

Route Name....Dixie Mountain Loop

Number....#3

Prairie City Bicycle Invitational

Dates Supported.....

Ride Type..... Mountain or Cross Bike-Hybrid w/suspension recommended

Difficulty..... Technical – II, Physical – IV

Time required.....4-6 hours (approximate)

Distance on paved surface..... 13 miles (approximate)

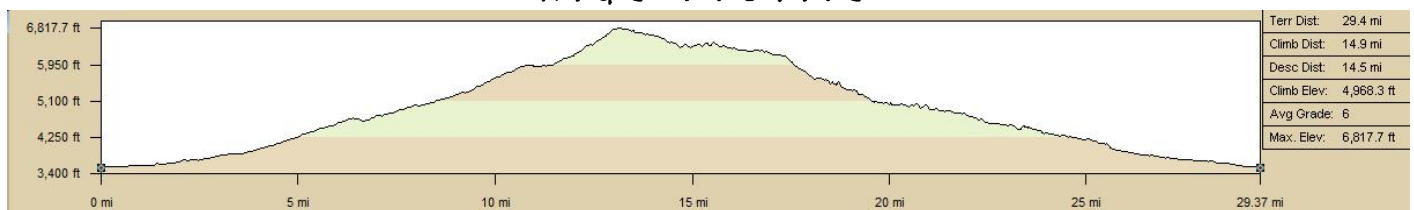
Distance on gravel/dirt..... 16.58 (approximate)

Distance to highest Elevation... 15.29 miles (approximate)

Lowest gear ratio on test bike.. 34 Rear X 26 Front

Necessary Supplies..... 1st aid, extra clothing, snacks & plenty of drink

Ride Profile



General Description

Technically the demand is not that great; road surfaces are sound and not too steep except for two stretches of climbing. Chunky, loose gravel is confined to those two stretches. This combination will force most to occasionally dismount and push their bikes but the views gained are inspiring. Besides, pushing a bike uphill is a good Achilles stretch.

Downhill begins at Dixie Spring (just beyond the highest point reached) and runs all the way to Dixie Summit Pass from where the paved surface of SR26 is taken for the remaining part of the descent into Prairie City. The descent portion on packed dirt/gravel surface before reaching SR26 is firm enough to allow experienced mountain bikers to race down. Those of less experience should keep in mind that even small amounts of gravel can be tricky as can be diagonal ruts carved by rainwater run-off – so, caution.

For those with energy remaining after 16.55 miles, a side trip of 1.14 miles to Dixie Butte Lookout (7,592') is strongly urged, where can be gained truly stupendous 360° view over vast area of eastern Oregon.

Route #23, Monster High Scenic Loop, combines the hardest portion of this route with a portion of Route #22, High Vista Traverse Loop, for those wanting more challenge.

Route Directions

Start point Highway SR26 (Front Street) & NW Johnson Avenue

Follow NW Johnson Ave. due north

.56 miles Johnson Ave. becomes Dixie Creek Road (CR 58)

3.3 miles pavement ends

8.4 miles CR 58 ends, road becomes NFD 58

9.22 miles intersection of NFD 2050, 3670 and an unnamed road, take unnamed road to the right (hairpin turn)beginning a long, hard climb that angles up a steep traverses on gravel that is large and chunky in places.

Here begins the longest of two hard climb sections, this one angling up in a traverse along a steep slope, eventually giving great views south to the John Day Valley, the Strawberry Mountains and even Prairie City itself seen down where the Dixie Creek gulch widens into the valley. At the top of this climb (where you'll no doubt take a break) the road makes a "T", be sure to go left at the T instead of to the right which runs downhill. Also, the road meanders on this section more than the line on the map indicate.

11.55 miles Wickiup Springs you'll recognize for the 4 way intersection with a large green drinking trough in the SE quadrant of the intersection

Easy to get confused here: From Wickiup Springs NFD 759 actually turns right, making a short, rutted steep climb up to a cattle guard fenced on either side. For a distance you'll be riding beside a barbed-wire fence. Between Wickiup and Dixie Springs you face another steep traverse on rough road (blocky gravel) but with views to the north

- 13.96 miles Good views of the Middle Fork John Day Valley and the Elk Horn Mountains 40 miles NE
- 16.55 miles NFD 759 becomes NFD 2610. Route continues straight, but option to side-trip to Dixie Butte
Lookout goes left
- 16.94 miles Unmarked road to Dixie Springs runs only yards off Route
- 20.22 miles Pass Starr Ridge Ski Club rope tow ski area to reach SR 26, leading back to Prairie City
- 29.37 miles End, Prairie City

