

# BIG REVIEW 2018

THE ANNUAL MAGAZINE FOR BIG MEMBERS  
LA REVUE ANNUELLE POUR LES MEMBRES DU BIG

ASCENSION CRISTO REDENTOR  
DE LOS ANDES

UN PONT EN OR

DE HOOGSTE TOP VAN HET HARZ  
GEBERGTE

RESULTS OF THE VOTES

NR. 32

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# Relations internationales

**Le mot du président**

**Daniel Gobert Président**

Une des spécificités du BIG a toujours résidé dans son côté international, ouvert aux différentes cultures cyclistes, à tous les pays du monde, uni à un constant désir d'être complémentaire avec les autres associations de cyclogrimpeurs.

L'ouverture aux différentes cultures est une des bases du challenge car deux parmi nos trois critères touchent aux particularités locales. En effet, mettre en valeur les hauts lieux touristiques promeut la culture régionale et recenser les hauts lieux médiatiques participe à la reconnaissance de l'activité cycliste en ces lieux.

Par ailleurs, toute personne ayant un jour participé à un rendez-vous du Big en reviendra convaincu de l'aspect polyglotte et multiculturel. La vision mondiale a, par contre, ouvert une brèche en permettant des ascensions libres hors Europe, ce qui induit de possibles critiques comme dans toute autre liste ouverte. La vision internationale implique aussi ce risque et nous devons l'assumer. On ne peut non plus passer sous silence les récents champions du monde cyclistes issus des pays de l'est comme Sagan ou Kwiatkowski. Notre zone+ et notre Euro-BIG a eu raison de promouvoir ces pays qui montent dans le cyclisme international.

Pour ce qui concerne les relations avec les autres associations, elles ont toujours été au beau fixe avec l'O.C.D britannique, Cima, l'U.I.C ou les M.D.F. Celle avec la confrérie des Cent Cols, notre mère à tous, puisqu'elle fut le berceau et la raison de notre liste initiale créée pour être complémentaire aux cols, fut plus mouvementée.

Nous nous voulions compléments, nous fûmes trop perçus comme concurrents. Mais les temps ont changé, fort heureusement !

De nombreux dirigeants actuels des cent cols, dont le président, sont des membres du BIG et même d'anciens acteurs dans le comité. C'est le moment d'unir nos forces et de retrouver enfin de la confraternité dans nos relations. Conservons nos autonomies et nos spécificités mais mettons en exergue ce qui nous rassemble, ce qui nous motive ; en s'appuyant l'un sur l'autre pour assurer nos perrénités, sans empiéter l'espace de l'autre.

Beaucoup de cols sont des bigs et beaucoup de bigs sont des cols. Notre partie commune forme notre tronc commun. Quant à nos branches, elles nous invitent à voyager. Car les bigs non cols et les cols non bigs ont aussi leurs lettres de noblesse.

Poussons aussi notre relation vers le haut !

## International relations

**President's words**

**Daniel Gobert President**

One of the specificities of the BIG always lived in its international side, open to the various cycling cultures, to all the countries of the world, united with a constant desire to be complementary with the other cycloclimbing associations.

The opening in the various cultures is one of base of the challenge because two among our three criteria touch the local peculiarities. Indeed, to emphasize the high touristic places promotes the regional culture and to list the high mediatic places takes part in the gratitude of the cycling activities located in these places.

Besides, every person having a day participated in a meeting of the BIG will return convinced of the polyglot and multicultural aspect there. The world vision opened, on the other hand, a breach by allowing free climbs out of Europe, what infers possible critics like in other open lists. The international vision has inside this risk, too and we must do with it ! We cannot either leave untold the recent professional world champions stemming from Eastern countries as Sagan or Kwiatkowski. Our zone + and our Euro-BIG was right to promote these countries which rise in the international cycling world.

Looking at our relations with the other associations, they were always set fair with the British O.C.D, Cima, the U.I.C or the M.D.F. The one with the Cent Cols club, our mother , because it was the cradle and the reason of our initial list created to be complementary of the passes, was more enlivened. We aimed to be complements, we were too much perceived as concurrents. But time is changing, very fortunately!

Numerous current leaders of the Cent Cols club, including the new president, are members of the BIG and even former actors in our committee. It is the moment to unite our strengths and to find finally some fellowship in our relations. Let us preserve our autonomies and our specificities but let us highlight what gathers us, what motivates us; by leaning the one on the other one to insure our futures, without encroaching the space of the other one.

Many passes are bigs and many bigs are passes. Our common part forms our common-core syllabus. As for our branches, they invite us to travel. Because bigs-not-passes and passes-not-bigs have also has their respectability.

Also let us push our relation upward !

## BIG Review 2018

<b><u>SUPERLIST</u></b>											
<b>ZONE 01</b>			75	Carter Barsco		<b>ZONE 04</b>	227	Mont Beuvray	fr		
			76	Great Dun Fell	engl	151	Waseberg	de	228	Mont de Sène	fr
1	Hrafnseyrarheiði	is	77	Westernhope Moor	engl	152	Hermannsdenkmal	de	229	Signal d'Uchon	fr
2	Öxnadalsheiði	is	78	Hartside Cross	engl	153	Hoher Meissner	de	230	Butte du Suin	fr
3	Námaskarð	is	79	Whinlatter Pass	engl	154	Hoherodskopf	de	231	Col de Favardy	fr
4	Halfdan	is	80	Honister Pass	engl	155	Mützenichde		232	Mont Poupet	fr
5	Hellisheiði	is	81	Hard Knott Pass	engl	156	Schwarzer Mann	de	233	Grand Taureau	fr
6	Oddskarð	is	82	Wrynose Pass	engl	157	Hohe Achtde		234	Mont Morond	fr
7	Almannáskarð	is	83	Kirkstone Pass	engl	158	Krautscheid	de	235	Mont d'Or	fr
8	Nordkapp	no	84	Fleet Moss	engl	159	Steigung Bremm	de	236	Fort de Chaudanne	fr
9	Guolasjavri	no	85	Rosedale Head	engl	160	Stumpfer Turm	de	237	Haut-Crêt	fr
10	Saltfjellet	no	86	Cow & Calf	engl	161	Erbeskopf	de	238	Col de la Faucille	fr
11	Umskardet	no	87	Oxenhope Moor	engl	162	Festung Königstein	de	239	Cirque Avalanches	fr
12	Trøen	no	88	Holme Moss	engl	163	Schaumberg	de	240	Signal du Cuiron	fr
13	Dovrefjell	no	89	Snake Pass	engl	164	Hesselberg	de	241	Relais de Planachat	fr
14	Blåhø	no	90	Mam Tor	engl	165	Donnersberg	de	242	Col de Saint-Thomas	fr
15	Vestkap	no	91	Bush Down	engl	166	Trifels	de	243	Col du Chevalard	fr
16	Trollstigveien	no	92	Exe Plain	engl	167	Hornisgrinde	de	244	Puy-de-Dôme	fr
17	Dalsnibba	no	93	Dunkery Beacon	engl	168	Schliff Kopf	de	245	Col de Guéry	fr
18	Gamle Strynefjellsveino		94	Chineway Hill	engl	169	Löcherbergwasen	de	246	Col Croix-Morand	fr
19	Sognefjell Hytta	no	95	Cheddar Gorge	engl	170	Kandel	de	247	Col Cx Saint-Robert	fr
20	Valdresflya	no	96	Llanberis Pass	wales	171	Schauinsland	de	248	Col du Béal	fr
21	Tyin Øsen	no	97	Horseshoe Pass	wales	172	Belchen	de	249	Col de Baracuchet	fr
22	Juvasshytta	no	98	Bwlch-y-Groes	wales	173	Herzogenhorn	de	250	Col Cx Homme Mort	fr
23	Osen	no	99	Devil's Staircase	wales	174	Blauen	de	251	Chaise-Dieu	fr
24	Nystölen	no	100	Gospel Pass	wales	175	Lochen Pass	de	252	Col de la République	fr
25	Stalheimkleiva	no	<b>ZONE 03</b>			176	Weissenbach Sattel	de	253	Crêt de l'Oeillon	fr
26	Aurlandsvegen	no	101	Posbank	nl	177	Petersberg	de	254	Col de Charousse	fr
27	Hardangervidda	no	102	Italiaanse Weg	nl	178	Kahler Asten	de	255	Pas de Peyrol	fr
28	Gaustatoppen	no	103	Oude Holleweg	nl	179	Großer Inselberg	de	256	Col de Légal	fr
29	DyrskarPass	no	104	Cauberg	nl	180	Waßerkuppe	de	257	Col de Finiels	fr
30	Lysefjordsveien	no	105	Keutenberg	nl	181	Hohe Wurzel	de	258	Pré de la Dame	fr
31	Luossavaara	se	106	Eyserbos	nl	182	Großer Feldberg	de	259	Col de Meyrand	fr
32	Ullådalen	se	107	Oude Huls	nl	183	Katzenbuckel	de	260	Croix de Boutières	fr
33	Stekkenjokk	se	108	Gulpenerberg	nl	184	Sonnenberg	de	261	Gerbier de Jonc	fr
34	Flatruet	se	109	Vijlenerbos	nl	185	Brocken	de	262	Col de Serre-Mûre	fr
35	Sälens Högfjällshotelse		110	Driekandenpunt	nl	186	Roßtrappe	de	263	Chartreuse Portes	fr
36	Vemdalskalet	se	111	Rodeberg	be	187	Auersberg	de	264	ColGrand Colombier	fr
37	Nipstugan Pass	se	112	Kemmelberg	be	188	Fichtelberg	de	265	Crêt de Châtilion	fr
38	Klevaliden se		113	Koppenberg	be	189	Schwarzriegel	de	266	Mont du Chat	fr
39	Tossebergsklätten	se	114	Kluisberg	be	190	Großer Arber	de	267	Mont Revard	fr
40	Hunneberg	se	115	Oude Kwaremont	be	191	Oberjoch Paß	de	268	Col du Granier	fr
41	Högekullen	se	116	Paterberg	be	192	Nebelhorn	de	269	Col de Porte	fr
42	Kilpisjärvi	fi	117	Muur	be	193	Riedbergpaß	de	270	Col des Arces	fr
43	Kaunispää	fi	118	Mont Saint Aubert	be	194	Allgäuer Berghof	de	271	Col de la Ramaz	fr
44	Pallastunturi	fi	119	Ry de Rome	be	195	Keißelbergstraße	de	272	Col de l'Encrenaz	fr
45	Rukatunturi	fi	120	Triple Mur Monty	be	196	Wallberg Straße	de	273	Avoriaz	fr
46	Tunturi-Ylläs	fi	121	La Gayolle	be	197	Spitzing Sattel	de	274	Col de Joux-Plane	fr
47	Vuokatti	fi	122	Montagne Croix	be	198	Südfeld	de	275	Mont Salève	fr
48	Ukko-Koli	fi	123	Col de Corbion	be	199	Hirschbichl	de	276	Col de la Colombière	fr
49	Ejer Bavnehøj	dk	124	Col du Satibe		200	Roßfeld	de	277	Col de la Croix-Fry	fr
50	Himmelbjerget	dk	125	Mur de Huy	be	<b>ZONE 05</b>			278	Col Grand Cucheron	fr
<b>ZONE 02</b>			126	Signal de Botrange	be	201	Roc Trevezel	fr	279	Collet d'Alleverd	fr
51	Sperrin	nrth	127	Ferme Libert	be	202	Ménez-Hom	fr	280	Col de la Madeleine	fr
52	Spelga Dam	nrth	128	Côte de la Redoute	be	203	Ménez-Kerque	fr	281	Signal de Bisanne	fr
53	Gap of Mamore	ie	129	Col du Rideux	be	204	Montagne Locronan	fr	282	Cormet d'Arêches	fr
54	Grianan of Ailceach	ie	130	Les Hézalles	be	205	Roc de Toullaéron	fr	283	Cormet de Roseleud	fr
55	Glengesh Pass	ie	131	Col du Rosier	be	206	Ménez-Bré	fr	284	La Plagne	fr
56	Cliffs of Moher	ie	132	Côte de Wanne	be	207	Mûr-de-Bretagne	fr	285	Col Petit St-Bernard	fr
57	Connor Pass	ie	133	Col du Stockeu	be	208	Mont Bel Air	fr	286	Col de l'Iseran	fr
58	Coomakesta Pass	ie	134	Baraque de Fraiture	be	209	Cap Fréhel	fr	287	Col de Croix-de-Fer	fr
59	Ballaghasheen Pass	ie	135	Cheval de Bois	be	210	Mont Dol	fr	288	Col du Mont Cenis	fr
60	Ballaghbeama Gap	ie	136	Col d'Haussire	be	211	Mont Cassel	fr	289	Chamrousse	fr
61	Healy Pass	ie	137	Pied Monti	be	212	Mont Noir	fr	290	Alpe d'Huez	fr
62	Mullaghanish	ie	138	Côte de Munshausen	lu	213	Mont Tranet	fr	291	Col du Galibier	fr
63	Slieve Bloom Mount	ie	139	Mont Saint Nicolas	lu	214	Col du Loup	fr	292	Col du Granon	fr
64	Sally Gap	ie	140	Bourscheid	lu	215	Mont Saint-Walfroy	fr	293	Pré Madame Carle	fr
65	Wicklow Gap	ie	141	Jardin Napoléon	lu	216	Grand Wintersberg	fr	294	Col d'Izoard	fr
66	Bealach Na Ba	sco	142	Côte d'Eschdorf	lu	217	Col du Donon	fr	295	Sommet du Bûcher	fr
67	Bealach Ratagain	sco	143	Ferme de Masseler	lu	218	Champ du Feu	fr	296	Chapelle de Clausis	fr
68	Lowther Hill	sco	144	Herrenberg	lu	219	Col Grosse Pierre	fr	297	Col de Tourniol	fr
69	Cairn Gorm	sco	145	Gorges du Loup	lu	220	Col de la Schlucht	fr	298	Col du Rousset	fr
70	Lecht Road	sco	146	Altrier	lu	221	Petit Drumond	fr	299	Col de Ménéé	fr
71	Tom Dubh	sco	147	Côte d'Houwald	lu	222	Petit Ballon	fr	300	Col du Noyer	fr
72	The Strone	sco	148	Eoliennes Pafebjerg	lu	223	Grand Ballon	fr	301	Mont Ventoux	fr
73	Devil's Elbow	sco	149	Birgerkraiz	lu	224	Ballon de Servance	fr	302	Mont Colombis	fr
74	Glen Quaich	sco	150	Mont Saint Jean	lu	225	Ballon d'Alsace	fr	303	Col du Pontis	fr
						226	Butte Montenoison	fr	304	Col du Parpaillon	fr

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305	Col de Vars	fr	382	El Sestil	es	460	Puerto de Honduras	es	537	Weissenstein	ch
306	Col d'Albos	fr	383	Paso del Morretero	es	461	Puerto Tornavacas	es	538	Balmberg Paßhöhe	ch
307	Col de la Cayolle	fr	384	Puerto Foncebadón	es	462	Puerto del Piornal	es	539	Paßwang	ch
308	Cime de la Bonette	fr	385	Puerto del Palo	es	463	Puerto Peña Negra	es	540	Regensberg	ch
309	Col de la Lombarde	fr	386	Pozo Mujer Muertas	es	464	Puerto Serranillos	es	541	Bachtel	ch
310	Col des Champs	fr	387	Puerto del Connio	es	465	Puerto de Mijares	es	542	Hauta-Chia	ch
311	Col de la Couillole	fr	388	Monasterio Obona	es	466	Puerto Guadarrama	es	543	Col de Jaman	ch
312	Col de Rieisse	fr	389	Santuario del Acebo	es	467	Bola del Mundo	es	544	Col des Mosses	ch
313	Mont Aigoual	fr	390	Puerto de Somiedo	es	468	Puerto de Morcuera	es	545	Col de la Croix	ch
314	Col des Faisses	fr	391	Puerto San Lorenzo	es	469	Puerto de la Quesera	es	546	Jaunpaß	ch
315	Pic de Nore	fr	392	Puerto de Ventana	es	470	Alto del Campello	es	547	Gurnigelpaß	ch
316	Col de l'Espinouse	fr	393	L'Angliru	es	471	Puerto de Ares	es	548	Glaubenbergpaß	ch
317	Pic de Tantajo	fr	394	La Cobertoria	es	472	Puerto de Tudons	es	549	Glaubenbüelenpaß	ch
318	Mont Saint-Baudille	fr	395	Puerto de la Cubilla	es	473	Cerro Espuña	es	550	Ächerlipaß	ch
319	Mont Saint-Clair	fr	396	Puerto de Pajares	es	474	Galilea	es	551	Melchsee-Frutt	ch
320	Guidon du Bouquet	fr	397	Puerto de San Isidro	es	475	Coll de Soller	es	552	Engstlenalp	ch
321	Mont Faron	fr	398	Collado Los Bedules	es	476	La Corbata	es	553	Etzelpaß	ch
322	Cirque de Vaumale	fr	399	Puert Panderruedas	es	477	Puig Major	es	554	Pragelpaß	ch
323	Col de Valferrière	fr	400	Lagos de Covadonga	es	478	Monasterio Cura	es	555	Stoß	ch
324	Montagne Doublier	fr	401	Collado Barreda	es	479	Mon. San Salvador	es	556	Schrina-Hochrugg	ch
325	Col Saint-Martin	fr	402	Puerto de San Glorio	es	480	Las Palomas Ronda	es	557	Buchs-Malbun	ch
326	Mont Vial	fr	403	Alto Campoo	es	481	Gibraltar	es	558	Ovronnaz	ch
327	Madonne d'Utelle	fr	404	Puerto Palombera	es	482	Alto de Cascajares	es	559	Col du Sanetsch	ch
328	L'Authion	fr	405	Puerto del Escudo	es	483	Puerto del León	es	560	Lac de Tseuzier	ch
329	Col de Braus	fr	406	Puerto Est. Trueba	es	484	Puerto del Sol	es	561	Crans-Montana	ch
330	Artzamendi	fr	407	Portillo de Lunada	es	485	Mirad Cabra Montés	es	562	Gorneren	ch
331	Col Bagargui-Iraty	fr	408	Peña Cabarga	es	486	Puerto Lobo	es	563	Fafleralp	ch
332	Col Pierre St-Martin	fr	409	Portillo de la Sia	es	487	Pico Veleta	es	564	Axalp	ch
333	Col Marie-Blanche	fr	410	Puerto de Orduña	es	488	Puerto Haza Lino	es	565	Große Scheidegg	ch
334	Col d'Aubisque	fr	411	Puerto de Urkiola	es	489	Puerto de la Ragua	es	566	Oberaarsee	ch
335	Col de Spandelles	fr	412	Alto de Jaizkibel	es	490	Puerto de Tiscar	es	567	Sustenpaß	ch
336	Pont d'Espagne	fr	413	Alto de Azurki	es	491	Las Palomas Cazorla	es	568	Furkapaß	ch
337	Hautacam	fr	414	Alto de Hachueta	es	492	Alto de la Sagra	es	569	Oberalppaß	ch
338	Luz-Ardidén	fr	415	Puerto de la Herrera	es	493	Puerto Padilla	es	570	Klausenpaß	ch
339	Gavarnie	fr	416	Puerto de Urbasa	es	494	Calar Alto	es	571	Tannenbodenalp	ch
340	Cirque Troumouse	fr	417	Puerto de Lizárraga	es	495	Las Cañadas	es	572	Pas de Morgins	ch
341	Col du Tourmalet	fr	418	Higa de Monreal	es	496	Pico del Inglés	es	573	Col de la Forclaz	ch
342	Lac d'Aumar	fr	419	Orzanzurieta	es	497	Pozo de las Nieves	es	574	Col des Planches	ch
343	Col de Beyrède	fr	420	Puerto de Larrau	es	498	Roq los Muchachos	es	575	Monte Generoso	ch
344	Col d'Aspin	fr	421	Puerto de Somport	es	499	Cumbrecita	es	576	Barrage Mauvoisin	ch
345	Pla d'Adet	fr	422	Castillo de Loarre	es	500	Garajonay	es	577	Thyon 2000	ch
346	Plateau de Beille	fr	423	Collado de Sahún	es	501	Monte do Faro	pt	578	Barrage Gde Dixence	ch
347	Col d'Azet	fr	424	Cerler	es	502	Nossa Senhor Graça	pt	579	Arolla	ch
348	Col de Peyresourde	fr	425	El Portillon	es	503	Barragem do Alvao	pt	580	Glacier de Moiry	ch
349	Superbagnères	fr	426	Collado Bonaigua	es	504	Alto de Espinho	pt	581	Chandolin	ch
350	Col de Menté	fr	427	Llac de Sant Maurici	es	505	Marofa	pt	582	Mattmarksee	ch
351	Col de Portet d'Aspet	fr	428	Coll de Cantó	es	506	Buçaco	pt	583	Simplonpaß	ch
352	Guzet-Neige	fr	429	Rasos de Peguera	es	507	Torre	pt	584	Nufenenpaß	ch
353	Col d'Agnès	fr	430	Coll de Pales	es	508	Bom Jesús	pt	585	Sankt-Gothardpaß	ch
354	Col de Péguyère	fr	431	Vallter 2000	es	509	Alto do Trevim	pt	586	Lago di Naret	ch
355	Prat d'Albis	fr	432	Coll de Bracons	es	510	Caramulinho	pt	587	Lukmanierpaß	ch
356	Montségur	fr	433	Turó de l'Home	es	511	Sao Mamede	pt	588	Lago Luzzzone	ch
357	Col du Pradel	fr	434	Coll Formic	es	512	Marvao	pt	589	Passo di Neggia	ch
358	Port de Pailhères	fr	435	MonasterMontserrates	es	513	Capela São Macario	pt	590	PasSan Bernardino	ch
359	Col de Puymorens	fr	436	Arcalis	ad	514	Monsanto	pt	591	Glaspas	ch
360	Coma Morera	fr	437	Coll de Ordino	ad	515	Alto de Sintra	pt	592	Lenzerheidepaß	ch
361	Col de Jau	fr	438	Els Cortals	ad	516	Serra da Arrábida	pt	593	Arosa	ch
362	Col de Mantet	fr	439	Port d'Envalira	ad	517	Monte Foia	pt	594	Flüelapaß	ch
363	Roques Blanches	fr	440	Port de Cabus	ad	518	Montejunto	pt	595	Ofenpaß	ch
364	Châlet Cortalets	fr	441	Bosc de la Rabassa	ad	519	Eira do Serrado	pt	596	Albulapaß	ch
365	Tour de Madeloc	fr	442	Lagunas de Neila	es	520	Bocca Encumeada	pt	597	Julierpaß	ch
366	Col de Serra	fr	443	Cruz de la Demanda	es	521	Cabo Girao	pt	598	Juf	ch
367	Serra di Pigno	fr	444	Moncalvillo	es	522	Pico Arieiro	pt	599	Berninapaß	ch
368	Bocca di a Battaglia	fr	445	Puert Peña Hincada	es	523	Lagoa do Canário	pt	600	Malbun	li
369	Haut-Asco	fr	446	Lag.Negra de Urbion	es	524	Pico da Barrosa	pt	<b>ZONE 08</b>		
370	Col de Prato	fr	447	El Moncayo	es	525	Caldeira do Faial	pt	601	Millrütte	at
371	Col de Lava	fr	448	Puerto de Orihuea	es	<b>ZONE 07</b>		602	Furkajoch	at	
372	Col de Vergio	fr	449	Puerto de Villaroya	es	526	La Barillette	ch	603	Schattenlagant	at
373	Bergeries Grotelle	fr	450	MontCaró	es	527	Col de la Givrine	ch	604	Hochtannbergpaß	at
374	Col de Verde	fr	451	Valdelinares	es	528	Col du Marchairuz	ch	605	Berwang	at
375	Col de Bavella	fr	452	P.Vidré-Vistabella	es	529	Mont Tendre	ch	606	Hahntennjoch	at
<b>ZONE 06</b>			453	Puerto Remolcador	es	530	Col de l'Aiguillon	ch	607	Bielerhöhe	at
376	Monte Albia	es	454	Alto de Esilda	es	531	Vue des Alpes	ch	608	Fiß	at
377	Vixia Herbeira	es	455	Javalambre	es	532	Le Chasseral	ch	609	Pillerhöhe	at
378	Alto de San Clodio	es	456	Puerto Viejo	es	533	Mont Soleil	ch	610	Kühtai	at
379	Puerto del Buey	es	457	PortilloLas Batuecas	es	534	Noirmont	ch	611	Ehrwalderalm	at
380	Cabeza dManzaneda	es	458	Peña de Francia	es	535	Montfaucou	ch	612	Kaunertal	at
381	Puerto de Ancares	es	459	El Travieso	es	536	Sur la Croix	ch	613	Rettenbachtal	at

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614	Timmelsjoch	at	691	Rif Barbara Lowrie	it	769	San Marino	sm	846	Martinské Hole	sk		
615	Mutterbergalm	at	692	Val Malenco	it	770	Abazzia La Verna	it	847	Skalka	sk		
616	Speich-Zillergründl	at	693	Passo del Vivione	it	771	Bocca Trabària	it	848	Sitno	sk		
617	Halltal	at	694	Passo del Mortirolo	it	772	Monte Amiata	it	849	Panske Sedlo	sk		
618	Zillertaler Höhenstr	at	695	Passo di Foscagno	it	773	Monte Argentario	it	850	Dobogókő	hu		
619	Sagalm	at	696	Passo di Gavia	it	774	Montefiascone	it	851	Galyatető	hu		
620	Kitzbühler Horn	at	697	Passo dello Stelvio	it	775	Sella di Leonessa	it	852	Kékestető	hu		
621	Steinplatte-Kammer	at	698	Val Martello	it	776	Forca Canapine	it	853	Pannonhalma	hu		
622	Gerlospfaß	at	699	Val Senales	it	777	Forcola di Presta	it	854	Felső-Borovnyák	hu		
623	Staller Sattel	at	700	Passo Monte Giovo	it	778	Gran Sasso d'Italia	it	855	Misina	hu		
624	Loferer Alpe	at	701	Passo di Pennes	it	779	Campo Felice	it	856	Pasul Prislöp	ro		
625	Hochtor	at	702	Merano 2000	it	780	Monte Perone	it	857	Pasul Tihuta	ro		
626	Neues-Luckner H.	at	703	Passo delle Palade	it	781	Campo Staffi	it	858	Pasul Ciumarna	ro		
627	Volkzeiner Hütte	at	704	Passo della Mendola	it	782	Campo Catino	it	859	Pasul Rařau	ro		
628	Oscheniksee	at	705	Val Genova	it	783	Passo Diavolo	it	860	Pasul Bicaz	ro		
629	Hochstein	at	706	Monte Bondone	it	784	Forca d'Acero	it	861	Páltinis	ro		
630	Dientner Sattel	at	707	Passo Manghen	it	785	Valico Monte Godi	it	862	Pasul Bålea	ro		
631	Gaisberg Straße	at	708	Torri del Vajolet	it	786	Blockhaus Maiella	it	863	Pasul Bran	ro		
632	Arthur Haus	at	709	Passo Furcia	it	787	Monte Carpegna	it	864	Stana de Vale	ro		
633	Zirknitztal	at	710	Passo delle Erbe	it	788	Monte Sant'Angelo	it	865	Pasul Bratocea	ro		
634	Plöckenpass	at	711	Passo di Gardena	it	789	Ab.Montecassino	it	876	Vrřiř	si		
635	Jamnig Hütte	at	712	Passo di Sella	it	790	Campitello Matese	it	877	Rogla	si		
636	Mokdaublick	at	713	Passo Pordoï	it	791	Sella di Perrone	it	878	Mariborsko Pohorje	si		
637	Losler Hütte	at	714	Passo di Fedaiia	it	792	Monte Taburno	it	879	Črnivec	si		
638	Stoderzinken	at	715	Passo di Valparola	it	793	Monte Vergine	it	880	Mangrřsko Sedlo	si		
639	Roßbrand	at	716	Passo di Giau	it	794	Vesuvio	it	881	Pavličevo Sedlo	si		
640	Hochwurzzen	at	717	Passo Duran	it	795	Monte Nerone	it	882	šljeme	hr		
641	Tauernpaß	at	718	Forcella Cibiana	it	796	San Pietro	it	883	Učka Vojak	hr		
642	Maltatal	at	719	Tre Cime Lavaredo	it	797	Monte Faito	it	884	Motovun	hr		
643	Katschberg	at	720	Monte Zoncolan	it	798	Cima Mutali	it	885	Vratnik	hr		
644	Naßfeldpaß	at	721	Monte Paularo	it	799	Monte Vulture	it	886	Óltare	hr		
645	Poludniger Alm	at	722	Passo Cason Lanza	it	800	M. Sacro o Gélbison	it	887	Stara Vrata	hr		
646	Turracher Höhe	at	723	Sella Carnizza	it	801	Monte Armizzone	it	888	Nevoljas Pass	hr		
647	Falkertsee-Hütte	at	724	Mataiur	it	802	Colle del Dragone	it	889	Sveti Jure	hr		
648	Vilacher Alpenstr.	at	725	Piancavallo	it	803	Serra di Tuono	it	890	Kupreřka Vrata	ba		
649	Kanzelhöhe	at	726	Passo Tomba	it	804	Passo Crocetta	it	891	Makljen	ba		
650	Gerlitzzen	at	727	Monte Grappa	it	805	Botte Donato	it	892	Mrakovića	ba		
651	Oberst-Klinke Hütte	at	728	Passo Porte Pasubio	it	806	Cole d'Ascione	it	893	Jahorina	ba		
652	Hochkar Gleischläg	at	729	Passo Campogrosso	it	807	St. Forest-Latteria	it	894	Metaljka	ba		
653	Sölker Paß	at	730	Alpe Cheggio	it	808	Monte Sirino	it	895	Gornje Opine	ba		
654	Gleinalmsattel	at	731	Alpe Rossombolmo	it	809	Passo Pietra Spada	it	896	Mount Avala	rs		
655	Lammersdorfer Bg	at	732	Cascata del Toce	it	810	Monte Alto Cocuzza	it	897	Iriski Venac	rs		
656	Gabersattel	at	733	Il Mottarone	it	811	Portella di Bova	it	898	Kapaonik	rs		
657	Klippitztörl	at	734	Passo Cuvignone	it	812	Erice	it	899	Vinčina Voda	rs		
658	Magdalensberg	at	735	Campo dei Fiori	it	813	Pellegrino	it	900	Čakor	me		
659	Großer Speikkogel	at	736	San Martino	it	814	Carbonara	it	901	Orjen	me		
660	Eisenkappler Hütte	at	737	P. Gran S. Bernardo	it	815	Femmina Morta	it	902	Durmitor Sedlo	me		
661	Seeberg Sattel	at	738	Monte Bisbino	it	816	Portella dello Zoppo	it	903	Njegořev Mausolej	me		
662	Weinebene	at	739	Monte Legnoncino	it	817	Sella Mandrazzi	it	904	Manastir Ostrog	me		
663	Jauerling	at	740	Monte Croce Muggio	it	818	Castelmola	it	905	Popova Sapka	mk		
664	Grubberg	at	741	Madonna Ghisallo	it	819	Etna	it	906	Bukovo	mk		
665	Zellerain	at	742	Giogo di Bala	it	820	Balestrieri	it	907	Babuna Pass	mk		
666	Bürgeralm	at	743	Passo Coe	it	821	P.Punta Masienera	it	908	Vitsi-Nymfeo O	gr		
667	Rohrer Sattel	at	744	Rifugio Alpo	it	822	SpClubMonte Spada	it	909	Lailias ski center	gr		
668	Hocheck	at	745	Passo di Tremalzo	it	823	Arcu Correboi	it	910	Pissoderi ski center	gr		
669	Hohe Wand	at	746	Prati di Nago	it	824	Genna Silana	it	911	Hortiatis	gr		
670	Preiner Gscheid	at	747	Telegrafo	it	825	Serpeddi	it	912	Seli ski center	gr		
671	Sonnwendstein	at	748	Colle Garezzo	it	<b>ZONE 10</b>					913	Pantokrator	gr
672	Stuhleck	at	749	Poggio di San Remo	it	826	Przehyba	pl	914	Prionia-Olympos	gr		
673	Auf der Schanz	at	750	La Cipressa	it	827	Przełęcz Okraj	pl	915	Megalo Papingo	gr		
674	Auf dem Straßegg	at	751	Colma di Sormano	it	828	Przeł Salmopolska	pl	916	Katara Pass A	gr		
675	Ebenwaldhaus	at	752	Passo di Melogno	it	829	Przełęcz Krowiarki	pl	917	Great Meteoro	gr		
<b>ZONE 09</b>													
676	Breuil-Cervinia	it	753	Monte Beigua	it	830	Cyrhla nad Białką	pl	918	Pliasiidhi	gr		
677	Colle San Carlo	it	754	Passo del Faiallo	it	831	Pereval Užhokskiy	ua	919	Velouchi ski center	gr		
678	Colle del Nivolet	it	755	Passo Bocchetta	it	832	Bukovel	ua	920	Mount Didim	gr		
679	Colle Sommeiller	it	756	Passo del Penice	it	833	Pereval Vyshkovskiy	ua	921	Pterolaka ski center	gr		
680	Colle delle Finestre	it	757	Passo del Ghiffi	it	834	Pereval Shurdyn	ua	922	Enos de Kefalonia	gr		
681	Colle Braida	it	758	Colle dei Due Santi	it	835	Tysovets	ua	923	Apollo Epikourios	gr		
682	Pian del Re	it	759	Passo del Cirone	it	836	Vrbatova Bouda	cz	924	Mycenae Citadel	gr		
683	Colle dell' Agnello	it	760	Passo Lagastrello	it	837	řpindlerova Bouda	cz	925	Karabola-Parnitha	gr		
684	Colle di Sampeyre	it	761	Passo di Pradarena	it	838	Suchý vrch	cz	926	Oligirtos řgr			
685	Il Fauniera	it	762	San Pellegrino Alpe	it	839	Červenohorské Sedl	cz	927	Kosmas Pass	gr		
686	Colle di Tenda	it	763	Abetone	it	840	Pradřd	cz	928	Langáda Pass A	gr		
687	Prato Nevoso	it	764	Croce Arcana	it	841	Pancřř	cz	929	Omalos	gr		
688	Passo dello Spluga	it	765	Passo della Futa	it	842	Klet'	cz	930	Akones	gr		
689	Menarola	it	766	Passo della Calla	it	843	řatliakovo jazero	sk	931	Idéon Antron	gr		
690	Passo di San Marco	it	767	Passo dei Mandrioli	it	844	Sedlo řertovica	sk	932	Giouhtas	gr		
			768	Val Monte Fumařolo	it	845	Slieszky Dom	sk	933	Asfendilia	gr		

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934	Dikteon Andre	gr	1000	Kantara castle	CY	71	Keszegi-hágó	71	Pasul Prislop
935	Aleko-Vitosha	bg				72	Püspökszilágy	72	Pasul Rotunda
936	Trojanski Prohod	bg				73	Ecksend	73	Valea Blaznei
937	Sipcenski Prohod	bg				74	Juharos	74	Lacul Colibița
938	Maljovica Complex	bg				75	Ó-hegy	75	Pasul Tihuta
939	Rilski Manastir	bg						76	Pasul Mestecăniș
940	Rožen Manastir	bg						77	Pasul Ciurmarna
941	Popski Preslop	bg						78	Pasul Trei Movile
942	Snezhanka	bg	1	Hörmann-forrás		1	Muntele Șes	79	Pasul Rarau
943	Rožafá	al	2	Kandikó		2	Meses	80	Tarnița
944	Qafá ë Llogorasë	al	3	Károly-kilátó		3	Damiș	81	Păltiniș (Vatra Dornei)
945	Chryssorrogiatissa	cy	4	Brennbergbánya		4	Lacul Drăgan	82	Pasul Stânișoara
946	Makarios Gravel	cy	5	Pannonhalma		5	Stana de Vale	83	Petru Vodă
947	Olympus	cy	6	Csépán-Bükk		6	Padiș	84	Schitul Cerebuc
948	Adelphi	cy	7	Büdöskút		7	Beliș-Fântânele	85	Pasul Creanga
949	Makheras	cy	8	Csőszpuszta		8	Făgetul Clujului	86	Pasul Tulgheș
950	Stavrovouini	cy	9	Hárskút		9	Pasul Ursoaia	87	Pasul Bicaz
			10	Kab-hegy		10	Pasul Vărtoș	88	Pasul Bucin
			11	Kóris-hegy		11	Peștera Scărișoara	89	Șicas
<b>ZONE 10+</b>			12	Hegystű		12	Buscat (Stațiunea)	90	Pasul Cabnda
866	Sem' Vetrov	RU	13	Tihanyi apátság		13	Cetatea Șiria	91	Harghita-Mădăraș
867	Akhun monastery	RU	14	Bence-hegy		14	Mănăstirea Feredeu	92	Harghita-Băi
868	Bakuriani ski resort	GE	15	Citadella		15	Văsoaia	93	Pasul Ghimeș
869	Gomborskiy pereval	GE	16	János-hegy		16	Slatina de Mureș	94	Hatod
870	Pushkin Pass	AR	17	Hármashatár-hegy		17	Pasul Lazuri	95	Pasul Cașin (Pasul Nyerges)
871	Kari Lake	AR	18	Diós árok		18	Pasul Vălișoara	96	Lacul Sfânta Ana
872	Selim Pass	AR	19	Csókakó castle		19	Pasul Buceș	97	Pasul Uz
873	Shahdag ski resort	AZ	20	Várgesztes		20	Pasul Bucium	98	Slănic Moldova-P Sărată
874	Pirqulu's observator	AZ	21	Dobogókő		21	Pasul Almașu Mare	99	Pasul Oituz
875	Baku old city	AZ	22	Visegrád highcastle		22	Geoagiu-Băi	100	Pasul Musat
951	Stóg Izerski	PL	23	Gerecse		23	Cheile Vălișoarei	101	Soveja
952	Czarna Góra	PL	24	Turul		24	Cheile Turzii	102	Comandău
953	Święty Krzyż	PL	25	Vaskapu-hegy		25	Poarta de Fier	103	Barcani
954	Jawor	PL	26	Pap-rét		26	Ocna de Fier	104	Pasul Predelus
955	Przełęcz Wýsna	PL	27	Királykúti-nyereg		27	Iabalcea	105	Pasul Bratocea
956	Süür Munamägi	EE	28	Magas-hegy		28	Semenic (Stațiunea)	106	Tătăruși
957	Turaidas castle	LV	29	Tokaji-hegy		29	Marila	107	Cetatea Neamț
958	Trijų Kryžių Vilnius	LT	30	László tanya		30	Poarta Orientală	108	Petricica
959	Małačka	HR	31	Regéci vár		31	Mănăstirea Călugăra	109	Mănăstirea Ciolanu
960	Vratnik Zrinska Gora	HR	32	Felső-Borovnyák		32	Piadra Alba	110	Jugureni-Marginea Pădurii
961	Kamzík (Televízna)	SK	33	Bükkszentkereszt		33	Știnăpari	111	Mănăstirea Dealu
962	Kohútka ski center	SK	34	Síkfőkút		34	Sfânta Elena	112	Cândești Deal
963	Sedlo Brezina	SK	35	Kőrös-bérc		35	Valea Ponicovei	113	Gușoeni
964	Kráľova Hoľa	SK	36	Derenk		36	Coroieni	114	Ghelnegioaia
965	Kojšovská Hoľa	SK	37	Vörös-tó		37	Mănăstirea Nicula	115	Bobaița
966	Herlianske sedlo	SK	38	Szár-hegy		38	Lefaia	116	Gorovei
967	Szár-hegy	HU	39	Szanticska-magaslat		39	Tárnăveni	117	Strunga
968	Tokaji-hegy	HU	40	Bükk-tető		40	Mediaș-Blâjel	118	Dealul Mare
969	Hörmann-forrás	HU	41	Kékestető		41	Biserica din Deal	119	Petrești-Găiceana
970	Tihany	HU	42	Galyatető		42	Topârcea	120	Popeni-Epurenii
971	Vysoké Sedlo	CZ	43	Hurok út		43	Ruși-Slimnic	121	Niculitel
972	Měděnec – Medník	CZ	44	Kővágó		44	Dealul Dăii	122	Horia
973	Komáří Vízka	CZ	45	Sas-bérc		45	Pelișor-Richiș	123	Sarighiol de Deal
974	Strahov České Radio	CZ	46	Garáb		46	Jina (Transalpina)	124	Cheile Dobrogei
975	Podvrší tower	CZ	47	Sejce		47	Sarmizegetusa Regia	125	Șipotele
976	Lysá Hora	CZ	48	Nagy-hideg-hegy		48	Muntele Mic (Stațiunea)		
977	Blejski grad	SI	49	Nagyirtáspuszta		49	Râușor (Parcul Național)		
978	Korte	SI	50	Wenckheim ház		50	Pasul Jiu Cerna		
979	Strma Reber	SI	51	Závoz-nyereg		51	Cheile Sohodolului	1	Arcalis
980	Trdinov Vrh	SI	52	Salgóbánya		52	Godeanu	2	Ruta del Ferro-Sorteney
981	Pasul Gutâi	RO	53	Tajti-lapos		53	Straja (Stațiunea)	3	Arinsal
982	Mănăstirea Feredeu	RO	54	Misina		54	Pasul Vâlcan (Stațiunea)	4	Port de Cabus
983	Semenic (Stațiunea)	RO	55	Hármashegy		55	Rusu (Stațiunea)	5	Comes Banyás/Collet Colls
984	Pasul Urdele	RO	56	Petőczpuszta		56	Curmatura Vidrutei	6	Salze
985	Transbucegi	RO	57	Máré castle		57	Pasul Urdele	7	Sispony
986	Niculitel	RO	58	Mausz kápolna		58	Păltiniș	8	Pic de Carroi
987	Dyulinski Prohod	BG	59	Tenkes		59	Mănăstirea Frasinei	9	Coll d'Ordino
988	Balgarka	BG	60	Gombás-hegy		60	Pasul Balea	10	Col d'Anyós-Baixalis
989	Dardhë-ski Bigell	AL	61	Pupi-hegy		61	Poiana Brașov	11	Els Vilars d'Engordany
990	Gracen	AL	62	Börzönce		62	Măgura	12	Coma de Ransol
991	Koprivštica – Zavoj J	RS	63	Gelse		63	Pârâul Rece	13	Vall d'Incles
992	Vlasinsko Jezero	RS	64	Sas-rét tető		64	Pasul Bran	14	Els Plans
993	Miroč	RS	65	Péterke		65	Cabana Piatra Arsă	15	Port d'Envalira
994	Zhegoc/Zegovac	KS	66	Felsőkövesd		66	Pasul Huta	16	Camf del Riu d'Urina
995	Prevalla ski center	KS	67	Rózsahegy		67	Pasul Gutâi	17	Els Cortals
996	Tal-Merħla	ML	68	Hosszú-Kopasz		68	Pasul Neteđa	18	El Forn-Grandvalira Canillo
997	Ta' Dmejrek	ML	69	Csúcs-hegy		69	Petrova	19	Estany d'Engolasters
998	Saint-Hilarion castle	CY	70	Borsó-hegy		70	Pasul Șetref		
999	Pentadaktybos	CY							

