

One Man's View – Details from Tony Myers' Facebook Blog

MONDAY

Recap from first full day in Oceanside: We welcome the crew members driving out the RV, ready the pace vehicle for resting (that's building a bed in a van) and go for a bike ride around this incredibly beautiful area. *June 16 at 8:28am*

THURSDAY

Trying to sleep shift, 2AM to 2PM PDT for me and Jerome. (Get off phone, Tony) **everyone else gets here today!** *June 18 at 8:32am*

FRIDAY

ALL in a freaked out frenzy. Nothing but meetings, inspections, photo sessions. Race is going to happen. **3100m, 100000f, ONE stage.** *June 19 at 3:46pm*

Last day of getting ready, all 14 GA Chain Gang are here in Oceanside, CA with much still to do. I'm tired & overwhelmed. Let's just GO! *June 19 at 9:00am*

RAAM is a MUCH bigger deal/production than any of us imagined. **We are all (all of you too) in something really special.** *June 19 at 8:02pm*

Very emotional meeting & presentation; incredible affair except for one rambling speaker. Highlight was introduction of the **4 man hand cycle team!!!** *June 19 at 9:10pm*

SATURDAY

All is ready once folks get back from last store trip. Hope everyone's getting newsletter w/ daily updates. More good stuff there. *June 20 at 10:42am*

----- **RACE STARTS HERE AT @5:00 PM RAAM time (EDT)** -----

Jerome & I just finished unsupported zone. Jerome is on his own now; **first big climb** coming. Then I take over for glass elevator. Awesome! *June 20 at 7:04pm*

I descended glass elevator safely despite unbelievable wind. Drop dead gorgeous in early sunset. Then I got lost; my fault. I turned in Borrego Springs, CA on desert floor with no direction. Confused because follow vehicle had stopped and I was given no direction. I should NOT have turned on my own – how stupid was that. It's night in the desert now. Jerome is riding. *June 20 at 11:54pm*

SUNDAY

Problems! Bike problems for Dowdakin and we can't take RV up these mountains for crew exchange or repairs. **Quick thinking needed.** *June 21 at 1:03pm*

MONDAY

Sunday riding most beautiful so far & fast: Prescott to Jerome to Sedona (AZ). Wow! Flagstaff to CO River to Monument Valley where we slept in RV on side of rd. *June 22 at 10:29am*

Status update: we are in 6th for 4 man teams out of 20, 1st in age group. Estimated average speed at 18.5 b4 race, actual now 18.6 w/climbs! *June 22 at 10:38am*

Recap from Monday night: **Jerome climbing to 10200'** as it gets dark on way to Taos from Durango; toughest climb of the race so far. Then I'm descending 10% grade in 36 deg temps avoiding elk, cows in the road & millions of potholes. Yet another thrilling, death defying dark descent; I must not be living right! Views before dark were best I've seen. *June 23 at 10:38am*

TUESDAY

Recap from early Tuesday morning: 30 mi from Taos **3AM tire blows out on follow vehicle**. Racers had to stop. Spare under everything. Pit crew changed in 20mins! *June 23 at 11:28am*

1100 mi down & all the western climbs behind us. Headed for the Great Plains. We're holding our standing & average speed. Average speed up soon! (Hello Kansas) *June 23 at 11:48am*

Our crew winning this race! Outstanding & complete group. Many bad hiccups, but fast thinking, good relations, skills & strength keep us going. RV is now broken down; because of limited budget this is a must have. *June 23 at 12:36pm*

RV broken down in eastern NM is turning into major mechanical. **Somehow we must see how we can bond together now**. We've got to continue somehow. *June 23 at 1:20pm*

Hooray!!!! **We're fixed and on our way**. *June 23 at 1:20pm*

Tonight on plains in Kansas is far different from last night in Colorado Rockies. Everything is smoother for now. **Moving fast! - my last leg 22,5**. *June 23 at 10:44pm*

WEDNESDAY

Recap from Tuesday night: Traded elk & cattle in road (Mon in CO & NM) for man-eating mosquitoes, turtles & frogs last night. **Night riding is really surreal if you can do it at speed**. *June 24 at 2:00pm*

As coach **I've proposed change n rider rotation** due to Midwest heat taking some heat away from 2 Daves & cool dark from me & Jerome. 2 Daves choose to stick with original plan. *June 24 at 2:10pm*

