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Recap of the 2013 IAMC Challenge

by Craig O. Olsen



On December 31, 2013, we came to the close of our fourth annual IAMC Challenge. This past year the Challenge sites comprised mostly dual-sport friendly destinations located mainly in Idaho with a few scattered in Montana, Utah and Oregon near to Idaho.

Twenty-two of our club members participated in visiting one or more of the 2013 Challenge sites. The four club members who made the bronze tire level (10-19 sites visited) are Gordon White, Ronald Schinnerer, Eric Exline and James Wilson. Another four reached the silver tire level (20-29 sites visited) and include Michael Hardy, Kevin Peter, Don Nesbitt and Ron Hoppins. The two club members who attained the gold tire level (30-39 sites visited) are Gary Umland and Ed Torrey. Of the five club members who achieved platinum tire level (40-45 sites visited), four visited all 45 sites. The five platinum tire level winners are Wayne Smith, John Dye, Rick Skinner, Chuck Scheer and Craig Olsen.

We recognize all who participated in visiting last year's Challenge sites. It should be noted that this is Rick Skinner's third year in a row at achieving the platinum tire level, and the second year for Craig Olsen and Chuck Scheer, both of whom were 2011 platinum tire level winners. This is the first platinum tire level win for Wayne Smith and John Dye. Ed Torrey is also a prior platinum tire level winner, having achieved that in 2011. The majority of this newsletter is devoted to highlighting the 2013 Challenge journey for the platinum and gold tire level winners.



IAMC 2013 Challenge: IN THE MIRROR

by Wayne Smith

2013 was a great year to have ridden the IAMC Challenge. The sites selected for the Challenge varied in difficulty from very easy to challenging, but all of them were fun and I was able to visit all of the sites for 2013. After looking over the list of sites for the coming year, I can't wait to get started on the 2014 Challenge.

In preparation for the 2013 Challenge, I went over the list of sites as well as the map and gpx file. I matched the sites on the list with the map and made sure that all sites were accounted for. Last year, there was one site on the list that was not on the map so it does help to double check the sites. I also opened the gpx file of sites in Google Earth so I could see the sites and plan my routes. When I was satisfied that I knew how I would approach each site and link them together if I was doing multiple sites, I created a route in Garmin Basecamp on the computer and transferred this information to my GPS unit that I carried on the bike. I still carried paper maps just in case.



One of my favorite sites of the year was City of Rocks National Reserve. The site is unique because of the rock formations and riding in the surrounding area was beautiful. The ride into the City of Rocks on a Sunday morning was fantastic. There were not many people on the road and the scenery was great. The weather was nice but a little brisk that morning. I was glad that I rode several of the sites in this area early in the year when the temperatures were pleasant.

A few weeks after that ride, my wife JoAnn wanted to take a ride. So with the promise of lunch in

After seeing the list of sites for the 2013 season I knew that I would be burning up some highway miles to get to many of them, so I traded my road bike for a BMW 1200GS that I could use for both on and off highway. Somehow I convinced my wife that this would be a much better touring bike than the R1100RT that we had. After riding the new GS for 7,000 miles, it is a great bike both on the highway and off road. The 800GS that I rode in the 2012 Challenge didn't get as much use in 2013, but I rode it to many of the more difficult sites.





McCall, she agreed to a ride into Burgdorf. I have ridden thousands of miles with her on the back but rarely off pavement by choice, so this short ride would give me an idea of how the bike would act with a passenger on a good gravel road. The ride went very well, and she ended up visiting six more sites with me over the summer and earning the title of Princess Pillion.



In early July I decided to do an overnight trip to the Steens Mountains and pick up the four sites in that area. After visiting Fields, I made it to the locked gate on the road into Riddle Brothers Ranch, and then started up the Steens Mountain Loop road towards Keiger Gorge Overlook. After riding several miles up the road, I discovered to my surprise that the gate across the road was locked. The only thing to do was backtrack and ride to the north entry to the Steens Mountain Loop near Frenchglen to see if that road was open. A BLM information board said that south road was being repaired after it had washed out but the road was open to Keiger Gorge Overlook from the north. I started up that road toward the site and camped at Fish Lake that night. The next morning was cold at an elevation of 7400 feet but

warmed quickly. I rode the short distance to Keiger Gorge Lookout and spent some extra time to take in the extraordinary view. On the ride out I planned to get gas in Frenchglen, but the store was closed on Sunday. With all the backtracking I was seriously low on fuel, and the nearest gas was in Burns. I was able to find gas at an RV park on the way to Burns before I completely ran out. Lesson learned - expect the unexpected and carry extra fuel.



The last big trip of the year was a two night trip to Southeast Idaho and ending up at Big Hole Battlefield in Montana before returning home. The weather on this trip was a lot more varied than I expected. It was very hot on the ride to Paris Tabernacle and Big Hill sites. Later that day on the ride to Caribou City a heavy thunderstorm hit. The good gravel roads changed to soft and muddy but stayed the pretty good shape. After visiting Caribou City the entire ride to Alpine, Wyoming was in heavy rain. The same scenario happened the next afternoon going over Lemhi Pass all the way to Dillon, Montana. Lesson learned - invest in good rain gear and waterproof luggage and remember to zip all of the zippers on your jacket.

Thinking back over the season, I tried to keep a few things in mind during the ride: (1) Expect the unexpected. (2) Carry tools and supplies for emergency tire repairs. (3) Be prepared for the changing weather. I knew that I would be uncomfortable at times during my adventures. Keeping a positive attitude is tough when things go bad. It's not an adventure until the unexpected happens.

I would like to thank everyone who was involved in setting up the 2013 Challenge in 2013. I can't wait for the 2014 season to get started.