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20	Rec de Solà	69	Haviříská bouda	147	Soláň	68	Velja Mogila
21	La Comella	70	Bělokozly	148	Lazy VII Zlín	69	Pinčiči
22	Aixàs	71	Jarník	149	Rozhledna Travičná	70	Brkanovići
23	Collada de la Gallina	72	Javorová skála	150	Mikulčin vrch	71	Medureč-Megjureći
24	Certés	73	Javorník - rozhledna			72	Stegvaš
25	Bosc de la Rabassa	74	Churáňov - pod meteost.			73	Kunje
		75	Žlíbský vrch			74	Kruce
		76	Libin			75	Pinješ
		77	Kleť				
		78	Plešné jezero				
		79	Vítkův hrádek				
		80	Sedlo pod Vysokou	1	Šula		
		81	Podivice - V Horách	2	Rudnica		
		82	U Serpentina	3	Hram Svetog Georgija		
		83	Javořice	4	Bobovo (Prijeiki Do)		
		84	Vysoký kámen	5	Mataruge		
		85	Rozhledna Babylon u Kram.	6	Kosanica		
		86	Horní Vestec	7	Ščepan Polje		
		87	Buchtův kopec	8	Muratovica (Smriječno)		
		88	Sulkovec	9	Rudinice canyon		
		89	Karasín	10	Dubljevići canyon		
		90	Obecník (Babylon)	11	Durmitor sedlo		
		91	Špindlerova Bouda	12	Veliki Štuoc		
		92	Modré sedlo	13	Žuta Galica		
		93	Černá hora	14	Sela		
		94	Krupná hora	15	Bijela		
		95	Sokolovská	16	Crna Poda		
		96	Janovičky	17	Semolj		
		97	Prachovské skály	18	Biogradsko jezero		
		98	Zvičina	19	Žurena		
		99	Památník bitvy 1866 na Chl	20	Sipanje		
		100	Kunětická hora hrad	21	Zekova glava		
		101	Blatina nad Borová	22	Lokve		
		102	Dobrošov	23	Planina Turjak		
		103	Masarykova chata	24	Priječ		
		104	Mezivrší	25	Cesta na (To) Vejle Duboko		
		105	Adam	26	Prevoj Trešnjevik		
		106	Suchý vrch	27	Prelaz Kula		
		107	Pod Klepáčem	28	Čakor		
		108	Andrlův Chlum	29	Babino Polje		
		109	Lázek	30	Grebaje		
		110	Hartinkov	31	Vrbica		
		111	Paprsek	32	Vračenići		
		112	Kristovo loučení	33	Srijede		
		113	Petrovy boudy	34	Donja Trepča		
		114	Čtyři rohy	35	Trebjesa		
		115	Červenohorské sedlo	36	Krnovo (Vučje ski centar)		
		116	Dlouhé stráně	37	Kapetanovo jezero		
		117	Praděd	38	Orjen sedlo		
		118	Lyra - Kóta	39	Grahovsko Polje		
		119	Svatá Trojice	40	Manastir Ostrog		
		120	Skřítek	41	Velestovo		
		121	Alfrédka (Mravenčí sedlo)	42	Manastir Čelija Piperska		
		122	Stránské	43	Brskut		
		123	Ecce Homo	44	Korita		
		124	Dubová (hrad Vikštejn)	45	Cekanje		
		125	Slavkovský vrch	46	Njegošev mauzolej		
		126	Starý Jičín hrad	47	Gradac		
		127	Javorový vrch	48	Seoštik = Prekornica		
		128	Lysá hora	49	Gorica		
		129	Bílý Kříž	50	Karaula Jagoda		
		130	Hrčava trojmezí	51	Konjevići		
		131	Sýkoř	52	Crkva Svetog Ilije (Žvinje)		
		132	Němčice	53	Ustanička		
		133	Drahany vysláč	54	Gornji Morinj		
		134	Útěchov	55	Klinci		
		135	Rozhledna Podvrší u Vesel	56	Merdari (Crkva Sveta Petra)		
		136	Automotodrom Brno	57	Radoševiči		
		137	Hádecká planinka	58	Ukropci		
		138	Karlovská	59	Sveti Spas (Seoca)		
		139	Pracký kopec (Austerlitz)	60	Podstrog		
		140	Žerotínský vrch (rozhled)	61	Manastir Duljevo		
		141	Znojmo - Horní náměstí	62	Manastir Rustovo		
		142	Klentnice	63	Radenovići		
		143	Hrad Buchlov	64	Kruševica		
		144	Hostýn	65	Poljice = Paštovačka gora		
		145	Cáb	66	Zagrade		
		146	Pustevny	67	Sutorman		



# Les Chiffres /Numbers B.I.G 2017

## Classement général global / General overall ranking - **TOP100**

1 MAYEUR Etienne S 1000	26 BOSDIJK Rob 544	52 PEETERS Marc 376	78 SVEHLIK Karel 313
2 LUCAS Eric S 1000	27 PARTHOENS Jean 525	53 BOYENK Arnold 375	79 CANDELI Luigi 312
3 JACQUEMIN Alain 984	28 SZILAGYI Andras 518	54 OTEMAN Luc 371	80 MONTEFUSCO Claudio 311
4 JACQUEMIN Dominique 981	29 NOTTEN Jean-Pierre 517	55 PIRET Véronique 366	81 HOPPE Ulla 311
5 SPEED Kevin 957	30 PIEATIERRA Joseba 508	56 DEJACE Jules 365	82 WINTER Charles 311
6 VAN ELS Wim 882	31 COULON Daniel 503	57 CAPELLANI Luigi 357	83 DUPEYROUX Olivier 310
7 BRIOLLET Daniel 848	32 HUL Philip 498	58 MATTE Jean-Luc 353	84 DELAHAIE LIONEL 303
8 OOSTRA Ard 840	33 VANSTIPHOUT Dominique 492	59 ALBERINI Enrico 350	85 WEYTMANS Christiaan 302
9 SPINA Luigi 838	34 GOBERT Daniel 462	60 KOOL Martin 350	86 LAVIEVILLE Bernard 300
10 TAYLOR Martin 834	35 VAN LONKHUYZEN Michiel 449	61 HANSEN Rob 350	87 MICHIELS Ludo 299
11 SEGUY Marc 809	36 OLDEMAN Gerrit-Rudolf 442	62 DEWEZ Rudy 349	88 JANSEN Axel 296
12 CANDAU François 800	37 CIJSOUW Jakob 439	63 NIMMEGEERS Stefaan 349	89 CASOLARI Bortolomeo 296
13 RAFOLS Frederic 765	38 OPOLECKY Hynek 425	64 FROGNEUX Bernard 345	90 JACQUEMIN Julien 295
14 ESCUER MESTRES Nuria 746	39 PLAINE Patrick(+) 424	65 VAN DER SLUIJS Herman 342	91 ADAM Jean-Pierre 294
15 TORELLI Cecilia 691	40 JACQUEMIN Gilles 424	66 ANDELT Radek 342	92 KOEDIJKER Hans 294
16 VAN AMEIJDEN Richard 669	41 VAN HECKE Marnix 415	67 DEMAESSCHALCK Patrick 341	93 SOLENNI Gianni 290
17 VERLAET Johan 662	42 NILSON Jerry 410	68 CHARY Denise 337	94 BRUFFAERTS Jose 289
18 LINNERT Heiko 653	43 RECKHAUS Juergen(+) 405	69 JACQUEMIN Renaud 335	95 ANGERER Elisabeth 287
19 BRENNER Karl 635	44 RUIZ-OPITZ Mario 403	70 ÁBRAHÁM Balázs 331	96 EPIARD Christian 287
20 NOTTEN Peter 615	45 COSIALS Xavier 391	71 SALA Roger 331	97 GRIMSTVEIT Leif 286
21 BERASATEGI Ruben 599	46 VAN SCHAİK Ronald 388	72 CHOZAS Eduardo 331	98 VON HEYDEBRECK Anja 283
22 HILSON Daniel 591	47 SCHNEIDER Irene 387	73 HINK Mark 329	99 CHARBONNIER Robert 282
23 CATTANEO Luciano 577	48 KREICSI Gabor 384	74 BERNEGGER Klaus 326	100 BEEKMAN Aart 281
24 MORALES GARCIA Angel 573	49 MENARD Michel 383	75 NOOTENBOOM Louis 324	
25 SOMMER-Brenner Claudia 547	50 VANDENBUSSCHE Tom 382	76 ANTJXUSTEGI Aitor 316	
	51 SCHILLEMANS Coen 380	77 AARD Miki 315	

## Classement année 2017/ year 2017 ranking - **TOP50**

1 KARBAUSKIENE Lina 94	14 AARD Miki 58	27 LAULHE Jean-Luc 42	40 PIEATIERRA Joseba 35
2 MEIJERING Gerard 85	15 NOOTENBOOM Louis 55	28 VAN ELS Wim 41	41 VAN DER SLUIJS Herman 35
3 COULON Daniel 83	16 ESCUER MESTRES Nuria 53	29 DE CARVALHO Guillaume 41	42 MORALES GARCIA Angel 34
4 WEYTMANS Christiaan 78	17 SCHNEIDER Irene 53	30 ANGERER Elisabeth 40	43 ODORICO Michel 34
5 TIEGEL Alena 73	18 RAFOLS Frederic 52	31 CANDAU François 40	44 LE TUTOUR Jean-Luc 34
6 GOMEZ, Manel 73	19 LINNERT Heiko 52	32 JACQUEMIN Alain 39	45 TORELLI Cecilia 33
7 TIEGEL Andreas 73	20 ÁBRAHÁM Balázs 51	33 VAN SCHAİK Ronald 38	46 VERLAET Johan 31
8 DITESCU Razvan 72	21 JOHN Achim 47	34 JACQUEMIN Dominique 37	47 SCHILLEMANS Coen 31
9 CHEREGI Marius 71	22 SOMMER-Brenner Claudia 46	35 CIJSOUW Jakob 37	48 KREICSI Gabor 31
10 SEGUY Marc 64	23 GRANTHAM Will 45	36 PAL Gabor 37	49 REDDER Klaas 31
11 BRIOLLET Daniel 62	24 BERNEGGER Klaus 43	37 VANDENBUSSCHE Tom 35	50 CODINA Arnau 30
12 MARTINS Juris 60	25 SPINA Luigi 42	38 ALLEMEERSCH Kris 35	
13 SZILAGYI Andras 58	26 OOSTRA Ard 42	39 JANSSEN Richard 35	

## Classement général Ironbig / General overall godfathers ranking

1 MENARD Michel 45	8 JANSEN Axel 7	15 SCHUYER Roland 4	22SCHOOT Hugo 3
2 WEYTMANS Christiaan 18	9 ANTJXUSTEGI Aitor 7	16 MAZON DEL CAMPO Carlos 4	23 NIJSTEN Stan 3
3 KREICSI Gabor 15	10 PUSKAS Aladár 7	17 KARBAUSKIENE Lina 4	24 COUCKE Raphaël 3
4 DEKKERS Helmut 13	11 SPINA Luigi 6	18 CATTANEO Luciano 4	25 CASTAGNOLI Giordano 3
5 MAYEUR Etienne 12	12 LINNERT Heiko 5	19 HOCHULI Olivier 3	26 DOMONKOS György 3
6 GOBERT Daniel 9	13 VIJVER Silvan 5	20 DE CARVALHO Guillaume 3	27 EUSSSEN Thomas 3
7 JOHN Achim 8	14 GRANERO NAVARRO M A 5	21 VINCZE Gabor 3	

## Classement général Dames / General overall women ranking

1 ESCUER MESTRES Nuria 746	13 GERLIER Sylvie 232	25 GROUX Michele 124	37 TIEGEL Alena 90
2 TORELLI Cecilia 691	14 TIMMERMANS Wil 204	26 DONNERS Patricia 123	38 MAURET Nathalie 85
3 SOMMER-Brenner Claudia 547	15 SALA Chantal 197	27 STOELZAET Jamien 121	39 BRINKMAN Marieke 82
4 VANSTIPHOUT Dominique 492	16 SIRET Françoise 191	28 HAYCRAFT Anne 120	40 KOCH Julia 81
5 SCHNEIDER Irene 387	17 MAAS Marlu 191	29 GEORGE Nathalie 114	41 DREDEMY Marie 81
6 PIRET Véronique 366	18 BERTING Corrie 170	30 CROZAZ Pascale 110	42 DIETEREN Nicole 75
7 CHARY Denise 337	19 JANSEN Vivian 162	31 GROOT Heleen 104	43 GODELU Sylviane 75
8 HOPPE Ulla 311	20 LONGO Jeannie 155	32 JACQUEMIN Odile 103	44 ZAAL Brenda 74
9 ANGERER Elisabeth 287	21 VEUL Ria 147	33 CORNET Bernadette 102	45 PELISSIER Christine 73
10 VON HEYDEBRECK Anja 283	22 NAGY Andrea 142	34 FLORET Sandrine 101	46 DOUBLON Nadège 72
11 KARBAUSKIENE Lina 260	23 BENISTRAND Catherine 131	35 BERTHELIER Patricia 97	47 KISS Anette 70
12 VERKUIJLEN Tineke 253	24 BOKHORST Jantine 126	36 EBEL Emilie 94	48 JACQUEMIN Elise 70

## BIG Review 2018

49 HILD Marie-Paule 69

50 DERENDORP Leonie 69

### Evolution members/membres

2003 : 277(+84)  
 2004 : 360(+83)  
 2005 : 440(+80)  
 2006 : 535(+95)  
 2007 : 634(+98)  
 2008 : 1863(+1229)  
 2009 : 2665(+802)  
 2010 : 3398(+733)  
 2011 : 3992(+694)  
 2012 : 4424(+432)  
 2013 : 4816(+392)  
 2014 : 5082 (+266)  
 2015 : 5339 (+257)  
 2016 : 5622 (+ 283)  
 2017 : 5846 (+ 224)

### Quality of increasing

	2007	2012	2013	2015	2016	2017
More than 500 bigs	3	13	17 (+4)	25 (+8)	27 (+2)	31 (+4)
More than 164 bigs	70	154	175 (+21)	212 (+37)	224 (+12)	236 (+12)
More than 30 bigs	398	1361	1483 (+122)	1631 (+148)	1696 (+65)	1759 (+63)
Women / femmes	99	190	206 (+16)	220 (+14)	251 (+31)	263 (+12)

### Yearly Classement

770 members claimed in the year 2017 / membres ayant déclaré en 2017  
 including 218 members with more than 10 BIGs /avec plus de 10 bigs

### Best BIG's climbed over 1000 visitors – les plus grimpés

1	<i>Alpe d'Huez</i>	2187	14	<i>Col de l'Izoard</i>	1387	27	<i>Col d'Aspin</i>	1130
2	<i>Col du Galibier</i>	2045	15	<i>Passo Pordoï</i>	1350	28	<i>Paterberg</i>	1124
3	<i>Mont Ventoux</i>	2039	16	<i>Col du Rosier</i>	1328	29	<i>Koppenberg</i>	1114
4	<i>Cauberg</i>	1754	17	<i>Passo di Sella</i>	1275	30	<i>Col de Vars</i>	1095
5	<i>Col de la Cx-de-Fer</i>	1703	18	<i>Vijlenerbos</i>	1264	31	<i>Ballon d'Alsace</i>	1079
6	<i>Keutenberg</i>	1617	19	<i>Col du Stockeu</i>	1234	32	<i>Col de la Schlucht</i>	1063
7	<i>Drielandenpunt</i>	1567	20	<i>Passo di Gardena</i>	1218	33	<i>Col de la Madeleine</i>	1054
8	<i>Eyserbos</i>	1557	21	<i>Col d'Aubisque</i>	1204	34	<i>Passo di Valparola</i>	1033
9	<i>Passo dello Stelvio</i>	1532	22	<i>Cime de la Bonette</i>	1189	35	<i>Passo di Giau</i>	1033
10	<i>Côte de la Redoute</i>	1519	23	<i>Oude Kwaremont</i>	1178	36	<i>Passo di Gavia</i>	1030
11	<i>Gulpenerberg</i>	1460	24	<i>Muur Geraardsbergen</i>	1172	37	<i>Oude Huls</i>	1011
12	<i>Col du Tourmalet</i>	1437	25	<i>Posbank</i>	1169	38	<i>Kluisberg</i>	1009
13	<i>Côte de Wanne</i>	1402	26	<i>Grand Ballon</i>	1148	39	<i>Col de l'Iseran</i>	1004

### Godfathers/Parrains

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Godfathers	61	37	77	37	32	23	30	35

Total : 332

Tableau d'honneur – Honoured table

# BIG

Finishers (1000)

Superbig



Etienne Mayeur – Eric Lucas

Eurobig

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Half-finishers (>=500)

JACQUEMIN Dominique - JACQUEMIN Alain - SPEED Kevin - VAN ELS Wim - TAYLOR Martin - SPINA Luigi - BRIOLLET Daniel -  
OOSTRA Ard- CANDAU François - SEGUY Marc - RAFOLS Frederic - ESCUER M. Nuria- VAN AMEIJDEN Richard - TORELLI Cecilia - VERLAET  
Johan - BRENNER Karl - LINNERT Heiko - NOTTEN Peter - BERASATEGI Ruben - CATTANEO Luciano - HILSON Daniel - MORALES G. Angel -  
BOSDIJK Rob - PARTHOENS Jean - NOTTEN Jean-Pierre - SZILAGYI Andras - PIEATIERRA Joseba - COULON Daniel

## IRONBIG

KINGS (>=25)

Michel Ménard

## NATACHA - HUN

Finishers (75)



Gabór Kreicsi - Puskas Aladár

Half-finishers (>=38)

PAL Gabor - ÁBRAHÁM Bakázs - SZILVAGYI Péter - SZILAGYI Andras - GALCSIK Robert - DOMONKOS György - VINCZE Gabor -  
CSONTOS Ivett

## NATACHA-ROM

Half-finishers (>=63)

CHEREGI Marius - MOGA Claudiu

## NATACHA-AND

Finishers (>=25)



CODINA Arnau

Half-finishers (>=13)

RUBIO COMPTE Jordi - GOMES-MARTINS MUÑOZ August - PEREZ GAÑAN David

## NATACHA-CZE

Current best one – Actuel meilleur

SKALA mojmir 36

## Budget prévisionnel 2018

### Estimated budget 2018

Tous les montants sont exprimés en Euro.  
All the amounts are expressed in Euro.

<b>Dépenses / Outcomings</b>		<b>Recettes / Incomings</b>	
Site web / website	920,00	Cotisations / Contributions	1500,00
Revue / Reviews	530,00	Dons / Donations	500,00
Diplômes et médailles / Diplomas and medals	750,00	Revue / Reviews	500,00
Vêtements / Clothes	7000,00	Diplômes et médailles / Diplomas and medals	0,00
Rendez-vous / Official Meeting	0,00	Vêtements / Clothes	3500,00
Assemblée Générale / General Assembly	150,00	Rendez-vous / Official Meeting	0,00
Frais postaux / Postage	500,00		
Frais bancaires / Banking charges :			
• PayPal	150,00		
• Triodos	0,00		
<b>Total dépenses / outcomings</b>	<b>10000,00</b>	<b>Total recettes / incomings</b>	<b>6000,00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>10000,00</b>	<b>Perte / Loss</b>	<b>4000,00</b>
		<b>Total</b>	<b>10000,00</b>

Les dépenses pour les diplômes et les médailles comprennent le coût du nouveau design (580,80 €).  
The expenses for the diploma and medals include the cost of the new design (€ 580,80).

La dépense la plus importante est l'achat des nouveaux modèles de vêtements à la société Santini.  
L'estimation des recettes liées à la vente de vêtements aux membres est une estimation moyenne. La vente de tous les vêtements peut se faire sur une ou plusieurs années selon le succès des nouveaux modèles auprès des membres.

The biggest expense is the purchase of new models of clothing at the company Santini.  
The estimation of incomings from the sale of clothing to members is an average estimation. The sale of all clothing can be done over one or more years depending on the success of the new models to members.



# Dépenses et recettes 2017

## Outcomings and incomings 2017

Bien que BIGCycling soit devenu officiellement une AISBL le 26/05/2017, les comptes ont été établis sur l'année civile, comme les années précédentes, car il n'y a pas eu de rupture dans les activités.

Although BIGCycling officially became an AISBL on 26/05/2017, the accounts were established over the calendar year, as in previous years, because there was no break in the activities.

Tous les montants sont exprimés en Euro.

All the amounts are expressed in Euro.

### 1) Solde au 31/12/2016 / Balance on 31/12/2016

Compte Triodos / Triodos account	0,00
Compte d'épargne Triodos / Triodos savings account	0,00
Compte intermédiaire / intermediary account	8429,33
Compte PayPal / PayPal account	2037,84
Compte "vêtements" / "clothes" account	76,33
Caisse "vêtements" / "clothes" cash	79,45
<b>Total</b>	<b>10622,95</b>

#### Stocks :

- vêtements / clothes (valeur / value : 1139,00)
- sacs à dos / rucksacks
- auto-collants / stickers
- ramettes de papier / paper sheets blocks
- couvertures plastifiées / laminated covers
- enveloppes / envelopes

Au 31/12/2016, il y avait 5621 membres dont 241 cotisants 2016.

On the date of 31/12/2016, there were 5621 members, including 241 contributors 2016.

### 2) Dépenses et recettes / Outcomings and incomings

Dépenses / Outcomings		Recettes / Incomings	
Site web / website	744,15	Cotisations / Contributions	1455,00
		Dons / Donations	351,70
Revue / Reviews	490,94	Revue / Reviews	770,00
Diplômes et médailles / Diplomas and medals	33,59	Diplômes et médailles / Diplomas and medals	0,00
Vêtements / Clothes	580,80	Vêtements / Clothes	146,50
Rendez-vous / Official Meeting	0,00	Rendez-vous / Official Meeting	0,00
Réunion / Meeting	0,00	Réunion / Meeting	0,00
Frais notariaux / Notary fees	1325,00		
Frais postaux / Postage	186,48		
Frais bancaires / Banking charges :			
• Fortis	36,74		
• PayPal	51,83		
• Triodos	25,00		
<b>Total dépenses / outcomings</b>	<b>3474,53</b>	<b>Total recettes / incomings</b>	<b>2723,20</b>
		<b>Perte / Loss</b>	<b>751,33</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3474,53</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>3474,53</b>



## BIG Review 2018

Le début d'année a été perturbé car le compte Triodos n'a été opérationnel que début juin, c'est-à-dire après que BIGCycling soit devenu une AISBL. En particulier, la difficulté de paiement des cotisations a entraîné une baisse du nombre de membres cotisants.

The beginning of the year was disrupted because the Triodos account was not operational until early June, that is to say after BIGCycling became an AISBL. In particular, the difficulty of paying contributions has led to a decrease in the number of contributing members.

Un compte d'épargne a également été ouvert dans la banque Triodos mais, malheureusement, le taux d'intérêt est tombé à... 0% !

A savings account was also opened in the Triodos bank but, unfortunately, the interest rate fell to... 0% !

La dépense de 580,80 € pour les vêtements correspond au coût du design des nouveaux modèles.

The expense of € 580,80 for the clothes corresponds to the cost of the design of the new models.

Les frais notariaux de 1325,00 € sont les frais de constitution de l'AISBL BIGCycling.

The notary fees of € 1325,00 are the constitution costs of the AISBL BIGCycling.

Le rendez-vous n'a généré aucune dépense, les participants ayant réglé directement les hôtels.

The official meeting did not generate any expense as the participants paid for the hotels directly.

### **3) Solde au 31/12/2017 / Balance on 31/12/2017**

Compte Triodos / Triodos account	1100,95
Compte d'épargne Triodos / Triodos savings account	5744,53
Compte intermédiaire / intermediary account	0,00
Compte PayPal / PayPal account	2882,51
Compte "vêtements" / "clothes" account	76,33
Caisse "vêtements" / "clothes" cash	67,30
<b>Total</b>	<b>9871,62</b>

#### Stocks :

- vêtements / clothes (valeur / value : 1052,00)
- sacs à dos / rucksacks
- auto-collants / stickers
- ramettes de papier / paper sheets blocks
- couvertures plastifiées / laminated covers
- enveloppes / envelopes

Au 31/12/2017, il y avait 5844 membres dont 151 cotisants 2017.

On the date of 31/12/2017, there were 5844 members, including 151 contributors 2017.



# Vote Balotilo

## Résultats/Results

### BIGCycling GA – AG 2018

Fin de l'élection / Election deadline : jeudi/Thursday 15.02.2018 20h00

59 électeurs autorisés/authorized electors.

Participation : 77% (47 votes)

#### Question 1

**Do you agree with the summary of the moral and activities' report?**

**Etes-vous d'accord avec la synthèse du rapport moral et d'activités ?**

Le « oui » l'emporte à 98% sur le « non » (2%).

Nombres de voix :

Oui : 43

Non : 1

Ne se prononce pas : 3

#### Question 2

**Are you satisfied (happy) with the moral and activities' report?**

**Etes-vous satisfait (heureux) du rapport moral et d'activités ?**

Le « oui » l'emporte à 98% sur le « non » (2%).

Nombres de voix :

Oui : 41

Non : 1

Ne se prononce pas : 5

#### Question 3

**To deter cheaters, do you agree that one has to sign up to a digital code of conduct if <= 164 bigs ?**

**Pour éviter les tricheurs, acceptez-vous qu'on doive signer un code digital de conduite si <= 164 bigs ?**

Le « oui » l'emporte à 68% sur le « non » (32%).

Nombres de voix :

Oui : 23

Non : 11

Ne se prononce pas : 13

#### Question 4

**Do you agree with the counts in the financial report?**

**Etes-vous d'accord avec les comptes du rapport financier ?**

Le « oui » l'emporte à 100% sur le « non » (0%).

Nombres de voix :

Oui : 42

Non : 0

Ne se prononce pas : 5

#### Question 5

**Do you agree with the financial budget for 2018?**

**Etes-vous d'accord avec le budget financier pour 2018 ?**

Le « oui » l'emporte à 100% sur le « non » (0%).

Nombres de voix :

Oui : 41

Non : 0

Ne se prononce pas : 6

#### Question 6

**Do you agree to receive reminders in the website to remind that you need to pay contribution?**

**Etes-vous d'accord de recevoir des rappels sur le site web vous rappelant de payer la cotisation ?**

Le « oui » l'emporte à 95% sur le « non » (5%).

Nombres de voix :

Oui : 41

Non : 2

Ne se prononce pas : 4

#### Question 7

**Do you agree that the price of the review would become 15€ instead of 10€ if the order is after the 15th of february?**

**Acceptez-vous que le prix de la revue devienne 15€ si le paiement est effectué après le 15 février ?**

Le « oui » l'emporte à 89% sur le « non » (11%).

Nombres de voix :

Oui : 34

Non : 4

Ne se prononce pas : 9

#### Question 8

**Do you agree that the diplomas with the new design coming in 2018 have an option to be printed by yourself?**

**Acceptez-vous que les diplômes avec le nouveau design arrivant en 2018 aient l'option d'être imprimés par vos soins ?**

Le « oui » l'emporte à 90% sur le « non » (10%).

Nombres de voix :

Oui : 37

Non : 4

Ne se prononce pas : 6

#### Question 9

**Do you agree with the following change suggested in the superlist?**

**Etes-vous d'accord avec le changements suivant dans la superliste ?**

BIG 162 Old: Winterbergstraße change to New: Festung Königstein

Le « oui » l'emporte à 95% sur le « non » (5%).

Nombres de voix :

Oui : 36

Non : 2

Ne se prononce pas : 9

#### Question 10

**Do you agree with the following change suggested in the superlist?**

**Etes-vous d'accord avec le changements suivant dans la superliste ?**

BIG 834 Old: Pereval Nikitskiy change to New: Shurdyn Pereval

Le « oui » l'emporte à 100% sur le « non » (0%).

Nombres de voix :

Oui : 38

Non : 0

Ne se prononce pas : 9

#### Question 11

**Do you agree with the following change suggested in the superlist?**

## BIG Review 2018

### **Etes-vous d'accord avec le changements suivant dans la superliste ?**

BIG 835 Old: Ai-Petri change to New: Tysovets  
Le « oui » l'emporte à 100% sur le « non » (0%).  
Nombres de voix :  
Oui : 37  
Non : 0  
Ne se prononce pas : 10

### **Question 12**

#### **Do you agree with the following change suggested in the superlist?**

#### **Etes-vous d'accord avec le changements suivant dans la superliste ?**

BIG 895 Old: Cemerno change to New: Gornje Opine  
Le « oui » l'emporte à 100% sur le « non » (0%).  
Nombres de voix :  
Oui : 36  
Non : 0  
Ne se prononce pas : 11

### **Question 13**

#### **Do you agree with the following change suggested in the superlist?**

#### **Etes-vous d'accord avec le changements suivant dans la superliste ?**

BIG 904 Old: Črkvine change to Manastir Ostrog  
Le « oui » l'emporte à 100% sur le « non » (0%).  
Nombres de voix :  
Oui : 37  
Non : 0  
Ne se prononce pas : 10

### **Question 14**

#### **Select 5 destinations among the suggested places between 2020 and 2025 for the official meetings!**

#### **Sélectionnez 5 destinations parmi les lieux suggérés de 2020 à 2025 pour les rendez-vous officiels !**

Jura (F-CH)	18
Sardinia-Sicilia (I)	18
Cyprus/Chypre	17
Hautes Alpes France (F)	17
Central Europe (H-SK-PL)	15
Galicia/Cantabria (E)	15
Italian Lakes (I)	15
Asturias (E)	13
Pyrenees Cross(F-E)	13
Roma-Napoli (I)	13
Central Massive (F)	12
Andorra (E)	11
Riviera Cannes-Genova (F-I)	8
Sierra Nevada (E)	7

### **Question 15**

#### **Select the best formula for managing the meetings!**

#### **Selectionnez la meilleure formule d'organisation des rendez-vous !**

mix of all / un mélange de tout .13  
travel car + bike 4-6 days – voyage voiture+vélo 4-6 jours  
7  
central place 4-6 days bike+visits – pied-à-terre 4-6 jours  
vélo+visites  
5  
travel only by bike 4-6 days – voyage uniquement à vélo 4-6  
jours  
5  
travel only by bike 8-15 days – voyage uniquement à vélo 8-15  
jours  
4

central place 4-6 days – pied-à-terre de 4-6 jours  
3  
don't mind / pas d'intérêt  
2  
travel car + bike 8-15 days – voyage voiture+vélo 8-15 jours  
2  
central place 8-15 days bike+visits – pied-à-terre 8-15 jours  
vélo+visites  
1  
central place 8-15 days – pied-à-terre de 8-15 jours  
0

### **Question 16**

#### **Do you agree for voting in the year 2020 for the central committee with candidates presented before?**

#### **Etes-vous d'accord avec la suggestion de voter en l'an 2020 pour le comité central avec les candidats présentés avant ?**

Le « oui » l'emporte à 97% sur le « non » (3%).  
Nombres de voix :  
Oui : 36  
Non : 1  
Ne se prononce pas : 10

### **Question 17**

#### **Do you think that we have also to vote for other tasks like the jury (changes,zone 12), the national delegates? Pensez-vous qu'il faille aussi voter pour d'autres postes comme les jurys (changements,zone 12), délégués nationaux ?**

Le « non » l'emporte à 56% sur le « oui » (44%).  
Nombres de voix :  
Oui : 15  
Non : 19  
Ne se prononce pas : 13

### **Question 18**

#### **Select 5 goals that must become priorities for the year 2018 among those committee's activities?**

#### **Sélectionnez 5 objectifs qui devront devenir une priorité en 2018 parmi ces activités du comité ?**

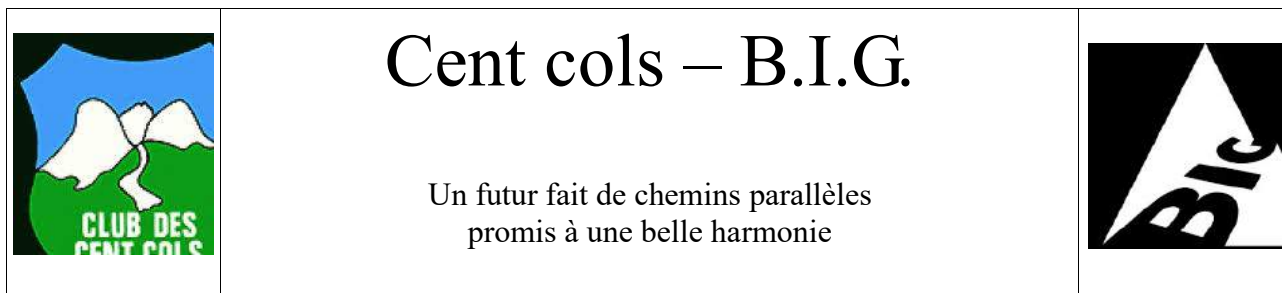
updating database to correct the stocked mistakes / mise à jour du stock d'erreurs de la base de données  
33  
increase the number of contributing members / augmenter le nombre de cotisants  
32  
improvement of the website to be more friendly / convivialité du site web  
27  
adjustement altitudes – profiles / parallelisme altitude/graphiques  
25  
better communication & social feeds / communication meilleure + réseaux sociaux  
21  
selling the new clothes / mise en vente des vêtements  
20  
New articles in magazines / Nouveaux articles dans magazines (promotion/publicité)  
14  
better promotion of the review / promouvoir plus la revue  
9  
creation of the diplomas / création des diplômes  
8  
use of new stickers / utilisation de nouveaux auto-collants  
6  
scan old review / scan vieilles revues 4

## Une photo souvenir de la première AG de l' AISBL BIGCycling



*Dominique Jacquemin, Alain Jacquemin, Christiaan Weytmans, Vinny Taylor, Lina Karbauskiene, Axel Jansen, Helmuth Dekkers, Kevin Speed, Richard Van Ameijden*

*Coen Schillemans, Daniel Gobert, José Bruffaerts, Christian Le Corre*



***Deux associations différentes mais une seule passion : grimper à vélo  
Entrevue de Enrico Alberini avec Bernard Giraudeau et Daniel Gobert***

Bonjour Bernard et bonjour Daniel !

*Je suis ravi de me retrouver avec mes deux présidents, Bernard Giraudeau, président du Club de Cent Cols et Daniel Gobert, président du BigCycling. Je suis inscrit aux deux associations, au CCC depuis l'an 2000 et au Big depuis l'an 2006, et c'est grâce au CCC que j'ai connu le BIG. En 2006 à Mittelwihl, lors de mon premier séjour CCC était prévue la visite d'une cave et j'ai vu un maillot bizarre, j'ai demandé des renseignements et voilà je suis devenu un membre BIG aussi. J'aimerais vous poser quelques questions afin de mieux faire connaître. Et puis, vous vous connaissez, vous voici en haut du Maljovica Complex en Bulgarie, tous les deux !*

Bernard GIRAudeau, président des Cent Cols



Daniel GOBERT, président du BIGCycling



### Question 1

**Q: Bernard, peux-tu te présenter aux lecteurs de la revue ?**

Candidat au Conseil d'Administration du Club des Cent cols lors de la dernière assemblée générale du 11 novembre 2017, j'ai été élu président de cette prestigieuse association et j'en suis très fier. Mais ma fierté n'est pas égocentrique, car en fait, je suis fier de me mettre au service de ce club qui a nourri une bonne partie de ma vie d'adulte et depuis longtemps. Je mesure également tout l'engagement nécessaire à cette fonction. Mais je ne suis pas seul car une équipe de qualité est constituée au sein du CA. J'ai aussi des antécédents à revendiquer dans le Brevet International du Grimpeur puisque j'en ai été, pendant un temps, son responsable "boutique vêtements". J'ai 64 ans, je suis à la retraite depuis le 8 décembre 2017 à 18h52 (Berxit mou, je vais travailler de temps en temps) et j'habite à Ajaccio. Marié à Nadine, deux enfants.

**Q: Daniel, peux-tu te présenter aux lecteurs de la revue ?**

Sur l'aspect personnel, je m'appelle Daniel Gobert, je suis un belge francophone, donc wallon, né en 1958. Je suis enseignant en mathématique dans ma bonne ville de Namur. Je suis marié et j'ai 5 enfants de 33 à 14 ans, quatre filles et un garçon. J'ai une épouse marathoniennne et cycliste, ce qui permet de nombreuses opportunités sportives familiales. Sur l'aspect vélo, je parcours entre 5000 et 7000km tous les ans depuis plus de 40 ans. Mais je tiens surtout à parcourir un minimum de 90 000m de dénivelée chaque année, soit plus de dix fois l'Everest, j'y tiens. Cela veut dire que je grimpe moins vite qu'un cycloportif moyen mais plus souvent qu'un cyclotouriste moyen. J'ai été président de club et administrateur de la Fédération belge du Cyclotourisme. Je suis membre des cent cols, de l'OCD britannique, des Monts de France, de l'UIC et président-membre fondateur du challenge BIG, devenu BIGCycling. J'ai écrit trois livres sur les



ascensions cyclistes : “les cols de la Vie “ en 1985, “l'Encyclopédie Cotacol : 1000 côtes belges” en 1991 et récemment “l'histoire du Cyclogrimpisme” en 2015, car je m'intéresse à tout ce qui se grimpe sur un vélo.

### Question 2

#### **Q : Bernard, comment et quand as-tu connu le Club Des Cents Cols ?**

J'ai connu le Club des Cents Cols par l'intermédiaire de notre Président Honoris Causa, Henri Dusseau. J'écrivais à l'époque des guides de randonnées pédestres sur la Corse, puisqu'il n'y en avait pas encore. Les Editions Franck, éditeur à Annecy s'occupaient de l'édition de mes guides mais aussi de celle de la série “La France à vélos” de la FFCT, animé par Henri. Celui-ci m'a téléphoné pour me demander si j'étais compétent pour écrire le tome Corse de la série et il m'a parlé du Club des Cent cols. J'ai réalisé le tome sur la Corse et j'ai adhéré avec enthousiasme au CCC puisque cela correspondait à ma pratique du vélo. C'était en 1994.

#### **Q : Daniel, comment et quand as-tu eu l'idée du Challenge-Big ?**

Pour toutes les associations de cyclogrimpisme à vie qui lui ont succédé, notre mère est la Confrérie des Cent Cols. Nous sommes tous nés de sa merveilleuse idée et nous avons tous ouvert des portes pour pallier à ses quelques oublis, inévitables, puisque tout concept ne peut tout renfermer. En 1985, je trouvais que la notion de col, pour belle et rêveuse qu'elle soit, réduisait la palette des ascensions. Des monstres sacrés comme le Puy-de-Dôme, l'Alpe d'Huez, le Pla d'Adet ou le controversé Mont Ventoux au sein des cent cols avec son col des Tempêtes en contrebas manquaient à l'appel et ne pouvaient être déclarés. Nos très médiatiques côtes wallonnes et bergs flamands n'y étaient pas. Des hauts points du Giro comme le Gran Sasso ou des icônes comme le Poggio étaient également exclus. Le cyclisme grimpeur y perdait quelque chose. Il fallait trouver de quoi compléter ailleurs cette si riche idée.

De là, me vint soudain une illumination en plein milieu du raidillon du triple mur Monty à Lustin, il faut créer une liste fermée mais représentative des plus belles ascensions d'Europe, cols et autres noms inclus, mais limitée en nombre pour ne pas se perdre dans un dédale infini. Par rapport aux trois premières associations existantes, l'idée du nombre limité et choisi d'avance apparaissait. Je l'appelai d'abord le BIEG : brevet international euro-grimpeur, puis il devint BIG pour brevet international du Grimpeur et enfin BIGCycling world par la voie internationale et informatique qui couvre notre monde actuel. Le nombre de 100 ascensions devint rapidement 1000 sommets. Ce nombre mythique de 1000 reste un nombre inamovible depuis maintenant plus de 20 ans. Je n'ai jamais voulu concurrencer les Cent Cols, j'ai toujours voulu que le BIG en soit un agréable complément.



