

Memorable Challenge Experiences



by Craig O. Olsen (Platinum Tire Level Winner)

2016 marked the 7th year of the IAMC Challenge. I have enjoyed the IAMC Challenge each year. It has been a good incentive for me to get out riding, and it has taken me to many places in Idaho and surrounding states that I might otherwise never have visited. It has also been the means through which I have met and ridden with many members of our club, both new and old.

I have had the good fortune of being a platinum tire level winner for five of those seven years, including the last four years in a row. Typically, I have been a procrastinator to getting my challenge sites completed early in the year. In 2010 I achieved the bronze tire level with 11 sites, the last of which I obtained on December 21, 2010, on a solo ride to Mayfield, site #-10 that year. In 2012 I achieved silver tire level with 21 sites. Unfortunately, I waited too long to get into central Idaho and was blocked out by all the fires that year. In most of the other years (2011 and 2013-2015) I finished late, obtaining my last sites well into October or November and sometimes being impeded by snow.

The year of 2016 was different. I started my challenge quest on May 4 and completed my last challenge site on July 7, and none too early as you will find out. Some of the years have had themes to the selection of the challenge sites — "spooky and high" (ghost towns and mountain lookouts for 2012), historic places (mostly for 2013), forest lookouts and water (2014), and county courthouses with optional individual county off-road sites (2015) — while other years the sites were grouped by their distance from Boise (2011). The theme for this year (2016) was small Idaho towns. Forty of Idaho's small towns were picked and listed alphabetically. The average population for these 40 towns from the 2010 census was 253 with a low of 16 (Warren) and a high of 1,189 (Cataldo).



Chattanooga Hot Springs located about 1 mile northeast of Atlanta on the Middle Fork of the Boise River.

The moss covered Atlanta Hot Springs located next to East Power Plant Road about 1/4 mile southeast of Chattanooga Hot Springs.

I enjoyed visiting each of these unique communities, many for the first time, particularly those in northern Idaho; but there were a few of the eastern Idaho ones that were also new to me (Acequia, Atomic City, Castleford, Rockland and Eden). On May 4th I began my 2016 Challenge quest with Dennis Hill (AKA Dennis66) on a ride to Atlanta. We visited the Chattanooga Hot Springs, which was very inviting. The same could not be said about the mossy Atlanta Hot Springs.



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Sheffy's Motel in Avery, site #5.

In mid-June I made an approximate 1,500 mile trip to visit all the northern Idaho Challenge sites. I enjoyed revisiting Avery, which I have ridden through several times on various dual sport trips and stayed there at Sheffy's Motel in 2009 while riding the Idaho Centennial Trail. I always enjoy riding north on NF Road 225 from Avery to Wallace along Slate Creek through the several old railroad tunnels.



One of several old railroad tunnels along NF Road 225 between Avery and Wallace.



Post Office in Murray, site #27.

Totem poles across street from the post office.

quaint in Idaho, if not the entire USA, and seems to fit right in with the totem poles located diagonally across the street.

The post office at Murray has to be one of the most



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Town sign in Winchester, site #39.

Winchester has one of the more unusual, if not somewhat intimidating, town signs you will find anywhere depending where you stand on second amendment rights. The roof of the visitor's center in Winchester is taken over with a heavy growth of moss.



Winchester visitor's center with moss covered roof.



My last 2016 Challenge site was Dingle located in the southeastern corner of the state. Arden Hill (AKA AGHill) and I visited there July 7th on our way to ride the northern portion of the Utah Back Country Discovery Route from Garden City, Utah, to Moab, Utah. Garden City is about 21 miles southwest of Dingle. In Moab we picked up the western portion of the Trans-America Trail on our way to Port Orford, Oregon.

Fire station in Dingle, site #14, with Arden Hill.

Six days after visiting Dingle while riding a remote section of the Trans-America Trail in Nevada between Eureka and Battle Mountain, I had a ride-ending accident. Heading up a heavily rutted two-track jeep trail, my front wheel became trapped in a deep, narrow rut.

