

Trip Summary:

So far, having a blast. Drove up from Baltimore to Fairhaven Mass. on Friday June 14, by way of West_Chester_Pa (lunch with my friend John, lovely little town) and NYC. Made the mistake of following my iPhone map directions which took me over the George Washington Bridge at 4PM on a Friday. Then directed me to bypass route 95 for a bit (good) up on to several parkways. Problem was, both had accidents on them and with only two lanes, traffic was stop and go. During the second 8 mile, 1 hour stop-and-go, found that it was 3 New Yorkers 'discussing' a fender bender-unfortunately they deemed it necessary to park in the fast lane and "chat", rather than move off the parkway. To compound the misery, it started drizzling during this lovely time and I had no speed with which to drive under the rain. All in all it took 4 hours to get past the greater NYC area. Ran into someone down the road who said 95 had a 25 mile traffic backup so either way we were screwed. Other than that section, the drive was beautiful.

Score: rain 1; Rick 0.

As others have noted, the FFR open house was great, held under perfect skies. Amazing artistry shown by many builders. Luv the 818. Great drive that afternoon to the Albany NY area to visit my sister. I could see that the sun is going to be a problem during this trip, and so far it's only gotten into the 80s. The goofy hat works great though (there's a pic of me and it on the FFR forum site somewhere in a Mad Dog thread post).

Nice drive on Sunday 6/16 to Syracuse for visiting my two college roommates. For those who aren't familiar with New_York_State, other than NYC and a few medium sized cities strung along the Thruway, it's all small towns and trees and farms and grass. See pic below of typical scene along the Thruway. On this drive, got caught in some sprinkle and then 20 minutes of a gully washer. Wore my rain suit jacket but failed to put on my rain suit pants. Was kept dry and comfortable, except for my hands and the top left thigh where the rain came off the upper left windshield corner.

Score: rain 1; rick 0; tie 1

Monday noon packed up the car and joined former roommate Bill (with his Miata) at a local restaurant before taking off to Rochester. While sitting in the restaurant the sky turned black. Ran out to put my tarp over the cockpit and his top up. 15 minute thunderstorm with horizontal wind and rain. Then the sky cleared up and turned blue. Stowed the tarp and headed North to the rural route on the Lake Ontario Southern shore, in blue sky the entire way. All along, was bordered on the driver's side by a huge rain front. Had I gone by way of the Thruway, would have been totally soaked. Yeah baby!

Score: rain 1; rick 1; tie 1

Spent several days in my hometown (Rochester NY) under fantastic weather. Parked with a beautiful '59 Corvette up on the Cobb's Hill Reservoir and had a nice chat with the owner. Enjoyed a large turnout of cars at the weekly cruise-in at the Log Cabin restaurant out in the boonies (20 minutes from the city) in Macedon NY. Several of my grade school/high school buddies joined me.

On Thursday 6/20, made the 450 mile drive to London Ohio for the annual Cobra show. Again, perfect weather in the morning, turning slightly on the warm side as the afternoon progressed. When stopped at a rest area, a friendly trucker advised me that there was an

overtaken tractor trailer down the road causing a 20 mile traffic jam. Headed off the interstate onto the back roads (Ohio 42) and enjoyed the last 100 miles of the trip on country roads. If you like cobras, you've got to experience the London show. The 4 or 5 hotels in the Hilliard area were festooned with roadsters and coupes. Their parking lots were overrun with them. Ran into forum god Jeff Kleiner and thanked him for all the help he had provided me (threads and PMs) during my build. There was a two day track day at Mid-Ohio on the Wednesday and Thursday preceding the show, and attendees (including Gary Bopp, my co-customer representative in the Carlisle show FFR booth with his coupe) said it was a magnificent experience. The Capital Area Cobra Club (Washington DC region) was headquartered at the Hilliard Holiday Inn Express parking lot with a huge trailer and beach chairs, plus cooler after cooler filled with libations. These guys (and gals) are Pro drinkers! On Friday 6/21 we participated in an organized tour out in the Ohio countryside, ending up at lunch at a mill with a functioning water wheel and covered bridge. On the way back, a group of four ended up on the interstate traveling at a sustained high rate of speed for an extended period. This came to an end when a highway patrolman entered the highway. We slowed down but he had us dead to rights. But instead of hassling us, he merely came up to us over in the left lane and assumed a 65 mph pace, which we matched of course. Comically, the traffic was instantly backed up behind the 5 of us (No one travels the speed limit on the interstate). Still, this type of friendly police accommodation was characteristic of the whole weekend-hassle free.

This morning, prior to the show, several hundred cobras lined up in the staging area outside of London. We were then escorted into the city by the Sheriffs, parade style, at a not slow rate of speed, perfectly orchestrated right into the center of town, with townsfolk and show goers waving and cheering all along the route. Several square blocks had been closed off to everything but cobras and vendors (cobra oriented and the strawberry festival). Throughout the day, paying customers donated \$10 to charity for a ride in cobras doing short drag races, chaperoned by the police. The entire London show is for the benefit of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, to the tune of about \$1 million per year.

At this point, am 9 days and about 1500 miles into the trip. No issues whatsoever yet. Sunday 6/23 am off to Detroit for a day visiting a friend, then will be venturing further into the Michigan hinterlands to spend a week camping and hiking along the Great Lakes shore and experiencing both the lower and upper peninsulas (the latter is apparently referred to as "The U.P." by those of 'us' in the know).