

5/11/01

Worked all day on computer e-mail problem, wanted to do some things – didn't have time.

Lori came up to see me off (great kid) at about 3:30.

4:00 went to Lisa and Ivan's. Lisa made a great meal, grilled lemon swordfish w/ vinaigrette salad and strawberry shortcake. Yum! Another great kid. She gave me this journal.

6:00 Lori and Pat took me to the airport – mixed feeling, but 'here we go'.

Flight good. Everything on time. Got in at 2am. Chuck woke up, we talked a little.

Day 1

5/12/01

Woke @ 6:15, chuck gone. He came in @ 6:30, he went for coffee. We had breakfast in hotel.

9:30, bike safety check.

10:30 Rode with Chuck along bike path on beach. Had lunch at 'Lora's Café'. Watched hang gliding class. Back to hotel @ 2pm. 26.6 mi.

Day 2

5/13/01

Up at 4:30, before alarm (5:15). Went to bed at 9:30.

Rode to Manhattan Pier for wheel dip and pictures.

Weather cool 60° and cloudy in am but got warmer soon. Took jacket off at about 20 mile point. Busy roads even for Sunday, all 4 or 6 lane roads. Got to Riverside @ 2:15.

80.5 mi, avg speed 14.4, elevation gain 2400 ft.

Went in jacuzzi with 6-8 other guys, felt good.

Not very tired, pretty easy ride at an easy pace.

Day 3

5/14/01

Riverside, CA – Indio, CA

85.3 mi, avg. 14.5, 5:51:42, 2700 ft. climb
2 mi and 5.4 mi climbs in am mostly flat

10am had strong tailwind for 7 mi on flats 25-30 mi w/o pedaling. For 6 mi saw many hi tech windmills (like Föhr).

Lunch at 'Blue Coyote' in Palm Springs, ate mexican – good food.

Had bad head wind for last 15 mi. Temp was 108° by Chuck's and bank thermometers. Hard pedaling over 11-12 mph. Stopped at a Del-Taco for cold drink – really perked us up.

Still feel great and strong. Day was pretty easy except for last 15 mi.

Went in pool, really cooled down – took shower. Dinner at Sizzler tonight. Called Pat – thinking about how I'll miss her until Santa Fe.

Day 4

5/15/01

Indio – Blythe, CA

101.4 mi, avg 14.6, climb el 3040 ft, 7:15am – 3:45 pm, Temp 114°

11 mile 1600 ft. climb in am. Chuck and I joined a young guy, Lynn, during AM climb. After 32 mi, we caught and picked up 3 more guys, got good pace line going at 17-18 mph. At 52 mile break we picked up about 4 more for pace line. By 82 mile break we were pooped – got plenty of water and ice perked up for last 20 mi. We did it slow at about 13 mph mostly. Most of the guys thanked me for organizing pace – said they wouldn't have made it otherwise. Many people vanned. Chuck got 2 flats. The first was at about 15 miles. The second about 70 miles.

Found out at dinner that 2 guys went to the hospital for transfusions (saline for dehydration). They're ok.

Day 5
5/16/01

Blythe, CA – Wickenburg, AZ
115.9 mi, avg 13.1, 8:57, 109° F, climb el. 4.320 ft.

Flat at mi 25 (wire). Crossed state line – AZ.
Got off I-10 at mi 39. Rt 60 all the way to Wickenburg. Good road – more interesting. We took it easy. Much long shallow climbing, couldn't get much over 12mph most of the time. I bonked at about 100 mi – last 15 very difficult. Most of group vanned part of the route.

Glad the desert is mostly behind us. Hot and boring.

Day 6
5/17/01

Wickenburg, AZ – Prescott, AZ
59.9 mi, avg 9.6, 6:12, 98°F, climb 5,740

Nicest riding so far. Good roads, light traffic, good scenery though hilly. Had about 6-7 miles of false flats – look flat but need granny gears – Horrible!

Got to Prescott in time to go to the library after dinner and do e-mail. Got e-mail from Pat – answered that and sent one to everyone. I think most people took the van part way today also – hills very difficult for most.

Saw neat museum in Congress. It was free, in basement of trading post. Guns and Indian stuff.

Day 7
5/18/01

Prescott, AZ – Cottonwood, AZ
41.8 mi, 11.8 mph, 2570 climb, temp in the 80s – beautiful day.