*Roselyne (accompagnatrice), Bernard, Luc Willem, Eric Lucas (en partie caché) et Daniel au sommet du Mont Snezhanka*

### Question 3

#### **Q: Bernard, peux tu présenter le Club des Cent Cols aux amis du Challenge-Big ?**

Le Club des Cent cols a environ 2300 membres à jour de cotisation en 2017, comprenant environ 500 membres européens non français et 200 membres hors d'Europe. Le CCC organise deux séjours annuels (printemps, été) d'une semaine environ dans un massif montagneux différents français ou frontalier, ainsi que dans le Valais en 2018, en Espagne, et en Italie précédemment et en 2019. Le club propose une quinzaine de randonnées permanentes ayant pour thème “100 cols en ...” : Vosges, Forêt-Noire en VTT, la Divisoria (ligne de partage des eaux atlantique-Méditerranée en Espagne), Ardèche, Drôme, Arc alpin, Suisse, etc. D'acharnés travailleurs et amateurs de cartes, du club, ont dressé l'inventaire exhaustif des cols d'une trentaine de pays européens et hors d'Europe. L'amitié et la tolérance sont des principes de base incontournables dans le club des Cents Cols. Les membres du club font une déclaration annuelle de leurs réalisations de cols, basée sur leur bonne foi. La compétition est une notion étrangère à notre club mais nous avons un classement, comme dans le BIG, qui paraît dans notre revue. Celle-ci relate les grands événements du club et de nombreux auteurs nous font part de leurs aventures cyclistes par le biais d'articles inclus dans la Revue. Adresse du club: [www.centcols.org](http://www.centcols.org)

#### **Q: Daniel, peux-tu présenter les Cent Cols aux amis du BIG?**

Le CCC est le challenge pionnier de tous les challenges. Devient lauréat tout simplement celui qui aura franchi sur le vélo cent cols différents repris dans les catalogues de l'association ou dénommé col de manière officielle selon certaines

règles. Dans chaque groupe de 100 cols déclarés doivent se trouver un minimum de cols localisés à plus 2000 mètres d'altitude. Les Cent Cols ont autant de membres inscrits qu'au B.I.G. et ont une organisation administrative et officielle qui a fait ses preuves de longue date.

### Question 4

#### **Q: Tu es inscrit au Challenge Big aussi. Comment as-tu connu le Big ?**

J'ai connu le BIG par Daniel Gobert qui est membre du CCC. Je suis allé faire un tour sur le site du BIG et cette idée de parcourir l'Europe en quête de grimpees caractéristiques m'a intéressé. Nous avons participé, Nadine et moi, à un voyage organisé par Daniel en Roumanie et en Bulgarie en quête de BIG. Nous en gardons de très agréables souvenirs. J'ai encore toute une série de BIG espagnole à enregistrer !

#### **Q: Tu es inscrit au Club de Cent Cols aussi. Comment as-tu connu le Club ?**

En tant que cyclo wallon, dans les années 80, tout amateur grimpeur se devait d'être des 100 cols. C'était l'incontournable en ce temps-là : on faisait des brevets cyclo-côteurs à l'image des classiques en Belgique d'une part et on collectionnait les cols en France d'autre part. Je me suis donc inscrit comme tous ceux de mon club de l'époque. J'y ai le numéro 2632 qui n'est autre que l'altitude du tunnel du col du Parpaillon et j'en suis fier. Malgré quelques problèmes relationnels de courte durée avec le club, liés au débat sur les cols belges, je suis toujours resté fidèle à cette association, car c'est elle qui m'a permis de me plonger dans tant de cartes chéries pour découvrir d'abord sur papier puis en vrai, tant de charmants paysages montagnards, et tant de pentes enivrantes. Et lorsque je parle avec un centcoliste, quel qu'il soit, je me retrouve si souvent dans ses paroles, ses aventures, ses enchantements et sa passion que pour moi, nous sommes inévitablement partenaires et non concurrents. Je garde un sentiment à 90% positif de mon adhésion aux Cent Cols, je respecte énormément l'idée fédératrice de Jean Perdoux et j'espère y rester ad vitam eternam.

### Question 5

#### **Q: à ton avis, quelles sont les différences et les similitudes entre les deux associations ?**

Les similitudes sont nombreuses et éloquentes. La première évidence est l'activité elle-même, grimper à vélo. Dans l'une ou l'autre des associations, c'est la parole de l'adhérent qui compte dans ses déclarations de réalisations des cols ou des BIG. Les membres du BIG comme ceux du CCC sont des grands voyageurs que l'on croise un peu partout en Europe et dans le monde. L'amitié, la convivialité sont les moteurs de l'une comme de l'autre. Ce ne sont que des exemples parmi d'autres.

L'objet de convoitise, seul, diffère. Unique pour le CCC, le col. Qui est souvent beau, parfois haut, difficile et bigrement célèbre certaine fois. Multiple pour le BIG, tout ce qui se grimpe qui est beau, qui est haut, difficile ou mythique. Donc en fait, si on y regarde bien, la différence n'est pas frappante !

#### **Q: A ton avis, quelles sont les différences et les similitudes entre les deux associations ?**

Les différences sont simples. La CCC est plus ancienne, principalement française, basée sur une liste infinie de cols, avec des concentrations très fréquentées, et des listes à entériner par des délégués. Le BIG a 10 ans en moins, est très international, basé sur une liste limitée de sommets notoires, avec des meetings moins fréquentés, et des déclarations de réussite automatisées via le site.

Liste illimitée ou limitée ?

La liste fermée du BIG, limitée à 1000 et choisie à l'avance, a un double avantage sur les listes illimitées : elle permet d'atteindre l'objectif final et elle est précise quant aux sommets à déclarer. On ne peut pas en inventer de nouveaux mais on peut en remplacer lors de cas bien spécifiques. Par contre, elle a l'inconvénient du choix, qui peut paraître subjectif même si un groupe spécialisé gère la liste. La liste ouverte des cols a, quant à elle, l'avantage d'être exploitable presque à l'infini, tant notre terre est montagneuse et belle. Les catalogues se nourrissent de nouveaux rêves chaque année.

Les similitudes entre les deux associations sont énormes : la passion de grimper sur un vélo, l'amour de la lecture des cartes, la préparation de grands voyages à l'assaut des déclarations futures, une revue annuelle, un site actif, des maillots aux couleurs de l'association, des diplômes, des médailles, des rendez-vous locaux ou internationaux, des assemblées générales, de la documentation chiffrée fouillée et issue d'années de travail par des groupes compétents, une longévité certaine, une assise de base de confrères fidèles, un classement édité.

Une critique très souvent formulée unit les deux associations. On additionne des pommes et des poires tous les deux. On gagne un point en grim pant les 35 kilomètres du col du Galibier tout comme en grim pant les 400 mètres pavés du Kopenberg du Tour des Flandres au BIG. On gagne un col avec le Galibier des Alpes ou avec un col à 19m en Corse aux Cent Cols. Mais au total, tout le monde y est vainqueur, d'abord contre lui-même et chacun reconnaît en son confrère un frère et en sa consœur, une sœur, car les deux associations font la part belle aux féminines en leur laissant une place réelle dans les comités et dans les classements.

### Question 6

#### **Q: tu crois que les deux associations puissent faire des activités ensemble ?**

Il n'y a rien, nulle part, qui empêche les membres d'une association de grimpeurs à vélo à rejoindre, au gré d'une activité commune, les membres d'une autre association de grimpeurs à vélo. Il reste seulement à définir la liste des possibilités. Pour le CCC, cette tâche revient de droit à Enrico Alberini, membre du BIG et membre du conseil d'administration du CCC mandaté pour organiser précisément ce genre d'événement.

#### **Q: Crois-tu que les deux associations puissent faire des activités ensemble ?**

Bien évidemment ! Je l'ai toujours souhaité mais certaines zones de l'Histoire des deux confréries ont empêché ce rapprochement inévitable. Je pense en mon for intérieur que nous avons tout à gagner en collaborant pour assurer la pérennité de nos challenges. Bien entendu, il n'est pas question de fusion, ni de partage quelconque de finances dans ce partenariat. Mais je verrais bien un groupe de dix personnes reprenant les responsables des associations de grimpeurs à vie (CCC, BIG, MDF, OCD, UIC, CIMA,...), partager une plateforme pour y échanger des idées, afin d'assurer deux éléments essentiels : la spécificité de chacun pour ne pas marcher sur les pieds des autres et l'entraide continue pour la pérennité de tous. Enfin, j'envisagerais avec beaucoup de bonheur une concentration réunissant les centcolistes et les biggeurs dans quelques années. Ce serait un lieu d'échange incroyable et le départ, j'en suis certain, d'un tas d'amitiés cyclogrimpeuses nouvelles.

### Question 7

#### **Q: qu'aimerais-tu dire à Daniel (Gobert) ?**

Certes, l'histoire entre le créateur du BIG et le CCC a connu des périodes houleuses. Comme nous sommes européens, prenons exemple sur deux pays d'Europe qui étaient qualifiés autrefois "d'ennemis héréditaires", et qui sont aujourd'hui et pour le plus grand bien de tous "amis inséparables". En proportion, je pense que quelques paroles maladroites, quelques actions négatives ou incompréhensions ne pèsent plus très lourd dans la balance du pardon réciproque. Nos deux associations vont continuer leurs routes parallèles, avec je le souhaite, de nombreuses passerelles tendues de l'une à l'autre par Enrico et d'autres. Je souhaite voir de plus en plus souvent les maillots du BIG côtoyés ceux du CCC dans un même esprit de confraternité et d'amitié. Personnellement, l'humour surréaliste de Daniel dans ses mails me manque beaucoup.

#### **Q: Qu'aimerais-tu dire à Bernard ?**

Tout d'abord, je connais bien Bernard pour avoir grimpé des cols et des bigs en sa compagnie en Roumanie et en Bulgarie pendant deux semaines en 2002. Quel grand souvenir ! Il était d'ailleurs accompagné de son épouse, Nadine, pour cette occasion. Nous avons traversé en train la Hongrie et la Roumanie pendant plus de 30 heures consécutives depuis Vienne et nous avons ensuite roulé et grimpé ensemble un géant comme le Transfagaras roumain ou le col le plus haut bulgare en franchissant un panneau "attention, tir à vue". Nous avons survécu !

Au BIG, Bernard nous a fait l'honneur en son temps d'être manager pour nos maillots et il fut en tout point irréprochable. Je voudrais donc lui dire à quel point je suis heureux de sa nomination à la présidence des Cent Cols. Après Napoléon, un deuxième grand corse franchit les montagnes ! Je voudrais qu'il trouve en sa présidence beaucoup de plaisir et de défi passionnant, mais je lui souhaite aussi beaucoup de courage car la présidence n'a pas que des côtés faciles et il faut parfois prendre des décisions cornéliennes. Je lui dédie cette photo qui nous unit au sommet d'un col et big bulgare, pour la survie grandiose des Cent cols et une survie identique du BIGCycling. Prônons ensemble cette phrase, Bernard ! "Au sommet, le cyclo domine le monde, mais il n'écrase personne".



*Marcel (accompagnateur) accueille Daniel et Bernard en 2002 au sommet d'un col ou big bulgare*



*Bernard, la tête d'Eric Lucas, Luc Willem, les membres droits de Daniel, Johan Verlaet (plus de 500 bigs) Enrico Alberini*



## The women of the B.I.G - Les femmes du B.I.G

The AISBL BIGCYcling presents : the women of the B.I.G. Here are the characteristics of some women who already climbed more than 100 bigs.

L'AISBL BIGCYcling présente : les femmes du B.I.G. Voici les caractéristiques de femmes ayant déjà grimpé plus de 100 bigs.

The questions asked were - les questions posées étaient

- 1) Present yourself as a woman - Présentez-vous vous-même en tant que femme !
- 2) Present yourself as a cyclist and your score in the BIG - Présentez-vous vous-même comme cycliste et votre score au BIG.
- 3) Why do you take part in the BIG ? - Pourquoi participez-vous au BIG ?
- 4) What are your best 3 souvenirs in "big" climbs ? - Quel sont vos 3 meilleurs souvenirs dans des ascensions "big"
- 5) What are your goals in 2018 ? - Quels sont vos objectifs 2018 ?
- 6) What do you think that the BIG can do to ameliorate the "BIGCycling life" of its women ? - Que pensez-vous que le BIG puisse faire pour améliorer la vie BIGCycling de ses femmes ?

**ESCUER-MESTRES Nuria**

**ESP**

**746 bigs**

- 1) I live in Vilanova i la Geltrú, 50 kilòmetres away from Barcelona, I am 61 and work as administrative.
- 2) Cycling for more than 30 years, I have been able to travel and to see the world in a different way, and to climb 746 BIGs. I have participated in very popular, long and mythical granfondo: Lieja Bastogne Lieja, Milan San Remo, Trondheim Oslo, Barcelona Perpinyà Barcelona, 24 hores in couples in Montmeló, Quebrantahuesos, Terra de Remences, La Mussara...
- 3) It is a passion to get to know different and unique climbs
- 4) Kardung La, Stelvio and Galibier.
- 5) Keep on cycling and climbing BIGs, still don't know where...
- 6) Maybe specific classifications for women



**SOMMER-Brenner Claudia**

**DEU**

**547 bigs**

- 1) I am living in the south-west of Germany, in one of the nicest places of our Country called “Pfälzerwald”. I am married, no kids, 60 years old, stopped working for now 10 years, I enjoy it. Since I am a teenager I like being outside for running, hiking and finally cycling.
- 2) Cycling was long time not my favoured sport. When I met my husband, we went to the mountains for many years climbing, skiing and mountaineering. Someday we started with running, distances until marathon. Getting older, having some problems with sporting injury, we start to intensify cycling. We took part at RTFs, many marathons in Europe, especially in the Alps. At one of this events in France, not so far from our home, we met a cyclist with cycling wear of “Club cent Cols”. From this time on everything went his way for us, cycling becomes high priority. We started hunting cols as a member from CCC and one day in 2002 I got an e-mail from Daniel Gobert, he was asking us to be a member of BIG. Now we planned our holidays to cycle as much Cols and BIGs as possible. Most of my 547 BIGs I cycled together with my husband Karl. Later together with friends like Heiko Linnert, Anja von Heydebreck at the German meetings, some I cycled alone.
- 3) I take part because it exists and this is good!  
With BIG I reached many nice places of Europe and some other countries. It gives us an idea were to go, not only famous passes, but also worth cycling. Collecting BIGs, seeing your numbers of BIGs increase is a good motivation to go on. And not to forget, I met some nice people.
- 4) I cannot remember a special souvenir by climbing a BIG. All BIGs I could more or less enjoy. Some I suffered hardly because of the steepness or weather conditions, but always happy to reach the top. Many climbs I remember as very beautiful and enjoying especially the great and famous passes of the Alps.
- 5) In this year, there are no special goal for BIG like to reach 600 BIGs for example. I do as much as possible and enjoy. We will go to Corse, Sardinia, Italy. Later in the year Austria. There are still many BIGs for me to cycle.
- 6) This is a difficult question for me, because now I am over 60 and not that tough anymore. Additional there are the BIG principles and the “rules” how to cycle a BIG. For me it would be nice not to have extremely steep BIGs, should not be one of the main criteria in my eyes, landscape and enjoying cycling makes me more happy. But I understand if strong cyclist want and need the challenge. Therefore we should BIG keep like it is.





**SCHNEIDER Irene**

**DEU**

**387 bigs**

- 1) I am a "late cycling starter" . I always loved to go to the mountains but I preferred climbing, hiking and paragliding, I cycled rarely and only with die MTB.
- 2) Then I met a new colleague on my job: Heiko Linnert. He first persuaded me to buy a race bike and then introduced me to "BIG", by taking me to some climbs in Austria. Well that was the beginning and since then Heiko is my "coach" - and if you know him, you know he is a BIG-motivator.
- 3) At the beginning I found it very comfortable to get usefull information about possibilities of cycling when I was somewhere on holiday. Later my attitude changed and I started to plan my holidays according to the location of the BIGs.
- 4) The best souvenirs? I think the people I met in the Challenge - Kevin, Ard, Francois, Anja, Dirk, Gabor and lots of others -and the possibilities to cycle in countries I would never go to on my own- like Ukraine, Romania or Thailand.
- 5) Finish the Austrian BIGS, climb die rest in Slovakia and Poland, perhaps some more in Switzerland, and go to Finnland and Sweden in summer.
- 6) From my wiew there is nothing BIG should ameliorate speciall for its women. It is ok. for me.

**Lina Karbauskiene**

**ESP**

**260 bigs**

- 1) I am a mother of 2 lovely children and the owner of a thriving interior design business. I love the outdoors and besides cycling, I love walking, swimming, diving and kayaking. But cycling stole my heart completely.
- 1) The Mediterranean climate In Spain allows me to fully pursue my love of the outdoors. My sons are already grown up so I have some more time for it.
- 2) Cycling remains my true passion. I love both mountain biking and road biking, my latest acquisition - a cyclo-cross bike - is tailor-made for big-bagging!
  - I have accumulated 260 BIGS over the last 4 years ( I am quiet a new member ) and I am determined to augment that score over the coming years.
- 3) I really love traveling, so traveling and cycling is the perfect holiday ;) I love the BIG organisation because it lets me discover new places, provides me with a challenge, and has allowed me to meet like-minded people.
- 4) My three best BIG souvenirs are:
  - Pico Veletta
  - Wu Ling (Taiwan)
  - Angliru



## BIG Review 2018

- 5) I have a lot of big cycling dreams: Himalaya, Andes, Australia, La reunion ... Let's see which of these dreams will come true this year. The goals for sure for 2018 are to claim 100 BIGS in the year and to break into new zones such as England, Netherlands, German and Austria
- 6) I think for a healthy life you need a healthy soul and mind. Life Offers so much ... I think every person, be you man or woman, needs to have their space, their hobbies; to find their way to disconnect from all the "diary duties" they have. What way could be better then traveling, discovering new places, new cultures and meeting very interesting people who share the same passion.

### GEORGE Nathalie

BEL

114 bigs

- 1) Rêveuse, artiste, passionnée depuis 39 ans dans la ville de Namur, au centre de la Belgique, maman depuis 17 ans de deux « terribles » demoiselles, et surtout femme du président du BIG. Je suis la first Lady comme dirait Jules Dejacé. Institutrice primaire à mes heures perdues (tout le temps quoi!) depuis 20 ans et toujours heureuse de retrouver mes élèves. J'adore la nature, la déco, les moments entre amis avec ceux que j'aime et surtout... la mousse au chocolat !
- 2) J'ai toujours été sportive dans l'âme. Après 20 ans de course à pied, durant lesquelles j'ai enchaîné joggings de moyenne distance, marathons et trails ; je me suis consacrée plus intensément au vélo (que je pratiquais déjà un peu auparavant). Je roule tous les week-ends et parfois en semaine, seule, avec mon mari (le président tout de même;-) ) ou en club. Je trouve beaucoup de plaisir dans le fait de pouvoir être en pleine nature et d'y découvrir de multiples paysages. J'aime également pratiquer la natation en club.
- 3) Pour sa valeur sportive ! Car ma valeur à moi réside dans la phrase « ce qui compte n'est pas le but, mais le chemin pour y parvenir ».
- 4) Galibier – Ventoux - Tourmalet
- 5) Je tente toujours un grand col par an. Pour 2018, ce sera le Stelvio. Si possible sans neige et sous le soleil ;-). Et ce, en conclusion d'un mini-trip de 4 jours avec mon mari au nord de l'Italie. Il y aura aussi une cyclo sportive dans les Vosges au début du mois de juillet, suivie de vacances sportives en Croatie et j'aimerais refaire une longue distance de plus de 150km un jour de cet été, sur une des randonnées organisées par la fédération de mon pays.
- 6) Que comme dans cet article, on mette en évidence ce que nous réalisons, que nous apparaissions de temps en temps en couverture de la revue, un rendez-vous organisé une année uniquement pour les femmes (avec bien entendu les ravitaillements conçus et distribués par les hommes, avec les encouragements des hommes, de la Sangria que pour les femmes;-) ), les maillots spécifiques adaptés aux dames (couleur, découpe,...).



**DONDERS Patricia**

**NED**

**123 bigs**

- 1) I am Patricia Dekkers-Donders and have BIG membership number 999.
- 2) By now I have cycled 123 BIGs. Since 2008 I cycle together with my husband Helmuth Dekkers, who joined BIG in 2003. And let me tell you why I started later. Sporting takes up quite some time and I prefer running over cycling. When I go for a long run then I am back after 1 ½ hour but by then, Helmuth had not yet returned from his training trip. Now at home this is not a BIG ;- ) problem but when we are on vacation it is a different story and I prefer to enjoy the holiday together. And that is why I started to cycle also though running is still on number 1 when it comes to my favorite pastime and cycling comes 2nd. But note that I also regularly go to my work on the bike.
- 3) BIG has brought Helmuth, and hence me also, on beautiful places and he often came back with enthusiastic stories. So I thought I can wait at the tent or join him on his cycling trips. And after cycling some BIGs together, Helmuth registered me as BIG member. He's my BIG manager and keeps track of the claims.
- 4) My best souvenirs I have from joining the annual BIG meetings. The first one was in 2008 in Flanders/Belgium. Then came Oberstdorf (Allgäu/Germany), Lake- and Peak District in England and Corsica. The best thing of these meetings is the other cycling enthusiasts that you meet. Mostly men of course and some women of which some did not cycle but who joined with their husband who cycled. I cycled some BIGs with Tineke Verkuylen (Kirkstone Pass & Honister Pass), Col de Bavella with Cecilia Torrelli and Luigi Spina and I cycled also quite a few together with Meindert Brugman. During a meeting you seldom cycle alone. In Oberstdorf, Helmuth said: "When I look for you I just look for Mauro & Enrico as they are always near to you." Yes, the Italian men are kind and friendly to the few women who attend. I really like all the things that we do together during the meeting: cycling, dining (I learned how to eat spaghetti with fork and spoon from the Italians on Corsica), have a drink in the evening and share the experiences of the day. It's not only the cycling and BIGs we talk about. We also had a wonderful and very funny evening in England for instance when we discussed how animal sounds are made in the Italian, Dutch, French, German and English language. The only drawback of the BIG meetings is that the planning is often too tight so there is little to no room (like on Corsica) to spend some time together in the evenings to get to know one another better. That's why we decided to go to Corsica one week earlier and we already cycled some BIGs which allowed us to admire the beauty of Corsica better (we hiked in the Calanches and visited Bonafacio to name a few things). It even allowed me to help Claudio Montefusco to bring him to the airport where he could pick up a rental car while Helmuth departed with the team for the first BIGs. followed me by car which is a change of the usual procedure. I cycled these BIGs after the meeting as we had time and Helmuth. I would love to join a meeting again. But the last meetings and upcoming meetings are too long I think. It's impossible for us to join a meeting of 10 days or more and we would appreciate meetings that are just 4 days (long weekend) up to 1 week long. When it comes to BIGs, I recall Stara Vrata in Croatia where we had a fantastic view on the deep blue Adriatic sea with the barren Isle of Pag in it.

And another one is Kitzbühler Horn, the toughest BIG I cycled. Helmuth did not recommend that I cycled that one. But I felt good and thought that I would just give it a try. I need to stop here and there to drink and eat something as I can't cycle without fuel. But with fuel I'm like a diesel and keep going. I made it to restaurant Alpenhaus and that's where Helmuth told me there are still 2 though kilometers to the top at 12.8%. Ouch. So I first had a coffee and apfelstrudel at the restaurant (Fuel!) and then I cycled upwards to





the top J Helmuth asked me via phone to take a picture on the top of a woman who cycled up with a child in a trailer. Incredible! Well, I found out she had an E-Bike so it was not that incredible. But I was happy and proud of what I had achieved on my own power when I arrived at the top.

The best cycling moments are experienced together J We've enjoyed the beautiful views from the top or on the way up. And we've found small chapels and monasteries on the top or cattle that blocks the road. We met many friendly people when we were abroad. Like the grumpy waiter who suddenly got very enthusiastic and friendly when I asked if the Giro had passed through the city where he runs his restaurant. We cycled through foggy woods where we still smelled the ozone after a thunderstorm. And we smelled the Maquis when we cycled on Corsica. It doesn't matter which BIG you cycle as after cycling it, each of them has its own interesting story.

5. In 2017 I cycled the last 5 BIGs in Luxembourg. We spend a weekend in Luxembourg where we cycled 3 BIGs together before we went to the campsite to put up our little tent up and after that had a wonderful dinner Italian style. The next day I cycled my last 2 BIGs while Helmuth cycled the Herrenberg 25x that day so he could claim a Luxembourg Iron BIG. So we had a great weekend. This year we don't know exactly where we will go for our summer holiday but you can bet that there will be some BIGs in that area. So my goal is for sure to add some new BIG claims this year but at the moment I don't yet know which ones.
- 6) No idea. I am happy with my BIG cycling life together with Helmuth.

**ANGERER Elisabeth**

**DEU**

**287 bigs**

- 1 I present myself as a person and as an athlete - why as a woman? My name is Elisabeth Angerer (BIG No. 1910) from Nesselwang in the Allgäu - in Germany. I am 55 years old and married to Klaus Bernegger (BIG No. 1912). I do sports regularly and I enjoy doing it in the nature, having fun with the challenge, having fun and being in company with my husband (when cycling), friends and like-minded people, to be fit and to stay fit... For that I also love and live the sport. Cycling: mainly on the road bike, preferably in the mountains or on multi-day tours, participate in cycling marathons, I am a club member of RSG Ostallgäu ([www.rsg-ostallgaeu.de](http://www.rsg-ostallgaeu.de))  
Running: on all surfaces whether asphalt or trail, participate in running events, have a coach-license, be a club member of LG Laufarena Allgäu ([www.laufarenaallgaeu.de](http://www.laufarenaallgaeu.de)) Cross-country skiing (skating): in winter in our great landscape Tai Chi: in various forms of movement, from Beijing form to weapon form (fan, sword, saber)
- 2 I am a BIG member since 2009 with 287 BIGs. Since my youth I am on the road with my bike and since 1986 I have done countless trips together with Klaus. We've been cycling home from Lisbon or crisscross through Spain... We climbed many BIGs without knowing that BIG exists. I come from the mountains, love the mountains and always ride my bike into the mountains. I already made climbing a pass extensively before getting to know BIG and will continue to explore many mountain routes that are not (yet) listed in BIG.
- 3 On vacation, I like to use the information from the list of 1000 BIGs. There are often mountain roads and trails that are not so easy to find on the map. The additional information such as height profile, road conditions, the number of submissions give very good tips to possibly incorporate the BIG in a cycle tour or drive as a single track. I have discovered here wonderful scenic pass routes.
- 4 Many great memories of the landscape, of the situation, the effort in the ascent and the associated joy I have, for example by the Col de l'Izoard: a sunny day in May, 24 °C, blue sky, south side, virtually no traffic, a great driveway, the first snowfields that are in the vicinity of the Col snow walls, associated with strong and cold gusts of wind on the pass – and loneliness, only we two cyclists and four motorcyclists and thus calm. Then a 34 km descent and time for views and the heat is returning.  
The Col du Tourmalet already in 1989 from the west side: A sunny, warm day in September, we are late and drive really fast on the ever narrowing road. A change in the weather ensures that I drive the last 400 meters to the pass in the snow, with pure will - but also very careless. No rainwear, only an undershirt to change for the very cold and wet descent. Shortly before freezing I get a roof over my head and hot coffee to warm up as the last guest of the day in a bar on the track. In addition - trembling I have the hope that Klaus is not frozen at the downhill and picks me up by car. Yes, I can get into our car. In the valley a hot shower is waiting for us at the "Camping Municipal", which we both use extensively, no endless. There are innumerable memories in all facets: cycling tours in the Allgäu, in Europe, in Australia - sometimes for an hour, some other time for several weeks - various landscapes, weather, encounters... and hopefully many more cycling trips and BIGs will be added. This is also associated with a good preparation. Therefore the focus is more on running. But we will take the racing bike with us in vacation. It will bring the necessary balance. And a few BIGs always go - that's what Klaus will care on.

## BIG Review 2018

- 5) I am not only cycling in the mountains, often I am running. In 2018 the most important event will be the start on 30.08.2018 at the UTMB® Mont-Blanc ([www.utmbmontblanc.com](http://www.utmbmontblanc.com)) on the OCC circuit. A route of 56 km / + 3,500 m from Orsières (Switzerland) to Chamonix (France). I hope and wait for years for a starting place at this race and now I finally have a starting place. The 6-day tour "Giro delle Dolomiti 2007". From the start of Stage 4 in Canazei, the Passo di Fedaia was the first pass climbed. The experience with 700 competitors in the still relaxed neutralized field drive up, in bright sunshine, to have a great day. The reverential silence of the cyclists in the area of the Lago di Fedaia at the sight of the breathtaking mountain scenery of the Marmolada, a fantastic atmosphere... and the knowledge that there are still 3000 meters of altitude on this dream day waiting for us - wonderful.
- 6) I do not think that sport, like cycling, and thus BIGCycling life is gender-specific. Performance differences are present, but unimportant. The necessary self-confidence in the sport of men, women and disabled people must each work out in their own way and does not need a separate place - the common counts. For me BIG does not have to do anything special for the women.



**VANSTIPHOUT Dominique**

**BEL**

**492 bigs**

- 1 J'habite à Bruxelles.
- 2 Juste 492 Bigs, rien d'autre !
- 3 je fais du vélo pour passer des vacances avec mon mari
- 4 souvenirs de voyage dans les autres continents, de belles rencontres humaines
- 5 terminer avec 500 Bigs
- 6 Rien de spécial



**Merci à toutes ces dames pour donner de la vie au BIGCycling  
Thank you to all those women to make BIGCycling alive !**



## Trans Hungary crossroad 2018

Gabor KREICSI

	Day	Place of departure	Place of arrival	Way	Climb	BIG	Accommodation	Distance by bike (km)	DOL by bike (m)	Time of departure	Time of arrival	Time	Transfer km by car
1.	14.09.2018. Friday						<a href="http://kacsardapanzio.hu/">http://kacsardapanzio.hu/</a>						
2.	15.09.2018. Saturday	Göd	Pásztó		0	0		0	0	8:30	9:30	1:00	90
	15.09.2018. Saturday	Pásztó	Somoskőújfalu		Galyatető and Kékestető	BIG-851 and 852	<a href="http://varganya.hu/">http://varganya.hu/</a>	100	1700	10:00	16:00	6:00	0
3.	16.09.2018. Sunday	Somoskőújfalu	Kazincbarcika		Felső-Borovnyák	BIG-854		120	1500	8:30	16:00	7:30	0
	16.09.2018. Sunday	Kazincbarcika	Martonyi		0	0		0	0	16:30	17:30	1:00	50
	16.09.2018. Sunday	Martonyi	Martonyi		Szár-hegy	BIG-967	<a href="http://szentjakabhaz.hu/cikk/a-vendegzhaz.html">http://szentjakabhaz.hu/cikk/a-vendegzhaz.html</a>	10	350	18:00	19:00	1:00	0
4.	17.09.2018. Monday	Martonyi	Tarcal					0	0	8:30	10:00	1:30	90
	17.09.2018. Monday	Tarcal	Tarcal		Tokaji-hegy	BIG-968		15	420	10:30	12:00	1:30	0
	17.09.2018. Monday	Tarcal	Pomáz		0	0		0	0	12:30	15:00	2:30	230
	17.09.2018. Monday	Pomáz	Göd		Dobogó-kő	BIG-850	<a href="http://kacsardapanzio.hu/">http://kacsardapanzio.hu/</a>	60	590	15:00	19:00	4:00	0
5.	18.09.2018. Tuesday	Göd	Pannonhalma		0	0		0	0	8:30	11:00	2:30	180
	18.09.2018. Tuesday	Pannonhalma	Pannonhalma		Pannonhalma	BIG-853		10	120	11:30	12:30	1:00	0
	18.09.2018. Tuesday	Pannonhalma	Kőszeg		0	0		0	0	13:00	15:30	2:30	140
	18.09.2018. Tuesday	Kőszeg	Kőszeg		Hörmann-forrás	BIG-869	<a href="http://csikarpanzio.hu/hu/panzio-koszeg/">http://csikarpanzio.hu/hu/panzio-koszeg/</a>	25	550	16:00	18:30	2:30	0
6.	19.09.2018. Wednesday	Kőszeg	Tihany		Tihanyi apátság	BIG-870	<a href="http://www.tihanykora.hu">http://www.tihanykora.hu</a>	143	900	8:30	17:00	8:30	0
7.	20.09.2018. Thursday	Tihany	Pécs		Misina	BIG-855	<a href="http://www.mediterranhotel.hu/">http://www.mediterranhotel.hu/</a>	120	1200	8:30	16:30	8:00	0
8.	21.09.2018. Friday	Pécs	Budapest		0	0		0	0	7:30	10:00	2:30	250
	Σ					10 BIGs		603	7330				1030

It will be a neutral car. If any other situations (for example bad weather) come, you could travel by the neutral car.

If you want more time in Budapest, you will have other one night (in Göd) and travel by way on Saturday.



## Een arctische ervaring

**Wim van ELS**

Het is eind juni als we met de veerboot ariveren in het oosten van IJsland. Op onze eerste dag laat het zonlicht meteen zien hoe betoverend mooi dit land kan zijn. En meteen lekker fietsen, BIG nr. 6 de Oddskarð staat op het programma. Wel zon maar vanwege de snijvend koude wind heb ik mijn winterkleding nodig. Een donkere tunnel doorsnijdt de berg vlak onder de oude pas. De oude weg over de pas, zoals aangegeven op de site, is mede door de sneeuw zelfs met een ATB niet begaanbaar. 's-Nachts begint het onafgebroken te regenen. We zijn blij dat we de camping ondanks de modder af kunnen rijden. Terug bij weg nummer 1, de nagenoeg geheel verharde rondweg, beslissen we op het laatste moment ons plan om tegen de klok in rond te reizen te herzien. Ik zie het niet zitten om met de gestaag vallende regen, noordenwind 6 Beaufort en een opspelende verkoudheid een pittige Big aan de noord-oostzijde te bedwingen. Dus linksaf en eerst de bijna Bigloze zuidzijde van het eiland.



Pas om 17.00 uur kan ik eindelijk de ruitwissers uitzetten. Net op tijd, even later fiets ik samen met Tineke Almannáskarð op via de makkelijke zijde.

De volgende morgen teistert een stormachtige wind vanaf de Vatnajökull, Europa's grootste gletsjer, de camping. Een arctische ervaring ook al zitten we zuidelijk van de Noordpoolcirkel.

Als ik van een warme douche bij de gebrekkige sanitaire voorzieningen terugkeer naar de camper heb ik het ondanks mijn dikke jas meteen weer koud.

Even later komt mijn buurman me vertellen dat mijn rechtervoorband "flat" is. Het is zaterdag, de garages zijn gesloten.

In een vakantiefolder stond de kreet "Om er te komen moet je vliegen of de boot nemen, om IJsland te beleven hoeft je slechts je hart te openen". Nu dus even niet!

Een spuitbus met schuim werkt echter wonderwel. Enkele uren later zijn we weer onderweg en bij het zien van al het moois begint mijn hartje weer sneller te kloppen, wat heet, te bonken. Vooral deze eerste dagen op IJsland moet ik me dwingen niet iedere paar kilometer te stoppen voor foto's.

We maken een lange stop bij de Jökulsárlón gletsjerlagune waar de gletsjer ijsschotsen afscheidt aan de rand van de Atlantische oceaan. James Bond was er en ook de film Nova Zembla werd er deels opgenomen. Een schitterende, zeer ongewone plek.

We vervolgen onze weg westwaarts en blijven genieten van prachtige panorama's. De rechte stukken over bruine en zwarte lavavelden worden langer. Soms, voor kilometers onderbroken door het paars van





lupines. Als uitheemse plant een plaag maar in deze tijd van het jaar heerlijk kleurrijk. Regelmatig zien we fietsers die met hun zware bepakking schuin tegen de Noordenwind hangen. Ploeteren door wind en regen en al kunnen zien waar je over een uur bent. En dan 's-avonds op een kale camping je vermaken met een één pits gasstelletje en een boekje. Nou laat mij dan maar af en toe een bergje fietsen, met lekker veel bochten en vergezichten, zonder zware tassen aan mijn fiets.

Gelukkig neemt de wind na een paar dagen af en ook zal langdurige regen ons verder bespaard blijven. Maar als het waait voelt dat meteen guur aan.



We brengen een bezoekje aan Geysir, naamgever van alles wat kokend water uit de aarde spuit en van het apparaatje in onze woningen. De Geysir spuit al een aantal jaren nauwelijks, wel de Strokkur 100 meter verderop. Eigenlijk de enige noemenswaardige geiser in Europa. Ander natuurschoon zal echter meer indruk op ons maken. Zoals enkele prachtige kloven o.a. in het Þingvellir nationaal park waar het Eurazische en Amerikaanse continent langzaam, 1 a 2 cm per jaar, uit elkaar drijven. Aardrijkskundig gezien de echte grens tussen Amerika en Europa. We raken niet uitgekeken op de vele fjorden met hun prachtige rotskusten, op de lavagesteentes in allerlei vormen, oude vulkaankraters en stinkende zwavelvelden met borrelende en dampende poelen. Dagelijks zien we mooie watervallen. En niet te



vergeten de desolatheid ondanks dat de ruigste delen voor ons zonder vierwielaandrijving verboden zijn. De vele onverharde stukken vinden we trouwens al ruig genoeg.

We genieten van de vele vogels die profiteren van de lange dagen en tijdelijke voedselrijkdom, allemaal druk doende met hun broedsel. Op sommige verkeersborden wordt gewaarschuwd voor agressieve vogels. Bij de West Fjorden geniet ik op mijn MTB van de prachtige, onverharde Bigs. Tineke vindt deze te zwaar en wil een wandeling maken maar door de vele vogels is ze weer snel terug in de camper. Ze had beter ook een helm op kunnen zetten.

De tunnel onder de Hrafnseyrarheiði moet over enkele jaren klaar zijn. De weg over de bergpas zal dan wellicht in verval raken waardoor we onze nummer 1 misschien moeten vervangen.



Mijn laatste Big in de zone Noord heeft de prachtige naam Hellsheiði, ook weer met zo'n

letter die ons alfabet niet kent. Wist je dat de IJslanders ter bescherming van hun taal prijsvragen uitschrijven om echte IJslandse woorden te kiezen voor nieuwe dingen? De Hellsheiði is mijn zwaarste klim, onverhard en vooral op de steilste stukken veel steenslag. Onder een aangenaam zonnetje en met prachtige panorama's ook door de nabijheid van de oceaan, ploeter en geniet ik. Soms gepasseerd door een SUV. Over een hoge snelheid van deze gasten verbaas ik me al lang niet meer. Wel over een VW camper die hier naar boven kruipt. Als ik de top gepasseerd ben, moet ik me bedwingen niet helemaal af te dalen om ook de schitterende ander zijde volledig te bekijken. Ik heb Tineke immers beloofd niet te lang weg te blijven.

Als we ons campertje weer tussen de andere campers frommelen op de veerboot, een avontuurtje op zich, en afvaren richting Denemarken is het prachtig weer. Een korte IJslandse zomer breekt aan.

Een paar dagen later fiets ik 's-avonds weer door mijn woonplaats Uden, gewoon in een T-shirt, heerlijk.

# BIKE TRIPS OF 2017

**Robert CHARBONNIER**

*Some stories about my journeys of year 2017. More pictures here: <http://cathie.charbonnier.free.fr/piwigo>*

2017 has not been a very prolific year for me, as I climbed just 25 new BIG. It's been although a year where I rode a lot, and if the BIG were not very numerous, I was happy to have added five new countries to my records.

## 1 - Paris-Roubaix ( and the BIG around)

At the end of year 2016, three of my friends, Pascal, Marc and Patrick, decided to register for the Paris-Roubaix race, which was to be held Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> of April, the day before the famous pro event. I was very attracted by this mythical race, but, in a general manner, I have difficulties to make plans like that months ahead. Furthermore the distance to the start line appeared to me quite important for a one-day event, so I didn't follow them, but with some regrets.

Months went by, and a few days before the date, I suddenly realized that the Lille-Nice football match was scheduled the same week-end. I wouldn't have crossed the whole France for just Paris-Roubaix, or for just the football match, but a combination of the two was sure not to miss. What's more, it was the beginning of school holidays, so I was freer at home, and another colleague, Fabrice, who was going to Paris on the Thursday proposed to take me in his car. So all the stars



were aligned and I couldn't do anything else than go.



The journey started with an early ride, as my driver lived 30 km away from my home and gave me a meeting hour of 6am for the start. After that, I had time to relax in the car, and we arrived in Paris in the afternoon. I then went by bike to the Gare du Nord and took a TGV (high speed train) that had a space for bikes (with a 10 € extra fee). So the Thursday night I joined the three others in the flat they had hired in Roubaix.

I had of course targeted the surrounding BIG, in Hainaut and Flanders. The day after my arrival, I then went for a ride, alone because the others had already climbed all these BIG, having raced De Ronde van Vlaanderen the year before. I started with Mont Saint-Aubert, then Mont de l'Enclus that I climbed down on a forest track, and the famous "berg" of the Ronde: Vieux Quaremont, Paterberg, Koppenberg and some other ones I had added when designing my route at home. At first I had excluded the Mur de Grammont, as it was a bit away from the others and I knew I would be back in Grammont in July for the Transcontinental Race (see story below). But the brutal death of Mike Hall, organizer of the TCR, just a week before had made the holding of the event much questionable (in fact it took place, but it was all but certain at the time). So I finished my BIG collection with Mur de Grammont, then turned back to Roubaix, with Kruisberg on the way, to get my package for the race (queue on the picture aside).

In the evening, as promised, I went to the Stadium, where I was happy to see my favorite team win with two goals of the famous Italian player Mario Balotelli. The match finished at 23 pm, and I had to be at 5am in the morning at the meeting point for the coaches that would take us to the start line in Busigny, 100 km from Roubaix. As I didn't want to disturb my friends with such a late come back and early leave, I went into a hotel in Roubaix, where I was not the only cyclist of course.



