

SEPTEMBER 2011 TRIP REPORT

This is actually the first trip report that I have ever done that actually starts a week before the trip, but it ties in directly with the trip.

When Trent and Johnny had ridden the Dry Fork around the 5th of September they picked up about 35 yearlings scattered from Double Springs, to the Rocky Bottom. Once they had them corralled at the Rocky Bottom they hauled them home in the trailer and put them on the meadow at the Rafter where we were going to dump all the yearlings we gathered on the September Cattle Drive. The yearlings were very content on the green feed of the meadow, so we were shocked to get a phone call the morning of the start of the September Cattle Drive. I was driving the catering truck to the mountain when my cell phone rang. It was dad saying he had just received a call from a neighbor two miles up the creek that they had hit a yearling that morning just as the sun was coming up. The neighbor said they had broken one of the yearlings legs. I asked dad to run up and take a look because I just couldn't believe we had cattle 2 miles up the county road, when we knew all the cattle had been in the pasture at dark the night before. Since the cattle had been in the pasture over a week it was highly unlikely that they had walked the perimeter of the pasture at that point in time. It is very normal for yearlings to do it immediately upon being put in a new pasture but not a week later. When the crew and all of us arrived in Dayton we sat and waited until we heard back from Dad. Once we left Dayton we knew Dad wouldn't be able to call us. Dad called and confirmed that yes the animal with the broken leg was one of ours. There were 15 other yearlings with the broken legged one. We had to go to plan A/B to deal with the injured animal. I sent Trent and John Barker back to shoot and butcher the broken legged animal. Trent and John put the suffering animal out of it's misery and Mom walked the rest of the cattle the 2 miles back to the ranch. We still don't know what set things off that night. We do know the gate stick was snapped in two, so it was obvious something had chased the cattle in the middle of the night and the yearlings had hit the gate at a dead run, because all the yearlings as well as the horses were in the road and scattered over a two mile stretch. We have no idea what chased the cattle, dogs, wolves, mountain lion, your guess is as good as ours. Whatever it was, did create sheer panic!

SEPTEMBER 10TH:

The next chink in the plan started about 3 days before the trip, when I got a call from the School District saying that I had lost my bus as all the district busses were scheduled to be used that day. That is one of the risks I run once the school year starts, however it has never happened before. At the 2 day point, there had been changes made and they thought that I could have one of the small busses. With one of the small busses, a suburban and two pickups for luggage, I figured we could cram everyone in and get them to the top of the mountain. Day 1 they called back and said one of the teachers had cancelled their field trip and I could have one of the old busses and a driver. Hey great news, we were back to Plan A! Well Plan A went as smooth as a babies behind, until about half way up the mountain, when like a baby with diarrhea, a hose broke and sprayed Wendell Cayton's saddle with antifreeze. Of course, other than that, we now had a bus half way up the mountain stranded. Of course none of us at Lake Creek new any of this had taken place. The bus driver radioed the school district transportation director and relayed their problem. By now one of the busses on a field trip had returned to the school, so they sent another bus to pick up the stranded guests and deliver them on to their destination. The guests arrived into the Lake Creek Cow Camp around 5:30pm. It was too late to get any horsemanship started. I guess if there was a positive, it was that the weather was very mild and warm and we had an incredible full moon.

SUNDAY SEPT 11TH:

After Breakfast we turned the horsemanship clinic over to clinician Chris Ellsworth. Chris worked with everyone until lunch time and reported that he didn't see any horse swaps that needed to

be made so we were ready to start gathering cattle after lunch, which is why people came in the first place. We split several different directions to start gathering cattle. I went to the bottom of Lake Creek and just as we rode up to the timber patch in the bottom, I notice one yearling standing there looking at me. Yearlings are very seldom by themselves. If they are, it generally means they are sick or have foot-rot. This yearling threw her head in the air and off into the trees she charged. Obviously she wasn't sick or injured! I couldn't wait to explain to people what was going on, or what they needed to do. If I lost sight of the yearling we weren't going to find her in the timber patch. With branches snapping and popping I did manage to get around her, but she was the only one I had seen. When the group caught up, I said wait here, I am going to go on down country and look for tracks. I didn't think to mention to people to not lose sight of that yearling. I went down country about a ¼ mile and there were all kinds of fresh tracks, headed down country. I knew the terrain gets so rough and steep farther down the canyon that we couldn't ride it with a horse All the tracks were headed down and none coming back out. I was afraid if the cattle kept going down the canyon they would end up in what we call Little Park. If they got that far down the canyon, chances were they would be trapped as they probably wouldn't find the game trail through the rims to come out in the Dry Fork. This of course meant a change in our plans for riding the next day, but in the cow business your plans really don't matter as everything is centered around the livestock and the weather. I rode back up through the timber to where everyone was patiently waiting, but no one had kept track of the one yearling and she had disappeared. At the end of the season we were 4 yearlings short, we have no idea if she was one of the 4 or not.

