ROB MACCACHREN
ON THE 50TH SCORE BAJA 1000
CANDID TALES OF HIS RACE HISTORY AND “ADDICTION” TO THE SCORE BAJA 1000

TEAM PAPAS & BEER’S NEW TROPHY TRUCK EFFORT FOR 2018
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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL OFF-ROAD RACING
John Hodel, 56, of Southern California is on a mission. He is planning on racing the Ironman Pro Motorcycle class during the 50th Anniversary SCORE Baja 1000. With only a small chase team for support across the Baja Peninsula, and in weather that can be as troubling as the free-range cattle and over-zealous fans, Hodel is taking on the challenge for a good cause. While some may call racing the Ironman class madness, Hodel sees it as a brother’s duty to a fallen Navy veteran. In either case, his story began in a twist of fate.
A BROTHER’S LOVE

“I was 7-years old when my oldest brother, Mark, was killed in Vietnam by enemy fire, and I’ve always wanted to do something meaningful for him,” Hodel said. “As the years went by I thought about running triathlons or something Ironman-like for Mark. Then one day when I was filling up with gas and started to stare at an old window sticker on my truck, a leftover from the 40th Annual Baja 1000 I raced.”

Hodel got an idea, but what he did next sealed the deal. “I went home and looked up the exact year Mark had died in battle in Vietnam,” said Hodel. He realized that this year’s 50th anniversary of the SCORE Baja 1000 race coincided within four months of the 50th anniversary of Mark’s death -- and the connection couldn’t be ignored.

That was all Hodel needed to start his journey. Racing the 50th SCORE Baja 1000 looked like it was meant to be, yet he knew he had a lot of work ahead if he was going to have a serious chance at finishing it without teammates to share in the riding. But now at least, he had somewhat of a plan.

FORMING A FOUNDATION

Hodel has a lot of motorcycle seat time under his belt, and he had raced the SCORE Baja 500 and SCORE Baja 1000 seven times, and he once rode 18,000 miles alone on an adventure throughout British Columbia and America just to see the world before he was too old to do it. So his decision to challenge the SCORE
Baja 1000 on a motorcycle was not a fool’s attempt. It was a risk he is willing to accept in an effort to keep his brother’s memory alive.

Furthermore, Hodel knew what happens when you’re riding for hundreds and hundreds of miles. Your arms begin to feel like jelly, you’re hungry, dehydrated, and barely able to keep your eyes open as you’re picking bugs out of your teeth. His commitment, however, never wavered in that regard and as he told SCORE Journal, the plan continues to gain momentum leading up to the race.

In 2016 Hodel launched a 501c non-profit foundation called Stand For Vets, in memory of Mark. It was formed to bring some sense of normalcy to wounded veterans. Today, it serves as the catalyst for his bigger vision, which is to find solutions for veterans so they can live with dignity. StandForVets.org became Hodel’s cause and his SCORE Baja 1000 attempt is the way he can promote it, yet he stressed that no percent of the donations raised will be used for his SCORE Baja 1000 goal. “One hundred percent of the money being raised goes to the veterans. I’ll underwrite the race myself if I have to,” said Hodel. “I thought the SCORE Baja 1000 would be best for the foundation if I raced it solo. It’s a better story to draw attention. I raced Baja on a motorcycle many times, but never more than five or six hours at a time.”

The question remained, can Hodel do it? “I expect to finish the race,” he said. “The pain that I might experience from racing it solo is only temporary for me,
nothing like what these vets go through every day of their lives.” Yet, the dangers of racing Baja are real and like most riders Hodel had first hand experiences with mishaps and injuries.

“In 1995 I was riding the SCORE Baja 1000 for a KTM team at night and I saw a single headlight in the distance,” said Hodel. “I was riding the pavement at full throttle and didn’t slow down, it turned out to be a truck facing me off the side of the road with its driver’s headlight burned out. I was about 100 yards away when I swerved to avoid hitting the truck. I flew off into the desert and crashed badly.” Lucky Hodel was able to jump back on, start the bike, and he continued the race until the next stage.
THE ORGANIZATION IS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH ANY WHEEL CHAIR OR PROSTHETIC MANUFACTURER, BUT IS DEDICATED TO HELPING VETERANS GET THE HELP THEY NEED.
There’s still the fear of the unknown during the SCORE Baja 1000, however, that hangs in the air, especially when the sun goes down. “There’s no way I can fully prepare for the SCORE Baja 1000 solo, there’s just so many variables that can happen,” said Hodel. “I raced a lot of sections of Baja, but I have no idea what will happen from Ensenada to La Paz. Every silt bed, every rock, or every guy that tosses something at you for laughs can put a rider down.”

WITH PURE DETERMINATION, HODEL PLANS TO RUN IN THE IRONMAN DIVISION AT THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SCORE BAJA 1000
AGE IS NOT A FACTOR

Beyond it all, Hodel’s positive attitude is almost contagious. He’s intelligent, sincere, and a formidable believer in putting his faith in other’s hands. He’s not twenty-something either; however, he’s nearly twice the age of most of the motorcyclists that have attempted Baja solo. Fortunately, Hodel is in great physical shape and spends a significant amount of time in the seat of a Honda CRF450X that will likely be his ride at the Baja 1000. “I don’t know if the bike will remain stock or modified, but I do have some help from Tim Morton (Baja Bound Adventures), who will be prepping the bike,” said Hodel.

Even though, he may be alone on the bike when he’s traversing Mexico in November, those that support him know that the spirit of his brother Mark will be with him every mile of the way. As Hodel sees it, “Fifty years after Mark’s life ended in Vietnam, he is still helping his fellow veterans through the Stand for Vets foundation.”

For more information on Hodel’s journey and Stand For Vets, visit the website at www.standforvets.org
**2017 Race Schedule**

+ The Four-race series for cars, trucks, UTVs, motorcycles, quads will be featured in all SCORE Baja races.

+ 2017 SCORE World Desert Championship with EL Rey Network coverage and global syndication.

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**June 1-4**

**49TH SCORE BAJA 500**

Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico

**Mar. 30-April 2**

**31ST SCORE SAN FELIPE 250**

San Felipe, Baja California, Mexico

**Sept. 21-24**

**TIJUANA 21ST ANNUAL SCORE DESERT CHALLENGE**

Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico

**Nov. 14-18**

**50TH SCORE BAJA 1000**

Ensenada, Baja California to La Paz, Baja California, Sur, Mexico

465 South Meadows Parkway #6 Reno, NV 89521, 775-852-8907