2013 Challenge... Cruising to some cool places

by Rick Skinner

Because the 2013 Challenge focused on sites for bigger bikes and lots of historical places, I got to ride my S10 to nearly all the sites and spend lots of time on Tarmac... that's not a bad thing, just different than we've been used to with the past Challenges. I personally enjoyed the Indian battlefield sites and learning more about the Nez Perce war... some impressive stuff there. While visiting the big Hole battlefield, I got to see a traveling group of Nez Perce put on a presentation about their history, the war and details about the Big Hole battle that you don't get in the brochure.



I also really enjoyed the Steens Mountain area, because I had just joined the club the year they were last part of the challenge and missed them then. That country is some of the best I've ever ridden and I will definitely be returning to play on the Alvord Playa and admire the Gorges of Steens Mountain.





Capturing all 45 challenge sites in a year is a big commitment. It means you are going to miss some family events. It means you are going to give up some other recreation. It means you are going to have a sore butt at times. It means your wife will be upset at you once in a while. But if you are committed to doing it, it can be very satisfying as you visit them all and reflect on how many cool things you've seen this year. Like the night I stayed at my Dads Home and admired the Tetons while I was traveling between Camas Battlefield and Caribou City... nice place to spend the night.



2013 was my 3rd year in a row of visiting all 45 of the Challenge sites. I hope it's not may last. But I recognize that as my grandkids get older, they need more of my time... priorities change... but, doing the challenges has been worth the cost in my eyes. I have the memories of the vistas, the roads and places that the challenge has given me. It has motivated me to see more of Idaho and surrounding area than I ever would have otherwise. Good riding... Rick (Silverspurs)





My Thoughts on the 2013 IAMC Challenge

by John Dye

2013 was my first year to participate in the IAMC Challenge. I have been with the club from very near its inception, but following graduate school, I left Boise in the winter of 2009/2010 prior to the beginning of the first Challenge. I remember talking to Ed Hiatt when he was working on the idea of a club activity that combined the fun of geocaching with riding, and I thought it was a stellar idea. Once I finally had the opportunity to participate, I was all in.



I started 2013 with a brand new out-of-the box Triumph Tiger 800XC. For years I had been doing my adventure riding on my trusty 2002 Suzuki DRZ-400E that I modded for adventure riding. For years I knew I needed something more capable at the higher speeds and comfortable for longer rides, and the Tiger fit the bill. It just so happened the 2013 Challenge was perfectly suited for a bike of this size.



The Tiger before and after farkling

After looking at all of the challenge sites for 2013, my goal was to ride the Tiger to all of them, and I found that was reasonable. The real challenge for me was learning to deal with a hefty bike, very nearly 550-600 lbs loaded with accessories and gear, after coming off of years riding a 300 lb dirtbike. Instead of floating through sand and gravel, it plowed; it followed every rut, and seemed to want to tip over every time I got below 10 MPH, but with a little work on my part and new front tire, I found the Tiger to be a top-notch steed.

I believe I did this challenge as intended. I broke it up in to several larger rides that each had the goal of hitting several challenge sites in one shot. Some were single day outings and others trips were as long as 5 days.

I started by visiting a number of the local sites, including Bonneville Point and Swan Falls dam. The return from Swan Falls was via 2-track and single track in the desert that allowed me to get my first feel for this bike on something more technical than Level 1 Gravel.



First real dirt for the Tiger, two track east of Swan Falls Dam



The next ride tested me a bit more. It was an all-day ride with a plan to hit Barber Flat Cabin, the Pioneer Cemetery in ID City and finally Thorn Creek Butte Lookout. I started by headed up Arrowrock Reservoir and cutting over FR 376 down into Baber Flat. FR376 turned out to be a real workout, since it was a steep, winding and rutted and had some nice whoops from the drainage diversion humps. After hitting Barber Flat, I rode into ID City, got lunch, gassed up and hit the Pioneer Cemetery. I then proceeded up to Thorn Creek Butte, which was a nice ride, and only technical for the last ¼ mile. The views from the lookout were outstanding, and the balsam root was out in force on the way down from the lookout.



Some great views from Thorn Creek Butte Lookout



Balsm root in full bloom on Bald Mountain Road, coming down from Thorn Creek Butte



Absolutely perfect day at Sage Hen Meadows

My next outing was an overnighter just a couple of days later up towards Hell's Canyon. I started out visiting Paddy Flat Guard Station (since I'd missed it on my previous ride up near Cascade), and then I headed north on up toward Sawpit Saddle. I ended up setting camp at Iron Phone Junction and then took my unloaded bike down into Sawpit.

The next several locations were done in two trips with mostly highway miles. These included the Old Fort Boise Marker, the Rock Island RR Crossing, Utter Disaster Marker, Shoofly Oolite and Three Island Crossing State Park. I didn't expect much adventure with these, but leaving home without a tube and tire tools left me stranded in Glenn's Ferry after slicing my tire on something sharp at Three Island Crossing. After getting a new IRC TR8 thrown on, I was back in business, and a week later I hit Boiling Springs, the FAA Radar Site, and Sage Hen Reservoir. Oh what a difference a good knobby made with the Tiger. This trip also served an opportunity to load the bike down a bit with some of my camping gear and see how it rode in preparation for my next outing.

Camp at Iron Phone Junction near Hells Canyon (this was my first time camping off the Tiger)





View into Hells Canyon from Sawpit Saddle Overlook

The next morning I packed up and headed for Pittsburg Landing. The roads from Iron Phone Junction down to Pittsburg were amazing and so were the views.

Looking down into Pittsburg Landing



On the boat ramp at Pittsburg Landing, not a lot going on this morning.

