



## **Lyle T. Bear Grand Tour 2026**

**April 1 through November 15, 2026**

TeamStrange Grand Tours are all about having an excuse to get out and ride.

Lyle T. Bear has been the loyal and devoted mascot for TeamStrange for most of the group's history. Lyle famously rode along with TeamStrange founder Eddie James for hundreds of thousands of miles and multiple Iron Butt Rallies, and was immortalized by Iron Butt figure Robert Higdon in *The Higdon Chronicles*. Lyle is showing his age and he doesn't get out as much as he used to but his name still keeps showing up in the list of finishers of TeamStrange Grand Tours. We thought it would be nice to give Lyle the honor of having a tour of his own.

Your entry includes a Grand Tour flag and sticker. Entry fee is \$50 for one or two up. GT flags and stickers will be mailed around March 15, and thereafter, upon sign up.

Finishing will earn you bragging rights and an Official Grand Tour finisher pin.

There is a minimum required number of locations to visit to be a finisher. You may also visit additional locations to collect points. The top finisher in points will be declared the TeamStrange 2026 Grand Tour Champion and will receive a commemorative plaque to document this amazing feat. We'll also declare Regional Champions in the U.S., Canada, Australia, and the Rest of the World, who will also receive (lesser but still nice) commemorative plaques.

### Grand Tour Finisher:

To be considered a finisher you must visit at least 12 Lyle T. Bear Locations on your motorcycle between April 1, 2026, and November 15, 2026, and properly document each visit.

A Lyle T. Bear Location is any of the following:

A location whose name as indicated on an official government sign includes “Lyle” or “Bear” *OR*

Public art of a bear such as a statue, mural, monument, or historical marker *OR*

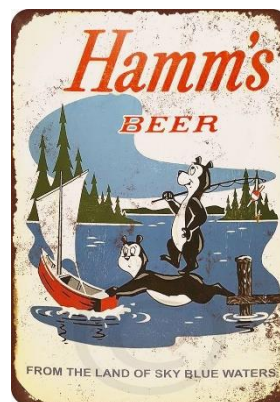
A real live bear.

### Grand Tour Scoring:

If you are a finisher, you will score points by visiting Lyle T. Bear Locations.

You will score 25 points for any location that you visit on your motorcycle and properly document whose name as indicated on an official government sign includes “Lyle” or “Bear”.

You will score 5 points for any signs depicting the Bear Alignment (or Alinement) bear (see [www.roadarch.com/signs/bear.html](http://www.roadarch.com/signs/bear.html)) or signs depicting the Hamm’s Beer Bear that you visit on your motorcycle and properly document.



You will score 1 point for any other public art that you visit on your motorcycle and properly document that depicts a bear.

You will score between 1 and 100 points for a Wild Card, depending.

You will score 100 points for any real live bear that you encounter on your motorcycle and properly document.

## **Grand Tour Location Proof:**

“Lyle” and “Bear”: we will accept any official government sign that has “Lyle” or “Bear” anywhere in the name of the location - city or county limits signs, “Welcome To” signs, city halls, post offices, municipal buildings, police stations, fire stations, historical markers. We will not accept “Lyle” and “Bear” signs on schools, churches, cemeteries, or businesses. We will not accept signage on mobile vehicles such as fire trucks, police cars, or trailers.

Public Art depicting a bear: we will count any public art that shows a representation of a bear. For purposes of this Grand Tour, public art is any permanently mounted sign, mural, statue, historical marker, or other artwork in public. It may be non-commercial or commercial public art. It may be realistic, cartoonish, or stylized, two- or three-dimensional, as long as we can tell that it’s a bear. “Permanently mounted” excludes banners, flags, temporary signs, mobile signs, images on vehicles, and the like. The word “Bear” is not a representation of a bear.

A real live bear is a real live bear. A stuffed dead bear is not a real live bear (but it would qualify as a statue of a bear).

For avoidance of doubt and purposes of this Grand Tour, koala bears and panda bears are bears, regardless of their biological genus.

We will count each location only once. For purposes of this Grand Tour, the location is the immediate vicinity of the physical place where the sign or art or bear is found. “Immediate vicinity” is within sight of, on the same property, or close enough that you would not have to move your motorcycle. Multiple signs or artwork or live bears at the same location will count as one.

Example: each city limits sign around the border of White Bear Lake is a separate location – so if you want to just ride around White Bear Lake and photograph city limit signs, you can, and you can score 25 points for each sign.

Example: Towns named “Lyle”, “Carlyle”, “White Bear Lake”, “Bearsville” all count.

Example: You somehow get your motorcycle into the Cuddly Koala Experience at the Australia Zoo and get a photo with 10 koalas. You get 100 points for 1 bear.

