

Lucas' R2R Hike

GEAR (107.8 oz or 6.74 lb)

Modified ~41L Kelty Backpack 21 ounces (sewed back mesh pocket and 2 shoulder strap pockets)

Zpacks Hexamid Tarp 5.5

Tyvek groundsheet 5.4

41F down sleeping blanket with stuff sack 17

6 MSR Groundhog stakes 2.8

CCF sleeping pad 6

2 1L Smart water bottles with sport caps 2.6

Sawyer Squeeze water filter with backflush adapter 3.5

Cnoc VectoX 2L water bladder 2.8

3 grocery store bags (2 doubled up for main food bag, 1 for daily food bag) .5

#2 kit: ziploc, holey hiker bidet, TP 1

Microfiber cloth 1.7

Dental kit: toothbrush, toothpaste, nightguard, floss, mesh bag 3

Leukotape .3

Ibuprofen .3

Earplugs in small bag .5

Dr. Bronner's soap in dropper bottle .8

Cork ball .2

Charging: Nitecore NB 10k mAh Gen3, Anker Nano 47W USBC Charger, a 240W usbc cable

1.6ft and an apple usbc cord 1 meter 9.2

Vaseline in travel case .7

Shampoo in travel case .7

Cash .2

Plastic spoon

Nitecore nu20 classic headlamp 1.4

Silver maple walking stick and tarp support

1 gallon ziploc for all small items/#2 kit/charging kit .9

1 gallon ziploc for trash .9

Pixel 9 Pro with case/credit card/DL 11.3

CLOTHES (40F nightly lows)

Froggogg ultra-lite2 rain jacket

Mosquito head net

2 plastic bread bags (emergency feet layer for sleeping, also used as sleeping blanket dry bags)

Pair of plastic gloves

Nylon dress socks

Injinji toe socks

Yellow acrylic hat

Baseball cap

Outdoor Research Echo sun hoodie

Outdoor Research buff
Rubber work gloves
Wool leggings
Bamboo boxer briefs
Wiggy's 2nd layer mesh shirt
Straight cut polyester joggers with zippered pockets
Xero shoes (discontinued)
Casio F-91W watch
Sunglasses

FOOD

36 oz of trail mix
7 oz bag of meat sticks
9 oz bag of fritos chips
8 packets of lance crackers
8 sharp cheddar cheese sticks
24 chips ahoy cookies
8 tuna packets in oil
8 fiber tortillas
8 mayo packets
6 oz pepperoni bag
6 honey stinger waffles
16 packets of electrolytes
3 honey buns, 1 poptart, 4 nature valley crisps
4 buff protein bars, 4 quest protein bars
13lb total (with ziploc bags to portion the loose items)

HIKE

10/20: 0-16 miles—16 miles

Got started at 8:37 a.m. in Elizabethtown. Shortly after a river crossing the path was not clear, so I did a little bushwhacking. I thanked all the gods for Avenza. Got to Tanner Hill for camp around 7 p.m. in the night.

10/21: 16-34 miles—18 miles

Got up at 5:30 a.m. My shoulders were killing me from carrying 2L of water all day and all my food from the day before. I met two guys who were out hiking the trail for a few days. We hung out at the Herod Baptist Church. Got my phone, my battery bank, and headlamp charged. We were going to meet for camp at One Horse Gap, but I decided to keep going to get water and do more miles. I quickly found camp under a pine tree at a higher elevation.

10/22: 34-50 miles—16 miles

I got up at 4:00 a.m. and started hiking. I left my name in a sandy part of the trail for the guys. I got very lost at a very wide, dry river bed, but I found the trail and continued on. I had to use a lot of leukotape on my feet because my toes were getting hot spots, even with my toe socks and

dress socks. Pinky toe got taped to the toe next to it because I was stepping on it. Heel struck a stone in a creek, hurt a lot. Got to camp at 4:30 p.m. which was a blessing. I had so much time to do my nightly chores and talk to family and friends.