I could feel my Tiger 800 starting to lean to the right, out of which I could not steer. Fearing that the front end would dive and the lean become precipitous if I braked, I shifted all my weight to the left peg while standing and opened the throttle slightly to pull the front end up out of the rut so that I could control the bike. I had nearly cleared the rut when the front wheel suddenly washed, and the bike went down to the right.

Unfortunately, I had my right foot slightly cocked outwards, and the toe of my right riding boot caught the side of the rut as I was going down, twisting it backwards resulting in a spiral fracture of the distal tibia and fibula. I instantly knew my leg was broken (both heard and felt it snap), and remember that my last thought before hitting the ground was "please don't land on your right leg." Luckily I didn't, but the result is shown in the photo to the right with both knees pointing straight forward and the right foot pointing nearly 90 degrees to the right.



Deviation of my lower right leg at the crash site.



Spiral fracture of my right tibia and fibula.

The extraction to the Northeastern Regional Hospital in Elko (the nearest hospital) took several hours due to the remoteness of the area and difficulty for the rescue agencies to get into the area of the accident. Much to my benefit, my riding boot acted as a perfect splint, and I had very little discomfort during the long wait and approximately 95 mile ambulance ride over rough roads to the hospital. The X-rays confirmed my suspicions of both the location and nature of the fracture. They splinted my right leg in the emergency room and released me to travel back to Boise, which I did the following morning. Six days later I underwent open reduction and internal fixation of the fracture with a plate and eight screws at St. Luke's Regional Medical Center in Boise.

After 2 1/2 months of healing and intense rehab, I was back to walking, and after three months, I was back to riding, albeit a little more cautiously. Five months after the accident, I am hiking several miles daily and back to skiing vigorously. I am



Surgical reduction of the fracture.

looking forward to the 2017 IAMC Challenge and continuing my dual-sport riding.

My Experience with the 2016 Challenge



by Arden Hill (Gold Tire Level Winner)

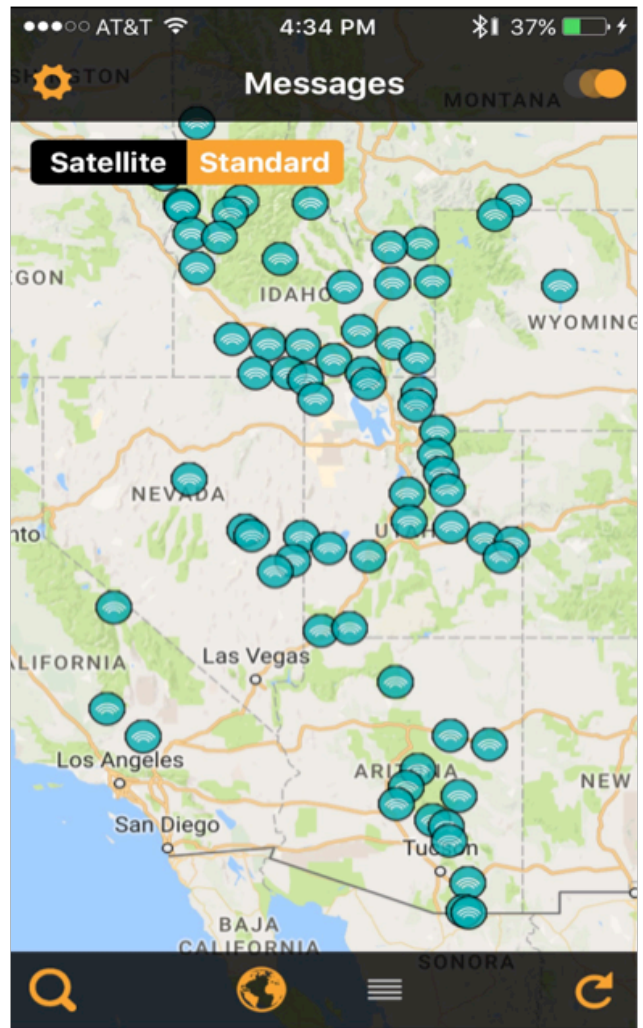
Let me start this article with a little introduction. I started adventure riding in the spring of 2015 with the purchase of a 2014 XR650L. IAMC was found with an on line search, and I joined to find riding buddies.