Example: We would count all these signs and any other signs at Bearsville Center as one sign for 1 point because they are all signs at and for the same location and none of them are official government signs marking the name of the town.



Example: The post office at Bearsville NY would be a different location from Bearsville Park because it's located elsewhere and it's a government sign and so it counts as 25 points. The sign at the Cub Market we would not count because it's at the same location as the post office. (We suppose you could claim the Cub Market sign as a picture of a bear for 1 point but then you wouldn't get credit for the post office which is more points.)



## General Documentation Rules

1. You must physically go on your motorcycle to each location you claim.
2. You must document your visit to each location with a photo.
3. The photo must include (legibly) your Grand Tour flag, your motorcycle, and proof that you are at a Lyle T. Bear location.
4. If you cannot get or do not have your flag, motorcycle and the required proof, in a single photo, you will not get credit for the photo. If there is a sign or artwork inside a building or museum and you can't get your motorcycle close enough to get a photo including your flag, your motorcycle and the sign, you will not get credit for the photo. If you go to the zoo and leave your motorcycle in the parking lot, you will not get credit for the photo. Our intention is for you to visit locations that you can actually ride to and photograph with your motorcycle at the location.

5. You must include your physical Grand Tour flag in each and every photo. No exceptions. It must be your physical Grand Tour flag – not a copy, not a duplicate. If you lose your original physical Grand Tour flag, you may not collect locations until you contact us and arrange for and obtain a replacement. We must be able to read the number on your flag in your photo.
6. Be safe and smart. If conditions or circumstances make capturing a photograph unsafe, a crime, or will result in a ticket or safety violation, do not take the risk. Find a safe alternative to capture your photo or skip the opportunity.
7. Our judges are simple folk. If your photo(s) is/are not clear or you do not document your photo(s) in a way that our scorers can understand, you will not score points. If one of the required items in your photo is too small or fuzzy or distant or dark for us to identify it, you will not score points.
8. You may use **five** *Wild Cards* for the entire Grand Tour. What is a Wild Card? A Wild Card is a location for which there is not all of the acceptable evidence, or which is not on our list, but you make a compelling case for why we should give you points. If you document your visit and make a compelling case, we might give you points. What's a compelling case? It all depends on your creativity; this is your chance to break free from the constraints of the rules and live free. You must tell us you're claiming a Wild Card, and why you should get credit for it, otherwise we'll just assume you made a mistake. Points will be awarded entirely at the discretion of TeamStrange and the bar is set very high. You can submit as many Wild Cards as you want (you miss all the shots you don't take), but we'll only give you credit for five. Given the looseness of the rules for this Grand Tour, it's hard to imagine what could be a Wild Card, but, why not?

We will likely *not* entertain submissions for a Wild Card for names that are close to "Lyle" or "Bear" but not quite. We won't accept "Lisle" on the theory that it sounds like Lyle nor "Embarrass" on the theory that it sounds like Bear.

9. You may submit your photos electronically/digitally or via the mail. Our first preference is that you send us a link to an online digital photo album such as SmugMug or Google Photos where all the photos are nicely captioned. Our second preference would be that you email us digital photos. Our least preference would be that you send us physical photos via mail. All digital photos (or links to digital photo albums) must be submitted to [grandtour@davidebsmith.com](mailto:grandtour@davidebsmith.com). If you would prefer to mail your photos, please contact David E.B. Smith at [grandtour@davidebsmith.com](mailto:grandtour@davidebsmith.com) for the appropriate mailing address. Photos, disks, pen drive and anything else you mail will not be returned.
10. Submissions must be submitted or postmarked on or before November 16, 2026.

11. The TeamStrange Uniform Rules do not apply to this Grand Tour.
12. A sign indicating a location must be at the location, not a nearby sign pointing the way to the location or saying how far it is to the location.
13. If we have to do historical research or if you have to explain anything beyond what the sign says or if the sign is not legible in your photo without computer enhancement, you will not get credit.
14. If we can't read the sign in the photo, you will not get credit, so you want to do better than an out-of-focus low-resolution photo of a sign off in the distance.

## Q&A

1. **Where do I get the list of locations?** We don't have a list of places. The governments of the US, Canada, and Australia all publish electronic "gazetteers" that list locations by their official government names. Our research suggests that there about 9 locations in the US, Canada, and Australia with "Lyle" in them, and about 120 with "Bear" in them, many if not most of which are inaccessible by motorcycle and don't have any signage. Waymarking.com has a group of "Bear Statues" with a few thousand listings world-wide. There are something like 1111 historical markers in California, some of which have the California Bear on them.
2. **How do I know if I can get both my motorcycle and the sign in a photo?** Google Maps Street View is your friend.
3. **Can I use more than one motorcycle during this Grand Tour?** Yes.
4. **Can I use someone else's motorcycle during this Grand Tour?** It's OK with us if it's OK with them.
5. **Can I use a different motorcycle than the one I signed up with?** Yes.
6. **Can I use a sidecar rig, a trike, a Spyder, a Slingshot, or some other 3-wheeled vehicle?** Yes.
7. **Can I use a bicycle?** A Whizzer or other motorized bicycle, absolutely. An electric bike, OK. A human-powered bike, it's good exercise, but no points.
8. **Can I use a car?** No.
9. **Can I put my motorcycle on a train and transport it to bonus locations?** Yes, but only if you are James West and Artemus Gordon.