Descend gradual for first 12 mi busy dump truck traffic – trucks turned off road at 12 mi point (thank God). Climbed 2500 ft in next 13.2 mi to top (Mingus Pass). Elevation 7023 ft.

6 mile descent to 'Jerome'. A neat old gold mining town that was a ghost town until the '60s

when it was taken over by artists and is now becoming a tourist attraction. Had a good lunch at the 'English Kitchen' – we walked around town. Then about 10 mile descent to motel. Went in jacuzzi.

Feel good. This was best day so far, although yesterday was very good. People in group are a lot of fun and staff is the best I've ever seen.

Day 8
5/19/01

Cottonwood, AZ – Flagstaff, AZ

47.7 mi, climb 5500 ft, rain, temp 50° in am.

Rained first 20 mi and last 4-5mi – stopped for coffee in Sedona. Sedona is beautiful w/ Red Rock Cliffs in background. Beautiful ride through Oak Creek Canyon then long 2 mi 1000 ft climb to top of the canyon wall (not as bad as anticipated). My butt is really sore. Hope tomorrow's day off gives it time to heal. Staying at same Econo Lodge that Pat and I stayed in when we came here.

Day 9
5/20/01

Flagstaff, AZ – Day off

Went to Lowell Observatory. Very interesting.

Looked at sun through telescope equipped w/ a special filter that made the sun look red. Saw sun spots and flares. Took guided tour also. Went to Bookman's Cyber Café to do e-mail. Got some pictures developed at Walmart and went to dinner at Olive Garden w/ Chuck. Nice restful day.

Day 10
5/21/01

Flagstaff – Holbrook, AZ
95.8 mi, avg 15.7, climb 1670, temp lo 60 hi 84°

Beautiful day. Perfect riding weather mostly I-40 w/ some old rte 66. Lunch at Brown Mug in Winslow, AZ. Took some pictures at corner made famous in an 'Eagles' song, 'Standing on a corner in Winslow Arizona'. Sag stop at Jack Rabbit Trading Post.

Day 11
5/22/01

Holbrook, AZ – Gallup NM
88.8 mi, 14.7 mph, climb 3180, temp 80s, sunny clear

I-40 every mile, pretty boring scenery. Got a flat from a piece of wire. Stopped at Ft. Courage (of 'F Troop' fame). To have a lunch in a pancake house – bad dingy place – skipped it and just ate cookies, etc. at the sag stop.

Day 12
5/23/01

Gallup, NM – Grants, NM
68.8 mi, avg 15.1, climb 1360

Crossed Continental Divide mile 30 – 7,275 ft. Mostly flat and down next 39 miles. Chuck, Ethel and I caught up to a guy (65-70 yrs old?) Named Bob Johnson and his dog 'Shorty'. Shorty rode in a home made seat on the back (just a frame on the rear rack made of 1" PVC pipes) Bob has been on the road for 2 months and said he'll stay out, probably another couple of months.

All in all a beautiful day of riding. Felt good and my butt is feeling better. Easy day and weather was clear sunny with temp in the 90s but pleasant. It was 37° at 6am. Started out with jacket and arm warmers – took them off at 25 miles.

We visited the mining museum in Grants. Very interesting reproduction of a uranium mine underneath - realistic.

Day 13
5/24/01

Grants, NM – Albuquerque, NM
79.0mi, avg 15.2, climbed 1970 ft

5:30 alarm woke us up. Still tired after breakfast but worked it out as soon as we started riding at 7:15. Keegan Brown had an accident the first ½

mile – skinned elbow and hip but did days ride. Leslie went down, skinned her knee and elbow. She also did ride. Chuck got 7th flat.

Beautiful day, nice riding. First half of ride then I-40 for 35 miles, ughh!

Had nice leisurely lunch in 'Old Town Albuquerque' 1 ½ -2 hrs. Got to motel around 3pm. Sat on balcony for a couple of hours – Life is Good!

Susan quit today and went home. Said the daily routine was too grueling and she wasn't having fun.

A bunch of us went for ice cream @ 8pm and went back on the balcony til 9pm. I had a Klondike Taco ice cream – pretty good.

