

Confessions of a Middle-Aged Coder Turned Gravel Grinder

October 24, 2019
ApacheCon, Berlin



Introductions

Shawn McKinney

-  **symas** Software Architect
-  PMC Apache Directory Project
-  **OpenLDAP**TM Engineering Team

Session Agenda

- Starting Line
- Transition
- Gravel Cycling
- Events
- Preparing
- The Good, the Bad and the Ugly
- Finish Line



Image from: [HTTP://EVENTS.LINUXFOUNDATION.ORG/EVENTS/APACHECON-NORTH-AMERICA](http://EVENTS.LINUXFOUNDATION.ORG/EVENTS/APACHECON-NORTH-AMERICA)

Starting Line

In Dedication

Gerrit Gorter



MAMIL Warning

Middle-aged Man in Lycra:



Road



Road

- Drop-bar
- Carbon frame, aggressive geometry
- Tall head tube
- Shorter wheel base
- Skinny tires, high pressure
- 700c sized wheels
- Caliper brakes
- High gears
- 2x chainring
- No suspension



Mountain



Mountain

- Flat-bar
- Carbon frame, relaxed geometry
- 26", 27.5" (650B) or 29" wheels
- Wide, knobby tires
- Disc brakes
- 1x or 2x chainring
- Hardtail or full suspension



Gravel



Gravel

- Drop-bar
- Carbon, aluminum or steel frame
- Relaxed geometry
- Taller, slack headtube
- Sloping top tube
- Long wheelbase
- Low bottom bracket
- 700c or 650b wheel size
- Wider tires, lower pressure
- Often times tubeless
- Disc brakes
- Lower gears
- 1 and 2x chainring
- New, low-travel suspension





hardcore

/ˈhɑːrd,kɒ(ə)r/

noun

noun: **hard core**

1. the most active, committed, or strict members of a group or movement.
"the party still has a hard core of supporters that will always vote for them"

Similar:

diehard

staunch

dedicated

committed

steadfast

hard-line

2. pornography of a very explicit or extreme kind.

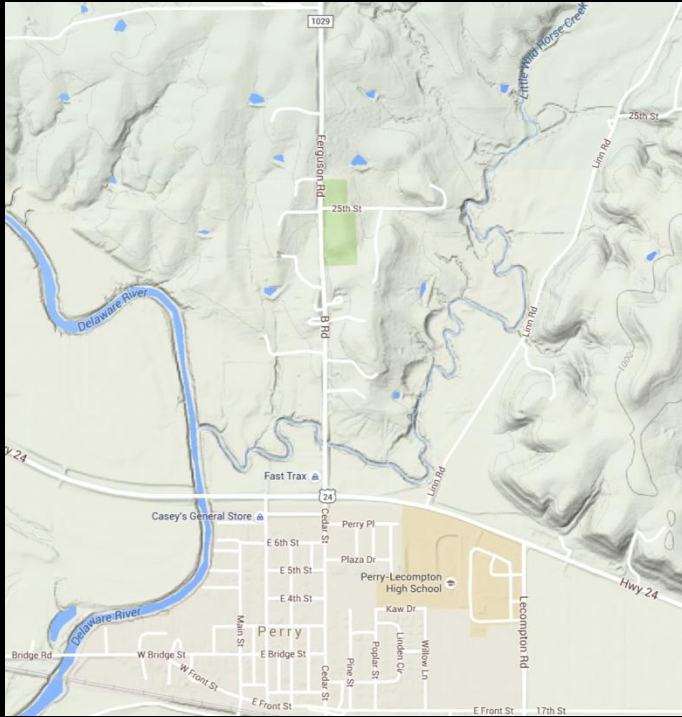
adjective

adjective: **hard core**

1. highly committed in one's support for or dedication to something.
"hardcore gamers"
2. denoting or relating to pornography of a very explicit or extreme kind.
"online hardcore porn"

