



The Toyota FJ Cruiser crew of Texan Jessica Jenkins and Tennesseean Carolyn Garner stop at Worthington Glacier. On their first rally, the “novice rallyists” were first in class.

visibility was about a quarter-mile. Coming into Prince George, one bike developed an oil leak and we stayed with him, and two others, until a dealership was located. The rider elected to try for the dealer, we followed, then handed off to Sweep 1 (with a bike carrier) to wait for repairs. The dealer fixed a cracked oil line with only about a two-hour delay. Somewhere north of Prince George, the skies became noticeably less smoky — pale blue, with small white clouds. Around Rally Mile 765 we crossed Pine Pass with views of huge formations of solid rock, folded here and there by geologic forces, then worn away by past glaciers.

Day Three: Dawson Creek, B.C., to Watson Lake, Yukon Territory — about 620 miles. “Old Alaska Highway” was the first TSD of the day at RM 918. Along the way we crossed the only remaining wood trestle bridge from 1942. A grading crew was working in the TSD — very smooth gravel, somewhat deep in spots — and then there was the grader! Then narrow 6 percent drop, hairpin and a slippery little hillclimb to a

checkpoint. Car 4 was the only “0”.

Back to the “new” highway, into Fort St. John (founded 1792). “Looks like Kansas to me, Toto” was the next TSD, and the rolling hills were a contrast to the previous days mountainous terrain. Onto the Alaska Highway again, more construction and lots of RCMP. North to Fort Nelson, and conversations with eastbound travelers reported the “road covered with hail, safe speed 20 mph,” and to the bikes with us: “Lots of places have closed, and the boys are having a hard time finding gas.” The reply from Tennessee’s Jeff Brisendine: “As long as we stay ahead of that big blue Dodge, we’ll be OK.”

At RM 1,254 we have a view of an unusual rock outcropping, Indian Head Rock, resembling a chief in full headdress, hanging off a replica of Yosemite’s Half Dome. At RM 1,283, in Stone Mountain Park, we pass Summit Lake and the highest pavement on the Alaska Highway, 4,247 feet elevation, with reports of caribou here earlier in the day.

A favorite and sometimes necessary fuel stop is Toad River Lodge, at

RM 1,315, with its collection of pastries and thousands of caps donated by visitors. We are calculating fuel range for the bikes. The KTM is safely 200 miles, the other two with us a bit more. There will be fuel at Northern Rockies Lodge in 81 miles. There might be fuel at Liard River, Coal River and Contact Creek. Our destination of Watson Lake is 200 miles.

RM 1,338 finds a momma moose and calf along the route. In Muncho Lake Park, the bighorn stone sheep are out for most of the rally — hidden from us in the rain. Black bear, a bison herd, with calves just slightly smaller than the bear. Liard Hot Springs is well populated as we reset odometer at the start of a DIY section. Just up the road, bison have blocked the highway, stopping the bikes and cars (seems the pavement holds some daytime heat into the evening).

The photo-op is interrupted by the big highway rigs — exhaust brakes rattling a low staccato, slowing, big bison yielding to the bigger trucks — then all proceed, for now. We’ll have more photo-ops, with solo bulls ignoring traffic, the cows and calves a bit