

Phil's Folly
The interview.
The Fisher report
By Greg (Bulldog) Fisher

On Saturday the 6 TH of November, 2004 was Phil's folly. This is the 15 TH ride in the Scorpion series. This ride is led by our own Phil Hardee or as we like to refer as Dr.Phil. Dr. Phil is veteran of over 30 years of riding. Dr. Phil was riding when riding wasn't cool. Below is an interview I did with Dr.Phil about riding and his ride Phil's folly.

Q: What got you into riding in the first place?

I did my first riding as a teenager on a 3 speed (don't remember the make) - actually rode as much as 10-15 miles occasionally (1965 or so). After some hiatus I bought a 10 speed (Attala) bike to commute from my apartment on the edge of the U. of Maryland campus to my graduate student office (1972 - 1976). One noteworthy event was a ride down the closed Rock Creek Park highway (closed after storm flooding one weekend) and then on bike path etc. past Wash National airport and on down to Mount Vernon and back (40 miles or so total). When I moved to the Lynchburg/Charlottesville area (1976 - 1980) I purchased a 10-speed touring bike (Proteus - made in Collage Park MD) and began to ride the Blue Ridge area. The local bike club did a few Century rides. In 1980 I moved down here and kept up my regular riding purchasing a new machine (Paramount in 1985). Finally got seriously into mileage after hooking up with Dave, Larry etc. purchased the Litespeed in 1996 and the rest is recent history.

Q: How did the name, Phil's Folly, come about? I did the ride a couple of years ago and then called Payne in the Lake ride and it still is a Payne.

Phil's folly came from numerous attempts to do the present Duncanville Coaling route from Capitol Park and getting rained on each time. We have had better luck the past few years. Or maybe - ask Larry - it was that the first time for this ride (2 yrs ago) I was at home with a broken collarbone courtesy of the BBC Century. Out out damn rock.

Q: How would you describe this ride or is it beyond description?

This is the hilliest/hardest ride that we do. Even the shorter loops are all up and down.

Q: What do you like about this ride or do you like anything about this ride?

The ride gets us into an area that has low traffic and we otherwise don't visit much. I like the ride from Moundville to Vance. Too bad the Pondville store is closed.

Q: Do you think this a ride for all skill levels or should it be only for professionals?

Only the pros should do the 80/100 mile ride and even the 35/50 mile option is probably too challenging for a new rider. However, I think the 12/25 mile loop would do for a new rider trying out the hills. Note that each longer option 100, 50, 25 has a bailout point for a shorter return.

Q: What you would change about the ride aside from flattening some of the hills?

How about making the ride shorter - like 70 miles and skip the Green Duck-Moundville-Pondville part. Hey hills are great fun to go down but enough is enough. Well I would love to flatten the nasty steep rough pave hill between Vulcan materials and Coaling on Wire Road.

Q: Do you think cash and prizes would attract more riders?

Well I'm sure if we offered Sam Adams and roasted chicken at ride end we would get more riders.

Q: Did anything weird or unusual happen on this ride besides me finishing the ride?

You should of course recall the strange disappearance and magical reappearance of Rob (our only Hope). Must have ridden faster than Litespeed in order to pass us while we were in

Moundville (a shortcut helps of course). Rob thought this was the best Century he had ever done - loved the hills etc. Of course, I had to ask him if he had done a Century before figuring he was just being facetious

I thought before we got to Coaling that I was going to have to come back and sag Bulldog in. I guess the promise of roasted chicken got him the last 15 miles or so.

When Bulldog caught up to Jim and me, we thought he was probably delirious, strange singing and stuff. That's why I'm not sure he would remember the "hill" on Wire road near Vulcan materials.

. Hey how about those kids in Brent in the white car - spray paint with cans and then scrape off the windshield and lights. Who needs masking after all when a razor blade works just fine?

What did they say to us when they pulled out of the parking lot? Just a little too far away to make out their complements concerning our spiffy appearance.

Some grizzled guy pulled up beside me on the way to Vance (must have passed you and Jim) and wanted to know why I was going so slowly up the hill. Must have been that Alabama jersey I was wearing made him think I could go fast?

9. Would you ever consider reversing the direction of the ride?

Reverse directions - are you out of your mind, well maybe but Keene's Mill is hideous in the opposite direction. Of course, it would be at the beginning of the ride. On the other hand, it would not allow all ride lengths to start out together.

10. What is your fondest memory of this ride or it all just a blur?

Fond! Fond! Well if you're a masochist and not even on a budget at that.

Fondest memory: The joy in Bulldogs face at the presentation of the roasted chicken.