Day 14
5/25/01

Albuquerque, NM – Santa Fe, NM
78.3 mi, avg 12.0, climb 4500

Nice ride on Rte 14N. Climbed first 22mi but not bad, then up and down to Santa Fe. The road was good w/ moderate traffic scenery very good – mtns, trees, ravines, ranches, etc. We went through a neat old town 'Madras', but we didn't stop, was anxious to get there! Pat and Lori flew out to spend the weekend. It is so great to see them. The one down side of this trip is being away from them. (Pat, Lori, Lisa, Ivan, Sofia) Oh well, only 5 more weeks. We went into Santa Fe for dinner at the 'Santa Café'. Very good place – Chuck went with us.

Day 15
5/26/01

Day off in Santa Fe. Pat, Lori, Chuck and I went into Santa Fe and took a walking tour from 9:30 – 12:30. It was very interesting. We had lunch at a New Mexican café. It was very good – we ate at a sidewalk table. We sat on a bench in the square and "people watched" for a while then Lori and I went to the library to do e-mails.

At 5:15 Pat, Lori and I went to mass at San Francisco Cathedral. They had 5-6 baptisms.

After mass we went back to the motel, got Chuck and went to dinner at 'Tortilla Flats' restaurant – it was recommended by our walking tour guide, coincidentally, the guide, Ahmus, was having dinner there when we arrived. The food was good.

When we got back to the motel, I gave Chuck a haircut and Pat gave one to me. Pat brought the hair cutting stuff from home.

Day 16
5/27/01

Santa Fe, NM – Las Vegas, NM
74.4 mi, avg 13.7, climb 3500 ft., Warm and sunny. High in the 80s

Kissed Pat and Lori goodbye at 7:15 and headed out. They're going to Taos, then Las Vegas to have dinner with us. We stopped at Pecos National Historic Park to see Pueblo ruins. Very interesting.

Chuck had an accident. He got his front wheel in a crack of a cattle guard and went over the handlebars. He appears to be ok w/ some scrapes and bruises, but his Trek 5200 bike was destroyed. The carbon fiber cracked at the top tube/head tube joint. Pat, the mechanic, loaned Chuck his bike.

Lori and Pat had dinner with us, then we went into the town of Las Vegas, we then went to Dairy Queen for dessert. Having a car is great.

Pat and Lori headed back to Santa Fe at about 8:45pm. Their flight is in the AM. It was great having them come here. It will make the next few weeks much easier. I'm already anxious for Erie, PA when Pat and Ina will come out.

Day 17
5/28/01

Las Vegas, NM – Tucumcari, NM
110.2 mi, 13 mph, 3,000+ climb

We were told that today is usually the most difficult due to heat, headwinds and distance. We were lucky. It was cloudy and the temp was in the 70s. It was a difficult ride with a stiff headwind for the last 30+ miles. There was a

long steep climb into the town of Tucumcari, just to add insult to injury.

The scenery was beautiful. It looked like a great place for an 'on location' cowboy movie. It was very desolate with one stretch of 75+ miles without a house or store or gas station. We had one long descent from the top of a rim – I took a picture of a great view. Chuck made out well with Pat's bike except the reach was too long so his shoulders bothered him some.

Day 18
5/29/01

Tucumcari, NM – Dalhart, TX
97.0 mi, avg 15 mph, climb 1800 ft

Headwind and crosswind for first 50 miles with most of the climbing. We had lunch in Nara Visa at about 50 miles. After lunch there was mostly a tail wind. We crossed into the central time zone and Texas. The sag break was at the 65 mi point after that Chuck and I hammered into Dalhart doing about 20+ most of the way – we passed many riders. WE stopped at DQ in Dalhart before going to the motel.

Day 19
5/30/01

Dalhart, TX – Guymon, OK
73.5 mi, avg 12.9, climb 500 ft

Slight tail/cross wind for first 30 mi. Then stiff headwind for next 43 mi. Brought avg speed down quite a bit. I hate headwinds. We were only able to do <12mph on the flats some times. I had a minor accident today. I was following Chuck closely on the shoulder. There was a pile of asphalt about 6-8" in diameter and 2" high. Chuck failed to warn me. When I hit it, the wheel turned and I went down. Just a skinned knee. Lucky!

Very uninteresting terrain. Flat, wheat fields and pasture land, featureless.

