

Valkyrie vs. Deer (w/pics)

Those Valkyries are tough machines...and those Valkyrie pilots can *ride!*

Case in point:

Note the trail of blood on the road. This is *never* a good sign.



This from Roy and Heidi with the [Colorado High Country Cruisers](#):

Text and pics used with permission...no Valkyrie riders were harmed in the making of these pictures.

Home From Telluride, Valk Not So Lucky

Heidi and I got home at about 4:00 PM Sunday afternoon from our trip to Telluride (full report to come later), however as indicated by the subject of this post, our Valkyrie Interstate wasn't so lucky.

Heidi needed to get home fairly early Sunday afternoon because she had a plane to catch from DIA Sunday evening to San Antonio for an Air Force Reserve class. So we left from the hotel in Telluride at about 6:15 AM planning on getting home by about 1:00 PM.

It was a beautiful morning in Southwest Colorado as we heading out of the canyon on highway 145 for highway 92 and the Dallas Divide. Nice ride out of the canyon from

Telluride to highway 92 where we turned to head over the Dallas Divide. Made it over the divide and headed downhill to Ridgeway at a nice leisurely pace.

A few miles from Ridgeway we rounded a nice easy corner onto a long straight section of highway, nice clear road ahead, running right at about the speed limit of 60 mph. Then in an instant all hell breaks loose with the front end of the bike!

There is a big jolt, the bike starts to fishtail violently and the front end goes from lock to lock about 3 times. Somehow I get control of the bike and we're heading in a straight line again with plenty of straight road ahead and I'm yelling on the intercom to Heidi that we're ok as the biggest thought running through my mind at that instant is that Heidi must be freaking out back there.

I grab for the clutch lever to downshift, what the hell, there ISN'T a clutch lever! It was at this moment that I finally realize that we must have hit something, although all I can remember seeing is clear road ahead before the impact. So, I hit the kill switch to shut off the engine, and not knowing what has really happened, I elected to stay off the brakes and just let the bike coast down the road until I had lost enough speed to ease it over to the shoulder and stop.

Now I usually have to wait for Heidi to get off the bike before starting to get off myself, but the first thing I notice the instant the bike gets stopped is Heidi standing to the left of me with the intercom cord stretched about 3 feet. I guess she wanted off that bike!

I motion to her to unplug the intercom cord and then look down toward the front wheel of the bike, what the hell! There laying at the right side of the wheel is the deer we had just hit and then dragged down the highway.

I get off the bike, attempt to control the shaking, check on Heidi, and then walk around to the front of the bike. What a mess! EVERY single piece of plastic on the front end of the bike was broken, front fender bent, radiator punctured, large dents in both sides of the tank, clutch lever broken off, front wheel completely covered in blood, deer laying there with it's guts spilling out onto the shoulder, and deer shit everywhere!

A gentleman that had been behind us approached, checked to make sure we were all right, and then got right on the phone and made the 911 call for help. He then stayed with us until helped arrive and described to me what had happened. Right after we had came out of the corner onto the straight section of highway, a group of 4 deer bounding up from the right without any hesitation at all directly into us. I struck one directly mid body and he said another actually clipped the rear of the bike and somersaulted off the road to the left behind us. I NEVER saw a single deer until we had come to a stop and saw the one we had hit. And I was watching for wildlife the entire time we had been on the road, even before the impact I can remember coming out the corner scanning ahead to both sides of the road and seeing nothing but clear road ahead.

The only logical reason I can think of that I didn't see the deer at all was because, one I must have done a mirror check at that precise instant, and two that section of highway is raised above ground to the right. So the only thing that makes sense to me is that I checked the road ahead, saw that it was clear, and then did a quick checked in my left mirror to check behind, and it was at that instant the deer came up from below on our right.

People, Heidi and I are SO LUCKY with this accident! In this case the circumstances of the accident added up in our favor, allowing me to get control of the bike back so that

we both could have walked away completely unhurt. But it could just have easily ended up the other way!

There are two things I feel helped us walk away from this. One, the circumstances of the accident, size of the deer we hit, plenty of straight road ahead at time of impact, didn't see the impact coming (Yes I really think this helped as I didn't have time to do attempt a swerve or panic break), etc. Two, taking the MSF class and the continuing studying I do on an almost monthly basis by reading motorcycling technique books and constantly thinking about and putting into practice the techniques I have read while riding. When the impact occurred I didn't panic and I understood what the bike was doing and thus was able to regain control of the bike.

