



May 2011 Newsletter — Editor = A. E. Keir Nash at acknash@gmail.com

Club Dinner Meeting = Mon. May 16, Goleta Sizzler's, 6 PM dinner, 7:30 meeting

THE DESERT THAT REFRESHES -- BIG BEND/TERLINGUA, TEXAS RIDING REPORT FROM FORMER NEWSLETTER EDITOR JIM ROWLEY



One of the many ghost homes remaining in Terlingua.

April 2011 ---

My annual trek south from Colorado Springs to rejuvenate and thaw out in the wilds of Texas could not come at a better time. Work stress hit an all time high and I was looking forward to riding, eating excellent grub and mimicking a lizard on a rock absorbing the sunshine... We were only two hours late leaving after my friend Ted showed up from his place in Superior.... After picking up fresh food at the local grocery store in Alpine, we finished the ride down to Terlingua with windows down and heater off. It was going to be a great week.

[Current editor's comment: I have edited this report very little. I trust readers longer in the SBBMW Riders club will understand better than I do whom the "we" includes and who are the persons named without introduction or description as if SBBMWers know them.]



Untested and unproven XT500 gets tested [for undulant fever]

In the past, we all planned on doing a big loop totaling about 220 miles... on the second or third day. This year we ... did it on the first day. The number of bikes started out with five and during the first section, we discovered some limitations with one of the bikes, a Yamaha XT500. Jamey dialed back his speed and all was well again. At one of our usual stops, Jamey did not stop. He found the groove and kept going. Once we arrived at Rio Grande Village via Old Ore Road, we had lunch, amidst a group of middle schoolers on a field trip. Most of us gassed up afterwards including me. I was on my Transalp and felt it better to be safe than sorry. Actually I didn't mean to fill up. The pump there was operating on the "double the price because the mechanical can't compute higher than \$1.99 a gallon." So I put in \$5.00. That will be \$10 please. @#\$%&*!!!! Fred on a KTM 640 said he was going to visit the hot springs and Jamey (XT500) joined him.

That left Ted (KTM400), Chris (BMW Special) and me (TA) to finish the loop. Ted and Chris were faster than me so they stayed in front and I rode further back out of their dust. But they would stop and wait for me, which was nice but I would have to endure the dust again for a little while. I rode a steady pace and we covered River Road in a good time. As I got to the pavement section, the other two informed me that they were both on reserve. They did not top off previously. So I played sweep. Sure enough, the BMW ran out first. For some reason, I kept an empty water bottle in my backpack and that helped. Another mile or two, we stopped again, this time for the KTM. Ted tipped his bike over to use all of the fuel in his tank and made it to the gas station in Study Butte. We finished the day back at camp with a cold one and a warm sunset. With the glitches resolved, we rode smaller loops on Thursday and Friday. They were much more pleasant as we did not have deadlines or places to be, except for the porch at the ghost town in the afternoon for a beer. The locals were there in numbers as usual. There are some interesting characters for sure. Every day ended with a nice meal at sunset back in camp. Mauro, an Italian living in Maryland who just moved to Houston, arrived Tuesday afternoon with his ATK605 in the truck. After all the spaghetti western jokes were said, we had a great meal. I cooked my usual tri-tip fare.

Wednesday was another big loop day. Somehow, this time it was not meant to be. After one mechanical issue or another, we threw in the towel after Rio Grande Village and headed back on the highway. It wasn't all that bad. Since the speed limit was only 45 mph in the park, we actually had a chance to view the scenery. If you did that in the dirt, it wouldn't be long



Ted had 4 or 5 flats during the week [probably served Ted right for tire abuse]

before you inspected the front tire as you fly over the bars with deep ruts and bottomless silt holes. At the intersection in Panther Junction, we had to brake hard. A family of javelinas was crossing the road. You don't see that every day.



Rowley's Transalp a long way from anything resembling an Alp

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In Balcom Canyon, near Somis, Southern California on Easter Sunday
Harvey Rawn sights Sancho Panza's horse on the horizon -- April 2011

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