Day 20
5/31/01

Guymon, OK – Liberal, KS
44.5, avg 12.2, climb 900 ft

Bad headwinds on flat open terrain – fortunately it was a short ride. Crossed KS state line at mile 35.

We went to the Liberal Air Museum after lunch. Very nice display of civil and military aircraft. Relaxing day. We've only had 37 miles of tailwinds in 1300 miles. Who said prevailing winds are west to east?

Day 21
6/1/01

Liberal, KS – Dodge City, KS
84.7, 18.2 mph, climb 1280

First full day of tailwinds and quartering tail winds. Finally!

Had lunch at Tim's Diner at the 60 mile point @ 11am. Got to Dodge City by about 1pm. Went to library to do e-mail then McDonalds. Chuck was still hungry and had a burger – I had a coffee and a sundae. Then to motel by 2:30. It was nice to have such an easy day and still do 85 miles.

Day 22
6/2/01

Dodge City, KS – Great Bend, KS
86.9 mi, avg 13.5, climb 580 ft

Head winds all the way – diminishing in the afternoon. Chuck and I went first 30 mi alone, switching lead each ½ mi, avg <12 mph. We joined a pace line of 6 and speed picked up to 14-15 w/ 1 mi lead turns (Chuck and I predicted that was too long). Mike and Charlie dropped out – too hard and Lynn stayed back to try to help them. Carl, Chuck and I continued. But we convinced Carl to do ½ mi turns.

We had a nice lunch in Larned, KS then on in (22 mi). We were one of the early ones in. Tough day, but feel good.

Day 23
6/3/01

Great Bend, KS – McPherson, KS
65.6 mi, avg 9.9, climb 1740, time 6:35

30-40 mph head winds all day. Absolutely the worst day we've had. There were times we could only do 5-6 mph pedaling as hard as we could on perfectly flat terrain. The fastest speed was 18 mph on a good down hill. That would have normally given 30+ mph. We had lunch in an old hotel, 'The Ly-Kan Hotel' in Lyons, KS. Very old and quaint. Many senior citizens, all dressed up, obviously just out of church. Chuck and I went to Braums ice cream after dinner. Tough day, but feel good.

Day 24
6/4/01

McPherson, KS – Abilene, KS
63.5 mi, 14.5 mph

Cool, cloudy and wind from the east. Head winds for first 22 miles. We drafted off of Bruce and John on the tandem. Bruce always wants to lead on the tandem, so Chuck and I got a free ride for 22 miles. Then we turned north, giving us a quartering tail wind for the next 40+ miles into Abilene. We stopped for lunch at 1 pm in Abilene at "Bredeaux Pizza" and had a BBQ sandwich on a toasted italian roll – good.

At 4:00 pm a local farmer; Kevin Harris, gave a talk about farming and the business of farming.

After dinner Chuck Brumley read a story from his book, "'Ripples From the Paddle". It was very interesting. Phil Brown said he would take orders for the book and arrange to have them for us in Indiana. I ordered one.

Another good day! We're nearly half way and, even though some days have been tough, I really enjoying the people and the trip.

Day 25
6/5/01

Day off Abilene, KS
Mi 4.5

Chuck went on a ride to make up for 40 mi he lost when he had his accident. I went to the library to do e-mail then to the Eisenhower Home and Museum. It was very interesting.

When I got out of the museum, I walked the 2 mi back to the motel to meet Chuck for lunch. In the afternoon we went on our bikes to the Grayhound Hall of Fame – Grayhound racing originated in this part of the country. Not particularly interesting. We then biked through some residential areas – nice. Dinner at Pizza Hut

Day 26
6/6/01

Abilene, KS – Topeka, KS
106.8 mi, avg 13.5, climb 3600, 65° cloudy

Rained hard last night, very cloudy and threatening in the morning – roads very wet. Nice ride over mostly rolling terrain. Very pretty. Cattle ranching country w/ more trees than we've seen. We came to a detour with the black top completely removed for 2 mi. We decided to walk/ride though - very muddy from rain – bikes and feet a mess. We saw a cowboy riding fences. Near Dover, KS we saw a sculpture of crushed bicycles welded together. Some had a hard time, Chuck and I did well and feel good. We had lunch in Eskridge.

