

2014 "THE RIDE"

January 27th Sno chasers club members Scott Bunker, Gary Hooker, Bruce Wormmeester, J.R. Corley and Dale Johnson set off from Croton, Mi. on their sleds and headed north. We arrived at the MackinawW Brige at 4:00 p.m. and were taken across the Mac by the bridge authority and continued on to the Kewadin Casino in St. Ignace for the night. The temperatures for day 1 were about 10 below, and a total of 242 miles. Sure was nice to get a room, have a great dinner and relax for the night.

Day 2 we were headed out about 8 ish with the temp. at about 20 below. Dress warm again was the word for the day! After getting the sleds loaded with the saddle bags and warmed up we headed west on trail 2. Lunch and the need for gas found us in Naubinway, from there it was exploring some hills and a short break to get my sled unstuck from a corner that "it" failed to negotiate. The end of the day, about 7:00 pm and 206 miles later found us at Escanaba, our motel had a great restaurant, so after a good meal with lots of talk we were all ready to call it a night.

Day 3 was another cold one, about 20 below again, same dress code as day 2, if you got it, wear it. We headed west again, the trails were really smooth, just like the previous two days and not much traffic on them. Seen a few wolf tracks crossing the trail in a couple of places and one bald eagle. Getting late in the afternoon and we crossed into Wisconsin and on to Hurley were we spent the night. After getting a couple of rooms we devored a three large pizza's at the motel and talked about the days ride which was 227 very long / cold miles.

Day 4, another cold one like previous one's, wear it all again! Before leaving the motel that morning we all purchased Wisconsin trail permits and were on our way heading north. Our first stop was at the Lake of the Clouds, snowing so hard that the lake was almost impossible to see at times, took a few pictures and headed back to the east as we were as far west as we could go. Day 4 was great riding and better scenery with lots of hills and again good smooth trails. 239 miles later brought us into Ishpening before dark. Got a motel room and had dinner and a brew or two at a restaurant with it own brewery.

Day 5, guess what, its cold again, dress code the same. Today we are going to make it to St. Ignace, have a motel rooms already rented, so give it the gas and go. Trails are excellent, that is until I hit 3 large mogels south of Christmass and the sled bucked me off. The only thing hurt is my pride, but I can live with that, the 3 guy's behind me got a good laugh anyway. 271 miles later we Checked into the motel about dark and then took the ice bridge to the island for a look see, did not know so many folks lived on the island all year, there were lights everywhere. Back to the motel for a late dinner and turned in to get rested for the next days ride home.

Day 6, a little warmer, must be only 10 below. We are over the big Mac at 8:30 and heading south and home with a stop for breakfast with some other friends in Levering. Breakfast done, we say our goodby's and head out, it's a Saturday and we start running into more traffic than we have seen all week long combined, so after 253 slower miles and at 7:00 pm we are back to Bruce's house in Croton, almost 1500 miles total and no breakdowns for anyone, some tired bodies, but am willing to try it again. A great, fun ride with a greater group of guys.

Bruce is already getting plans ready for next year's "The Ride", if snow conditions are good, departure will be from Bruce's again and riding the sleds to the Big Mac. And onward to the U.P.

Dale