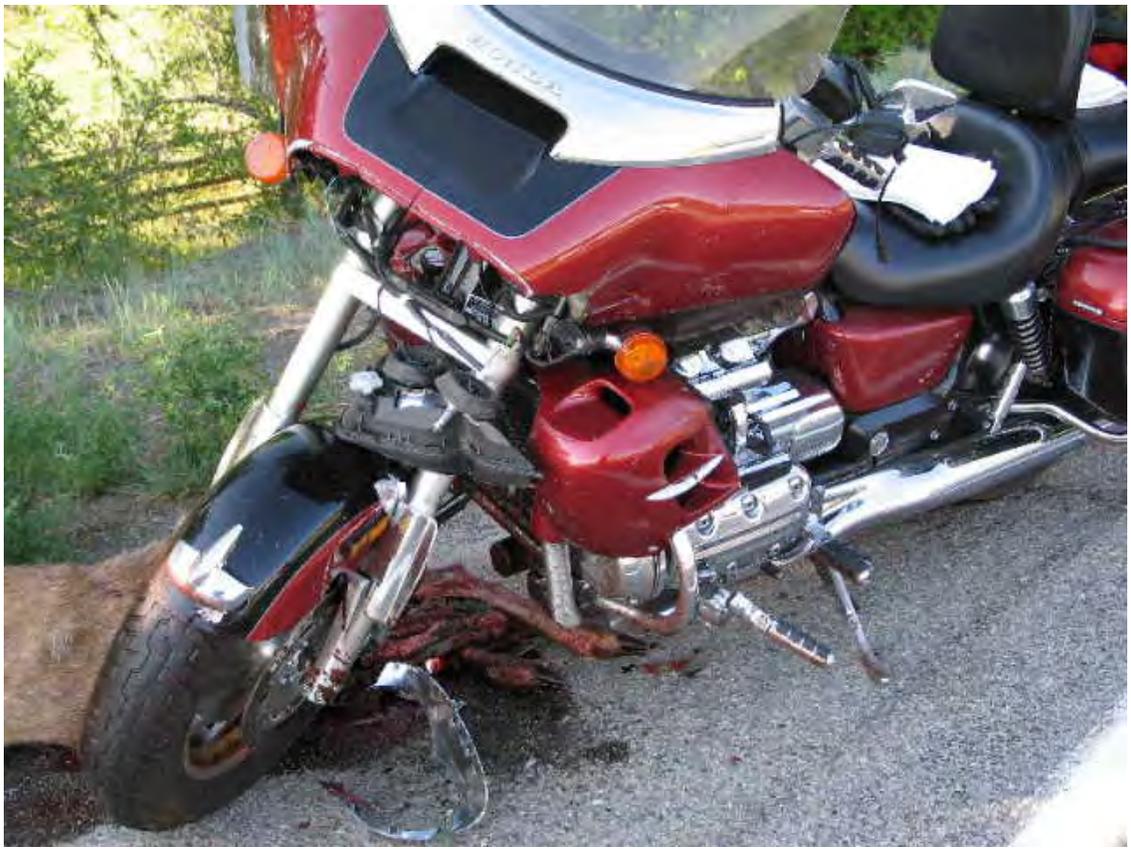
Those of you that are close to me know how serious I am about proper riding technique and the continuing education of the motorcycle rider. IT DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

At this moment our Interstate is at an impound lot in Ouray. There is a LOT of damage, of course I do not yet know at this time if there is any structural damage or if it's just cosmetic and minor mechanical. I have made my claim with our insurance company and should hear from them by end of business Wednesday with the details of getting an estimate and getting the bike back to Denver.

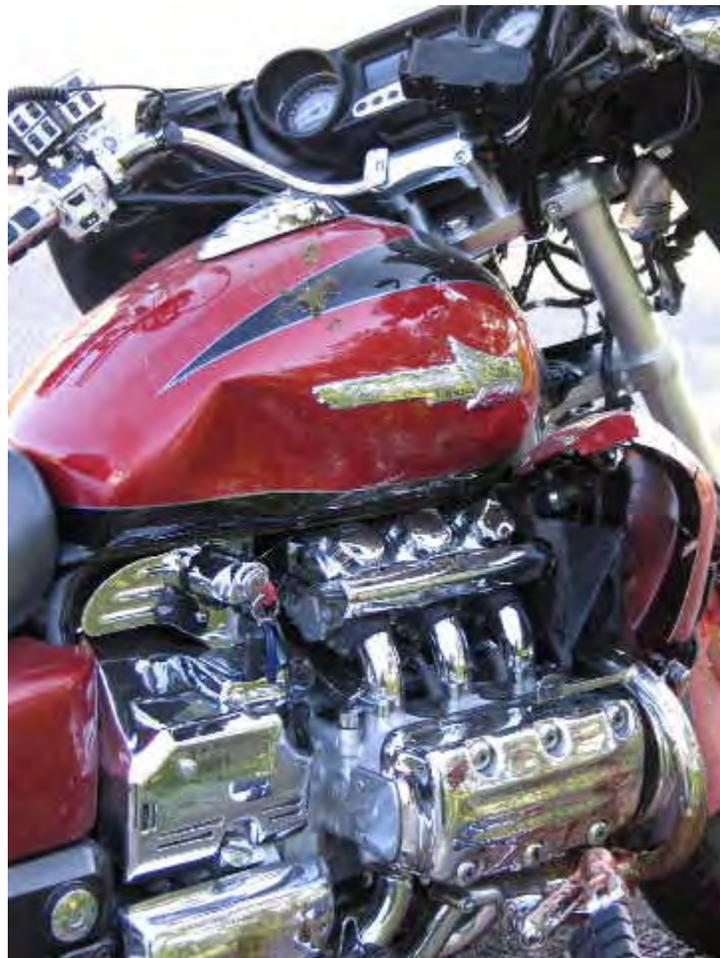
Regardless, it looks like that will put a damper on any trips or riding that Heidi and I will be able to do together. Black Hills is most likely out for us now.













Roy was kind enough to share these pictures and words with us in the interests of rider education.

One of the lessons to be learned here is that those little critters are fast, nearly invisible, and they can even get to the best of us. They're waiting to ambush us...sometimes even when we *most* expect it.

Another lesson, and one that I feel very strongly about, is clearly illustrated here...that is...until the bike is *actually* down, *never quit riding it*. Sure, luck played a part, but make no mistake. This bike stayed up and the rider and pillion walked away simply because the pilot never quit flying it. Good job Roy.

Y'all ride safe...

CUAgain,
Daniel Meyer