

November 2005



Trail Tales

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ARIZONA LO-RANGERS 4WD CLUB

Cover Picture

The gang watching/helping Ron fix his broken u-joint and axle. This was the result of Ron's attempt on the Miner's Revenge waterfall. Ron was nice enough to back it into the shade of a tree to work on once Nick winched him off the falls.

Meeting Minutes

The pledge was said at 7:05 p.m. and the meeting started.

Those in attendance were: Don Munzer, Ed Lyons, Ron Couch, Steve Graham, Jim Sanford, Marty Boetel, Charlie Babcock, and Matthew Parkes. Visitor: Bob Simmons

Ron described Charlau Gap Trail from the Trail Dust Days that he ran with Mike.

Magic Carpet Ride was another trail Mike and Ron ran on the Trail Dust Days. Mostly buggies went; Mike was the only driven truck there.

Don Munzer turned 46, happy birthday Don!

Bob introduced himself again. He went on Mt. Lemon from the backside. Then he went on Bull Springs. Rick (guest) and Jim went wheeling in Table Mesa. Rick got stuck in the mud and Jim had to go for help.

It was decided that the November/December meeting would be the 2nd Wednesday of December, December 14, 2005.

The Christmas Party will be Saturday, December 17, 2005 10:00 a.m. Meet at the corner of Bartlett Dam Rd. and Cave Creek Rd.

Charlie described Deuce&half 's and 4 x 2 L's

Ed said that we have \$3868.00 in the kitty.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Calendar of Events

November 19 – Club run to Needle Rock call Marty @ 480-926-3977

December 14 - Meeting at Round Table Pizza, 7pm NW corner of Rural & Ray

December 17 – Club Christmas party run on the Verde call Charlie @ 480-812-9101

Trip Report

Miner's Revenge Run 10/30/05

1973 K5 – Charlie Babcock

1966 FJ40 – Matt Parkes Eric and Wife?

1976 Cherokee - Ron Couch

1979 Bronco – Mike Tutor and Gail

1993 Toyota – Nick Sesma

2000 Denali - Jerome Gill, Rick Tomblin, Mark, and Richard

2005 Rubicon Unlimited – Steve Smith

I headed for Superior on a beautiful clear and cool morning. I was early and the first one there. Matt rolled in next with his shiny new tow rig, a Dodge 1 ton 4x4 crew cab dually with the Cummins engine, sweet. When everyone else had arrived we took off for Battle Axe road. I missed turned twice before turning onto the unmarked road south to the corral. We aired down and proceeded onward towards the start of the trail. By committee we ran the trail down hill towards the waterfall like we always have. Jerome and Steve left their undamaged trucks at the trail head and rode along with the rest of the crew. We dropped into the boulder strewn trail up high and proceeded to make our way without too much trouble. A hundred feet down the trail the Blazer was pushing a small boulder instead of rolling over it. A quick check showed that the hub hadn't been locked. This is definitely 4wd territory. Mark and Richard rode with me. Steve rode with Ron, Jerome ran along beside, with Nick or with me. Eric and his wife rode with Matt. I didn't get to watch much because there was always a truck right behind me so I assume everyone was making good progress. When I dropped down the double whammy, two 2' high rock steps I had an audience and then got to watch Matt and Mike. As usual Matt took the hardest line and made it look easy. Mike got a little to friendly with a coffee table sized rock next to the steps and was hung up until he could rock it a foot to the side. I don't think Ron or Nick came down the steps but I could have missed it. There's an easier road just to the right of the tough trail.

The next section is a tight squeeze past a sofa sized boulder that my fender just scraped. Matt came through next and put his passenger tire on the sofa rock. When his rear tire came off the sofa rock the rock tumbled into the pass I had just come through. Mike followed and somehow still squeezed through. Ron and Nick took the high road. We drove across some more boulder fields and I by passed a very nasty section. Matt rolled right through like it was a highway and Mike followed him. The street driven Bronco had a little more trouble but with Ron spotting and Mike's judicial use of the skinny pedal he made it. Everyone cheered! After a few more boulders and passed the Blazer taillight rock (I didn't even touch it this time) we drove down the gravel road switchbacks to the sandy wash.