After visiting Pittsburg Landing, I headed up to the Whitebird Battlefield. The coordinates were off and I ended up heading up the old very twisty highway on the east side of Whitebird, but it was definitely a fun detour. From Whitebird I headed south to Riggins, then up the Salmon River to the Wind River Bridge. While heading up the Salmon, I was being paced by a jet boat. I would stop and take pictures as they went by, then have fun trying to catch them. They were carrying the mail! (I'm not sure which one of us had the better ride.)



Jet boat flying up the Salmon River

After logging the Wind River Pack Bridge, I backtracked a bit, and headed up French Creek toward Burgdorf Hot Springs. Lucky for me the road was just recently free of snow, and I was able to make it over the top to Burgdorf. Apparently a few days before it was still impassible. By this point I was pretty tired, and decided to just hot-foot it back home, but the springs were awfully tempting.



The pool at Burgdorf was awfully tempting.

The next leg of the Challenge had me hitting 10 different sites on a single winding trip as I returned from Glacier National Park and visiting family up in MT.

I started from the north and hit the Bighole Battlefield and the Bannack Ghost Town, which I visited before the road washed out. I then headed down to Lemhi Pass, and after a bit of searching, found the Indian Massacre Marker. The day was finished up with hitting the Camas Meadow Battlefield and Fort Henry, then finally credit card camping in Idaho Falls. The next day I swung south and visited the Albion Normal School, cut through City of Rocks and hit Rock Creek State and Shoshone Falls on the way home.



Continental Divide Marker at Lemhi Pass

Not one to settle on 10 Challenge sites, my next outing was the biggest yet with a plan to hit 11 more sites over 4 days. I had a wedding reception to go to in Twin Falls, so that served as my jumping off point. I camped with friends in the hills south of Twin Falls and set out the next morning for the Golden Spike Historic site via City of Rocks. My maps failed me, and I nearly ended up on the Salt Flats while attempting to work my way from City of Rocks down to Promontory, but I eventually made it.

Golden Spike was the southernmost Challenge site, so after checking out steam engines, my only choice was to head north toward the Bear Lake area. I hit the Bear River Massacre site along the way and then cut up through Preston to camp at Emigration Campground before heading for all of the Bear Lake sites the following morning. The last time I'd been to Bear Lake was the first IAMC Labor Day group camp out, and this visit brought back some great memories of that weekend.

Trying to get myself lost near Great Salt Lake, I finally decided it was time to turn around.

After visiting the Paris Tabernacle Church and the Big Hill Oregon Trail Marker, I headed north on some familiar roads toward Caribou City. It was nice to get up in the mountains again and cool off a bit since the mid-August heat was oppressive down in the valley.

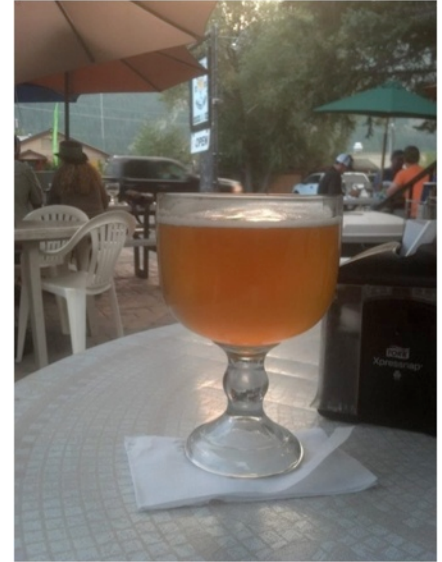
After a quick stop at Caribou City, I decided to slab it across the plain to Sun Valley to start picking up the challenge sites in the Ketchum/Stanley area. Before setting up camp, I visited the





Sheep Bridge and Triumph and then headed into Ketchum for a little liquid refreshment.

A much needed beer at Grumpy's after a long day.



The next day was the final leg of this trip, and it proved to have some of the best sites of the whole Challenge. The first stop was at the Pole Creek Historic Ranger Station and, since I was up early, the morning light had everything glowing.



The Sawtooths from the Pole Creek Ranger Station Parking area.



I imagine there were certainly worse places to be assigned.

From here I headed to Redfish Lake, and then on to Seafoam Guard Station north of the Great Horn, finishing the day at what I have to say was my favorite Challenge site of the year, Josephus Lake. I had the place to myself. I will definitely be returning to camp here.



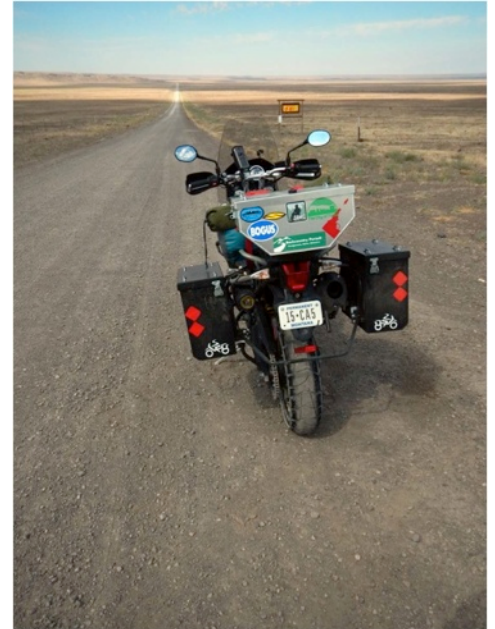
Some much needed rest for my toes at Josephus Lake.

From Josephus Lake I hot-footed it home for a bit of rest, having just knocked out 11 challenge sites. This left only the four Challenge sites in Oregon for me to complete the 2013 Challenge.



I'd heard about the Steens Mountain for years, but I had never spent any time in the area. The closest I had come was doing the Owyhee Backcountry Byway loop. What I wasn't prepared for was the scale of things in Eastern Oregon. There is a whole lot of empty space in here, and it made me glad I'd finally invested in a SPOT GPS Locator.

