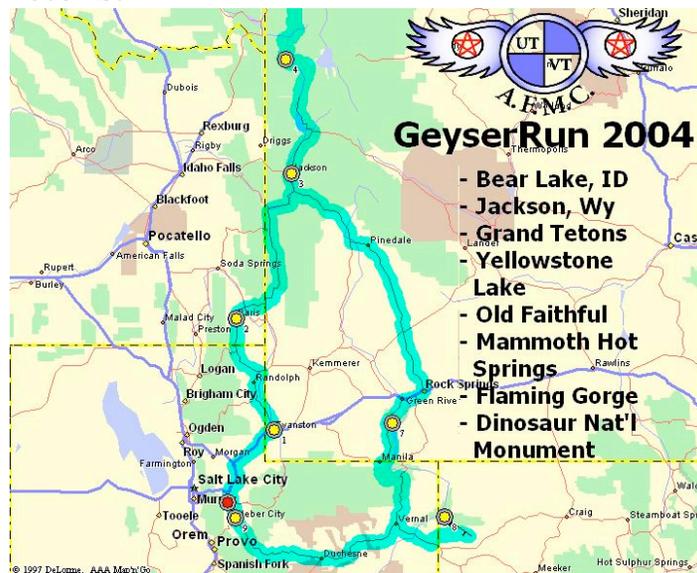


Flexible Flyers

Concept; Modify the annual AFMC CanyonRun ride to head north to Yellowstone and the Tetons.



Impact: CanyonRun turned into GeyserRun and trip pushed back to Memorial Day weekend.

Reality: **Current Conditions for Yellowstone Lake, WY**

	Rain / Snow Showers	49°/34°	30 %
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Current Conditions for Moab, UT

	Sunny	90°/58°	0 %
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Solution:

- Diversity.....
- Comraderie.....
- Low Expectations.....
- Geographical Reach.....
- Flexibility.....

Philosophy: While age and maturity has led to a modest amount of wisdom and the urge to take risks has not died, the desire to avoid unnecessary discomfort has grown. Quality of life eventually overtakes longevity as the primal goal. So too

has the Flyer evolved so that “quality of ride” has overtaken the natural instinct for the “Fuck it....let’s just do it...” attitude.

Flex #1: With 2 days to spare, the AFMC Tourmaster was able to secure reservations in Moab and Torrey, assuming that the weekend leg through Flaming Gorge would remain unchanged. Thus, GeyserRun 2004 transformed into CanyonRun 2004.

Narrative – Day 0: As usual, the crowd gathered at Chez Marin in Park City on Tuesday afternoon/evening. Rich & Stacey, Walt and Arthur flew in from NY. Bob & Jean flew in from Augusta. Seattle Bob rode in from Seattle via Idaho (he was the only Flyer wondering what all the fuss was about in terms of going north). Bill & Nick Karry arrived from yet another cross-country father/son extravaganza with reports of nice warm weather in Moab. Deb & Mardie joined for our kick-off dinner by Chef Josh.

Narrative – Day 1: Wednesday morning was bright and sunny with only a slight nip in the air. The 8:30am “wheels up” was met precisely as the 6 bike pod departed with the chase truck anchored by Deb, Mardie, Stacey and Walt. Walt would spend the next 5 days developing his feminine side and learning how to cope with a pedicure and the truth behind PMS.

The ride down Provo Canyon to Spanish Fork was the usual great start to the CanyonRun, but as we halted to anticipate Soldier Summit.....

Flex #2: Seattle Bob, on a prior solo trip had discovered a route through the lower Wasatch. We headed down Rt. 89 towards Manti, but then diverted onto Rt. 31 over the mountains with stunning alpine scenery and smooth swith-backs to warm up our riding skills.

Lunch at a local café yielded the original Fat Boy Hamburger, which Bob declared, in his most serious meatpacking demeanor, the best hamburger he’d ever eaten. Jean and Rich found the onion rings all the better for Bob & Stacey’s protestations.

