

## **INSTALLMENT 2**

### **BRAG APPLICATION**

Applications can be found in some of the bike shops or can be downloaded in Adobe Acrobat Reader\* format by navigating through the "Download Application" link on the BRAG home page.

The application for BRAG is fairly straight forward but there are some decisions that need to be made and indicated on the application.

Complete a separate application for each person. You may copy the application if you need additional copies. **Be sure and sign the waiver on the back of the application.**

Do not even consider riding BRAG without registering. BRAG is non-profit and freeloaders are not welcome.

After registering, you will get a confirmation letter in May that explains a lot of the details about the ride. Also in that letter will be options for the meal plans.

### **CENTURY RIDE ON WEDNESDAY**

After **legibly** filling out all your personal information, the first decision is the Century Ride. This is on Wednesday, the layover day, where you will spend both Tuesday night and Wednesday night in the same city. If this is your first ride and consecutive 60- mile days seem daunting, perhaps the wisest thing to do is to take Wednesday off and not ride at all. But it will be tough watching many cyclists start out in the morning while you just hang around the campground.

Your options for Wednesday are varied from short mileage to the 100-mile century ride. All distances are supported with rest stops, SAG wagons, etc. If you have never done a "Century" this is your chance! But remember, start early and take on lots of electrolytes at the rest stops. Hyponatremia (excessive salt loss) has stopped many a rider only a few miles from the end. Century bandannas are promised to the first 200 finishers, but you need to indicate on the registration form that you will do the 100.

### **MEAL PLANS**

You will not have to commit to meals until you receive the Confirmation Letter in May.

### **BRAG, BRAG LITE, and CHILDREN**

BRAG is at least 6 days of riding out of 7. BRAG LITE gives you some options besides the "whole enchilada." You can join the tour on Sunday and bike the first 3 days -or- join the tour on Wednesday and do just the last 3 days. There is a bus option back to the halfway point from the **end** of the ride.

### **PRIVATE VEHICLES**

If you choose to bring a vehicle with you for the week, you will need to purchase a vehicle permit for \$30. You will receive a set of route maps which will keep you off the bicycle route. You will also be given a decal that needs to be displayed in the rear window of the vehicle. If the driver is staying at the overnight site, he or she will also need to register.

### **SPECIAL OLYMPICS GEORGIA**

Special Olympics Georgia will be hosting the rest stops throughout the week. Check out their web site to see the good that they do and consider a donation. <http://www.specialolympicsga.org/> for more information.

## **SHIRTS AND JERSEYS**

BRAG merchandise will be for sale at every overnight stop. Besides the T-shirts and jerseys, they will have rain jackets, hats, sports bags, etc. Merchandise will be sold at BRAG headquarters. The jerseys will go fast and should be ordered now. Check out the jersey design on the BRAG home page.

## **BUS SERVICE**

On the application are the optional bus rides. Even though the application gives you until the first week in June, or until the buses are full, to make this decision, **do not procrastinate. Buses fill up in a hurry.**

The buses are nice chartered rigs complete with A/C, toilets, and video systems so you can watch a movie. Your luggage will travel with you.

Your bike will travel in an enclosed truck. The pedals must be removed (do not attempt this without the right tool) and the handle bars rotated so as to render the bike as narrow as possible. If you are worried about your frame getting some cosmetic damage, pack your bike in a box. If your bike does get some functional damage (this would be extraordinary) there will be bike shop vendors near the BRAG headquarters upon arrival at the start. BRAG provides cardboard to put between the bikes.

In all the plans listed below, none of the parking areas for the automobiles are guarded locations.

## **BUS FROM AND TO ATLANTA**

Drive your automobile to Atlanta and park it there for the week. Partially disassemble your bike and pack it into the truck. Ride the bus from Atlanta to the ride start on Saturday before the ride begins. Retrieve and re-assemble your bike. Ride your bike for 6 or 7 days ending on Saturday. That afternoon, disassemble your bike, pack it in the truck, and ride the bus back to Atlanta. Retrieve your bike and drive your automobile back home.

**Pros:** If you live near Atlanta, this is great. The bus will be filled with like-minded people and is a good opportunity to begin making new friends.

**Cons:** Once you board the bus in Atlanta, you had pretty much better have what you will need for the week with you.

## **DRIVE TO THE END OF THE RIDE**

Drive your automobile to the end and leave your car there for the week. Partially disassemble your bike and pack it into the truck. Ride the bus from the end to the start on Saturday. Retrieve and re-assemble your bike. Ride your bike for 6 or 7 days, party, load up your bike and gear, and then drive your automobile back home.