Trent took his group of riders to Garland Gulch to do a reride of that drainage. They didn't find any cattle on their way over to Garland Gulch but did find cattle on their ride back. These are the little things that make you realize how tough it is to get cattle gathered on the mountain. In the group of cattle they found, they had one sick altitude yearling and one calf with altitude sickness. The problem was that they couldn't find the mother to the sick calf. They trailed the calf along with the herd hoping to find more cattle and come across momma in the process. However, mom wasn't to be found that day. The calf being sick and not feeling well, meant he was lagging and was struggling to keep up with the rest of the small herd of cattle that they had found. One of our well intentioned guests, who allowed the maternal side of her to show, decided if she rode along and bawled like a calf, that maybe mom would hear it and come running. That night around the fire we asked Cindy if she would give us a demonstration of a bawling calf and of course she said she would. After hearing her imitation it was obvious if the cow had heard it, she was running alright, but probably in the opposite direction. With much laughing we were sure Cindy would be a cinch to win the White Bags for the night. Matter of fact we are still laughing about it. I will give Cindy credit, it did sound like an animal, we just aren't sure of what species. However, much to my surprise we had another nominee who won the White Bags for the next day. One of our repeat guests from Colorado, rode with Trent that day, and commented as they were riding up a steep part of the trail, with the blue sky on the horizon, "It looks like we are riding in a big blue tent". It shocked Garry to discover that we would be riding in that big blue tent all week long. We all started wondering if it really was water that Garry had in his canteen!!

MONDAY SEPT 12:

With the change in plans the majority of the guests went with Dana to the Sand Dunes and Little Park which is where the cattle would show up if they had continued on down the bottom of Lake Creek. The issue with the mountain is, that you really don't know if you don't ride it and check it out yourself. Trent took a group of people with him and did a reride of Lake Creek hoping to find the mother to the sick calf we had found the day before. Trent's group did find about 40 head of cattle that had been missed the day before and the mother of the sick calf.

One of our Chicago guests was having a hard time breathing at the 9000 foot elevation as he had a bronchial infection flare up just as he left Chicago. Trent hauled the sick animals off the mountain

as well as our sick guest and deposited him at a motel in Ranchester for the night. We knew from experience that if we didn't get Victor to a lower elevation his respiratory problem would only get worse. The plan was that I would pick Victor up the next day and he would ride back up the canyon with me and we would meet everyone at the next camp which is only 6500 feet. He called his doctor when he was in the valley and got some good meds and a good nights sleep so that he would be ready to go the next day.

That night around the campfire Roy had over heard Pierre talking about a trashy mule that we had. Roy runs our pack string and has never had any real problems with our mules, but when hearing that we had a trashy mule, Roy became concerned and cornered me, wanting to know which one had become trashy. In cowboy language a horse or mule that has gone trashy means they are likely to kick you if they can, or they can't be trusted at any point in time. It took a while to figure out what Roy was talking about because none of our mules had become trashy. It's especially scary if it's a mule, because they won't waste time trying to kick you, they just wait until they know they can't miss and then they kick you. (saves a lot of energy on their part and doesn't give you any warning). Going back over the conversation that Roy had overheard we were all laughing, when we determined that what Roy had overheard, was Pierre telling someone about the mule we always carry the trash out on. I guess that is how rumors get started. However, the winner of the White Bags that night was the English chap from across the pond. Charlie won them for being off his horse looking for his lens cover for his camera for the second time that day. He cemented the nomination when he confessed the reason he was really off was that he was looking for his hat that had blown off, plus his lens cover, which he had actually lost 3 times that day. (Later in the week his girlfriend was wishing he had lost his camera and not the lens cover, but more on that later).