Taking off for Oregon just 5 days after completing the 11 site loop, I headed up over New York Summit in the Owyhees and dropped down into Jordan Valley, and from there, scenes of roads vanishing into the distance would become the standard.



The Whitehorse Road cuts across parts of Malheur and Harney counties to the Alvord Desert on the way to Fields.



My first stop for this trip was at the store in Fields. They do indeed have gas and even have the occasional plane stop in to fill up. They also have a damn good burger and milkshake. I had some lunch and then headed on to Steen's Mountain.

An airplane stops for lunch and gas in Fields.

I stopped first at the Historic Riddle Brother's Ranch. Luckily, I came through when the caretakers were there and the gate was open. From there I began winding my way up the mountain, where I got some phenomenal views. I finally made it up to Kieger Gorge

Overlook and was amazed to still see snow up there even at the end of August.



Kieger Gorge, you can see the small white patch of snow ¼ over from the left hand edge of the photo.

Having logged Kieger Gorge Overlook, my only remaining site, Pete French Round Barn, would have to wait until morning because there was no way I was coming down off this mountain to camp in sweltering August heat. So I rode



down to Fish Lake and set up camp for the night looking forward to a nice cool night. I didn't have much for dinner, just some beef jerky and trail mix. Lucky for me, I was adopted by a couple of Portland firefighters in the campground who were interested in the Tiger. They ended up supplying me with dinner (hot dogs and fixins), libations and a breakfast burrito in the morning. I made out like a bandit.

Refreshed from a good night's sleep and with a full stomach, I headed down off Steen's Mountain to hit my final Challenge site for 2013, and then head home. I was able to get fuel in Frenchglen and then headed out for Peter French Round Barn, which like so many of the 2013 sites, I had all to myself.



Peter French Round Barn

Despite having finished the Challenge, I still had to get home, and this proved to be one of the more interesting sections of road I would encounter on the whole Challenge. I ended up working my way over to the Crowley Road, which turned out to be 80 miles of loose rock and baby heads. It amazed me that the nearly slick original rear Pirelli Scorpion given to me from the Triumph factory survived. It was also some of the most remote road I've travelled, and I am quite sure had I broken down and not been able to fix the bike, I might have been out there a long time before someone found me.

All in all, I covered over 5,000 miles during the 2013 Challenge. I was able to get the Tiger to all of the sites with very little fuss. It allowed me to test my limits in new ways, and gave me the excuse I needed to get out and find new places. Some of the roads were familiar, but most were completely new to me. The Challenge is what adventure riding is all about - going places that few others go - free to pick your own route.

I hope this year affords me the time I had last year to complete the 2014 Challenge. It appears that the riding for the 2014 Challenge will be significantly more technical, some of which will definitely require a smaller bike than the Tiger. I look forward to getting out there and putting another 5,000 miles on my bikes.



It's About The Bucket List

by Chuck Scheer

The Club Challenge has been a hit with me since day one, one of *Capt.ed's* best ideas. Sure, the Club has attracted like-minded riders with a variety of backgrounds and given them a common forum for sharing their riding experiences, expertise and knowledge. The club ride and member posted rides are a great way to ride new country and meet new and old riding buddies and the workshops are informative and a great resource especially for new club members wanting to join the fun.

But the Challenge, in my opinion, it's the jewel in the crown, an adventure rider's "Bucket List". And riding to all of the sites is only half the fun as there is the ride home to enjoy while contemplating your accomplishment. Quoting Greg Anderson, "Focus on the journey, not the destination. Joy is found not in finishing an activity but in doing it."

I've participated in every Challenge since it debuted in 2010 and I've loved every second spent on the trail in pursuit of Platinum. Of course it's not easy, that's the point, right? But the mix of #1, #2 and #3 difficulty rides with an occasional near #4 thrown in makes the adventure worthwhile.

The 2013 Challenge had a distinct historical flavor. Among the sites were battles, massacres, ghost towns, Oregon Trail stops, Railroads, forts, a mine, an "incident", a pass, the oldest dam on the Snake River, a lookout, bridges, overlooks, a "normal school" and a BARN. I'll highlight a variety for you.

The battle at Camas Meadow (#1) was more of a horse theft than a real battle but the ride to that place was one of the most amazing back roads I have been on in Idaho. To get there I left Rexburg mid afternoon and travelled north on Red Road stopping at the historical marker six miles from the site of Fort Henry (#11) which is where a group of trappers built cabins in 1810 and nearly starved but for eating horses. They abandoned the "fort" the next spring. Red Road led to to Kilgore, Idaho and Kilgore - Yale Road, all part of the Lost Gold Trails Loop and was among my favorite scenic rides of the year. That ride from Rexburg to Island Park is on my "A" list.



Camas Meadow Battle site and the Fort Henry Historic Byway & Lost gold Trails Loop markers



Historic Marker Near Fort Henry



The ride to The Utter Disaster Site (#34) was a sobering experience. North of ID78 west of Grandview, at the end of a long dusty farm road is a 16” X 20” bronze plaque that relates the tragedy of a wagon train attacked by Indians with the loss of 31 lives by murder and starvation and the cannibalism that kept survivors alive until rescued. “No other Oregon Trail wagon train suffered greater losses.” I had no idea this had happened in my state so close to home.

