

The Fayette Ride
The Fisher Report
By Greg (Bulldog) Fisher

Saturday morning was cold and sunny. There wasn't any wind. To start with there was Larry Pierson and myself. This was around 7:45 AM. Larry was down in his back, but he had to ride. Benjamin Kulger rides up and then Dave Casebeer and Rebecca falls. We proceeded on the Big Bridge for a three-hour tour (sound familiar). We rode to Mount Olive. We met Gary Falls dawned in the finest of cycling apparel and his always-lovely wife Trica. Also there was Pat Ferguson, Phil hardy, one of the original Hardy boy scorpions.

We had gotten to Mount Olive a little early because we had exceeded normal touring speed. While we were waiting on the other riders, Gary asked if I wanted some cucumbers. I was a little puzzled by the question. But being a gracious southerner I never turn down produce. Even though it was late in December and no one was growing cucumbers, I figured I could put them in my jersey or something. At this point he hands me a pair of shoe covers and said Merry Christmas. I felt kind of dumb not knowing that Gary was talking about shoe covers. Now I have a great pair of shoe covers for next month's start of the Scorpion Series. Thank you Gary and Trica.

We figured no one else was coming and it wasn't like Paul Weaver to be tardy. So the slower group took off. Dave, Benjamin, Larry and myself waited for any late comers. Paul finally made it and we were on the way to Fayette.

We rode to 171 were Rebecca had to turn around and go to work. We rode 171 to Mormon road into Fayette County to State 12. We counted tatters to see who was going to Fayette. Phil, Byron, Gary, Pat, Trica, and Paul opted for the sissy, we have a life, responsibilities and loved ones; Back home to a warm home, clean jammies and warm cocoa before dark route.

There was much discussion about leaving a marker to show us they made it back. I suggested to Gary that he leave his Pearl Izumi yellow cycling vest. He didn't bite. I think they left a 20-dollar bill, but the wind must have blown it away. This left the four amigos to made he ride to Fayette. The ride going to Fayette was nice. The roads were good .The traffic wasn't too bad and the hills were minimal. No dogs or power lines.

We arrive in Fayette about 11:30 A.M. We stopped at the shell station and Larry and I head for the potato wedges. Dave had a soda and Benjamin had a pork fat stick (slimjim) and water. Next thing we know we see Jason and Eric; two of the infamous Rocket Riders.

After refreshments and powering our noses, we were off. We started south on State 159. A fierce south wind was in our faces, as well as some hills that would make Cheaha look like Sander's Ferry. We had gone about a mile or so when we got to the first big hill. The Rocket Riders kicked up a notch and with Dave and Benjamin left a vapor trail. This left the ailing Larry and the Bulldog to defend the honor of slower cyclist everywhere. Did I say the wind was fierce?

We fought and grunted and coughed and spat and wheezed down a roller coaster wind tunnel called 159.

We stopped at the famous Zion Mall in Pickens County near Gordo. This store has everything and then some. There was stuff in every square inch of that place. The place had so much stuff in it, I think it was sinking into the ground. Did I say the wind was fierce? We finally get back to Echola through Sipsey River across Shirley Bridge.

We were now encountering large log trucks. You know the diesel jobs that look they are hauling telephone polls and running sub light speed. Eric said they only saw one. We must have seen 20 or more. This peaceful road was now a death trap and we were in the middle of it. Did I say the wind was fierce?

We finally made it back to Mount Olive and didn't see the vest or the 20 bucks. We figured they were all home drinking Cocoa.

The last hurdle was the Hugh – Thomas bridge. A death trap, what with the holiday traffic and the wind.

We get back at 4:30 P.M. There were no crowds or bands. Just an empty parking lot with two old cars sitting on it. About ten minutes later Dave drives up to see if we were alive or dead. He told that they got back at 3:30 P.M. We will have Video surveillance next time to confirm their arrival time. We wound up doing 105 miles. So if you want to ride to Fayette, eat your O and O's. Put on your knee braces and wear a windbreaker.