

Eastern Washington Steeple Chase Sites – Day 2

After an absolutely GREAT day riding to get the first batch of Steeple Chase and Wing Washington sites in Eastern Washington, I'm thrilled to be chasing sites the second day, too. The day starts off bright and sunny, but not warm. I'll take what I can get!

My plan has me going from Colfax to the Potlatch area of Idaho, then back to Washington to the Steeple Chase bonus site in Rosalia, then up to the Ford area for a Russian Orthodox church (that should be cool), then down and west to Odessa, then more west to Wilson Creek for my final church of the day. Then the roughly 200 miles home! Whew! It was going to be some day!

Colfax to the Potlatch church is just 28 miles, but its on 272 and it's up and down through rolling Palouse-type hills. I'm leaving before 7 in the morning to get a good start, and riding into the sun. I find the location (I can see it, even if my address and GPS pointers are wrong), and soon discover to my disappointment that this is yet another dead church on the Steeple Chase run. Really, it's a funeral service church only; part of the cemetery, but not an actual Church. I say my prayers for the community anyway, and I'm off again to Rosalia, 42 miles away. I'm traveling on Hwy 271, and I soon figure out that I've been on this road before, because I recognize the city of Garfield.

The Rosalia Christian Church is another non-church. (Was a church once, but no longer.) Rosalia is an interesting town, I'm cold, so I decide it must be time for coffee. At the one coffee shop in town, all the local old guys are sitting at a table, and the pot of coffee is on their table. I wander over, get a cup, say hello, and find a chair to enjoy my coffee with the local elders. Soon they are taking shots at my electric gear, at the fact that I ride a Gold Wing and not a Harley, and other random characteristics. (Seems I'm always in trouble, and sometimes its not even my fault!) I'm there for 15-20 minutes of laughter and stories. They are amazed that I'm going to small places like Ford, Odessa and Wilson Creek. It is a good exchange of cultures, but I have to get back on the road.

From Rosalia to my next stop, Nicholas Russian Orthodox, at the intersection of Hwy 291 & Hwy 231 south of Ford, is 66 miles, up 195 to Spokane, then out Hwy 2 to Reardan, and then up 231 through beautiful, twisty canyons. Spectacular ride on 231. I've been this way before, but it has been a while. I finally arrive at the intersection, and have to find the church. It's there, but it's behind walls and a big "No Trespassing" gate. Gate is open, so I wander in. The courtyard is paved with brilliant white stones, and the little church itself is on the eastside of the property. Very pretty, but odd to see the bulbous balls on the steeple.

From the Russian Orthodox church, to the site in Odessa is 65-ish miles, down 231, then over on 2, and then down 28. I find the Heritage church, get someone to take my picture, and inquire about where to have lunch. They tell me to go to the Chief's place,

so I'm thinking its American Indian. Nope, it is US Navy Chiefs. Delightful options, very friendly people once they find out my Dad was a Master Chief, and I was a zero. When I asked them about my next stop in Wilson Creek, they tell me that the town is so small they sometimes call it Wilson Puddle. And I won't have any trouble finding "the" church in that town.

And they're right. You can see the 1st Presbyterian church from almost anywhere in town. Got a couple of locals to take my picture, do my prayers, and I'm on my way. But I notice a historical marker talking about the town, and decide to use it as my Wing Washington historical marker from Eastern Washington.

A good day of 5 Steeple Chase sites, and one Wing Washington. Then 200-ish miles home, down the crazy I-90, but I'm not concerned. The sun was shining, the temperature above 40, and I was a satisfied man. A great two days of riding!

Jerry Weltner











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