

Reflections on The Long Push



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Seeing as I've done a number of longer pushes here and there over the years I thought I'd share some of my unending wisdom with you. A note, if you will, for mental, emotional and physical well-being.

Initially, the romance of a long push is sweet. It's very easy to imagine the growl of the engine, the warm sun, the beautiful landscape flashing by, the cold beer,...the simple and careless FREEDOM! Believe me. The anticipation of it all is almost as good as the real thing. The trip itself is a GAS!!!

In reality, a long haul is at times very demanding on the mind, soul and body. I'll explain.

Riding someone else's Harley into The Great Unknown will drain energy from your body like a hot wind sucks moisture through your skin. It happens without you really knowing it. We'll drive through places we've never been, traffic situations we're not really used to etc. Risk of animal-encounters are real. Enormous thunderstorms may appear, roads may be covered with rock, sand, dirt and pebbles. We may not see civilization for a long time. In these conditions a person has the tendency to become tense. Tension tires you like a work-out at the gym. You'll notice this every evening: "shit, why am I so beat and tired?" you'll ask yourself. Now you know why.

At times one can also feel a bit anxious, worried. "So far from home, such a big, empty landscape, what if there's gravel on the next curve? Are there deer in the woods? Look at those rain-clouds!" etc. No worries. We'll be driving at the speed-limit, calmly, and taking no stupid chances. I'll always know where we are. And, we're together.

When I was eighteen I could go to the gym every day and party hard every nite for days in a row. I'm not eighteen anymore. Neither are you. These days, if I party 2, 3 days in a row I feel like horse-shit both physically and mentally for days afterwards. The Road is a harsh mistress. Being tired and super hung-over on the road will weigh on you like a lead suit, compiling with every mile, relentless, and, believe me, no fun. Driving up to 350 Km a day, every day, leaves us little time for recovery. My bad-ass, biker party-mode recommendation is: moderation. We'll be pounding beer every nite,.but let's limit the shots of Tequila and perhaps go to bed at a "decent" hour. (I sound like my Mother) Blow-out parties can be pre-planned. Sleep-ins as well. You will thank me.

Long pushes can easily wear upon relationships faster than shit through a goose. I'm no psychologist, but the scope of The Long Haul messes with your head. Petty issues can become big Big BIG! At some point during our wonderful tour, there WILL be incidents and arguments, probably over little or nothing. When irritation, anger, mistrust, paranoia etc. wields it's ugly head, talk about it at the next stop. Many times the Road Captain, in this case ME, gets lots of shit. I'll prepare as well as I can for us, but there may be mistakes, wrong-turns or missed attractions etc. along the way. I'm not Superman, please work with me. It's normal. Don't worry, mahn,.be happy!

A huge irritation-source is tempo, not just riding-tempo but group-member tempo i.e, finding a flow, a timing within the group. We are many. Normal mathematics, oddly, do not apply. For instance, take getting up in the morning, showering, dressing, packing your bike, having coffee, assing-up and driving off as a group for example? Simple? One would think that. Seeing as the group consists of many people, this activity, mathematically, should take 13 times longer than if performed by one person. WRONG. It can take 47,000 times longer! Whenever we move as a group: mornings (especially mornings!!!), gas-

breaks, leaving the hotel evenings to the bar etc. please try to digest the groups natural tempo and adapt. Nobody likes to sit around and wait for somebody. If you have special needs or arrangements, try to complete them in advance or notify the group. There are no rules concerning group-participation. If you feel the need to “chill.” Chill.

Health-tips: Vitamins, minerals, voodoo etc. daily are recommended. Any medicine needed, for head-aches, stomach-aches etc. is readily available in the U.S. Be sure to obtain a health-insurance ID from your insurance-company in case we need to go to the hospital, doctor etc.

Now. Let's ride!

Dave