

Subject: Dispatches from the Subcontinent IV

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The Glamping Ends

On Saturday we rode far into Chattry for a night of camping at 13,250'. The tents were quite a bit less luxurious with skinny beds that were about 8" too short for my 6'3" frame. The water closet floor was dirt and rock, as was the dining tent. I don't really know how the food was because I've been trying to stick to toast and rice. Self-preservation insurance. In the dining tent was a small wood burning stove that was appreciated with the nighttime temps being in the low 40's. After numerous card games, we headed to our tents to face the cold. At this elevation sleeping is difficult after a few hours.

Sunday, Anu told us it would be our toughest day with miles of hardback, mud, and numerous water-crossings. After about 30 miles of it, Anu and a couple of us waited for the others at a turnoff to great asphalt. After dismounting, I even kneeled down and kissed the beautiful black tarmac. And we waited.

After maybe 20 minutes, Howard came up and said one of the team went off the road. He was on a slick, muddy two-track road when he cross-rutted. This is where the front wheel is in the outside rut towards the edge of the road, while the rear wheel is in the inside rut. The bike then goes to the edge of the road and when it hits the rocky edge, the rider gets launched. The bike came to a rest upside-down just over the edge of the road. Woody tumbled about 20' down the ravine, brushed himself off, and climbed back up to the road without a scratch or a bruise. That's one Cool Hand Luke. The guys hauled the Enfield back up to the road with straps. Other the some bent turn-signals and the loss of half its fuel while wheels-up, it came through fine.



One morning at breakfast I was sitting with Bret and Bill from Florida. There was a small condiment dish with some ash gray powder on it. Bill said it was Chaar Masala, and it was an excellent on fresh vegetables. Bret said it looked like Mom and Dad. We thought that was funny until a couple days later. At a Buddhist shrine, Bret produced a Mason jar of gray ash with pictures of an elderly couple and the legend "Mom & Dad" taped on in the inside. He told us he spreads a few ashes at every interesting place he goes. So far no problems with TSA.



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