The rest of the way to Torrey was covered via Rt. 72 and its beautiful high-country meadows and sweeping turns. While a sub-group went on to Rt. 12 to Escalante for the “Vertigo Special”, the rest of the crew checked into the motel.

Flex #3: All prior visits to Torrey had included a stay at the lovely Best Western Capital Reefs. Who could forget the 90 degree swimming pool or the gatherings by the trash bins. Well, this time the Flyers chose to try out Austin’s Chuckwagon Motel and General Store. The setting under the cottonwoods of downtown Torrey makes this a cool spot of shade. The cabins with their porches provided a wonderful evening gathering spot and even a massage table venue.

While Escalante was on the minds of several Flyers, the tenderizing hands of Deb lured Arthur to the porch massage table. This porch sits about 15 feet off Rt. 24 in Torrey. Arthur’s massage created Torrey’s first traffic jam. Legend has it that the folks in Hanksville called in UFO sightings on account of the numerous moons flashed to passers-by that afternoon. Dinner at Café Diablo, while much anticipated, was stronger on presentation than on flavor. Our numerous successful visits to Café Diablo force us to want to give it another chance, but we’ll bring the Adolph’s just in case.

We were joined at the Chuckwagon by Steve Larsen and his banana-yellow Gold Wing. This year he arrived sporting two GPS units and a radar detector. The array of instrumentation sprouting from the handlebars made Steve look like Captain Kirk on the bridge. Strangely enough, the radar detector didn’t prevent a speeding ticket and the dual GPS array didn’t indicate to get to Torrey via Rt. 12. So much for technology improving on an already good thing.

Narrative – Day2:

Flex #4: Normally, the Flyers go East to West across southern Utah. Not this time. We headed East through the morning light through the chicanes of Capital Reefs and down into Glen Canyon. There we peered into the abyss to see almost no water in Lake Powell. The ride across Rt. 95, the Bicentennial Highway, was followed by a ride down over the devil’s back mesa into Mexican Hat. The chase crew was flexible enough to go down the gravel switchback despite road signs warning off trailers,

Mexican Hat once again lured us with promises of Navajo Fry Bread. The lunch was mostly made up of white beans, which Arthur declared was a mainstay of the Navajo longevity diet. Having “gassed up” as it were in Mexican Hat, we boogied on up to Rt. 191 to Moab for a dip in the pool and a meeting with old pal Jay Ladd.

Jay is now working out of Denver, where the combination of good skiing, good riding and a central location for a mid-air weather data make it the perfect location for his latest venture, called Airdat. Jay is working to make the friendly skies safer for us all.....that and trying to make his next venture fortune.

We dined that evening at the lovely Centre Café, named after its prior location on Centre Street. Go figure. Never give up on a good brand,,,,,right Frank? That said, Frank and Barbara were unable to join us on CanyonRun 2004 due to Frank’s pending sale of the Indian intellectual property rights, which were duly advertised in the WSJ the day CanyonRun 2004 began. Meanwhile, another last minute cancellation by Russ left us with the lowest attendance level in years. At our peak we were but 13.

Narrative – Day 3:

Flex #5: Friday Morning dawned with the prospect of local jaunts into Canyonlands. But Jay had an interesting suggestion which our flexible Flyers seized on. We would ride to Telluride for lunch.

While the bulk of the group saddled up for a Rocky Mountain High, Walt and Nick chose to rent a Jeep and experience the Slickrock trails of Moab. For the rest of us, the ride over the LaSal Junction on Rt. 46 turned into Colorado Rt. 90 and was spectacular. We then found the western equivalent of the Warren Country Store in Bedrock, Colorado. The “Yabba Dabba DO” Store as we chose to call it, was an 1881 stagecoach stop. Some of the items on the shelves appeared to be original and as yet unsold. Nevertheless, it was a great half way stop both going and coming. The ride down Rt. 145 was also sweet as we dropped off the high desert into a river canyon that flowed north at us. This sensory illusion notwithstanding, the ride along the river was smooth and twisty into Telluride. Sofia’s Café provided our best midday fare of the trip (excluding the Fat Boy) and was followed by the usual activities of shopping and curb-sitting.

