

# Nebraskan Cycles to Arctic

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Niobrara, Neb.  
**L**AST July 29 Danny Liska, age 30, had his sanity questioned by a Niobrara service station operator when he announced his intention of going to Alaska on a motorcycle. Dan, a veteran cyclist of 14 years, laughed it off and went on his way.

"We live in a too conventional world," said the young Niobrara rancher. "Ever since I read my first book by the late traveler-author Richard Halliburton, I've wanted to go places and see things."

When Dan was 16, a couple of young Lincoln friends drove to Niobrara on a motor scooter. They gave him a ride. He said to himself: "This is for me."

Dan purchased a motorcycle and began taking trips over the countryside. He has averaged 10 thousand miles a year, including trips to Mexico, Florida and California and visits to 14 national parks and monuments.

east of Niobrara. His wife has accompanied him on some of the trips but did not go to Alaska.

## Longest Way 'Round

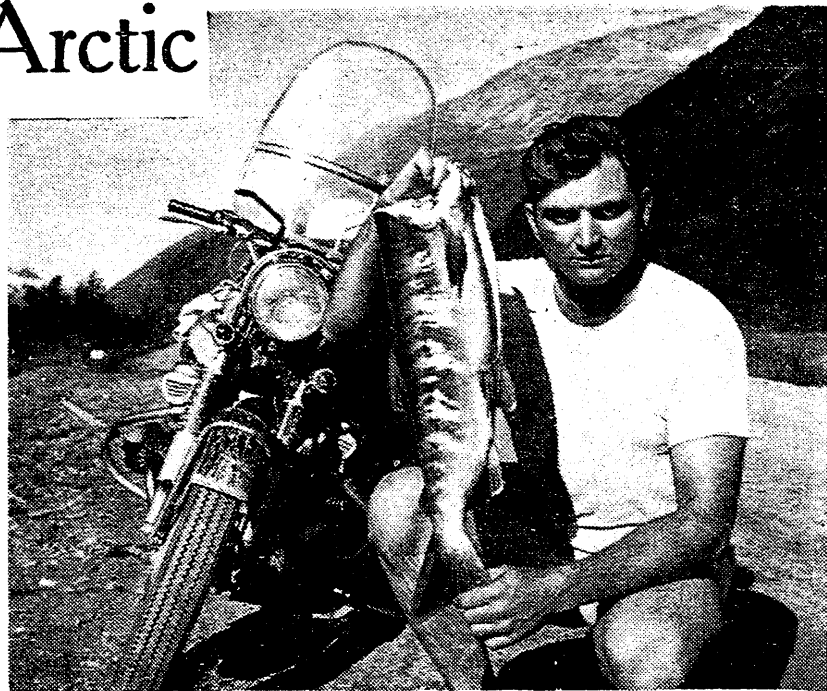
THE Niobraran three years ago said he reached the decision to "quit dedicating my life to making money." He made up his mind while he, his motorcycle and tent were resting on the rim of the Grand Canyon.

"As I absorbed the scenery, never was I more keenly aware of how trivial are the efforts of man," he said.

A small office in the basement of his ranch home contains maps, camera equipment, travel guides and a set of Richard Halliburton's books.

The Nebraskan made the trip to Alaska as the "long way around" to Dodge City, Kans. He had been invited to attend the Dodge City Motorcycle Races.

"I wanted to win the trophy for having traveled the furthest to get to the races," said Dan. "I also was in-



Dan Liska, Niobrara motorcyclist, holds the salmon that he caught by hand in a river near Valdez, Alaska. "The fish were so thick you could not help but catch them," said the Nebraskan.



The small tent beside the motorcycle was Dan's home during his nine-thousand-mile trip. This photo was taken on a lake beside Wyoming's Grand Tetons.



Just before entering Alaska on the Alcan Highway, Dan stopped to shoot a picture. Then he kissed the pavement.

He owns three motorcycles and belongs to four motorcycling organizations.

"The public thinks motor bike riders are a bunch of bums," he said. "Sure, there are bike bums. But there are a lot of other bum drivers on the road, too."

Dan graduated from Niobrara High School in 1945. He is married and operates a 940-acre ranch two miles

interested in seeing how my cycle would take the trip over the Alcan Highway."

## Cycle Well Prepared

SINCE 12 hundred miles of the Alcan are graveled, Dan installed a metal shield near the base of his two-wheel vehicle to prevent rocks from damaging the motor. He installed two auxiliary gas tanks which along with the cycle's regular

tank gave the machine a capacity of 13½ gallons.

"I made 50 miles to the gallon over the worst of the drive," he said. "Under good driving conditions I made about 93 miles to the gallon."

Dan took his tent, cooking utensils and two cameras. He slept and ate outdoors most of the time. "In an effort to meet more people, I would stop occasionally at a cafe," he added.

His nine-thousand-mile trip took him from Niobrara across Wyoming through Montana and then into Canada's Province of Alberta. He got on the Alcan at Dawson Creek.

