

ONE REDLIGHT NON STOP TO MONTREAL

by Steve Rosenzweig

or How We Drove Over 1000 Miles To See One Hit

The Steve and Harvey Sports Show with special guest Phil Wexler have returned from Montreal where they were studying the Phillies. It was their plan to follow, meet, and then watch the players to give an in-depth report on the happenings of their journey. Also, we are describing the trip to and from Montreal.

We left 951B at 7:53 p.m. on Tuesday, May 23. Our vehicle (Phil's Toyota) was decorated with "Montreal or Bust" signs. Bob Dunn and Charlie Carlin witnessed the departure from our house. Dr. Susskind also witnessed our departure on Weaver Ave. at 7:55. He had some very encouraging, but unprintable, words. We stopped at Mark Israel's house to tell him we're leaving and he signed our log at 7:58.

When we arrived at the exit of Meade Heights our tripometer read 0000.0 and our odometer read 08452.8. It was witnessed at 8:04 by Berna Eisenberg. Berna and Robin were invited to go with us but Berna thought we were crazy. Robin would have gone, but Phil was driving.

We drove out of the Plaza on the way to the Hess station for a pit-stop. As we turned out of the Plaza I heard the first fart of the trip. Harvey and Phil both tried to accept credit for it.

We pulled into the Hess station at 8:09 and we were really feeling silly by then. Harvey told three strangers that we were going to Montreal and Phil cleaned his headlights which was strange. I've lived with Phil since September and that was the first time I ever saw him clean anything.

The trip down route 230 was pretty uneventful. After 14 miles of the trip Phil looked at the odometer and made the intelligent statement, "I went 14 miles already." At 8:39 Phil noticed the cows were standing in the fields so we would have good weather. Harvey and I tried to do some homework but gave it up after a minute and a half.

After getting off Rt. 283 we had to stop for only one redlight all the way to Montreal. It was 8:45 and the redlight was on the top of a State Trooper's car just outside of Indiantown Gap. We were going to ask the trooper to sign our logs, but we already had his signature on the ticket. Phil got caught at 76 mph in a 65 zone. Phil had his license suspended and didn't get it back yet, so they had to check on him. At 8:52 we heard on the trooper's radio, "Car 321 - the operator's license is not under suspension." We breathed a sigh of relief. Then, the cop had a funny line, he asked what was on the side of our car. Phil told him Montreal or Bust. The cop said, "don't get busted in Montreal."

So, back in the car with a \$15 ticket and the Phillies losing 2-1 on the radio, and Phil losing his license for another 15 days. At that point I predicted a Deron Johnson HR. He hit a grounder scoring a run and making it 2-2.

We were about 30 miles outside of Meade Heights when an incredibly big birdshit hit our windshield. Phil was still speeding but it's easier to slow down from 75 to 65 than 91 to 76.

At 9:01 a giant bug crashed into our windshield. A minute later, two more giant bugs in rapid succession hit the car. We were getting bombed in Schuylkill County by the biggest bugs we ever saw.



Photo by Frank Lucchesi

From l., Harvey Brown, Phil Wexler, Steve Rosenzweig

We had traveled 100 miles and I was getting tired of writing. So, I decided to jot down only the important stuff. For example: Rest Station Closed. The next 100 mile point was near Nuangola and Phil wanted to know if Nuangola was related to Tom Gola. I told him not to say anything funny because I was tired of writing.

We were driving through the Poconos. I asked Phil and Harvey if they would like to stop and stay over on our way back. That idea was voted down when we realized we had only one clean set of underwear.

After 126 miles of the journey a cop was trailing us. Gee, he could copy the information from Phil's other ticket. About the same time Harvey burped in the backseat. Fortunately, he didn't get any on him. And I just wrote on the separation of the notebook without realizing it.

Well, we were 136.7 miles into our journey when the Phils lost 6-2. We were 56 miles from Binghamton where we would make a food stop.

We started singing old songs and rode past Binghamton. So, we started to look for a restaurant and after three stops we were about to give up. They were all closed. We stopped for some "El Cheapo" gas and I think we woke the attendant up.

