

That puny Bullet shot me right in the foot

By Shawn Farrell

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The Boardwalk Bullet — the so-called “Coolest Coaster on the Coast” — spans 3,236 feet of untamed wooden tracks. Only five feet from the water’s edge at the Kemah Boardwalk, Tilman Fertitta’s newest attraction can reach 51 mph when it plummets 94 feet on the first drop. Six cars per tram, capable of 24 riders per train — and you know what I had to say?

“\$4.75? It’s going to cost me \$4.75 to ride this toy?” I blurted at the ticket line.

The cheery clerk pointed at the sign one more time with the freshly-painted “Boardwalk Bullet: \$4.75” written on it. I cringed, but surrendered my credit card.

Had I known it would be this expensive, I would have simply driven extra fast on the way over to Kemah — perhaps jumped a few curves and done doughnuts in the parking lot. After all, two tickets on this nailed-together dead rainforest cost as much as 10 tacos at Jack-in-the-Box. And, what’s worse, it didn’t even look very good from down on the ground. It seemed squatty and congested — not like other wooden rollercoasters where passengers look like they’re riding Seabiscuit through an earthquake.

My fiancée, bored with my hissy fit at the ticket booth, finally snatched the paper passes and dragged me to the ride. Lines were practically nonexistent on a Wednesday, and we were quickly latched into our seats on the Bullet’s last car. My belly full of five-cheese pasta and I wanted the greatest ride for our buck and the last car on wooden coasters has a reputation of being the premium experience: It’s the only car to frequently bounce off the tracks.

I hoped someone would jump out and shoot at us in the beginning of the ride to really set the mood for the Boardwalk Bullet. Instead, we gradually made our way up a giant hill at the pace of a mortally wounded slug.

My fiancée was ecstatic at the stunning view of Kemah from the top; I was still unimpressed. Was this thing really going to be better than the Astroworld’s Texas Cyclone (a mirror image of the legendary Coney Island Cyclone)? Doubtful.

Then the first drop appeared and I ate my words — and some large bugs.

“AAAAAARRRRRRRRRRR GGGGGGGGGGHHHHH!!!!”

Our eyes lodged into the back of our skulls as we landed only four feet from the ground. The tracks seemed to whip in different directions faster than we could see them and I reacted to each turn with a handful of high-pitched profanities. Onlookers likely crowded around the coaster with comments like:

“Geez, I hope a section of the track isn’t missing” and “Someone should wash that girl’s mouth out with soap.”

The lovely lady and I found ourselves “sweating bullets” for 105 seconds. With our hair ruined and my vocal chords in hysterics, our ride stopped and we fell out of the car. Trying to hold back the five-cheese ziti, I mustered a few words for my fiancée: “Do we have another \$4.75?”

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