Transition

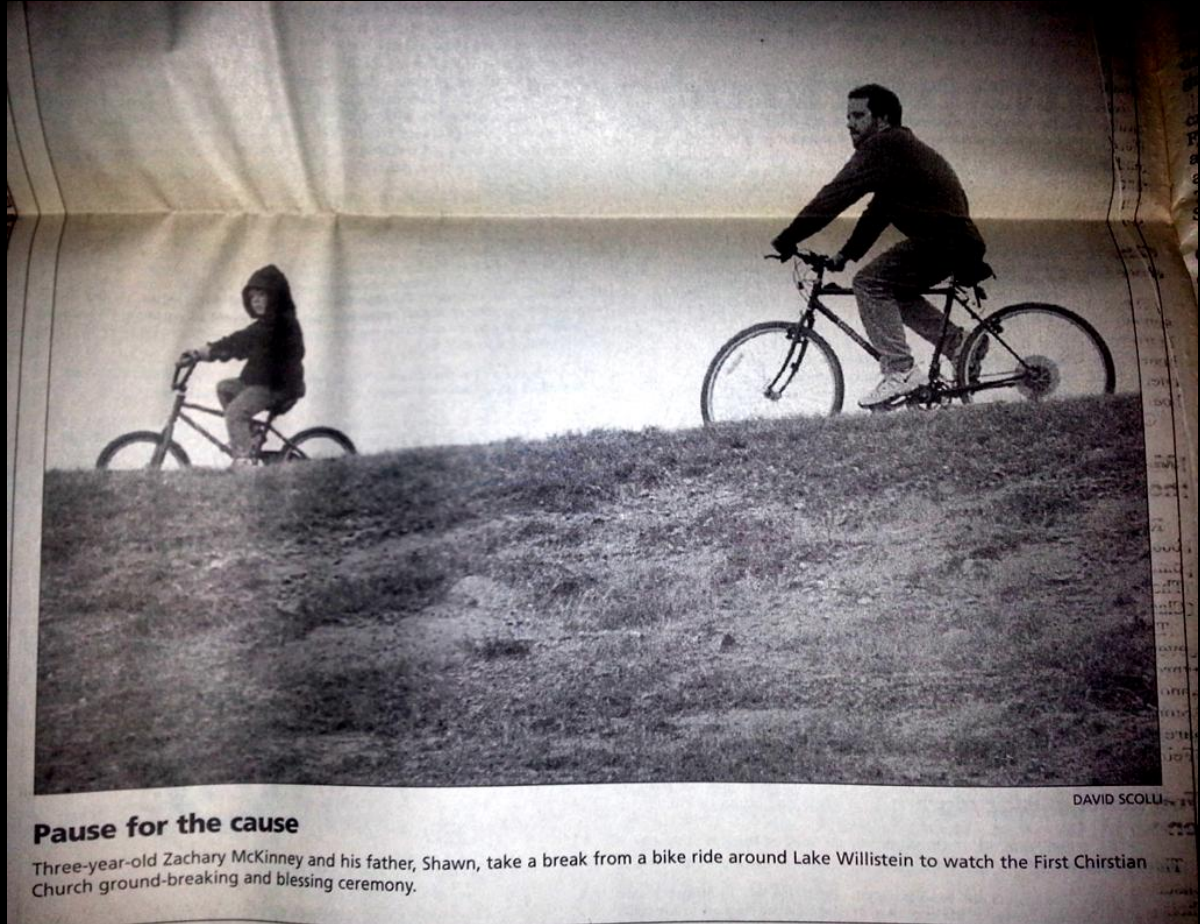
1970's



1980 – 1999



2000



Pause for the cause

Three-year-old Zachary McKinney and his father, Shawn, take a break from a bike ride around Lake Willistein to watch the First Chirstian Church ground-breaking and blessing ceremony.

DAVID SCOLL

2011



2013



2014 Just ride



Try Some (road) Events



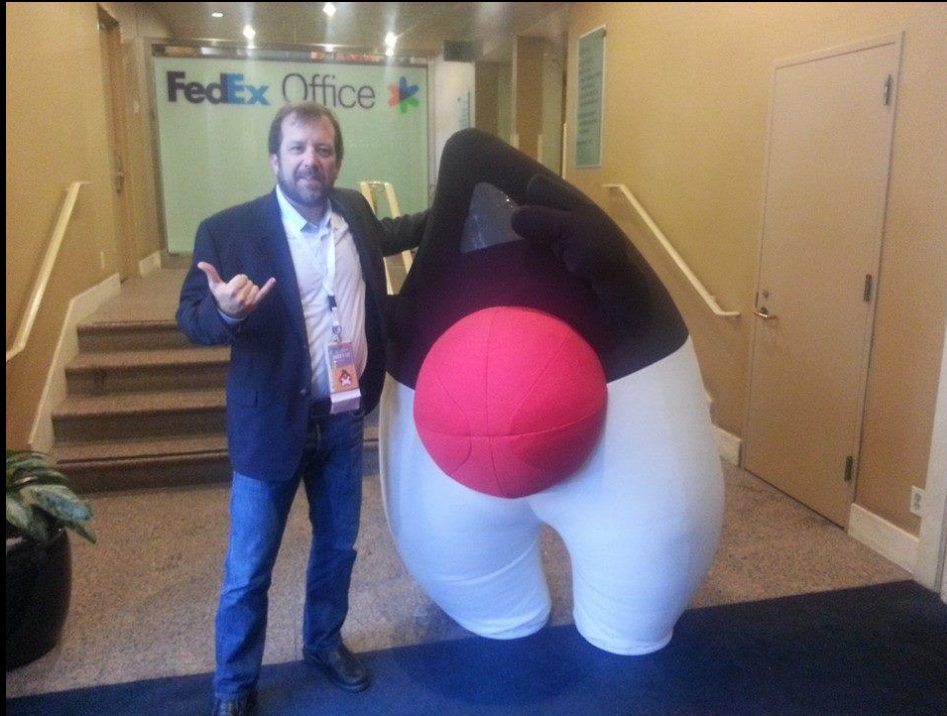
2014

Think About Dirty Kanza

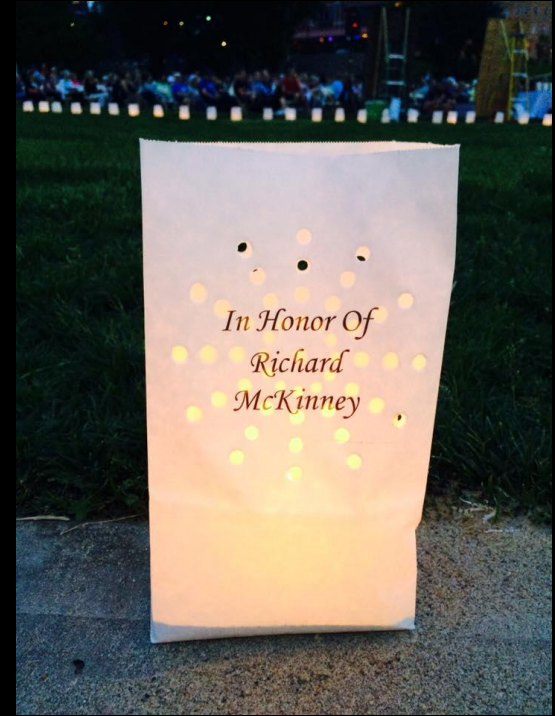


End of 2014

Naw, still
too busy,
maybe
next year



2015



Kavanah

Intention or sincere feeling,
direction of the heart.