At 11:28 Harvey burped again and we were starved to death. We weren't going to Montreal anymore. We were going to a diner. We started on our second chocolate bar. We kept driving because if Binghamton restaurants closed at 11:00, Whitney Park wouldn't have anything open. The topic of conversation at this time was whether or not we had Oscar Meyer Weiner Whistles when we were young.

We finally decided to get off the highway outside of Cortland. Phil was apprehensive because the exit read "State Police". But, we were hungry. Of course, the restaurant was closed. We got lost in Cortland trying to get back to Route 81. But all was not lost. We found a diner in the Village of Homer.

The top song in the diner's jukebox was Pitty Pitty Patter by Susan Raye. But, who cared after driving 235.5 miles. You could write a soap opera in that diner. All the old country folks knew everyone else's business. And, if it was 60 degrees outside, it was a cool 54 inside. The bathroom in the diner was so small that when Phil leaned forward on the pot, his nose hit the soap dish. If he was an inch

shorter, he would have had to get up for the paper. At 12:52 Phil took a No-Doze, put on the heat, and left for Canada.

At 2:36 and 369.3 miles into the journey we reached Canada. The country looked closed. At customs they checked Harvey's dirty underwear - afterall, who can you trust. It was still 160 miles to Montreal.

We made a gas and coffee stop almost immediately. Gas was 58.9 cents a gallon and Phil had a bird. In the restaurant I asked the cashier if she takes Canadian money and she told us we were in Canada now. We saw Franchot Foofoe the famous French Farther. Harvey went to the bathroom and some guy came in and flushed all the toilets but his. So, another tank of gas and back on the road again. It was 3:27 and our E.T.A. seemed to be off. Afterall, we were 23 minutes late already and still 140 miles from Montreal.

As we entered Montreal at 5:13 a.m., we saw the sun. At 5:14 Phil made his first Canadian U-Turn. At 5:15 we hit our first Canadian redlight. At 5:16 and 5:20, 2 miles later, we hit the main street of Montreal. After 9 hours and 16 minutes Phil was tired of driving, so he let Harvey drive the last 3 miles.

We stopped at a phone booth to get the address of the Queen Elizabeth Hotel where the Phillies stay. I guess the three of us looked suspicious in the same phone booth. That's why the cop stopped us. We got back in the car to find the hotel. We passed the Bank of Nova Scotia. Phil told us to deposit \$50 there and we'd get four free pounds of lox.

After driving around to hotels with no vacancies we finally decided to stay at the Hotel Laurentian, but our room wouldn't be ready until 9 o'clock. It was only six now so at 6:15 we went to sleep in the lobby.

We were lucky, our room was ready at 8:10. We went to sleep until 11:30. When we awoke we walked two blocks to the Queen Elizabeth Hotel to hopefully have breakfast with some Phillies.

At 12:21 we spotted Larry Bowa. Harvey asked him if he was a baseball player and Bowa said "no". If Harvey was on the ball he would have said, "you're right, you're not." We then spoke to Chris Short who was really a nice guy. Unfortunately, he had no tickets. Harvey spoke to Mike Anderson at breakfast. He had no tickets, but he did

have two eggs over easy, home fries, bacon and coffee. In the lobby later we spoke to Tommy Hutton who was a real nice guy with no tickets. In all, most of the players wouldn't even talk to us. Even though they were on a losing streak, we came all the way from Philly to cheer them and they could have at least said hello instead of shrugging us off.

About 1:43 we met Wayne Twitchell and he really impressed the hell out of us. We explained our situation and told him we needed tickets. All he did was say, "How many do you need?" Now, that shows some class.

A few minutes later we met Harry Kalas who took our names to announce on T.V. Then we met Richie Ashburn and told him we met Harry Kalas. They were both really nice guys.

The tickets arrived at 6:50 and 23 seconds later Phil was in the park having a beer. As we were going to our seats we noticed that our camera had melted from sitting on the car's dashboard. We only hoped it still worked.

We went to stand behind the Phillies dugout where we met a collage student who covered the Expos for the school paper. As the Phillies were taking batting practice he was taking pictures for us. We saw Harry Kalas again and said hello. Phil saw Deron Johnson and asked him how his foot was and received a grunt for an answer.

