

Soundings Trade Only Today

DAILY NEWS FOR MARINE INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

[HOME](#) > [COLUMNS/BLOGS](#) > [BOATERZ N BIKERZ](#)

The First of Two Dragons Slayed!

WANDA KENTON SMITH · UPDATED ON MAY 8, 2019

Day two of “The Dragon’s Roar” on Tuesday was fun and exhilarating as our band of hardy warriors set out to slay the lesser of two legendary beasts that lure motorcyclists and adrenaline junkies from all over the world to their enticing lair.

Known as the “Georgia Dragon” and the “Suches Loop,” this motorcycling and sportscar mecca is nestled between the Blue Ridge Mountains and the lush Chattahoochee National Forest, along what is aptly known as Georgia’s Blood Mountain.

We strategically designed and positioned this ride to serve as a warm-up and pre-cursor prior to challenging the infamous “Tail of the Dragon” on Wednesday. It proved a smart tactic to get our riders well primed and ready for battle.

We suited up for dragon slaying in traditional armor including helmets, boots and leather jackets. When our fearless road captain gave the war cry and nudged his Harley-Davidson Fat Boy forward, a powerful roar as our Hull of a Tour riders revved up their trusty two-wheeled steeds to follow.

Our battle plan encompassed about seven hours in the saddle, sporting a 236-mile round-trip rendezvous. We shook off nippy morning temperatures and rode like proud soldiers in staggered formation, winding our way along Highway 129 from Robbinsville through Topton, Andrews, Marble and Murphy, NC.

As we entered Georgia, the scenery changed and we shifted gears. Blairsville ushered entry to the Richard B. Russell Scenic Highway, part of the larger Russell-Brasstown National Scenic Byway known as SR 348. We rode 14 glorious miles along this spectacular passageway to Suches through the Chattahoochee National Forest, with its top elevation ascending to 3644 feet. We cruised beneath towering trees and lush greenery, enjoying cool glimpses of the beautiful Nottely River.

Although spectacular scenery abounds throughout this area, bikers know to beware; we’re trained to keep our eyes focused on the road and to keep our wits about us, especially when entering Dragon territory. It’s tempting and easy to get a false sense of security when admiring the dazzled dappled lighting peeking through the trees, or when catching splashes of colorful wildflowers from the valleys below. Road warriors recognize and respect the fact that danger lurks around every corner. Specifically, the Georgia Dragon boasts 50 miles of curvy twists and fast turns, coupled with steep elevation changes. Riding the Georgia Dragon requires plenty of fierce concentration to prevail.

We came. We rode. We conquered!

Our Hull of a Tour boaters and bikers handily tamed the beast. All 20+ bikes claimed and shared in the success of a great conquest. From the most to least experienced among us, we collectively savored this sweetly satisfying victory!

We returned triumphantly to base camp at the Iron Horse Motorcycle Lodge & Resort, each of us admittedly exhausted but equally enthusiastic. We capped off an awesome day with an outstanding, family-style Southern dinner of fried chicken and pot roast at the popular Wolf Creek Grocery & Restaurant right down the road. With our bellies full, we bid farewells for the night. We're all eager to pit our skills against the formidable Tail of the Dragon in Deal's Gap.

I can't wait! This marks my fourth time battling the demon, and I'm already anticipating the outcome. Our group is looking forward to our victory celebration in Lenoir City, TN, our destination following the morning battle. We're meeting up with friends from Malibu Boats for an afternoon of relaxation and boating fun!

See you tomorrow; thanks for reading along and being an integral part of the virtual ride!

Hull of a Tour 5: *The Dragon's Roar* is powered by Evinrude/BRP and sponsored by Sea Tow, Malibu Boats, Emerald Coast Marine Group, Boogey Lights, Born to Ride Magazine, Jim Krueger Photography and Kenton Smith Marketing.

###