The departure of the coaches was very delayed, as we were still waiting in the buses at 7am. Finally, we left for Busigny that we reached after more than one hour of driving. So I was at the start line at about 9pm (there was no group start, except at 7 pm for those who were there at this time). This late start didn't bother me too much as this two hour delay allowed me to benefit from less cold and wet conditions at the beginning of the ride.

I finally discovered the famous cobblestones of Paris-Roubaix, and I have not been disappointed! Compared to the cobbles I had ridden the day before, the contrast was brutal. The cobbled stretches are little paths between the fields, used by tractors, with very big and bad joining pavés. When you discover that, you think that the idea to ride a bike here is weird, so a pro race!

As more as I could, I rode on the tiny dirty part of the road, between the cobbled part and the field aside (sometimes visiting the field aside). At each cobbled stretch's beginning, there was a sign telling which color



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it was, from blue the least, to black the most difficult. A special mention to Trouée d'Arenberg, as here the cobbles are bigger and shake more than anywhere else. And all along the 2 km cobbled track, there's a nice, smooth and very inviting cycle lane, but what would be the use to come here if it was to cycle this lane?

At the end of the first cobbled sector, I wanted to drink and I realized that my bidon was gone away, but it was not a problem as every 10 meters bidons were lying on the ground. So I picked one which luckily stood better on my bike and that I kept to the finish. I was less lucky with my multi-tool, because I realized when I arrived that I'd lost mine, so I had to buy a new one, after having neglected all the ones I saw on the road.

The arrival at the Vélodrome de Roubaix was the last great moment, to ride on this track I have seen so many times when watching race arrival on television. Having never ridden on a track like this, I was surprised by the inclination in the curve. At a moment I rode too slowly and I was too high on the track to feel secure, so I came back soon at the bottom of the track, strange impression.

All in all, Paris-Roubaix appeared to me even harder and more mythical than before I saw it from the inside. As a cyclist races watcher, I have been in awe of what the riders were doing, but now I am even more admiring. And it was a sunny day! I still wonder how it can be ridden under the rain, with all the mud on the tracks.

The day after, the four of us moved to Bailleul by car to ride the Gand-Wevelgem BIG of this area. My friends had hired a small van, with three seats at the front and an empty space at the back. So I travelled to Bailleul in the dark, among the bikes, holding them in the curves. It was not a long way anyway and we were soon on our bikes.

First it was a flat part to Mont Cassel, and then we began the climbs. The ride we had planned was not very long, but the tendency of my friends

to climb every side of the BIG lengthened it a little. Furthermore, we added the climb to Mont des Cats before going to the next BIG, Mont-Noir. After Mont-Noir, we wondered with my friend Pascal why we had both a trace that made a detour before going to Rodeberg (I was happy because Noir was black, and Rode was red, and red and black are the colors of the Olympique Gymnaste Club de Nice that I saw winning in Lille two days before). We then realized that the summits of these two BIG are very close to each other and we wouldn't have climbed anything if we had gone directly from Mont Noir to Rodeberg. So we went down and climbed Rodeberg from the official BIG NW side.

We then just had the Kemmelberg to finish. I was happy to reach the war memorial at the top, as it was the last of this fructuous 10-BIG weekend (even if here again, we climbed it once more from the north-east side). After Kemmelberg, we just had to get back to the car, but as we were some 30 km from the house, I said I'd rather go back by bike than at the back of the van. I was joined by Patrick for this ride back home. At a moment, we were fooled by the GPS that led us to a dead-end, so we asked a local cyclist, whose advices lengthened our route of no more than 10 km, but we were finally back in Tourcoing.

Then, I left my friends, as they had a plane back home later in the evening, and they wanted to go to see the pro race meanwhile. In Lille station, I was told that, due to the beginning of school holidays, I couldn't expect to take my bike in the TGV. So, I had to take six different trains to get back to Nice, passing by Arras, Paris, with a stop for the night at my sister's home, Dijon, Lyon and Marseille before finally reaching Nice in the evening of the Monday.

### 2 – 999 Miglia

This randonnée is the equivalent for southern Italy of the 1001 Miglia, that exists for several years, and that I rode in 2016, 1001 Miglia being located in northern and central Italy. Like 1001 Miglia, it is approximately 1600 km long, and



both are now part of a new four-year challenge, called Grand Tour d'Italia, that will include also a randonnée around the Alps in 2018, and a two-part randonnée in the islands, 600 km in Sicilia, 600 km in Sardinia, in 2019. The organizers kindly put three BIG on their route, which was a good bonus for me.

The randonnée started in Roma the last Sunday of June. It was a very nice trip as it was designed to take us around some of the most beautiful



sites of the country. The start was for instance in the Circus Maximus in Roma. The first notable site was Castel Gandolfo, where the popes have their summer residence. This place overlooks a very nice lake, with strangely steep banks.

We followed our way down to the sea at Sperlonga, with wonderful views to the coast and the Ischia Island, then we got back into the lands to visit Reggia di Caserta, a very impressive building, and Pompei, where I arrived at night, so saw nothing of the roman town, but had a look at the very nice cathedral. By the morning, I reached the sea again in Sorrento, where I had a little

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sleep before climbing the first BIG of the trip.

Picco Sant-Angelo is not the hardest BIG on earth, but it opens the road to the very scenic Amalfi Coast. The road follows the coast, half-way between the sea and the cliffs above, with wonderful views to the sea below and the villages with their houses built above each other on the steep slopes of the coast. After Salerno, we headed to Paestum, where we cycled across the archaeological site and its impressive Greek temples.



From Paestum the route went eastwards. I was happy to find a group of riders for the stretch up to my second night stop in Tricarico. The day after we passed by Matera and its famous Sassi, a borough where houses are dug into the rock. After Matera came my toughest moment of the trip. It was mid-day, end of June and the temperature was about 40° C. We were riding on a rather unpopulated area, with no villages (and no fountains) along the way. With the heat, I drank a lot and I saw the moment I had to stop in one of the scarce farms to ask for water. So I was much happy to arrive at the town of Mottola, where I was able to drink liters, eat an ice-cream and cool down a little for the rest of the trip.

After visiting the nice town center of Martina Franca, I arrived in the country of the trulli. I had already heard of this typical form of building, but I hadn't realized it was so extended. Trulli can be seen all around and inside Alberobello, the capital of the region, and are very numerous. One out of two or three houses in the area is in fact a trulli. After Alberobello, we followed our way to the Adriatic Sea and

Polignano a Mare, then began our westwards return to Roma. I had another night stop in Castel Del Monte, that we saw all illuminated on the top of its hill long before we arrived.

The next day was frustrating for a BIGger as we passed along Monte Vulture without climbing it. But after the last night stop in Morcone, came a more rewarding day in Matese and Abruzzo. We started with the climb to Bocca della Selva from which Sella di Perrone is reached going downhill (I know, I know, this is not an official BIG side, but I'll come back). Then we passed along lago del Matese, Lago di Gallo and lago di Barrea before starting the climb to Passo del Diavolo, third and last BIG of the randonné.

After the descent of Passo del Diavolo, we came across Fucino, a very large and totally flat ancient lake with a spatial center full of antennas in the middle of the fields. The town of Avezzano was at the end of this part and after began a gentle climb to Colle Civitella. I arrived at about 1 am at the last control in Castel di Tora. There, I was wondering if I was going to sleep or tried to reach Roma the same night, as we were only 80 km away, with more downs than ups, so it looked like the arrival was now very close. At this moment, I was asked by another rider what I wanted to do, as he told me he was leaving now. This decided me, so we were three, an Italian, a French and a Swedish to go into the night for the last stage.

Well, I regretted it a bit, because, soon after we left, I began to feel very sleepy. I told my fellow riders that I would stop for a rest, what I did. But despite having slept a little, I felt still very asleep while riding. The coffees I drank along the way in the bars I was lucky to find open at such an hour didn't make much and I had to stop again, taking some minutes of rest leaning against a tree in the outskirts of Roma. Finally, the arrival of daylight woke me a little and I was able to ride the last kilometers to the finish line, where I was rewarded with a beautiful certificate.



I then went to the central station to get a train back home. Many trains were full so I had a few hours before being able to take one. I knew I was in Roma, I had made at home an itinerary to visit all the famous sites of this capital, but all I was able to do at this moment was to seat on a bank in a nearby square and sleep until it was time for the train. But I'll be sure back in Roma, as lot of BIG still await me in southern Italy.

### 3 – Transcontinental Race

The Transcontinental Race, or TCR, is (or is supposed to be) a race across Europe, where cyclists must go through three to four control points along the way, but are left free of their route between the check points. The first two editions started from London and finished in Istanbul, then the start was moved to Grammont (Geraardsbergen) in Belgium, and this year, for the first time, the arrival was not in Turkey, but at the Meteora monasteries, in Greece. The check points included Lichtenstein Castle in Germany, Monte Grappa in Italy, Hotel Sliezky Dom in Slovakia and Pasul Balea in Romania. So with the start and arrival, there were 5 BIG out of 6 control points!



When this race appeared some years ago, my first feeling was that it was completely stupid, to cross Europe on highways as fast as possible, instead of visiting beautiful places on the quietest possible roads. Well, as years passed by, this race grew in importance and renown, at least in the little world of long-distance cyclists, and finally, having a bit forgotten my first opinion and letting me influenced by all the hype about this race, I registered for the 2017 edition.

The most difficult part of the race, once the check points are known, is to build a route, trying to find a compromise between a fast and a secure itinerary. I started this job seriously, building a first stage that turned out quite satisfactory on the ground, but after a while my natural laziness made me postpone a little the rest of the work. Suddenly, in the last day of March, came the brutal news that Mike Hall, the emblematic organizer of this race, had been killed in Australia, while riding a race similar to TCR. This terrible event appeared immediately as to provoke a cancelling of the TCR, and in fact we were left for months without notice. As I said, my feelings about the race were mitigated, I wasn't not sure anymore, after my application had been selected, to still want to be on the start line, so I left things go, taking the assumption that the race would finally not take place.

So when the race was confirmed, less than a month before the start, I had to quickly finish my route, and building a route on the scale of a continent is a big task, as one can imagine. As a result many parts of my itinerary were made in a hurry, especially in the easternmost countries, and that worried me more and more, as the departure date approached.

Anyway I was in Grammont the day of the start. I went through registration procedures, bike check, riders briefing and so on. After the briefing, I had a nice meal in a Grammont restaurant with Maxime that I knew from the tour de l'Aude the year before, and Erwann, another rider. I spent the time remaining unpacking, re-packing and re-re-



packing all my stuff, before we were finally sent away at 10 pm. We started by a little loop in the streets of Grammont, finishing by the famous Muur. At the top of the Muur was the real start of the race, where we were left on our own, free of our itinerary, night and day stops, etc.

The first night in Belgium was nice and quiet, a bit hillier in the end than I had expected. I went briefly through France in Givet then reentered Belgium. In the very morning I broke a spoke and had to ride 80 km before I could have it fixed in Luxembourg. Leaving Luxembourg for Germany, I rode along the Sarre, on a very nice cycle lane. I entered France again in Sarreguemines and went through very nice landscapes between this town and Haguenau. I crossed the Rhine and the French-German border in the beginning of the night and had just after my first night stop.

For my night stops, I had what is called a bivy bag, which is something like a big sleeping bag, but made with tent material. Therefore it is proof to rain, but very light and can be easily carried on a bike as there are no mats and pegs. I've never used much this gear since I bought it, but during TCR I found out it was really convenient: whenever I felt sleepy, I just had to find some place a bit hidden from the road and take out my bag to be at home.

The Sunday morning I began my first long climb, as I had to cross Black Forest. I arrived by noon at the first control point, Lichtenstein Castle, a nice little castle which overlooks the valley below. After the check point, I continued my way, which was to go through Germany,

Austria and Italy, to the second control in Monte Grappa. I then experienced for the first time the riding along highways, as I rode towards Ravensburg and Bodensee. It was a very uncomfortable moment, but more were to come. I reached Bodensee and Austria by night and stopped for sleeping just before a storm, below a footbridge by the railway.

I spent very little time on the Austrian part of my route as it appeared obvious to me on the map. It seemed to go directly from Bregenz to Landeck where I had to turn south towards Italy. I just didn't realize that there was a mountain range in the middle and that I had to pass over the Arlberg pass! So the



climb after Bludenz appeared to me quite hard for what I had expected to be a gentle valley climb up to Landeck. And worst of all, I found out in Klosterle that due to works in the road tunnel, all the traffic was diverted to the road that I was



supposed to take, and therefore it had been forbidden to bikes. It was an uninterrupted passing of cars and lorries, so it appeared impossible to me to continue on that road.

At first no alternate other than a detour of hundreds of kilometers appeared to me, then I saw that a nearly parallel pass existed a little south of where I was, and what's

more it was a BIG, Bielerhöhe! Paradoxically, this detour made me happy. I knew it would allow me to climb a BIG in a new country, Austria, and it delivered me also to the last concerns about the TCR classification I may have had by the time. Furthermore, as I was cycling among the switchbacks of the Silvretta, it reinforced my conviction that the cycling I like is climbing mountain passes in beautiful sceneries.

I was finally in Landeck where I started the climb to Reschen Pass (this one I knew it was there). I was by Reschensee at night, so I saw the famous campanile illuminated above the water. The following day I went down the Adige valley. I felt rather stupid to ride all the way on the monotonous cycle path in an intense heat while beautiful climbs expected me on each side of the valley.

As I was getting closer to Monte Grappa, I felt a bit worried about it, as I knew it was a long and steep climb. I had been riding day and night for four days now, I felt of course tired, and my bike was loaded with all my travel equipment. I felt that my 25-teeth cassette would be hard to carry up to Monte Grappa, so I was considering buying a larger one. I was lucky to find a 30-teeth one in Levico Terme, after having cycled along the nice Lago di Caldonazzo, and sent the other one back home.

The second control in Semonzo, at the foot of Monte Grappa, was very long to arrive as it was the end of the day. It was located in a camping where I had a good meal, was able to wash my clothes and to sleep a little. The morning after I climbed Monte Grappa under a beautiful sun and was happy with my new cassette. After some severe ups and downs (and a little ride on a wrong road) I was back in the plain at Pederobba.

The following days I crossed the plains riding along corn fields in Italy, Slovenia and Hungaria under an intense heat wave. The temperatures were around 40° all the time. I drank my two bottles in no time, so stopped very often in bars to fill, drink sparkling water, eat ice

creams ... After entering Slovenia, I had a long climb where I could have had good views above the valley below but was there at night. Leaving Ljubljana I struggled to find a cycling path to Domzale as my route was directed towards a highway forbidden to bikes. After Slovenska Bistrica I had to divert my route as I found myself again on a road where bikes were banned.

I entered Slovakia in Komarno. I rode on a highway, but with reasonable traffic and a large shoulder. But just after a crossing, traffic increased brutally while the shoulder disappeared. I couldn't stand the traffic as lorries were passing me by so close, so I tried to find other roads. I took some little roads, which turned out to be very hilly and steep. I came back to my planned route hoping that road 66 would be better, but it was the same, so I diverted again as soon as I could.

I was then on a quiet road, but lightning in the distance began to worry me. It was late night so I started to look around for a shelter. I was then happy to find a 4-star hotel in the changing room of the Senohrad football ground. The day after was nice as I rode on normal roads and climbed my first ever Slovakian BIGs. First I went over non-BIG passes, Tisty Javor and Pohansko, then I reached BIG Sedlo Čertovica, in the Lower Tatras, as I had to cross this mountain range to get to the third control point in hotel Slieszky Dom, another BIG.

As I said, I had bad times on Slovakian main roads, praying that it would overtake me far enough each time I heard a lorry coming from behind. At the check point, two things made this unease grow. First I learned that a rider had been killed in Belgium at the beginning of the race, and then we were told that the A1 road in Romania had been judged so insecure by the first racers that it had been banned subsequently by the organizers, and I had to build a new route on the fly from a map that was there at the control point. So, when I left Slieszky Dom, I felt very uncomfortable about the rest of the trip. I knew that my route included a road forbidden to bikes in Hungaria,

as it was the only way to cross a river hundred kilometers around, and the A1 incident made me worry about what I would find later in Romanian roads and further.

During the following hours, my unease didn't decrease, I couldn't stand no more highways and began



considering quitting the race each time I found myself on a busy stretch of road. I went nevertheless through nice places during this time, like Dedinky Lake in Slovakia, but when I found myself again in the Hungarian plain, I was ready to give up. Furthermore, the mythical dimension of the crossing of a continent of the TCR that had driven me since the start was beginning to fade away. I had already ridden 2500 km, 1500 km were left so less than some of the randonnées I did in the past. Continuing now appeared to me more and more as pedaling stupidly on and on along highways during a few days more.

So when my route went near a train station, Sajószentpéter-Piactér, I decided on a sudden impulse to stop my ride and turn back home with the train. It was a very little halt with no more than a platform along the rails. As I was getting to the station, a train arrived, but it was gone before I could get to it. Before I could decide what to think about that, another train arrived in the opposite direction and I jumped in it not knowing at all where it would take me. It happened that this train was going to Miskolc (the first would have taken me back to Slovakia) where I was able to take a train to Budapest.

travelling on permanently changing



In Budapest my troubles were not over. The trains that would take me back home were all full for bike transportation and I didn't know at all which alternate solution I could take. At the same time, for the first time of my trip, the weather was awful with a continual rain that I really didn't have the courage to face on my bike, now that I had taken my decision to stop. As it was getting late, I decided to go to sleep and see the day after. But all the hotels around the station were completely full. Finally the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> I tried had a room for me, phew!

After a good shower, I looked at my situation and decided that a solution would be to go by train to Sopron, close to the Austrian border and ride to Wiener-Neustadt to reach the Austrian rail network. So in the morning I went, still under the rain, to Budapest-Déli station. In Sopron I had a little ride under a sun happily returned, and in Wiener-Neustadt I could take a ticket to Milano, changing in Venezia and Verona. After Milano I couldn't go further than Albenga that I reached by midnight. I had plenty of sleep in the trains all day long so I was able to continue to Nice by bike during the night, where I arrived at 5 am.

Despite the fact I decided not to continue to the end, I keep good memories of my TCR. I enjoyed being on my bike all the time,

countries and landscapes. When I try to think rationally, I come back to my initial opinion that riding like that along highways, with no other motivation than arriving, is no fun, but at the back of my head I still know that the initial goal has not been fulfilled, so I can't help but thinking "But what if I prepare my route in a better way?".

#### 4 – Torino-Nice Rally

For the second time, in the beginning of September, I went to Torino for the Torino-Nice rally. This rally, launched last year, mixes roads, with some important BIG of the southern Alps, and non-asphalted tracks, in a very loose way as opportunities are left to choose between hard or easy options in many points of the route. Living in Nice I'm familiar with most of these roads, even more since I had ridden the rally in 2016, so while keeping the general direction, I changed a lot of the original route.

The first notable climb of the Rally was like last year Colle del Colombardo, a big and steep pass unasphalted in its higher part. This year I chose instead the parallel and lower Colle Del Lys, that I never rode before, which also links Val di Viu in the north to Val di Susa in the south. I crossed Val di Susa towards Colle Braida, passing along the Avigliano lakes, then below the monumental Sacra di San Michele

during the climb. From Colle Braida, a small forest track heads to the north before going down to Val di Susa. In Bussoleno I took the train for a few kilometers, as a ride on the highways of Val di Susa didn't attract me too much.

I renounced to Colle delle Finestre as I already climbed it twice, so I left the train in Oulx and headed towards Col de Montgenevre on the highway. Afterwards, I regretted not to have climbed to Colle Basset through Sauze d'Oulx, then gone down to Sestriere and Cesena, as it would have been a nicer alternative, although quite harder and longer. In Cesena also, I could have saved me a stretch of highway going through the town center, but anyway, after a few bends, the old Montgenevre road, very well surfaced and without cars, allows to reach the pass in a very pleasant way.



In Montgenevre, I added an extra of my own, by climbing the col des Gondrans. The climb on the Montgenevre side is on a dirt track mainly used to reach the skiing installations of the ski resort, while the descent is on a tiny, once asphalted but now much degraded, road of military origin. In fact, there are a lot of military remnants at the top and the pass itself is between two mountains, Mont Janus and Sommet des Anges, both topped by ancient forts. They can be both reached by bike, but the beginning of the track to Mont Janus, the highest and most interesting one, looked quite difficult, as for the steepness and the surface. It was the end of the afternoon, I felt too tired to appreciate a hard climb now, so I left the visit to another time.

Instead, I went down on the other side, which reaches the Izoard road a little below Cervières. As I said, it was about 8 pm, I had left Torino at 4 am, so I felt a little bit tired, and I



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stopped at the first guest house I found, Gîte de Terre Rouge. There I had a nice discussion with the tenant. He showed me a picture of him on a bike, with a pair of shorts he told me was given by Jacques Anquetil himself! We talked also about my ride, and he showed me two alternate ways to go down from Izoard: one by col des Tronchets that is reached with a track that leaves Izoard road just after Casse Déserte, and another one that starts in La Chalp, going by lac de Roue and the village of Souliers. According to him, the col des Tronchets option presented some parts harder to cycle, so I chose the second one, and I didn't regret it. It broke nicely the cold descent from the Izoard, and it made me discover the very steep and narrow road down from Souliers to Château-Queyras, that deserves well to be done uphill one day.

After that came classic climbs of the Agnel and Sampeyre passes. Just a few days before, the climb from the village of Sampeyre to the pass had been forbidden by Sampeyre mayor to all bikes and motorcycles, and signs had been put across the way. Well, like in col de Larche, it was some kind of virtual interdiction, I came across the barriers and reached the pass without any problem.

The asphalted road that links Val Varaita and Val Maira crosses at Sampeyre pass an old military track. I had ridden the eastern part last year, so I went westwards this time. The track follows the ridge for a few kilometers, always on the Val Maira side, and terminates in Colle della Bicocca. From the pass, you have nice views to Agnel Pass and Pontechianale below, and also to the valley of Bellino, another branch of Val Varaita that leaves Agnel road a little below Pontechianale.

After colle della Bicocca one has to turn back as only foot paths continue after the pass. A very rough track, halfway from Sampeyrepass, goes down to the village of Elva. Then came one of the highlights of the trip. Although the pictures I could have seen from Elva road looked spectacular, I never had the opportunity to ride it before. The door to the so nicknamed Strada

dell'Orrido (road of the horror) is a little tunnel, and a Madonna statue with a marble plate aside bearing the names of the people that found death on the road. Then during 4 km the road goes down, hanging on the cliff, halfway between the bottom of the valley and the mountains above. All along the way the road crosses protections from avalanches, tunnels directly dug into the rock, with a rusty railing on the valley side, all of this giving the impression of having been built in a very artisanal way. Needless to say that despite what I have seen of this road before on the web, I was totally stunned from what came in front of my own eyes!

After a cold night in the Marmora camping (I wouldn't recommend it unless maybe in full summer, as being close to the river, it was very cold and humid in the beginning of September) I started the climb to Esischie pass. Like other places crossed by the official route of the rally, I didn't go to Altopiano della Gardetta having been there last year. But I highly recommend visiting this place, which is certainly one of the most beautiful in the Alps. You need a MTB to go through the entire track, but you can have a nice preview by taking the 100 m diversion to colle Valcavera, 2 km below Fauneria pass, on the Demonte side.

All along the climb, I saw a lot of marmots that kept me company with their whistles. After Esischie pass, a small climb leads to colle dei Morti (Fauniera) that is followed by a long descent to Demonte. In Demonte the route continues to the steep but short climb to Madonna del Coletto. Down in Valdieri and Val Gesso, the route proposed between Roaschia, in a lateral valley of Val Gesso, and Vernante a non-asphalted pass called Colle delle Goderie. I already climbed it last year, and remembered having much difficulty. As I had started it in the beginning of the night, I wanted to see if it would appear easier in a normal part of the day. Well, in fact it is really difficult, and much higher than the 1230 m announced at the summit.

When I reached Vernante the rain began to fall heavily while I was climbing towards Limone. The rain



was so strong in Limone that I stopped for a while, but the thunderstorm decided to stay over Limone, so after having stayed one hour under a shelter, I decided to stop for the night.



The morning after, sun was back and I started my ride with a climb to col



de Tende. With my early stop the day

before, I was too short in time to cycle the very hard tracks that go east after the pass. Instead I went towards baisse de Peyrefique. I already rode this track and knew it was much easier, and still in very mountainous and beautiful landscape. After baisse de Peyrefique, an intersection allows to go down to Casterino or to Baisse d’Ourne then Tende. I went to baisse d’Ourne that I reached after a short and gentle climb. After the pass the track is very rough, and I think hardly rideable uphill but I was going down. After a long, shaky and cautious descent, the track turned into a very narrow, roughly asphalted road down to Tende. When I reached the bottom of the valley, I continued on a small road that led me to the Roya main road at the pont des 14 Arches, and then down to Breil-sur-Roya station.

Like last year, I finished my trip with the train. After four days on the road I was happy to come back home quickly, although I think the roads and tracks around Nice are among the best parts in the world to ride a bike.

**5 – Newcastle**

My son, like many students now, has to stay one year abroad during his studies. So he’s spending the scholar year 2017-2018 in Newcastle University. We then decided to visit him a few days and we flew to Newcastle with my wife and my daughter at the end of October.

The first thing I did when the journey was decided was to have a look at the map of the BIG in England. I saw that Rosedale Head in North York Moors National Park on one part, and three others BIG in North Pennines on the other part, were reachable, with a little bit of train. This implied two days out with the bike, which looked compatible with a six-day family stay in the area. I was lucky to find a place in Newcastle that hired bikes, where the only road bike they had was a bit big for me but did perfectly the job.

So the Monday morning I was ready to pick my bike at 8:30, hoping to be at the station at 9 to catch a train to Castleton Moor, at the foot of



Rosedale Head, my intention being to go down to Kildale after the BIG to take a train back to Newcastle. But it took me more time than expected to get the bike, and I could only get a train at 9:30 that stopped in Nunthorpe. This was not a problem at all, it added just some kilometers to my ride that was anyway a short one, and it made me climb instead by the Kildale-Westerdale NW side, which happened to be a very nice approach.

After a rather flat stretch between Nunthorpe and Great Ayton, the climbs began a little before Kildale. I then turned right towards Westerdale and the BIG. It was a very nice landscape of moorlands, just like I thought it would be. The surrounding hills look gentle, but the British road builders don’t seem to bother very much with hairpins, so should a river cross the way, you have a 15% slope to go down to it, and the same to climb on the other side. This didn’t prevent me from reaching the BIG, marked by a stone cross. I was then down in no time to Castleton Moor, as the road to it is smooth, large, busy (relatively) and downhill, to catch my train to Newcastle that I reached

with a change in Middlesbrough and another one in Darlington.

My second ride was a longer one, as it included the three BIG located in the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. I went by train to Hexham, where a misadventure made me lose a few minutes. Arrived in Hexham, I got out of the train and started to prepare for the ride. At the time I wanted to put my helmet, I realized I had it no more. I then remembered that the bike had fallen down at some





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moment during the train journey and that the helmet had certainly followed it on the floor. The train I took didn't continue after Hexham, this left me a little chance to have my helmet back, but it was parked on a siding a few hundred meters away. I went out of the station in the direction of the train but of course was stopped by a gate before reaching the tracks. I came back to the station, where the lady at the desk told me this train would be soon taken back to the station for its next journey. And in fact, the time she spoke the train was again at the station platform, and I could find my helmet under a seat. Ready to go now!

The ride to climb the three BIG was rather long (about 180 km) so it occupied me the whole day. I was not unhappy with the weather, it was colder than in Nice of course, but not too much, and if it was cloudy all day long, sometimes even misty, the rain didn't fall (too much).

From Hexham I went south towards the first BIG, Westernhope Moor, passing by the beautiful village of Blanchland, then Rookhope, in a landscape alternating grasses and moorlands, but with always lot of sheep around. In Eastgate I reached a slightly more frequented road, then turned left in Westgate, fording the Wear River, to start the climb to Westernhope Moor. I loved this climb as it was very remote and lonely (even if I saw one car), again in a moorland landscape so typical to this place.

After this BIG, I had a good ride against the wind between Middleton-in-Teesdale and Brough before reaching Knock at the foot of Great Dun Fell. Well, this climb is a serious one. It's supposed to be England's highest road, but it's also I guess one of the hardest (of this length). The slope is always very steep, except for a flat part in the middle, and very demanding all the time. At a moment, there was a sign aside to forbid the road to cyclists, and another one upper, but without consequences. I even met a car going down from the radar at the top that ignored me completely.

After Great Dun Fell, Hartside Cross appeared as an easy job, even though the posts at the side of the road present it as a dangerous climb because of its 1900 ft. (580m) height. Down in Alston, I had another climb to go back to the train. Haydon Bridge would have been the closest station, but as all trains don't stop there, I had a train earlier in Hexham. So I rode a few kilometers more to

well, it appeared that my fears were justified, as my program has been drastically shortened by the weather.

Anyway, I spent a lot of time designing my journey as, unlike in the mountains where the roads between BIG are generally obvious, I had to look at a lot of options to minimize the distance traveled. Finally, my program was ready: the



go back to my station of departure, after a very much enjoyable ride in the English countryside.

### 6 – Arnhem

Here again I took advantage of a football match (and even two football matches) to mix supporting and traveling for BIG. In September, we knew Nice would play in Arnhem the Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> of December, and I noticed immediately that three BIG were in the surroundings. A few weeks before this European Cup match, a League Cup one was added in Lille the week after, the 13<sup>th</sup> of December. So with a great enthusiasm, I decided to spend the 6 days between the two matches riding for BIG. It was a journey that looked memorable, as 48 BIG were in my schedule, in Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany and France. But, as I was preparing my trip, I couldn't prevent myself for thinking that December in northern Europe was not the best period to do long bike rides, and

three BIG between Arnhem and Nijmegen, then train to Maastricht. From Maastricht, I had the 7 remaining Dutch BIG before reaching Mützenich on the German border. Then I entered Belgium for 6 BIG between signal de Botrange and Stavelot, came back to Germany for two BIG, Krautscheid and Schwarzer Mann, and crossed Luxembourg riding the 13 BIG of the country. The next step was another train transfer to Aywalle and the 6 BIG between la côte de la Redoute and le Cheval de Bois, a relatively long stretch without BIG to reach Mont Saint-Walfroy and 5 other BIG up to Ry de Rome, alternating between France and Belgium, and finally the last 4 BIG along the Meuse, finishing in Huy where Lille was easily reachable by train.

The first part of the program was easily followed, as I took a train the morning in Nice and arrived at Arnhem at about 7:15 pm, having just the time to settle down and go to





the stadium, the match beginning at 9 pm. My favorite team lost 1-0, but that was not important as they were already qualified for the following round of the competition. After the match we came back to town center under police escort. At this time all was quiet in Arnhem town, the hooligans were gone to bed so I came back quietly to the room I had hired.

In the morning, during breakfast, my hosts asked me what my program was for the days to come. They looked dubious about it, as they said that snow would certainly come my way. The weather issues had appeared to me while I was building my route, so I told them I was prepared to interrupt or shorten my journey at any time. Well, I wasn't wrong, as my journey was interrupted very soon.

From Arnhem, I first took the direction of Posbank that I reached after a 11 km flat stretch under a light rain. The BIG is very modest, even though it keeps trace of the Giro d'Italia that climbed it in 2016. As I started the climb, the rain was turning into snow and the bushes around were all white. It was nothing serious though, so I came back towards Arnhem to reach the next BIG, Italiaansweg. The city center was not long to cross, and the trip continued on quiet lanes along the Lower Rhine. At this time the snow has stopped, the temperature had increased a little (from 1°C to 3°C) and I felt more optimistic. The Italiaansweg climb was soon over and I took the direction of Nijmegen for the last BIG of my ride.

I first crossed the Lower Rhine on a motorway bridge with a cycle lane aside. The weather was turning bad again at this time, with the return of the rain, but the skies looked brighter in the direction of south. Unfortunately this soon disappeared and the rain turned to snow again. I

was still in the mood of continuing my trip, hurrying to finish the BIG and reach the Nijmegen station, before going to Maastricht and see how it was down there. But the snow kept on falling more and more and was totally covering the road when I reached the top of the Oude Holleweg. I had some difficulties arriving at the station, as I felt the snow under my wheels, that was smooth in the beginning, was freezing rapidly.

No need to say that once I was at the station, my bike and I all covered with snow, I didn't think anymore of going on with the trip. I took instead the first train to Schipol station, which is served by mainline trains. It was nearly 2 pm when I was in Schipol, so I didn't hope much being able to reach Nice the same day, but it appeared to be possible, going from Schipol to Gare du Nord in Paris, then from Gare de Lyon to Nice. Like in April, I had a night ride through Paris before climbing in my last train.

Just a little word about trains. I've made this entire trip in high speed

trains. In the past, I've often had problems with my bike in such trains, but for this journey I used a very light bag (in fact a cover) that I had bought for this purpose. It allowed me to respect the trains' regulations with a very little increase of my luggage, a very useful gear!

I was not too disappointed to finish my journey this early as I was aware from the start it was a probable eventuality. Before my trip, I was wishing very hard to encounter mild mid-December weather, but it didn't happen that way. Anyway, I'm happy to have ridden these three BIG, I discovered a new country with Netherlands, and I climbed the snowiest of my nearly-300 BIG. All in all, a short but nice BIG hunt.



# Lundi 24 avril 2017, mon 42<sup>ème</sup> Ironbig

**Michel MENARD**

Je me suis constitué un petit tableau en prenant soin de ne faire aucune erreur, pour faire une statistique sur les IRONBIGs, concernant les Parrainages depuis son origine. Peut-être serait-il intéressant de le faire paraître dans la prochaine revue. Il est possible que cela intéresse certains IRONBIGeurs.

Il est vrais que nous ne sommes pas encore le 31 décembre, mais il est peu probable qu'il y ai de nouveaux Parrains compte tenue que nous sommes au cœur de l'hiver.



## Résultat à l'IRONBIG au 31 décembre 2017

Le 31 / 12 / 2010 : Il y avait	<b>61</b> Parrainages	→ Pour	<b>55</b> Parrains.
2011	<b>98</b> (soit 37 de plus)	→ Pour	<b>75</b> (soit 20 de plus)
2012	<b>175</b> (soit 77 de plus)	→ Pour	<b>94</b> (soit 19 de plus)
2013	<b>212</b> (soit 37 de plus)	→ Pour	<b>103</b> (soit 9 de plus)
2014	<b>244</b> (soit 32 de plus)	→ Pour	<b>112</b> (soit 9 de plus)
2015	<b>266</b> (soit 22 de plus)	→ Pour	<b>115</b> (soit 3 de plus)
2016	<b>297</b> (soit 31 de plus)	→ Pour	<b>121</b> (soit 6 de plus)
2017	<b>331</b> (soit 34 de plus)	→ Pour	<b>126</b> (soit 5 de plus)

↙ 205 Parrainages multiples      ↘ **54 récidivistes** ou multirécidivistes

Et 72 IRONBIGeurs ont un Parrainage.

Michel MENARD

# POTJE RISKEN

**Gerard MEIJERING**

Vorig jaar ben ik begonnen met 'het bordspelletje Risk'. Alleen dan gespeeld op een alternatief speelveld. In plaats van op het kartonnen speelbord landen te veroveren en proberen mijn opdracht uit te voeren, is nu mijn missie om een gebied in bezit te nemen door alle bergen uit de BIG 1000 (en Fiets 500) van dat gebied met de fiets te beklimmen.

In 2016 is de eerste Risk aanval ingezet. Met de verovering van de niet al te moeilijke Oude Holleweg bij Nijmegen zijn alle tien de heuvels in Nederland in bezit genomen. Dit is een mooie stevige uitvalsbasis om de vleugels uit te slaan met een gerichte actie in de Benelux. Het plan was om in een week als Ardennenoffensief een verrassingsaanval uit te voeren naar de top van de heuvels in de Ardennen. Vervolgens zou tijdens een terugtrekkende beweging richting Nederland de van zuid tot noord nabijgelegen 6 heuvels uit de Hunsrück en Eiffel worden meegenomen. De tactiek was simpel. Als voorbereiding werden de bergen en de mogelijke startplaatsen via de ouderwetse kaart en lijst in beeld gebracht. Vervolgens werd de aanval ingezet door met auto en tent naar het dichtstbijzijnde slagveld te rijden. Na een combinatie-offensief van zo'n 5 heuvels per dag al dan niet in een rondje werd op de route van het volgend strijdtoneel bivak gemaakt. Als een wervelwind werd elke Ardense heuvel in België, Luxemburg en zelfs een stukje Frankrijk beklommen. De balans thuis opmakende, bleek dat helaas niet overal overwinningen waren behaald. Zo bleek in de schemering het

smalle weggetje naar de top van Hohe Acht in de Eiffel totaal gemist te zijn. Thuis bij bestudering van het route en de 'finishfoto's' van mede-BiG-ers bleek ik de slag naar de toren op de steile top verloren te hebben! Ook de slag om Petersberg vlakbij Bonn die s avonds laat plaatsvond, liep finaal verkeerd af doordat in het donker een afslag gemist werd en op de verkeerde heuvel gefinished werd. Toch was het aantal overwinningen van 36 heuvels een mooi resultaat om naar huis te gaan en te herstellen van alle inspanningen.



Begin maart 2017 werd het al iets professioneler aangepakt. Een Mio 315 werd aangeschaft en aan de hand van voorgeprogrammeerde routes werd via een snelle actie samen met een strijdmakker in één weekend alle 10 heuvels in de Vlaamse Ardennen, het toneel van de 1e wereldoorlog, veroverd. Met deze gerichte actie zijn alle 50 heuvels van de Benelux (zone 3) veroverd. Dit zie ik als een mooie mijlpaal waar ik erg trots op ben. Leuk om te vermelden is dat we op de grens van Frankrijk en België mede BIG-strijder Christiaan Weytmans tegenkwamen. Op de heuvel Mont Noir deed hij als een Godfather een poging om 25 x de zwarte berg te bestormen. Volgens de 'digitale communicatiemiddelen' blijkt

hij die slag glorieus gewonnen te hebben. Minder leuk was dat ik af en toe flink ruzie had met mijn nieuwe metgezel Mio 315. Geregeld begrepen we elkaar niet. Hij verwijtte mij dat ik zijn instructies niet goed opvolgde terwijl ik hem soms doelloos en onlogisch vond opereren. Echt op het autistische af. Naderhand snapten we elkaar steeds beter. Tegenwoordig is hij mijn steun en toeverlaat die mijn gebrek aan oriëntatie goed weet te verbloemen.

De volgende aanval was gepland eind april 2017. Toen was in één week het vizier gericht op het Schwarzwald in Duitsland en de Vogezes in Frankrijk. Op weg naar het strijdtoneel moest eerst nog de in 2016 verloren slag bij Petersberg en Hohe Acht heroverd worden. In de herkansing ging het mij makkelijk af. Vervolgens met goede moed naar de acht bergen in het Schwarzwald. Nadat die met een flinke inspanning veroverd waren, was het snel doortrekken naar de Vogezes om daar nog een mooie slag te slaan. De tegenstand was echter in de Vogezes ongekend fel op de steile en natte Col du Drumont. Na het bereiken van de top was de afdaling in de regen een kwelling. Doorweekt en verkleumd werd het dal bereikt. Helemaal zwaar was de strijd naar Le Petit Ballon. Door sneeuwval was het in de mist glibberen en glijden op de top. Toch werd hier een mooie overwinning behaald met het bereiken van de top. Door de





feërieke en idyllische omstandigheden smaakte de overwinning zoet.

De grote slag in 2017 vond echter in de zomer in twee delen plaats. Via een rondje van Zuidwest-Duitsland naar Oost-Zwitserland/Liechtenstein werd vanuit het westen de aanval op Oostenrijk ingezet. Het smalle Westelijk deel van Oostenrijk (Vorarlberg en Tirol) werd ondanks de felle tegenstand minutieus berg voor berg veroverd. Dit was een langdurige en taaië strijd gezien de lengte en zwaarte van de bergen. Denk bijvoorbeeld aan de lange, steile en hoge Rettenbach Tal vlakbij Sölden.



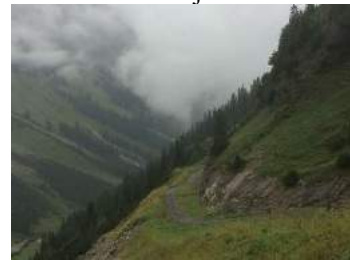
Uren werd er gevochten om de bijna 2000 hoogtemeters te overwinnen zodat uiteindelijk de één na hoogste geasfalteerde top van Europa werd bereikt. Ook een hevige strijd werd gevoerd op de flanken van de Halltall waar het melkzuur uit de oren spoot bij moorddadige stijgingspercentages van 22%. Al zigzaggend met alle krachten die ik had, kwam ik fietsend boven. Vanuit Mayrhofen in het Zillertal werd ook een flinke strijd gevoerd om alle drie de stuwmeren (Speicher-Zillergrund, Zemmtal en Grüne Wand Hütte) in bezit te nemen. Dat waren echter niet de enige hoofdpijndossiers in het mooie Zillertal. Wat te denken van Zillertal Höhenstrasse! Dit veroveren was een zeer zware en daardoor prachtige overwinning waar ik met voldoening op terugkijk. Juist ook omdat de 'vijand' elk moment toe kan slaan. Zo was het daar niet voor de eerste keer dat ik tijdens een snelle

afdaling vol in de 'ankers' moest voor een kudde niet opletende koeien. Dat het ook wel eens fout kan aflopen bewijst het fietsongeluk die ik ooit in de afdaling van de Col d'Iseran had met een bergmarmot. Het knuffeldiertje lette niet op met oversteken van de weg en kan het helaas niet meer navertellen.