10. **If I'm riding two up, does one person have to be in every photo?** No, mostly we have two up registration so we know who gets two finisher pins. If you register two-up, you can take along a passenger or not; if you register solo, you can take along a passenger or not. If you registered solo and took a passenger to all the locations and you both want pins, let us know at the end of the tour; if you registered two up and your passenger refused to ride along to a bunch of obscure places to take pictures of signs and you only need one pin, let us know at the end of the tour.
11. **Can I take my motorcycle on a trailer to a location and roll it off and submit the photo?** You would be better off leaving it on the trailer and having a really entertaining story for a Wild Card.
12. **Do my flag and motorcycle have to be in each photo?** Yes, absolutely. Again, Yes, absolutely. (And the sign too). We're going to be strict on this rule in this Grand Tour because we want you to have the rally mindset that your flag must be in every photo.
13. **Can I submit more than one photo of a sign?** For credit, you will need to submit one photo that shows, in the same photo, the sign, your motorcycle, and your rally flag (with the number legible). Additional photos may not help and may confuse us. We expect that you'll get close enough to the sign so that it and your motorcycle and your flag are all visible and legible without us zooming in to the photo. But there is no penalty for submitting extra photos.
14. **Are there any limits on the number of signs or public art I can submit from any one town or location?** No. If you think it would be fun to ride around the borders of White Bear Lake and collect all the city limit signs, who are we to judge? Some Strangers inexplicably enjoy riding across the featureless prairies of South Dakota to find tiny towns with women's names. ˘(ツ)˘
15. **Do I need to imprint the date and time on the photo?** This is not the rally that required that, so no. But if you want to, OK.
16. **How do you want me to submit the photos – all at once, as I go along, in the cloud, in an email, etc?** We're pretty agnostic about this. If it works for you to submit photos in individual emails as you go along, OK, if it works for you to submit everything at the end, OK, if you want to send us a link to Google Photos at the beginning of the tour and just keep adding photos, OK. Most online photo albums or cloud services or file transfer apps we can figure out.

We will say that we think it's risky to send photos in individual emails, because they can get lost in transit, they can get misdirected into our Spam folder, and sometimes the

photos you thought were attached to the email weren't attached, or are garbled, or are shrunk so as to be almost impossible to view, or are blown up so we can't see the entire photo.

We *can* tell you what makes our lives easier for scoring your submissions: if you put your rider number in the title of each email you send us. If you tell us if you're sending multiple photos of the same location, either in the accompanying email or in photo captions. If you send us a link to a cloud photo album like Google Photos or Smugmug or the like, that you check that the link works and that it will work for us without us logging in or downloading anything. If you send photos in emails, send one photo per email.

For some online photo albums like Google Drive and Dropbox, you have two options – you can share via email or you can create a link and send that. It's better if you create the shared link and email that to us, rather than using the "share via email". We can handle either, but the shared link is easier.

We strongly recommend that at the end of the Tour, or whenever you give up if it's not at the end, you send an email to us at [grandtour@davidebsmith.com](mailto:grandtour@davidebsmith.com) to tell us that you're done and are submitting your photos and how you're submitting them. We may have 125 riders to keep track of and we are simple folk.

Also strongly recommended is that you tell us how many locations you're claiming, and even better, what they are. That helps *you* because we can double-check your count against our count and determine if we counted right and got all your photos and give you the proper credit.

We don't score entries as the season goes along, because many riders submit everything at the end. If you send us emails or links during the Tour, we sort them by rider number (hence the need for the number in the email) and collect them for the end of the Tour. It is easiest for us (and hence better for you) if we can simply go to the list of emails or the online photo album, click through the list of photos while we count, and compare our count against your count.

And however you submit the photos, be sure we can see what's shown in the photo. Make sure before you leave a location that you have a photo that's in focus, not too dark, at a high enough resolution, and shows your motorcycle, your rally flag, and a sign that is readable.

A helpful hint for sending us a link we can see if you're using Google Drive: Right-click on your folder in Google Drive, click Share, click Share, under General Access set to Anyone with the Link, Copy Link.

Questions? Ask [grandtour@davidebsmith.com](mailto:grandtour@davidebsmith.com)