Site of The Utter Wagon Train Disaster



Remains of Caribou city



Not much is left of Caribou City now (#6). I got there by riding in from Cody, Wyoming through the East Entrance of Yellowstone, Grand Teton Park and Jackson Hole. I had spent the previous day riding through the Park’s West Entrance stopping at Norris Geyser Basin and Dunraven Pass, elev. 8,859’, then out the Northeast Entrance to Cooke City, Montana , over Beartooth Pass, elev. 10,947’ to Red Lodge, Montana, back over Beartooth Pass, over Dead Indian Pass, elev. 8,060’ and on to Cody overnight. Next day, just south of Alpine, Wyoming, I followed McCoy Creek Road and turned south on NF165. The Forest Service has posted an information sign with some amazing facts: settled in 1897 the town once boasted 1,500 residents, living mostly in tents, a population rivaling Pocatello and Idaho Falls. \$1.67 million in gold, early 20th century dollars, was found near here. The last resident left in 1930. After I claimed the site I rode west to Grays

Lake, south to Soda Springs and on to Montpelier for the night. While there I went to the Big Hill site (#17) where you can still see wagon tracks descending “the greatest impediment on the whole route from the United States (over 200 miles east of here) to Fort Hall (over 120 miles farther west).” The wagons had to be lowered down by ropes tied to trees that no longer exist.

One of the biggest impediments to progress on the Oregon Trail was Big Hill



Entrance to City of Rocks



I travelled to the BMW of Idaho Club Campout at City of Rocks (#7) and took the opportunity to ride to The Golden Spike Monument in Utah (#13). I was fortunate to get there midday on Saturday when the reenactment takes place. At 1:00pm actors in costume reenacted the driving of the golden spike when West met East, again, as reproductions of the C.P.R.R.’s *Jupiter* wood burning steam



West meets East at the Golden Spike National Monument

locomotive, east bound, and the U.P.R.R.'s west bound #119 coal fired steamer came within a few feet of each other. Bells and whistles were loud and proud as a crowd of enthusiasts watched under a 20 starred union flag. This leg was definitely worth the extra effort. Since I was a kid I wanted to see this and the Challenge was the nudge I needed to make it happen.

Triumph (Mine) (#37) is now a community of up-scale \$1 million ranchettes but once it was the source of an astronomical gold deposit. The state and US Gov't have buried tailings worth an estimated \$45 million in gold but because of environmental concerns it may never be touched. The stop at Triumph is a nice break from the congestion and gridlock that afflicts the Hailey to Ketchum corridor each summer.



A Remnant of Triumph Mine near Ketchum, Idaho

The ride from Salmon, Idaho southeast on ID28 had two Challenge sites that were totally different in character. The first was Lemhi Pass, elev. 7,373', (#10) and was reached by turning west at Tendoy on to The Lewis And Clark Back Country Byway. The ride on the fully loaded GS12 led to spectacular views of the Lemhi Mountains and the opportunity to stand in the footsteps of Lewis and Clark was well worth the effort. Meriwether Lewis traversed the pass westward bound in August 1805 and returned two weeks later with Clark and the rest of the expedition. After descending back to ID28 I turned southeast to look for the site of the Birch Creek "Incident" (#9). Its actual position was questionable

though several markers seemed to be genuine. The kiosk and panels erected at the Birch Creek Campground explain it well and include a statement from an eyewitness. Essentially Shoshone warriors, fresh from having been attacked at Big Hole six days earlier, came upon the freight wagons bound for Salmon, Idaho. After obtaining rations from the wagons the braves supposedly found whiskey and that probably resulted in the death of several of the teamsters. All this fascinating Idaho history wasn't in any of my schoolbooks.



Lemhi Pass on the Continental Divide



My Candidate for the Birch Creek Incident Marker



Thorn Creek Butte Lookout (#28) was part of the loop ride that I combined the Idaho City Pioneer Cemetery (#25), Barber Flat Cabin (#29), Seafoam Guard Station (#23), and Josephus Lake (#24). It made for a long day but the DR made easy work of it. The ride from Seafoam to Josephus was one that I had made many times in the seventies while riding in my Ford pickup with friends for a chance to angle for cutthroat trout in Soldier Lakes. Those were the days!

*Thorn
Creek
Butte
Look Out*



Pioneer Cemetery at Idaho City

Josephus Lake



Not wanting to suffer the DR seat over pavement for six hours I opted to trailer it to Lucille where I began the ascent to Sawpit Saddle Overlook (#40). The ride out to the overlook was terrific and riding solo always adds an “edge” to that kind of adventure. I always carry my SPOT and check in with an “I’m OK” often with family and friends. The panoramic view of Hell’s Canyon from the overlook is beyond comparison and the effort required to reach it is well worth it. After

tagging the overlook I began the ride along the ridges northward toward Pittsburg Saddle to descend to the Snake and Pittsburg Landing (#19). By the time I reached the river it was late afternoon and the temperature had soared to over 105°F. By the time I had the site tagged, enjoyed a cold beverage and a Power Bar from the cooler I was past ready to begin the climb to cooler elevations and the ride out to Hammer Creek. A short stretch of pavement back to Lucille and my 2013 Challenge was done.

Hells Canyon near Sawpit Overlook

Pittsburg Landing in Hell’s Canyon





I didn't keep track of miles traveled or days ridden for last years Challenge so I've no numbers to show for it. I did most of the miles on my BMW R1200GS with serious dirt time on the Suzuki DR650E. There were a few strictly pavement rides that were done with our BMW R1200RT. Oh yes, there were times when my aging body complained about the effort. But whatever the cost in miles, days, dollars or aches I consider it a privilege to have participated in all of the Challenges and I look forward to more Challenges to come. I think of the Challenges as "Bucket Lists". So many of the sites are places I've only heard about and wanted to visit but never quite got around to. So many sites are spectacular, some are amusing and some are historically interesting, but all should be experienced by the avid outdoorsman (woman) and adventure rider living in Idaho.

