

Today was busy for staff getting all the riders fully checked in and official for the start tomorrow. We do most of the registration items ahead of time to save time and minimize the staff numbers needed at the start. Riders start their process with the odometer check. Most motorcycle odometers are off. Some a little, some a lot. A calibrated course is established by staff to gauge the accuracy of each bike. The rider presents to the odo staff to verify the trip meter is zeroed out and heads out on the course. We like the GPS to be zeroed as well to ensure the route was followed (the GPS is accurate) but it's not required. When the rider returns, the trip meter is recorded so we can determine the correction factor for each rider. This allows us to know their actual miles traveled during the event. After odo, riders report to the registration room for the final steps which is basically confirming all items were submitted completely and having them sign the waiver in the presence of our notary. Then they can go mingle, rest, repack their stuff for the 47th time, you know, the stuff riders do.

An app is used in this event for riders to submit their bonuses to scoring. At 4:30 PM, after all registration was complete, riders came for a tutorial on the app. Several of them have successfully used the app in other events we host and everyone seemed to get through it without too much trouble. They still have time to get questions answered prior to the start. And of course, they have access to their scorer during the event. More on that in future reports.

A casual dinner was provided this evening to give everyone a chance to get food in their bellies before things get real tomorrow. Riders will gather at 4:30 AM for the meeting that explains the game this go round.

Anatomy of a Rally Bike

As we've discussed, rally riders spend a great deal of time on their bikes. Lots of folks think that sounds uncomfortable. Riders put a ton of thought into their set up to maximize comfort. Not everyone wants or needs the same things. It's a very individual process. Ergonomics are a factor. Foot peg location, handlebar reach and height, windscreen position, aftermarket seats are just a few of the details each rider specifies to their specific needs.

We cannot possibly demonstrate all farkles and doodads riders find necessary for their comfort and convenience. We've endeavored to show the common, interesting, illuminating and otherwise helpful for non-ralliers to gain some insight into this niche activity we call fun.

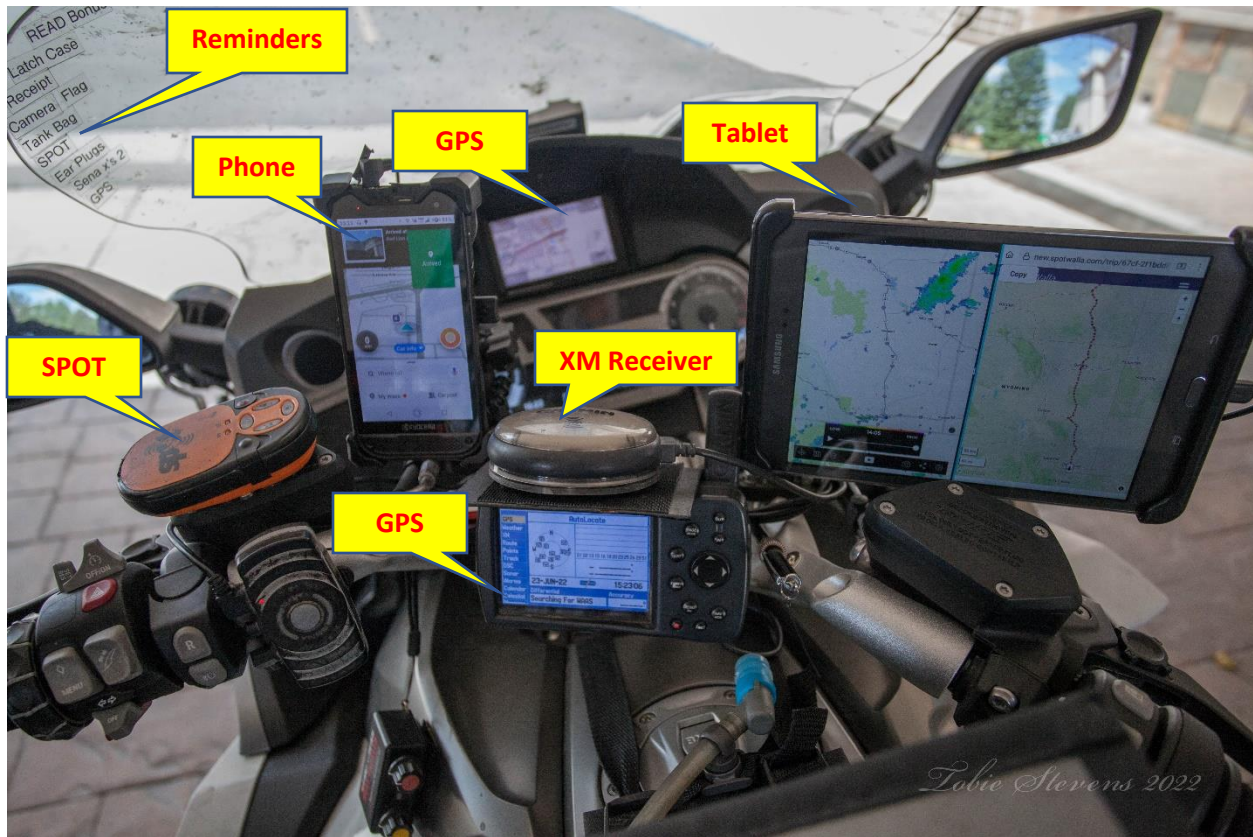
The incomparable Kerri Miller is our primary model for this, but we've shown some other variations in a few cases as well. Again, all photos by the world-famous photographer, Tobie Stevens.

