



Photo by Allan Hubbard

ROLLIN' WITH IT — South African brothers Anthony Lawler, left, and Greg Lawler venture along Loop 286 Friday on their way through Texas toward California. The duo are riding a total of 3,200 miles as they see the United States as few have.

South African cyclists riding through America

By Allan Hubbard

The Paris News

Bob and Tallie Bush of Bogata got some unexpected visitors Thursday afternoon.

Anthony and Greg Lawler of Natal, South Africa.

The brothers are on a trek across the United States from Miami Beach, Florida to Santa Barbara, California.

Their only source of transportation? Bicycles!

"South Africa is going through a transition period at the moment. We're using this time to see the world, to do something no one else has done," said Greg.

As this is their first time to the states, the brothers took the advice of friends to see the country from the roadside.

And believe it or not, the two aren't trained cyclists.

"Before leaving Miami, the furthest we'd ever ridden was 65 miles. Now we ride about 100 miles per day, resting on Sunday

and Monday," said Anthony, the younger of the two brothers, ages 19 and 22.

Having ridden 1,450 miles in just 15 days, they're almost halfway through with their estimated 3,200 mile trip.

After literally riding out of the sand in Miami Beach, the men have ridden through Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and now Texas. They stop mostly at churches, where they can usually pitch a tent and stay for the night.

In Donaldsville, Georgia, they were treated to their first iced tea, learned to play softball, and helped with a vacation bible school. A logging truck ran them off the road in Louisiana, where they also encountered poor road conditions, which caused some damage to one of their bikes.

"Wherever we go, people point or shake their heads and hoop and holler at us," Anthony

said, when asked what the public reaction to their adventure has been.

Bob and Tallie gave some points of interest and made contacts for them in towns they'd be traveling through in the next few days, helping prove to them that everything they'd heard about Southern hospitality was true.

The two plan to rest awhile in California, and then make their way to Canada, where they have some family and friends to visit.

With no time constraints of any kind looming over them, they later plan to kayak and rock climb in the Grand Canyon, then wind surf across the Straits of Gibraltar from Africa to Europe.

These are adventures most people only dream of being able to do.

"If we can do this, we can do anything," said Greg. "This show's what you can do if you put your mind to it."

Mind, body, and soul, that is.

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