Storms are coming: red on radar. Only lightning stops us. **Dave & David riding like champs n 100 deg**. Jerome & I get the storms. *June 24 at 3:58pm*

Crossing border into Missouri now. **Storms on horizon**. Averaging 20+ for 2 days. Real average, not ride time! Oops Crank arm came off bike. *June 24 at 5:42pm*

Waiting out monster t-storm in the follow vehicle, western Missouri. *June 24 at 7:42pm*

THURSDAY

I'm accepting the probability **we are going to make it to parties at finishing line**, that I'll be showing off a finisher's jersey! *June 25 at 8:50am*

3 out of 3 vehicles with major mishaps. Shuttle vehicle that leapfrogs folks to hotels had a tire disintegration. **A#1 crew has it in hand**. *June 25 at 3:09pm*

Rider down! On section of, get this, gravel road, Dave Armento has gone down & now headed 2 hospital. Update soon. We may have to finish with 3 men doing WV. *June 25 at 4:55pm*

Waiting out rain and lightning with a 3 rider team after 4th man, **Dave Armento, broke his hip today falling on a gravelly section of road** that's hard to understand why was on this course. Dave has surgery tomorrow as we continue toward Annapolis. Total revision of "system" has been thought through. We'll prevail. We were in a race to hold 5th overall, but now we are in a race to finish! Hemorrhaging time and money!! *June 26 at 1:29am*

FRIDAY

The four man team of three now continue across Ohio. Worst roads here we've encountered in the country, but pleasant rural scenery. *June 26 at 12:44pm*

Just saw **family and friends at the Chillicothe time station** (Ohio) under the ATS/Atlanta Cycling tent; feeling stronger now. *June 26 at 3:29pm*

Dave is having surgery, as I type this, for his broken hip. I can imagine his spirits are low. The hardest part of RAAM is tonight and I know he wishes he were helping. We wish it too! We'll ride again together soon. *June 26 at 5:50pm*

Several have asked: **the three of us are riding 18hr shifts, 1hr on, 1hr off; resting in the moving RV for 6.** Rest shifts in series. All may change when we reach mountains in WV. *June 26 at 6:03pm*

SATURDAY

We will indeed finish & finish strong! Thanks much for all good wishes, thoughts & prayers. **Not out of the mountains but almost.** *Sat at 8:08am*

Jerome & I doing final & hardest climbs in RAAM – bad luck of the draw I guess. Going to fly down rollers to Annapolis with David D as a team. Ready to cry! *Sat at 1:18pm*

I just came off 18hr shift for 6 of rest; I'll rejoin my team mates David & Jerome for 2hr ride to finish line. Sobs of joy & sorrow; **wish Dave was here.** *Sat at 5:28pm*

Chaos towards finish. Everyone is keyed up like D-Day. This is an f'g race!! We will finish later than last updt-1AM due to miscues. *Sat at 9:08pm*

Recap from late Saturday night: Not only are we finished, we all, and I mean ALL, crew and riders, did it in style. As many know we had fallen behind two of the front running teams we'd been jockeying with for thousands of miles after Dave's injury. At one of the last time stations I learned we were back in front of the Germans and with 20 min if the Brazilians. There were only 50 miles to go. **As you can legally do Jerome and I started a "tag team" draft.** *Sun at 9:03am*

Recap from early Sunday morning: **Within 10 miles of the finish we caught the Brazilian rider and crew** and boy was it on!! English & Portuguese screamed in the night by both crews trying to help and to sort through navigation to the finish. *Sun at 9:07am*

Recap from early Sunday morning: Jerome & I got in front after several fights, sailed ahead, and then the follow crew, crew chief **Debra Priest and master driver David Rossetti realized we'd missed a turn.** OMG! They got us back on track and we finished ahead of the Brazilians. Turns out they had penalties (we had none) so we beat them handily!! *Sun at 9:17am*

Recap from early Sunday morning: The Brazilians, in a last minute attempt to re-catch us, brought in some fresh legs. My wife Nancy was following them and called ahead to tell us. **We pulled our secret weapon off the bench, DAVID DOWDAKIN,** and then they never had a chance!! It was over! *Sun at 10:04*

MONDAY

Post-race depression is setting in. Must not allow magic to fade. Nothing hurts - no easy reminders of RAAM like sore legs or back. *Monday at 12:39pm*

Just got home and weighed; gained 5 pounds. This is GREAT for endurance athletes and a clue to why I never came close to bonking. *Monday at 4:55pm*