



## CHARITY

To win one of the Harley-Davidson jackets as worn by the women riders in the Amazon Heart ride, just answer this question: **Name the event that ran parallel to the Amazon Heart ride.** [CLICK HERE](#) to send us your answer Note: The jacket is an XL size

## Thunder in their hearts



This summer, 23 women took part in the Thunder Run, a ride from Aviemore in the Scottish Highlands to London for Amazon Heart, a peer support organisation for breast cancer survivors. Taking an ambitious route, the women raised thousands and had tremendous fun along the way...

Every August, Edinburgh buzzes with people from all over the world flocking to the festival, but this year there was an extra growl underneath it all as 23 women convened at Pollock Halls, Edinburgh University, to begin the Amazon Heart Thunder run. This journey, running almost the length of the UK was a great chance for breast cancer survivors to take part in an inspiring adventure and raise a lot of money.

The women spent the first day getting to know each other and sorting out rules and schedules for the ride ahead, before having an excellent barbecue and a party in the evening. Heading to the Edinburgh H-D® dealership the next day, the Harleys were allocated, and the group were ready to go.

The following morning, the group packed all their kit into the chase vans and began the ride north to Aviemore, the Thunder in the Glens rally and the official start of the run. Before the women had even reached the rally, the patrol formation of 18 Harleys passed through many beautiful country roads and villages, past lochs and livestock, before meeting the group from the local Dunedin H.O.G® chapter who were their escort to Aviemore.

Thunder in the Glens is one of the largest rallies in the UK, and with the Amazon Heart girls leading the ride-out to Granton on Spey it was an incredible stage of their journey.

The hospitality that Dunedin H.O.G showed the Amazon Heart group was the best encouragement they could have hoped for.

The next day, the fifth since everyone met in Edinburgh , it was time to start the run back south. Several hundred Harley riders came along to cheer the group on their way, and after a siren-wailing send-off they were escorted back to the A9 south. After 100 miles of beautiful winding road, the group faced the dramatic Forth Road Bridge . Around a mile and a half long, the rumbling procession of Harleys crossing together was a glorious moment for the first day of the run proper.

Stopping overnight in Edinburgh, the group celebrated Tracy's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday with champagne and brownies at the Hard Rock Café. However, rather than the usual chorus of Happy Birthday, the Amazon Heart Harley riders stood on their chairs and belted a loud rendition of Gloria Gaynor's *I will survive* instead. Edinburgh certainly knew they were in town...

Once the bubbles had worn off the next morning, the ride went past the border and into England, through part of Hadrian's Wall. With the sunshine lighting up the fields either side of the road, the group left Scotland with high spirits and ready to tackle the rest of the journey.

Coming further south, the group got stuck in to some excellently twisty roads through the moors before riding through Penrith towards the Lakes. Some of the most beautiful scenery in the country, coupled with these narrow, twisting roads provided a stunning setting for the women and their bikes. Once they were through the Kirkstone Pass , they headed to Hawes in the Yorkshire Dales to stop for the night.

During their 130 mile run the next day, the girls were welcomed by 20 members of the Hatters H.O.G chapter and escorted to the Manchester dealers, where they were met by news cameras, friends and family. After a tremendous afternoon tea, the group collected more donations for their cause.

The Peak District was the setting for the next day of riding, reaching Birmingham Harley-Davidson in time for lunch. The Amazon Heart girls were, once again, shown excellent hospitality, with the local chapter blocking traffic to help their departure. On approaching Stratford-upon-Avon, the police gave them an escort into the town, clearing the way as hundreds of tourists stopped to photograph and cheer on the group. Staying at Stratford Youth Hostel, the group were met by local bikers who provided a free barbecue and enormous Harley-shaped cake. They also donated a fantastic £500.

The next day's route passed through Oxford and the H-D European Headquarters, where they stopped for lunch and an interview on BBC Radio Oxford with Marj from H.O.G UK .

It was now time for the final leg of the journey before the triumphant arrival in London . Heading further south, the group passed Stonehenge in the bright, early morning sunshine, then joined the motorway for 70 miles of the return. At Heston, the group met their escort, composed of four Metropolitan Police motorbikes and a group from the Meridian, Essex and Chelsea and Fulham H.O.G Chapters.

It was time for the amazing culmination to the ride, as the police led the group on a traffic-stopping route through Kensington and Knightsbridge, past Hyde Park. This was all the while to the delight of tourists and passers-by who photographed and cheered the girls as they rode through.

Passing Buckingham Palace, through Admiralty Arch and approaching Trafalgar Square, BBC London filmed the group's arrival at the finish line. The Amazon Heart Thunder Run women were met by family, friends and supporters, cheering and applauding their 1,300 mile ride. The women raised £22,186, had a tremendous 10 days, and showed themselves and women the world over that, as Amazon Heart sets out to prove, breast cancer can be the start of an incredible journey.

Details of the Lightning Run that ran parallel to the Amazon Heart Thunder Ride will be published in the next issue of Hog Tales.



