

# May and June 2016 Initial Plans

30 Saturday APR 2016



A week from Monday, May 9, I'm planning to head west on my Yamaha XT250 dual sport motorcycle. MotoDiscovery is putting on an off-road riding school and week long tour through the canyon lands and arches south of Moab, UT, May 14-20. If all goes well, there, I'll head down to the southern end of the Great Divide and meet Stephen Sullivan from Great Divide Dual Sport Adventures, LLC, Cell: 406-250-2039, Web: [www.greatdividemcadv.com](http://www.greatdividemcadv.com), Email: [greatdividedsadv@yahoo.com](mailto:greatdividedsadv@yahoo.com). He'll guide me up the Great Divide. So, unlike last year, I won't be facing a thousand miles + of dirt, untrained and alone. I really want to complete the Divide. I've bicycled down from Whitefish MT to Steamboat Springs, CO twice. So, once we get to northern CO, that goal will be complete. Depending on how well I am doing, I may then head home, or keep going on north (with Stephen's advice) maybe up to Calgary, before turning east.

We'll see. One thing I've learned from previous year's (mis)adventures is to be flexible. Keep an eye on this site and my FindMeSpot to see just how it goes.

08 *Sunday* MAY 2016



It starts tomorrow morning, odometer says 13407. We'll see what it says when I get back home.

Solo road to Moab-MotoDiscovery school and tour thru the canyons and arches, dirt- guide/professional companion/rescuer with me thru NM and CO along the Great Divide, dirt-???

I'm both excited and anxious; it will be a glorious next trek, and/or the close of this era of my wandering, perhaps even a bitter acceptance of my limitations ??? We'll see in a few weeks!

# First day-spitting rain all day

09 Monday MAY 2016



Mississippi crossing at Louisiana MO

West Lafayette IN to New Florence MO. 8am EDT -4pm CDT. 315 miles

The bike ran perfectly, 55mph all day. I was tired and my hands and shoulder were sore by the time I got in.

It spit rain and was in the 50-60 all day. But the bike and gear worked just fine, warm and dry. There was little traffic and Google Maps gps was spot on. Bravo!

One good day. Tomorrow, across MO and into KS

## *Into the west-oh, hell*

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10 Tuesday MAY 2016



Faulty clutch pull aid

The bad, first. After running 55 mph for several hours, when I came into the next town, the bike would NOT shift down into 2nd or 1st. But it did after sitting 10 minutes. This went on all day. Finally, I decided I couldn't go on like this. Get it fixed, or abort.

A bike rider at a gas station pointed me to a Yamaha dealer 30 miles off route. I made it down there and their tech pulled off the clutch aid, and then lub'ed the toe lever. All's well! Bravo. Good to keep going.

The morning started rainy and cool. Through the Ozarks, twist and turn, short steep climbs and descents. No traffic. Once the rain stopped it was a great ride (except for worrying about my gear shifting).

About the time I hit US54 (RAAM route west of Jefferson City) it cleared. The rest of the day was on pretty straight more or less flat 55-65mph. I thumped along at 55 mph and slid onto the paved shoulder when traffic backed up.

When I crossed into KS, the forests turned into prairie. I was getting tired and sore, but the run down to get my bike fixed got the adrenalin pumping, for a while.

In the end, I rode 355 miles and it took 11 hours, including the bike service.

Good to go. All day tomorrow will be across KS, to Garden City.

# *Honestly, I don't WANT to do this.*

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*11* Wednesday MAY 2016

I find I am not excited, I'm anxious and always worried. Even at the BEGINNING of the day I'm tired. I should be excited and eager to go. 10 years ago I would have been.

Maybe I can do this and maybe not. But after a morning of frank thought and listening, I just don't WANT to. Instead of thinking about the road and the wilderness, I'm always thinking about my wife, my kids, and my students.

I'm going home.

You never know how far you can go until you risk going too far. Any further is too far.

This phase of my life is finished.

Now, to get home safely.

13-21 MAY 2016



So, ... , on the way home, I stopped at Thompson Motorsports in Terra Haute, IN, just to look at a VStrom enduro bike. It was WAY too big and heavy and tall for me. But, right next to it was a Honda CB500X. Just the right size. It was love at first sight. Maybe with a more capable bike, my two wheeled trekking is *not* over.

I rode home on my XT250 (thumping along) and talked with Guy Martin, who has both an XT250 and a Honda CB500X. I took his 500X for a ride, and the passion was consummated – quick, stable, powerful, smooth.

So I've gone back to Terra Haute and traded my XT 250 thumper for a smooth, powerful bike. Granted, it has twice the engine and hp, and is 100 lb heavier. But, it is a touring machine. Now, to outfit it for endure riding – gps mount, Garmin Montana gps, skid plate, engine guard, rack, cases, hand guards, heated grips, throttle lock, big windscreen, Corbin seat. What else do I want, ... ?

Getting her properly outfitted and getting to know her is going to take the rest of the summer. Its too bad Jean hates her so much. But, the bigger the bike, the more Jean worries.

The adventure continues – just with a different mount and look.