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## RAWHYDE'S WORLD OF ADVENTURE

# GETTING THE MOST

**N**ot long ago, Jim Hyde invited *ADVMoto* to experience *RawHyde's World of Adventure*, encompassing an entire week on board Hyde's highly acclaimed traveling caravan across southern California's Mojave Desert and through Death Valley's expansive terrain. Hyde's BMW-approved training academy is nearing its 10th year in business and has evolved into a world-class destination for ADV riders of all skill levels. They also chase *Dakar* every year in South America.

Our week-long journey was a cross-section of the ADV riding universe, including *RawHyde* students and instructors, aftermarket manufacturer representatives, and media correspondents. The event also included testing six of the latest ADV bikes, all completely outfitted with the gear necessary to really get to know these models. We were encouraged to push the fleet to its limits, incorporating real world aspects to help validate our findings.

*RawHyde Ranch* is an amazing piece of property in the foothills north of Los Angeles that Hyde has transformed into a Mecca for off-road training. Miles of perfectly groomed single-track trails wind up and down over rolling terrain. Upon arrival, a new visitor gets the impression they're at a special place, built from the ground up for our type of riding.

*RawHyde* is a bona fide off-road riding academy with a progressive curriculum, including an introduction to adventure riding, and increasingly more advanced skill training.

The *Introduction* is a weekend off-road skills training program for beginners. It's not easy, but for some it's also an opportunity to reconnect with others or to get a niece or nephew out on a bike for the first time.

*Base Camp Alpha (BCA)* is more than just an outpost staging area



## RawHyde Adventures



# OUT OF EVERY MILE

Story by Scotty Breauxman Photos by Alfonse Palaima and RawHyde Adventures

*Expedition CV* is a real life test of rider, equipment and how to balance the dynamics of both.

outside of Trona, CA. It's a two-day package where new grads of *RawHyde's* intro course navigate from the *RawHyde* facilities across the Mojave Desert to a stationary bivouac location on the opposite side of Southern California. This *Dakaresque* feeling gives the *BCA* its appeal. Tucked into a semi-remote canyon, the *BCA* has a shipping container converted into a chuck wagon, along with a military style tent and outhouse. It's over 100 miles to *BCA*, half of those off-road. Everyone sets up their own tents while homemade chili simmers and the "Campfire Girls" sing. In the morning you find a gateway leading to trail routes in several picturesque directions.

## Expedition CV\*

"CV" is the third stage of Hyde's process. It's a five-day program that prepares you to ride off-road into the wild where you stay for a few nights. Riders are tested in tight, sandy canyons, washes and old jeep trails before twisting through gnarled rock gardens and teaming up to move their bikes through some especially rugged terrain. There's navigation, team building, and roadside maintenance as well as a little expected drama as riders learn to manhandle their big enduros through the harsh environment. CV is the total package, everything a rider would need to prepare for a real off-road ADV trip. For expert riders, it's a great way to tune your game and ride with some talented coaches. CV includes workshops and discussions for riders to hone their adventure skills with the latest equipment, nutrition, packing, first aid and survival techniques.



**CV** is the total package, everything a rider would need to prepare for a real off-road ADV trip.

It's time to set out for two nights in the bush, albeit pampered by Anna and Julia, gourmet cooks traveling in 4x4s. The group heads out across a long narrow lakebed just in time to be buzzed by fighter jets in training. Take a left turn up a tight, twisty canyon wash, make the water crossing and from here it all gets pretty technical for a big bike. If you make it this far, next stop is lunch at noted landmark, Barker Ranch, the site where Charles Manson was captured.

Next, riders test the rock gardens where a few bikes are expected to go down. Some lose their "beginner" status in these sections and come out the other end of the pass as intermediate riders. Although quite manageable for expert riders these rock gardens are also a great test for the latest aftermarket wheels, skid plates, shocks, pegs, and luggage. Ouch! There goes a stock GS rim!

Jim Hyde has his heart in sharing the adventure that comes with off pavement riding.

Upstart moto-journalist Sam Bendell gets a crash course riding deep sand en route to Base Camp Alpha.



Finally, after a day of relatively slow riding you'll reach a rocky outcrop with just enough light to set up camp. The caravan ladies cook stew while the "Campfire Girls" sing cover songs. You are very far from any sort of paved roads and hours from civilization.

Days blur together at *RawHyde*, and you laugh at how easy it is to forget that it's already Friday. You've spent the entire week riding and getting accustomed to life on the trail, and aren't ready for it to end. Still, you pack your bike and tend to your coffee with your comrades, preparing for a full day of riding back to the *Dakar Bar* at the *RawHyde Ranch*.

## Demo Program

New for 2014 is the *ADV Demo Program*: RawHyde has outfitted one of every current model ADV bike available in the U.S. with the aftermarket parts and gear needed to take these beasts way past the pavement. Per day demos are \$500 to ride and compare multiple bikes and, if you end up buying a bike from a local dealer, you get your \$500 back. Anyone seriously in the market for a new ADV bike would be well advised to try this program.

RawHyde's new demo program allows riders to test ride properly modified ADV bikes in real world off road setting. Don't try asking your local dealer to do that.

## Summary

*RawHyde* is "top of bucket-list" material, something special that shouldn't be missed. The host facilities at the California location are first-rate and the trails are pristine. The enthusiasm is contagious and the experience produces a lifetime of memories. Taking some time out of your year to experience this kind of camaraderie and nature while improving your skills is worth every penny. Jim Hyde is a great host and someone who genuinely cares about sharing the thrill and stoke of the ADV lifestyle. And, if *BCA* and *Expedition CV* aren't challenging enough for you, there's always their *Continental Divide* or *Chasing the Dakar* rides. **ADV**

\*CV (Cur-ric-u-lum Vi-tae): A short account of one's career and qualifications prepared typically by an applicant for a position. A resume. Latin: "course of (one's) life."

**RawHyde-OffRoad.com**