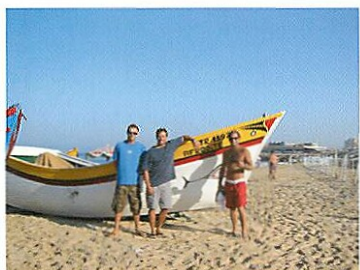


# Biarritz Surf Festival



*Three-time world surfing champion Colin McPhillips and Dennis Bourg are shown in Biarritz with Rob Farrow.*

By Rob Farrow

Two years ago I made a drastic life changing decision and set out on a journey. This decision was one that would require me to walk away from a very successful career. Along the way I'd face an unknown, and learn more about myself, and commitment and discipline than I had ever imagined. This decision was to pursue a world title in surfing and to win the world championships of long boarding.

Most of my friends thought I was crazy. They thought I was facing some sort of mid-life crisis, or trying to prove something. My co-workers were confused and inspired by the decision to walk away and chase a dream.

My family encouraged me to chase this dream and use the experience to learn and grow. For me it was more about fulfilling my destiny and going after something considered elusive, unobtainable and incomplete in my life.

With the support of sponsors, the Outrigger and my credit cards, I set aside what I thought was enough money to afford this journey and gave myself 24 months to achieve this goal. Win or loose at the end of 24 months I was going to walk away from competition.

I was going to call this "the conscious awakening, corporate suicide tour....". I had no idea what to expect only to expect whatever was to come my way. To my surprise there are some incredible opportunities and adventures out there if you let yourself experience them.

Over the last 18 months, I traveled through South America, Central America, Southern Europe, Mexico and the U.S. in pursuit of a championship. I have logged 127,000 frequent flyer miles, paid over \$2,700.00 in excess baggage fees for my surfboard and slept on seven airport floors and in 14 hotels.

I have eaten palm tree, snails, giant bananas, pizzas for three days straight, tacos made of cow brains and McDonald's in three countries in one day.

I witnessed gunfights on the streets of Portugal, bullfights in Pamplona, bar fights in San Sebastian, and square dancing in Biarritz. I have driven through miles and miles of sunflower fields in southern Spain, drank cider on the feet of Fatima and almost ended up in Africa after a wrong turn.

The big question.... Did I achieve the goal of a world championship? Well the answer is Yes and No.... Officially I finished 64th in the world after two full years.

However I did make an incredible amount of friends and I was able to share Hawaii, the Outrigger Canoe Club, our sports and the Aloha spirit with every one everywhere I have gone. So the answer is "Yes" I do feel as though I accomplished a championship and champion status as an athlete and representative of our sports and Club.

I can honestly say over the last 18 months I have had one of the greatest conscious awakenings one could ever hope for. I look forward to a future of sharing my enthusiasm, experience and knowledge with others and encouraging them to fulfill their dreams and destinies while spreading the Aloha. It is the best....

My trip was dedicated to the memories of "Brudda" Henry Ayau for the "Aloha", Cline Mann for the Vision and Todd Chesser a great surfer and friend.

*Rob Farrow, right, made friends with the European Championship tour director by giving him an OCC shirt.*

