

*Here is a pre ride report from John Ingold, Northern AZ RBA.*

I rode the Mingus Mountain 200k permanent (#2540) on 4/9/15 during a break in the N. Arizona spring winds.

With almost 10,000 feet climbing in 200k, this ride may seem intimidating but actually there are no sustained grades greater than 6-7% making it a one-day epic worth the views. Breakfast at the Coffee Pot Restaurant (101 omelets) fueled the start of the ride.

Started in low 40 temps then dropped from Sedona Red Rocks on Dry Creek Scenic Road to quiet Page Springs and its bright green leaf buds and Oak Creek valley. Climbing started shortly thereafter at the Verde River when approaching Cottonwood. The "back route" thru Cottonwood includes sections of the historic Old Jerome Hwy before the climb up to Jerome where a natural fuel stop is in order. The main climb is another 7 miles up and over Mingus Mountain Scenic road summit (7023 ft elevation, approximately 4000 ft climbing in the first 40 miles). This road has good pavement over and back but no shoulder. Share the Road signs are posted, traffic was light, and all motorists were courteous and all passed with plenty of room. However, hugging the white line is a safe idea through the several switchbacks. A 20-mile downhill into the turnaround in Prescott Valley was a welcome and recharging rest for the legs.

The climb back up and over the summit requires having some mojo left in the tank so a hearty fueling stop at the turnaround is recommended. Temps reached the comfortable low 70s. The return downhill is prolonged thru Jerome (watch out for some random-motion tourist traffic both on foot and vehicles thru town) into Cottonwood. The last stretch of climbing from Cornville to Sedona is deceiving. I had to take a break at the Red Rocks Ranger Station, about 13 miles from the end to rehydrate and snack before the final push.

I recommend servicing brake pads and cables before this ride due to the mountain descents. I also recommend a post-ride stop at the Oak Creek Brewery a block from the finish in Sedona for a fancy hot dog or brat and a refreshing beverage. Not a strong or light climber I was able to complete the ride in around 11 hours thanks to the well-earned long downhills and good pavement. All in all, this ride was tough but well worth the world class views, funky Jerome and awesome Red Rocks. Hopefully, other randos will be interested in this ride as the scheduled May 16 200k ACP brevet.