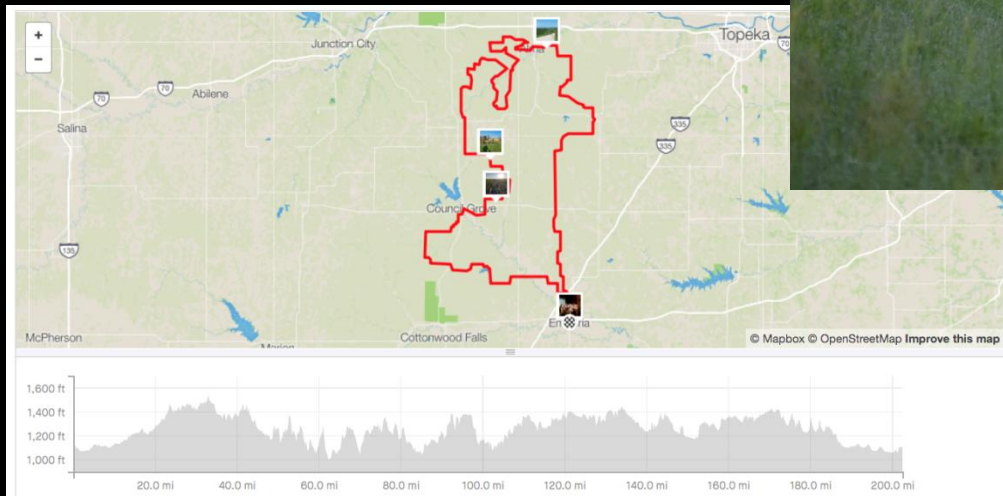
Dirty Kanza

Emporia, Kansas

25, 50, 100, 200 and 350 miles

Early June

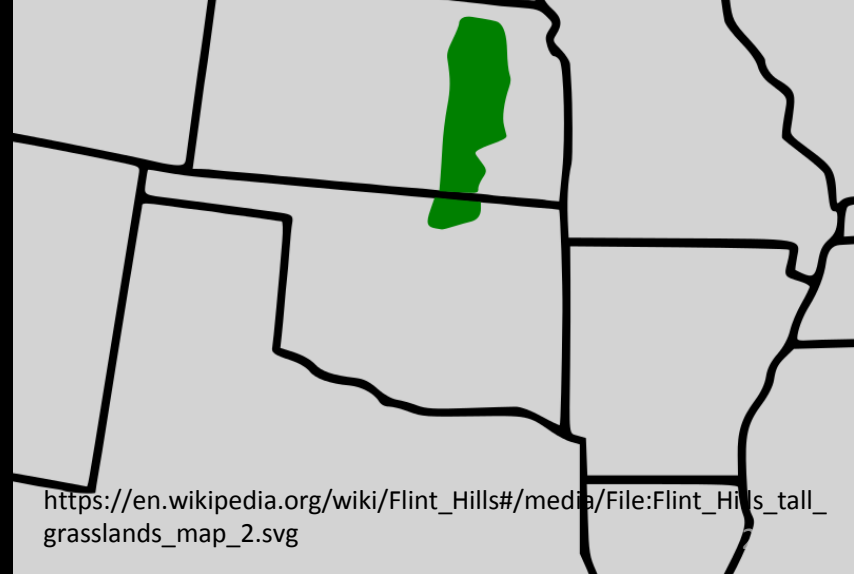
<https://dirtykanza.com>



Aaron Davis: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/sT3jKUxvUUjodqmx8>

Flint Hills

10,000 square mile area.
Covered by water 250M years ago.
Limestone with bands of chert.
As the limestone erodes, the chert remains.



Gravel Events

- Between 25 and 350 miles long.
- Some neutral support, depends on event.
- No outside support allowed.
- Require a great deal of training and preparation.

6 There will be several checkpoints along the route where all participants must check in.

10 Each participant, regardless of event distance, **MUST** have present at the event at least one support crew person to come get them should they need to abandon the event. Multiple riders may share the same support crew. DK200 and DK100 riders who do not have a personal support crew may wish to consider our support crew for-hire program. (See our online registration page for more information). However you decide to meet this requirement, just remember... **WE WILL NOT COME RESCUE YOU. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOU.**

2 Dirty Kanza is a self-supported, bicycle marathon event along the gravel and dirt roads of rural Kansas. For the purpose of this event, "bicycle" is defined as "a vehicle consisting of a frame mounted on two wheels one behind the other, and having a seat, handlebars for steering, two hand-operated brakes, and propelled solely by the operator via two pedals connected to the rear wheel by a chain or belt. "E-Bikes" will be allowed in the 25 and 50-mile distances only.

9 Participants may help other participants with mechanical support, navigational assistance, or by any other means.

7 Cut-off times will be established for reaching and for departing each checkpoint. Any participant not reaching a checkpoint before the established arrival cut-off time will be pulled from the event. Any participant still at a checkpoint after the departure cut-off time will not be allowed to continue past that point. Arrival cut-off times are based on an average speed of 10 mph and are established for the purpose of rider safety. Therefore, these times will be strictly enforced.

Who Does It?

Ashton Lambie

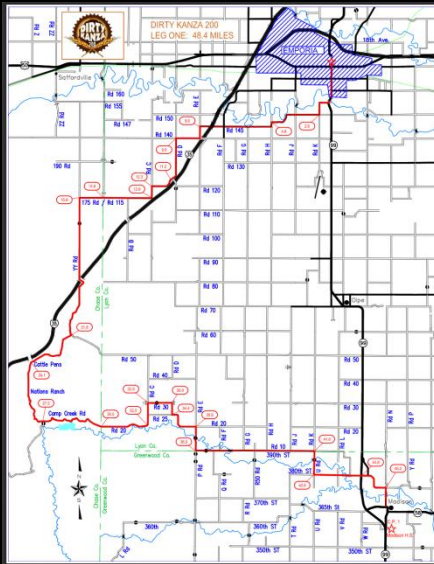


Who Else Does It?

