

DAY 4 Update

September 12, 2007

Day 4: Flagstaff, AZ to Kayenta, AZ

Beginning the fourth day of riding in Flagstaff, Arizona, a major stop of historic Route 66, the Alumni Bike Race team was filled with wanderlust and was itching to get its "kicks" on the road. The riders continued with their strategy of covering the day's scheduled mileage by splitting it evenly between two groups and riding simultaneously.

Penn Riders Bruce and Mike, along with bike specialist Nir began the first leg from Flagstaff to Tuba City, AZ armed with determination, and the addition of Penn Alumni rider, Murray Zucker, '67. Murray joined the team the previous night at their fund-raising event in Phoenix and his enthusiasm and fresh legs injected his group with vigor more befitting of twenty-year-olds. The group raced down route 89, beginning at 7,276 ft of elevation, through green scrubland that gradually gave way to red sand desert.

Twenty-three miles into the sixty-five mile leg of the day's journey, The team entered the Navajo Nation, the largest area assigned to Native American jurisdiction in the United States with an area covering 26,000 square miles reaching into Arizona, Utah and New Mexico. With rugged red canyons and plateaus featuring striations of multi-colored sediment, the Navajo Nation struck the riders with its natural beauty. The scenery made the ride into Tuba City a memorable one.

While the first group rode out Flagstaff by bike, the second team, consisting of Bucknell alumni riders Frank, Dr. Walt, Pat, and Kyle drove on to Tuba City to embark on another sixty-five mile section of the day's trip. The group romped up and down the hilly terrain on an overall uphill grade along route 160. With the slowly increasing elevation, the riders enjoyed vast stretches of desert hills set against brilliantly blue and white-clouded skies. Walter rode at a strong and steady pace past remarkable rock formations such as twin rock pinnacles. Toward the end of the section riders Kyle, Pat, and Frank were challenged by arrival a formidable headwind. Alumni Bike Race crew member and recent Bucknell grad Jay Kosa '07 got in on the fun for the first time during the race, contributing support mileage for the second group.

Upon concluding their designated sections, the two groups met twenty miles away from their day's endpoint in Kayenta, AZ under an old coalmine conveyor belt. The size of the combined group and the excitement of finishing the day's miles, along with somewhat heavy traffic created a rather hectic finish to the day. The team's third day of riding through a massive state of Arizona was mercifully warm, rather than insufferably hot, with the temperature

hovering between 85 and 90 degrees.

As usual, the senior rider club, which today added Murray to its ranks, polished off a large portion of the 150-mile segment. For the first group Bruce, Murray, and Mike notched 53, 51, and 48 miles respectively. Frank and Walt recorded a 55 and 63 miles for the second group. As impressive as Arizona's landscapes have been, the team finished day looking forward to moving on into new states (they will pass through Utah and into Colorado tomorrow) and more unforgettable rides.

Jay Kosa, Bucknell '07