TUESDAY SEPT 13:

Today we break the Lake Creek camp down, pack it up and move to the next camp at Rock Cabin Park. Dana takes part of the crew and heads to the valley to set that camp up for later in the week. Roy packs the pack string with everyone's bedrolls, Trent loads the kitchen string of mules with the groceries and the cooks and heads to Rock Cabin Park. Chris takes the guests and they go gather the cattle and trail the herd to the next destination. The cook crew leaves first in the morning, then the valley crew leaves, then the cowboy crew heads out followed by the pack crew. The goal is for all of us to meet at Rock Cabin Park for the night. Today we had the fastest camp breakdown that we have ever had. Dana, Craig and John headed to the valley with the valley camp. We had just left the horse pasture when I looked over and here were 11 head of yearlings still in the Lake Creek pasture that we had now ridden every day since we had been up there. There was no room to turn the loaded pickup and trailers around so I stopped, parked them along the road and ran back up to the Lake Creek camp to tell Chris about the newly sighted yearlings. After running up the hill and into camp I was badly needing oxygen. It's hard for an old fat man to run up hill at 9,000 feet! It probably took me as long to get enough air as it did to run up the hill and of course I couldn't tell them what I had seen until I got my lungs full of air. You must ask yourself, where have those 11 yearlings been the last several days? I sure didn't want them disappearing into thin air again.

Once we were in the valley we swung over to Ranchester and I picked up Victor who was feeling much better and raring to go back to the mountain. We went to the Rafter, set up camp and then went to the Rocky Bottom where we would then ride back up the Little Horn Canyon to Rock Cabin Park and meet up with everyone else. Sounds simple enough! Since the terrain is what it is, everything on the mountain is high adventure and the trip back up the canyon for Victor was another high adventure. One part of the trail as we were riding up which we call "The Stairs", there was a leaning over tree that was pointed down the trail at just about should height. Now if you twisted just right you could sort of lean over and miss it as you went by. Victor was 3rd in line going up the canyon and Craig and John made it

and most of Victor made it. However, the part that didn't make it by the tree ended up making it so none of Victor made it by the tree. The tip of the tree speared the outside edge of Victor's coat at shoulder height and his horse kept on walking, the tree separated Victor and saddle. Victor landed in a pile right in the middle of the trail. Once we got Victor up and checked out we mounted back up and on up the trail we went. You would think that would have been enough excitement for Victor for one day, but about an hour later, he again had another moment of adrenaline rush. Horses don't have very good footing on flat rocks and there was one along side the trail at about a 45 degree angle and when his horse stepped on it, the horse went down on his knees. This of course threw Victor forward over the top of his saddle horn. As Victor later recalled, if it hadn't been for my male anatomy catching on the saddle horn as I was going over, I would have gone clear to the ground!

We arrived into camp about 6:30 pm just ahead of the cowboy crew. They had a real long day as the cattle (due to the nice weather) had no desire to cooperate with the cowboys. The people were exhausted but still smiling. Hell they had to be! They had just spent 8 hours in the saddle getting here and didn't know the way out!!! Most people just wanted to get their horses turned out and sit for a few minutes and relax. The next thing that happened was that our English chap Charlie, must have been afraid that he was going to miss out on the White Bag nominations that night. He stepped off his horse at camp to untie his saddle bags and coat too leave them there so he didn't have to carry them back from where we unsaddled, which is ¼ mile away. His horse Gizmo, who has been through this drill a hundred times didn't wait for Charlie to get back on and ride him to the other end of the park to unsaddle. Once Charlie stepped off and untied his coat and saddle bags, Gizmo took off on his own and ran to the other end of the park where he then patiently waited for Charlie to come unsaddle him. Wendall Cayton won the white bags that night, seems he stepped off Traveler that day to look through his binoculars and Traveler does what he does, he travelled. Cowboys never drop their reins assuming their horse will stand and wait for them because it can be a long walk back to camp. Cowboys especially hate to walk!! It is always amazing to me at 9000 feet how quickly guests are willing to pay big dollars to have their horse captured for them when faced with an 8 mile walk!!

Once people arrived at Rock Cabin Park, Garry Lawrenz just wanted to sit and smoke his cigar and enjoy the moment. He took several puffs on his cigar and set it on the stump next to him and got visiting with someone when an exhausted Sylvie walked up and seeing the vacant stump, plopped down to relax a few minutes. The few minutes turned into a few seconds as the hot cigar sent a message to Sylvie's brain that maybe another stump would be better. As Sylvie jumped she didn't appear to be nearly as exhausted as she thought she was!! Sylvie was known as hot pants the rest of the week!

