

OTP 2011: The Trip of a Lifetime

Report by Bernd Neumann, Germany

It was the 21st of March 2011 when I received an email from Hans Ove „The Boss“ Goertz officially announcing me to be the official winner of OTP 2011... wow! But I decided that Gie Lambeir (Runner up 2011 and 2009) should accompany me and got the Confirmation by the OTP Team.

Only another four exciting months left – and so much to do, so many things to organize.

It turned out to be pretty simple: Anette (my wife) and my boss approved the requested vacation time and Ted Adcock started the organization. Spencer Farrow sent some money and I got the tickets for the flight. All the organisation was done by that great OTP-Team.

Then came the day of the big trip: 29 July 2011. Rick Hall picked me up at the airport in Denver, Harry Martin provided some OTP Tour T-shirts and the very next morning Steve Cook and Phil Tarman guided me up to the Rocky Mountains National Park. I had never been over 1200 feet elevation with my bike and my happiness increased with every gained meter in height.

Another day, a new adventure: 600 miles, 100 °F – and for the first time ever I heard my GPS say: “ride 465 miles and then turn left”. And there was not a single turn... When we arrived at Chris Baum in Lincoln, NE, Gie (my nanny for this trip and good friend) already expected us.

The next day we had a plant visit at the Kawasaki Motors Manufacturing Corp., in Lincoln. A company tour all day – but why? The riddle’s answer: **Mike Boyle** (Vice President of KMMC U.S.A) provided an almost new C14 for the rest of my trip. What a surprise! I could not hide some tears. I handed over Harry van der Laan’s bike to Gie. The Baums organized a barbecue at their house, which was attended by some local COG members.



Kevin Cummings took the trouble to ride 3 days in the heat, pick us up at the Baum’s house and guide us through the flooded Missouri valley to his home in Foley, MO.

After he left us on the next day at noon, Gie and I were on our own. The heat was really getting on us. Gie’s water bottle exploded with a big “bang” and all his delicious Belgian Chocolate (which he provided for the hosts) was melted. But when we arrived at the hotel that night, Gary Murphy surprised us with some Camel Baks (courtesy of Murphy’s Kits). We filled them up with ice and this made the whole situation a lot easier for us. After paying for dinner and accomodation, Gary was riding

with us/accompanied us for the next half day and then Gie and I enjoyed some nice twisty roads in Kentucky and enjoyed some extra miles. We arrived late that night at our hotel in Charleston, WV..

The next day our way was leading us to the New River Gorge Bridge in WV and via the Blue Ridge Parkway to Bob Dombrowe in Crozet, VA.

It was only a short trip from there to Frank Hunt’s home, who accompanied us to Washington DC, where Arthur Boyd as well as Russel and Martha Flemming showed us the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum. On our way to Arthur’s house in Baltimore, MD we were caught by some heavy rain and we got soaked to the skin for the first time on this trip.

Arthur guided us to a Truck Stop, from where Dennis Robbins brought us to New York city.

After a stop in Liberty State Park and Ground Zero in Manhattan he guided us to Patrick Gallaway (Upper Westside), who invited us for dinner in a Jazzclub in Downtown Manhattan. He was riding with us the next day and after an interesting visit at the Military Academy West Point we arrived the COG National at Mount Snow in West Dover, VT.

After all that time we finally met all the people we only knew from the internet, for example. Mike Aldea who planned all the nice routes for us, Ted Adcock and Guy Young (OTP Traveller No.1) and many others.

One day Gie and I were travelling on our own, driving at a speed we are used to from Europe. This resulted into a nice little chat with a local sheriff, who finally had to let us go since he did not speak German or French.

Our way back led us through NY to the Niagara Falls and via Lincoln, Ontario in Canada to John Sexton, a former co-worker of mine. He and his wife Elfi invited us to stay over for the night and the next morning he showed us the area around Holland and Saugatuck, MI. From there we only had a short distance to John “Hoogie” Hoogewerf in Lansing, IL . We stayed at John’s house and he showed us Chicago and invited us to a nice Greek restaurant.

On our way back to Lincoln we had quite some difficulties to cross the flooded Missouri and we tried to make up for the lost time – and again we had a nice conversation with the State Po-

lice. They explained us friendly: the “75” is the number of the road – not the speed limit!

Steve and Phil expected us to bring Gie back to Colorado the next

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