

# Nexus Expedition: Kyrgyzstan to Tajikistan, Then A Retreat



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Dimitri Kieffer and his wife Colnara Mulkhova continue their human-powered Nexus Expedition by bicycle from Kyrgyzstan to Tajikistan. With understandable apprehensiveness before entering the Pamir region of Tajikistan where violent clashes and riots recently occurred, they, seemingly as always in their journeys, encountered colorful people and events.

After heading out of Sary-Tash, Kyrgyzstan, at an elevation of 3200 meters (10500 feet), and after getting too close to large, Soviet-era, 'early warning system', spherical communications apparatuses (they were chased away by a young boy on a donkey), they were on their way across the border.

Once they made it past an uptight border guard, they soon after set up tent in no-man's-land only to be woken later by guards with AK-47s.

Their journey on both sides of the border and in the land in-between was punctuated by interactions with a variety of colorful travelers on motorcycles and in Volkswagen vans, for example, fleeing the conflict region ahead of them in Pamir.

The area in-between also consisted of a road up to Kyzyl Art Pass at 4282 meters (14,050 feet).

Once into Tajikistan, they wove their way up to high elevations on rudimentary roads to a desolate area known locally as 'Death' Valley where they spent the night.

The next day, however, brought them a series of misfortunes. First, as they were packing up their gear, strong winds blew their tent away down the valley. They chased it for hours but it was futile.

They forged onward, as snow started to fall, to attempt the next 58 kilometers (36 miles) to Lake Karakol. They were well aware that they may spend a snowy night in sleeping bags without shelter. However, after only 500 meters (0.3 miles), Dimitri's bike seat broke. With this debilitating handicap, the loss of the tent, and considering Dimitri was coming down with a bad cold, they were forced to retreat back to Kyrgyzstan by hitchhiking.

For their latest blog installment, the more complete story, please visit them [here](#).

## The Journey

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Dimitri Kieffer began his human-powered journey from Knik Lake, Alaska in 2005 as part of the annual Iditarod race. But then he didn't stop. He continued with Karl Bushby of the Goliath Expedition to make the first successful non-mechanized, walk-swim-kite-ski, westbound crossing of the Bering Strait. Since then he has been traveling across Siberia by ski, snowshoe and kayak. Golnara Miftakhova, his wife, joined him in 2011 for the bicycle-powered leg of his journey that has taken him from distant portions of the Russian Far East to his current location in Kyrgyzstan.

*The Best Quest is an adventure travel company that specializes in planning unique, off-the-beaten path trips for the curious traveler. We are currently planning trips to Asia in 2014. Check out our [full travel schedule](#) or [sign up](#) for our email newsletter to stay in the loop about upcoming trips.*



By Greg Michaels • 0 comments • Tags: adventure travel, affordable travel, budget travel, cycling expedition, Dimitri Kieffer, expedition, human-powered expedition, Kyrgyz, Kyrgyzstan, less-touristed travel, meet locals, meeting locals, Mexico, Perito, Gary-Tech, Siberia, Tajik, Tajikistan

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