Tot slot werd via een omtrekkende beweging door Zuidoost Duitsland zelfs ook nog Tsjechië aangedaan. Door het fietsen in dit voor mij 10e land in combinatie met ruim meer dan 164 overwinningen wordt ik nu door het BIG-leger gezien als een BabyBIG-er. Oftewel één van de talenten van het bataljon. Het voelt goed om deze onderscheiding net voor m'n 50e verjaardag te ontvangen.

Eerlijkheidshalve dient ook vermeld te worden, dat niet alleen maar glansrijke overwinningen zijn behaald. Wat te denken van de beklimming van de Grosse Inselsberg wat vlakbij Erfurt in Duitsland ligt. In het allerlaagste verzet (36x32) stijgingspercentages van rond de 25% zien te overwinnen. Zo steil dat je alleen nog maar zigzaggend naar boven kan. Niet meer fietsen maar een krachtraining om de pedalen rond gedraaid te krijgen. Tot op het laatste steile stuk per ongeluk mijn wielen de grasberm raken en het slijpend wiel mij acuut tot stilstand brengt met een gênante val (in het harnas) tot gevolg. De eerste minuten na de buiteling met een hartslag boven mijn max was ik zo aan het uithijgen van de inspanning dat ik niet in staat was om op te staan. Toen dat uiteindelijk lukte, bleek na vijf meter de weg af te vlakken en bereikte ik gehavend de top. Enkele schaaftonden rijker en een

illusie armer. Nog bonter maakte de berg Nebelhorn, te beklimmen vanaf de skischansen van Oberstdorf te Zuid-Duitsland. De laatste 4 kilometer van deze steile jongen was gemiddeld 23%. Dat betekende voor mij met mijn verzet lopen met de fiets in de hand. Dit was nog een hele opgave met gladde schoentjes. De steile en natte berg afdalen zonder schijfremmen durfde ik niet. Met de staart tussen de benen bood gelukkig de kabelbaan uitkomst voor mijn aftocht'.



Ondanks bovengenoemde tegenslagen zijn er uiteindelijk in 2017 ruim 90 bergen beklommen en kijk ik met voldoening en trots op de geleverde prestatie. Hoewel de oorlog nog lang niet is gewonnen, is er een mooie slag geslagen in vooral de onderste helft van Duitsland en het westelijke gebied van Oostenrijk.

Tijdens de donkere dagen is het eerst tijd om na te genieten om vervolgens in 2018 opnieuw een spelletjes Risk te spelen. Het plan is om Oostenrijk nu links te laten liggen en een 'verrassings' aanval te openen op grote delen van Frankrijk. Hier valt nog flinke stukken land te veroveren.





# Naar de hoogste top van het Harz gebergte

(BROCKEN BIG 185) 27 mei 2017.

## Dirk VISSERS

Ik heb geluk de 27ste mei. Tijdens het ontbijt in mijn hotel in Kassel schijnt de zon volop en maak ik me snel klaar voor een autoritje richting Harz gebergte. Dit nationale park en middengebergte ligt ergens geklemd tussen Dortmund en Leipzig. Net voor 11u zet ik aan voor de klim naar de Sonnenberg (BIG 184- 829m hoogte). De weg loopt langzaam omhoog naar een



hoogvlakte waar enkele hotels de toeristen lokken. Ik ben in Duitsland en dat betekent ook veel motorrijders op de bredere bundeswegen, die soms onvermijdelijk zijn. Zeker bij dit zonnige verlengde Hemelvaart weekend is er meer verkeer. Duitsland betekent ook goed geasfalteerde wegen,

mooie glooiende hellingen en lekker eten.

Op de top van de Sonnenberg kijk ik rechts naar de hoogste berg van de Harz, de Brocken. Hij steekt boven alles uit en dit uitzicht geeft me het gevoel van het hooggebergte. De Brocken is 1142m hoog en kan dus wedijveren met de Vogezen en het Zwarte Woud en zelfs met enkele cols in de Alpen.

Na een snelle en lange afdaling kom ik aan in Elend, waar het gezellig vertoeven is tussen de diverse Brauhausen. Hier staat het bord dat de start van de klim aangeeft. Onderweg naar Elend passeerde ik het vroegere ijzeren gordijn. Een herinneringsbord geeft aan waar de grens was voor de val van de Muur. Een nog steeds historische plek. De klim naar de top is langs deze zuidoostzijde 14km lang aan gemiddeld 6%. Het begin is echt niet zwaar. Gezapig gaat de weg omhoog aan 4 a 6%, het heerlijk lentezonnetje, de groene heuvels en de rust doen de rest. Er zit weinig verkeer



op de klim, ook omdat de laatste 10km volledig verkeersvrij zijn. De weg loopt door de bossen, en af en toe vang je een glimp op van de omgeving. Het venijn zit 'em in de staart... De laatste 3km zijn heftig, eerst aan 10 a 14%, later aan 8 a 10%. Bovendien zit de weg vol van wandelende toeristen, die als duiven "gelost" zijn door het treintje dat net voor de top stopt. Iedereen moet dus over deze smalle weg naar de toren en het uitzichtpunt. Ik worstel me letterlijk door de horde toeristen, die geen oog hebben voor een fietser met klikpedalen. Het enerveert me enorm, er is nochtans plaats genoeg om een fiets door te laten.... De rust en de stilte van de klim zijn voorbij. De top is daar, en al snel haalt de genoegdoening de bovenhand. Ik verkijk me aan de mensen met shorts, vrijetijdsschoenen, en veel te grote bierbuiken.... wat ben ik blij om een fietser te zijn.

De afdaling is wederom zigzaggend naar beneden tot voorbij het treinstation, waar de rust en de stilte nooit beter was dan tevoren .....



# Suis-je un tricheur ?

## Le Nebelhorn et le respect du règlement

Michel MENARD BIG 78

Il est de ces curiosités ou de ces coïncidences qui sont bizarres et étranges. Ainsi cet exemple où j'avais l'intention de vous donner mon point de vue sur certains points du règlement BIG ; avant même d'avoir lu l'article de Dominique Jacquemin, pour un petit rappel ; dans la dernière revue de l'an dernier, N° 31 de mars 2017 ; principalement concernant le Nebelhorn BIG N° 192.

Nota : J'en ai déjà un peu parlé en juillet 2014 à la concentration annuelle, en Catalogne.

Nous sommes fin Mai 2013. Après avoir franchi plusieurs BIGs et pour finir toute la série, soit les 50 que représente l'Allemagne, il ne me manquait que ce fameux Nebelhorn. J'avais pris note sur le site que c'était un « costaud », qu'il culmine à 2068 m, etc ... et le faire en cette période de printemps, c'était prendre le risque d'y trouver de la neige au



sommet. C'est vrai, mais ce dernier se situe près de la frontière Autrichienne, donc bien éloigné de chez moi et je ne me voyais pas revenir si loin



pour cette seule montée. Je ne pouvais que tenter ma chance.

La première difficulté consista à situer le pied ce qui ne fut pas, mais vraiment pas facile. Contrairement à ce que l'on me dit souvent, je dis et me répète, en disant que ce n'est pas évident de communiquer dans un Pays étranger lorsque l'on ne connaît que sa « langue ».

Le ciel était bien bas et les nuages menaçaient.

Première partie de la montée sur une belle route large et bien revêtue, qui me mena après

plusieurs kilomètres avec déjà une forte pente, à une sorte de plate-forme d'où s'y trouvait plusieurs bâtiments. Dans l'un de ces bâtiments en travaux, je m'informais auprès des ouvriers pour avoir des indications complémentaires sur la suite de la montée. Je compris qu'ils voulaient me dire que je ne pourrais aller jusqu'au sommet, probablement à cause de la neige, mais qu'importe j'étais là et rien ne pouvait m'arrêter, du moins je le croyais.

Deuxième partie, au départ pas bien difficile, sur une petite route bien plus étroite, au revêtement à peu près correctement goudronnée, mais un peu gravillonneuse et se dégradant au fil de l'ascension. Plus je m'avancé, plus la pente s'accroît et en lacets, puis ce qui devait arriver arriva. Dans un premier temps avec une pente telle, que je fus obligé de mettre pieds à terre et de pousser le vélo. Parfois je remontais dessus en danseuse, la roue arrière patinait (gravillons / pluie / pente) et je reposais pieds à terre, et repoussais le vélo. Le même scénario se reproduisit maintes fois et je n'y pouvais rien, même avec mon mini braquet



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de 30 x 26 (2,290 m avec roues de 650C) ; avec une pluie fine qui avait fait son apparition et ... Dans un deuxième temps, la neige sur le sommet, puis sur les bas cotés qui, au fil de la montée recouvrait la chaussée étroite, ce qui m'obligea au bout d'un moment malgré ma volonté, à jeter l'éponge.

Combien de kilomètres avais-je fait, à quelle altitude étais-je et le sommet était-il encore bien loin ? Je ne peu répondre à ces questions car quand la pluie fit son apparition, j'ai retiré mon compteur ; depuis un souvenir lointains où un jour sous la pluie, celui-ci c'est détraqué.

Anecdote : Au retour sur la descente dangereuse, parfois en descendant de vélo, eh oui là aussi ; j'ai croisé un homme avec mini sac à dos qui s'aventurait sur le sommet. Au vu des conditions climatiques, quel pouvait-être son but ?

J'ai toujours respecté dans l'intégralité le règlement du BIG, de l'IRONBIG et pour bientôt celui des NATACHA (comme de toute autres confréries cyclos), à l'exception et partiellement peut-être de cette clause, et encore quelques rares fois, sans savoir que c'était une entorse au règlement.

Un BIG doit-être fait dans son intégralité à vélo.

A Daniel Gobert Président ; poser pieds à terre et pousser un peu le vélo, c'est une remarque dont je ne me suis jamais caché lorsque je lui fais part de mes comptes rendu sur mes Ironbiggs.

Pour un jeune cyclo avec entraînement, cette clause et facilement respectable, ce qui fut le cas pour moi-même dans les années antérieures. C'est vrai, tout BIGeur se doit de faire son maximum, mais aujourd'hui en prenant « de la bouteille » comme toute personne, et avec mes ennuies de santé (J'en ai déjà parlé avec

mon Endofibrose), cette clause devrait-être assoupli pour tout le monde ; c'est une question d'honnêteté personnel, être en règle avec sa conscience. Même avec un braquet adapté, il peu s'avérait que l'on soit obligé surtout avec l'âge et de plus en plus souvent, de poser pied à terre et de faire de la marche à pied sur des distances plus ou moins longues. Comme il m'arrive de plus en plus d'agir de la sorte, devrais-je arrêtais toutes activités BIG, sinon suis-je un tricheur ? Pour mon aventure au Nebelhorn, suis-je un tricheur pour avoir descendu de vélo et marché, mais surtout, de n'avoir pas atteint vraiment le sommet ? (Celui-ci ne devait pas être bien loin).

Pour les puristes, et je me considère tel ; en vue du règlement, oui j'ai un peu triché, dans ma tête, non ; car c'est une exception et surtout, en regard de cette petite entorse involontaire, cela ne représente rien en comparaison (et pour compenser) sur de nombreux BIGs et pas des moindres, que j'ai eu l'occasion de franchir INTÉGRALEMENT par le passé plusieurs fois, et par leur versants différents.

Exemples en France :

Galibier 14 fois, je dis bien 14 fois, et pourtant je demeure bien

loin de son pied ; dont une fois au cours de la Marmotte 1987 alors que j'étais en pleine défaillance (Voir revue BIG N° 27).

Ballon d'Alsace et Aubisque 10 fois / Tourmalet 8 fois / Croix de Fer et Izoard 6 fois / Bonette 5 fois / Mont-Ventoux 5 fois, dont 4 fois dans la journée (Voir revues BIG N° 13 et 25) ; et je pourrais continuer, la liste est longue ...

Réflexions pour conclure :

Combien sont-ils ceux qui ont réellement franchi en France le BIG 274 col de Joux-Plane altitude 1712 m, en Haute-Savoie ? Très peu c'est certain, car le **sommet réel** se situe en bifurquant sur la droite ou la gauche, suivant le sens de la montée, à 300 m du chalet sur un chemin muletier.

Combien ai-je vue ou entendu dire des cyclos me répondre avec des réflexions du genre « C'est comme si c'était fait, ou, c'est du pareil au même » !



# Oser monter sur la Valence

**Daniel GOBERT et  
Nathalie GEORGE**

La ville de Valence, située au centre des latitudes de l'Espagne, au bord de la Méditerranée, est une splendide cité, ornée de monuments historiques et agrémentée d'avenues où fourmillent les boutiques à la mode.

Nous avons séjourné à l'intérieur des terres, à une trentaine de kilomètres de ce joyau citadin, à Navajas, dans la province de Castellón.

## 1. Alto de Eslida

Le big le plus proche était l'Alto de Eslida dont le pied était situé à un peu plus de 15 kilomètres de notre chalet. Dès le lendemain de notre arrivée pour ces vacances familiales au soleil et au bord de la piscine, Nat' et moi démarrons tôt directement à vélo pour rejoindre ce pied. Malgré nos GPS, nous devons demander trois fois le chemin car l'autoroute fait joujou avec la nationale et la liaison des villages. Il commence déjà à faire chaud.

Cette ascension se divise en deux parties distinctes. D'abord une jolie route bien revêtue et ondulante, mène au col du Port d' Eslida, matérialisé par une pancarte en bonne et due forme. Le club des Cent Cols ne le reprend toutefois pas dans ses listes. Le paysage y est typique de l'endroit, c'est-à-dire aride et vallonné. La circulation est faible.

Ensuite, on prend à gauche, une route plus étroite au revêtement dégradé avec pour objectif le Punt de l'Ajolb, ou Alto de Eslida et ses antennes. Après un léger plat initial, nous sommes directement mis dans le vif du sujet avec un toboggan aux multiples raidillons plus ou moins longs et aux replats bienfaiteurs. La sente est étroite, le milieu de la route souvent herbeux ou dégradé, le précipice est présent mais pas trop effrayant. La fin est vraiment éprouvante, il nous faut utiliser toute notre énergie pour nous hisser au sommet.



*Le final exigü de l'Eslida*

La plate-forme sommitale nous offre des escaliers où il fait bon s'asseoir et y saluer le seul cyclo local rencontré en ce paradis perdu.

Après une descente prudente jusqu'au col, on profite de la pente ensuite car plus bas on s'offre une descente rapide et sans dangers tout en se dorant la pilule sous 30° centigrades.

## 2. Javalambre

Un jour de repos dans la piscine et nous voici sur l'autoroute vers l'ouest. Une heure de route et nous sommes au pied de Javalambre, station très courue en hiver, station désertée en été.

Nous sommes au petit matin mais quelle aubaine ! Juste au pied, la station à essence contient une cafétéria où le petit-déjeuner offre de multiples possibilités dans un cadre agréable. Nous en profitons tout de go !

Nous nous élançons ensuite pour 25 kilomètres en dents de scie. L'ascension est longue sur une route très large au parfait bitume offrant une vision sans cesse panoramique.

On monte haut et longtemps mais les pourcentages sont souvent faibles. On peut enrouler le braquet sans économie.

En deux heures d'ascension, nous avons juste croisé quelques ouvriers communaux réparant les rares trous de la chaussée et aménageant les bas-côtés. Pour le reste, calme plat et vent comme unique compagnie. C'est vous dire si nous fûmes tranquilles !



*Un LOL avec les doigts au Javalambre*

Au sommet, il s'agit d'une très longue ligne droite et en bout de piste, un parking, une buvette, une terrasse vide au bas des remontepentes. Et en point de mire : l'antenne sommitale, joignable via un court muletier final.

La descente fut un régal où on ne freina pratiquement jamais car la pente permet de ne jamais pédaler mais de garder toujours une vitesse suffisante. Dans un décor pampa du bout du monde, on peut penser qu'il y a pire comme détresse humaine. Bref, que du bonheur !

## 3. Puerto de Remolcador

Notre troisième objectif se débat depuis longtemps entre son V et son M. Sur le panneau, le M a fini par l'emporter. Nous avons aussi hésité longtemps avant de décider de son pied car il se situe au bas d'une descente dont le final a quelques soubresauts. Alors, nous avons stationné le véhicule après quelques hectomètres de la réelle montée, fait demi-tour avec les vélos jusqu'à ce que nous ayons besoin de pédaler pour avancer. Nous avons décidé que le pied était à cet endroit-là !

On fait encore demi-tour et on se lance dans une belle montée boisée au nombreux virages, on dépasse notre lieu de stationnement, on reste entre 4 et 6% de manière régulière, on passe



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dans un village tranquille et on continue toujours sur le même genre de route.

La montée est agréable et sereine. Peu avant le sommet, on matérialise le col avec peine car les arbres cachent l'endroit cherché. Un panneau nous rassure. Nous y sommes. Le paysage y est beau sur l'autre versant, sans y être transcendant. Un big de plus, un col de plus, pour tous les deux. Il fait beau, nous sommes heureux.



*Nat' un peu au-dessus de 1000 mètres*

### 4. Valdelinares

Seconde station de ski de nos rêves proches de Valence : Valdelinares. Le pied y présente également une station à essence et un parking voisin de bon aloi. C'est une large courbe qui nous mène en pente douce vers le début des lacets conduisant à la station. La route est bien macadamisée, la pente est irrégulière mais quand elle se cabre, il faut s'atteler à la tâche. Il n'est pas aisé d'y trouver un rythme régulier. On semble souvent perdu dans les arbres et aucun signe avant-coureur ne témoigne de l'arrivée proche d'une ... ligne d'arrivée souvent empruntée par les coureurs de la Vuelta.

Il faut arriver au dernier carrefour à quelques encablures du sommet, pour trouver un panneau nous situant la station. Celle-ci ressemble à s'y méprendre à l'autre. Longue ligne droite, parking et buvette aux pieds des pistes. Plus de chalets et moins d'antennes,

toutefois !



*Valdelinares et ses chalets*

Les heureux cyclos de l'été que nous sommes y vaquent en toute tranquillité.

### 5. Puerto de Villarroya

Notre dernier big de ce court séjour est le plus éloigné de notre lieu de villégiature. Plus de deux heures de voiture pour rejoindre un village anodin, assommé de soleil. Nous y garons notre voiture et dès sa sortie, nous voyons le col au loin au-dessus de cinq-six lacets séparés par de grandes lignes droites bien pentues.

Cela nous laisse augurer d'une ascension pas trop longue mais bien costaute quand même, dans un paysage très large que nous aurons tout le loisir d'admirer au gré de notre cadence de montée. La plaine est aride et le coteau assez sec mais ce paysage qui pourrait laisser un goût repoussant, reste joli et original.

Nous en profitons tout au long de la montée, sauf quand les 10% se montrent présents dans de courts murs intermédiaires.

La ligne droite finale est interminable car on y quitte la vue sur la vallée et on traverse la colline lentement.

La pancarte sommitale arrive enfin et nous sommes heureux d'y boire l'entièreté de nos bidons à l'ombre car le dieu Ra darde tous ses rayons de manière vigoureuse.

Alors, c'est le moment de dire au revoir et nos bigs de Valence. Il est grand temps de descendre de la Valence car nous avons pu voir que les bigs du coin faisaient le poids. A bientôt pour de nouvelles aventures !



*Nat' à l'ombre*

# BIG summary 2017

**Kevin SPEED**

**Malta. January 2017**

At Dingli Cliffs on the western side of Malta I was stopped by an Italian cyclist who asked for directions but then decided to join me for the afternoon.

Together we explored three bays and three great road climbs. We decided to take the tracks following the coast, heading for Migra Fehra. We could see where the track was going but not sure if we could cycle it and disturbed the peace for an older couple eating their picnic at Matneib but the farmer assured us that the cliff path was cycleable. It was, and once we reached the bay there's a fantastic view of white rocky chambers or caves at the waterline. Most of the route up on the track is rideable and we eventually reached the stony car park at Migra Ferha at the foot of BIG 996 Tal Merhla. The climb took 40 minutes. It was a great introduction to the eventual climb by approaching it over cliffs tracks from the Dingli road to the east. There's nothing at the top to mark the top of the climb, only an open road looking over a rough grassy area towards Dingli church. My companion Alessandro recorded a 18% gradient half way up on his GPS. The start at Migra Ferha is a rough gravel car park.

From here we cycled to Bahrija via St Martin's passing a wildlife park along the narrow pot holed roads. He introduced me to one of his favourite climbs so we plummeted down to Fammir Rih Bay then struggled back up. He was hoping to find a rideable track off to the right from the bay but locals had blocked the route with felled branches. The climb up from the bay is steeper



nearer the top at 18%. Back at Bahrija at 14.00 where he went to shop for water and I went back down again to take photos. He waited at the top then we cycled on for Mgarr. On the way we freewheeled down to Griegna Bay then back up and a 21% gradient nearer the top then on to Mgarr at 15.30 where he left his car and our parting of the ways. I told him of the Cycling BIG club and my name. he would check out the website and look me up on Facebook. I continued on alone to Zebbiah and took a look at the ancient Skorba Temple then downhill, passing to the right of old Roman baths to reach Mankata then further slightly downhill all the way along Pwales (Paul's) Valley to St Paul's Bay.

On small quiet roads, past a small gated chapel named St Paul and a pot-holed road into Marsaxlokk with its long open fishing harbour. December 1989 in the middle of a wild winter storm, US President George Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachov held their groundbreaking end of the cold war Malta Summit here on board Soviet cruise ship SS Maxim Gorky. It's a

long front here and a line of interesting buildings then up steeply and down again over the headland to Birzbuga. Heading south following the waterfront then inland along a narrow pot holed lane heading uphill to Hal Far then off to the right to reach a roundabout then to the left and another pot



holed narrow lane to Zurrieq. I followed the signs for Blue Grotto. It's a steep downhill from Zurrieq for the couple of miles to the pounding waves on the rocks where people were waiting for the boat to take them to the open caves through which the water flowed, a tall grotto of white cliffs falling straight into the water. There's cafes at the bottom of the road but didn't want to stop here as



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the best bit of today's tour was yet to come. Back to the top of



the steep road then took a left before reaching Zurrieq for the scenic road following the cliff tops with the sea way down below. Shortly after I reached Hagar Qim off to the left. It's now covered with a protective large tarpaulin. From here on to Ghar Lapsi, steeply downhill from a road junction. At the road junction I was halfway along the route of my second climb Ta'Dmejrek BIG 997. I took a left, past a cement works and down the road to the coast at Ghar Lapsi and its two cafes. The one on the waterfront is a bit more upmarket. The bottom part of the road to the coast is split into a one way system. It took me an hour to reach the radar globe at Ta Fuq il Fulija, Il-Fawwara after going too far into Siggiewie and turning back to Providanza for the correct road to Gebel Ciantar and back to the cliff road heading for Dingli Cliffs. After Annunciation church the road ends at a track where I pushed the bike up a short way over the area of a Bronze Age settlement to reach the road at Zula. On along the road to the top of the BIG after 1.1/2 hours (15.30). Back through Dingli at

16.00 then mainly down as I headed inland back to Sliema

### Northern Spain May 2017

Collada Barrada BIG 401, 1325m

There's a large open car park on the south side of Las Arenas, just a short way into the beginning of the road heading for Sotres. Making off along the road for the climb at , it took me 4.1/2 hours to reach the top and back down to the hire car, cycling 15km and return (20 miles) from 1325m. Much of the way along the lower section as far as Camarmeña the road is lined both sides by a wall of white rock. At one point, on the left, there is a large hole in one of the rocks. From here the way is a little steeper to the village of Tielve, a farming area. The upper section of the road follows the Rio Tuje then a sharp turn to the left and a steep ascent to Sotres, the most sizeable place along here where there are also hotels and restaurants, plenty of places to get a drink but didn't see any shops. They're probably there. After taking some photos I continued on along the road for

Tresviso until I reached the highest point, the Collada Barrada. From Sotres after a few hundred metres the road opens out into the open mountainside and a clear view either side of the road and to the high mountains of Picos de Europe. The top itself is at the Asturias / Cantabria boundary L'Angliru.

BIG 393 With Francois Candau and Irene Schneider

Arriving in La Vega at 10.45. It was a little confusing finding Santa Eulalia and especially negotiating the centre of Oviedo which I really had no need to do. Once back out of town and finding Leon signs I reached Soto de Reibera and the small road to Santa Eulalia and asked directions at an open market, I was to return to a small roundabout, take a right, rejoin the Leon road, pass through a tunnel then take the next right for Riosa. Sure enough 6km along here I came to La Vega. I recognised this road from my previous two visits however the road for Leon has changed; it's more like a motorway than the small road I remember. I arranged with Francois and Irene to meet at La Vega and the foot of the climb for Oviedo to La Vega 20km (13 miles) 13km and return (16 miles). It was good to see them both again. We started the ride at 11.40 and took 3 hours to reach the wide open space car park at the top. The first 200 metres out of La Vega is a drop to a river bridge then a gentle rise for a couple of kilometres becoming progressively steeper. We stopped in the fog to take a photo of the Angliru indication sign, today indicating green for 'open'. Just as well having come all this way. At approx the 7km from the top of the road I recognised the inner bend that my Euskadi friend cycled with all those years ago was waiting and recovering

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from his part ascent. He was here for a breather and at the time I knew why. Here then was the beginning of the really steep section – a challenge for any cyclist. None of us could ride it. I made it as far as the metal cyclist sculpture on the right side of the road on the long section but had to walk until we came to the next hairpin veering to the right much further up. Below this we were above the fog and clouds and we were looking out over what resembled the sea with the nearby mountain tops as rocky islands jutting up from the white mass. It was hard to walk, let alone cycle. Francois shouted up “This is terrible”. It was David Millar, Scottish cyclist who threw his bike over the side of the road here. In 2002 he pulled out of Vuelta a España in protest at difficult racing conditions: he stops half a metre before the finish line on the Alto de L’Angliru and removes his race number “This is organised torture, not a bike race”. Fortunately we had plenty of time to reach the top, time wasn't against us. Just as well because perhaps we are the slowest on record on the BIG website! Fantastic views on the way up and there are many boards along the road telling of the exploits of cycle racing over the years. I can't imagine the agony of the Vuelta a España competitors attempting this killer. It makes the 2km / mile 'killer mile' of Mow Cop in Cheshire a child's play

Vixia Herbeira BIG 377 604m  
With Francois Candau  
From the west side it's 15km to the stone building opposite the line of wind turbines on the ridge of the hill, marking the top. It was a very strong westerly wind today that made the way difficult in places, especially coming up the other side from Pedra later. From Cedeira town we found our

way through the streets and across to a right hand turn for Vixia Herbeira as this road continues on for the huge lighthouse; Punta Candieira which we didn't see but it's an attraction in this area mainly because of its size and position on the cliff top. We cycled up through the woods and into an open clearing over cattle grids then hugged the coast for quite a way. There's some good viewing places of the coastline on the way up with cliff and sea inlets. Part way up the road reaches a ridge at a large stone crucifix to the right then descended down for 3km to a road junction. On then to the right for Carino and started to ascend again and a sharp turn away from the coast. The final 3km are very exposed in open country and now mainly a straight road on to the top marked by numerous wind turbines. Took a look at the stone building to the left overlooking the cliff. This marks the top of the climb. From here we both descended 9km 5.5 miles to Pedra. The higher section is exposed and descends as a long sweep with a right turn leading down a long section to the treeline. From there down to the small town of Pedra. The road ends at a 'T' junction then we turned left along a flat section into the town. Francois found a shop to buy food and while in there it started to rain; a little at first but then a deluge. It only lasted for about 20 minutes and it was so fortunate that we were in shelter at the foot of the mountain. We returned in a little rain but it went off as we ascended back to Vixia Herbeira and the car. From this side it's an easier climb under the shelter of the trees and by now the air was much fresher after the rain. The upper part was easy enough but as we rounded the bend in the exposed area the force of the wind hit us for the final 3km to

the road summit. Cycling 15 km from Cederia to the top then 18km there and back from Pedra, total 33km 21 miles. 12.00 to 16.30 both sides  
Lagos de Covadonga BIG 400 1187m  
(24 miles or 40km) 4.5 hrs  
11.00 – 16.30. Met with Irene Schneider at 11.00 and we parked our vehicles at Soto de Cangas on the Covadonga road just to the right of the roundabout at the entrance to Covadonga valley. We cycle together 7km to Covadonga village then take the much steeper narrow road from the roundabout here, second exit indicated for Las Lagos. From here it's 12km along a twisty road leading up to the lakes. For the first 4km the way up is tree covered but later we were cycling under the white rocks along a road with many turns. A kilometre after passing Mirador Reina the road drops a little to an upper valley with farmsteads but then rises again to a greater height to reach the highest point overlooking Lake Enol. This is a spectacular view with the lake framed by the mountains and contented brown cows in the upper meadow before the lake. There is a constant steepness to reach here, above 10-12% for some time. I thought it would ease higher up, but it is surprisingly steep most of the time with up to 15%. When we reach the upper sections there is a false summit where the road descends, only to rise again to the last summit before the descent – here is the 'wow' factor. Following this a descent along Lake Enol and then little rise and descent again to the highest lake - Lago de Ercina at 1135 metres. We stop for drinks at the cafe at the end of the road, take in the view and the usual photos of the area that wouldn't be out of place in the Swiss Alps then we turn around and head back down. Only on the return did



we notice the huge red edifice of Basilica of Santa María la Real of Covadonga.

### **Gran Canaria and Tenerife. February 2017**

Cycling the coastal cyclepath from Las Palmas as far as the Triton sculpture then along the underpass to the other side of the autovia and up a short track to reach a bridge over a road at Los Cacharros then bearing left then right over another bridge and left again keeping to the right of the autovia then right under road GC3 to a roundabout then uphill for a short stretch then a wide turn to the left and followed the signs for Marzagan, another climb through Jinamar then a long downhill into Telde on the inland road GC100. It was a diversion of approx 3km but much safer than cycling the autovia. Through Telde the way was south through the town to a blue girder bridge and just past that, at a roundabout with a stone arched gateway in the centre the way was to the left where the road GC130 begins. Along here a short distance, a turn to the right then a steady rise up to the edge of the town along the road lined both sides with small colourful concrete walled homes at El Eljido then steadily rising up in open country. I stopped for a rest to eat bananas at the junction with the GC132 road to the right as I could see ahead that the road ahead was now steeper. From this point the route to Cazadores is fairly steep and much of it is wooded. From here though the road is steeper. There's a one way split in the road as it passes through the village then the climb begins in earnest. I entered low cloud and visibility was limited. A short steep section downhill led to Caldera de la Marteles. I had passed up and over the rim of the crater. At the bottom I was

in the lower part of the caldera that was only partly visible in the fog but I saw it again when I returned back later the same way. I was now 7km from the Pozo de las Nieves BIG 497 at 1930 metres height on road GC130 26.7km (17 miles) from Telde. At 5km from the top I was in open country. Towards the top I took a left turn and 2km a final right turn for a 500 metre stretch, passing the fenced off military site on the left and the radar globe. The top was reached and the mist was clearing so stayed a while to be rewarded with some great views when it finally cleared. I could now see Roque Nublo off to the left and way across the horizon a wonderful view over the Bentayga rock to Teide Mountain over the stretch of water that separated Gran Canaria from Tenerife Las Cañadas BIG 495 Starting at 08.30 and even though it's only 59.7km (37 miles) from Santa Cruz the north east to reach the 2380 metres height from sea level it took me five hours to get there, 68km or 43 miles. From the start it's a tough, hot steep climb from Santa Cruz to La Laguna on road TF180 where I was confused around the town streets before finding the road TF24 across the autovia. I came across the place where the taxi had disgorged us yesterday. The main street was interesting, some old buildings. I passed through and found the busy roundabout over which was the beginning of the road TF24 indicated as a brown sign for Teide. On the right at the start of the road is Tenerife North airport (Los Rodeos). Continuing on to La Esperanza along a tree lined avenue, after which it's open country and a steep section through the forest, Bosque de la Esperanzana, passing the road south to the coast through Guimar. From there the road enters the national park, Forestal de

Corona then continues up to a col at Puerto de Izaña at 2300 metres. This is the same height as Puerto de las Cañadas so what happens at this point is that the road reaches the rim of the crater then drops again steeply after the white towers of the Teide Observatory on the left on Las Vacas Mountain beyond which is an extinct volcano called de Fasnía. Another short rise to the inner edge of the crater rim at Corral del Ninno then a sudden drop to the road junction at El Portillo where the road from Puerto de la Cruz joins from the north. I was now in the Parque Nacional del Teide. From the junction, a turn to the left then a gradual up for 11km further to Las Cañadas. There is nothing at this point, the highest point of the road just after the cable-car station at the foot of Pico de Teide. I continued on, down now for 4km to Parador Las Cañada where there's a road on the left leading to the restaurant and only hotel up here. I bought a beer to celebrate and ate my sandwich and relaxed in the sun for a while. I had a look at the little chapel, Ermito delas Nieves. I was fascinated by the weird rock formations near the Parador, Los Roques and also the jagged ridges of lava fields and red fields of ash as I went up and over Puerto de las Cañadas. Except for the deep blue sky it resembled a moonscape and some similarity to Mont Ventoux. Total 68km from Santa Cruz or 43 miles so total distance cycled today on return to Santa Cruz is 136km or 85 miles. I started this morning at 8.30 and reached the top at 3.30pm – 7 hours! It took me 4 hours to return and needed the bike lights on reaching Bosque de la Esperanza. It was a little dangerous through the forest area so had to keep a close eye on the white line marking the side of the road. Once in

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Esperanza I had street lights except for a 2 kilometre section before reaching the end of the mountain road at Tenerife North airport. From La Lugana it was an easy downhill all the way but still some confusion in the lower streets before I found the apartment by Hotel Principe. It was now 7.30 and thoroughly tired!

Pico del Ingles BIG 496 at 992 metres

Setting off at 9.15 I followed other cyclists along the quite coast road TF11. The first few kilometres were on a separate cycle path but the final section to San Andrés was on the autovia but on Sunday it was quiet, not much traffic. From the fishing village I took the TF12 road up into the mountains, Las Montañas de Anaga heading for the road summit. From this side, the south east, it's 22.8km (14 miles) to the top. It's an interesting road up to El Bailadero 11km up a winding route, especially nearer the top. One dislike is the number of dogs barking from properties away from the road. There are good views back to the coast. At one point I saw the morning ferry from Las Palmas heading into Santa Cruz. There are no really steep sections and it's a good surface road to the ridge. There were many cyclists up and down the climb but of course it's Sunday. Just before reaching the top it started to rain and I wondered how those sporty cyclists carrying no wet wear would manage, especially when the rain became worse the higher I reached. On the ridge I was in fog. That mixed with rain is far from pleasant. I continued on for 12km to Taborno along a road with plenty of ups and downs but with no views. This road follows a ridge and there should have been good views to the south over the coast – today nothing. Once at Taborno I noticed the left turn for Pico

del Ingles, a kilometre before Mirador Cruz del Carmen. I took the road, for 2 km. At first up then down a section and a final up to reach the one way loop to the Mirador. There was nothing to see. I took my photos of the name-board and a selfie. Even the footpath to the mast along the ridge was closed due to bad weather. Back to the main road and continued on to Mirador Cruz del Carmen just a little lower down but still no view. From here I descended through the woods to Vega de las Mercedes where at last I emerged from the thick mist – and the rain stopped. There was a view here across the coast and as well as Santa Cruz I could see Pico de Teide over to the right of me. From here through Las Cantaras where there was some party happening along the road. Down again rapidly to San Cristobal and back on to what was now a familiar road back to Santa Cruz. I arrived back at 3.15. It took me from 9.15 to 1.15 to reach Pico del Ingles and 2 hours down. The total distance round is 42km or 26 miles. I bought a small whiskey to celebrate and drank at the waterfront with the remainder of my food. I wished I hadn't! The combination of the warm day and my activity went to my head and I fell asleep.

### Sicily June 2017



Etna BIG 819 It was very warm – approx 30 degrees but

decided to give Etna a bash now. It was past 15.00 when I started off up the road but decided to see how far I could go before dark. It's a fairly easy but steady rise up on road SP92 in open country. I reached Livelli Cave not too far from the road junction (bivio) with the road coming up from Catania. Deciding I wouldn't reach the top of the road at Sapienza take in the scenery then enjoy the slow descent, I decided to return back down to Zafferana and do Etna justice in the morning when I could enjoy it more. Returned back to Etna again as not enough daylight hours the day before. I could feel the heat this morning. It's a bumpy road until meeting the road coming up from Catania where it was smooth as the Giro d'Italia were racing this two weeks before. There were many chalk markings on the road of the favoured riders. Cycle 18km 11 miles to the top of the road and return to Zafferana 11.00 – 15.00. I stayed at the top for a while. I could see the walkway that ascends to Etna itself and nearby is the cablecar that goes up part way. At the top where coaches turn there is a pale red coloured restaurant where coach parties are dropped off or collected. Inside is a souvenir shop with food and drink samplings. Of course I didn't miss the opportunity. There was chocolate, fudge, biscuits and liquors. From there it was back down the mountain slowly.

Castelmola BIG 818 (Spring Castle)

I cycled on along the coast and found the road Via Luigi Pirandello for the correct way up to Castelmola. From 13.45 to 16.45 I cycled from Taormina to Castelmola and could really feel the heat. I stopped twice for long periods on the way up, the second time I felt dehydrated despite swallowing two litres of water

on the way up. I thought the top was the castle above the straggle of houses but how wrong – it goes higher to reach Castelmola perched on the rock. I needed a gelato badly and enjoyed this from the view at the top at the end of the road by a hotel. There is great view from the terrace at the top and a few interesting cobbled streets. Cycled 8km and return.



**Sella Mandrazzi BIG 817**  
This morning in Taormina I was out at 08.30 walking the quiet street of Corso Umberto to the Greek Amphitheatre. The gate was open and I wandered past the ticket barrier as it wasn't manned. There was no one else here as the place had not opened to the public yet this morning. I took plenty of photos with not a soul in sight. The place was well worth a visit. The front of the amphitheatre at the stage area below the seating was is the original Greek columns. Returning to the entrance after nearly an hour of sightseeing I had a shock – I was locked in! The tall metal gate was firmly padlocked. Fortunately there was still a way out. To the left was a low wall but not so low on the other side. I clambered on to the wall and carefully shinnied down the side into a hotel garden then casually walked to the entrance where another peaked cap man acknowledged me and wished me buon giorno. Breathing a sigh of relief I wandered back up Corso Umberto to the

parked car guarded by the other peaked cap attendant of the Hotel Villa Paradiso who also wished me buon giorno. I decided to leave now before I got myself into trouble! I drove down to the coast from Taormina to Naxos then 24km 15 miles to Francavilla 1 hour at 10.00. I parked by the main church in the town, unloaded the bike and rode the cobbled streets. These are the type of cobbles where it calls for some care as they are approx 300cm square with sloping edges and laid diagonally along the road. It's so easy to catch the wheel in a groove and come a cropper. From 10.30 to 13.00 I cycled 16km 10 miles and return 13.15 to 14.00 on road SS185. From Francavilla the first 4km are easy, just a slight rise to reach a road junction. I took the right turn that sweeps down to the river bridge and following that the road begins to climb, gradual at first. I ate fruit at the bridge and gulped some water for the warm ride ahead. The climb itself is approx 10km as after the bridge it's gradual. There are no places along the way to eat or drink. At one time there may have been something at Borgo Pietrapizzuta but these are now just empty shells of buildings. On the approach to them it looked like an army barracks. There's nothing at the top of the climb except a deserted building where cows were wandering in and out. There are views of Etna on the way up. From the top one hour back to the car then drove back up later and over to Capo d'Orlando.

**Portella dello Zoppo BIG 816 (Lame Hatch)**  
It took me 4.1/2 hours to cycle then 1.1/2 hours down. From Orlando to Castell Umberto is the steepest part of the climb, took me 1.1/2 hours. There's no marker that indicates the top. Distance cycling is 50km 32 miles on road SS116. At the

top I cycled past the wind turbines for 3km as it's only a short rise following Floresta mountain village, and it wasn't obvious where the top was so cycled over to the trattoria on the right, just past a road junction on the left. From Ucria to Floresta 12km.



**Portella Femminina Morta BIG 815 (The Hatch of the Dead Women!)**

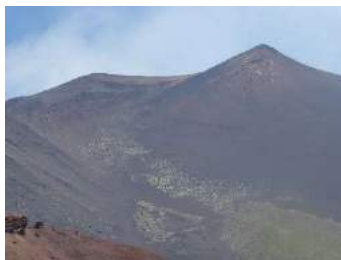
The steepest section was the climb to San Fratello. I was a bit disappointed in the heat to find that I'd only reached this point after 1.½ hours. Actually took from 09.30 to 13.30 then one hour down at 15.00 with ½ hour at the top I stopped at San Fratello on the way up for a gelato to cool down, 36km 23 miles 6 hours 09.00 – 15.00. Steeply up to San Fratello then from there not so steep. There are three short tunnels (145, 130 and 45 metre lengths). From there down a bit then up along hairpins through woods from a signposted restaurant on the right. There are brown height markers at the top at a large car park but no buildings.

**Piano Battaglia Carbonara BIG 814 (Slow Battle with Spaghetti?)**

Today was the most difficult climb of the tour, mainly because of the heat but the distance was also a factor. I've climbed higher at Etna but this one really took the stuffing out of me. Then begin the climb up through Campofelice for the 36km 23 miles road SP9 then SP34 to the top, 6 hours It's a meander through one way streets up through Campofelice then the climb starts in earnest on the quiet road leading to Callesano. This is a long

straggly place. The houses are close together making it dark and gloomy. Above Callesano Syrian refugees were ambling along and seemed to be centred on the two hotels up there – Park Hotel is one of them. Too hot to cycle the whole way up so at 17km turned back for the car and parked it just before Callesano. From this point I cycled up through the woods, mainly in the shade of trees which was helpful. I reached the point where the road to the top veers off to the left. From there it's approx 3km to the brown signs but then the road goes up further for a kilometre, off to the right the top was reached at Rifugio Piero Merlino. After the usual pictures plus one of a cowbell suitably displayed and jangled by its owner I was on my way back down, passing the hotels before Callesano and the immigrants ambling along the road.