My first IAMC ride was when Bob Sims (AKA Honda Bob) posted a single-track ride in the Owyhees. Not knowing what I was in for, I contacted Bob, and he invited me to go with him. I showed up with low cut boots, Levis and a Fox coat purchased at a garage sale. Bob was very kind, and we had a wonderful day with me trying to keep up with his KTM 500exc on difficult single track. He was patient and the education began. I found other IAMC rides and have met so many great people on various rides.

SPOT messages of some of the many places I visited while riding in 2016.

With retirement 2016 was a time to catch up on lost time, covering over 17,500 miles of dirt and twisted roads this past year. So many great friends have been made while eating dirt.

IAMC challenge rides started in May with Cambridge, Lowman, Ola and Placerville. I had never been on the Banks cutoff road down the grade from Ola. It’s quite a drop the last two miles. Placerville cemetery was very interesting with the age of the graves. The Idaho Gold story was evident everywhere from Featherville to Rocky Bar to Idaho City to Placerville with old dredges and piles of rocks everywhere.



Checking in at Almo, challenge site #-2.

A second challenge site ride was a two-day marathon with Craig Olsen (AKA coolsen). We covered 1,000 miles and picked up many of the Southern Idaho towns. The cutoff between Sublett and Rockland was abandoned after rain

turned the road into a clay mess, and my Tourance 90/10 tires gave up the ghost with a few spills. We ended up turning around just a mile from the summit. My favorite part was City of Rocks by Almo, which was part of the California trail.

Doug Patchin (AKA Shutterman) and I hit four other southern Idaho sites on the way to Promontory Point in northern Utah with a few nights of enjoyable camping. We counted 9 rattlers on the old Transcontinental Railway Trail through northern Utah in middle May. At 6:30am while camping by Stone Reservoir, we looked at the radar summary and realized we were going to get drenched in less than 20 minutes. Camp was broken, bikes were loaded, and we made it to Mollys Cafe in Snowville just before the torrential rain hit. It lasted through breakfast, and we were back on the road again. I became cold on the way home and hit Magic Hot Springs for a warm up — a \$10 indulgence for a private tub.

On another trip, "coolsen" hit his last IAMC challenge site (Dingle) on the way to an eighteen-day, 1,800-mile ride of the Utah BDR and TAT from Moab, UT, to Port Orford, OR. It was July with 102 temps in southern Utah. The trail had lots of sand, washes and ruts with several penalty points in Nevada ending the ride for "coolsen" with a broken leg. Was I ever glad for the SPOT.



EMTs helping "coolsen" into their transport.

At the end of summer, I had another great ride getting to Leadore the hard way. There was a respectable turnout to *The Heart of Idaho Rally* sponsored by Happy Trails with riders from North Carolina to Oregon. I had the pleasure of riding with a couple that had recently moved from California. She had been riding since she could walk, and I'm afraid this pretty little elementary school teacher that stood a proud 5'4" out rode us all on her Yamaha TT.

One memorable part of this trip was following Ed Torrey (AKA Special Ed) up the west slope of Big Windy. We had taken a wrong right turn, and the road had become a bad ATV trail. His F800GSA was leading and all of a sudden, there was no "Special Ed" in front of me. I couldn't figure out what had happened until looking over my shoulder, I saw him still on his bike lying on a huge sagebrush. A very large rock had catapulted him and his bike off the trail in a specular manner. A few laughs later he was up and in the lead again. We were all relieved to hit the top of Big Windy.



*Thane Eddington resting
at the top of Big Windy.*

My favorite and final solo trip was in northern Idaho and the Idaho BDR south of Orofino. I picked up Winchester and Peck on the way up following the old road out of White Bird and picked up Weippe on the way to catch the Idaho BDR south. The French Creek Road (NF 246) was outstanding, topped off with a night in the old cabins at Burgdorf Hot Springs. Warren and Yellowpine were next along the Idaho BDR. So much wilderness and so little time. A great way home from Yellowpine is NF 674 along the South Fork Salmon River to Warm Lake to avoid all the ruts and dust.

