia is gorgeous along this stretch, I'd already seen it a few times before so wasn't too concerned about what I was missing this early in the morning. It was cool in the low 60's when I left, this really felt good, as it's been so hot this summer and I was really looking forward to some cooler weather as I headed north. I rode in and out of heavy fog until the sun came out and burned the fog off.

The ride up I-81 through VA and PA was simply awesome. This part of the country is so pretty to begin with, but combining the rolling hills, mountains, pastures and barns along with cattle and other livestock mixed in with varying amounts of fog and sun was simply spectacular. I really enjoyed this part of the ride up through PA as the scenery was just great, weather was perfect in the mid 70's and there were really no issues with traffic. I was off to a good start, averaging just a click over 200 miles per tank, which is typical for my bike.

Knowing that I had a long day ahead of me, I was really trying to make some time and get into Canada as soon as possible. My only stop in New York was at McGraw, NY. It had

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started to get a bit cloudy up there so I really didn't have the opportunity to enjoy the scenery in this stretch of the ride. I didn't mind the cloudy weather, as it kept things cool, which I enjoyed a great deal. Getting into Canada was on my mind, as I'd been told that some people have had problems crossing the border, due to the increased security these days.

It was around 4:00 PM when I approached the US/Canada border crossing. There was a significant amount of traffic at the crossing, so it was a stop and go situation. This was the first time I was hot all day long and actually started sweating a bit. There were several lanes open and the security personnel were moving traffic through nicely. I was prepared with my passport and driver's license ready along with my insurance and registration information in a readily accessible location. When it was my turn, I handed the guard my passport and driver's license, he asked where I was going and if I was doing business in Canada. I told him I was not here for business, just a tourist heading for Sudbury... that was it, he said have a nice day or the like. Ha, goal number one, I made it into Canada.

My day was hardly over at this point; I still had nearly 500 miles to go before I would be in Sudbury where I was to spend the first night. Just after entering Canada there were bridges that cross the St. Lawrence, wow it was simply beautiful along this area. It was just sinking in that my trusty bike and me were in another country and really off on an adventure!

My next immediate goal was to get through Toronto; I've been warned that the traffic there could be very heavy. I needed fuel, so I stopped at Gananoque with over a ¼ tank of fuel still on board, a bit unusual but I needed the stop and thought a full tank wouldn't hurt about now. This was my first experience with buying fuel by the liter at \$1.22/ltr Canadian... still not sure what the exchange rate is, as I used credit cards for all of my purchases. I think this put the price per gallon at around \$5 – I guess one has to pay to play! It's around 200 miles to Toronto so I rode in the "fast" lane trying to make some time. Of course I was heading due west and the bright sun was in my face all the way to Toronto. I did stop for fuel one more time in Ajax after around 150 miles, thinking that a full tank would be good if I got caught in Toronto traffic. Well, the traffic was heavy but not real bad and I was on 400 going Northbound before I knew it.

I traveled north on 400 to 69 north and made my next stop at Parry Sound. I wasn't sure about the area I was driving into and wanted to be sure there were no issues with finding fuel, I was also getting hungry. It was dark by this time (9:30 PM) and I was really concentrating on riding (not that I don't always concentrate on the ride), as I couldn't see any of the scenery I may have been traveling through. So, I fueled up, ate and called home while at Parry Sound.

When I take rides like this I generally take all of my food with me. I eat hard-boiled eggs, cheese, sliced ham in wraps, protein bars, nuts and beef jerky. My goal is to never really eat a lot at any given time, eating just a little each time I stop. This keeps my energy level even throughout the long day. I really avoid carbohydrates as they do crazy stuff with ones insulin

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and energy. I also drink a lot of water and actually have an 8-liter hydration system built into my bike that consists of two 4-liter Platypus bags. I'm a huge believer in keeping hydrated and will drink 4+ liters every day of my ride, as I can easily drink while I ride.

Heading for Sudbury now and already thinking about tomorrow's ride, although I still 100+ miles to go today. My plan was to stay at a Hotel 8 in Sudbury; I had been told that finding a room would be no problem here. (Note to self, make reservations next time.) I travel with business all of the time and always make reservations for my hotel stays, for some unknown reason I did not do so and regretted the fact when the Super 8 and the next two hotels I checked had no vacancy! Ended up in a smoking room and the last available room at the Travelodge I stayed at. It was 11:30 PM now and I had been on the road for the past 18.5 hours and was feeling just a bit tired! Checked my e-mail, sent a quick message and it was off to sleep. I didn't have a specific time to wake up and planned to sleep till I awoke naturally, as Day 2 was going to be a serious ride as well!

## **Day Two**

Woke up in Sudbury at around 6:00 AM, had a cup of coffee and a protein bar, loaded the bike and did quick walk around and air pressure check of the tires. Was back on the road at 7:25, excited and ready for another long day. Weaved around a bit on the back roads of Sudbury getting onto 17 where I would spend much of the day. It was cool in the morning with temperatures in the low to mid 50's – it really felt good, as I like to ride in the cooler weather.

Leaving Sudbury had me in the country rather quickly or maybe I should say almost immediately. I was really hoping to see some fall colors during this ride and was pleased to see areas with a lot of reds and oranges. It was sort of strange that some areas were very colorful and others looked very green, like mid-summer. Regardless, it was quite pretty and the road was in very good condition. I was on my way to Ames Iowa, around 1200 miles away and a significant ride.