Monte Pellegrino BIG 813  
I left the car parked at the secure hotel lock up in Palermo and they suggested I hold on to my keys until I depart later. I cycled along Via Roma and found the water fountain at the start of Via Pietro Bonanno and filled up my water bottles. The climb began for 9km 6 miles to and over other side, total 16km 10 miles 2.5 hours. Found start of climb easily. It's by a water fountain in by the side of a busy crossroads. The way up is over cobbled hairpins, 13 of them. It took me an hour to reach the church then another ½ hour to reach the radio masts. I went down the other side and came back up again. Up then to masts then ½ hour down the other side then back up again to the monastery then back to Palermo and the car.



Erice BIG 812

Cycling from Trapani to Erice town. Erice town tops the climb 24km 16 miles, 2 hours  
A look around Erice and the coast at Trapani. Took me ½ an hour to find somewhere to park on the lower slope to Erice then to the start of the road SP21 to the top. It starts next to the cablecar lower station. The actual climb took from 1.5 hours. I enjoyed a spaghetti carbonara in the main piazza, the café run by a controller who doubled as a waiter. He was good humoured though. He told me not to add parmesan to my spaghetti before tasting it then not to use a knife. I must keep the water and beer out of the sun and not text my wife at the table. It then took an hour to descend stopping to take photos, then drove away for Agrigento.

### Albania, September 2017

Gracen BIG 989. From Elbasan only four cars passed me the whole way on the two hour climb, the reason being that this was the old road SH13 to Tirana but there was now a much better road along the valley from Tirana to Elbasan. On the way I passed a mosque at a bend in the road and radio masts on a hill. The road is fairly steep up with bends at the lower part and great views down to Elbasan and the valley. Halfway up the road leaves the valley over the ridge and heads away to reach the high point above a neighbouring valley, I continued on some way along the an upper ridge across the top on the opposite side before Gracen but soon became

obvious that Gracen was the top of the climb so I stopped a while at the only cafe there and had a large Hellas beer for then returned back down to the car parked at a petrol station by the roundabout



Qafa E Llogorase BIG 994 at 1050 metres I drove south at 08.15 and went along the coast south to Orikum and parked up, unloaded the bike and cycled inland along the Dukatit Valley. The valley road is a gradual up as far as the road off to Dukat, and from that point the road rises abruptly between high concrete walls for 500 metres then two sharp curves to gain height and along an upper valley, a short descent then another bend where the road continues upwards. At one point along here there were road works as there had been a rock fall and there was much mud on the road. I couldn't avoid getting spattered which was shame because I had nice clean white socks! I continued on past a disused garage to the right then heading above the valley and into the Llogora forest and national park with a series of hairpins and past many cafes and restaurants to the top. In 22km, 14 miles the height difference is 1050 metres. Cycling up took me two hours, There was no view at the top because of low cloud. I freewheeled down the other side into Dhermi on the coast and at the foot of the climb at noon. I didn't particularly want to see Dhermi as Ruth and I



will explore this when we drive back over this road tomorrow. About turn and cycled back up to Qafa E Llogorase, reaching the top after 2.5 hours and 16km. I stopped twice on the way up; first to rest because of the heat and finish off one water bottle and take some sweets then later 1500 metres from the top to fill up with water from the tourist information booth in the viewpoint car park. Conscious of time I wanted to get back to the car and back to the hotel in Vlore. With photos along the way and a stop for a drink I was back to the car in Orikum at 16.15



Dardhe Ski Bigell, BIG 989 Leaving Korce on the Erseke road and at 3km south took a left turn for Boboshtice on road SH90, now heading for the climb. There's a slight rise to the village. On entering the farming village I took a left turn for a steep 15% then joined the road going up to the climb between sandstone cliffs. I entered a gap between hilly barren slopes that soon became steeper. The road rises dramatically after a water fountain on the right. I was into gorge scenery of barren brown rock. In a series of steep sections eventually reaching a series of gravel road sections interspersed with asphalt sections. After a bend to the left then a final 20% rise and final bend to the right arriving at the ski-station. It's very small, not what I expected. A gateway framed by upright skis placed into the earth and beyond a caravan blaring loud music in French; this wasn't exactly a resort, nor was it typically Albanian. However

this is the base of the ski-lift. I passed over the brow of the road summit and partly down the other side to be certain that I had passed the top of the road – then back again. It took me two hours to cycle from Korce then 45 minutes back to the town

**Georgia, ex-USSR, August 2017 Shared with Axel Jansen and Daniel Briollot**

Perhaps a very different adventure was waiting for me on the eastern extremity of Europe as I took the train down to London then struggled on to the bus with my bike in its black bike-bag the short hop to St Pancras with the usual wisecrack by the bus conductor



when I swiped my over 60's free bus pass – "Oi come orf it Peter Pan, going through second childhood are we?" Now I was on the verge of the greatest adventure and the furthest I would ever take my bike, to the extreme eastern section of Europe- not quite Asia or Middle East but within spitting distance of both. It's a five hour flight from Gatwick to this remote country just below Russia.

Tskhvarichamia BIG 1769. I set off alone for my first climb this morning and at 08.00 the temperature was already hot.

Cycling the right bank of the river northward for a few kilometres I came to a rise away from the river where the road crosses the railway then took a right turn at the top by a filling station to the right then to a left bend that led to a busy dual carriageway that led to Gldni. This is the northern area of Tbilisi. Once on the correct road it wasn't long before I reached the end of the city and into the country. I came to a road embankment over the valley then a sharp right turn and steep rise and immediately on to a quiet road and into the national park and to Mamkoda. There was confusion because there are very few road signs – none for Mamkoda. Once I

reached this road it was a steady rise through the woods along a twisting road to reach I bought a bottle of Borjomi carbonated water from a shop to the right just over the rise and took the usual photos of the road height then turned back for Tbilisi. On the way down in Gldani I was overcome with the heat. I bought a small bottle of iced coke to cool down and had to rest a while at the shop. Back in Tbilisi I was sick in the town, sitting in a small square behind a cafe. I walked with the bike over Metheki Bridge and met by a man walking

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towards me with outstretched arms – Axel! It was chance meeting; he recognised my BIG cycle shirt. His wife was with him. We discussed the planned cycling and the hot weather and my suggestion of a hire car, to which he agreed.

Gamborskiy Pereval BIG 1771  
Feeling much better today. I really needed the salt and potassium from avocados. I cycled along to the Budget car hire company on Rustaveli Street at 09.00 to see if it was possible to extend the car hire from today until the end of the holiday rather than collect on 7th August. There were others waiting here frustrated that the office wasn't open. Eventually the staff arrived at 10.10. I made arrangements to collect a car today and deposit back at the airport.

The traffic was chaotic – police cordoned off Rustaveli Street to the city centre because U.S. Vice President Pence was visiting Parliament in Rustaveli Street today – really inconsiderate of him, disrupting the city. Back at the hotel and changed for the cycle trip and drove the same route that I cycled yesterday. I passed through Mamkoda and up and over Tskhvarichamia to a long straight road in the valley heading north and took a right turn by a police station for Sakdrioni and signposted for Sioni. The road is along an interesting valley between mountain scenery to reach Sasadilo. I parked up there at a cafe and shop to the right of the road at the foot of the climb to and unloaded the bike. With this vehicle it wasn't necessary to remove the front wheel. From here it was a two hour climb through great scenery but with no real steep sections. There's a 10% rise at one point and a steep section of approx 12% close to the top after a gravel section. Most of the road is asphalt but with some pot

holes. The final sections of the road are steeper with bends, mainly after Gambori village

Betania. The ex\_USSR BIG tour begins! We would meet Daniel Briollot later today. We set off at 07.00 from our respective hotels close to one another off Metheki Street and rode the cobbles down to the river at 560 metres then to the stadium to the west of the city that's the starting point for our first climb to Betania at 1260 metres. Leaving Tbilisi by Maro Makashvili Rise we passed the road off to the right that leads to the TV mast, taking the fork to the left to eventually reach Tskneti. This continues up a few kilometres past the small town on the edge of Tbilisi and enters countryside where the road is well potholed. We asked a passing motorist if this was the road to Betania. The driver confirmed, however one kilometre on we came to a fenced off area spanning the road with a security guard standing before it. We asked him how far the road was blocked and why. There had been a rockfall and the road was being cleared but judging by the state of the road this was a slow process. Before we left we asked him to take some photos of us. We turned tail and went back down to Tbilisi to take the southerly Okrokana road to reach Betania. We reached the right turn where we could go back down heading for Tskneti but of course we couldn't reach it but did come to the other side of the rockfall and again there was a security guard, two kilometres down from the road junction. Back to the top then we rejoined the car after photos at the top and continued heading west via Orbeti to Manglisi.

Bedeni. Later we drove down the valley the short distance to Algeti and parked the car for

our second climb. The road goes up through the woods in hairpins to emerge out of the trees at a straight section where we could cycle in middle gears to a point roughly north of Laila Mountain and south of Baret Lake. We took photos here at the top at this point marked only by a road sign. It was a parting of the ways here. Axel cycled on, down the pass and continued on to Tsalka. When I returned back down the car I saw a cyclist with the familiar BIG cycle vest on. Surely this must be Daniel or we're joined by another member cycling alone. He turned the bike round at the bottom and started on his way up again. I had already reached the car and was on my way back up so turned round at the first hairpin to go back to him and turned again at the bottom to reach him a little further along his climb then parked in front of him and got out of the car to stop him. He was as surprised as I was as Daniel wasn't expecting me to have a car. Originally the plan for Axel and I was to cycle the whole tour. I gave Daniel the address of the hotel where to meet.

BIG 872 Burnasheti We drive from Tsalka to Aiazmi and leave the cars just off the road to the right on a spur road, unload then cycle through Nardevani then north on a newly constructed smooth road then off to the left to Berta and along a rough track to Burnasheti. From this point the track is mainly gravel and in many places we were riding along grassy tracks, crossing a ford by stepping stones at one point. When we passed a collapsed stone hut the way forward was mainly on grass as we traversed the slope of a hill before reaching a wider gravel track coming in from the right. There was some traffic here so we presumed this would join

up further to the north on the smooth road we had left near Berta. Along here the wide gravel track becomes ash as we approached the two extinct volcanoes ahead either side of the track but both some distance from it. The track eventually reaches Tabatskuri Lake. We didn't catch sight of this but we had now reached the highest point of the track between the two high points of Javkvetili and Shavnabada. In the absence of any road boards and also no indication on our maps we decided to name the climb Burnasheti, being the nearest village. This would be BIG 872 Burnasheti. Daniel and I perched the bikes against each other and took photos. Axel meanwhile had been troubled by dogs attacking but their bark was much worse than their bite. I did wonder though if it was advisable to wield the long camera support stick at them that he was carrying. Perhaps it made the dogs more aggressive but that's only my opinion. It was unfortunate for Axel as previous to this he received a puncture, slow at first so had to stop every few kilometres to inflate. Eventually he had to bite the bullet and replace the tube. Coupled with this he was also having problems tightening the saddle as the ratchet to the seat tube was faulty. It's a risk sometimes when hiring a bike not to have a totally serviceable machine. The track over the top of the pass is marked on the map as road 169 coming from the north east. We returned back to the cars on the same route.

Tukmatashi Shortly afterwards we all drove to the top of Tukmatashi to the south. We parked at the top just past a railway tunnel on a turn in to the right of the road. Axel would cycle on through Ninotsminda to Akhalkalaki to our overnight stop there. I

unloaded the bike from the car and freewheeled back down Tukmatashi 25 minutes to cycle back up, 1.5 hours. Unknown to me Daniel followed me down to Aiazmi soon after and together we cycled back to the top. With gradients of 10% maximum, 2 at 9% and 2 at 7% it wasn't a difficult climb and also we had the wind in our favour. The entire ascent is in open country. It seemed a little strange seeing the railway line snaking up as we approached the top of the climb. The road becomes less steep nearer the top. At the top the railway enters a tunnel and our cars were parked opposite. About 100 metres further the road reaches its highest point.

Tskhratsko BIG 872. Parking in Ghado where the road becomes a stony surface we assembled the bikes and headed north Tskhratsko. The way is stony but manageable with a road bike. Most of it is a gravel surface so the road bike was no problem but had to be careful. The upper section is easier as there are some hairpins. The end was in sight from 4km away where I could see a building ruin on the ridge. Next to this were the familiar blue and orange plastic tents of the shepherds who live out here. For an indicated yellow road on the map the way was pretty rough. We stopped many times on the way up and even though it wasn't steep it was still a challenge on the stony track surface. We stopped at the top to admire the view and took in the massive drop of the road on the north side that plunges into the deep valley with hairpins. The climb took us 3 hours. We attempted to converse with the police at the metal hut checkpoint up here at the junction of tracks. They were friendly enough, however when we all attempted to continue on for Tabatskuri Lake they insisted on seeing

our passports before we could go further. Unfortunately Daniel had left his in the car and was made to return back down the mountain the way we came. Axel and I had ours and were allowed to continue. The view from the top before the disastrous incident was shared with great enthusiasm and sunbathing as we relaxed in the grass looking up at the deep blue sky and then across to the valley and the road snaking down several hundred metres. From our distance it seemed to be a better surface road on the north side as there was traffic, unlike the south side. This was coming from and to Bakuriani. The parting of the ways; Axel and I continued on, heading down into the valley and eventually to Tabatskuri Lake while Daniel retraced his route back to his car never to forget to bring his passport on future occasions. We had to contend with pesky dogs on the way down. Maybe they've not seen cyclists before but they were really mad and chased the wheels. Axel lashed out with his extending camera support stand which made the situation worse in my opinion. He placed his bike between himself and the mutts. I tried a different tactic; dismounted and stared them out. After some barking they walked away. There's a long sweep around the long valley then eventually reached a point above the lake and Tabatskuri. A local farmer on horse and cart encouraged us to go down to the village when the rain started. Steeply down on a grass track then a steep narrow track to the right leading directly into the village. It was like going back in time – so many horses and carts along the gravel roads in the village. We took shelter at the village shop and chatted with the locals. After the lake there's a steep section then the gravel gives way to a stony track. Some of this consists of larger



stones making it difficult for me to negotiate with a road bike. I was a lot slower than Axel on this surface but I survived! We had some difficulty after Chikharula trying to find a road off the right (east) to return back to the car. We were directed to the next right turn after Alatumani but these aren't roads – just tracks. An added problem is that there is no signage. We risked the next right turn we saw and we were now on a fairly good surface fine gravel track. This led directly to Ghado and the car, 4km away. We ran out of dry weather along here, the black sky warned of an imminent storm. The heavens opened and we were drenched; Axel more so as he had no rainwear, he arrived at the car first and crouched at the side of it to avoid the worst of the downpour. As soon as I got there I opened the car and we bundled our bikes in quickly. Daniel had already arrived earlier and had missed the rain. If we had been ten minutes quicker we would have done also. The descent from the top took us 3 hours.

Apnia BIG 871 Breakfast was outside in the covered area. I was out and about at 06.00 and had 3 cups of coffee from the self-catering area. They didn't mind. Later we had breakfast together. As we were eating the wasps were eating us. They were after the honey. Later we took the cars 3km back to the road junction and river bridge at the foot of our next climb and the cave town. For the first 3 kilometres from the foot there is a fine tarmac surface road but following that it's a stone and gravel road for 8km to the top of the climb. The way up isn't excessively steep and much of it is gravel and small stones so it was possible to cycle with road bike. We were joined by a horse rider who

kept pace with us part of the way. In the final few kilometres before the top was reached we could see Apnia village perched on the mountain ridge. Once at the top we took a right turn to the chapel that marks the top. We made our group photos here. We were also joined by locals who took an interest in our bikes as well as us. They enjoyed cycling Axel's hired bike. I'm so glad it wasn't mine. We took in the views from the top and could see the cave town along the mountain on the other side of the valley, lower down than our position. I had to descend the mountain slowly by which time Axel and Daniel had already enjoyed beers.

Sapada Monastery BIG 870. Daniel sensed a storm was brewing and wondered whether it would be better to cycle to Sapada Monastery now rather than wait until later. We agreed and set off from the hotel in Akhaltsikhe, back to the main road where we came in, then took a right turn (south) and an immediate steep 9% rise away from the town. The first 4km is tough going and relentless. A turn off to the left then the road veers to the right to reach a high point then steeply down to a wooded valley, veering left then the final 3km downhill to the monastery. I walked the bike inside the grounds and took a look inside. The priest in there allowed me inside, even with shorts as I was a cyclist (perhaps he's one too!). Decently dressed anyway- me that is, not the priest! I was told to make it a quick visit, don't want to upset the locals. Equally Axel and Daniel were told the same when they arrived. The painting of Christ on the underside of the high dome was awe inspiring. A girl who spoke very good English told us of a well at a wall on the rear side of the monastery

where we could fill our cycle bottles. We had a group photo taken by the girl then we returned back to the town the same way, many photos on the return.



Zekari Pass BIG 867

We drive 24km to the end of the road at Abastamani for the continuation by track to Zekari Pass, another stony track. The first kilometre follows the stream on the left so is easy going on fine gravel. After that kilometre the track leaves the river at a building on the left and climbs behind it, left and upwards. The way becomes a little rougher in places. There are many twists in the track as it negotiates the upward way through the forest. Axel was already ahead and later Daniel caught up with me shortly before we emerged from the forest into the barren higher ground. Eventually we cleared the trees and we could see Axel ahead and caught up with him. We traversed a muddy section at a bend where even a SUV was having a problem steering over. There are great views from this area over the surrounding countryside. Above us we could see a village on the ridge with the Georgia flag flying. We continued on approx 3km further to the 28km marker at the village and immediately greeted by farmers in the village who were sitting on an old bench at the top. We asked if there was a café to which they laughed. No problem! We sat down to be served by a farmer's wife who brought out a pan of steaming hot strong coffee followed by cha-cha then coke to dull the effect of the extremely potent vodka.

After many photos and our chats to a Ukrainian couple- the girl with a large photo lens camera clicking away at us – we left after many handshakes, hugs and back slapping and continued down the way we came with a short rise up to the actual pass where the road continues over and heads north for Baghdati. It's a spur road – if you can call it a road – that leads to the actual col but this is lower than the wooden mountain village we visited. From here we return the same back down to the cars.

Shakhvetila, now BIG 874  
Alone now I drive east to Sartichala then head north to Sesadilo and east over the Gamborskiy Ughjelt to Telavi. Approaching Akhmeta the road bends to the right so ignored the minor road that continues on straight at this point. The beginning of my next climb was the following left turn where I parked up and assembled the bike for the next adventure. I filled my bike bottles with Borjomi water from a local shop here then began the climb along the asphalt but pot-holed road following the river valley. Over a river bridge off to the right until I reached Friendship Fountain where the road rises for approx 200 metres (length not height) on stony surface then downhill to Sabue village and veer to the left and back on an asphalt road again for approx one kilometre where the road crosses the valley by a long bridge over a dried up river bed and climbs again on stony gravel surface. I was hopeful for an asphalt surface again but it wasn't to be. The whole climb now from the bridge to the top of the climb was stone and gravel surface making it difficult. Although the climb is indicated as Sabue this village is at the foot of the climb. The actual top is at the municipality boundaries of

Akmeta and Tianeti where there are blue plates indicating both municipalities. On the map the top is called Shakhvetila so the name of the BIG should be changed. I passed Kvetara Castle where the track becomes steeper. The top itself is also in forest so no views. I was passed in both directions by many Russian cars. Taking photos of the blue plates at the top then returned back down to the car the same way.

Rikotis Ughjelt BIG 1772  
Parking at Surami near Khashuri and meet Daniel as arranged to climb two BIG's from where we parked just north of Surami, at Chumateleti, Daniel had been kind as to arrange with his daughter to ring me from Chamonix to arrange as she speaks perfect English. The main road wasn't so busy after all and only took me until 09.00 to reach Khashuri so had time to get some breakfast – sausage and coffee at Surami (as they were the only items I could decipher on the menu) It was busy there but all the customers were Russians. A Russian family told me to move from 'their' table – I didn't argue. They ate with their car door open and engine purring away – very annoying! First we cycled the main road northwest for Rikotis Ughjelt uphill and very busy with heavy trucks thundering up the road towards the tunnel. After a few kilometres we saw the turn off on to the old road. Very little traffic goes this way now with the convenience of the new tunnel. We were relieved to reach the old road but had to be very careful crossing the main road for the left turn that continues uphill. It was dangerous crossing that road. The old road was so quiet – a complete contrast. Approx three kilometres further along we reached the ram-shackled

ruin on the left of what may have been a hotel or restaurant before the new road was built. Just after that we could see the tunnel on our right, a long way down the mountainside. We were both busy taking photos but there's no landmark at the top. We returned back down the same way but continued on past our parked cars to the lowest point at the river bridge in Surami then back up to the cars. There was no way we could turn around in the road. It really is a game of Russian roulette here.



Suramis Ughjelt BIG 1773  
Back to the cars and from that point we struck off to the left (west) for Suramis Ughjelt. This was a complete antithesis to the first climb as it was so quiet! At first the road to Kharagauli is asphalt with pot-holes but soon gives way to a gravel track. A passing motorist told us to take a left turn to avoid a two kilometre gradual rise to the right followed by a bend to the left through the woods. We wish we hadn't as it wasn't possible to ride this. This wasn't because of the 25% incline but the fact that the surface is deep layer of sand. Being impossible to ride we pushed the bikes through the sand and watched the antics of drivers attempting to negotiate the steepness and depth of sand, roaring up with wheels spinning. On reflection it would have been best to take the longer route. Reaching the top there

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were no markers so we put the bikes together in the centre of the wide track, it was wide enough for traffic to pass. We took the usual photos. I'm sure this would have amused the motorists. We returned back down to the cars the same way but this time took the longer route midway. I had to be careful on the descent as there were plenty of stones and thick sections of sand/gravel. Later Daniel and I had a couple of beers each at the small cafe at the road junction where the cars were parked. The lady in the cafe took an interest in our maps and where we had been and amazed that we were French and English.

### Jvari Pass BIG 873

After a good breakfast I made my way down to the organised tour company near Jerusalem Square for the grand tour of Kazbegi region just south of the Russian border. My bike was hoisted up and firmly attached to the rear of the mini bus. The tour began at 09.00 and returned at 21.30. It

shouldn't have taken this long but there was a hold up at Seturni due to an accident on the road inside an avalanche shelter. The delay lasted over an hour as the crashed vehicle had to be towed away but first a towing truck had to journey to the scene. We had stops on the way at Zhinvali Reservoir then Ananuri Castle and monastery, a spring water area flowing over smooth, brown rocks and finally at Kasbegi (or Stepantsminda – St Stephen) where we ordered our meals. I ordered soup. The meal would happen later but first some of us transferred to four wheel drive vehicles for an exhilarating drive over rough terrain up high to Tsminda Sameba Monastery. We were 15km from the Russian border. This was a great experience even though it was hair-raising. Our driver was really skilled and I wanted to tell him so. Not only was he skilled on the very rough track but also in avoiding all of the other drivers passing. The whole experience took two hours for only 15 lari - £5.00. Many of us walked up

to the monastery at the top of the mountain. There was much to see on the way back but I would forego that and unloaded my bike at the northern foot of the climb at Kobi and cycled to Jvari Pass, my final climb of the tour. From Kobi the distance is 10km. It's a long, steady uphill but not difficult as there are no really steep sections. I was collected at the top, changed and had my photo taken at the top of the road at the blue height marker by the tour organiser. From here we had one final stop at the Friendship Monument for photos then back to Tbilisi.





# Appennine Mountains

## Gabor KREICSI

After last summer Csabi and I organized a short BIG trip again in Italy. Csabi booked the accommodation which was in San Pietro in Bagno in a parish. On the first night we had got another place close to Lago Lungo. It was a very quiet and nice house which was run by nuns and monks. However the road was damaged by the weather and so it was really challenging for our car.

On the first day we had a long journey (1100 km) from Hungary to Italy. Before taking our – exiting - accommodation we climbed the Passo la Calla from Lasino. It was a long climb with a great feeling. After the climb we travelled to San Pietro in Bagno and had a very nice evening.



On the second day we had three different climbs. The first was the Monte Fumaiolo which we climbed from the N side. On the top there was a sign from the Giro d' Italy 2017 because it was a mountain sprint. The second one was the Abbazia La Verna. This BIG remembered Saint Francis of Assisi who got the stigmas here in 1224. After the BIG climb you will be able to find the chapel and the cave in which the Saint got the stigmas. It is a very-very beautiful point. I think there are BIGs (La Verna, Monte San Angelo, Swiety Krzyz, Pannonhalma...) giving a new present for those who climb them. The last climb this day was the Passo Mandrioli which has got fantastic cliffs above the road. While riding



downhill from the top I met my friends Andrea Nagy and Balazs Abraham from Hungary. It was a big surprise. They had got a trip in Italy, too, but in two weeks.

On the third day our first climb was the Bocca Trabaria. It was a very meditative road with nice viewpoints. Then we travelled to the Carpegna. Csabi translated the sign which stood at the starting point and after I had a big motivation to the climb. I worked hard and touched the Pantani monument on the top forty minutes later. I like Pantani's sentences for example „Il Carpegna mi basta”. In reality the climbs that are here (around my home) are enough training for me for others elsewhere in Europe. After this nice mountain Csabi climbed San Marino. I climbed it in 2009.



On the fifth day the first climb was the Monte Nerone. It was the hardest, but from the top we had the best view on the surrounding landscape. It was fantastic. We did see Emilia Romagna, Umbria, Marche and Toscana. More than hundred kilometres through the Appennines. Then we found the foot of Cima Mutali. It was amazing. A very steep road with damaged sections. It was really hard.



Next day we travelled back home but stopped for some BIGs in Slovenia. The first was the Strma Reber. It had got nice hairpins and wasn't too hard. After we travelled to Novo Mesto and started to climb Trdinov Vrh. Above Gabrje the road become to gravel and Csabi turned back. I went to the top where I found a TW Tower and a little chapel. On the last day we looked for the foot of Vratnik Zrinska Gora and climbed one by one single.

It was a nice tip with Csabi in Italy.

## BIG 708 Torri del Vajolet “Rifugio Gardeccia”

**Giordano CASTAGNOLI**

A Giugno 2017 l'UIC ha programmato il raduno annuo a Caprile nelle Dolomiti. Tutti i BIG della zona li avevo già fatti e quindi per l'occasione occorreva trovarne qualcuno nuovo che rendesse il viaggio di valore.

On June 2017 UIC organized the annual meeting at Caprille in the Dolomites. I had already done all the BIG of that area, but I tried to find a new one in order to give importance to this excursion.



Grazie all'amico ottantenne Alfonso Rasimelli di Perugia che mi ha chiesto di accompagnarlo per scalare gli ultimi passi sopra i 2000 m della sua vita, si parte dall'Umbria per Caprile e si giunge in tarda serata in Hotel, dopo nel pomeriggio aver conquistato presso Belluno il Monte Nevegal, che per importanza potrebbe ben figurare nella lista del BIG. Thanks to my 80 year old friend, Alfonso Rasimelli of Perugia, who asked me to join him to climb the last of the 2000 m high passes of his life, we started from Umbria toward Caprile, reaching the hotel in the late evening. This was after having conquered Monte Nevegal near Belluno on a very sunny summer afternoon, a mountain which could be included in the BIG-List.

Il giorno successivo in programma il Passo Pordoi (BIG 713) via Digonera, una strada stretta e con gallerie buie che ci conduce in alto prima a Pieve di Livinallongo e poi ad Arabba per affrontare i 10 Km



finali del passo a quota 2239. Alfonso è felice e arriva prima di me in vetta, dopo un buon strudel al rifugio, decide di scendere a Canazei e affrontare il Passo Fedaia (BIG 714) per tornare a Caprile.

The next day we began first with Pordoi pass (BIG 713) via Digonera, through a narrow road with tunnels which leads up first to Pieve di Livinallongo and then on to Arabba where begins the last 10 Km to reach the pass at 2239 m. above sea level. Alfonso is happy and arrives before me at the pass, after a rest, tasting a strudel at the refuge, he decided to go down to Canazei and return back to Caprile through Passo Fedaia (BIG 714). A Canazei ci si separa, io procedo in leggera discesa lungo la val di Fassa con l'obiettivo di affrontare la strada impegnativa del Rifugio Gardeccia. Un bel segnale indica l'inizio della salita dando tutte le informazioni.

Questa fa parte di un numero selezionato di salite della Regione Trentino, uno stimolo in più per il ciclista scalatore.

At Canazei we depart from each other, and I proceed on a gentle descent in the Val di Fassa until Pera di Fassa where begins the very difficult ascent toward Rifugio Gardeccia, the







goal of this ride. A detailed sign gives me all the information about this ascent, which is included in a selected list (Grandi Salite) proposed by the Region Trentino.

Si inizia subito con pendenze attorno al 12 -15% fino all'abitato di Moncion poi la strada tende a scendere e questo dà preoccupazione perché si deve riguadagnare quei metri persi nel tratto che segue. Nel frattempo il sole si fa sentire mentre prima era dietro le nuvole.

The climb immediately begins with a gradient of 15% until the hamlet of Moncion. Then the road gradually descends, frustrating me because I realize I have to gain again all that lost altitude. At the same time I can now feel the shining sun, which before was behind the clouds.

La parte finale è davvero molto impegnativa, 13,5% la pendenza media dell'ultimo Km, poi finalmente un ponticello e termina la strada asfaltata e non lontano si trova il Rifugio Gardeccia posto sotto le Torri del Vajolet.

The last part of the ascent is very difficult, with the last Km a 13,5 % gradient. Finally, after a narrow bridge the tarmac

road ends, and located nearby is the Rifugio Gardeccia, just below the mountains named Torri del Vajolet.

Rifocillato riparto senza non prima aver notato il cartello che fa i complimenti ai ciclisti che sono riusciti a raggiungere il rifugio, davvero una bella iniziativa di marketing della Regione Trentino per attrarre i ciclisti alla scoperta del territorio.

After a rest I start again, but not before I notice a large sign which congratulates the cyclists who reach this place. This is an intelligent marketing initiative of Regione Trentino, to promote this territory through hit ascents.

Ritorno in valle e per la ciclabile rientro a Canazei e poi verso il Passo Fedaia sulla Marmolada, stesso percorso fatto prima di me da Alfonso per ridiscendere a Caprile.

I go down to Val di Fassa and return to Canazei through a cyclist pathway, then toward Passo Fedaia, the same road which Alfonso did some hours before me.

Francamente mi ricordavo più facile questa terza salita di giornata, ma man mano che si sale, la fatica si fa sentire e

devo prendere alcune pause per giungere in cima.

Honestly I remembered this third ascent of the day as being easier, but I need several stops along the way to achieve the pass, because of the fatigue. Anche la discesa verso Malga Ciapela non è uno scherzo, occorre stare attenti a non prendere troppa velocità con rettilinei al 13% di pendenza. Infine piacevole rientro all'Hotel La Montanina a Caprile dove Alfonso mi attendeva soddisfatto anche lui delle sue prestazioni.

The descent to Malga Ciapela is also not too easy, and it is necessary to keep the speed under control because there are long stretches at 13% gradient. At the conclusion of the day, it was a pleasure returning back to Caprile at Hotel Montanina, where Alfonso waited for me, also very satisfied with his performance.



## Trip naar Roemenië/Bulgarije

Wim van ELS

De Big staat voor fietsen in de bergen en afzien, maar natuurlijk ook voor reizen, avontuur en het overwinnen van de bijbehorende problemen. Toen Ard met het idee kwam om samen de Bigs in Oekraïne, Roemenië en Bulgarije te gaan fietsen was ik daar meteen voor te vinden. Terwijl ik tot dan altijd het idee had om er gewoon met de camper naar toe te gaan. Met z'n tweetjes gewoon met een personenauto en overnachten in hotels, wel zo veilig en niet te prijzig in die landen. Bovendien zijn er nauwelijks campings. Misschien wat minder avontuurlijk maar gewoon lekker fietsen blijft toch het belangrijkste.



Omdat er waarschijnlijk nieuwe Bigs bijkomen in west Oekraïne in verband met de situatie op de Krim besluiten we dat land niet aan te doen. Uiteindelijk fietsen we niet alleen Bigs in Roemenië en Bulgarije maar ook in Hongarije, Griekenland, Macedonië, Servië en Kroatië. Vier nieuwe landen voor ons allebei, da's zo gek nog niet. De eerste dag in Roemenië worden we bij onze overnachtingsplek ergens in de klim van de Stana de Vale meteen door enkele Roemenen uitgenodigd voor het eten. Een prachtige kennismaking met de Roemeense gastvrijheid. En we doen nieuwe inzichten op over de bouw van talrijke kerken en pastoors in een Mercedes, over de enorme aantallen Roemenen

werkzaam in het buitenland en over de slechte wegen. Waarom er geen goede wegen aangelegd worden met EU subsidies? Antwoord: omdat de EU tegenwoordig de geldstromen zo goed controleert hebben onze politici geen interesse. Nog meer gespreksstof en we hebben al zo druk te praten over de Big en allerhande wereldse problemen dat we af en toe bijna vergeten te fietsen. Onderweg genieten we op de kleine slingerwegen van het landschap, van de kleurrijke, vaak wat kitcherig aandoende huizen en van protserige kerkjes. Ik heb van de Ceausescu's begrepen dat ze wel hielden van opgesierd, uiterlijk vertoon maar dus niet alleen zij. Het toppunt van protserigheid treffen we aan in Huedin. Daar schieten we prachtige plaatjes van de tientallen Roma paleizen, met gekleurde daken en vele kleine kasteeltorentjes. We genieten van prachtige Big's als de Pasul Bicaz en de mede dankzij het programma Topgear beruchte Pasul Bâlea. En het dorpje Bran aan de voet van de gelijknamige klim, met het kasteel van Dracula is erg gezellig.

In enkele beklimmingen ergeren we ons aan het vele (vracht)verkeer. En op de Pasul Rarău vloeken we zelfs. Volgens informatie van andere Big-leden was er een nieuwe weg aan de Noordzijde. We fietsen de Noordroute, misschien is deze deels ooit verhard geweest maar op onze racefietsen is het nauwelijks te doen. Maar ja we "moeten" deze Big natuurlijk wel hebben dus doorgaan maar. Op een kilometer onder de top komen we plotseling op een nieuwe, uitstekende weg. Tja, die staat niet op de site, niet op de nieuwe ANWB kaart en het navigatiesysteem wilde ons daar niet overheen sturen. Intussen passen we ons steeds beter aan aan de Roemeense manier van rijden. Niet echt verstandig, 30 dagen rijbewijs inleveren wegens het overschrijden van de witte streep is de inzet van een politiebeambte. Da's schrikken maar gelukkig loopt het met een sissers af.





De beklimmingsen in Bulgarije zijn nog interessanter en allemaal goed verhard. Hoewel, 15 kilometer klimmen over kasseien in het Vitosha gebergte is nog wel aardig maar voor de afdaling is het, net als bij de tourversie van Parijs-Roubaix die ik eens reed, concentreren en verstand op nul. Terwijl Ard een taxi scoort.

Het Rilski klooster op de top van de Big met die naam is zeer de moeite waard.

Ard klimt, zijn Big instelling getrouw, nog kilometers verder tot einde verharding.

Na een paar weken temperaturen van 35 graden Celcius is het ruim 30 kilometer kou lijden en watertrappen tijdens de afdaling van de Snezhanka dankzij een onweersbui die van geen wijken weet.



Het passeren van de grenzen van Macedonië en Servië is niet echt een pretje. Geen EU landen hé. En de snelwegen in Macedonië zitten soms vol hobbels en vreemde op en afritten. Zo onveilig heb ik ze nooit gezien in EU landen. De Mother Theresia Highway springt er in positieve zin uit. De voet van de Babuna pass ligt volgens de site dicht bij de snelweg, die willen we dus niet overslaan. Maar daar aangekomen ontdekken we dat de gegevens niet kloppen, de voet ligt 30 km verderop. En erger, al snel wordt de weg

onverhard en waar de klim begint steeds slechter. Niet te doen met onze fietsen. Drie uur later zijn we weer terug bij het begin. Een Big zo moeten laten schieten en dus een Big-loze dag is na al die jaren nog altijd een mentale domper. Volgend keer beter maar dan via de Zuidzijde en met een ATB. In Servië verorberen we ook nog een tweetal Bigs. Op beiden staat een toren die gebombardeerd werd door de NATO, en is nu te zien dat de Serven hun eigen rol tijdens de recente Balkan oorlogen heel anders zien dan de gemiddelde West-Europeaan.



Terug in Zwitserland laat Ard vlak bij zijn woning een waarschuwbord zien met 38%. Van een bijzondere passie kun je samen op een speciale manier genieten.



# BIG EGG HILL Suur Munamägi (BIG 956)

**Axel JANSEN**

Last June I was invited to a (professional) meeting in Estonia – Wednesday & Thursday. I immediately saw the opportunity to stay over the week-end and discover Estonia by bicycle.



Step 1: To check if there are any BIG in the neighbourhood. Great, there was one! In the deep south of Estonia next to the Latvian and the Russian borders. Please note that this is not only the highest point of Estonia, but also of ALL the Baltic countries. Excusez du peu 😊

Step 2: How to go there? Ask a stupid question gets a stupid answer: with my bike, of course! From Tallinn it was only a few 300 km 😊 If I skipped Thursday afternoon meeting, I could leave at noon and be back on Sunday noon right on time for the flight back.

Step 3: To find a map. Lucky me, there is a great map bookshop in Brussels: L'Anticyclone des Açores. I found a detailed road atlas of Estonia (1:150,000), like a book and pre-folded in order to fit easily in my bag, and for only 6 EUR, a tourist guide of places to see, etc. (sponsored by the Tourism Ministry).

Step 4: To find a bicycle. Great (bis), there is a bike shop in Tallinn renting road bikes, and there was one 58cm frame size available for those 4 days.

Step 5: To prepare my luggage. Actually, it depended on the weather and temperature. In the end I was really lucky – 10-12° early morning, up to 18-20° in the afternoon AND (nearly) completely dry! Conclusion a light camel bag was enough.

Thursday noon, leaving discreetly out of the meeting room, cycling clothes in the restroom, I headed to the cycle shop. First problem, the previous customer had not yet returned with 'my' bike. There was a cyclocross one (54cm) available immediately if I wanted, if not I could have waited. No choice, let's go for the smaller bike...

113 km during this first day until the city of Paide and 304 meters elevation... There, you understand why the highest point of the country is lower than that of the highest point of the Netherlands – because the country is even flatter than the Netherlands! After 5 km I was already out of Tallinn but still on a main road. Good news, there were separate cycling paths on all main roads.

After 40 km, I decided to take a small 'white' road. That's the exact moment I discovered that road colours on Estonian maps do not have the same meaning as those on Michelin maps. On Michelin maps, red roads are national ones, yellow ones are regional and white ones are local. On Estonian maps, red roads are tarmac roads, yellow roads are gravelled and white ones are for (experienced) MTBers... The 'road' I took South from Oru was so narrow that even for a 4x4 it would have been difficult, and it was 8km long. After 1 km I was hesitating to come back. Thankfully I had a cyclocross bike! Please note that there was even a special Estonian road sign warning you when the road was to become gravelled (picture attached).



Villages are not packed like they are in Belgium. I mean in our country, all houses/farms are next to each other in the village in order to have more space for fields. In Estonia, you have a minimum of 50 meters between each house, and trees to have some privacy. It's nice but the first time you are passing a village you don't know if it is a village or just individual farms. When you look on the map it indicates that you need to go left at the end of the village, it would have been good to know where the village was ... Also something else quite particular is the high number of abandoned collective farms.

At the end of the day I arrived in Paide and was looking for the city centre. I stopped at a crossroad and checking on the map I discovered I was exactly on the main square, I hadn't noticed !!!...

Day 2 – Breakfast was at 7 and start at 8 AM, for 218 km. I spent the whole day trying to answer this question: on gravel roads, is there less dust when a car is crossing you or passing you? In both cases you had dust in your eyes, this is what I learnt...

1,046 m elevation for 218 km – even in Flanders it's not



easy to reach so low a ratio... From Paide I went to Türi-Alliku then next to Saareotsa, Pilitsvere, Voisku, Kolga-Jaani, Ahuoja rahn, Jõesuu (bridge on Emajogi, also named Järvejogi), Väike-Rakke, Neemisküla, Kaarlijärve, Kureküla, Lossimae, etc – I was trying to remember the names of the following two villages in order not to keep having to check my map all the time, but... it was not so easy...

Starting at 8 AM, I cycled all the way to the deep south. After 90 km I stopped alongside the Vortsjärv Lake and ate in a restoroute in Rongu. 20 km further there is the small town of Otepää, the Estonian winter capital. 30 km further at Nursi we enter the hilly part of Estonia! Finally, I arrived in Hannja, the foot of the BIG and already 196 km in my legs.

I went to the parking place then took a narrow walking path along the road and then the path goes up to the left – I discovered it was not the official road but a straight walking path with some steps. I was half cycling half walking until the top and to the tower. From there I saw the official road going down, which I took and climbed back the right way! It was exactly the way indicated on the website...

The last uphill of 700 meters was tough, average 11% and max. 15%. On the top there is a 30-metre high observation tower (with a lift, don't worry). There is also a sign where it's written "Still 8,530 meters elevation and you reach Mount Everest" □ the Estonian sense of humour ☺ There is also a bar with a nice terrace.

"Big Egg Hill (Suur Munamägi), rising 318 metres above sea level, is the highest point in the Baltics. On the world scale, it is not very high, but by Estonian standards, it's almost a mountain!" claimed the Estonian Tourist Board leaflet.

