

Road-weary bicyclists sometimes refuse to go on without spot repairs.

San Antonio to Alberta ...

By SUSAN HOPKINS

Battalion Reporter

There aren't too many students who would make up their minds to pedal 2,000 miles from San Antonio to Canada -- especially if they didn't own bicycles.

But for Texas A&M University seniors Bobby Jenkins, David Hime and Matt Burns, it didn't matter that they had never ridden bicycles seriously before they took off on a 31-day ride across the United States last summer.

"We had talked about wanting to get away from things since we were sophomores at A&M," Hime said, "and riding bikes seemed like the cheapest way to go.

"We wanted to ride through the mountains, and Canada seemed like a good place, so we decided to go for it," he said.

The novice riders began last spring planning for costs and supplies, and referred to a bicycling magazine for the best bike routes to take. Jenkins said the threesome also began what they thought was a very vigorous training program. He said, "We would ride about 20 miles down Highway six every now and then, and really feel like we'd had a good work out when we got done." However, he said, they later realized that those rides down Highway six were easy compared to the "real thing", with 40-pound packs on each bike to slow them down.

Nevertheless, the men said, they left San Antonio right on schedule -- May 19 -- hunched over brand new bicycles, with their heads cocked, eyes on the road and hearts set for Canada.

Each bike held two 20-pound packs which draped over the rear wheels and contained only bare necessities -- tents, gas stoves, pots, pans, plates and sleeping bags. On each handle bar set was a small pack full of personal belongings, maps and money (\$300 each).

Hime said the first week on the road was miserable for the group, as they forced aching legs to prod on through West Texas' scorching heat and blazing winds. "Saying the area was desolate is putting it nicely," Jenkins said.

"If there was ever a time we wanted to call it quits and go home, it was around San Angelo," Jenkins said. "But it became a challenge after awhile, and we really wanted to do it (keep riding)," he said.

Hime and Burns strike a relaxed pose which symbolizes the fact that they are almost halfway there.



David Hime and Matt Burns are pictured sitting in front of a bicycle repair shop. The travelers had to go 100 miles out of their way to get a bike fixed.

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