Day 27
6/7/01

Topeka, KS – St. Josephs, MO
86 mi, 13.0 mph, climb 2560

Woke up feeling punky, not sick just mentally tired. The weather was cloudy, 67° and humid. The terrain was not nearly as nice or pretty as yesterday. Very gradual and long climbing w/ a 5-15 mph head wind all day – Yuck! We had lunch in a small café at about mile 62, just after crossing into Missouri. The roads in Missouri are not nearly as good as in Kansas. Most of the last 8 miles was on a park road – very nice. Was glad to get to the hotel at about 3pm

Day 28
6/8/01

St Josephs, MO – Chillicothe, MO
86.8 mi, avg 13.5, climb 3970, 70-80°, partly cloudy

Nice day. Pretty ride through farm country and rolling hills. Some hills were pretty steep, but none real long. We had a great stop in the town of Maysville, pop. 1000. The women of the historical society set up a table with coffee, lemonade, bananas, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and the best cinnamon rolls ever. The table was on the sidewalk. We gathered just outside of town and all came in 2x2 wearing our team jerseys. This is done each year the tour comes through. We hung around for about an hour talking to the men and women and visiting their historical museum. The museum was great. All of the things were donated by local families.

Saw a sign in Lock Springs that said, "Happy are those who dream dreams and are ready to pay the price to make them come true".

Day 29
6/9/01

Chillicothe, MO – Kirksville, MO
74.5 mi, avg 13.5, climb 3990

Woke up feeling lethargic this morning, I didn't even want breakfast, but I had a couple of waffles, a doughnut and some orange juice and coffee. Once we started riding I was fine. Plenty of rolling terrain after 25 miles with some very steep hills. The scenery was very pretty – farm lands mostly cattle, I think. For the last 3 days we've been hearing Bob White quail calling all day long. Today I saw one fly by when we stopped at the green door. No lunch stop today. CR got sandwiches at a sag stop for us. We stopped at a gas station food store at a 1pm for a soda about 3mi from the motel and hung around w/ a few people for about 45 min so we wouldn't get to the motel so early.

A beautiful day – got up to 91°F. No DQ today and nothing near the motel.

Day 30
6/10/01

Kirksville, MO – Quincy, IL
76.1 mi, avg 15.0, climb 2210 ft

Much less hilly today – gently rolling farm land with more corn and truck farming. Pretty uneventful, easy ride, we went past a bicycle

junk yard in LaBelle. It was just a store front with 25-50 old bikes on the side walk and you could see hundreds through the windows we stopped at a go cart track to watch and we talked to a guy who explained some things about them. We then crossed the Mississippi into Quincy. We rode through town on Maine St (yup, streets named after states). which was lined with large trees and very large, old homes – beautiful place. Got to motel at about 2pm

Day 31
6/11/01

Quincy, IL – Springfield, IL
111.1 mi, avg 15.0, climb 2480

Hot and humid today – temps reached 97°F.

We stopped for soda at 57 mi then lunch in Jacksonville at the West Cottage Café, at 69 mi – good place – many people asked us about our trip. We stopped for soda again at mi 86 and filled water bottles. I left my bottle on the table and we had to do about 3 mi extra to go back for it. Except for the heat it was a comfortable ride and I felt good at the end.

Day 32
6/12/01

Springfield, IL – Champaign, IL
87.8 mi, 15.9 mph, 1480 climb, 102 °F humidity high

Hot, in the 70s when we left. Most climbing in first 20 mi. Got very hot but not quite as humid as yesterday. First sag was at 45 mi, at a DQ – I had a cone, Chuck had a Blizzard. We then stopped for a soda at 64 mi. We had lunch on the way into Champaign at mile 84. We ate at ‘Niro’s Gyros’. Good lunch. Had popcorn and soda at route rap and said goodbye to Bob Mount – he only scheduled to Champaign had dinner at ‘Chinatown Buffet’. Very good.