With Rick, Mark, and Richard in my passenger seats and Jerome in the cargo area I put the K5 in 2wd low range and goosed it fish tailing down the sandy wash. What a hoot.

I rolled up to the squeeze and just looking at it realized the Blazer wasn't going to fit through that opening. It looked like a couple more feet of sand had washed out of the area leaving a 1" less than my track width gap. I moved forward slowly and both wheels stuck between the rocks. I tried angling through but the windshield caught the rock wall on the left. After a discussion Mike and I decided to back up and try the only other option. Matt went ahead and tried passenger side high but his windshield caught where mine did. It was very impressive though with his front axle almost vertical to the ground. He then backed up and put the driver's side tire high on the rock wall. Amazingly this worked and Matt worked his at least 6" wider track width than mine through the narrows. This was the best driving I had ever watched anyone do. In the middle, the driver's side slipped down in and then rode back up high to get the front axle through. Once his front tires came down the rears caught both sides and drove up and over the narrow spot.



Ron rolled up to the spot and tried but decided not to risk the truck crusher obstacle. Nick pretty much drove straight through with his Toyota.

I went around the big boulder and found a three boulders 4-5' high blocking my path. Luckily they formed a "V" that the differentials would clear through as the tires went over. Once I got the K5 lined up right it went up and over the rock wall. Mike made it over in one shot with Ron close behind him.



We had one more big rock mound obstacle before the falls and this one had become more difficult due to the 2' of missing sand. It now required good approach angle and a decent tire to climb it. The Blazer, Cruiser, Bronco and Jeep made it over without any difficulty but it gave Nick fits. His bumper would hit then once that slipped over the driver's tire would grab and the True Trac wasn't doing its job. The passenger tire would just hang in the air and spin. With a bunch of high rpm and a head start Nick launched the truck up on to the rock pile and pretty much hung it up on everything. We then decided amongst the chant, to "use the winch".

I drove through the sand and various boulders that mark the approach to the waterfall, the obstacle we'd all been waiting for. Well at least me anyway. I had been told to make sure I wait until everyone got there before making any attempts on the rock wall. Last time I was





there I lead the trip and got ahead of everyone so I thought I would give the falls a couple useless attempts. I made it up before most of the group could get there. So I lined the Blazer up with the line I wanted and then parked it waiting for the others. There were hundreds of bees right next to the falls on the water seeping out of the rock. Mike, Matt and Ron were right behind me. Matt parked his FJ on the vertical face of rock next to the falls. His Cruiser was very close to vertical and Matt laughed that the rear passenger could almost touch the ground out the back. The group decided to have lunch under the shade of the big trees.

After lunch I jumped in the K5 with nervous anticipation, the waterfall is a somewhat flat launch pad of rock with small ledges and ruts set at 40°, about a Blazer length and a half a long. The path is barely my trucks width with a rock wall on the passenger side and a crevice full of bees on the other. There's sand at the bottom, no water this year, but at least 2' of the sand was washed away from the base. This made the approach very difficult for the more factory looking vehicles. I made sure the first transfercase was in low range 4wd and the second was in high; I'd need all four tires driving and plenty of available tire speed to make it up this formidable obstacle. I eased the Swampers into the rock, they easily grabbed it and pulled the front end what seemed like skyward. I paused for a moment with the rear tires a couple feet from the rock. Then I gently rolled the Boggers into the rock face as the front end got higher. When the rear tires made contact with the only available traction I gave it a little more gas, just enough to keep the momentum going up the rock wall. All I could see was sky, when it felt like I was losing momentum I pushed further into the gas pedal. Time froze and I was on the waterfall for an eternity yet in an instant the rear tires hopped over the top of the rock and I was done.



What a rush, I moved up ahead to make way for the next challenger.