Kudos to all who chose and helped to search for the sites, found the coordinates and Benchmark references and posted them on the website. It's a terrific amount of work and I'm sure we all appreciate those efforts. I think the design and implementation of our amazing website has had a great deal to do with the club's success and I would like to thank *hez* again for her effort, patience and expertise. Very few clubs have a site as great as ours. *coolsen* has graciously taken up the newsletter torch again so let's support his efforts by responding to his requests for articles.

Thanks again to:

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TerriHiatt

hez

idahosam

coolsen



2013 IAMC Challenge Journey Highlights

by Craig O. Olsen

My 2013 IAMC Challenge journey began in May 2013 with the Nevada Pony Express Trail Ride that Sam Stone put together. A report of this ride is found in our last newsletter. [1] During that memorable ride, I picked up 7 of the 2013 Challenge sites. Of these the one that stands out most was riding up to Kieger Gorge Overlook in the Steens Mountains. We attempted this on Memorial Day, May 27, on our way back from the Pony Express ride and encountered snow at about 6,500 feet elevation. We continued on several more miles in an increasingly dense fog and snow storm, finally being stopped by deep snow at 8,938 feet elevation a few miles short of the overlook where this picture was taken.



Another outstanding Challenge site occurred on September 10. While riding solo, I attempted Caribou City when the voltage regulator on my 990 KTM suddenly failed about 2 miles short of the site. With loss of all electrical power, I could not jump or bump start my bike. I was looking at an approximate 20 mile hike back to civilization where I could get a ride or help retrieving my bike. Fortunately, about 15 minutes after this happened, a search and rescue crew out of Idaho Falls happened by on their way back into Caribou City to pick up some of their equipment from rescuing an injured hunter earlier that morning. They had extra room on their equipment trailer and offered to haul me and my bike back to Idaho Falls. While I was waiting for them to return, I coasted my bike three quarters of a mile back downhill to the junction where I took this picture. About an hour later the search and rescue crew returned, loaded my bike on their equipment trailer, and gave me a ride to a U-Haul dealership in Idaho Falls where I rented a truck and hauled my bike back to Boise for repairs.



This is the second time I have had to haul this bike back to Boise from eastern Idaho for repairs. The first time it failed me was near Island Park on the Continental Divide Trail ride in July 2011. [2]

One objective of the 2013 Challenge was to make it more big-bike friendly. As a result, I visited at least 8 of the sites on my Harley Davidson Road King while doing two-up rides with my wife, Lenna. I am sure that I could have visited at least another 15 sites on this bike. While I have had it off road several times, it is not very sure-footed in the dirt or gravel, and I must admit that it is much more fun to ride the KTM.

References:

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My Fourth Year Doing the Challenge

by Ed Torrey



Paris Tabernacle

2013 was my 4th year doing the Challenge, and I'm still seeing new places. I just think of all the neat places I would not have visited had I not participated in the Idaho Adventure Motorcycle Club Challenges. Not just the Challenge sites, but the adventure getting there and the great people I have ridden with and met along the way.

Due to the heavy demand of overtime at work, I knew I was going to be limited on my Saddle time this year. I even debated on not participating in the 2013 Challenge. It did not take long to convince myself to go for it and enjoy what time I could get on the bike. Even if I could only get a few sites, it would be worth it.

Out came my Benchmark maps book, and I started to plan my 2013 Challenge wish list. To optimize the time I had I was going to need to plan something that would get me the most sites in the shortest amount of miles and time. I put together an approximate 1,000 mile, 3 day trip that would net me 15 sites, 12 of which I have never visited before. So late in May I headed to Golden Spike hitting all the Challenge sites near my route. I then headed to Montpelier, Idaho Falls, Kilgore, Howe, Arco, Mountain Home, and then came back home. I tried to keep to the main roads because it was early in the year, and I did not want to backtrack due to snow on the passes. Over the next 4 month I was able to do some day trips picking up 8 more sites. Then in September FoolHardy posted a Steens overnighiter, and that trip netted 4 more sites. After getting back and going through all my Challenge pictures, I realize I only needed 3 more sites to achieve my gold tire level. So in late November I was able to get my last three: Swan Falls dam, Bonneville Point, and old Fort Boise marker.

My favorite site this year was Golden spike. I have never been there, and it was very interesting. I thought all the sites on my big loop were well worth the time and effort getting there.



Fort Boise Marker



Historic Golden Spike Monument

The one very interesting thing was Sheep Bridge. I have been by there and camped down the road, but never knew it was there. I guess you never know what treasure is just over the next little hump.

Every year I save all the sites on my GPS and computer along with a lot of the tracks just in case someone asks about a neat place to go, or I want to take a group out to explore. I'm looking forward to the 2014 Challenge.



Lies, Lies, Lies

by Gary Umland

In August Thane Eddington and I both got new bikes, his a Tiger 800 and mine a V-Strom 650. It was time to hit the road. After doing some route planning and research on Google I decided to get the Challenge Points near Riggins. We started out the morning with a slab ride to McCall and on toward Burgdorf. I have some friends that are rock hounds, and they suggested if I was near Burgdorf, I must see Crystal Mountain. Just past the hot springs we veered off the road and wound our way up a hill, and when we reached the top, we were parked on a giant quartz peak. I've never seen anything like it. We explored the area for a bit to stretch our legs, took our pictures, and then I loaded up my panniers with some souvenir rocks because I needed more weight on the bike (not really).



At the top of Crystal Mountain



Wind River Bridge

rain began to puddle up in my seat region, and I saw deer swimming across the highway, drastic measures became a requirement. The weatherman lied. We found an RV park with friendly hosts who pointed us to a covered machine shed where we could park the bikes and find shelter. That's when the rain stopped.

The next morning was perfect as we travelled to Whitebird. Of course we took the old highway. Thane decided to let the Tiger loose on those switchbacks, and when I caught up to him at the top, his grin was as big as the prairie around us.

