

Nipton Loop Century Ride, February 2005 — By Scott Dakus

There we were; surrounded by weather. It looked bleak at the start, but six brave souls left from Fausto's in the wet heading for Jean, Nipton, Searchlight, and back to Henderson. The brave soul on the recumbent had left about 4:45 am with the thought that we would eventually catch him; as it turned out, this was a devilishly clever and amazingly well thought out plan.... would it work?? bum-bum-bum-buuuummmm. The rest of us selected what we hoped would be the correct combination of cold weather / rain



/ climbing / long ride / fashion icon gear. We threw our collective legs over the top tubes and headed south.

It wasn't quite light yet, but not dark enough for lights. The first hour we had heavy fog, a dense mist, and no wind, and it was a bit chilly. A few miles into the ride, we had our first flat. It had

been raining and we knew that there would be flats, so we came prepared, but as it turned out, not prepared enough. We stopped for snacks at Jean and found out that Ron (on the recumbent) had passed that way about 45 minutes before us. We thought that we might get him on the climb up to the Nipton turn off, but we flatted again. This time we split into two groups; some of the guys stayed and fixed the flat and some of the guys went up the hill to try to catch Ron.

This didn't work; Before the flat tire group got rolling, I saw a wire in my tire and pulled it out. The air came with it and we had another flat without even turning another crank. Well we fixed that one and then another before we caught Steve on the hill. Apparently he and Jason split when one of them flatted and then the other flatted. Needless to say we didn't gain much ground on Ron.

By the time we were getting near Nipton the weather was getting more and more un-ugly; it was turning into a very good ride. Jason got to Nipton first and actually "saw" Ron there, but Ron refueled up and left; he was clearly open for business. Two of the stragglers got detained by a train in Nipton for 15 minutes. Ha Ha! On the climb out of Nipton, All but one of us passed Ron, but we WOULD see him again. Another flat and then into Searchlight. While we were refueling in Searchlight, Ron scooted past and was heading towards home.

We were trying to catch him but we had another flat, and then at the bottom of the climb up to railroad pass, he was only 200 yards in front of us when we flatted again! We split



again, repaired the flat and then caught and passed Ron. Then we flatted again.

Well, we rolled into town and back to Fausto's, except for Ron. He went straight to home. The rest of us met up at Fausto's and had burritos and nachos sufficient to replace all of the calories burned plus a small buffer.

THE WEATHER: It was GREAT!! Practically no rain, temperatures in the 50's the whole ride, and either no wind or a tail wind the whole way including the 40 mile stretch from Searchlight to home. By far the easiest century I have ever ridden.

ATTRITION: None; Six starters and six finishers; thanks everyone.

MECHANICAL: Eleven flat tires Everyone, except for Ron got one, some got two, and I got five (one shy of my record).

SPECIAL THANKS: Karen (Steve's wife) for motorized vehicle support services rendered. (I would say sag, but it just wasn't necessary)

Attached are some pre-ride pics of Jason and Steve, one of me during the morning, and one of (from Left to right) Steve, Jason, Eric, Scott, and Joe.

Keep the Rubber side down.

Scott "Loon" Dakus

