

Date April 19, 1997
Weather 73', humid, partly to mostly cloudy, none to light breeze from the North.
Meat Used 3.5 pounds of pork baby back ribs.
Source Draeger's
Preparation Cut two long racks into four 10" sections; removed membrane; rubbed with a medium amount of Cal's rub; refrigerated overnight; applied Willy's mild sauce 40 minutes before serving.
Comments My first smoking experience!

Chronology

10:30am Laid a single layer of Kingsford charcoal on the grate, then placed it in the chimney. A single layer of charcoal almost filled the chimney to the top. Also tossed in two partially burned chunks of oak from the burn-in. Placed a double-wide piece of newspaper in the chimney and lit.
10:35am Placed another double-wide piece of newspaper in the chimney and lit.
11:05am Spread charcoal evenly on the grate. Some coals were not totally gray colored.
11:32am Filled the water pan with hot tap water. Placed 4 large oak chunks and 2 medium hickory chunks, soaked overnight in water, directly on hot coals. Place ribs on edge in the rib rack, straight from the refrigerator. Adjusted all vents to 1/3 open.
11:32am 250'
11:50am 230'
12:35pm 220'. Added 12 briquettes and hot tap water.
1:05pm 220'
1:55pm 210'. Added 14 briquettes and hot tap water. Most charcoal added at 12:35pm don't appear to be doing much. Original charcoal appears quite used up. Chunks are not as used up as expected. Adjusted all vents to 3/4 open.
3:00pm 240'. Adjusted all vents to 1/3 open.
3:10pm Added 8 briquettes and hot tap water. Turn over chunks to expose unburned side to hot coals.
4:00pm Removed ribs from rib rack, placed bone-side down on grill. Applied light coat of sauce.
4:25pm Closed all vents.
4:40pm Removed ribs from grill and served.

Results

- Good smokey smell and taste.
- Not spicy or salty enough.
- Not enough sauce.
- Not bad for the first time!

Notes for Next Time

- A double-wide piece of newspaper seems too much for the chimney and doesn't burn quick and hot. Next time, try a single-wide sheet.
- Get longer matches or a butane lighter.
- Get a small watering can.
- Do the first addition of briquettes sooner than 75 minutes into cooking, before the original briquettes begin to peter-out. Then resume adding at 75 minute intervals.
- Does rub "sweat" off the meat when on edge in the rib rack? Maybe try them flat on the grill.
- Apply more rub and sauce.
- Make sure plenty of charcoal is on-hand.
- Use more hickory.