Start of the expedition on 01. of March 2014. The last informations of the local weather reports confirmed the proposed traversal direction from South to North of Baikal. So I began on the South end of the lake. With small tail winds and good ice conditions around Listvyanka I could realize more miles per day as calculated. Average daily temperatures had been around -4°F, nights about -10°F. Short behind Listvyanka area the vehicle tracks on the ice (from the ice fishermen) disappeared and I had to find out my way on the ice. Some big pack ice zones, ice faults and warps had to be over-
come with great caution. Sometimes it was necessary to handle baggage, bike and extrawheel sepa-
ratly, or to protect things with ice screws before crossing myself first. I always tried to bike between
1 and 5 miles away from the shore, because ice crevasses are usually less towards the middle of the
lake. GPS navigation help and compass allowed to do this even when shore was out of sight. During
all the time I stayed overnight on Baikal and put my tent on the ice. Ice screws, additional ropes and
snow flaps permit to do this, even when strong storms rush unhindered over the ice. At that moments
you have to check the tent position several times during the night.

In the second week of the traversal, a very big pack ice zone with open crevasses and water pressed
up, had to be crossed. Within looking for the best way to come over, I came too near to the shore and
suddenly a big ice plate broke and I was dropped into the water up to the breast with bike and all equi-
PMENT. But fortunately I could save myself over other ice plates to the more compact ice field.
Within seconds cloths and equipment are completely frozen. In this situation - about 2000ft off shore
- I decided to move towards the shore by feet, bike and equipment behind and besides me, only to
keep moving, specially for the feet. Finally I reached the shore and could kindle a fire with stove,
fuel and dry wood around. So I could warm me up and dry cloths and equipment as good as possible
over the next hours. I overnighted on that place and next morning I made an equipment check, which
showed that the mobilephone, camera and parts of the equipment had become useless. But fortunate-
ly the Satellite telephone, GPS and compass survived in good condition. So finally I decided to con-
tinue the expedition.
For that, I first had to struggle through ice floes very near to the shore for about 2 miles in this pack ice zone, then I returned on the lake in a 90 degree angle. Staying out 5 miles off shore, I finally reached after 2 weeks the beginning of Olkhon island. The entrance to the chanel between continent and the island was as usually barricaded by a big ice fault with wide crevasses. It took a longer time to find a safe passage through this zone and after the successful entrance to the channel I continued on the small road on the Island for to reach the little town Khuzhir, 209 miles after the starting point in the South. Khuzhir should be the place of my studies concerning: **Schamanism cult in Olkhon.**

Even I lost some time up to here, I had several opportunities in the next days to discuss with different people who live since generations on the island. The often published statement of a resurrected 'Neoschamanism' (after the Soviet Union was collapsed) in Olkhon island, as one of the eldest places of Siberian and Burjatian Schamanism, made me curious, to learn whether there would be definitively a new generation of people living together with the help of shamans in their lives. Most of the people told me that they „have of course Schamanism in their heart“, but nobody could tell me about events where they or the families had been looking for the help of an Schaman, for spiritual or other problems. This would be very difficult too, because the only actual Schaman - Walentin Chagdaew - lives since a longer time on the continent. From there he tries to combine as a so called 'Town Schaman' confessions of faith with commercial doings like offering study-courses of „how to become a Schamane“, lectures or visits to the international annual Schaman-meeting on Olkhon. So I got the impression, that Olkhon is an important - may be the most important place on earth - to study and conserve specially Siberian-Schamanism tradition, even if people do no more live very close or with the help to the Schaman. In this context I cannot comment the word „delusion-schmanism of the 21.century“ of some scientists in the world. But remarkable for me seems to be the statement of K.E.Müller: who wrote, that „times which formed Schamans and their confessions of faith have definitively gone and with that their legitimation to intervene between human and spirit world.

Klaus E. Müller: Schamanismus, Heiler-Geister-Rituale, Beck München 2006

Without camera, static and self-timer, it was nearly impossible to make good fotos, but fortunately a Russian boy from Khuzhir borrowed to me his old smartphone, to make some pictures from the celebrated Schaman rocks, even in bad quality. And hard to believe... they reached me later by email!
Due to the ice conditions I could not continue on the West side of Baikal. I had to cross to the East side, directly north of Olkhon Island just there, where Baikal has its widest distance between the shores of about 45 miles and the greatest depth of about 5397 ft! Just to put the tent on that place, is ghostly amusing: 2 feet ice below you and the tent and then over 5000 feet water!

On the middle of Baikal the ice was nearly perfect for biking, but near the east cost there were terrible pack ice zones which had to be crossed in the next days mostly by pushing the bike by hand. Sometimes I made no more than 3 or 4 miles per day.

Later on, north of Ust Bargusin it was a little better, but now snow became to be deeper and the surface of the lake soon was completely covered by snow. Biking was nearly impossible and time began to run out. Under this circumstances I had to decide before reaching the point of no return, what to do: to risk to need the help of a 4x4 car or to get out by myself by fair means’ without any help until I reached the continent. I decided to give up after 326 miles (from total 403) or geographically written: about 1°39′ before the North end of Baikal at 55°46′ N

My last position on the ice was N 54°07′ E 109° 28′

Finally I could not reach one of the goals of my expedition and so the Japanese Hirosoma Andow with his expedition in 2003 still has the honor, to be the first and only until today, who successfully crossed Lake Baikal from South to North, solo with bike.


Nevertheless, I would not miss the new experience, to have been alone on Baikal.