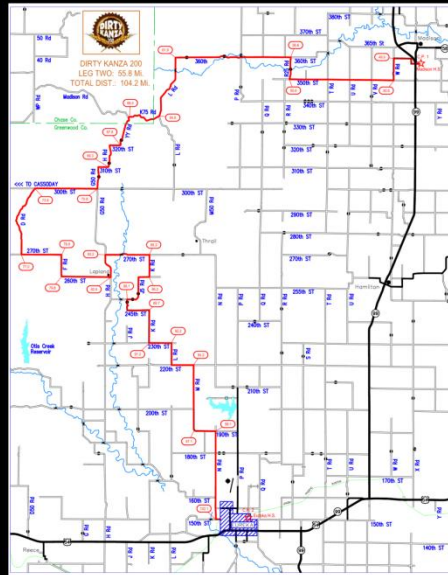


2016 – 2018 Route

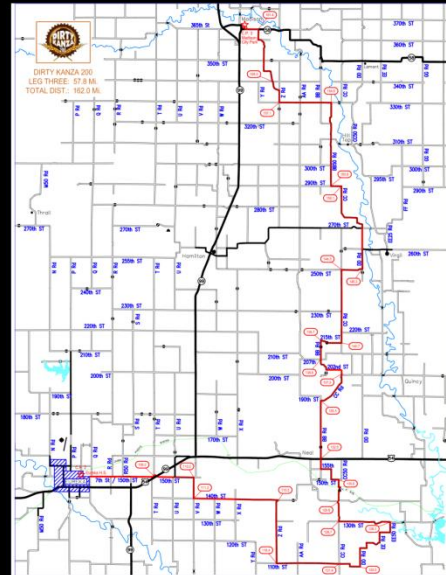
Leg 1



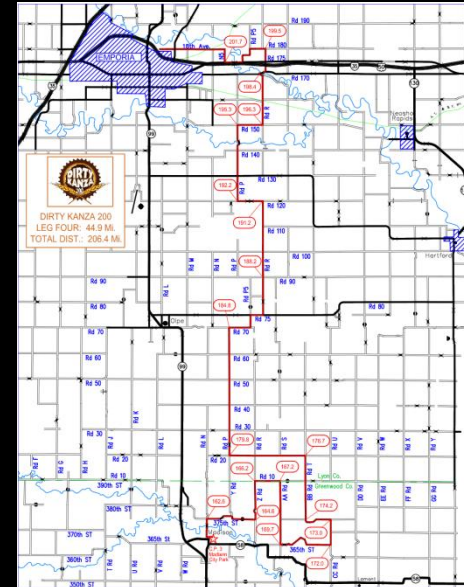
Leg 2



Leg 3



Leg 4



Cue Sheets

5 "A long line of white sails on the sea of grass - as they beat their way slowly, inevitably... bearing young men and women with dreams in their eyes" - *Marshall Davis*

61.3	↶	Left onto L Rd.
64.3	↷	Right onto K-75 No Sign
65.8	↷	Left onto YY Rd.
67.3	↷	Right onto 320th St.
67.7	↶	Left onto H Rd.
68.8	↷	Right onto 310th St. No Sign
69.2	↶	Left onto G50 Rd.
70.2	↷	Right onto 300th St.
73.1	↶	Left onto D Rd. No Sign
76.4	↷	Left onto 270th St.
78.3	↶	Right onto F Rd. No Sign
79.3	↶	Left onto 260th St. No Sign

6 "O dear, this is a hard place to live, this Kansas is, I wonder what in the world will become of all of us, anyway." - *Anna Webster*

81.5	↶	Left onto H Rd.
82.6	↷	Right onto 270th St.
84.7	↷	Right onto K Rd.
85.7	↷	Right onto 260th St.
86.2	↶	Left onto J5 Rd
87.3	↷	Right onto 250th St. No Sign
87.7	↶	Left onto J Rd.
88.3	↶	Left onto 245th St. No Sign
89.3	↶	Right onto K Rd. No Sign
90.8	↷	Left onto 230th St.
91.8	↷	Right onto L Rd.
92.8	↶	Left onto 220th St.

9 "The Kansas spirit is therefore on that finds something exhilarating in the challenge of an extreme difficulty." - *Carl Becker*

130.0	↶	Left onto 150th St.
130.5	↶	Right onto BB50 Rd.
130.8	⚠	Dangerous Bump in Rd.
131.0	↶	Left onto 155th St.
131.5	↷	Right onto BB Rd.
132.0	⚠	Dangerous Highway Crossing
134.8	↷	Right onto CC Rd.
136.6	↶	Continue on CC Rd.
136.8	↶	Left onto 202nd St.
137.5	↷	Right onto BB Rd.
138.2	↶	Continue on BB Rd.
138.8	⚠	Low Water Crossing

10 "The way of the pioneer is always rough." - *Harvey S. Firestone Davis*

139.1	↷	Right onto 215th St.
140.1	↶	Left onto CC Rd.
143.6	↷	Right onto 250th St.
144.6	↶	Left onto DD Rd.
145.6	↶	Continue straight on DD Rd.
146.6	↶	Continue straight on DD Rd.
147.3	↶	Left onto 275th St.
148.1	↷	Right onto CC Rd.
149.5	↶	Left onto 290th St.
150.0	↷	Right onto BB50 Rd.
153.0	↶	Continue straight on BB50 Rd.
154.0	↶	Left onto 330th St.