IT'S BEEN A GREAT RIDING SEASON.

"AG HILL", living in Emmett, ID.
Let's ride.

Ride for the Gold



by Chuck Scheer (Gold Tire Level Winner)

"You can't always get what you want
But if you try sometimes well you just might find
You get what you need" - Richards & Jagger

It's encouraging to observe how the Idaho Adventure Motorcycle Club has managed to stay alive and become reinvigorated with renewed efforts of long-time dedicated members and new talented members ready to help make motoidaho a success. There's a need for a club like ours to encourage and educate dual sport riders and to serve as an example for adventure riders everywhere. Here is another chapter in my story of riding opportunities and incentives provided by the Idaho Adventure Motorcycle Club since my first Challenge season in 2010.

The 2016 season included a few sites I've already visited and some I've claimed in previous challenges but also offered were enough unseen places and unclaimed sites to make it interesting. Even the familiar ones were fun to revisit, many, I have to accept, I'll probably not see again.

The knowledgeable well traveled members that annually complete the task of selecting, identifying, assembling and presenting the Challenge sites face an increasingly difficult task as many of the most select locations are collected and locked in the collective memories of the challengers. To complete the annual Challenge is demanding even when many sites are not as difficult as some have been in past years. Challengers all know the considerable amount of time involved, time for the passion of adventure riding that eats into work, family, and other pursuits and commitments. Many of us ride "on the cheap" camping and eating "rough" to be able to reach distant often remote destinations where luxurious accommodations aren't available even if we could afford them. I've been to spectacular places, seen really amazing historical and cultural challenge sites, that I had no idea even existed before I joined the IAMC and began riding the challenges. I've met some great folks along the way, made some great friends in fellow club members and have always tried to be a good ambassador for our club and dual sporting.

Here is a short list of some of my 2016 favorites with photos.

My first site visit was on an early spring day with a lunch ride to the newly remodeled Ola Inn where I met the owners who were remodeling the worn out and derelict structure. They did a terrific job and have since flipped the Inn and its attached residence to the present owner who is maintaining the quality and ambiance. If you didn't make it to site #28 I would highly recommend it.

Ola Inn in Ola, site #-28.



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Inside Ola Inn.

Camping at City of Rocks National Reserve.

In late June I rode a loop through southeastern Idaho to spend a night's campout at City of Rocks State Park hosted by the BMW Club of Idaho. Along the eastbound leg of the route to Magic Valley, I passed through 1,000 Springs and under Balanced Rock on my way to Castleford. I appreciate murals of local subjects the mural there is is a good one.



Murals in Casstleford, site #-10.

After the City of Rocks campout I rode southeast as far as Snowville, Utah, catching more sites along the way finally resting for the night in Montpelier, Idaho. I had missed the ghost town of Chesterfield, a site from a previous Challenge so I extended the ride from Bancroft and it did not disappoint. It is preserved very well considering the winter conditions that exist there. Don't miss the ride from Freedom, Wyoming to Soda Springs via Gray's Lake National Wildlife Refuge on Idaho State Highway 34.

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Amusement Hall in Chesterfield, Idaho.



Butterfield Home located in Chesterfield, Idaho.

In early August I rode the "The Nez" a formidable 5 day ride and campout sponsored by the BMW Club of Idaho. Each year a different venue is planned, and 2016 took us to Clark Canyon Reservoir for the first night out so I took

advantage of the route and scored several motoidaho Challenge sites along the way. Second day of the Nez included a side trip to Bannack City, Montana where I enjoyed the sights of the State Park. I highly recommend a day there. It is a remarkably well preserved mining town from the civil war era that was once the Capital of Montana Territory,



Bar inside saloon at Bannack, Montana.

Combination Masonic Lodge and school built in 1874 (Bannack, Montana).

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In 1864 when the First Legislative Session was held here, Bannack was named the County Seat of Beaverhead County. In 1875 this impressive brick building was built as the first Beaverhead County Courthouse, but by 1881 the gold rush to Montana was history. Stock raising and agriculture were displacing mining as the main industries in Beaverhead County. Bannack was evolving into a humdrum settlement. Dillon, twenty-five miles to the east, on the other hand, was emerging as a bustling metropolis of about 800 people. The Utah and Northern Railroad had established a terminus in Dillon and it was evolving into a flourishing freighting center.