It was time to go up North to the City of Voru where I had booked a hotel. Unluckily for me, even though I had chosen a nice hotel - the restaurant was closed that Friday evening because of a wedding...

Day 3 – 171 km for 786 m. elevation and about 50 km gravel road. Right to the North, I cycled a nice red road

with practically no cars – some gravel sections due to road work – a hilly road according to Estonian standards ☺. After 75 km I arrived in the nice University city of Tartu and stopped in front of the Kissing sculpture at Tartu Town Hall Square – where I found a nice restaurant. Still 100 km to cycle, I didn't try to kiss any student... Once again up North, on minor roads after the Lake Saadjärv, left of Polrsamaa, gravel roads from Lahavere through water stamps, I arrived in Koeru. I faced a shower rain during 10 minutes, quite enough to have a very dirty bike...

It seems a big village on the map, but on the spot, it's a little bit different... The youth hostel is open from 11AM to 3PM (if you understand why please contact me ☺). I had to call to explain that I had arrived (it was about 5 PM), the owner's son answered that his father (living next door) would come to greet me. There was no restaurant, snack or bar in the neighbourhood, but a supermarket! I nearly broke the cheese shelf and left with hot pasta, and one tiramisu.

Day 4 – 106 km for 253 m. elevation. I woke up at 5:30 AM and started at 6 AM. Not so many cars so early – the first one passed me after 38 km and the fifth one after 63 km! ☺ This time to the North-West – one windmill next to Kaalepi – one nice picture of a tree a little bit after Albu – I even presented it to a photo contest with the Estonian Society for Nature Conservation. A little bit less exciting this last day and it was a lot more windy – fortunately plenty of storks nests everywhere. Less funny, the cycling shop charged me 5 Eur to clean the bike... I arrived at 11 AM in Tallinn along the Baltic Sea. Happy I hadn't wasted my time: one BIG in 600 km!

In short I had cycled 307 km in order to climb a hill of 63 m elevation. If I compare it with Col du Sanetsch in Switzerland and its 1,750 m elevation, I should have started 8,700 km from Sion – between Irkutsk and Ulan Bator – in order to have the same ratio distance to the foot / elevation.



# Ascension of Cristo Redentor de Los Andes (english version)

(3825m), Chile, Thursday  
23-02-2017

## Ard OOSTRA

Among the greatest hairpins in the world

Around noon, with a bright sun and temperature of about 27 Celsius, we began our climb



from the village of Rio Blanco (1400m altitude). Our goal is to take Road 60 to the tourist station of Portillo (2800m) then on to the Tunnel Cristo Redentor at 3185m. Depending on the situation, I have this little idea in my mind: Just before the tunnel there must be a 8 km long dirt road that winds up to the Cristo Redentor de Los Andes Pass at 3825m altitude.

Of course it is possible to start the climb from a lower altitude, for example at the village of El Huape (900m alt.), which is just east of the city of Los Andes. From El Huape the road climbs gradually, apart from a short downhill, for about 30 km to 1400m altitude.

Since Road 60 is a major artery between Argentina and Chile there is significant traffic,

especially trucks in transit. During the first segment, one also has to contend with the city traffic of Los Andes.

Once past Rio Blanco, about 5kms before the tollgate, the road widens and traffic decreases. Today we are fortunate as road marking work is being performed and traffic is regularly interrupted for up to 30 minutes which is ideal for

cyclists permitted to pass through without delay. Generally, we are unimpeded by traffic as the trucks drive uphill at slow speed giving wide berth to cyclists. Further up the climb there is a series of galleries where the road is narrower, especially some kilometres before Portillo and shortly before the Tunnel Redentor.

Cyclists can bypass this last one by taking a northern parallel road. The Tunnel Redentor itself, which leads into Argentina, is prohibited for cyclists.

For the first 16 km after Rio Blanco the road is a nearly straight climb along the Rio Juncal River to 2200m altitude. The mountains surrounding us are impressive and the climate

is dry. The western valley wind gives us a tail wind at times.

After this start, things become more interesting, the heart of the cyclo climber goes faster and this not only because of the physical effort. In front of us rises a 400m high wall of steep and barren mountain rock, a backdrop to some of the most spectacular hairpins in the world. The road is wide and the grade mild. Most trucks do not exceed 30km/h. The higher we climb the more breath taking the view of the extraordinary hairpins below us.

It is on this section that we receive most encouragements from the motorists passing by. There are few cyclists riding this road. Today we'll meet only one other crazy cyclist: a Japanese who descends from Argentina on his fully loaded MTB.

Arriving at the top of the "wall" a photo stop is mandatory!! This is one of the most spectacular views of a roadway we will ever experience. This is where many stop, but all should continue – the remaining kilometres are an adventure of epic proportions!!!

After the hairpins, the road climbs further, some scenic views as well, to the intersection leading to Portillo Ski Station (2800m alt.). No stopping for us as we have some 3 km remaining until the customs office (in the Andes, the customs-check points often are situated miles before the real geographical country border). Some road repair is being done where the road is in bad condition (as a prelude of what is still to come). Again, we have this magnificent panoramic view of volcanic shaped mountains, the Portillo Lake





and our valley starting point now far below.

We are fortunate on our way up the mountain to pass customs uneventfully (not so lucky on the way down when we were delayed in spite of never having put our wheels or feet in Argentina). This said, the frequency of control of tourists on the Andean passes seems variable and depends on the location and mood of the official on duty.



We've arrived at an altitude where one can feel the reduced oxygen level and it is important to pace ourselves so as to acclimate as much as possible on our long climb. The one advantage of the altitude is that it is cooler, some 15 Celsius.

<sup>1</sup> Note - the Argentinian side of the pass is better because there

**Over 50 hairpins in 8.5km (Stelvio has 48 in 17km)**

We also get the benefit of clouds forming overhead which offer welcome shade.

After passing customs we continue straight to the last gallery that we bypass. The roadway surface to this point is paved and in generally good condition except for the last kilometres. Vigilance is necessary, especially in the downhill because of irregular concrete slabs and holes.

After the last gallery a couple of hundreds of meters are left to reach the entrance of the Cristo Redentor Tunnel. We stop for a photo with the 3185m altitude road sign.

Since I have the time, energy and motivation left I decide to see if my road bike allows me to make my way up on the dirt road that leads to the Pass. Beware, the access to this dirt road is not marked or designated and not obvious (the

is no tunnel to bypass – that side is paved to the top.

start is situated about 200m before the tunnel on the south side of the main road).

After some hesitation I locate this amazing dirt road that winds up to the sky.

With about 600m of altitude gain in 8 km on dirt, I am anticipating quite a challenge, compounded by the inadequate rental bike I am riding <sup>1</sup>and the effects of the high altitude. But the 25mm tires show their best side and the motivation is there! Regardless, ascending to 3,000+ meters here is a good test for my future plan to ascend in the Atacama the highest paved pass in the Americas at 4,800m.

Overall, the dirt road would be manageable with a road bike if equipped with wider tires. But there are some parts, often in the steep bends where there is loose gravel and stones, where the rear wheel may slip and its difficult to keep balance. A couple of times I am forced to dismount and briefly walk.





Surprisingly, I meet in the first kilometres a group of bikers (All terrain motor bikes, with Malaysian license plates!) of which some are unable to keep their bikes up in the narrow and steep curves. I passed the motorbikes (a first!) and later see them abandoning their effort to ascend this segment. However, a few cars, pick-up trucks and SUV did pass me on the way up.

Evidently, the higher the altitude, the faster the respiration. The climb is taxing and the hairpins seem to go on for an eternity, but the sense of accomplishment upon summiting makes it all worthwhile.

The pass is on the border of Chile and Argentina and from here we have exceptional views of the majestic Andes and the tip of Aconcagua, the highest mountain. The volcanic rocks vary in colour from yellow to red and from grey to black, accented by almost vertical glaciers on the highest slopes, here and there with some

splashes of green in an overall dry and barren landscape.

The pass is on the border of the two countries and there are some military buildings, a restaurant and a gift shop at the summit. At this hour in the end of the afternoon there are few visitors and in the distance some dark clouds are developing. A kind Chilean couple that passed with their pick up during the dirt climb offered me a lift which I politely declined. But later at the summit, I did gratefully accept their offer of water and to photograph me thus memorializing this magnificent climbing adventure.

As it is getting late, I briefly enjoy the magnificent summit view and do note that the road on the Argentinian side of the pass seems in better shape. My route though will take me back down the steep dirt road and I send some prayers that I do not puncture my tire(s) at this late hour and with bad weather approaching.

The descent is not fast on my rental bike but is blessedly uneventful, other than more of the wonderful views that I experienced many hours before on my ascent.

As I descent, the sky becomes black and lightning and thunder begin. The wind picks up and the temperature drops significantly and I begin for the first time (I think anyway) to experience some altitude sickness with the onset of headache and neck pain.

After what seems (or really was) an eternity, I reach the paved roadway and descend to the customs office where I have a (welcome) delay. It has begun to rain by now. As I finish my business at customs, I observe a beautiful rainbow highlighted against a black sky on the side of the mountain pass. It seems the rain stopped at the customs. Now only the last section of downhill is left in the direction of a nice sunset.



# Ascension Cristo Redentor de Los Andes

(3825m), Chili , jeudi 23 février 2017

## Ard OOSTRA

C'est sous un soleil rayonnant et une température avoisinant les 27° Celsius que nous nous mettons en route autour de midi avec nos vélos de location, depuis le village de Rio Blanco (1400m d'altitude). Notre but est de monter par la Route 60 jusqu'à la station touristique de Portillo (2800m), et ensuite de continuer jusqu'à l'entrée du Tunnel Cristo Redentor à 3185 m. En fonction de la situation, j'ai une petite idée en tête : juste avant le tunnel, il y aura une route en gravier de 8 km qui serpente encore plus haut, vers le col de Cristo Redentor de Los Andes à 3825 m.

Il est évidemment possible de commencer l'ascension à plus basse altitude, par exemple au village de El Huape (environ 900 m d'alt.), du côté est de la ville de Los Andes. Depuis El Huape la route monte graduellement, à part une petite descente, sur une trentaine de kilomètres vers 1400 m d'altitude.

Comme la Route 60 est un axe principal entre le Chili et l'Argentine, il y a relativement beaucoup de circulation, surtout

des camions en transit. Il s'y ajoute la circulation de ville dans les alentours de Los Andes. Vers Rio Blanco, 5 km



avant la station de péage, la route devient plus large et la circulation moins intense. Ce jour-là, nous avons de la chance, car il y a des travaux de marquage et tout trafic motorisé est régulièrement interrompu pendant 30 minutes, idéal pour nous les cyclistes qui pouvons continuer à pédaler. D'un point de vue général, la circulation routière ne nous dérange pas : les camions montent à basse vitesse et laissent la place aux cyclistes. Il y a une série de galeries où la route est plus étroite, surtout à quelques kilomètres avant Portillo (photo 2) et ensuite juste avant le tunnel de Redentor. Le dernier peut être contourné par les cyclistes qui montent par l'ancienne route qui est parallèle à la galerie. Le tunnel de Redentor, qui mène en Argentine, est interdit aux cyclistes.



Pendant les 16 premiers kilomètres après Rio Blanco, la route monte presque en ligne droite le long de la rivière Rio Juncal, de 1400m vers 2200m altitude. La montagne aux alentours est imposante et la nature aride. Le vent de la vallée nous est favorable.

Après ce début, les choses deviennent intéressantes, le cœur du cyclo-grimpeur va battre plus vite et pas seulement à cause de l'effort physique. Devant nous se dresse un flanc de montagne imposant de 400 m de hauteur, sur lequel serpente la route en lacets réguliers. La route est large et pas trop pentue. Pourtant, la plupart des camions ne dépassent pas les 30km/h. Plus on monte, meilleure devient la vue sur les lacets en contrebas qui semblent accrochés les uns aux autres.

C'est sur ce tronçon que l'on reçoit le plus d'encouragements et d'applaudissements des automobilistes. Il y a peu de cyclistes qui s'aventurent par ici. Aujourd'hui on a rencontré







un seul autre fou de vélo : un Japonais qui descendait avec son VTT plein de bagages depuis l'Argentine.

Arrivée sur la partie supérieure, une pause photos s'impose (photo 1). Cette route qui serpente spectaculairement est la « marque » de ce col. Mais peu de cyclistes qui montent par ici se rendent compte que le plus spectaculaire du point de vue « lacets » se réserve à ceux qui persistent jusqu'au bout, vers 3800m d'altitude.

Après les lacets, la route monte par quelques galeries vers 2800m d'alt. (photo 2), jusqu'à la bifurcation pour la station de ski de Portillo. Pas d'arrêt pour nous, il nous reste environ 3 kilomètres jusqu'au poste de douane (dans les Andes, les postes de douane sont souvent situés bien avant la frontière). Quelques chantiers sur la route où la surface est dégradée (prélude à ce qui va venir). A nouveau un magnifique panorama sur les montagnes d'origine volcanique, le lac de Portillo et la vallée en bas (photo 3 et 4).

Arrivés à la douane, nous avons de la chance, car on nous laisse passer sans autre formalité (ce qui ne sera pas le cas pour le

retour, où on vous impose une série de formalités, même si vous n'avez pas mis pied en Argentine). Cela dit, le degré de contrôle des touristes semble aléatoire et en fonction du poste et du fonctionnaire.

On est arrivé à une altitude où on commence à sentir que l'oxygène se raréfie. Il faut adapter sa respiration. L'avantage de l'altitude est qu'il fait moins chaud, vers les 15 degrés, et des cumulus commencent à se développer au-dessus des crêtes, nous offrant un peu de leur ombre.

Après la douane, la route continue dans une ligne presque toute droite vers la galerie que nous contourrons. Tout le long le revêtement de la route est en béton et en assez bonne condition, à l'exception des derniers kilomètres avant le tunnel de Redentor, où il faut être vigilant –surtout dans la descente- à cause des plaques de béton, déplacées par endroits, et des trous.

A l'endroit où la galerie se termine il reste quelques centaines de mètres à faire jusqu'au portail du tunnel de Cristo Rendor. On s'y arrête pour immortaliser notre exploit à côté du panneau qui indique

les 3185m d'altitude.

Comme il me reste du temps et que l'énergie et la motivation sont là, je décide de voir si j'arrive avec mon vélo de route à m'engager sur le chemin qui monte vers le col. Attention, l'accès à cette route (du côté sud de la route principale et environ 200m avant le portail du tunnel Redentor) n'est ni indiqué, ni évident à trouver, il n'y a pas de vraie bifurcation.

Mais les quelques mètres de terrain vague dépassés, on se trouve bel et bien sur ce sentier qui serpente vers le ciel (photo 5 à 7). Avec 600 mètres de dénivelé à franchir sur environ 8 kilomètres, ça ne sera pas tout à fait facile. Si on y ajoute le vélo de location assez usé (dont des problèmes avec les petites vitesses), le revêtement qui par endroits est assez mauvais et les effets d'altitude, on imagine bien l'effort demandé à l'organisme du cycliste. Mais les pneus de 25mm se montrent costauds et le moral est là. De toute façon, pédaler à ces altitudes au-dessus de 3000m sera un bon test pour le corps pour découvrir si le projet de pédaler à plus haute altitude encore, dans l'Atacama (>4500m) dans une semaine, sera faisable.



Globalement la piste est praticable avec le vélo de course équipé de bons pneus. Mais il y a des endroits, souvent dans les virages pentus où il y a beaucoup de gravier et de cailloux, où il est difficile de tenir son équilibre et de ne pas faire patiner la roue arrière. A quelques reprises je suis forcé



de mettre pied à terre.

Ce qui est étonnant est que dans les premiers kilomètres de la piste il y a un groupe de motards (motos tout terrain avec des plaques d'immatriculation malaisiennes !), dont quelques-uns ne réussissent pas à garder leur moto debout dans les virages serrés. Finalement le cycliste les dépasse et les Malaisiens se voient contraints de redescendre. Par contre, les quelques voitures et autres pick-up et SUV arrivent à monter.



Bien évidemment plus haute est l'altitude, plus rapide est la respiration. C'est dur, la montée prend du temps, les lacets semblent interminables, mais c'est faisable et une fois arrivés au sommet la récompense est là !

Sous la forme d'un magnifique panorama du côté chilien ainsi qu'argentin. Les Andes majestueuses (jusqu'à presque 7000m, dont le massif de l'Aconcagua) ; les rochers volcaniques en diverses teintes du jaune au rouge ocre, du gris au noir ; les quelques glaciers presque à la verticale sur les flancs des montagnes les plus hautes ; et par-ci, par-là quelques touches de vert sur un paysage nu et aride (photos 8 à 11).

Le col se trouve sur la frontière-même et il y a quelques baraquements militaires, un restaurant et une échoppe à souvenirs. A cette heure-ci, en fin d'après-midi, il y a peu de monde et au loin des nuages noirs s'amoncellent. Il y a ce gentil couple de Chiliens que je croisais en montant dans leur vieux pick-up et qui ont offert un lift au cycliste, qui a

poliment décliné. Ils ont finalement réussi à me faire accepter avec gratitude leur service en me donnant de l'eau et en immortalisant mon exploit sur photo.

La satisfaction du cycliste est là, le temps pour profiter de cet endroit et de ses superbes vues semble trop court. Du côté argentin, une belle route en gravier compact descend et invite à la découverte. Mais non, le retour sera par le même chemin. De petites prières pour qu'il n'y ait pas de pneu crevé, car rapidement le ciel devient menaçant.

La descente n'est pas rapide sur ce vélo, mais se passe sans encombre. Quelques arrêts photo. Le ciel qui devient tout noir, les premiers coups de tonnerre retentissent. Une brise se lève, il fait plus froid. Un peu de mal à l'arrière de la tête et dans la nuque commence, donc quand même un peu de mal d'altitude.

Enfin de retour sur la route principale et descente rapide

vers la douane chilienne. Stop forcé à la douane. Pas grave, car la pluie commence à tomber. Et quand le cycliste est enfin libéré, il y a un grand arc-en-ciel sur fond noir du côté du col. Comme si la pluie s'était arrêtée à la douane. Reste la dernière partie de la descente à faire, en direction d'un beau coucher de soleil qui s'annonce.



## Le plancher des vaches en haut hissé ho !

**Dominique JACQUEMIN**

Depuis tout temps les alpages suisses offrent de vertes prairies à leurs bonnes vaches afin de faire gruyère, beurre et chocolat. Ces bonnes laitières grimpent à des altitudes de 1500 mètres voire 2000 mètre d'altitude sans être essoufflées. Leurs consœurs françaises avec le Reblochon et les italiennes avec le Gorgonzola ne sont pas en reste.

Mais il y a plus fort que les européennes. En effet les vaches équatoriennes, de bonnes laitières, paissent à plus de 3500 m d'altitude.

On est donc bien loin du plancher du crabe ou autres crustacés, à moins qu'ils ne soient fossilisés.

Bref, tout ce blabla pour vous dire que lorsque nous touchons le plancher des vaches à Quito nous sommes déjà à 2300 m d'altitude !



L'altitude, je la craignais. Le mal de l'altitude peut frapper n'importe qui, mais c'est un comble pour un bigueur qui vise les plus hauts sommets.

L'ignorer aurait été vachement prétentieux.

J'en avais tenu compte pour mon voyage en Amérique du sud en prévoyant une semaine au Chili à basse altitude avant de passer trois semaines en Equateur à des altitudes plus élevées .



Les moments forts de notre périple andin.

### La vierge ailée

Le lendemain de notre arrivée à Quito on s'est fait conduire en taxi au sommet de l' El Panecillo .

Dressée sur cette colline, au pied de laquelle s'étend l'ancien quartier colonial et baroque de la capitale, une réplique de la vierge ailée de Quito en aluminium et haute de 38 m, semble protéger la ville.



Cette vierge, pas si vierge que ça, représente une femme enceinte qui combat un dragon voulant s'en prendre à l'enfant qu'elle porte.

Le paysage à 360° qui donne sur plusieurs volcans et sur la vieille ville, est grandiose.

Cet El Panecillo sera le sommet de notre premier big , que nous effectuerons deux jours plus tard.

18 km pour 725 m de dénivelé avec un parcours des plus variés : quatre bandes pour s'extraire du bas, suivi de « los Conquistadores », petite route tortueuse et pavée qui remonte une vallée encaissée jusqu'à Quito, là, traversée d'une ville avec ses bus rejetant dans l'atmosphère d'épaisses volutes de fumée noir-grasse, et enfin la montée finale en pavé vers la vierge ailée.



## BIG Review 2018



Mais revenons deux jours auparavant :

2999 m d'altitude, c'est haut pour de petits Belges ! La tête tourne un peu. Heureusement, nous ne devons pas grimper mais uniquement descendre par des escaliers pour gagner la vieille ville. En bas, nous arrivons à l'Iglesia de El Carmen Alto en même temps qu'une procession colorée où se mêlent dieu et saints chrétiens et dieux locaux. Vraiment nous avons de la chance d'assister à ce spectacle !



### Les volcans

Sur son épine dorsale, l'Equateur égraine un chapelet de volcans.

Au nord de Quito ,à une centaine de km , à Otavalo se dressent le Cotacachi, l'Imbabura et le Fuya.

Ces trois volcans encerclent la localité. Celle-ci est habitée par une communauté d'Indiens autochtones. Les femmes habillées de longues jupes couvrant un jupon et d'un corsage finement brodé, portent à leur cou plusieurs rangées de fines perles colorées. Les hommes eux sont reconnaissables à leur natte noire de jais. Ce ne sont pas des habits d'apparat mais leurs vêtements usuels. Cette communauté indienne est réputée pour ses danses folkloriques et son marché artisanal quotidien, le point d'orgue de la semaine étant le « Mercato de animales » .





« Tait Imbabura » et « Mama Cotacachi » sont les père et mère protecteur d' Otavalo.

Le mama culmine à 4944 m et serait le volcan le plus actif du pays.

### Une jolie légende les entoure

Un célèbre conte local met en scène des montagnes personnifiées. Tait Imbabura (le père) et Mama Cotacachi (la mère), étaient considérés comme des dieux pouvant se déplacer librement. La légende veut que, puisqu' ils étaient en couple, Mama Cotacachi se réveillerait couverte de neige chaque fois que Taita Imbabura lui avait rendu visite la nuit. Rucu Pichincha, l'ancien amant de Mama Cotacachi, apprit leur liaison et décida de les punir en les privant de leur enfant, Guagua Pichincha. Ainsi naquit la lagune Cuicocha, d'une rivière de larmes descendant les pentes du volcan Cotacachi.



Ce volcan allait nous donner l'occasion de grimper deux BIGs.

Le laguna de Cuicacha (3083 m) sur le flanc sud du volcan nous offrit une belle ascension de 16km pour 705 m de dénivelé. Passant par Cotacachi petite ville indigène qui regorge d'artisans travaillant le cuir. La route s'élève régulièrement avec un ou deux passages plus raides jusqu'à la lagune de Cuicocha.

Au milieu du lac couleur émeraude, deux petites îles dont une en forme de cochon d'inde, servaient jadis de prison aux Incas.

La seconde montée passant par un col au Sud-Ouest du volcan était une petite route conduisant d'abord à un important centre industriel puis vers la réserve écologique de Cotacachi, zone inhabitée et dépourvue de routes sur 150 km jusqu'au Pacifique. Ce big est long de 27 km pour 937 m de dénivelé.

C'est lors de cette grimpe que Domi connut les premières affres du mal de l'altitude : maux de tête, essoufflement, sensation d'étouffement.

Visiblement notre accoutumance n'avait pas été assez longue. Adieu veau, vache, cochon, couvée.

Ce fut un vrai coup vache.

Heureusement, notre programme devait nous conduire 4 jours au bord de l'océan, le temps de se refaire une santé.



### Les oiseaux

C'est dans la petite localité de Puerto Lopez que nous avons assisté au retour des bateaux de pêche.



Ceux-ci accostent à même la plage. De loin, on voit une nuée de grands oiseaux noirs au ventre blanc et à la queue fourchue. Ils tournoient en planant au-dessous et autour des embarcations. Mais avant de les apercevoir on les entend. Glougloutements, claquements des becs, un vrai tintamarre qui signale

de loin la présence d'une colonie de frégates affamées. Sur l'eau, à côté du bateau à décharger, de bons gros pélicans attendent paresseusement leur dîner.

Sur le bateau échoué, les marins remplissent aussi vite qu'ils le peuvent un cageot de poissons. Puis, le posent sur l'épaule de l'un des leurs qui pique un sprint jusqu' au camion stationné sur la plage en attente de la pêche du jour. L'homme court, court, poursuivi par des dizaines de frégates qui n'hésitent pas à attaquer en piqué l'homme et sa cargaison. La technique est payante, car avec leur long bec fin et crochu, happer nombre de poissons est un jeu d'oisillons. Certains marins essayent d'éloigner ces intrus en les chassant avec une tapette, mais cela ne décourage guère les assaillantes. De temps en temps, un oiseau laisse échapper son butin qui tombe à l'eau ; le large bec du pélican, lui servant d'épuisette aura vite fait de le ramasser et de l'engloutir.

### Ville fantôme

Personne dans les rues, quelques restaurants qui ferment tôt le soir ainsi que le dimanche.

Des immeubles lézardés, des vitres brisées, des bâtisses éventrées, des immeubles d'une dizaine d'étages tous vides, jette un air de désolation sur la station balnéaire. Pourtant le front de mer et la promenade le long de la lagune n'ont pas perdu de leur splendeur d'antan, car Bahia de Caraquez connu son heure de gloire avant le terrible tremblement de terre qui la ravagea en 1998. Depuis la ville semble oubliée.

Nous logeons à la Casa Hey sol. Superbe hôtel de six chambres dans un décor art déco. Une superbe terrasse en bois, agrémentée d'une petite piscine coiffe l'immeuble.

Pourtant plus personne n'y vient et les prix sont écrasés. L'entretien fait défaut et la propreté est plus que douteuse et une vache n'y retrouverait pas son veau !

Un garde qui est peut-être le patron nous accueille avec une machette à la main.

Toute la nuit il restera posté à l'entrée pour nous protéger. Un frisson nous parcourt et l'ombre de la folie de Shinigami semble planer sur les lieux.



### Louer une voiture la belle affaire, mais se faire plumer par un poulet ...

Après une journée de recherche le véhicule tant convoité est trouvé à un coût raisonnable (550€ pour 20 jours). Quatre jours plus tard, en descendant vers la côte un barrage policier nous arrêta. Et là, consternation : nous apprenons que les papiers de la voiture ne sont pas en règle. Je reste comme une vache qui regarde passer un train. Une demi-heure plus tard un confrère du policier qui nous contrôle le persuade de nous laisser continuer notre route. Merci ma bonne étoile ; mais à partir de ce moment, l'insouciance a fait place à la crainte d'un autre contrôle policier, qui immobiliserait le véhicule, nous laissant avec nos vélos de location et nos bagages sur le bitume. Sensation oh combien désagréable et angoissante.

C'est en traversant la ville de Guayaquil, ville de 3 millions d'habitants, où nous ne nous sommes pas arrêtés, vu sa réputation de coupe-gorge, qu'un policier chevauchant une mobylette nous dépasse sur



la chaussée à quatre bandes et nous intime l'ordre de nous garer sur le bas-côté. Le représentant de l'ordre nous signale que nous avons oublié de mettre notre clignoteur, que cela constitue une infraction et nous ordonne de payer 100 Dollars américains.

Pour les Equatoriens qui trop souvent mangent de la vache enragée, le toutou reste la vache à lait.

De plus, parlant l'espagnol comme une vache française je ne puis me dépêtrer de ce piège. Comme les papiers de la voiture ne sont pas à jour, je m'exécute, en ruminant la colère qui fermente en moi. Le Poulet prend les billets, les met dans sa poche, nous remercie et part à la recherche d'un autre touriste à déplumer.

Il faut savoir que le poulet est le plat national en Equateur. Mort aux vaches !



### Lamas , vigognes , alpagas ou cochons ?

3 ème ville d'Equateur , Cuenca est classée au patrimoine mondial de l'humanité. Elle culmine à 2500 m d'altitude et se situe au pied du Parque Nacional Cajas . Celui-ci compte 235 lacs et constitue un vrai château d'eau . Y flottent en permanence des nuages, la température n'y excède pas 7°C. Pas très accueillant et il ne faut pas s'étonner qu'il y pleuve à vache qui pisse.

Un de ses sommets est le «Tres Cruces » 4152 m d'altitude .40 km sont nécessaires pour le rejoindre à partir de Cuenca . La pente régulière est douce car les camions empruntent ce col pour relier la mer. La monotonie est entrecoupée par l'apparition sur la route de cochons et de vigognes,



Puis sur la fin de l'ascension, on joue à cache-cache avec les bancs de brouillard. Les 4150m d'altitude sont atteints.

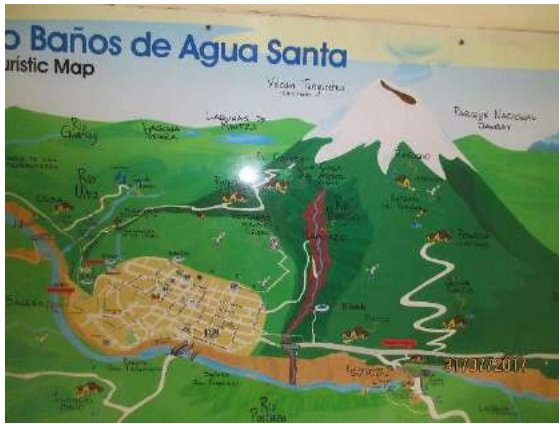


### Mon premier Spa

Une rivière ,la Pastaza se fraie un passage entre les montagnes et relie le monde andin à l'Amazonie. Une partie du cours de la rivière est constitué de gorges profondes parsemées de chutes spectaculaires. Banos est le centre touristique de la région, on y trouve de tout en termes d'aventure. Pour moi cycliste, j'ai épinglé deux BIGs :







la Casa Del Arbol et le Pondo. Deux belles ascensions bien pentues qui partent à l'assaut du volcan Tungurahua 5023 m, volcan très actif dont le dernier soubresaut remonte à 2006. En attendant une catastrophe certaine, les habitants profitent des eaux thermales chaudes en allant au spa local.



En bordure de l'Amazonie



Le Vélodiste



Un pied en hiver un pied en été



A l'aéroport, lorsque l'avion nous arrache au plancher des vaches, Dominique, à mesure que l'avion s'élève, retrouve une respiration normale. Et à 10000 mètres son mal de l'attitude est enfin vaincu. Il ne nous reste plus qu'à tuer le veau gras.



# Cycling Morocco

**Helmuth DEKKERS**

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> of September:**

Last working day! I stopped a bit earlier than usual but it was still 15:30 before I stopped to be able to pack the last bits and pieces and cook dinner as my wife was working this day also. After dinner and coffee we drove to a hotel that I had booked near to Schiphol as my flight was on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September at 06:30 already. We arrived there around 22:00.

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> of September**

We got up at 04:00 and then drove to Schiphol where we arrive at 04:30. We kissed goodbye and then I went through all the procedures to get to the plane. The plane left in time and I tried to catch as much sleep as possible but I never really sleep in a plane. The seats are not comfortable enough for that and there is too much noise. Anyway, due to the tailwind we arrived a bit earlier than planned in Marrakech. We had already filled the immigration form while being airborne so we could immediately go through customs. Which takes some time as everyone needs to go through it and everyones passport and immigration form needs to be checked. After I passed customs I could pick up my luggage. I had an extra suitcase as I had one week of cycling and after that would tour through Morocco for 2 weeks together with my wife. As customs took some time, I could almost immediately take my suitcase from the belt. OK, so I could now go outside to find the driver who would support me during the cycling week. Outside, there were many persons with names of people and travel agencies. But

my name was not on any sign and Dades (the travel agency I arranged the trip with) was not on any sign either. OK, we arrived earlier than planned so that might explain this. I decided to send a text message to the travel agency. When I had done that and looked around again I saw the man from Dades. I found out his name was Mohamed and he took me to the car which had

could be easily torn in two halves and then opened so it could be stuffed with sliced tomato and cheese or with fish. Similar to a pain bagnat. Good fuel for the climb. We finished the lunch with fruit. I liked the pomegranate which can be easily broken in pieces after the top part had been removed with the screwdriver of the multitool. After I had put on some sun protection it was



an MTB on the roof and the front wheel in the back. Nice! Let's move! The first climb on the planning is called **Oukaïmeden (2600m)** and this is a ski resort. On our way to Oukaïmeden we stopped at an ATM so I could get some Dirhams, the local currency in Morocco, and to buy lunch. We bought tomatoes, canned fish, cheese, bread (Ghobz in Arabic pronounced as Ggoobs), fruit (bananas, apples and pomegranates) and water (maa' in Arabic). And we had lunch at the foot of Oukaïmeden. My driver washed his hands and then the tomatoes. Good as I don't want to get problems with my stomach during the cycling week. Then we found out we did not have a knife. But fortunately I had a multi tool which is also useful for such a situation. The round bread

finally cycling time! I had estimated, based on a GPS track I had found with elevations and with the speed I can keep up on flat roads that it would take me 2 hours and 40 minutes. But the travel agency had indicated it would most likely cost me 3 hours to cycle to the top. So it was time to get going.

The foot of Oukaïmeden is at 1023m already and the the difference of level is 1578m so you can do the math how high the summit is. The climb is approximately 30km long and hence the average gradient is 5.33%. After the 1st kilometer at 6.4% there is a 500m long descent before the climbing starts again. The rest of the ascent is very regular an sticks to the 5% I mentioned as average gradient. At start I had

to stop a few times to get the saddle at the right height. And because the saddle got loose. I fixed that with my multitool but then had to stop again as I had not fixed the saddle in the right, level, position. From that point on the bicycle was OK. I forgot to mention that Dades Travels had, on my request, changed the tyres so the bike did not have the normal MTB tyres but normal tyres which is better for the cycling on tarmac. So, I was making my way up now but it didn't feel well. I tried to remember what I liked about uphill cycling but couldn't come up with good reasons at that point in time. I was just tired from the short night, the flight and then immediately getting on a bike to cycle for 30km at 5%. Remember that only yesterday at this time I was still working! Luckily it got a little bit better



after I had stopped the last time to fix the saddle in the right position but it still felt as hard work and not as a pleasure to cycle up. But what can you do else then keep on cycling to finish what you have started. Quitting is not an option! We had lunch in the blazing sun, remember I did put on sunscreen, but now it started to drizzle. What? Rain? In Morocco? When I passed Mohamed, who waited for me

here and there along the climb, I asked if I would have to put on a rain jacket. But he told me the rain was "medio" and that it was not needed. But after another kilometer I decided to shelter beneath the rocks besides the road as far as that was possible and to send a text message to Mohamed to come with my jacket. I was glad I had taken my rain jacket and shoe covers along and could put them on when Mohamed arrived as it kept raining until I reached the summit. Just before I reached the ski resort Oukaïmeden I noticed the sign that points to the prehistoric rock carvings of Oukaïmeden. Ah, that we will visit when we drive back. A little further I reached the top (2600m) where Mohamed took a picture of me. In the end it took me 1 hour more than I had planned to reach the summit. But I did

spend some extra time on getting the bike right and also due to the rain. The Oukaïmeden ski resort did look gray and outdated to me. But hey, it was raining and no people there which doesn't help of course. Instead of putting the bike back up on the roof we moved my suitcases and front wheel to the backseat and that allowed us to fit the bike into the car, a Toyota 4x4 Landcruiser. Much better than

getting the bike on and off the roof of the car. We drove around a little to find a sign that said Oukaïmeden but as we did not find a sign and it was still raining we decided to drive down and to the Riad where we would spend the night. After 19km we reached the turn-off to the P2028. Ahh, I had forgotten to stop at the rock carvings of Oukaïmeden 😞 Pity but I was not that interested to ask the driver to go back and had a look. After another 8.5km onwards we reached the crossing which is also the top of the ascent that was on the planning for the next day: Tassafit 'n Tizi. I asked Mohamed if we could not drive back via that road but he indicated we needed to go to Asni. Yes, I know but the foot of Tassafit 'n Tizi is Asni. He argued this was not the case and when I looked at the planning I found out he was right! I also learned he knew all the ascents I had planned, the places where we would stay, etc. Amazing! So we took the other road to Asni. While going down, the weather improved and by the time we reached Asni it was actually quite nice again. Mohamed parked the car on the parking place of Riad Asselda and then we had to walk up to the Riad itself. Yes, up! And then I felt my legs when carrying my suitcase up to the Riad. It was a nice Riad with a kind hostess. Dinner was very good. A salad to start with and Tajine with chicken, vegetables and bread as main dish. Wonderful.

### **Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> of September**

I got up at a quarter to seven though I woke a couple of times earlier due to cats who made a lot of noise and due to the Imam who called people for the morning prayer at sunrise from the Minaret of the nearby Mosque. Mohamed was late for breakfast and after repeatedly knocking on his door I found





out I disturbed his morning prayer. Oops, that was of course not my intention. After a solid breakfast with bread and local pancakes (msemmen) with honey we left to foot of **Tassaft 'n Tizi (969m)** which was just 15km away and we drove via Asni as Mohamed needed to buy some medication. The length of this ascent is 20km and I had estimated that it would take me 1 and a 1/2 hour to get to the summit. This climb was more irregular as Oukaimeden and at places the road was gravel instead of tarmac, especially through the hamlets that I passed, but still good enough for normal tyres and even a racing bike would have been OK.

The larger part, 16.5km, is at 4.8% but consists of some small but steep parts followed by flatter parts.

In the hamlets, the children yelled and came up to the road for a high five :-). Some even ran along and wanted to push me. Ah, that's not needed and I didn't like it very much. But OK, their intentions were good. I had also asked Mohamed if he could take a couple of pictures of me with his smart phone. So now I did not only see him in the car here and there but he also stepped out to make some pictures. Good guy! The road to the summit is quite



scenic and despite that it still didn't come easy, especially the steeper parts, it went better and I enjoyed the cycling a lot more than the day before.

The last 1.6 kilometer the climb flattens to 1.5% on average. And I was glad I saw the Car at the summit (1795m) and Mohamed who had stepped out to make a picture of me arriving at the summit. Then the frontwheel was dismantled and the bike put into the car and off we were to Asni for the foot of the next ascent to Imlil.



We took the same road down to Asni as we did yesterday but as the weather was so much better it looked different to me. I decided to first cycle up to Imlil and to have lunch after that so I had some banana's on the way down to have some fuel for the climb up to Imlil. And after I had put on some sun cream, the sun was quite bright again, I got going and though the length and average gradient of this ascent is quite similar to

that of Tassaft 'n Tizi it felt easier. Am I getting better? The road though is less scenic and there is definitely more traffic as Imlil is well known as a starting point for hiking or for climbing Mount Toubkal the highest mountain in North Africa (4167m). On my way up I saw families harvesting walnuts with long branches to hit the tree branches so the nuts fall down and can be boxed. It took me less than 1 and 1/2 hour to reach **Imlil (1726m)**.

As this ascent covers just a little more than 500m I had hoped to cycle on to Aroumd if possible to gain some additional altitude but after a sharp turn at the border of Imlil town, the road got very narrow, steep and bad and due to the large amount of people on the narrow road it was not easy to cycle. Dades travels had already

indicated the road to Aroumd was piste, which means gravel, and hence Imlil would be the end and after I tried a little part of the road to Aroumd I agreed and turned back to the main street of Imlil. In the end I did not claim Imlil as a BIG as I had cycled better ascents. From Imlil we move to our next destination: Oulad Berhil. We would take our lunch "en route". And during our lunch it seemed it was time for the

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midday prayer as the speakers on the Minaret were turned on and with a lot of squeeking and in a bombastic way it was spread that it was time for the afternoon prayer. From Asni to Oulad Berhil means we had to drive via the northern side of the Tizi 'n Test. The southern side of Tizi 'n Test was on the planning for the next day. And so we drove up the northern side of Tizi 'n Test. And while it was nice and sunny in Imlil and Asni we again had rain in the mountains near to the top of Tizi 'n Test. Quite a shower and the temperature dropped to just 13 degrees and I was glad I was not cycling. On the way down the weather improved again and I while descending we passed the part of which I had seen beautiful pictures of rocks hanging over the road. I told Mohamed that I wanted him to take a picture of me



when I would cycle below these rocks the next day. The rocks looked even better than on the pictures I saw: awesome! Ok, further down we went and Mohamed kept a nice speed so we did not arrive very late at Riad Hida in Oulad Berhil. I had a nice and

spacious room with airco which was good to have as it was 35 degrees outside which was 22 degrees higher then the temperature on Tizi 'n Test!

### Monday 25<sup>th</sup> of September

After a good breakfast together with Mohamed, we drove from Riad Hida to the foot of the Tizi 'n Test (735m) which is just 12km away. I could have cycled that but as the bike was in the car it was just as wasy to drive to the foot. It was a beautiful day with a clear blue sky and magnificent views on the Atlas mountains in front of us. Tizi 'n Test is a quite regular ascent and the average gradient is 4.3% so it's not a difficult ascent and it did indeed go quite easy :-). On the lower part there are a lot of roadworks ongoing to increase the width of the road and on these parts the road is more like gravelled almost but still OK to cycle. The rocks on the side show the vertical drilling lines closely aligned one next to the other.



I understand this is the only way to make the road wider but I don't like the sight of this pattern in the rocks.