WEDNESDAY SEPT 14:

After a later breakfast we headed up the Kerns-Joslyn trail. It took us exactly one hour and 22 minutes to go the 2.6 miles of trail that climbs in elevation of 1749 feet. Once we reached the top we stopped and rested the horses a few minutes before splitting up to start the day's gather. Chris took part of the group and headed to Lick Creek to do a regather of the country he had ridden the day before. The plan was that Trent and I and our group would split up and gather the Bear Trap pasture and then we would all meet on the fence in the bottom of Dayton Gulch. We would then all gather the East Burnt pasture together on our way back to Rock Cabin Park with the herd where we would drop them for the night. As Trent and I met up on the suspension fence we had a hand full of yearlings and the 4 Longhorn Steers. The fog had rolled in and it was misting and raining off and on. One minute you could see several miles ahead of you, the next with the fog about 200 yards. Originally I had planned on taking our group of cattle up over the top and coming down the open face on the end of the Little Horn rim. Since we had gathered the 4 Longhorns I knew there was no way we were getting the 4 of them off that steep face. They would take off at a run and I knew we couldn't keep up with them. Trent and I decided that the best route was to take them on into Dayton Gulch and out the bottom. I rode around to the group

in the fog and thought I had told everyone what we were planning on doing. I told everyone that the Longhorns were probably going to take off at a run and we would have no choice but to keep up with them or we would lose sight of them and it would then be the Clean Up Ride before we could get them gathered again. This of course meant the guests had to keep up with us because we weren't going to have time to wait. There are two reasons why we wanted to take the Longhorns off with this group. ONE- they would take the lead and give the yearlings someone to follow. TWO- we had turned the bulls out about 2 weeks before to of course, breed the cows. That's what bulls do! Once one of those big Longhorn steers go stand beside a hot cow, no bull will attempt fertilization as the Longhorns horns are just to menacing! This of course is very detrimental to the conception rate and without conception we don't have anything to sell which makes the bank very unhappy! The gather of the four Longhorns was as wild as I thought it would be. Once we arrived in the bottom of Dayton Gulch and the Longhorns had run themselves out, we waited to get an inventory of all of our cowboys. I knew Craig had gone up over the top, but thought he was going by himself, so that meant we were short 3 cowboys. I even took my boots off and counted and we were still short 3 cowboys.

When Craig rode to the top of the hill and looked back down to where we had all just split up, the fog lifted just enough for Craig to see 3 guests sitting there by themselves on their horses. Craig sat and watched as he thought maybe one of them had had a call of nature and they would take off riding shortly. After a few minutes Craig decided something wasn't right so he rode back down to check things out. Sure enough here were 3 guests who had either missed out on the instructions or didn't understand the instructions and were patiently sitting and waiting for someone to show up and tell them what to do. I wouldn't have worried because we were planning on riding that same country two weeks later so we could have gathered them up then. Since the 3 were just sitting there we started calling them Larry, Moe and Curly the rest of the week. (Wendell, Lorraine, and Grant). As it turned out Larry, Moe and Curly had mores stories before the week was over. Curly did win the White Bags that night around the fire. We dropped the herd where we wanted them for the night like we have done since the beginning. It was later than I had hoped (7:00pm) because I like to get in early enough to turn our horses out so they can fill their fuel tanks, because tomorrows ride was a long one. Even though we got in right at dark I elected to turn the horses out for a couple hours and hope that we could catch them with flashlights. If we couldn't catch them with flash lights that meant I would spend the night sitting in the trail to make sure our horses stayed the night with us. The fog lifted about 9:20 as we were catching horse to tie for the night. It was a crystal clear night with a full moon. It was absolutely breath taking!! With all the years of tying the horses at night they are so well trained to this that once we started catching horses they ran to the hitch line and waited to be tied for the night.

THURSDAY SEPT 15TH:

We had an early breakfast, because today is a very long day in the saddle regardless of how you slice it and you need to get moving to get it all done. Just as soon as breakfast was about ready Chris wolfed down a few swallows of food and rode off, headed up country to make sure he was above the cattle before they got up and started walking back to where we had gathered them the day before. Cattle generally get up in the morning, stretch and graze for a period of time to fill the belly before they go to walking somewhere. However, Murhpy had shown up in the night and completely changed our day's plans. I rode out about 45 minutes behind Chris with the kitchen string of mules to head down the canyon to the valley. As I rode onto the main trail I didn't seen any sign of Chris or cattle and when I hit the trail I knew why. All the tracks in the trail were headed up country, not down like they should have been. This meant that cattle had gone back up the direction we had come from yesterday. I tied my string of pack mules and loped back to camp and told Trent he better get his cowboys mounted and head up country just as soon as they could. The cowboy crew on this morning generally stays in camp an extra 30 minutes to help pack the big cook tent for the season and stuff it under the big rock where