The citizens of Bannack fought to keep the county seat, but in February of 1881 the Territorial Legislature called for a special election in Beaverhead County to vote on moving the county seat to Dillon. After a venomous battle, Bannack lost the bid and the county seat was moved to Dillon.

The large brick building remained empty until about 1890 when it was purchased by Dr. John Christian Meade for \$1,250. Dr. Meade remodeled and turned the building into a plush hotel that operated on and off until the 1940's.

Source: <http://bannack.org/photo-tour>

In early September I made a loop through spectacular eastern Idaho as far as Island Park, Tetonia, Driggs and Swan Valley picking up sites along the way. In mid-September a ride following the South Fork Salmon River road led to Yellowpine for cheeseburger lunch and challenge site photo then over Lick Creek Summit and on to highway 55 and home.



South Fork
Salmon
River



Sign welcoming you to Yellow Pine, site #-40.

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September ended with a last ditch effort to see central Idaho. I found more local art in Weippe and beautiful river scenes along the Clearwater where I would be steelhead fishing in another month.



Murals in Weippe, site #-38.



Scene along the Clearwater River.

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Those sites north of Lewiston that would make my efforts turn platinum were not to be as other commitments and changing weather curtailed my riding. Now it's that time of year again when we must consider the possibility of another Challenge, hopefully the 2017 Challenge. I'm looking forward to following yet another quest having gotten so much from previous challenges. I'll not be able to resist the adventures and rewards of another.

Thanks again for the opportunity to ride with a purpose.

There's No Right Or Wrong Way To Be A Motorcyclist

by Sean MacDonald

Note: This article first appeared in *Lanesplitter* on February 5, 2016, and is reprinted here with the consent of the author and by permission of Patrick George, the *Jalopnik* Editor-in-Chief. The original article appeared at this site:

<http://lanesplitter.jalopnik.com/theres-no-right-or-wrong-way-to-be-a-motorcyclist-1756061433>



Motorcycles are one of the best things to ever happen to me. They've brought more fun, passion, people, interest, experiences, and growth into my life than a lot of things, and I bet many of you would say the same. But they're worth different amounts to different people—and it's time to stop letting that divide us.

The motorcycle community can be one of the most welcoming, encouraging, and helpful I've ever been a part of. But I also see, especially now that *Lanesplitter* has so

many diverse commenters, a couple of big ways we allow motorcycles to segregate us. Too often, riders have the attitude that their version of motorcycling is the best and most right version, and anyone who chooses a different version or chooses a different type or level of gear is wrong or bad.

Obviously, I don't mean that *EVERY* version is right. If you're egregiously breaking the law or endangering people, you're doing it wrong. You're not a motorcyclist then, you're just an asshole on a bike. We're talking about the different styles of riding people do that stay relatively close to inside the bounds of okay. I see two big problems with current bike culture: the first is people bashing each other over not wearing enough gear, or getting into arguments about what type or quality of gear should be used. The \$1000 helmet dudes talking down to the \$150 helmet dudes, or the \$150 helmet dudes making fun of guys who want to spend money on the latest and greatest—or worse, complaining that we cover all of them. The second problem is this ethos: "My version of motorcycling is the right version, and everything else is dumb and invalid and prob shouldn't even be covered." It's a far more divided world than the world of cars, if you can believe it.

I think people married to those ideas are thinking of things the wrong way. And I'm living proof of why they're wrong.

I bought my first motorcycle roughly 10 years ago. It was a beautiful 1976 Yamaha XS650 in cherry red, complete with clubmans. To this day, it still may be one of the prettiest things I've ever seen. It also never ran. Ever.

My second bike was a 1975 Honda CB750. I too was a looker, and for \$2,000 it actually ran sometimes. I spent another \$100 on a Biltwell open face, \$150 on a jacket on Craigslist, and \$60 on some Doc Martens at the flea market. At the time I was still teaching and new I loved riding around Orange County, but I didn't have much money and I loved lots of other things too. Unfortunately, its unreliable nature kept me from any long rides or road trips.