On a different trip we decided to do the eastern Oregon Challenge Points. We were making such good time that we decided to camp near the Peter French Round Barn, the GPS informed me that there was a nice State Park nearby. The GPS lied. As it's getting darker and colder, Thane and I started looking for an alternate campsite. Again I referenced the GPS and this time I saw a large lake with multiple campsites. The GPS lied. By the time we rolled into Burns we had to ride the bikes leaning over to get all the gas out of the tanks we could. We both were having a bad case of

Then our next stop would be the Wind River Bridge, and this is where the lies begin. I had found a great short cut on Google that would take us straight north where we would drop next to the bridge. After several detours and turn a rounds, we found ourselves descending into the Salmon River drainage but we weren't getting closer to the river. We finally stopped in a small valley to discuss our options. Now this valley is full of old buildings, cars and junk everywhere, the kind of place where you hear dueling banjos in the trees. Google lied about the road being a shortcut. It was time to reverse direction quickly.

We did make it to the bridge and then headed to Riggins for gas and food. It was getting dark as we left Riggins, and it was time to find a camping spot. To aid us in our *The* search Mother Nature decided to light the way by providing a spectacular lightning display. But when the



hypothermia since we were too afraid to stop the bikes and not get them started again. Thankfully we made it to town and decided to camp in a hotel. Imagine my surprise when I get out of the shower and there's Thane cooking Jiffy Pop popcorn on his camp stove in the room.

Even though the weathermen, Garmin and Google lie to me on a frequent basis, I don't let that stop me from participating in the Challenge each year. I've seen the majesty of China wall, the postcard beauty of Black Lake, enjoyed pinning the throttle across the Zumwalt prairie and camped with a host of new friends. Besides, how can I have a story to tell if everything went as planned?



Inside the Peter French Round Barn



To Solo or Not to Solo...

by Michael Hardy

While pondering what I would share about last years Challenge, I stumbled across what is possibly a very common statistic among riders. Of the twenty-two challenge points collected last year, I ended up hitting eleven sites solo. Let's do the math, twenty-two total, minus eleven solo, add the "post your own ride", carry the Three Island Crossing that I lost my picture of, and we end up with a perfect 50/50 split. Did I really spend that much time alone on rugged mountain roads and deserted two track, in places like Sawpit Saddle, where I hadn't seen another person for many miles, it was lightly snowing, and I may have ended up as bear poop if my bike had decided to take a nap in the mud? My first challenge point this season made me think about the possibility of things going all wrong, and if that rider who made a small misstep hadn't had two other guys around, it could have gotten ugly.

I am one who enjoys the solace of being the only person within ten miles of a given patch of sagebrush. I love to pause in the absolute human-less quiet, where my own thoughts seem so loud that I find myself trying to hush them, so as not to disturb the ground squirrels. I love the freedom of wandering, of not having to explain to the guy behind me my habit of inexplicably clamping down on the brakes to examine whatever roadside artifact happened to have caught my eye, the next minute racing along again full throttle like a Pony Express rider, chased by warring Apaches and outrunning ominous thunderstorms within my mind. It's easier for me just to saddle up and head out, without all the planning and coordinating required to organize a group ride to an unfamiliar destination. Now, it's not that I'm antisocial, as I have enjoyed the camaraderie of everyone with whom I have ridden. It's not that I prefer dropping my bike on a precarious jeep trail climbing a steep slope 40 miles from help, all by myself. And it's not that I am so terrible at planning ahead of time that I can't arrange to ride with someone, though there may be just a hint of truth to that one. It's just easier sometimes to go it alone, to live at my own pace.

A couple of years ago, I had an incident that matured my thinking a bit, and the voice of caution was heard. I had the misfortune of breaking my ankle while riding solo, and it was indeed a wake up call. I was in the parking lot of Jump Creek Falls, and by way of a poorly timed act of hooliganism I ended up with my KLR on top of me, specifically on my right ankle. I got the KLR back up on its wheels, and rode it home. Luckily it was a flat easy 45 minute ride, and not thirty miles of rocky, sandy, Owyhee two track. It certainly could have been much worse. The area wasn't remote, and my 'Spot' was tracking me, so I felt fairly secure. After that, I decided it was not wise to go far into the back country alone. 2013 was going to be a safer year for me, better planned and coordinated. At the least, I wasn't going to be out there all alone.

Most of my solo rides in 2013 were day trips not far off the beaten path, so I did pretty well in that regard. My journeys into the back country in pursuit of Challenge points with my fellow riders were punctuated by some memorable moments last season. Like that moment when Woody realized I had been filming him while he wrestled his GS down some rutty and powdery back road near the Radar Site. And when the ranger showed Rockhop John and me what the inside of Barber Flat cabin looked like, and explained how each cabin was set up within a days horseback ride of each other. And riding the Alvord dry lake bed with Ron and Special Ed, and the thunderstorm we rode under on the way home. I actually planned and executed an overnight ride in 2013, including other riders. And of course there were rides that earned no Challenge points, where I made new friends, and strengthened bonds with some I already knew. We all have to ride our own ride, but we don't have to do it all alone. For me, that is what the club and the Challenge are all about.



Cornering

By Craig O. Olsen

There are few things that put a smile on your face and enjoyment in your riding more than well executed cornering on a motorcycle. Putting together a series of sequential right and left hand turns on a twisty mountain road is sheer pleasure. Being out of sync with those turns can bring terror and intimidation to your riding.

Perhaps that is what this rider experienced just before his crash on Highway 71 between Cambridge and Hells Canyon. While I do not know the details of this fatal accident, it is not a particularly difficult corner to negotiate, and it appears the rider simply lost control of his motorcycle. Unfortunately, there are a lot of riders around who demonstrate over and over that they are only partly in control of their motorcycles, particularly when cornering.