Flex #6: While the larger group headed back on a reversal of the morning's ride, Arthur and Steve peeled off to do the western leg of the Alpine Loop. The price paid for this beauty was a longer, less colorful ride north back to Moab. Yes, flexibility has its price.

Our second night in Moab was accentuated by another dip in the pool and a visit to our favorite Desert Bistro. We were at maximum Flyer load that evening and in fine form.

Narrative – Day 4:

Saturday morning's weather of pouring, pelting rain signaled the displeasure of the Gods that the two most recently arrived members, Jay and Steve, chose to boogie back home to Denver and Phoenix respectively. Bill and Seattle Bob had departed early for Grand Junction for new brakes and tires and would catch the group later.

The morning ride up the Colorado River was marred by the downpour. As the mighty Colorado churned to the color of Starbuck's best Mochachino, the Flyers gritted teeth and felt each trickle that invaded our rain suits. BY the time we stopped in Cisco to dry off, the rain had stopped and we were able to warm up and replace soaked gloves and other items of clothing.

Lunch at Rangely, Colorado was a homey affair that caused Bob to repeatedly suggest we go over to the busier Cowboy Café where he was sure the hamburgers were better. We finished our pie just in time to be joined by Bill and Seattle Bob. As they dug into the local cuisine, we headed north.

Our destination for Saturday was Dinosaur National Monument. We used our expiring National Parks Pass to enter the Dinosaur Quarry and observe the fossilized remains of the grandest beasts to walk the earth. Dinosaurs lived for 100 million years on earth. Man has lived for 100 thousand years on earth. Flyers have existed for 10 years on earth. Think about it!

Now that we were feeling small and insignificant in the cosmic grand scheme, we headed north through Vernal up Rt. 191 to Flaming Gorge. Little did we know that we would climb in elevation up over 8,000 feet and that we would hit snow showers and 35 degree weather on our way. Nevertheless, we arrived at Flaming Gorge Lodge no worse for wear, but certainly not interested in a dip in the pool.

Dinner at the Red Canyon Lodge was highlighted by Bob discovering unexplainable panoply of humming birds. Luckily the people whose table he hovered over to observe the birds didn't seem to mind too much.

Narrative – Day 5:

On Sunday morning we bid farewell to Bill and Nick who had 2,500 miles east ahead of them. We said our good-byes at the Flaming Gorge Dam and then proceeded up into the mountains overlooking the Gorge. Rt. 44 to Rt. 43 to Rt. 414 and icy cold the whole way to Fort Bridger. We lost the chase van somewhere in there, but still took the time to visit historic Fort Bridger. This was the way-station of the West through which all pioneers and even the Pony Express passed and stopped to refresh. We followed suit at the Bridger Café, where BLT's and frozen strawberries were the specialty.

Flex # 7: While we had ridden south instead of north to avoid the cold weather and snow, we chose to continue our planned route down Rt. 150 to Mirror Lake. We embraced the snow-capped mountains in the most flexible manner imaginable.

The scenery to Mirror Lake became increasingly snowy and yet the road stayed clean in the midday sun. At the peak of 10,000 feet the snow banks were 4 feet high. The beauty of the High Uinta Mountains was in all their splendor. Down to Kamas and into Park City for our return to the AFMC barn.

We ended our trip with a toast to ourselves and all our AFMC compadres at home and still on the road (Bill and Nick, specifically). Josh's Chicken Dijonaise was the perfect ending to another ride.

As I finish my flight home with Stacey, I have several final thoughts. As Jay and I shook wet gloved hands on Rt. 70 near the Utah/Colorado border, he said, "Always a pleasure.....and always an adventure." It struck me as the purest expression of how I feel about every AFMC ride. We are flexible in all ways except in our unswerving quest for the pleasure of each others' company and the adventure of the road ahead.

The End