7 "I felt motion in the landscape, in the fresh heavy blowing wind, and in the Earth itself, as if the shaggy grass were a sort of loose hair, and underneath it bands of wild buffaloes were galloping, galloping." - *Wily Carrion*

93.8	↷	Right onto M Rd.
96.8	↶	Left onto 190th St.
97.8	↷	Right onto N Rd.
100.8	↶	Continue South on N Rd.
101.9	↷	Left onto 150th St.
102.1	↷	Right onto N. Poplar St. Entering Eureka
102.4	↶	Left onto 3rd St.
102.7	CP	Checkpoint #2
102.8	↶	Left onto Main St.
103.0	↷	Right onto E. 7th St.
104.3	↶	Becomes 150th St. Leaving Eureka, KS

8 "...On the plains one's friends have a chance to prove their mettle." - *Buffalo Bill*

107.5	⚠	Dangerous Highway Crossing Continue East on 150th St
109.4	↷	Right onto V Rd.
110.4	↶	Left onto 140th St.
114.4	↷	Hard Right onto Z Rd.
117.5	↶	Left onto 110th St.
120.5	↶	Continue straight on 110th St
125.0	↶	Left onto EE50 Rd.
125.5	↶	Left onto 130th St.
128.0	↷	Right onto CC Rd. No Sign
129.0	↷	Hard right then left to stay on CC Rd.
129.7	⚠	Dangerous Water Crossing

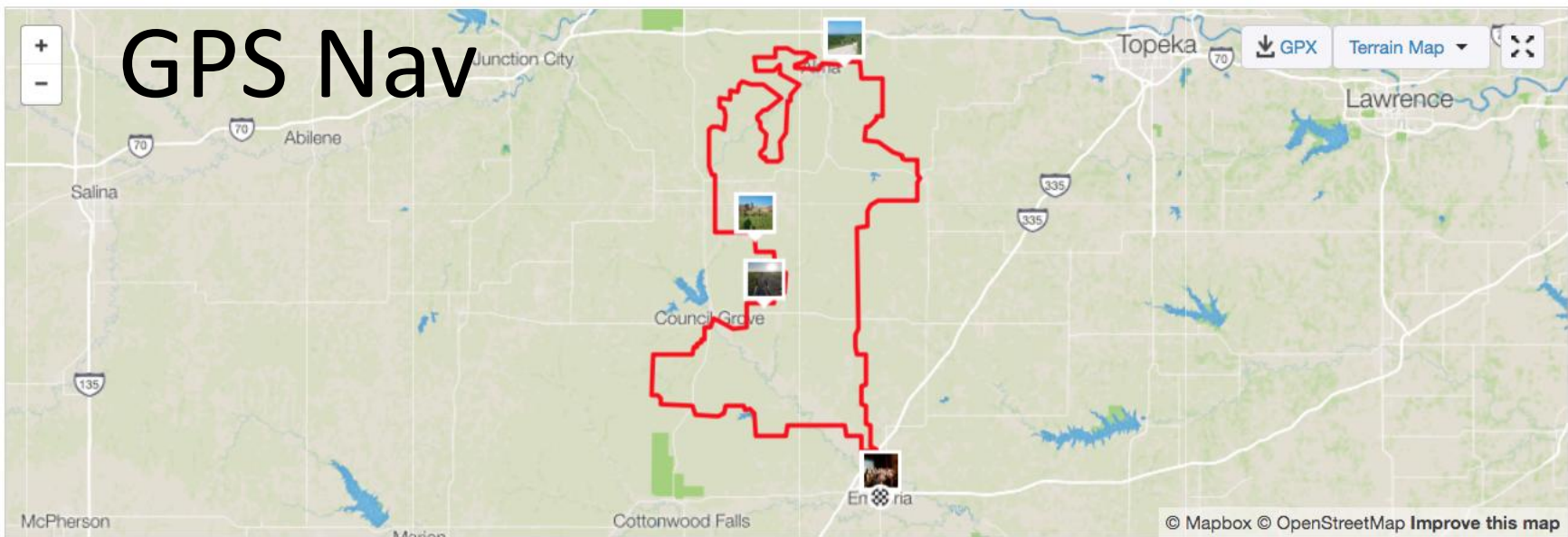
11 "It is easier to go down a hill, but the view is much better at the top." - *Henry word Beecher*

156.5	↷	Right onto Z Rd.
157.1	↶	Bear left
157.7	↶	Left onto 340th St., then Immediate right onto Y25 Rd.
160.2	↶	Left onto 360th St.
160.3	↷	Right onto Y Rd.
160.8	↶	Left onto K-58
161.2	↷	Right to enter city park
161.5	CP	Checkpoint #3
161.5	↶	Continue West onto Main St.
161.6	↷	Right onto 3rd St.
161.8	↶	Left onto Boone Ave.
161.9	↷	Right onto N. 5th St.

12 "I could never resist the call of the trail." - *Buffalo Bill*

162.3	↶	Becomes X Rd. Leaving Madison, KS
162.6	↷	Right onto 375th St.
163.6	↷	Right onto Y Rd.
164.6	↶	Left onto Z Rd.
166.2	↷	Right onto Rd. 10/390th St.
167.2	↷	Right onto AA Rd.
169.7	↶	Left onto 365th St.
172.0	↶	Left onto CC Rd.
173.0	↶	Left onto 375th St.
174.2	↷	Right onto BB Rd.
176.7	↶	Left onto Rd. 20
179.8	↷	Right onto Rd. P