**Pros:** The bus will be filled with like minded people and is a good opportunity to begin making new friends. Your automobile is at the end of the ride so you can load up your fully assembled bike and get back to the world when you choose.

**Cons:** The bus ride from the ride end leaves at 10 AM which is kind of early if you don't live near there. Once you board the bus at the end, you had pretty much better have what you will need for the week with you.

### **DRIVE TO THE BEGINNING OF THE RIDE**

Drive your automobile to the start and park it there for the week. Ride your bike for 6 or 7 days to the end. That afternoon, prepare your bike for shipping and load it into the truck. Ride the bus back to the start where you left your automobile. The bus is supposed to leave at 3 PM. Retrieve your bike then drive your automobile back home.

**Pros:** Your automobile is at the beginning of the tour so you can bring all kinds of extra gear. For a first-timer, this is a good idea because you can see what everybody else is doing. This gives you the day to pare down all you brought to just what you really need. If you need to go to a store, you have your automobile. Your bike won't have been partially disassembled. You can get to the start anytime you wish.

**Cons:** At the end of the ride you must wait for the buses. You must disassemble your bike which requires some tools, namely a pedal wrench and allen wrenches or hope somebody brought tools. On the last day you will ride your bike several hours, ride a bus several hours, and drive your car several hours making for a long day!

### **DRIVE TO THE RIDE MID-POINT**

Drive your automobile to the mid-point on Wednesday and join BRAG (actually BRAG LITE) at the approximate mid-point of the ride. This is the layover day so the riders will be there two nights. Wednesday is the optional day to ride not at all, choose shorter options, or ride the Century. Ride your bike for 3 or 4 days to the end. That afternoon, prepare your bike for shipping and load it into the truck. Then ride the bus back to the mid-point where you left your automobile. The bus is supposed to leave at 3 PM. Retrieve your bike and drive your automobile home.

**Pros:** This is a good plan for those that do not want to ride a bike 6 or 7 days. Your automobile is at the beginning of BRAG LITE so you can bring all kinds of extra gear. For a first-timer this is a good idea because you can see what everybody else is doing. This gives you the day to pare down all you brought to just what you really need. If you need to go to a store, you have your automobile. Your bike won't have been partially disassembled. You can get to the mid-point anytime you like on Wednesday and ride for the last 3 days.

**Cons:** At the end of the ride you must wait for the buses. You must disassemble your bike which requires some tools, namely a pedal wrench and allen wrenches or hope somebody brought tools. On the last day you will ride your bike several hours, ride a bus several hours, and drive your car perhaps several hours making for a long day!

### **NO BUSING**

Do not ride any buses, but work out your own automobile logistics.

### **TENT**

Packing tents and their paraphernalia adds complexity to your bike ride and weight to your luggage.

Overnight stops are at schools and camping is sometimes restricted to their athletic fields. If not restricted, you may get to camp in a shaded area. Everyday you will have to carry your luggage some distance. There is the additional chore of setting the tent up. In the morning, the tent is usually wet and must be folded up while wet. And this is when the weather is nice. Your bike may have to spend the night outdoors. On the other hand, you can go to sleep and wake up when you like, have a little more privacy, and the campsites are relatively quiet - unless there is a barking dog nearby or a busy train crossing.

If you do not already own a light, easy-to-pitch tent and think you may want to tent, start your research now. By the way, a one-person tent is too small for one person.

Some schools require that inside sleepers stay in one big gym, but other schools let you sleep in the hallways. The hallways are usually air-conditioned and remain at a constant temperature throughout the day and night. Staying indoors definitely requires ear plugs, eye mask, and being able to sleep in a room full of strangers. Of course they won't be strangers if you get to know them first! The temperature stays somewhat constant, storms are less of a problem, and you need much less stuff than tenting. Sleeping pads are really insufficient on concrete floors; get a good air-mattress and a rechargeable electric inflator. Light sleeping bag, pillow, slippers, "jammies" and a small flashlight are all you will need. Leave the alarm clock at home because about 5:45 AM everybody starts stirring which you will not sleep through. The lights should go back on at 6:00 AM.

If you cannot decide whether to tent or gym, plan on tenting. After two nights in the tent, you can change your mind and sleep indoors.

### **MOTELS**

Motels are along the route but getting to them and back to the campground the next morning can be a real problem. Do not depend on shuttle buses running in the mornings. Use the BRAG motel list for the event. It's a good idea to make reservations early.