Matt was next in line and with his two passengers rolled up and lined the big Cruiser up for some fun. The front tires rolled up the rock and then the rears but that was it. Matt tried to crawl up the falls but the suspension would start to open up. He made several tries and decided to take the strap from the Blazer. Mike rolled up with the confidence of the only person I've "watched" drive up the falls under their own power. Mike's Bronco is set up very similar to my truck, same tires, weight, track width, and nearly the same wheelbase (Bronco ~106" and Blazer 111") and ponies, so maybe that's the secret. Mike eased onto the rock face where the engine stumbled at the extreme angle. I'm amazed that Mike can get the Bronco up that incline with a carburetor. I've seen fuel injected Toyotas stall on this rock, it's steep. To give you an idea of the difficulty Mike's winch hit the rock and dragged up it then as his front climbed the spare tire and bumper dragged deep into the sand. After a couple attempts Mike's Ford crawled up and over the top with everyone cheering, very nice. Ron was next and gave it the good try but his Jeep was running poorly and this obstacle takes everything your rig has to get over it. On his last attempt he was making good progress when the passenger side tire slid over to the rock wall and stuck there. Unfortunately the axles kept spinning sending the u-joint seal flying past me as the passenger side Dana 44 u-joint sheered the cross ending Ron's attempt. The engine then stalled and the Jeep wasn't going anywhere coming to rest on the rear bumper and spare tire.



Meanwhile Nick was still having trouble in the boulder area, the Toy wasn't cooperating; the engine had stalled and would restart but not stay running. Eric and I tried a several things with no success. Finally Nick kept the Toyota running long enough to winch/drive it over the obstacle. We then used Nick's winch to pull the Jeep off of the Waterfall. The gang all jumped in to help Ron change out the u-joint in the shade. I chatted with Richard while I ate lunch. Jerome, Mark, Rick and Richard decided to hoof it back to the Denali to go do some shooting. Jerome's guests were visiting from California for the weekend. I came back to the u-joint party and jumped right in to help. I hadn't gotten my hands dirty yet and I can't go home from wheelin with clean hands. During the extraction Nick's Jack handle got bent prying the tortured remains of the Jeep's axles out of the housing. The splined end of the inner axles had sheered off and stayed in the Detroit. Ron stuffed a plastic bag in the axle housing opening to keep dirt out and oil in and called it good.

After the bonding party Nick drove up to the falls but the winch and bumper hit the rock before the tires did. Between the engine running poorly, the limited slip front end and a manual tranny Nick didn't stand a chance. We hooked his winch to the permanently installed winching cable above the falls and Nick went up without assistance. The winch had never been used before this trip. Nick did an amazing job getting the Toyota through this trail, it's a tough one.

It was decided that I would lead and Ron would follow so I could tug the Jeep up the loose hill out of the canyon. Matt followed me, then Mike behind him with Nick last so Mike could pull him up the hill. The hill out requires a rear locker and at least one wheel in the front driving. The road is very loose dirt with anywhere from gravel to bowling ball sized boulders strewn about and it's very steep. I pulled Ron about a hundred feet up the hill

before my rear tires dug in as the Jeep came to a stop. It turns out the steering arm pulled the bolts out of the knuckle. Ron got new bolts and ran them down and they seemed to hold. I got back in the Blazer and gave it hell, the big Bogggers throwing dirt everywhere. When I stopped I noticed Matt covered with dirt, sorry Matt I didn't notice he had come up to watch. I couldn't get the full-sized Jeep started on the hill from a dead stop. We hooked Matt up to the front of K5 and tried again not making much progress. Mike unhooked from Nick who seemed to be making OK progress on his own. Mike hooked the Bronco up in front of the Jeep and behind the Blazer. With twelve Swampers churning and 23,000 pounds of truck the train of four rigs left the station. We made good progress until we came to the first switch back, it was tight but we all made the turn with a few back ups. When the hill leveled off we unhooked and Ron was able to drive under his own power. Nick had followed us up on his own. We quickly dropped back into the wash out and made good time. Just as I got to the corral I realized Steve was riding with Ron. Steve's Jeep was back at the trail head. So Steve climbed in with me and I bonsai'd back to the trail head. When we got to the Jeep I heard gun fire coming from the canyon. Jerome, Rick, Mark and Richard were target shooting down in the canyon. We said goodbye and Steve got in his Rubicon and followed me out. Mike and Ron were waiting at the corral for us. I aired up and then we headed back to civilization.