This is Kerri's cockpit. She's a fairly low maintenance gal in many ways, including here.



As an example of how she might use this set up, she could have the next bonus loaded in her GPS, but wants to look for gas stations or food or weather on her phone. As she's trying to decide if she should push to the next location or stop for some food, she may have a conversation with her companion for guidance. You think I'm kidding? I'm not.

This is an alternative approach, much more technology here as displayed by the Vooks, Steven and Tamara.



All riders have some tracking means, the Vooks use a Spot device. This communicates via satellite, so no worries about cell phone reception in the boonies. The XM Receiver is likely gathering weather radar which will display on that ancient GPS it's mounted on top of. Reminders or other notes on the windscreen can be super helpful during a ride like this. As an example here, the Spot tracker times out and a reminder to ensure you are still tracking can avoid disappointment later.

The 2 photos below show FLIR (pronounced "fleeer") mounted on a bike with LOADS of other tech. This is probably the most farkled up bike on the lot. FLIR = Forward Looking Infrared. This technology utilizes a thermographic camera to sense infrared radiation and displays an image on a screen for the rider. "Why?" you ask? Nighttime creatures are a motorcyclist's worst enemy. FLIR will show a rider things that might not be picked up by the bike's lights. There's a camera mounted on the front of the bike that feeds the display. Pretty cool, eh?

If this were actually at night, you would not see so much detail of the building behind Scott, the camera would pick up heat sources, like a warm-blooded creature.





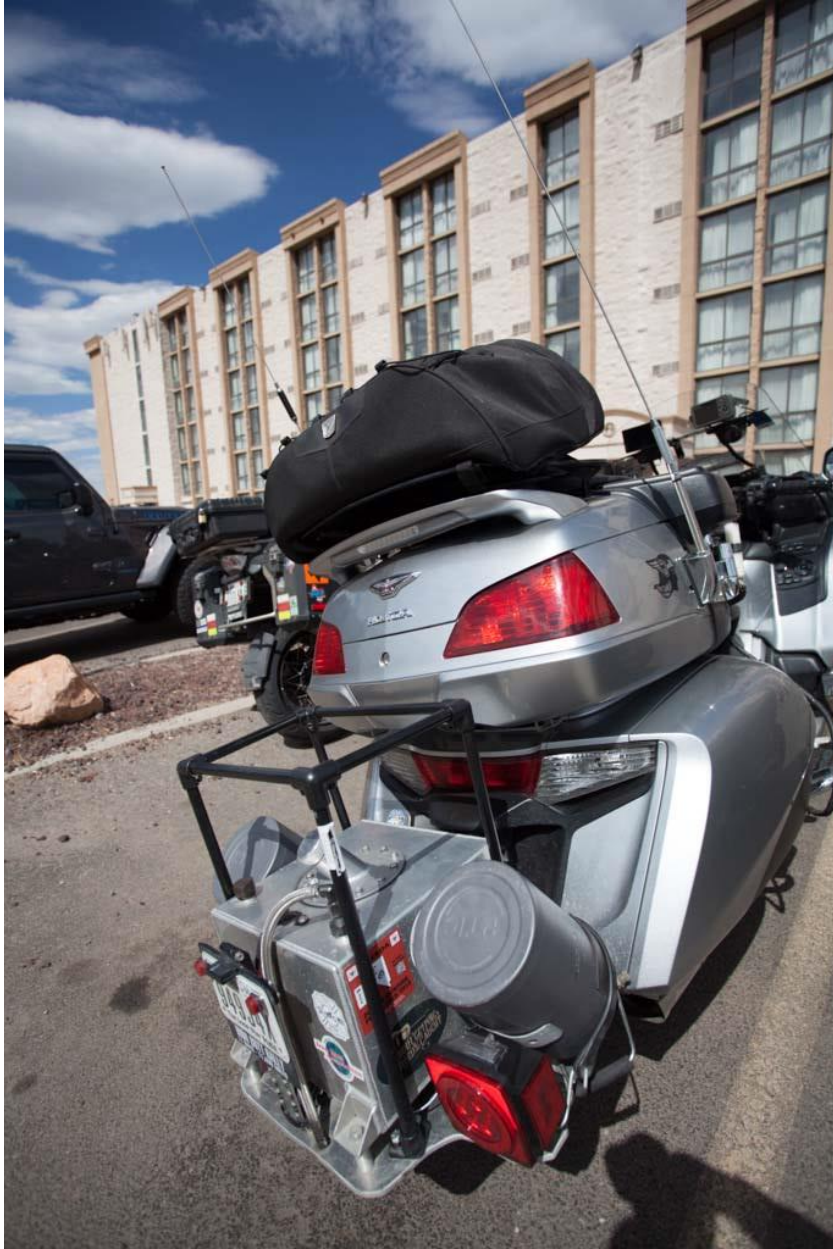
This is a fully functional, safe helmet. Kerri just puts her fun and unique stamp on many things. Including her helmet. If anyone says "Oh, I didn't realize that was Kerri," they are either dumb or a liar.



