

Bluegrass Riders Old Coots on Scoots



The Shrive Report

Twas the beginning of fall and the Dragon was coming to life. The Old Coots came in the king of unlucky numbers but came away eating dragon stew. The horde of gold kept by the dragon is the sharp talons called curves.



The Old Coots came from three general areas. The first group to leave on Friday morning was the Indyucky group, Joe and Kevin at around 7:30. Dave and Pris left around 9 and were to meet up with Good Gary along the way. The last group to leave was the Bowling Green group. Their time of departure was 8:30 slow time. Well to be honest though ... Jim and Sharon didn't leave till 5 pm or so but to keep things straight, that small fact had to be ignored.

Arriving in the order they left in and mostly without incidents we converged on the Highland Manor. Jennifer, who took all of our reservations, was on hand to meet us at the front desk. She was as delightful in person as she was on the phone, which is saying something. The last of the group made a grand entrance a bit before 3. The leader of group was Steve wearing his skull painted face mask to help keep warm. After everyone had unpacked it was on the bikes and off to try to tame the dragon.

Taming the Dragon

10/01/10 – 10/02/10

After some quick consultation with Jennifer, it was decided that we could make the dragon ride and return with good sunlight. Speaking for myself, and I think most others, riding the dragon in the dark would not be our first choice for a good time.

Dave led the way. Like a homing pigeon he went straight to the start of our ride on the dragon. It did seem though that a few other riders outside our group may have wanted to cut line on entering the beast. A small group of sport bike enthusiasts decided to slide by us. I don't know why they went by so quickly without even waving, but they did. Probably means they were a group of Yankee carpetbaggers not realizing they were in the heart of the south. Not even one motorcycle salute.

This ride changes much. You can see in others what is not in you by watching them ride. Some riders you observe may be going quicker than you are completely comfortable with. Some riders may be going slower than you enjoy. Some riders take risks you don't understand, and some riders you see are so conservative they can't be having fun. When you see all this at the same time, it changes your understanding of riding and yourself. The changes you go through are nearly always positive



A change in mild mannered Jean Into Bad Ass Jean

We started on the Tennessee side with the street name Calderwood Hwy. and finished on the North Carolina side on a street named Tapoco Road. Now I don't remember exactly when it changed, but knowing that it stayed 129 all the way through, made things a little easier. 318 curves in 11 miles -- through turns that go by the names such as Copperhead Corner, Hog Pen Bend, Wheelie Hell, Killboy Corner, Mud Corner, Sunset Corner, Gravity Cavity, Beginner's End, and

Taming the Dragon

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Brake or Bust Bend. We had now reached the other side and had survived. Time to stop at the Deal's Gap Motorcycle Resort. We did and we purchased small reminders of this trip.



Now for the ride home. It was very pleasant. For those who had never ridden it before, the unknown was now known. There is not one spot on the tail that you have to worry about someone pulling out on a blind spot to you and making both of your days not nearly as pleasant. There are 318 curves in 11 miles. There is about 20 miles between the dragon and the Highland Manor. After returning to the Manor it was time for what real Old Coots take as a sacred time. That time is dinner. Fortunately while it make take 3 hours from start to stop for us to go do the dragon, it takes only 5 minutes for us to arrive at the restaurant. Walking. The food was good, everything from steaks to fish to hamburgers. Salads were enjoyed by nearly everyone. Those of us that got the balance of the beef vegetable soup were quite impressed. This might be why there was only enough for Steve and myself. After dinner it was time for a nice hot shower and bed.

Day 2

The day didn't start nearly as well as it ended. Johnny had gotten bounced around quite a bit on the tail, and it was causing pain in his back. He thought it much better to head home stopping frequently to help keep the pain down. I certainly would agree, though we missed him, it was a good decision. Then it was breakfast. Some went to the buffet and some of us stayed at the hotel for bagels or muffins. Jim and Sharon arrived about this time. They had stayed in the hotel next door the night before.

It was about 9:30 and we took off seeking fuel. Today would be a little over 250 miles. The roads would be fairly slow all in all as we were headed into the Smoky Mountains and along a 43 mile trail called the Cherohala Skyway. The horns blew at Joe's room to get him to come out. We thought he would come and meet us for fuel, but he passed us up and had a great day of riding all on his own. I believe he went to Maggie Valley and stopped at a motorcycle museum as well as doing the dragon's tail again.

Jim created the route and led on that big nice Goldwing. Through Cherokee and many other places that I don't know the names of. They all had one thing in common, they were beautiful. Parts of the ride took us back over to Deal's

Taming the Dragon

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Gap. This time we were on the other side riding the Hellbender. Some areas had nice long sweeping turns, other areas had tight turns. The only part that I can honestly say I didn't like, perhaps because it scared me, was going through some tunnels. I was nearly blind in those things. I could see just some of the yellow line on pavement. My eyes just would not adjust.



We returned home around 6:30 pm and waited about a half hour or so, then off to the Old Coots second favorite place.... When you're not on the motorcycle, you want to eat. Back to the same restaurant for more good food. The second night did not offer the salad bar which was a shame... it was the best part of the previous night's dinner.

After dinner, it was off to nice hot showers and bedtime. Tomorrow is going to be an adventure of the not so fun kind.

Day 3 - The Return of the Coots

The Old Coots had been inspiring up till now. The weather cooled down a little and the grumpies set in. I was still wearing my light shirt and varsity jacket. Earlier I was explaining about changes, and today Bad Ass Jean changed again.

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10/01/10 – 10/02/10

This time instead of being one tough momma, she turned into a whimpering seven layer burrito. I think she had brought a very large suitcase filled with many clothes. I am fairly confident that it was only half full, as she was wearing the other half. Good Gary was first out of the hotel, followed by Joe. After that, Steve, Jean, Donald, Sandra, George, and I started off for Bowling Green around 9 a.m. The weather was as I said a little cooler. Instead of the low 60s it was in the mid 50s. On the interstate though, there is a difference in those temperatures. Jim and Sharon left about the same time. Dave and Pris lounged a bit and went home later. There was a rumor that they had rented a one way vehicle that could trailer the bikes. That was the reason they had waited until the end to leave. The person that started that rumor shall forever remain nameless.

Everyone seems to have made it home safely which is awesome. I can't verify this quite yet, as I haven't seen them post their arrival. No news can be good news though.

When all is said and done, for a bunch of Old Coots, we didn't do too badly.