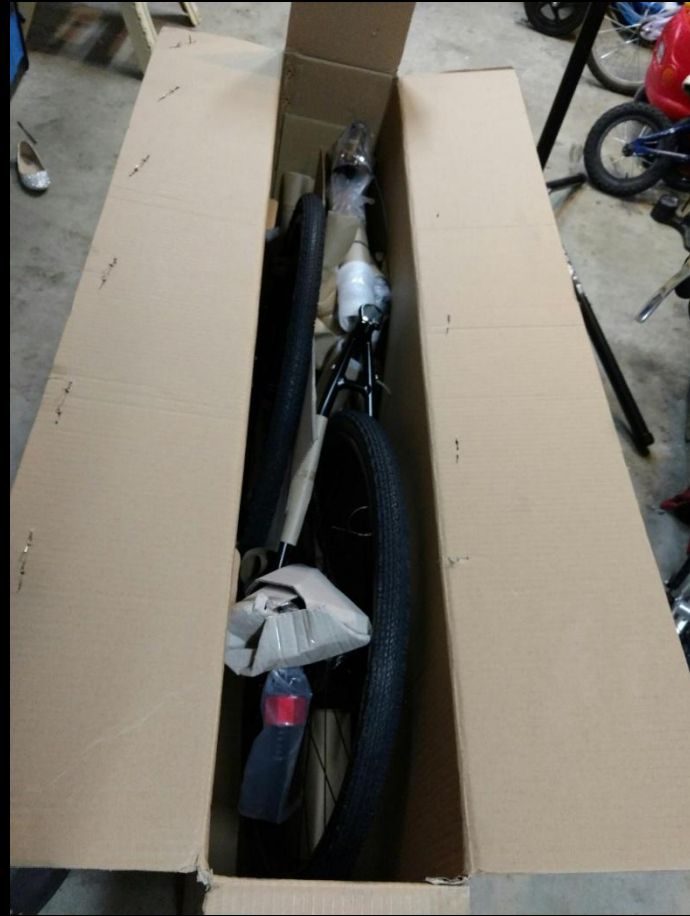
GPS Nav



Project Management

- Procurement
- Modifications
- Testing
- Deployment Planning
- Rollout

Procurement

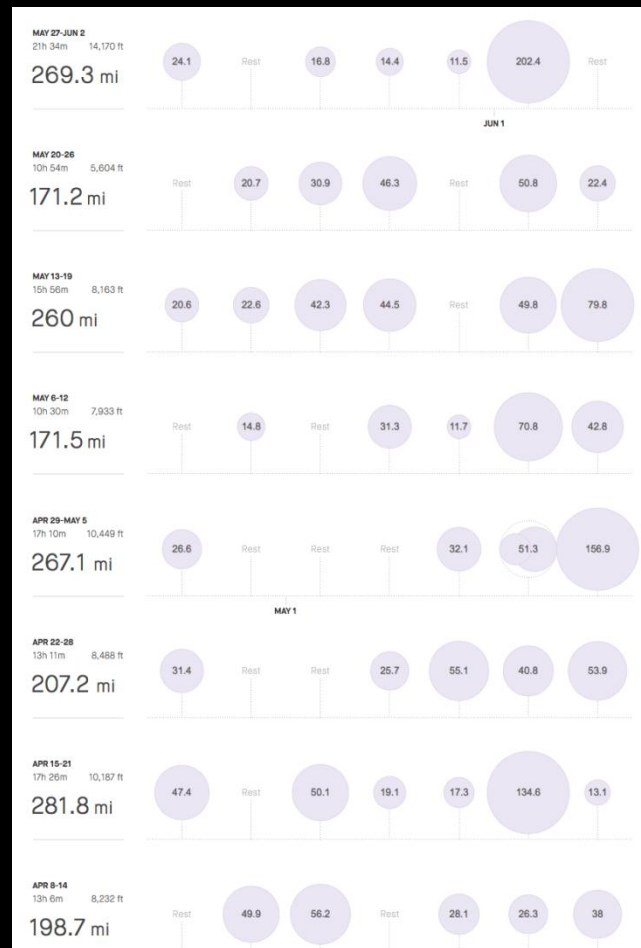


Key Modifications

- Bontrager Montrose Comp saddle
- Specialized CG-R carbon seatpost
- 12-36 rear cassette
- Salsa cowbell type 3, double-wrapped, handlebars
- Roval wheelset (tubeless)
- Teravail Cannonball – 700×38
- Aerobars
- Redshift ShockStop Suspension Stem
- Revelate Tangle frame bag



Test



Deployment Planning

DK 2019 Checklist

Ga - Bike Gear Start list

- 2 headlamps / 1 tail light
- 1 Bostons peak (249)
- 1 sunn sps. unit
- 1 pair track glasses / 1 pair untracked
- 1 rain jacket
- 1 bottle Tailwind (150) bottle Scratchalls (14)
- 8 electrolyte tablets / 8 tins
- 4 Israel CapSules 1030a - cp #1 1030, 4 miles
- 1 Camelbak (1.5L) Altra - 1 water bladder (1L)
- front end kit - 1 battery pack
- Chainis Outer (9m) - 1 change clothes
- old sock / surgical gloves - Food / hygiene / ice
- mud slick - Tubes / CO2 (as needed)
- 3 tubes - wet wipes
- 5 CO2 cartridges
- mini handlamp 49a (Neutral water @ 121m)
- 1 spare derailleur Altra Vista
- 1 spare set brake pads 630a - cp #2 1030 / 51 miles
- 1 tire patch kit 60mm
- 1 boot - 1 battery pack
- 1 multitool - 1 light jacket
- 1 tire change levers - 1 headlamp
- 15 small bottle Crank Luber - 1 change clothes
- duct tape, zip ties, rubber bands - Food / hygiene / repair / beer?
- ear buds - wet wipes
- eon phone / \$
- TP (2m)