Some parts of the road have already new tarmac and these parts were really a joy to cycle. Here and there, Mohamed waited en route for instance in the shade of a lonely tree next to the road as the sun was shining bright. Next to the new tarmac I also enjoyed this ascent as there was very little

traffic on the road and the views on the surroundings were great. After some 20km I saw a family coming towards me. A father and son walking and they had a donkey with them carrying some goods and another son. I took my camera and indicated/asked if I could make a picture. Many times the people don't want to be photograhed but this man indicated it was OK and so I



took a picture. There were two women walking a little behind them and they started to complain that I took a picture. Hey, I asked and it was OK! Another 5km onwards there was the famous part with the overhanging rocks. And Mohamed was indeed there to take pictures :-). Good guy! This last part of the ascent the road is much more narrow and I hope that when they widen it that they will not desctruct





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these beautiful rocks. They almost look like stalagmites hanging down at places. The road is not only more narrow for the last 8km but also less good at places with some large potholes here and there but it would still be OK to cycle it with a racing bike so not too bad. From the overhanging rocks it is just 4km to the top and by the time I arrived there I saw the car, door open and two feet sticking out. Mohamed was taking it easy, really easy. When I asked he came out and shot some pictures of me at the top next to the sign indicating Tizi 'n Test 2100m.

OK, down we go again to drive to Taliouine where the next ascent, Tizi 'n Taghatine, starts. This was a drive that was slightly over 100km. And while driving to Taliouine we saw the famous goats that climb into the Argan trees to eat the Argan tree fruit :-). I had not expected to see them as region to see these goats was more to the south. But I was lucky. I asked Mohamed to stop but he indicated he would drive on as the shepherd of the goats would for sure ask money if I wanted to take pictures. So we drove on a little further and then he stopped so I could take some pictures of these famous goats. The goats eat the Argan tree fruits and later poop out the undigestible seeds, which are collected, processed and turned into the expensive Argan oil. OK, let's move on to Taliouine where we stopped just outside of the village to enjoy our lunch in the "Exterieur" as Mohammed called it. It's nice to lunch in the "Exterieur" in the shade of some trees as the temperatures soared to 35 degrees. So after lunch I got ready to start cycling. The start altitude was 1026m but the first 500m go down to 1019m as I needed to cross a Oued (pronounced as "wet" which is the Arabic term for a river

which is funny as many Oueds are in fact dry ☺ ) and then there are 30km left to the Tizi 'n Taghatine. The next 1.5km are not steep and followed by 9km at 5%. This does not sound much but remember that it is 35 degrees and that makes a difference. Trucks have a hard time to go up this part too and they crawl by, roasting me with their even hotter exhaust ☹. After 4km of cycling there are 2 wide hairpin turns and another 3.5km onwards there is another one. I was glad when the road flattened after 11.5km and the road went down. Yes, I know, normally I hate it when the road goes down as I lose hard earned altimeters but now I only lost 40m while I had already gained 475m and it's nice to feel some wind that cooled me down with these temperatures. Then again a

piece of 5% but just 1.25km long and then the road goes down again. Again 40 altimeters are lost over 2.5km of cycling before the last 11.4km took me up to the pass. There are some nice rock formations next to the road in beautiful terra colors.

I even passed some camels :-). Well, dromedary actually as they only had one hump. In Morocco there are only dromedary but still these are mainly referred to as camels. Still, it was nice to encounter them while I was making my way up! Near to the top the road sweeps in a broad curve to the left before it bends back and I reached the summit (1825m) where Mohamed was waiting for me. From the top we drove on to Tazenakht,





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some 50km further, to Hotel Bab Sahara. Bab means Gate so this Hotel is the gate to the Sahara. Well, in fact it is not a hotel I can recommend

### Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> of September

For the first ascent of the day, the **Tizi 'n Bachkoum (1686m)**, I could start directly from the hotel (1405m). Nice! It's a very easy ascent with 8.5km at 1%, then 1.5km at 3.3% followed by 3km at 6.2% and then the last part it flattens out with 650m at 2.8% to reach the summit. So it is just 2.2% on average and only 281 meters gained in height. In the end I did not claim it as an ascent for BIG as I had enough ascents that qualified better. At the top there was a man selling fossiles. And I ended up buying a Trilobite as a souvenire on top of the Tizi 'n Bachkoum. Later Mohamed informed me that this fossile is not found in this area. Pity as I would have preferred it would have been found in this area but still a souvenire to remember Tizi 'n Bachkoum.

For the next Tizi we had to transfer to Agdz (103km). There we first had lunch besides the road like usual. We had bought bread, tomato, fish,

cheese and fruit in the morning. So lunch was good again. After lunch I started to cycle from Agdz (956m) to the **Tizi 'n Tiniffift (1688m)**. Again not a very difficult Tizi but a little more demanding than the Tizi 'n Bachkoum. The first 6km are just 2% and then the gradient increases a bit to 3.2% for the next 16.5km. Then a flattish part of 5km followed by a short but steeper final. This ascent does offer nice views on the surrounding mountains and I when I cycled I passed impressive rockslabs and saw a wide, dry and rocky gorge. Normally my driver would be waiting at the top but here I almost beat him to it. Almost as on these last 850m at 5.3% he overtook me. OK, another Tizi down. Over 21.9km I gained 732m so the average gradient is again not very impressive: 3.34%. As it was still early, I decided that I might as well cycle on to hotel Azoul in Ouarzazate. This would add another 45.5km to my trip and as it would mostly be downhill it should not be much of a problem. Though I found out there was still enough uphill too and parts which were flattish and hence required cycling to move forward. I still had some 13km to go when it

started to rain. Yep, rain. And it rained enough to put on a rain jacket and shoe covers even. But the shower did not last long as before I reached the outskirts of Ouarzazate it was dry again. The GPS neatly guided me through Ouarzazate on to the hotel. And I was glad I reached the hotel after 67.6km of cycling (the 12.8km of Tizi 'n Bachkoum not included). Here I met the Dutch lady (and her 2 children) who runs the travel agency that I booked my cycling trip with: <https://dades-reizen.nl>. She runs it together with her Moroccan husband and they live in Ouarzazate. It was nice to meet after 1 phone call and many, many emails :-)

### Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> of September

Breakfast of course again on the roof terrace. And after that I joined Mohamed who was already waiting in the car in front of the hotel for me. First we drove to Aït Hani. Which was quite a drive as it was 214km. First we drove to Boumalne which is a town that later on my wife and me would also stay during our holiday tour that we would do together through Morocco. Then we drove via the famous Todra Gorge to Aït Hani. The start of



the Todra gorge is some 15km after we passed Tinerhir. This first part is the most spectacular as the walls of the gorge are 400 metres high and the gorge is really narrow here. This part is just a little over 1km long and is the most busy part with busses, tourists and people who want to sell stuff to tourists. I took so many picture with my phone that Mohamed asked if he should stop. No, no, it's just some pictures that I will send to my wife as a teaser as we will visit the Gorge together later on. After that 1km the gorge is not so busy anymore but still well worth to see. I can recommend that you drive until the end of the gorge. Even when you feel the road is not so good and too narrow perhaps as you will be able to turn at the end which is where a hairpin turn takes you upwards and



away from the Todra river. From the end it was not that far to Aït Hani (1971m) where we had our lunch. I saw dark clouds above the mountains and we even had some specks of rain during the lunch.



So after lunch I left with my rain jacket on for **Tizi n Tirherhouzine (2667m)**.

The first 5.5km I gained less than 100m in altitude (1.7%). Then the road goes down a bit and then the gradient doubles for the next 3km. It was raining on and off so at times I had my rain jacket open and the sleeves up as it was hot and then closed and sleeves down due to the rain. After this 3km the ascent really kicked in as the last 6.3km is at 8%.

And near the end the rain got worse. But I was warm from the exercise and it didn't matter. Just before the top the road sweeps to the left and then after a hairpin turn the pass is visible. At the top (2667m), Mohamed was not very happy to get out of the car as it was windy, wet and cold. Nice Tizi as there was a good amount of work to be done to get to the top.

From the top we drove on Imilchil where our next hotel



was located. On our way the weather gradually improved and I noticed that before we would reach Imilchil that we would pass the foot of the **Tizi 'n Inouzane (2215m)**. I thought it might be good to cycle it now it was dry and have the morning to cycle up to Lac Tislit as the weather in the mornings was always good until now. So I asked Mohamed to stop at the turnoff to the P7319 which is the road that leads to the Tizi 'n Inouzane. We unloaded the bike and I got going. In the first 9km I only gained 108m so it's what

cyclists call false flat. I cycled through some hamlets with a few houses and there where children who like at other places yell to attract my attention and then wave. I waved back naturally. Some came running towards me but as soon as I took my camera they would indicate clearly they did not want me to take pictures of them. Which I respect of course. It's strange that the road was actually not too bad but just like on the Tassaft 'n Tizi, the road is bad wherever it lead me through the hamlets. Over the next 4km the gradient doubles but that still does make it very impressive. It's just outside the last hamlet with some 3.5km to go to the top where the gradient ramps up to close to 7%. This part of the road is not good as the top surface is gone on many places and there were some large potholes here and there also.

But I could cycle around them and I think that even on a racing bike one could make it to the top (26660m) like I did. Mohamed was waiting for me at the top as usually and after we put the bike in the car we drove back to Hotel Izlane in Imilchil (2119m). Note that it might be nice to combine cycling near Imilchil with the so called wedding festival that takes place every year in September and that I unfortunately missed. I noticed 2 maps on the wall of the hotel next to the reception and I as I was thinking if I could find another Tizi to cycle so I had a good look. One map was a topographic map that showed the area around Imilchil and Lac Tislit. I noticed it also showed Tizi 'n Bab Ouyad, the ascent that was planned for the next day. The other map showed a greater area and also the destination for the next day: La Ksiba. En from Imilchil to La Ksiba we would pass another Tizi ☺: Tizi 'n Ifar. But

would it qualify as a new Tizi that I could claim as a BIG?

### Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> of September

After a good breakfast we found that it was chilly when we came outside as it was just around 10 degrees. From Imilchil we drove first passed **Lac Tislit** which looked peaceful in the dusky morninglight. Then a 90 degree to the left which took us up to the highest point at **2371m** and then down and up again to get to the Tizi 'n Bab Ouyad. There the road takes another 90 degrees turn but now to the right and then the road really goes down to valley of the Akka n' Ouanine river (1700m). This part of the road is spectacular! High rock walls rising up to the righthand side



of the road and a drop of hundreds of meters on the left side without any guardrails. And the road is just gravel at places as the maintenance of that road is not that good. But I really enjoyed the views while Mohamed drove us down. The sun was shining abundantly and the colors were amazing. Imagine a deep blue sky with the mountain scenery in all sorts of colors like ocre, terra red, brown and dotted with bright green pine trees.

There was one rock ridge that due to the small spikes on it at

regular places looked like the back of a dinosaur.

We passed some camels just before we reached the Akka n' Ouanine river which we followed to the point that I thought was the lowest point at 1530m. The temperature had gone up to 15 degrees and it was nice to start cycling in shorts and short sleeves. The road was muddy here and there and it did not take long before my shirt and bib was speckled by with mudd stains. Here and there people were harvesting apples. The first 11km are just at 1.5% so maybe I should not have bothered to go down for that little bit. But on the other hand I did not mind cycling this part as it was a beautiful day. I passed some scattered houses with single solar panels which is there only means of electricity. Then there is a stretch of 2km at 4.5% before the road dips down a bit bends 90 degrees to right and the continues for another 6km or so at 2%. So far, so good. An easy ascent so I had plenty of time to enjoy the scenery while I was heading upwards. After 19km of cycling there is yet again a 90 degree turn but now to the left and from here it becomes serious business as the 5.5km of cycling left to Tizi 'n Bab Ouyad are at 7%. No problem, I had the time to get warm and this part lead me along the high rock walls. The road was not that good here and there and I had to pass a flock of sheep which went quite OK :-). The mountain on my left side on the other side of the steep drop looks amazing. It consists of many rock layers that run diagonally upwards. By then I could see the Tizi 'n Bab Ouyad ahead. There are roadworks ongoing to widen the road. But, as Mohamed explained to me, this will not be easy for the part where there are the high rockwalls besides of the road as tons of rock will need to be removed there. And



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I fear it will not get more beautiful if they start drilling to remove the rock. It will ruin the rugged rock walls which make up the impressive sight here. From the Tizi 'n Bab Ouyad (2296m) the road goes down for a little over 1km but only 38m are lost before the last 3.5km took me up to the summit at 2371m. I cycled further to make sure this was indeed the highest point as there is no sign but I did not cycle down to Lac Tislit (2270m).

I turned so the bike could go into the car and we could turn tail and descent for the second time to get on our way to La Ksiba. Eventhough this was the 3rd time I was on this road I still enjoyed the magnificent scenery. OK, on to La Ksiba via Tizi 'n Ifar. When we drove down it did look like a possible BIG candidate but the GPS track would have to prove it later. Then we drove up to the Tizi Aït Ourirah, the next ascent on the planning, before finally heading down to La Ksiba. By now it was quite hot again and I had to put on some sun cream before I started cycling out of the centre of La Ksiba. Tizi 'n Aït Ourirah is a very regular ascent and the first

part after the village centre took me through the woods. I liked this climb as the average gradient is good, 5.3% on average, it's just 10km long and offers some nice views on the surrounding mountains when you get out of the woods.

It's really OK but can't compete with the ascent I cycled in the morning, that was the main problem. From the summit we descended to La Ksiba to the Gite where we would spend the night. When I checked the GPS files I found that Tizi 'n Ifar would indeed be a good candidate for a BIG ☺.

### Friday 29<sup>th</sup> of September

In the very early morning, it was still dark so I could see the constellation of Orion in the sky, I got my dry laundry from the roof terrace ☺. After breakfast we left for Tizi 'n Ifar. So we first ascended Tizi 'n Aït Ourirah and then drove down to the intersection on the R317 where the R306 can be taken. The first 3km are nice at 7% ☺ and took me up to the small town Aït Dawd. Then there is a short dip and followed by 5 easy kilometers at 2.1%. Just before Aït Azzou, after gaining 312m in altitude,



the road really goes down for 3.5km and 75m are lost again ☹. The views while cycling were nice. Some rocks are amazingly dark red and other more orange and picture that against a blue sky. Nice. The next 3km the road goes up with 2.5% and it was on this part I was chased by 2 dogs. Now I don't like dogs when I am cycling and especially not when they are chasing. I cycled harder but as the road went up so did my heartbeat and I was almost out of breath by the time they decided to give up the chase. Good for me so I could muster my strength for the nice final of 6km at 5.6% to the top. Yep, nice Tizi and a nice bonus too as I had not





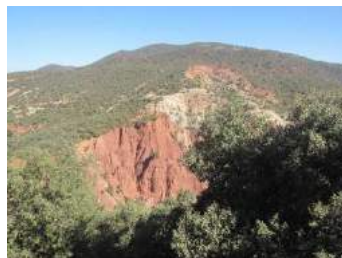
planned to cycle this one. And also BIG worthy. Good, back to Marrakech now! The fastest route would be via the N8 through Beni-Mellal but Mohamed did not like that option. He preferred a route via Bin El Ouidane and hey, he's the driver so it's his choice. So we descended the Tizi 'n Ifar by car and then took the R306 from where I had started my ascent. Note that the R306 offers 3 possible BIG ascents on the way down to the Bin El Ouidane Reservoir. And that from the Bin El Ouidane Reservoir another 3 possible BIG candidates can be cycled. This is a very good area to harvest some Moroccan BIGs and if you are interested in the details of these ascents then you can contact me via the BIG website. We arrived at the hotel in Marrakech around 17:00

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> of September**

OK, last cycling day today and it must be the cherry on top of the cake ☺ The Tizi 'n Tichka is on the program today 64km of cycling with a difference of level of 1407m. We first drove to the foot which is near Talbanine some 50km away from Marrakech. In fact it is at the turnoff on the N9 of the P2016 to Tighdouine (813m).

This climb is a real roller coaster ☺ as the first 4km the road goes up with 3.33%. Then there is a small descent of 41m over 2.3km before the road goes up again to Tizi Aït Barka (1464m). This part is 11.5km long and you gain 530m (Avg=4.6%). Just after Tizi Aït Barka there is a nice panorama on the valley of the Oued Tensift river below and the surrounding deeply red colored mountains.

Next the road goes up and down a couple of times so over the next 4.8km only 60m are gained before the true down hill is encountered as over 6km some 250m are lost to go down to the point where the Oued Tichka river branches off from the Oued Tensift. From there the road follows the Oued



Tichka through the gorge and the next 2.5km are going up and down again and in the end no altitude is gained. The 18km to Taddart Oufella are just 2% on average but due to the strong head wind, it was funneled by the gorge, it felt

harder. Normally I would see Mohamed here and there along the road and ready to take a picture. But not today. What's happening? Is he taking it easy? On this part there are many road works ongoing to widen the road. And at one place I had to wait while Loaders were used to move the rock debris from the road so it could be picked up by Excavators and moved to the waiting lorries to be transported away from the site. The road is damaged here at many places as the teeth of the loaders bucket leave long scratch marks on the road. And every time the Excavator would throw rock debris in the lorry's while it was filled quite a bit already a lot of dust came blown to us. I was glad I could cycle on to Taddart Oufella. Just outside Taddart Oufella the road bends away from the Oued Tichka and I reached what is known as Taddart Oufella's ladder. A magnificent and impressive piece of road engineering as the road snakes its way up with many curves and hairpins. After 10km one has gained 460m and the road aligns once again with the course of the Oued Tichka. The views while cycling the ladder are great. High, impressive mountains and the winding way can be seen ahead and below. The best view on the ladder though is after 7.5km where in a curve one can stop and see the road lying below like a Formula 1 circuit in the mountains with all the curves and hairpins. Wonderful!

This part of the climb is 3 lanes wide already and has smooth tarmac which helps even more to enjoy the cycling. From there just 4km are left to the top. The road dips down briefly and the last part the gradient is down to 3%. Then the road bends away from the Oued Tichka and after a lefthand and

## BIG Review 2018

right-hand hairpin the summit is reached at 2260m. Nice! I made it. Mohamed took pictures of me at the top

I was glad Mohamed had found the time to buy lunch on the way up and during lunch I found out the reason that he had not stopped to take pictures. It seemed that his mobile phone could not store any more pictures ☺ OK, so you could have deleted the oldest picture of me which were already transferred to my phone. He had not thought about that. During lunch the idea popped up to cycle back to the foot. You cycle back to Marrakech, Mohamed asked? Nope, just to the foot and it is mainly downhill of course but still some climbing also towards Tizi Aït Barka. Down we go for 32km ☺ The descent on the ladder was awesome. It's wide, smooth tarmac combined with a nice gradient of 4.6% it was a lovely descent. After that there were places I had to cycle to keep going as the gradients are not so high. And I had to stop again for some road works. The good thing is I can cycle to the start of the car queue and when the signal is given that the road

is clear I was allowed to go first ☺ Well, the 11km from Oued Tensift up to Tizi Aït Barka are mainly uphill and tough by now. It did not come easy anymore ☹ But OK, it was my wish to cycle this uphill part too. And after Tizi Aït Barka there is a 11km long descent again. I was singing on my bike here ☺ The last hurdle is 2.5km of uphill cycling and then the last 4km are downhill to the point where I started the ascent in the morning. It was almost 7 o'clock by now and I had cycled 126.3km with 2709m difference of level. This was indeed a nice closure to my cycling week in Morocco.

Closing notes. As already mentioned, I have additional information of possible BIG ascents in Morocco like for instance Col du Zad and some other Tizi's so if you have plans and would like to more then please contact me via the BIG webpages.

### **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> of October to Sunday the 15<sup>th</sup> of October**

These 2 weeks I toured with my wife through Morocco in a rental car. We started from Casablanca as the economic capital of Morocco

and then via the oldest Imperial cities of Morocco : Rabat, Meknes and Fez. Drove through the Middle Atlas and had a trip in the desert on camels. Then on to the Todra Gorge and Dades Gorge and finally via Ouarzazate and Ben Aït haddout back via the High Atlas and the Tizi 'n Tichka back to Marrakech which is also an Imperial city. Dades Voyages (<https://dades-reizen.nl/>) arranged the accommodations which consisted of very nice Riads (Small scale hotel with patio and roof terrace) but we also spend the night in a tent in the desert and stayed in a Ksar (a fortified village). If you want to get an impression of our 2 week tour then look on <http://durgeshsahu.com/?p=562> It almost exactly shows our trip we only did not go to Essaouira. I can recommend cycling in Morocco and touring there to meet wonderful kind people, have terrific food and see amazing scenery!





# Un pont en or

Dominique JACQUEMIN



Lors de notre voyage en Equateur, nous avons descendu une vallée encaissée au fond de laquelle coulait la rivière Pastaza. Passer de l'ubac à l'adret n'était pas une sinécure même si l'inverse eut été plus pénible. C'est la raison pour laquelle, il y a bien longtemps, les Indiens avaient jeté une corde faite de lianes entre les deux berges. Des nacelles transportant hommes et marchandises faisaient un va et vient incessant entre les deux versants de la montagne.

Si on remonte un tant soit peu le temps, on peut s'imaginer qu'un des premiers ponts fut un arbre abattu par le vent et qui aurait relié deux berges. Ont suivi les ponts formés par des dalles à même l'eau. Vinrent ensuite les ponts suspendus qu'on retrouve encore dans l'Himalaya.

La définition du pont est : une construction qui permet de franchir une dépression ou un obstacle (cours d'eau, voie de communication, vallée, ravin, canyon) en passant par-dessus cette séparation.



Il peut se rencontrer à l'état naturel comme dans le cas du pont d'arc en Ardèche ou Le pont naturel de Faqra au Liban.

Mais la plupart du temps il est l'œuvre de l'homme. Il rapproche ce dernier de son semblable. « Jeter les ponts d'une amitié, d'une concorde, d'une alliance ». Il peut également transporter l'eau dans les aqueducs comme le Pont du Gard, ou encore la vie lors du pontage cardiaque.

Souvent le pont relie deux quartiers d'une ville ou tout bonnement deux villes comme Buda et Peste. Le pont et devient souvent le pôle central de la cité. Pensons au Ponte Vecchio et au pont Charles à Prague.



Plus près de nous, des ponts gigantesques ont vu le jour, le Pont de Normandie, le pont de Beipanjiang.

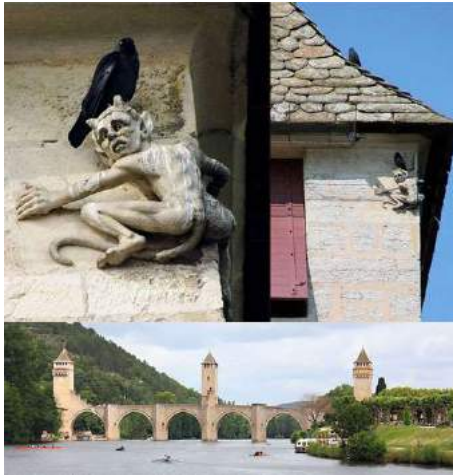
Le mot pont a donc une connotation plus que positive : lui offrir un pont en or, faire le pont. Il flotte et ose rêver entre terre et ciel, il peut vous donner des ailes, vous transporter aux portes du paradis.



Pourtant la géphyrophobie existe, car les précipices qu'entourent un pont, peuvent le rendre oh combien menaçant et dangereux.

Souvenez-vous les abîmes que les héros des « Seigneurs des anneaux » doivent enjamber pour ne pas ne pas être condamnés aux enfers ! Déjà 1200 ans av Jésus Christ, pour les Iraniens, le pont de Cinvat et plus tard le pont Sirat pour les musulmans était le passage obligé des âmes mortes, dans leur voyage vers le paradis, sans oublier le pont du Purgatoire pour les chrétiens.

Prenez garde à ne pas être précipité dans le vide, dans les ténèbres, à la damnation !



A Cahors lors de la construction du pont, le maître d'œuvre a fait un deal avec le diable, que je vous laisserai découvrir par vous-même. Sachez toutefois que le diable y apparait au grand jour sur le haut d'un pilier. Ici, il a quitté les gorges profondes, sombres et humides où il construit d'habitude des ponts en pierres sur lesquels on glisse et qui portent son nom.

De tout temps le pont constitue une étape initiatique à franchir tels les neuf ponts pour accéder au graal des chevaliers de la Table Ronde.



Paradis, Enfer, Initiation ..... que de mystères !

Mais pourquoi discourir sur les ponts ? Dans nos ascensions bigs, le pont ne joue pas un grand rôle voire aucun.

Cependant, je vous propose pour une fois, de mettre un pont au centre de mon article. Notre voyage en Amérique du Nord, en quête du big graal, va s'articuler autour de la baie de San Francisco.

Cette région nous attirait à plus d'un titre.

A l'heure du Trump-mensonge, aller dans un état qui vote démocrate, n'était pas pour nous déplaire. La

Californie, c'est vers elle que se sont rués les migrants lors de la conquête de l'ouest. Italiens, Allemands, Polonais, Irlandais, Chinois, Iraniens, y ont opéré un brassage de cultures différentes depuis longtemps déjà.

Ce foisonnement intellectuel sera à l'origine de nombreux mouvements contestataires. Mouvement contre la guerre du Vietnam, mouvement hippie, Les Black Panthers, le Castro District.

A la pointe, la région l'est également dans la recherche scientifique et technologique.

La silicone vallée est le symbole de ce qui se fait de mieux dans l'industrie des technologies de communication et de pointe.

De plus, San Francisco avec Boston sur la côte est ressemble le plus à une ville européenne .

La période de Pâques semblait la plus propice car visiter la Californie en été me semblait risqué vu les incendies qui chaque année à cette époque dévastent cette région.

Seul problème, les grands parcs nationaux tel le Yosemite National Park à l'est de San Francisco n'étaient pas accessibles car recouverts de neige.

Il ne nous restait plus qu'à trouver dix ascensions dans un rayon de 120 km. Ce choix nous permettrait d'avoir du temps pour visiter la région et de réduire les heures passées en voiture pour rallier deux BIGs.

Je ne vais pas vous décrire les ascensions que vous trouverez avec graphes, cartes, photos sur le site. Seules les ascensions d'où l'on voit le Golden Gate Bridge seront mentionnées et quelques sites à visiter évoqués.

### Hawk Hill



Le lendemain de notre arrivée nous sommes allés directement réceptionner les vélos loués. Le magasin était composé de quelques containers.



Nous étions début de la matinée et la location débutait seulement à 13 H00. On décida d'aller reconnaître les lieux. Arrivés à l'extrémité nord de la ville nous longeons le Marina Blvd.

Devant nous, à notre gauche, la célèbre prison d'Alcatraz, à notre droite le Golden Gate Bridge, Il est majestueux. Le rouge-orange de son armure tranche sur le bleu de la mer. Les deux piliers haut de 227 m de haut s'élancent tels les mâts d'un voilier vers le ciel.

Deux câbles dessinant une jolie courbe relient les deux piliers. A intervalles réguliers, des haubans fixent le câble à la jetée longue de 2737 m dont 1280 m de portée principale au-dessus de l'océan.

Le détroit qui sépare la baie de San Francisco et de l'océan Pacifique porte le nom de Golden Gate et donna naturellement son nom au pont qui l'enjambe.

Ce fleuron technique fit la fierté de San Francisco. Jusqu'en 1964, ce pont suspendu fut le plus long du monde. Sa construction plusieurs fois recommencée à cause de la furie des tempêtes, sera finalement achevée en 1937 après 4 ans de lutte contre l'océan.

Ayant encore du temps devant nous, en voiture nous poussons jusqu'au California Palace of the Legion of Honor musée qui compte 80 statues du sculpteur Rodin. De retour de celui-ci ,le Golden Gate Bridge a disparu dans le brouillard. Seuls les sommets du pilier sud percent la brume !

Les propos de deux de mes collègues me reviennent à l'esprit. Venues visiter San Francisco, ni l'une ni l'autre n'a eu la chance de voir le pont suspendu. Ce fut également le cas des premiers explorateurs européens dont Francis Drake. Le détroit ne fut décrit pour la première fois qu'en 1769 par José Ortegasoit, soit deux siècles plus tard.

A partir du Marina Blvd, une piste cyclable suit le rivage jusqu'au Ford Point. Ce fort est un témoignage de la guerre de Sécession, bâtie en briques rouges, elle se situe sous le pont et marque l'entrée dans la baie.

Un sentier cyclable quitte le bord de mer pour rejoindre le pont situé 55 mètres plus haut. La traversée du pont peut alors commencer. Dans chaque sens, trois bandes de circulation et de part et d'autre de celles-ci, une voie totalement séparée et protégée. Celle de gauche en remontant vers le nord est réservée aux cyclistes, celle de droite aux piétons.



Le pont traversé, une route va grimper jusqu'à Hawk Hill offrant des vues sur le pont et sur la ville. Ce fut une ascension de toute beauté.

### Twin Peaks

Seconde ascension à partir du Marina Blvd au pied du Golden Gate Bridge ou à partir du Golden Gate Parc. Les deux routes se rejoignent près de Haight Ashbury.



Cet ancien quartier résidentiel aux hautes maisons victoriennes construites en bois et offrant une palette de couleurs pastel fut squatté dès 1960 par les hippies.

Durant une décennie une odeur de marijuana y flottait en permanence. D'autres drogues beaucoup plus « hard » eurent raison de Janis Joplin et Jimi Hendrix entre autres.

Plus loin le quartier de Castro. Sur celui-ci se dresse fièrement un gigantesque drapeau arc-en-ciel, tout y est gay même les passages pour piétons.



Dans le même coin ...

C'est une maison bleue  
Adossée à la colline  
On y vient à pied, on ne frappe pas  
Ceux qui vivent là, ont jeté la clé  
On se retrouve ensemble  
Après des années de route  
Et l'on vient s'asseoir autour du repas  
Tout le monde est là, à cinq heures du soir  
San Francisco s'embrume  
San Francisco s'allume  
San Francisco, où êtes-vous  
Liza et Luc, Sylvia, attendez-moi.

Chantée par Maxime Le Forestier, cette maison était en réalité verte.



On atteint le Twin Peaks (pics jumeaux) par une route sinueuse qui gravit la colline la plus haute de la ville 281m. De là, le regard embrasse la ville entière.  
Panorama \*\*\*



### Grizzly Peak Blvd.

Berkeley, abrite la grande université américaine qui est considérée comme le temple de la contestation.

Le mouvement hippie, avec ses drogues, son art psychédélique, sa libération sexuelle, y a ses racines. Joan Baez y chante notamment « Web Shell Overcome », chanson qui devient l'hymne du mouvement des droits civils et la lutte contre la ségrégation raciale. Plus tard, en 1967, elle sera arrêtée deux fois à Oakland pour ses prises de position contre la guerre du Vietnam. Plus tôt, toujours à Berkeley et Oakland est né le mouvement des Black Panthers.



C'est dans cette localité que l'ascension a son pied. 11,8 km pour 515 m de dénivelé pour atteindre le sommet qui se trouve près du parc Tilden qui surplombe la ville et où le dernier grizzly fut abattu en 1860.

Du sommet, la vue s'étend sur toute la baie et entre deux traînées de pluie en aperçoit au loin notre fameux pont.



Le Golden Gate Bridge peut encore être aperçu du sommet du **Mount Diablo** qui se trouve plus à l'ouest. Cette belle ascension longue de 16 km vous offre 995 m de dénivelé.

**Le Mount Tamalpais** est notre dernier big proche du Golden Gate Bridge.

Long de 14 km pour 774m de dénivelé, il se situe au Nord de San Francisco.



Le pied se trouve à Bolinas.

Ce petit village au bord de l'océan semble avoir été oublié. Quelques maisons sur pilotis, une lagune fréquentée par les oiseaux migrateurs, une belle plage balayée par le vent du large, quelques anciens hippies qui y ont arrêté le temps en 1969. a16



Elle est intacte contrairement à sa sœur Sausalito qui se trouve au sud du Mount Tamalpais.

Sausalito. Village formé de « house-boat » ; maisons-bateaux aux formes biscornues. Chaque maison est plus excentrique que sa voisine et semble sortie de l'imagination d'un auteur de BD fantastique.

Aujourd'hui le coin s'est transformé sous l'impulsion de « bobos » venus de la grande ville.



Epilogue

Le Golden Gate Bridge doit son nom au détroit « Golden Gate » et non à sa couleur dorée ou à l'or utilisé lors de sa construction.

Le pont doré du début d'article est en fait le Tower Bridge à Sacramento.....

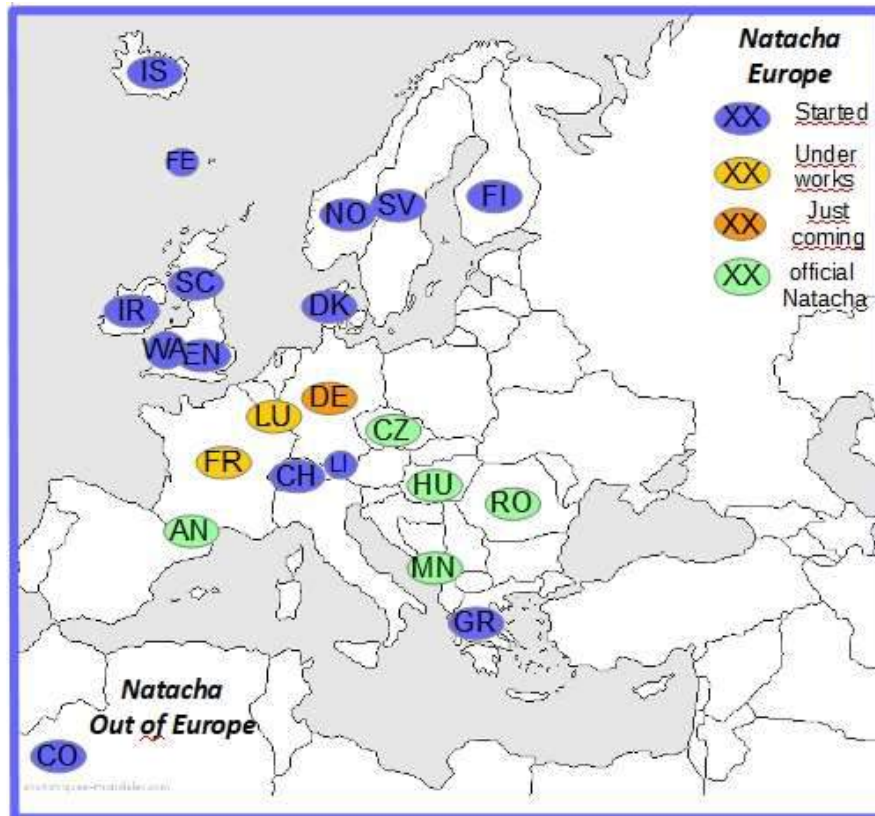
La ruée vers l'or oblige !

Mais c'est une autre histoire.....

Osons espérer que mon article n'ait pas été un pont trop loin !



# Natachas evolution



# Reviews since 1985





# And the last ones



Rev. Nr 32 - 01.03.2018



Rev. Nr 31 - 01.03.2017



Rev. Nr 30 - 01.03.2016



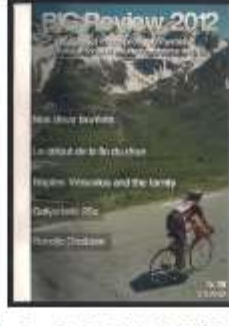
Rev. Nr 29 - 01.03.2015



Rev.nr 28 - 01.03.2014



Rev.Nr 27 - 01.03.2013



Rev.Nr 26 - 01.03.2012



Rev.Nr 25 - 01.03.2011



Rev.Nr 24 - 01.03.2010



Rev.Nr 23 - 01.03.2009



Rev.Nr 22 - 01.03.2008



Rev.Nr 21 - 01.03.2007



Rev.Nr 20 - 01.03.2006



Rev.Nr 19 - 01.03.2005

Thank you, Martin Kool, for the edition of the 12 last reviews !

Merci, Martin Kool, pour l'édition des 12 dernières revues !

## Les générations du BIG

On pourrait distinguer 3 périodes dans l'évolution du BIG.

De 1985 à 2004, 360 membres rejoignent le Challenge. Ce sont les pionniers, les piliers sur lesquels reposent encore le challenge à ce jour. Outre le Président, on retrouve les 2 lauréats Etienne et Eric mais aussi les futurs lauréats que sont Alain et Dominique, Kevin et plus tard Wim, Marc et Ard. 14 des 31 membres à + de 500 bigs font partie de ces pionniers, 80 d'entre eux ont passé le cap des 164 bigs soit plus d'un sur 5. Ils représentent plus du tiers des cotisants. C'est le socle du Challenge. On leur doit le respect !

En terme de nationalités, plus d'un tiers sont belges. Les hollandais, français et italiens sont très présents parmi ces pionniers. Les allemands sont quasi absents, les espagnols et les autres nationalités sous représentées.

De 2005 à 2007, le big connaît un développement important de ses membres sous l'effet d'un nouveau site internet. 274 membres rejoignent le Challenge en 3 ans. Ce développement s'effectue principalement au profit de l'Europe de l'Ouest : latine d'abord (France, Espagne, Italie) et à nouveau Hollande puis Belgique. A nouveau l'Allemagne est quasi absente et les autres nationalités encore sous représentées. Les membres recrutés à cette période sont assez actifs, 9% d'entre eux sont cotisants, 30 ont passé le niveau BIG et 6 sont à plus de 500 déclarations. Les membres représentatifs de cette période se nomment Luigi et Cécilia, François et Gabor qui préfigure la période suivante.

A partir de 2008, le Challenge affiche délibérément sa volonté de se développer à l'international et en Europe de l'est notamment. C'est l'explosion du nombre d'adhérents : plus 5210 en 10 ans. Et l'objectif visé est atteint : plus d'un tiers de ces recrues proviennent d'autres pays que les 6 traditionnels. L'Allemagne en profite pour faire une percée significative. Bizarrement les plus gros bataillons proviennent des Pays-Bas qui devient la « nation dominante ». Les espagnols doublent les italiens qui comme les français ne suivent pas la croissance générale. Le taux de cotisants sur cet effectif est faible (1,4%). 90 ont passé le cap des 164 bigs et 11 celui des 500 dont Frédéric et Nuria, 3 Daniels, Martin, Heiko, Rob ... Enfin et surtout c'est au sein de ce vivier que l'on trouve les membres qui progressent le plus et ceux qui constituent la relève du Challenge : Lina Karbauskiene, Christiaan Weytmans, Jakob Cijssouw, Irene Schneider, Louis Nootenboom, Ronald Van Schaik, Miki Aard, Balazs Abraham, Klaus Bernegger, Herman Van Der Slluijs, Elisabeth Angerer, Enrico Betta, Robert Charbonnier.

**François CANDAU**



## Ruim 350 BIG's in de FIETS 500 en KLIMAPP

In 2016 en 2017 verschenen er in Nederland twee leuke naslagwerken: de Fiets 500 (april 2016) en de Klimapp (juni 2017). Hierin staan 500 beklimmingen opgenomen, waarvan 100 in respectievelijk Frankrijk, Italië, Zwitserland, Oostenrijk en het Iberisch schiereiland.

Handig voor fietsers van het BIG is dat meer dan 1/3 van de totale BIG-lijst in deze beide naslagwerken zijn opgenomen: 362 om precies te zijn! In de drie grote BIG-landen te weten zone 5 (Frankrijk), zone 6 (Spanje/Portugal) en zone 9 (Italië) blijken dat er bij telling toevallig 77 van de 100 beschreven beklimmingen per land te zijn. In Oostenrijk en Zwitserland zijn dat er respectievelijk 63 en 68 van de 100.

In de papieren versie FIETS 500 zijn de 100 beklimmingen per land geordend op hoogte. Naast een genummerde overzichtskaart per land vind je bij elke klim een foto, toelichtende tekst, marker op de landkaart en een hoogteprofiel per km. Ook staan bij elke beklimming naast elkaar de hoogte, te overwinnen afstand en hoogteverschil, als ook het gemiddelde en maximale stijgingspercentage. Ook zijn alle beklimmingen voorzien van een categorisering zoals in de drie grote ronden Giro, Tour en Vuelta gebruikelijk is.

Dat was meteen makkelijk voor het opstellen van de digitale versie KLIMAPP. Hier staan namelijk dezelfde 500 beklimmingen per land gegroepeerd en per land kun je vervolgens zoeken op categorie of regio/gebied. Met natuurlijk alle hierboven beschreven info en ook de beklimming in Strava. Natuurlijk is er in deze digitale variant een zoekversie, zijn er achtergrondartikelen toegevoegd e.d.

Het praktische en digitale naslagwerk, in print of digitale versie, is van de hand van Richard van Ameijden (BIG 144). Hij publiceerde vaker stukjes over het BIG in het magazine Fiets of op de website. In de periode 2011-2015 verscheen er van zijn hand jaarlijks een Bergengidsje met 75 beklimmingen in een land. Die zijn dus in de winter 2015-2016 gebundeld en er zijn in elke gebied 25 beklimmingen toegevoegd om een mooi rond getal van 100 te verkrijgen.

Richard heeft daarbij hulp gekregen van Michiel van Lonkhuyzen (BIG 309), die naast levering van alle statistics voor de papieren en digitale versie ook een aantal beklimmingen beschreef in Italië en Oostenrijk.

Michiel is trouwens de man achter de website met vrijwel alle beklimmingen in Europa [www.cyclingcols.com](http://www.cyclingcols.com)

Het stukje dat je nu leest heeft niet tot doel om je de FIETS 500 of de KLIMAPP 'aan te smeren', maar veeleer om je erover te informeren. Het kan je, naast en bij onze mooi opgefriste BIG-website, van nut zijn om onbekende en vaak prachtige plekken in Europa te ontdekken en daar lekker te gaan fietsen!

Meer info over de FIETS 500 (€ 12,50) vind je op [www.tijdschriftnu.nl/fiets-500](http://www.tijdschriftnu.nl/fiets-500)

De KLIMAPP ontdek je via Google Play of kun je downloaden via de App Store. Een land met 100 beklimmingen kost € 2,29, alle 500 beklimmingen heb je in de broekzak voor € 6,99.