Regardless of your riding ability, a review of the fundamentals of motorcycle dynamics is helpful. Reprinted below is an Idaho Star newsletter from July 2012 on corner control by Ax. [1] Other sources on cornering technique are listed in the references at the end of this article. [2-7]



Corner Control



Running off the road in corners is the most common crash scenario in Idaho's fatal motorcycle crashes (it represented over 40% of fatal crashes during 2009-2011). Running off the road and hitting an oncoming car; running off the road into a ditch; running off the road into a guardrail; running off the road and hitting a tree or some other solid object. You get the point - running off the road in a turn is not good.

So, what does it mean to have 'Corner Control?' If you unintentionally cross over the centerline or the fog line, you lack corner control. That's just a fact. If the bike goes somewhere you didn't want it to go, you weren't in

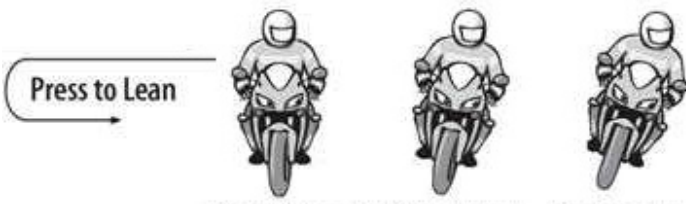
control. Most of the time, the rider doesn't crash or hit anything, but whether or not there was a car or something else there to be hit was simply a matter of luck (and yes - it has happened to me a time or two...).



Picture this scene - you are riding on a beautiful twisty mountain road halfway through a right hand curve. All of the sudden, you see an oncoming car that is straddling the center line (that means halfway into YOUR lane). If you quickly and precisely change your line so that you turn tighter and move your bike to the fog line (all the way right) to avoid the head-on crash, you have corner control. If you panic, hit the brakes, lay the bike down and crash, you do not have corner control. So, how do we do this the right way? There are several elements to surviving this scene:



- Always ride with a reserve. If you are already leaning over as far as you can, you have nothing left to avoid a sudden hazard. Riding at a 100% is for the track (and even there, a little reserve is a good idea). Riding on the street requires that you always have a reserve. Control your speed to control your lean (and to know that you can lean more if and when you need to.)



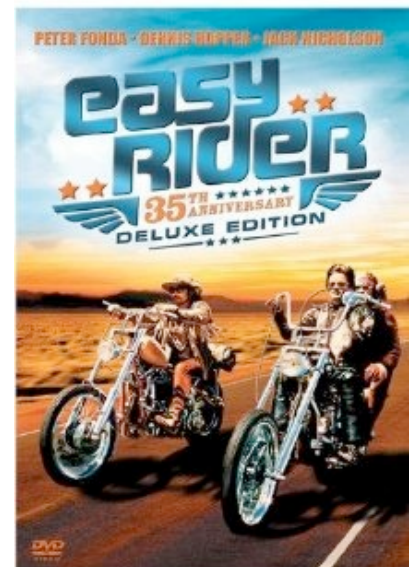
- Learn, practice, and master countersteering. To turn left, press forward on the left hand grip. To turn right, press forward on the right hand grip. The forward press initiates the lean; the lean causes you to turn. To turn sharper (lean more), press more forward. To turn less sharp (lean less), reduce the amount of the forward press.

If you just don't get this concept, come and take a [STAR course](#) and we'll work on it with you.

- Body position. You should be leaning your body at least as much as the bike is leaning. It is very common to see riders with their bike leaned farther than their body. This makes turning harder. One way to help keep your body leaned is to line up your chest with the center of the handlebars (or even just to the inside). That way, as you lean the bike, the center of the handlebars goes down and keeping your chest lined up helps you lean with it.

- Arms bent. Keep your shoulders relaxed and your arms bent at all times in the turn. Riding with locked arms like Dennis Hopper in Easy Rider may seem cool, but it puts you in a very poor control position. You may need to scoot up in your seat to keep your arms bent. You may need to adjust or even get a new seat, handlebars, or both. If the bike doesn't fit you so you can stay in a good riding position, adjust it so it does. With arms slightly bent, pressing forward on the hand grips is easy and precise. With locked arms, you have to press from the shoulder and this tends to be difficult and 'sloppy.'

- Lane position. Keep all of you and your bike well within your lane at all times. It is very common to see riders with their tires right next to the centerline. This means their handlebars, mirrors, saddlebags, and (in left hand curves) their head can be over the line (in the other lane!). If you want to take it home with you, keep it well within your lane. Put some space between you and the center line.





- Eyes on target. When riding a motorcycle, you tend to go where you look. If you've ever seen motorcycle racers or motorcycle police officers doing cone drills, they all very aggressively look where they want to go.

It is human nature to want to look down, or look at the potential trouble. "*Oh no, I'm going over the centerline!*" and we stare right at the centerline, ensuring that it happens. It takes practice and discipline to use 'target fixation' to your advantage. If you tend to go where you look, then look where you want to go. Simple in theory, but if you never practice it, you are unlikely to be very good at it in an emergency. If you want the bike to complete the turn,

turn tighter, and make it go down the road, look through the turn and down the road. Eyes up and level with the horizon; nose pointed to where you want to go. If you want to get some guided practice with this - come and take a [STAR course](#) and we'll help you build the habit.

None of this is rocket science, but neither is it common knowledge or common practice. If you learn, practice, and master these items, you will develop corner control. When you have corner control, not only is riding much more fun, but you also greatly increase your chances of staying out of the crash statistics.

Ride safe, ride well, ride lots.

-Ax



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