Rollout



The Good



When It's Good



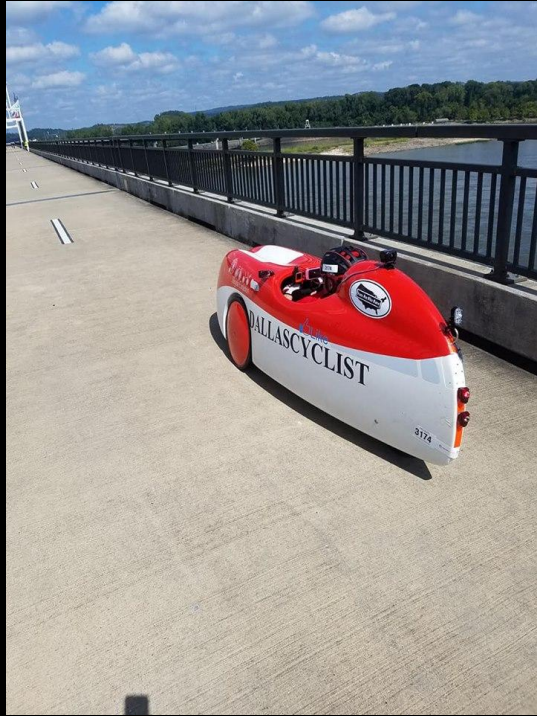
Make Some Friends



And Ride a Lot With Them



Cool Stuff



Unusual and Funny Things



We Get To Eat a Lot



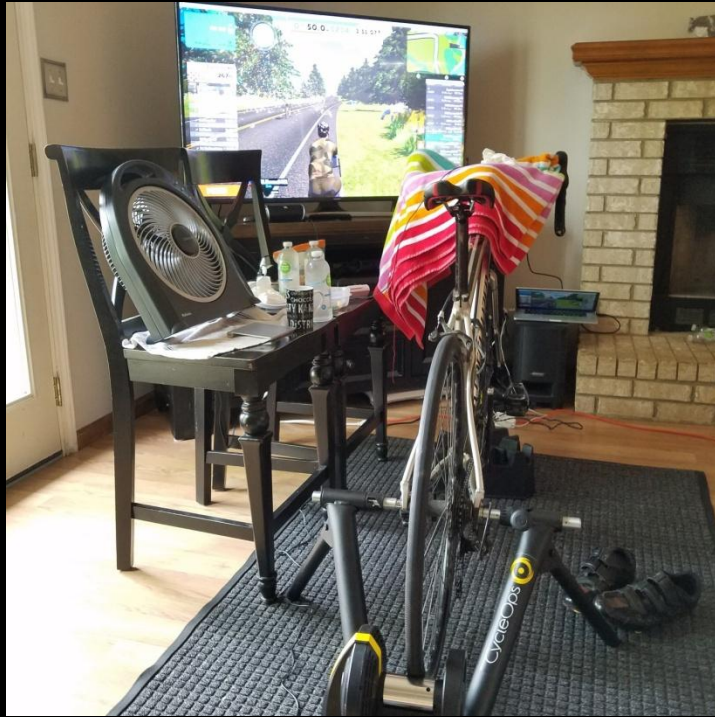
The Bad

Sometimes, bad things happen

March 2018



DK Training on Zwift



June
2018



Feb 2019



How It Was Supposed to Go



WTF



Sometimes It Gets Ugly



photo courtesy of <http://www.swiftwick.com/sw/cycling/kanza-does-not-care->

When things don't go according to plan



Sometimes We Hit Walls

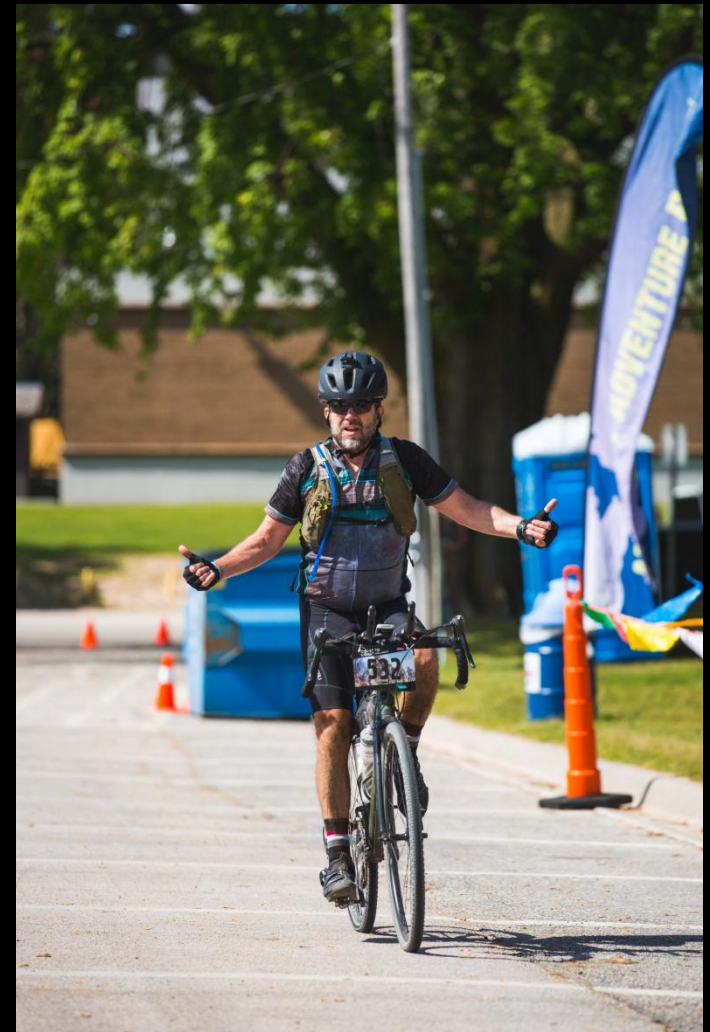
- 2nd leg 2016, 2019 DirtyKanza
- 3rd leg 2017, 2018 “
- Mile 120 2018 GravelWorlds
- “ 100 2019 “



It's ok, Just Keep Going



Find a Way to Finish (no matter the hour)



Enjoy It For a Short While



Pack It Back Up



Try Again

- Learn from the mistakes.
- Rinse and repeat.