The scenery was nothing short of awesome with more "wow" scenes than can be explained in this report. I was impressed with the views from the road of the lakes and mountainous terrain, just unbelievable. I quickly realized that the road I was on has a relatively slow speed limit of 90 kph or 56 mph with many small towns where the speed was much slower. For some reason, I was planning on U.S. interstate type speed limits where I can generally average 63+ mph over long distances, including fuel stops. As previously mentioned, the roads were in very good condition and the traffic was light to nonexistent much of the way. There were ample passing lanes so getting around slow moving cars and trucks was not much of an issue. I would slow way down going through towns and twist the throttle pretty good when I had the chance.

The roads were perfect for a large touring bike like my Gold Wing, with many long sweeping curves and nice hills. When I stopped for fuel in Terrace Bay I had only covered around 500

miles and it was 4:00 in the afternoon... I had 700 miles to go before I reached Ames, IA. My average speed to this point was almost 59 mph; at this rate I had another 11 hours ahead of me. Boy, this was going to be a long day. So, I decided that I'd twist the old throttle just a bit more to attempt making better time. Well, this little move allowed me to meet one of Ontario's finest... Ontario Provisional Police (OPP) I was clocked at 135 kph or about 84 mph, as I had just passed some trucks and cars that were actually not in the hurry I was in. The police officer was very nice and most interested in my bike and the fact that I was up there sight seeing all the way from Georgia. I didn't bother telling him that I was riding 1000+ mile days... He gave me a break and reduced my speed by 30 kph (19 mph) that really helped me with the fine and any other related unpleasant repercussions that riding at this speed may have brought to me. Needless to say, this little incident slowed me down for most of the remainder of the day!

I rolled on, being just amazed at how pretty the lakes and surrounding area is. I would like to and probably will travel back up to this area and spend a week, where I only spent a day. There were plenty of gas stations and a lot of small Mom & Pop type hotels or inns that looked very clean and like places that I wouldn't mind staying. The road was a ways away from and elevated from the lakes themselves; I would love to get up closer to the lakes – just no time for “flower sniffing” during this SS3000.

I was lucky in that the weather was perfect all day long, sunny and in the mid to low 70's. To make it even better, that night was the first night of the Harvest Moon with the Moon being just about full. I was so cool to watch the moon rise as if it were growing right out of Lake Superior! Words simply can't describe the scene and I was in too much of a hurry to stop and take photos. Although there were many times that I slowed down and said out loud “oh my God, unbelievable”. I enjoyed this wonderful scene all the way to Duluth, MN.

I stayed on 17 all the way to Nipigon where 11 took me south towards the States. I stayed on 11 took into Thunder Bay and then it was 61 all the way across the border and down to Duluth, MN. This part of the ride was pretty as well, with many good views of Lake Superior, 61 actually skirts right along the lake for many miles. I had no problem whatsoever crossing the U.S./Canada border again. The border guard was very friendly, looked at my passport and drivers license and told me to have a good ride. I was back in the States but a long ways from Ames, IA – it was 6:30 PM, over 11 hours on the road and I had over 500 miles to go before I would arrive at my hotel.

Once I was through Duluth, MN it was back on the U.S. interstates system – I-35 would take me all the way to my destination for the day, Ames, IA. I kicked it up several notches and rode at around 78 mph as I closed in on St. Paul, MN. The traffic in St. Paul was much heavier that I had anticipated and it was a bit confusing to me staying on I-35 through the city. It may be that it was dark and I was tired, didn't have much patience for my friends who surrounded me in their cars! After I successfully got through St. Paul, I stopped and took a little break, realizing that being frustrated and riding a motorcycle don't go hand in

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hand. After about 15 minutes I was in the right state-of-mind once again and continued my journey.

Because I was going to be so late (or was it early) getting to my hotel, I called and told them not to consider me a no-show and that I would actually arrive... at some point! It was an uneventful ride the rest of the day as I traveled south, heading for Ames, IA. I sure could smell the hog operations along the way, as this is big time pork country in this area. I arrived at the Hampton Inn in Ames, IA just before 3:00AM. When I walked in the door the night clerk said, "Well, you must be Craig Moore" with a big smile on her face. It was a good way to start the morning!! I checked in and asked for a 9:00 AM wake-up call. Just completed a 1244-mile day and around 19.5 hours of riding. I was surprised to see that my average speed ended up being almost 64 mph. There was no time for sleeping in at this point; I had over 1000 miles to get back to Newnan, GA.

### **Day Three**

Actually was awake before my 9:00 wake-up call. Has some stuff to do like put ice in the cooler and refill one of my 4-liter Platypus hydration bags. After a quick walk around inspection and air pressure check of tires, I was ready to hit the road at 9:53. It was sunny and pretty outside, with people in the parking lot getting ready to go wherever.

It would be all interstate travel back down to Newnan, GA. It was a Saturday, so the traffic was light, or maybe its always light around Ames, I don't know. As in all of my travels, its always amazing how spectacular this country is. The agriculture in this area with corn and beans is just not explainable. Just as far as the eyes could see were rolling hills of crop just about ready for harvest. I simply love the ride and all the sights and smells along the way... well maybe except the smell of the hog operations.

It was a pretty uneventful ride through central Illinois, Kentucky, and Tennessee into Georgia. In their own way, all pretty states with good interstate roads... all 1069 miles worth. Made my final fuel stop in Sharpsburg, GA at 1:44 AM Sunday morning with an odometer reading of 106,149. I had just completed 3497 miles in 2 days, 20 hours and 54 minutes. In reality, I had completed my SS3000 on Saturday in Ina, IL at 5:19 PM, but continued logging mileage and keeping receipts until I reached Sharpsburg, GA. I will submit the entire ride to the IBA for ride certification.

This was a fun ride and I really enjoy the long-distance endurance type motorcycle riding. Since September 25<sup>th</sup> 2004, I've completed sixteen 1000+-mile days with one being over 1500 miles. My next adventure will be in the Spring of 2006 with a BBG3000 – two 1500+ mile days in a row!