we store it during the winter. The tent weighs right at 300 pounds brand new and with all the patches probably weighs close to 350 pounds. After delivering the message, I loped back down the trail to my pack mules. I was certainly hoping that once I rode into the lower park I would find most of the cattle waiting at the gate waiting for me to open it. However, as I rode into the big park I had a sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach as I didn't see any cattle at all. As I rode down through the park below the camp and read the sign, it didn't look good at all. There were no bed marks in the tall grass anywhere. There should have been several hundred bed marks and I counted 6. This meant that the cattle had not even laid down in the night but had done an about face and had gone back up country. I had no idea how far Chris was going to have to go to get around them, but assumed no more than a couple miles at the most. I was wrong again!! There was no way to communicate with Chris so all I could do was stay with the plan and hope for the best. I knew this meant that the cowboys were in for a real long day in the saddle. I was silently cursing those 4 Longhorn steers as I was sure they were the culprits who were responsible for this.

When Trent had the cowboys all mounted and ready to go, several of them were sitting on their horses waiting so Trent told them to go ahead and start off. Since neither Trent or I saw exactly what happened, all we can do is report sort of what we heard. We had switched Melanie to a different horse that day as the one she had been riding was pretty sore. When that little group of cowboys were about 300 yards out of camp, Melanie came flying off her horse and hit the ground. John Barker our medical person jumped off his horse to see if she was alright. The chap from across the pond (Charlie) who was always taking pictures was now snapping away as she picked herself up out of the dirt.

When Chris was several miles up the trail he came across several bunches of cattle all headed back up country. Chris kept going until he had gone clear to the fence in the bottom of Dayton Gulch. The last mile there had been groups of cattle scattered from the river to the bottoms of the rims. When the cattle would see Chris ride, up they would throw their heads in the air and head on up country. You could tell they were laughing the whole time! Once Chris arrived at the Dayton Gulch fence he attempted to start gathering cattle and start them back down country. As he would gather one bunch and start them down the trail, they would walk along until he would swing up or down to gather another little group and then the cattle he dropped, would turn around and head back up country. Chris was charging up and down the mountain side trying to stem the tide of the cattle as they continued to surge up country. Chris was well aware he wasn't going to get all of them but maybe he could get most of them. When these types of situations happen you always think that sooner or later if you stay after it you are going to whip them. Apparently the cattle had the same thought. As your horse starts to labor very hard trying to get enough oxygen to keep his muscles going you start to realize I better drop this group and just concentrate on that group. To get some is better than none. I'm not really sure when Trent and the reinforcements showed up but it was obvious they had a major problem. Now it's approximately 8 miles from where we had all been camped the night before with the herd of cattle. This meant if they got the cattle gathered and trailed to the valley some of those cattle were going to walk 20 miles that day. Now take into account the 8 miles the cowboys rode that morning to get around the cattle and that meant the cowboys were going to ride 28 miles that day not counting the miles of back and forth and up and down to get gathered. With cattle scattered throughout the timber and meadows they didn't know where to start. Trent had a decision to make. I had taken off to the valley with the kitchen string, Roy was headed out with the pack string with all the beds and remaining groceries, the camp had been closed up for the winter and Trent and cowboys had 20 miles to ride to get off the mountain without any cattle and it was now noon. In all my years we have never been completely skunked but we were that trip. I have on many occasions spilled a large number of cattle but never have I been skunked. There is always a first time for everything. However, the days excitement wasn't over. Around 2:00pm the group stopped for lunch figuring they had about 4 hours of straight riding left. However, Murphy wasn't finished yet with all the excitement. The horse Stan was riding