Kerri's hydration system is a little hard to see here, but the gist is that she has access to water. We are providing ice water near the start area tomorrow for the riders to fill up so they aren't emptying every ice machine in the hotel and pissing off other guests. Kerri has a MotoJug system with a Yeti tank, so she's a bit fancier here than other riders who shove a camelback hose in a gallon thermos and have a nice day. But staying hydrated is crucially important, so we're glad Kerri takes this seriously. Kerri also has a fantastic seat from Russel Day Long. Having a comfortable seat is crucial to being able to stay in the saddle for long periods of time. As we've discussed, these folks sit there and twist that many hours straight.



Many (most?) riders like to supplement their stock fuel tank for extra range. The Iron Butt Association set the standard for maximum allowable fuel at 11.5 gallons and the LDX follows this standard. This is one solution for aux fuel, but there are many others. What they all have in common is that they are plumbed into the main tank. The rider typically flips a switch or somehow opens the system to flow from the aux tank into the main. Kerri's tank provides an additional surface to securely attach a storage box.



This is another type of aux fuel on Paul Tong's Goldwing called a tail dragger. This type of system requires the addition of a fuel pump to move fuel from the aux tank to the main. Kerri's is a pressure-gravity delivery system. Others are pure gravity, meaning the tank is mounted high enough to let gravity drain it to the main tank.

Paul also has an interesting hydration set up here. The two cylinders on either side of the aux fuel tank are for water. There is also a pump here that delivers water at pressure. Super handy for wetting down a hot and sweaty rider. Or you know, spraying your neighbor at the start line up.

Paul also has a rack there on top of the tank to hold camping gear when needed for trips.



Most, probably all, riders have some sort of auxiliary lighting. Here is Kerri showing off for Tobie. Think back to the FLIR photos/descriptions, aux lighting is the more common solution to this. Most riders have some sort of aux lighting to help keep them safe at night. Riders need to balance between enhancing their ability to see and angering every other driver on the road. It's not just critters, there's road surface issues, road debris, anything and everything that is a threat to the rider is something they want to see.

Note her full gear. We absolutely promote ATGATT – All The Gear All The Time. Proper boots, pants, jacket, gloves, helmet. Riders all have a favorite under gear as well. LD Comfort is popular among the community for its moisture management properties as well as having no seams that can become sore spots between rider and saddle. Kerri is a proponent of LD Comfort long tights, mock turtleneck and the very popular LD Comfort Women's Combo Top. This was developed after several women ralliers threatened Mario Winkelman with great bodily harm if he didn't come up with something for the ladies of the community. Kerri is also a Scorpio who enjoys Pina Colodas and long walks on the beach in the moonlight.



Profile of Kerri's ride – note the awesome Heart of Texas Sticker just off the coast of Maine. Thanks for representing, Kerri.

Everyone will depart Cheyenne tomorrow. Let the good times roll!