I love this trail and with 5 drivers and 9 passengers we had a pretty good turn out. I got close to 300 pictures with the 4 cameras from Jerome, Gail, Steve and Mark. Thanks guys and gal I usually get half a dozen pictures if I'm lucky.

Written by Charlie Babcock

Items of Interest

Remember the club meeting is the last Wednesday of every month, 7:00pm at
Round Table Pizza
9920 S Rural Rd
Tempe, AZ

It's located on the northwest corner of Rural and Ray. If you visit

<http://www.roundtablepizza.com> you can get discount coupons on pizza to use at the next club meeting. Come early and eat with the gang.

To get a state trust permit go to:

http://www.land.state.az.us/programs/natural/rec_offroad_permit.htm at the bottom is the link to the form at: http://www.land.state.az.us/programs/natural/rec_permit.pdf.

Family Problems

Two men met at a bus stop and struck up a conversation. One of them kept complaining of family problems. Finally, the other man said, "You think you have family problems? Listen to my situation. A few years ago I met a young widow with a grown-up daughter, and we got married. Later my father married my stepdaughter. That made my stepdaughter my stepmother and my father became my stepson. Also, my wife became the mother-in-law of her father-in-law." "Then the daughter of my wife, my stepmother, had a son. This boy was my half-brother because he was my father's son, but he was also the son of my wife's daughter, which made him my wife's grandson. That made me the grandfather of my half-brother." "This was nothing until my wife and I had a son. Now the half-sister of my son, my stepmother, is also the grandmother. This makes my father the brother-in-law of my child,

whose stepsister is my father's wife. I'm my stepmother's brother-in-law, my wife is her own child's aunt, my son is my father's nephew and I'm my own grandfather! "And you think you have family problems!" Think again.

November club run

The November Club run is Needle Rock. It's an easy trail any 4wd can run near the Verde. There will be optional obstacles ranging from easy to extreme. For more information and if your coming call Marty @ 480-926-3977.

Land Use Issues

Things you need but didn't know it

Wanted: 1964-1965 Scout, call Scott Nixon @ 602-482-8973

For Sale: 1948 Civilian Willy's Flat fender, front narrowed Dana 44 with locker, rear narrowed Ford 9" with locker, Dana 20 Transfer case with adapter (\$450), SM420 Tranny-new rebuild, power steering, hydraulic clutch, 33" TSL tires, complete soft top plus bikini top, Rhino lined tub, diamond plate rear corners, 2 1/2" body lift, new springs all around, and a 350 Chevy - some assembly required, hood and fenders needed to be extended 3", asking \$2500.00. Call Ken Phillips @ Work- 520-432-1203 or Home- 520-432-3679

For Sale: Chevy TH350 transmission \$50 obo call Scott for more information @602-482-8973

For Sale: 3 camper jacks 1000 # capacity that I had for my Alaskan camper, they'll lift high enough for a 4x4 truck. Also have a 36" cab high sleeper that fits a full size Ford '75 - '97, or Dodge up to '84, or Chevy / GMC up to '87. It's solid, has a roof vent, 4" foam mattress, and a lift gate. Made of 1"x1" framing, 3/8th Plywood, and covered with .030 silver aluminum, & lockable. Best offer on them. Want to get them outta here! Call Ed Lyons @ 480-921-1171.

For Sale: 1976 Jimmy, 35" tires, new 383 engine, rebuilt Xcase, Torsen front dif, gov lock rear, runs good, the air works good, \$2500 Call Charlie @ 480-812-9101

Quote

A child of five would understand this. Send someone to fetch a child of five.

Groucho Marx

Created by Charlie Babcock