After that, I moved in with a guy who worked in the industry and, after several months of seeing him pull away every morning on different bikes while mine sat in the garage, I decided to pull the trigger on a brand new Triumph Bonneville. Out the door, it was like \$7,500 but my payments were cheap and I still had the gear I'd bought from the Honda.



Over the next few years, I spent more money on customizing the bike and started spending way more time on it. I commuted to and from work (because what middle school student isn't going to worship the young teacher who pulls up on his motorcycle?), participated in weekend rides with the local Triumph crew, and went on several long trips. Turned out, this whole motorcycle thing fit well.

I met Wes Siler a year or two later, and started helping out with *Hell For Leather* after I learned how nice it was to wear gear that could actually save my hide. As my role in the early HFL days increased, so did my exposure to more bikes. Wes put me on my first sportbike (BMW S1000RR), first adventure bike (Triumph Tiger 800), and first dirtbike (Yamaha WR250.)

Before I met Wes, I thought the sportbike scene was about being a squid or or tryhard, thought all dirtbike guys were bros who survived off Monster tall cans, and thought all ADV guys just hung out at Starbucks.

Everyone else had the wrong version of motorcycling except me, because I felt cool and people hired me for photoshoots and girls thought it made me cute. I was enjoying riding motorcycles the right way and had no desire to talk to other riders about their wrong versions, let alone think about trying it myself.

The thing is, the more I experienced those other versions of motorcycling, the more I fell in love with them. All of them. There's nothing like dragging a knee around a race track on a sportbike. Except maybe hitting a jump on a dirtbike. Or riding a single track ridge line on a dual sport. Or spending a week on the road with buddies exploring new places. Or riding

300 horsepower jet skis or blasting a side by side through the dunes.



And, as my appreciation for different kinds of motorcycles grew, so did my appreciation for all the stuff that makes the experience of motorcycles better. I was saving my money for better helmets or camping gear that would fit on a bike or the perfect summer gloves. I lusted after things like an Aerostich and tailored race leathers *in addition to* my cool new denim vest and hipster-ass Simpson helmet.

Now I work in motorcycling full time, and I joke that I can't wait to leave and get a real job some day so I can afford all of the motorcycles I want to own. But motorcycles were originally only worth about \$2,500 of my resources, that grew quickly to \$10,000 or so. Now, that number is much higher, because I've learned not only that I love them, but that it's also a huge part of my life (whether for work or not).

But I think I only got here because the guys around me didn't spend all of their time telling me I was doing it wrong, and helped teach me that learning about and trying new things was cool. I wasn't ATGATT-shamed, I was given opportunities to try better gear. I wasn't chastised (too much) for being a silly hipster, I was invited to ride some random old dual sport or sportbike.



Here's something I try to keep something in mind: no matter how much motorcycling is worth to you or what kind of motorcycling you love, I'm certainly happy you're in the club—and the moto community at large should be too. Because that's how you go from being a middle school teacher/model/hipster to a motorcycle journalist/lover of all things with engines/hipster.

If your buddy wants to get into motorcycling, but refuses to be ATGATT or wants a '70s Honda CB or Sportster 883 or something you think is silly or stupid, try and guide

them but don't shame them (excessively). I don't love wearing open faces much anymore unless it's for a photoshoot, but if you do I'd love to tell you about how Scorpion has a new open face coming out that looks and wears better than any other I've worn.

Want a \$150 helmet or a cheap ADV jacket? I have recommendations. Want to spend ten times that? I have something for you too.

I don't really love cruisers completely either, but I think it's cool if you do and would love to talk about how the Kawasaki Vulcan S is actually an awesome option for newer riders. I even think the new Harley-Davidson Low Rider S looks rocking.

And, if you really do want to start on an old Honda Cafe Racer, I'd love to tell you about my experiences with them and then give you the number for a guy I know who does decent rebuilds.

The fact is, every level of motorcycling should be appreciated. We might not have the same version of motorcycling or think it's worth the same amount, but we should all be glad you're here and want to help you improve your version of riding.