10/23: 50-66 miles—16 miles

I started hiking at 4:08 a.m. Stopped at Shotgun Eddie's to charge everything. Found camp at 5:00 p.m.

10/24: 66-86.5 miles—20.5 miles

I woke up around midnight to my feet being a bit cold and I was shivering on and off, only slightly uncomfortable, nothing dangerous. I was well-rested, so I got up and started hiking. When I got to Garfield Lane I turned my headlamp off and got a perfect view of the stars and I saw the Milky Way bands. Later that day I talked to some horseback riders, and set up camp above a ditch next to Forest road.

10/25: 86.5-105 miles—18.5 miles

Got up around 4:00 a.m. I ran out of water when I woke up. Luckily I found a culvert on Tall Tree Lake Road with water. It tasted weird. Met the River to River Society weekend hiking group, and we took a picture for the website. Stopped at the Goreville food market. I charged my phone outside the store sitting on the ground. Two girls asked me since they were throwing away chicken and other food that I could have it and I said I only had 2 more days into my backpacking trip and I had plenty of food. They realized I wasn't homeless and bolted lol. They were too kind. Lots of gunshots in Ferne Clyffe State Park. Glad I brought a brightly colored hat. I camped at Hilltop Campground in Goreville.

10/26: 105-127 miles—22 miles

Left Hilltop around 2:00 a.m. Could not make it through on map 22 right before US 51 way too overgrown can't see a path. Not worth doing since there were a lot of blowdowns recently and it was about to start sunset with rain and froggtoogg jacket would've gotten destroyed by the dense thickets. It was already a little beat up so I didn't want to risk my safety. I backtracked and went down Shepard Lane then Makanda Road. I got to the next trailhead, and it was raining so much at that point. I was a little chilly from stopping for water and it was getting late. I couldn't find an area without much brush in the dark that was also flat but not filled with water, so I set up my tent on the trail.

10/26–10/27: 127-157 miles—30 miles

It's 11 p.m. the same day, 10/26. I forgot to put my wet socks on my body to dry out. I charged my headlamp and my phone and then I left. Little Cedar Lake was really pretty but there was no daylight so I couldn't get it on camera. The blowdowns have been crazy around here. Hit my head really hard on a fallen branch because I couldn't see it with my trucker hat. I had three hats on so it didn't really hurt me even though I walked into it at full speed. The first half of the Bald Knob Wilderness was easily the highlight of the trail. It was so well maintained and very pretty. I ate the last of my food at this point as planned because my girlfriend would be bringing me fast food that night. Met a very nice couple doing section hikes of the River to River. We talked for a

long time, it was a great break and lifted my spirits. Stopped at Inspiration Point for the view. Started the 10 mile levee road walk. My socks never dried out.

The Levee

The sun set around 6:00 p.m., maybe 2.5 miles into the 10 miles stretch. I checked my feet while there was still daylight, and the leukotape had come off completely and my feet were impossibly pruned. When it got completely dark out there, distances became impossible to judge and I couldn't tell that the road was changing at all. With nothing to see and my feet hurting with every step, I knew this last 7.5 miles was going to feel like double or triple that amount. All I could do was move forward. At one point I felt a blister pop and was excited something had happened. When I felt like surely enough time/distance had passed, I would check my progress on the map only to find my icon barely moved at all. It was both heartbreaking and comedic at the same time. I was elated to get into Grand Tower, even though it was more road walking. The last half mile took me 30 min at a hobble. A second wind took hold as I rounded the corner and saw my girlfriend parked in our car. I made my way to the Mississippi river. The dock workers beamed their lights at me, I don't know if it was to acknowledge my accomplishment, give me more light on the rocky bank, or my headlamp confused them as a boat. I finished the trail on 10/27 at 9:44 p.m. I had walked 30 miles that day and officially thru-hiked the R2R.



