

North Arbor Hot Hundred 2005

View from the sag wagon

“The Fisher Report”

By Greg (Bulldog) Fisher

The Bulldog would say that Saturday August 20, 2005 was one of the best experiences I have ever had in cycling, even though I didn't ride a foot. I was providing sag (support and gear) from Jena to Lewiston in Greene County at the 181 -60 intersections. I had the opportunity to drive and watch the riders smiling and suffering. I seemed to always be just in right place at the right time.

The 2005 Edition of the North Harbor Hot Hundred Saturday was done in a fashion that would any bike club in America envious. Special Thanks to Barry Lawrence and his staff of volunteers.

Some 225 riders from all over the southeast and beyond converged on Tuscaloosa for the 3rd annual North Harbor Hot Hundred 2005. This ride raises money for the Mental Health Task force at Northport DCH North Harbor pavilion. We knew that this would be a very hot ride, especially for the Century riders and some of the 65 milers. We saw temperatures in 80's at 6 AM Saturday morning. The ride started promptly at 7 AM after a few words from Barry Lawrence. We would see any variety of chain driven contrivance from a Mountain bike to a hand cycle. The hand cycle was ridden by Jerry Pope who was paralyzed from an Automobile accident some 20 years ago.

The site of these bikes and people is rather overwhelming for us that bike regularly on century rides that may have 25 people or less. The sound of the road bike folks clipping into their pedals sounds like the old westerns when everybody cocked their 45 pistols before a gun fight.

We don't play music like they do at Cheaha but the riders don't seem to care. Once the riders leave, the sag and support people just stand around and wait till we can go out and patrol the course. I got to Jena at 8:00 and at 8:35 the first and rather small group would fly by. A few minutes later a larger group and then finally a few stragglers.

The early part of the ride was uneventful. People were fresh and rested and having a good time on the ride. As I rode on the course I saw folks waving and smiling like an ad for a cycling tour group, then it got hot! I am not talking hot, like the folks from up north talk, when it gets a little above 82 degrees. I am talking about sit on the pavement and burn your backside, lava flowing, scorching, sweat popping Death Valley hot.

It seemed people were not smiling or waving that much now. Folks were starting to look like they were in a sauna. I stopped and handed some folks a cold towel to put behind their neck. I think I could have sold them and made a few bucks.

The heat and humidity was so stiffening and it was taking its toll on the riders especially at miles 60 and beyond. Bethel Church looked like a MASH unit. People were exhausted and hot and that was just the staff. The riders were well cared for and refreshed to point, so they could complete the 23 miles back to Capitol Park. The radio I was carrying was going off like I was a drug dealer or something. I was hauling people in and picking people up. It was very gratifying to be able to help these dehydrated and exhausted people to the rest stops. They were so grateful for my being there and sometimes in the nick of time. I can't wait till next year when again we help the mentally ill of west Alabama and the riders doing this hot ride!

[Bulldog](#)

