

JUNE 07 DOUBLE RAFTER TRIP REPORT

The June trip certainly started out different from the others due to the fact that about 2 weeks before the trip we had 4 inches of rain in about 9 hours. This storm dumped 10 inches of new snow on the mountain which caused lots of flooding. We had to haul in about 8 bucket loads of gravel with the tractor to make a path so that you didn't have to wade to get to the outhouse. Something about wading in the middle of the night just wasn't real appealing even if your mother did tell you to just go in the water. Everyone had to put their ground tarps down because the ground was spongy from all of the water. Anything left on the ground acted just like a wick and shortly everything would be damp.

SUNDAY AM: We started the horsemanship clinic and were very pleased that we didn't have to make one horse change. It's not often that a group of people are so honest about their skill level with a horse. Now some of the horses are not real high on the horsemanship clinic but then, it's not for them. As Chris was working with one group on the North end of the arena, Fox decided he had heard it all before and decided to take a little nap. So he decided to roll before taking his nap. Penny Doty rode him clear to the ground before deciding to dismount. However, she forgot to yell dismount so she ended up with the white bags that night. As we were doing the team penning that afternoon Gina Clark decided to see if Tango could do a Lone Ranger imitation. She certainly had Tango standing and pawing at the air, all she needed was a mask and a white horse and you would have expected to see Tonto come riding up at any moment.

MONDAY AM: We let people sleep in that morning and held off breakfast until 5:00am. After breakfast we saddled up, gathered the herd and started the trek to the mountains. We had a perfect day of about 75 degrees with a slight breeze and the cattle walked very well. We were in the Rocky Bottom by noon with the herd. Kathy Jones and Alice brought lunch over to us so that we could get the job of implanting the heifers done after lunch. Not everyone wanted to work cattle in that hot dusty corral after lunch so Alice and Kathy took two loads of people to tour the Battle of the Little Bighorn. (Custers Last Stand) That afternoon as they were implanting heifers one of them came out of the chute and was just a little on the mad side. She came out with red eyes and was looking for someone to take it out on. She came out of the chute and there was Darlene Cunnane standing right there. Now Darlene was an excellent horseman and had handled enough animals to read the intent in the heifer's eyes. Laying there on the ground was a pipe about 2 feet long, a piece of board, and a pile of baling twine. Now most people would have grabbed the pipe or the board to defend themselves. Now being Darlene is from one of those eastern liberal states she grabs the pile of baling twine and shakes it at the heifer. The shocking part was that the heifer panicked and turned around and ran away. Anyway Darlene won the white bag award for the day. So beware, if Darlene threatens to get her string out you better be minding your manners.

TUESDAY AM: We knew we were going to have a long day so we had to have breakfast at 3:30am to get the day rolling. You can't afford to be burning daylight when you have to break the camp down and pack it and move the herd up

the Little Horn Canyon. As we handed out the green sea bags the night before Kimberly and Donna took the bag with the JK quarter circle on it and decided that the smiling jackass bag was there's. We had the cooks packed and out of camp a little after 4:00am. The cooks had 4 pack animals with them and off they went. As the cooks went up the switchbacks Moe stumbled when they were almost at the top and tumbled over backwards and to the bottom he went. When he stopped rolling he was laying upside down with his pack still lashed in place. The cooks jumped off and cut the lash ropes off of him, the cinches and the breast collar. With the packs off of him they were able to get him on his feet. They weren't sure yet, what the extent of his injuries were so they sent Craig Mead back down the canyon to where the drags were. I sent Trent up the canyon to evaluate Moe's situation and Randy out the mouth of the canyon to get another pack animal. I sent Craig back to the cooks because we still had to get the cooks into camp to prepare the evening's meal. The pack string unloaded one pack animal and sent him back up the canyon to replace the injured pack animal and distributed his load among the remaining pack animals. Once the drags arrived at the switchbacks it was obvious that Moe was just shaken up and was a little sore but no permanent damage was done. I was really dreading what I thought I was going to find at the bottom of the switchbacks. (for those of you who support the horse slaughter ban we were going to put him out of his misery by shooting him right between the eyes). So we loaded Moe's pack onto Eddie and on up the canyon we went. As we loaded Eddie we discovered that Moe had been packing the meat for the evening's meal. That meant we were going to have to drink another beer because dinner was going to be a little later than planned once we got into camp. We waited at the lower drift fence for the pack string to come through. We waited for about an hour and boy did I manage to sleep. We crossed the herd at Robinson Crossing and off up the Beaver Slide we went. The cattle went pretty well since they really didn't have a choice. There were hundreds of trees that had blown down from Robinson to the Parks. It took Trent an entire day with the chainsaw to cut out the trail. It's amazing when the logs are piled 4 ft high along the trail how cattle don't wander outside of it. Tammy Hovde won the white bags that night for lecturing her husband about burning the soles of his boots because his feet were too close to the fire then she proceeded to do the same thing.

WEDNESDAY: Indian Fry Bread day. We let people sleep in a little later today as we only had about 4 miles to go with the cattle and if the cattle followed the normal pattern they would have covered about half of it by the time we arrived the next morning. The cattle did as expected but getting the herd through Elk Draw proved to be a real challenge. The wind shear that spring had knocked hundreds of trees down and we basically had to cut a new trail. It took a whole day to cut the new trail and we couldn't always follow the old trail since some of the downed timber was higher than you could reach from the ground. That night Jean Culbert won the white bags for her little adventure with the sleeping bears. In the middle of the night she got up to go to the shepea and with the full moon giving everything a rather weird look she stumbled to the shepea and on her way back she noticed lying out in the park between her and her tent a rather large group of black furry objects laying on the ground. It was rather obvious to her

that it was a herd of sleeping bears. Now she wasn't sure how she was going to get to her tent without waking them but she was going to give it her best shot. She snuck around the mess tent and made a mad dash to her tent when she realized what the black objects really were~~~~ gopher mounds. She was then foolish enough the next morning to tell me this little tale.

THURSDAY AM: We headed to the Green Cabin to gather the cattle we had dropped yesterday and trailed them onto Sardine Lake. It was about 8 miles I would guess but with the terrain we knew it was an all day ride. We got the cattle to Sardine about 4:00pm and let them water up before kicking them back into Horse Apple Park. Now as I am starting to drift cattle back that way a group of them throw their heads in the air and off into the timber they run. As I charge off after them I see what it was that spooked them. Tim Beirnard had run off into the timber to take care of Nature and when he stood up the bare in the woods was just too much for the yearlings to handle. After getting the cattle regathered we loaded the pack horse with snow to take back to the beer cooler and off the Kerns Joslyn trail we went. In 40 minutes we were all back in camp enjoying a relaxing evening. Gordon Mead won the white bags that night for managing to compare a woman to a cars engine. Let's just say that Gordon's engine was running a little rough by the time the gals got through with him. The each took one piece of his clothing and then made him come on bended knee to get it back.

FRIDAY AM: We broke camp down and packed up the mules and headed out on the trail for the last mornings ride before calling it a week. The wildflowers were truly magnificent in the high country as we rode through. The crisp clean air made it hard to imagine that the week was just about over. As we turned the horses loose that day it was hard to imagine that a week had gone by. I guess when you are having a good time the time flies by. That night at the banquet Gina Clark won the belt buckle in the Cowboy Trivia game. I think Trent was the big looser for the night as he had assured several of the guests that he would drink them under the table, and yup that's where he ended up. So long for now and thanks for everything.