It was "Meet the Player Day" in Montreal and we were allowed on the field. Phil went over to talk to the college student we met and found out they both knew Brenda Finklestein. Phil got her address so he could call her and say hello when we got back to the hotel.

Then came the classic. We spotted Frank Lucchesi, the Phillies Manager, sitting in the bullpen. So, we went down to get a picture. A guard stopped us and we explained our situation. The guard got permission from Frank to let us in the bullpen. As Frank was sitting up and straightening his hat, Harvey handed him the camera. We stood back and posed with our Phila. banner. Frank was quite dumbfounded. All he did was look at the camera and ask us where to snap it. He then took our picture. We thanked him and then went back to the infield.

During the game we had nothing to cheer about except for Mike Anderson's triple and a DP executed by the Phillies. At 10:03 the game was over and Carl Morton had pitched a one-hitter. We drove 1000 miles to see one hit. So we went back to the hotel to call Brenda. At 11:01 Phil called her and found out there are two Brenda Finklestein's in Montreal. Of course, he had the wrong one. We went to a club and then a restaurant before going to sleep.

We awoke the next morning around 10:45. After breakfast we checked out of the hotel and were on the road at 12:20. Out E.T.A. would be 8:46. The first thing we did in the car was to throw out a melted Hershey bar. As we left Montreal, Phil went through a redlight near the Montreal Forum.

At 2:28 and 681.6 miles into our journey we came to the bridge into the U.S.A. Phil asked the toll-taker if America was opened today. He said it was, so we entered.

At 2:30 we were at customs after traveling 152 miles in 122 minutes. were in customs

about 15 minutes. They really checked us over, probably because we had hair. They even checked under the hood. While the agent was doing this, Phil asked him to check the oil. He also asked him if he ever saw the French Connection. Harvey took their picture and said the stuff was hidden in the camera. The agent said we could go because we couldn't have gotten more than a pound past him.

So, we were off again. After 739.4 miles in the front seat, I asked Harvey if he would like to sit there for a while. We stopped at 3:37 and after a tank of gas, three candy bars, three sodas, and three trips to the bathroom Harvey took over the navigator's seat.

At 6:56 we hit a crisis period. Phil farted for the fourth time near Stroudsburg and missed his turn when he shifted his buttocks. Fortunately, we only went 8 miles out of the way.

At 7:03 we saw a Sheraton Hotel and I thought we should have given back the towels we took in Montreal. We were having a heated discussion about the towels when we saw "Harrisburg - 100 miles." Thoughts went back to our destination. At 7:58 we were 50 miles, two farts and 48 minutes from our E.T.A.

A cheer from the car arose as we hit a 100 mile mark a mile outside of Hegins, Pa. It was 47 hours and 55 minutes after the start of our trek.

Only a half mile away and we passed two state troopers cars. Fortunately, the troopers were outside their cars bullshitting. Phil only cut his speed from 77 to 68. At 8:36 and 1051.9 miles later, we hit route 230 and our first redlight since Montreal. We went over 500 miles without hitting a redlight. We still had nine minutes to hit our E.T.A. It was plenty of time, but to make sure Phil ran the light in Highspire.

We reached the light at the plaza at 8:41 and still had five minutes to our E.T.A. We drove slow and got to the Meade Heights entrance at 8:44. We were two minutes ahead of schedule and our arrival was witnessed by Marc Cohen. But what made it even better was that the same people who said good-bye to us, met us at the 4-way stop sign. As Marc was talking to us, the witnesses to our departure, Bob Dunn and Mark Israel, drove up. It was a perfect ending. Our trip and the school play both ended at the same time. After receiving congratulations we took Bob Dunn's pizza and drove the last leg of the journey to 951B Kirtland. A journey which consisted of 1054.4 miles and 48 hours and 40 minutes of our time.

GOODBYE!

This past year has been a lot of things to us. Sometimes it has been rough, sometimes fun. Mostly, it has been a bitch getting this paper out every week.

But we have enjoyed it.

We've made good friends through our work on the paper, and we've made good friends elsewhere. We shall miss you all.

Whatever you are going off to find now, or if you come back to Capitol next year, good luck and good life.

Tom Hagan
Lee Nell