Day 33
6/13/01

Day off in Champaign, IL

Got up about 7am. Ate breakfast in the motel. Cleaned my bike chain and cassette and re-oiled. Chuck and I then walked the 2+ miles into town and went to the library to do e-mail. We then walked to the U. of Illinois campus and walked around there – we sat on a bench and people watched for a while. We had lunch at a Greek restaurant ‘Mykonos Restaurant’ and had souvlakis – very good. We then walked back and I had a Butterfinger Flurry at McD’s. We went back to the motel – watched a movie on Cinemax starring Jeff Bridges – don’t know name but it was about bombing an FBI building in DC. Then I showered and did laundry – soon we’ll go to dinner somewhere – very relaxing rest day. I usually don’t feel like riding the next day after a day off.

Day 34
6/14/01

Champaign, IL – Crawfordsville, IN
80.3 mi, 14.9 mph, climb 1540 ft, temp 100+ and humid

Pretty easy ride through farm country and small towns. We went through one town that had a sign “Welcome to Hillsboro – 600 Happy Folks and a Few Old Sore Heads”

We had a nice lunch stop at a café in Veedersburg, IN. We crossed the state line at about mile 42, this is the 9th state of 13 we’ll be in. There is a McD’s just past the motel so we went there before checking in. After showering and laundry we sat around the pool and talked for about an hour – about 10 of us.

Day 35
6/15/01

Crawfordsville, IN – Indianapolis, IN
79.6 mi, 13.2 mph, 1270 climb

Start – warm and humid storms forecast but sunny 20mph headwinds. Sag stop at mi 33 was at Gentry Farms – a dairy farm that Tracy had asked to use their property. They not only let us use it, but put out a dozen lawn chairs, open their house for bathroom use, allow tours of the barns

and sat around with us and talked – nice people. We got with a larger group after sag – made things easier. Got to Indy Speedway at mile 60 at about 12:30. The skies opened up with a large thunderstorm – we stayed in the ‘Pit Stop’ snack place (about 20 of us) until about 2:30 – the rain was letting up, so we were allowed to go around the track on our bikes – neat. After that, we had about 15 miles to the hotel. It stopped raining about half way.

I heard Carl, from Cape Cod, had an accident and went to the hospital by ambulance. They said he was unconscious for a while and cracked his helmet.

Day 36
6/16/01

Indianapolis, IN – Richmond, IN
83.9 mi, avg 15.2, climb 1820, temp 80s, low humidity, sunny

Nice ride – best weather of the trip so far with quartering tailwind most times. We had about 6 mi of terrible rough road where the surface had been removed and roughened before repaving – like a washboard. Carl recovered from his accident yesterday and rode today he was a little sore, but did fine, we missed 2 DQs today. They were about 7 mi apart, we skipped the first and when we got to the second, there were about 50 kids there after a ball game. WE found a TCBY and got ‘Shiver’s’

After dinner, Phil Brown delivered the books we ordered from Chuck Brumley, the name of the book is “Ripples From the Paddle (Adirondak Stories)” By Chuck Brumley.

Chuck autographed the books for us. Then he and his wife Karen did some songs for us in the lobby (well mostly Karen sang and played the guitar) Karen did 2 songs that I really liked – Louis Armstrong’s ‘What a Wonderful World’ and Billy Joel’s ‘Piano Man’. Chuck and Karen also did a couple of fun duets – Everyone enjoyed the evening.

Day 37
6/17/01

Richmond, IN – Marysville, OH
106.6 mi, 14.2 mph, climb 2500

Beautiful Day and a beautiful ride on back roads through farm land. The first sag was at mi 42. Chuck and I hooked up with 7 or 8 guys and went fast to the sag stop. but decided to take it easy and enjoy the rest of the ride – it was just too nice to rush. We had lunch at mi 68 at a Subway – choices were limited. We stopped at a DQ about a mile from the motel and while eating our ‘Blizzards’ outdoors we heard my rear tire blow and all the air hissing out. I put on my spare tire and threw the bad one away. There was a package for me at the motel. It was a giant cookie with a picture of a cyclist. It was Lisa’s Father’s Day gift. I brought it to route rap and it was devoured in about 10 minutes, it was very good. Lori left a message on the phone – she said she’ll call later. I called to thank Lisa and Pat was there trying to put the baby to sleep – she’ll call when she gets home.

Day 38
6/18/01

Marysville, OH – Wooster, OH
100.0 mi, avg 13.7, climb 3970

Beautiful quiet country roads for first 40 mi – gentle hills. Had lunch at mile 54 at about 11:15 am – no good lunch stops later. Second sag at mi 74 then many big hills very steep – down to 3 mph at times. Stopped for ice cream at the “Funk Country Store”. An old general store. Tired afterwards but a very nice ride. Lori called at about 5:20.

