

Red Rock Canyon March 9, 2008

Contributed by Sherry Nichols
Tuesday, 11 March 2008

13 Member and Guest vehicles attended the Red Rock Canyon run being lead by Ernie. This was a new run for most club members and has already become a favorite from the stories told by those who were able to make it.

Red Rock Canyon is northwest of Benson off of Ocotillo Road. It is a long, boulder-strewn wash that goes through a beautiful canyon with rock walls and saguaro cacti. This trail is a challenging 4 and should not be attempted in a stock vehicle. 33" + Tires, 3" + Lift, tow points front and rear, and spare tire are required – lockers are recommended.

The club earned \$15 in winch/strap fees on this run; it was quite the workout for the crew. The stock Bronco and stock Jeep (guest) were at \$4 and \$5 donations, respectively, as they were forcefully dragged through the most challenging obstacles. At one point Sonny, in the Bronco, had a winch on the front and a strap on the back to pull in both directions in a valiant effort to dislodge him.

The above donation amount does not include the attempt made by Donnie to use his own winch to straighten out his track bar as he was doing trailside maintenance while other vehicles were navigating obstacles. There are at least a dozen spots that offer rock climbing fun with 2 or 3 serious obstacles waiting for their next victim(s) to come along to trap a tire or two, scrape a differential, axle or driveshaft, bend a track bar or dent body parts. Or all of the above.

We had 5 or 6 non member vehicles on the run with us who did a great job keeping up. The shiny new stock jeep had its fair share of issues and sustained a bit of body damage. David, from St David, showed up in his Polaris – what a tough little machine that is! He only got hung up in the most challenging heap of boulders; otherwise they waited patiently with the rest of us as others were manually removed.

Steven did a great job navigating some rough terrain as Tom was spotting him – how many 12 year old boys respond so quickly to direction that they are able to stop quickly and on command?

Tom also sustained a dent as he slipped off a boulder and into the rock wall. Three of us pushed him off the wall as he drove forward to avoid scraping the entire side of his Cherokee. In case Mona is reading this, he did mention something about using white out to hide the evidence.

The end of this trail has two possible ways back. One is up a steep hillside with loose shale that requires nerve and lockers with a high pucker factor rating. This way leads back to Ocotillo Road. The other meanders through some exceptional scenery, raging stream crossings (where did the water come from?) and a few intersections for U-Turn fun. This way eventually leads to Mescal but adds about an hour to the return trip.

We hope that the guests on this trip will join the club; they were a lot of fun and did a fantastic job in following club rules, navigating a challenging trail and helping out with vehicle recoveries. The stock Jeep owner has plans to do a lift and other enhancements; he is just beginning Jeep Syndrome and will soon realize the truth behind Just Empty Every Pocket. Sonny also wants to put a lift on his Bronco, sometimes a V8 still isn't enough to force your way through.

Watch the calendar for the next run through Red Rock Canyon!

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