slipped on a rock and cut his shin clean to the bone just below the knee. Blood was pouring out. They bandaged the leg using someone's extra shirt to try and stop the bleeding. However they couldn't get the bleeding to stop. They considered several options but the only one that really gave them a chance was that the injured horse was going to have to walk the remaining 12 miles off the mountain. They did have several extra horses with them that they were leading so with a few switches here and there, everyone did manage to have a horse under them. The horses they were leading, were the horses that had been sored up or banged up during the week. However, it was the only option they had. Four or five hours later they pull into the ranch with the injured horse and he is still on his feet but still bleeding. It was very obvious we needed to make a quick trip to the vet or risk a horse going into shock and dying. Now we recognized that making him walk off the mountain was probably the main reason he was still bleeding, but I just didn't think waiting a few more hours would do the horse any good if we were wrong. I called the vet and said we were on our way with the injured horse and since he hadn't left the clinic yet he said he would just wait until we arrived. One of the thoughts that kept popping into my mind was a statement my brother Krayton had made years earlier that if a vein is big enough to have a name, then it is probably an important vein. Sure enough, when we arrived at the vet he had a name for the vein. However, it appeared that Bubba wasn't any worse for the wear. While he had lost a lot of blood he wasn't really showing any signs of shock. The vet sutured up the wound and tied off the bleeders the way he wanted, and sent us home with Bubba, saying keep him in a box stall for about month and he will be fine. By the time John Barker and I got back from the vet most of the people had gone to bed.

The other little item that happened the day before that impacted the day is rather comical and I am still laughing about it. Bam Bam had stayed with us a couple days on top before leaving to go on to college for the semester. Since he was staying a couple days longer it solved my problem of how to get the porta potties off the mountain to the camp at the Rafter for the last night. I told him all he had to do was pull into the ranch and park things and go on to school and we would take care of the rest. Bam Bam pulled the poo-poo-choo-choo all the way off the mountain until he got about 2 miles out of Dayton. He is on a straight away and says he wasn't going very fast, but somehow the poo-poo-choo-choo came unhooked and bounced off the ball of the suburban. It drove itself into the ditch and drove the tongue of the trailer into the dirt on the opposite side of the ditch where it came to a **splashing** halt. Once both tires settled on the ground, amazingly it was still upright and all in one piece. However, there had been serious displacement of floaters on the inside!! This problem of course always falls on the clean up crew to remedy, meaning the lucky owners of the business!!! It's so great to own your own business! Anyway, back to the story—Seems the poo-poo-choo-choo was too full for Bam Bam to lift back on the ball of the Suburban, so he did what any 20 year old would have done, he jerks out his cell phone and calls his dad, and like all dads, his came out from Sheridan and helped him get hooked back up. Yes siree, it was a good day!!

FRIDAY SEPT 16TH:

Since the days plans were all in the Poo-Poo-Choo-Choo because we didn't have any cattle to trail on home that day, we decided that the best thing to do for the day, was a swing up the North Slope of the Dry Fork to see if we had any cattle in that pasture. It was a beautiful day for a ride and people actually had a great day even though we didn't find any cattle. There was cow sign just not the cows to go with them. I did finally find those cows that left the sign but it was about 6 weeks later before I found them!

That night at the banquet the winner of the white bags was something that had taken place on the day the group came down the canyon. If you remember earlier I had mentioned the English chap who always had his camera out and was shooting everything. Well first thing that morning we had to do some horse switching and had switched Melanie to a new horse. We really don't know what happened

but shortly after leaving camp that morning Melanie came off her horse and hit her head on the ground when she landed. Now Melanie had come on the trip with Charlie and we knew they were an item but as she is lying there on the ground Charlie is busy shooting pictures of her with dirt on her face, her hair all twisted this way and that, dirt smears on her coat and clothes and Charlie seems completely unconcerned whether she is okay or not. Melanie being the cowboy she is, got up, dusted herself off, and told Charlie to get the camera out of her face. Charlie felt so guilty about it that in trying to make up to Melanie he proposed to her, and then to prove she had hit her head pretty hard, she said yes. Most definitely a white bag moment!! Cindy Mitchell won the Cowboy Trivia game and got to take home the Double Rafter Buckle that we give away on each trip.

One of the really neat things that was observed is how bad the guests felt about not getting the cattle home. It shows that they understood this is not just something we do for entertainment, but something that is a serious, very difficult business. It was no one's fault that the plans didn't work out. You have to remember that Mother Nature holds all the aces and believe it or not a cow does have a brain and in their way of thinking, we were wrong, and they weren't going to concede one inch, and they didn't!! People go away realizing this is not make believe and we take it very serious, but sometimes you just have to have a do over! We had a great week with lots of laughs and some really great people to share the experience with. I can't thank you enough and may God Bless!

Trail Boss.

P.S. As always it took Trent and I about 6 weeks to get all the cattle found and off the mountain. I don't remember the date of our last trip, but I do know it was about mid November and we found 3 yearlings west of the horse pasture in the Little Horn. All I remember from my horse wreck in the fall was that Trent still had me riding Ugh on our last swing to the mountain.