

Mark Wilson

I first heard of the Hoka Hey Challenge at the Easyrider Motorcycle Rally in Chillicothe, Ohio, where I saw Jim and the crew stationed in the campground. What attracted me was the big tepee they had there. While checking out the tepee, Jim proceeded to tell me about the baddest ride ever thought up. A 7,000+-mile, two-lane ride across America and Canada, ending in Homer Alaska. Camping with the bike the whole time was another twist that intrigued me. Two years of waiting and some practice runs using mostly two-lane roads and camping with the bike, prompted me to invent what is now known as the Rider's Rest Hammock. A hammock like no other, it attaches to the bike only – no trees needed. After camping on the ground and waking up to moist or wet camping gear, and knowing that I would have to pack fast and move on in order to make good time on the Hoka Hey, I knew I had to make the hammock a reality. As it turned out, the hammock also kept me out of the rocks and away from the ground crawlers.

Off to Key West I rode with a couple of friends from my home area that were in the Hoka Hey as well. Bill "Batman" Pixler and Michael "Enigma" Mendell shared the road south with me. We pulled out of Key West on June 20, 2010 and started the amazing ride of the Hoka Hey. What a ride, what an adventure! The best ride I have ever experienced in all my riding days. We hit all kinds of weather, from humid 105 degrees, rain, dry 115 degree heat, hail, sleet, snow and bitter cold. But what beautiful landscapes and sites we encountered.

Some of the more memorable parts of the ride were the times spent alongside fellow Hoka Hey riders. And, when Chief Red Cloud signed my windscreen at his house where we stopped for some sandwiches and soup. The most spiritual impact for me was when I was deep into the Challenge and decided to separate myself from all others for my last putt. I pulled into Haines Junction on the edge of the Yukon at 3:30 a.m. after a 19-hour day of riding to sleep. Waking up at 6:30 a.m. and crossing the Yukon on the Alcan Hwy. This place, combined with the days of solitude on your iron horse, makes you reflect on the significance of your own being. When you are riding across the Yukon you don't dare take too many chances; as Chris Callen said in his interview, "There are no do-over's on the Alcan." You can sense this as you putt across the wilderness. One mistake could land you in the bushes unable to help yourself and, with little to no traffic, Mother Nature could just eat you up before anyone could find you. Take that thought and, at the same time, appreciate your surroundings for what God has made and what you are now taking in with all your senses. It makes for one hell of a ride, my friends. Twenty-five hours after pulling out of Haines Junction I found myself pulling into Homer, 11 days after the start at 7:30 a.m., saddened that the ride had come to an end. The whole ride from the time I hit the Alaskan border, I kept thinking to myself, "How am I ever going to fulfill my adventurous spirit after a ride like this?" ...Hoka Hey 2011!!! 3/48 baby

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE RIDE,
~ Mark Wilson, Albright, WV

WISKYBILT CUSTOM SCOOTERS 'N PARTS

