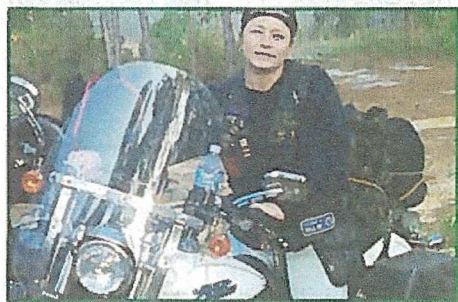


ROAD TRIPPIN'

AirZone To The Rescue

By Huustin



Touring on a motorcycle is in a class all its own! We're the "forgotten few". If you travel in a motor home or pull a camper trailer; the amount of equipment available is almost unlimited. As "bikers" our options are extremely limited.

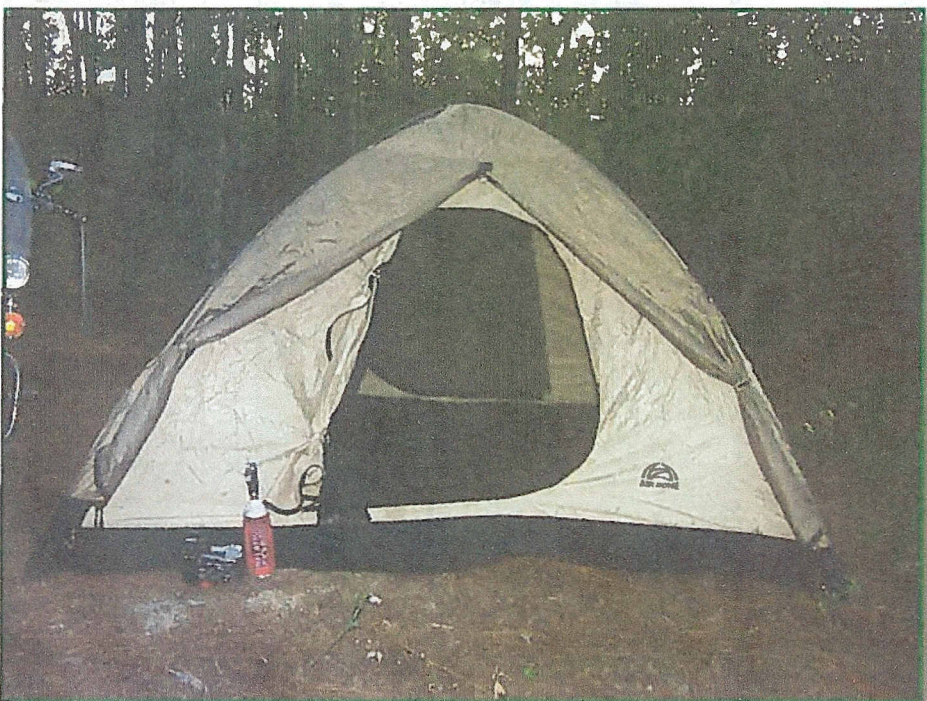
Light weight, durability and pack-ability is what counts. I've found an answer to at least the tent problem. The Air Zone inflatable is just what the doctor ordered! I was looking for a solution to the cumbersome conventional pole tent design. I wanted a tent that could be set up in a New York minute. After years of searching, I hit on the AirZone Recreation web site. BINGO!!! I was so impressed with what I saw and what the rep told me, I decided to ride out and see the tent for myself. Now riding to Kelowna, British Columbia in September is no trip around the block. I ran into some frog-chokin'-side-ways rain in North Dakota with temps in the low to mid 40's. Just try to put up a conventional dome tent with fiberglass poles in sideways rain.

Arriving in Kelowna, I was welcomed by the whole AirZone team. Marc and Tim gave me the grand tour of the facility, did several demos on how to use the various inflation systems, showed me all the materials that are used in the construction of the tents and set me up at a local campground so I could try the tent out for a couple days.

I had some time before I had to be back, and I had always wanted to visit Monument Valley down by the Utah, Arizona border so I headed south. Every night the AirZone tent proved itself. After a long day in the saddle it was great to be able to have the tent set up quickly using the air compressor. The real beauty of this inflatable system didn't come into play until Glenn Canyon, Utah.

I worked my way cross-country to southern Utah, picking up Highway 95 South heading to Monument Valley, WOW what a ride!! After heading south on 95 for about 46 miles my back tire blew out. The last little town I went through was Hankville, Utah which was 46 miles back and the only sign of life was last weeks road kill. So there I sat on the side of a deserted road in the middle of Glenn Canyon.

The wind had been picking up all day, by now it was blowing through the canyon at a pretty good pace and the sky was looking as bad as today's economy. The temperature was dropping fast. Looking for place to pitch the tent, I spotted a spot about 200 feet off the road just as the first drops of nickel size rain began to fall.



Throwing gear off the bike I grabbed the tent case and ran over to the area. The rain was beginning to come down in earnest by now and the wind had picked up big time. Using the CO2 bottle to inflate the tent for the first time, I inflated the tent in about 30 seconds. Running back to the bike I grabbed the duffel bag and threw it in. I had gotten somewhat wet, but all in all I had faired pretty good. Not having to spend 20 minutes or more in the hollowing wind and rain trying to put up a tent was a lifesaver! It was less then five minutes from the time it began to rain until I was in the tent. I organize my gear and settled in for the duration, laying there listing to the wind and rain.

As I laid there pondering my tire problem, the storm continued to intensify. By dark the lighting, thunder, wind and rain was raging. The tent was swaying and twisting unbelievably and I kept thinking what Marc had told me about how the material the tent was made of was the strongest nylon tent material made and how all the seems were double stitched and reinforced. He told me that the material could hold a cubic foot of standing water before it would begin to leak. I was sure hoping he wasn't exaggerating. By midnight the storm was out of control. The tent was being whipped around so bad that if I sat up the sides and top would slap my face and the rain driven by the wind was pounding the tent like blasts from a shotgun! The tent was taking a severe beating from both the wind and the driving rain. So far everything was holding and no leaks. As the night drew on, the wind increased to the point that I was getting concerned that the bike might be blown over! I didn't get much sleep that night between worrying about the tent holding together and listening for the crash of the bike.

The storm raged on for two more days. By the third day the wind calmed down and by noon it had decreased significantly, but the rain showed no signs of letting up. The last morning brought light drizzle and cool temperatures but at least I could get outside of the tent assess any damage. The tent had stood up to everything that mother nature had thrown at it. The tent was everything Marc and Tim had said it was and more!

Hope to see ya on the road. Upright that is!
Have a question or comment?
RoadTrippinByHuustin@gmail.com

