



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Paralympian Embarks Today on Cross-Country Cycling Journey**

*Wounded Marine Rob Jones on quest to raise \$1 million for charities  
that supported his recovery*

*BAR HARBOR, ME* (October 14, 2013) – Rob Jones has never taken the easy route. So it's no surprise that the U.S. Paralympian and combat-wounded retired Marine has chosen Bar Harbor, Maine, as the starting point for his epic cross-country cycling trek. He is setting out today, October 14<sup>th</sup>, and he doesn't plan to quit until he's reached the sandy beaches of San Diego, California sometime between February and April.

What makes Rob's journey so unique is that he will be pedaling his bicycle with prosthetic legs. During his 2010 deployment to Afghanistan, the Marine combat engineer was hit by an improvised explosive device (IED), resulting in double above-knee amputations of both his legs.

"Most people don't understand just how difficult it is to ride a bike with prostheses," Rob explained, while training for his expedition. "Most people use their quads, calves and glutes to pedal, while I am only able to use my glutes. It's extremely challenging, but I'm determined to achieve my goal."

Rob is no stranger to world-class achievements. Last summer, he and his partner won a Bronze Medal at the 2012 Paralympic Games in London in the Trunk and Arms Mixed Double Sculls event. He has competed in the Marine Corps 10K (6.2 Miles), the Army 10-Miler, the Charlottesville Half Marathon, the CFI Mini Triathlon and the Nation's Olympic Distance Triathlon (a .9-mile swim, 24-mile bike, and a 6.2-mile run). In 2012, Rob was named USA Rowing's Man of the Year.

Given his extraordinary track record, who would bet against him now?

Rob will head from Bar Harbor south along the Atlantic seaboard to Blacksburg, VA, where he will pivot west and begin the cross-continental march to San Francisco. He'll then "coast" south toward his personal finish line in San Diego. By then, he will have covered 5,400 miles, averaging 30 miles per day.

Why is he doing this?

"It's simple, really. I am committed to giving back to the charitable organizations that were there for me in my darkest hours," he says. "They helped me stand back up on new legs, learn how to walk again, then ride a bike again, then become a world-class rower. Now, with the help of patriotic and generous Americans, I intend to pay it forward, so those

organizations can help even more wounded soldiers, like me, in their time of greatest need.”

Virtually unique among other ambitious fundraising initiatives, 100 percent of the money donated to Rob Jones’ Journey will go to the charities he is supporting: [The Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes](#), the [Semper Fi Fund](#) and [Ride 2 Recovery](#). Rob has already secured enough funds to purchase the equipment, including a support vehicle, he’ll need to complete his trip. He will be counting on the kindness of his fellow Americans for an occasional meal and overnight accommodations; but all cash donations made through his web site, [www.RobJonesJourney.com](http://www.RobJonesJourney.com), will pass directly through to the charities.

His Olympic-sized fundraising goal: \$1 million.

“It’s important to me that people know I’m not getting anything out of this financially,” Rob explained. “While I will accept certain in-kind sponsorships from companies that want to support me, any cash they provide will go straight to the charities. Just like the funds individuals donate. This is truly all about giving back.”

Rob has already secured one corporate supporter, Bonk Breaker Energy Bars, which is supplying its products to help fuel his journey.

“Rob is one of the most inspiring men I have ever had the honor to meet,” said David Walker, President & CEO of the Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes. “He is obviously a unique individual, but the role he plays in motivating and challenging his fellow combat wounded and in raising funds and awareness for organizations like ours, is extraordinary.”

In his short adaptive rowing career, Rob and his Team Bad Company partner, Oksana Masters, have won several major competitions, including the 2012 U.S. Paralympic Selection Trials, the 2012 World Rowing Final Paralympic Qualifier in Belgrade, Serbia, and the 2013 U.S. Para-Rowing Championships. The pair placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Samsung World Rowing Cup in England earlier this year, and 4<sup>th</sup> at the World Championships in South Korea in August.

To learn more about, and to support, Rob’s upcoming cross-country bike trip, please visit [www.RobJonesJourney.com](http://www.RobJonesJourney.com).

*Media representatives interested in scheduling an interview with Rob during his journey may contact Ladd Biro at Champion Management via email ([lbiro@championmgt.com](mailto:lbiro@championmgt.com)) or via phone at 817.675.3499.*

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