After arriving in Alaska, Dan drove from Fairbanks to Circle City (at the Arctic Circle.) He then went to Anchorage, Tok Junction and finally White Horse (in the Yukon) where he and his motorcycle went by train to Skagway. Next, he boarded a ship that took him to Vancouver from where he continued his journey to Dodge City, Kans.

"I won the trophy for having traveled the furthest to get to the Dodge City races," he said. "So there would be no doubt, I had registered my motorcycle in Anchorage and it bore Alaskan license plates."

## Trouble in 'Civilization'

AFTER the races were over, Mr. Liska returned home September 8. The total cost of the trip was only 280 dollars.

"I had a swell time and saw some of the most beautiful scenery in the world," the motor bike rider stated. "The only mechanical trouble was when I blew a tire on a four-lane highway near Portland, Ore."

He met three Swiss misses who were fulfilling a life-time ambition of

traveling the Alcan on bicycles. He camped with Canadians. He took more than five hundred photographs of people and places.

"Animals were no trouble," he said. "But I had a problem of keeping the mosquitoes off my neck."

His drive along the graveled Alcan was treacherous because of chuck holes. His average speed was about 30 to 40 miles per hour.

"When I reached Alaska the road was paved," he said. "I stopped my bike and kissed the pavement."

Auto drivers who met him looked twice as they passed his motorcycle. "I laughed," he said. "They had no idea how much fun they were missing."

His most unusual experience occurred at Valdez, Alaska, where Dan camped near a river bank. "The salmon were headed upstream to spawn," he said. "They made so much noise that I could not sleep."

The next day, Dan walked into the water and caught a salmon by hand. "The fish were so thick that it was like slopping hogs."

Dan found that Alaskans, like Nebraskans, thought he had lost his marbles. At Circle City, Alaska, two Indian service station attendants were filling his gas tanks.

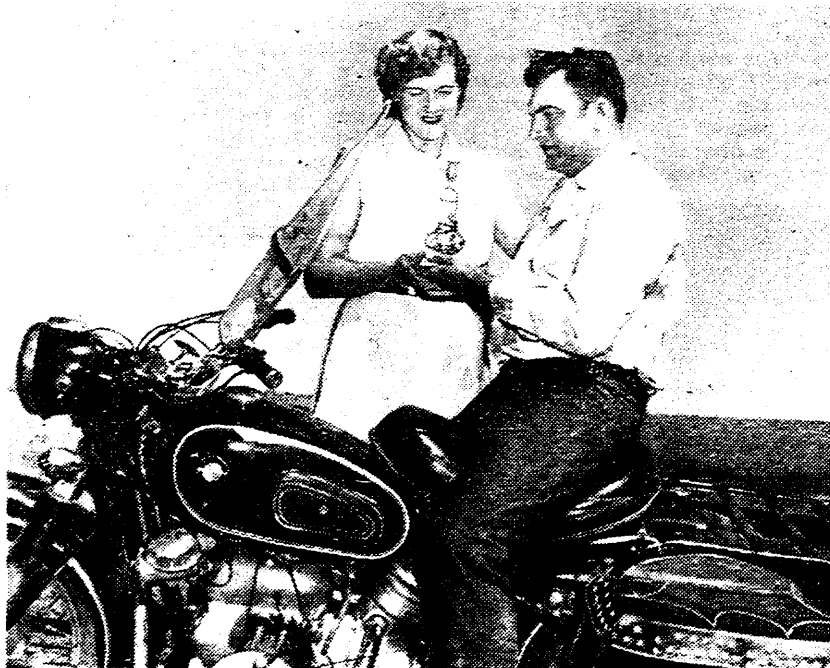
One of the helpers asked if Dan had come up the highway on his motorcycle. "Yes," answered the Nebraskan.

"Ugh, him crazy," replied the Indian.

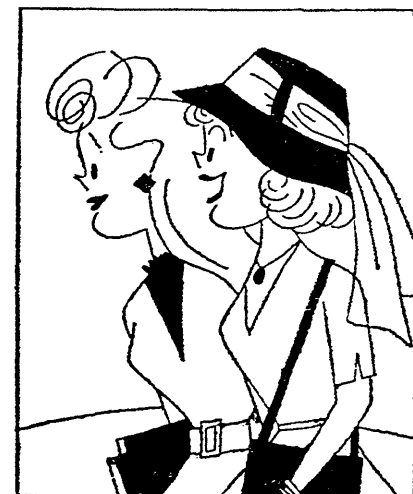
"Maybe I am," said Dan. "But I'm sure having fun proving it."

What about next year's adventure on a motorcycle? Maybe a trip around Europe?

"If he does, I'm going with him," answered Mrs. Liska.



Dan and his wife, Arlene, examine the trophy that he received at the Dodge City Motorcycle Races. It was awarded to the Niobrara man for traveling the furthest by motorcycle to the meet.



"She has all the qualities you'd want in a rival—stupidity, no style sense, poor sportsmanship!"