Day 39
6/19/01

Wooster, OH – Niles, OH
96.8 mi, 14 mph, climb 3300

Nice day, got hot 96°+ in afternoon. We had 2 roads closed today. The first only required us to walk our bikes about 100 yards along a field and cross a farmers bridge. The second required a 3 mile detour - no big deal. It was a pretty easy day except for some lousy, bumpy roads for the last 5-10 miles. DQ about 3 miles before the end. Pat comes to Erie, PA tomorrow – Hot Dog!

Day 40
6/20/01

Niles, OH – Erie, PA
89.9 mi, avg 15.5

Mostly cloudy – forecast was for showers but we never had any rain. Some of the roads were wet from earlier showers. We did an early pace line for about 25 miles to the first sag starting at mi 7. The roads were straight, flat and low traffic. We had hot dogs for lunch at mi 63 then crossed the PA state line. Got to the hotel at 1:45. We were first in. We took showers and were heading to the lobby at 2:15 and met Pat and Ina in the hall. It was great to see Pat. It's been since Santa Fe on May 27th – too long!

After route rap we went with Chuck and Ina to 'Outback' for dinner. Chuck had some coupons and paid for dinner with them – I left the tip. After dinner we went to Kelly's work place at 'Talbots'. She was surprised to see us. We made plans to meet tomorrow for dinner.

Day 41
6/21/01

Day off – Erie, PA

I got up and searched out a cup of coffee and breakfast place. At 8:30 we met Chuck and Ina and headed for 'Red Hots Dinor'. Chuck and Karen Brumley and Diane and Larry went with us. Later Pat and I went to the library to do e-mail and Internet. Then at 11:30 we went with Chuck and Ina to Presque Isle. We had lunch at Joe Root's. Kelly came to the hotel at 6 pm and we all (Chuck and Ina too) went for a nice dinner at a good seafood restaurant 'The Wharf'. We had a good time – she's a great kid.

Day 42
6/22/01

Erie, PA – Hamburg, NY
85.2 mi, avg 16.5

Had buffet in hotel. Pat and Ina came too. Left hotel at 7:15 in pouring rain. Rain stopped before 8am but got some sprinkles and drizzle for a while more. I got 2 flats – 1 at 10 miles and another at 60 miles. We had 2 detours due to bridges being rebuilt. Total detour – about 5 miles. We had lunch at a little place run by a 'Hells Angel' type motorcyclist and his 'Mol'. Very nice and friendly couple in their 40s? The only other customers were 2 old ladies in their 70s or 80s. We stopped at DQ and still got in well before 3 pm. Easy day.

After dinner, Keegan, Phil, Chuck and I went into a classic car showroom. They had about 25-30 restored cars from a 1928 Pierce Arrow to a 1970 Chevy Pickup. They had 2 cars I once owned – a 1958 Ford Thunderbird and a 1962 Pontiac Bonneville Convertible. We spent about 45 minutes there – Neat!

Day 43
6/23/01

Hamburg, NY – Canandaigua, NY
95.1 mi, avg 13.4, climb 4610

Steady rain all morning then on and off drizzle after lunch – temp at noon 57°. I got cold after 1st sag stop but warmed up OK – Chuck stayed cold and was shivering while we ate lunch. Had lunch in Avon, NY – nice town. We saw several nice villages and many nice houses. We stopped at mile 87 for an ice cream cone and coffee, but mostly to use their bathroom (didn't want to 'Pee and Flee'_. Stopped at a bike shop and picked up a spare tire. Cleaned and oiled bike. Clothes were terribly dirty from road grime. My socks may never get clean again. After dinner, Chuck, Carl and I took a short walk to Lake Canandaigua. The breeze was chilly and we didn't have jackets on.

Day 44
6/24/01

Canandaigua, NY – Syracuse, NY
63.5 mi, 13.5 mph, climb 2300 ft.