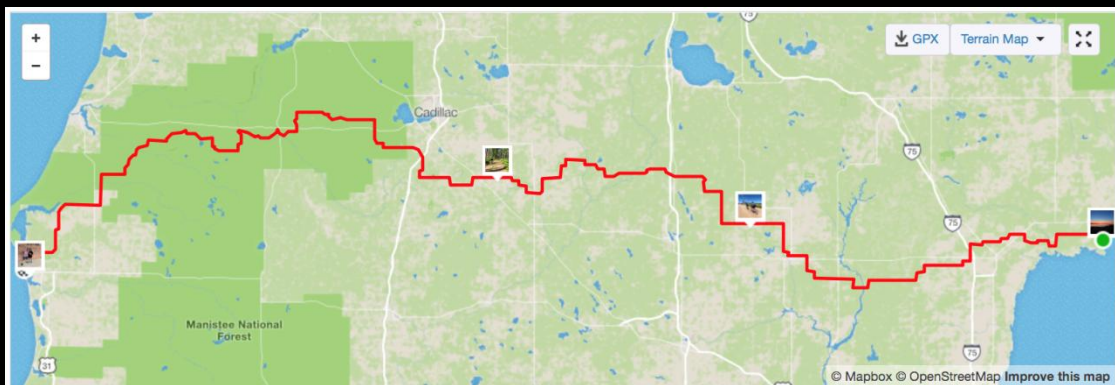
Coast to Coast

Au Gres to Luddington, Michigan

100 and 210 miles

Late June

<https://micoasttocoast.com>



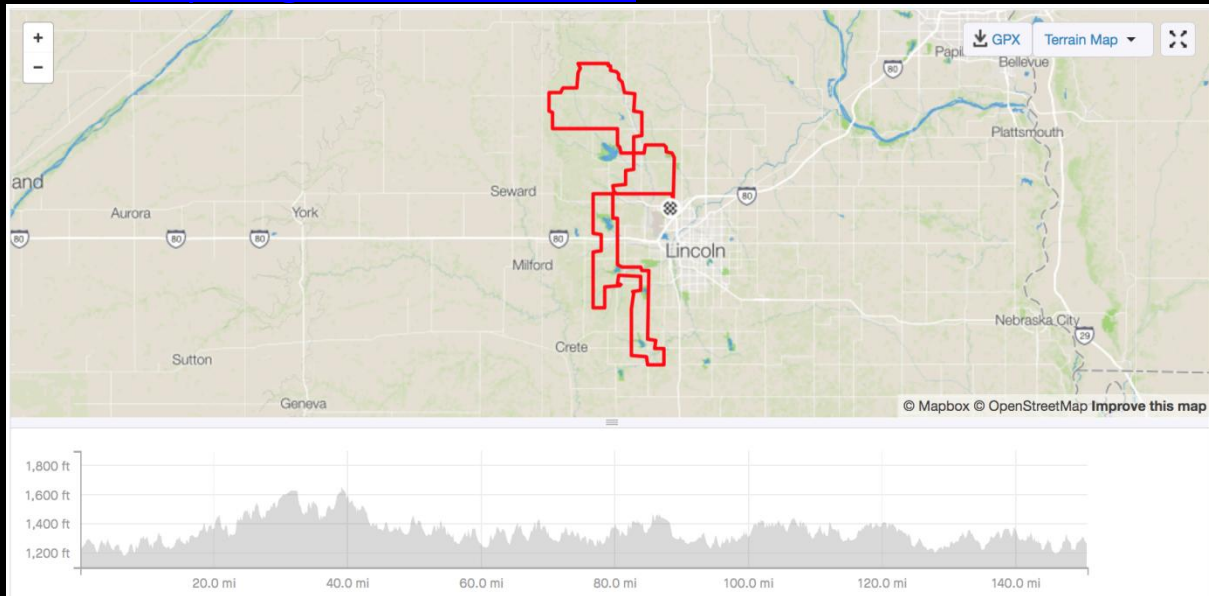
Gravel Worlds

Lincoln Nebraska

75 or 150 miles

Mid-August

<https://gravel-worlds.com>



More Gravel to Ride

- Dirty Reiver, UK <https://dirtyreiver.co.uk>
- The Rift, Iceland <https://www.therift.bike>
- Iowa Wind and Rock
<https://iowawindandrock.com>
- The Epic, Missouri <http://epic150.com>
- Land Run, Oklahoma <http://epic150.com>
- Many more

Lessons Learned

A photograph of a muddy trail with people and bicycles, illustrating the 'Lessons Learned' text. The scene shows a dirt path that has become a muddy river. In the background, several people are visible, some with bicycles, navigating the difficult terrain. The foreground shows a large puddle of brown mud and water. The surrounding area is lush with green vegetation and trees under a clear blue sky.

- Choose your line carefully
- Salad does not travel real well
- Bikes float

More Takeaways

- Things don't always go according to plan, don't worry about it.
- Bad can be turned into good.

- <https://iamfortress.net/2016/06/20/2016-dirty-kanza/>
- <https://iamfortress.net/2017/06/13/2017-dirty-kanza/>
- <https://iamfortress.net/2018/06/08/dirtykanza-training-on-zwift/>
- <https://iamfortress.net/2019/06/08/the-dirty-kanza-effect/>



Contact Info

Twitter: [@ABikeMonkey](#)

Work:

<http://symas.com>

Email:

smckinney@apache.org

Blog:

<https://iamfortress.net>

Strava:

<https://www.strava.com/athletes/9862720>