Cool – mostly cloudy. Chuck had a night flat and fixed before breakfast, then had another after breakfast – he had to buy a couple of tubes. We were last to leave the motel – then Chuck heard a noise in his front wheel – We stopped a couple of times then Pat (the mechanic) stopped in the van and we messed around for a while trying to stop the noise. We went through some nice villages – Geneva, Waterloo, Seneca Falls (a old car show here). Had lunch at mi 54 in Camillus. Got to hotel before 3pm. I didn't feel much like riding today, don't know why.

Day 45
6/25/01

Syracuse, NY – Little Falls, NY
84.5 mi, avg 15.5 mph, climb 2080 ft

Beautiful clear day, temp 54° - 85°.

Easy flat ride – first 12 mi were busy roads getting through Syracuse, but the rest were quiet country roads. Much of the ride followed along the Erie Canal. We stopped at an aqueduct where the canal crossed a stream. The sag stop was at a place where there was a pond with a chapel and cross out in the middle – weird. Had lunch in Utica at Rosario's Pizza. Little Falls is an old town that once had 15,000 people, now has <5,000. We got in at 2pm and walked around – we took another walk after dinner.

Day 46
6/26/01

Little Falls, NY – Albany, NY

Warm sunny day, 85°. We, Chuck and I, stopped at the Erie Canal Lock #17 in Little Falls. It's the highest lock in North America at 40.5 ft. Huge! We followed Rt 5 most of the day. Very light traffic, good roads and wide shoulder. We went through several nice villages – St. Johnsville, Nelliston, Fonda and Scotia. We had lunch at O'Leary's Pub in Scotia. I had a Rubens sandwich. We stopped at a Stewarts for ice cream. I got bear's claw on Chuck's recommendation. It's vanilla w/ caramel and nuts. We stopped at an interesting old guy's

'Junk for Sale'. It was just a bunch of stuff in his yard that he picked up. He lived there in a trailer. He had old magazines, Herkimer diamonds and all kinds of other things. I bought a small case pocket knife from a box full of all kinds of knives, for \$1.00. Karen Brumly bought some (3) Herkimer diamonds for \$1.00 each. He was a nice guy and seemed to enjoy talking to us and was interested in our trip.

Day 47
6/27/01

Albany, NY – Greenfield, MA
79.9 mi, avg 11.8, climb 6380 ft.
Sunny, high temp 95° - Hot!

Climbed nearly 40 of first 50 mi much of it very steep – used 'granny gear' much of the time. Beautiful route – rte 2 – Mohawk Trail. Crossed Mass. State line at mi 31. (Last state of 13). At mile 50 we had an 8 mile descent – steep and curvey in parts but the last couple of miles were gentle (coasted at about 20 mph) along a small river – Beautiful. Chuck and I ate lunch at the Charlemont Inn – very old and quaint (200 yrs. Old?) Good lunch. We went through a very neat old town named Shelburne Falls. It was kind of like Chester, NJ, but older. We stopped at Friendly's near the hotel and I had a chocolate milkshake.

Although this was the most climbing we've done on the trip, it was the most beautiful and enjoyable. We passed a couple of boys walking their bikes up a hill. One of them said to Chuck, 'How do you guys do it?' When I went by him, he said 'I'm not used to this.' They were about 12-14 years old.

Day 48
6/28/01

Greenfield, MA – Lexington, MA
89.0 mi, avg 13.0, climb 4440 ft.

Sunny and hot 95°+ early part of the ride was hilly, but no steep climbs – mostly long and rolling. Most people, including me were tired. Many of them took a ride in the van. It's hard to believe this was the last day of real riding. It's been a long 7 weeks and it will be good to get home to family and friends. I've had a great time, but it's time.

We had lunch at mile 63 in a small diner. Then, from mile 68 on, we were on some very nice back roads. We went through Concord and Lexington – some great, old homes.

Day 49
6/29/01

Lexington, Mass – Revere Beach
20mi

Got up at 5am. Bags to truck at 5:30. Started ride to assembly area at 7:15am. Assembled whole group at mi 15. Left for beach at 8:45. Lots of noise from group – chants “LA” – “Boston”.

Got to beach – met by friends and family – very emotional. Did front wheel dip – had champagne, supplied by Carl – pictures – much talking, hugging, etc. We then left for the hotel – stopped for lunch with Chuck, Ina, Janice, Brian and their kids – Samantha and William. It was great to see Pat and Lori at the beach. I didn't realize how great it would be to have them there.