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## Le mot du président

**Notre géographie apolitique**

Notre terrain de jeu est géographique. Et la géographie terrestre a toujours été administrativement politisée par des pays, des nations, des états, des régions. Nos membres appartiennent à ces pays et grimpent dans d'autres pays. Mais un kilomètre à 10 % est partout identique. Si nos ascensions héritent du patrimoine médiatique ou touristique local, elles n'en restent pas moins simplement et uniquement un bel effort sportif réalisé sur un vélo, quel que soit le pays et quelle que soit la politique de ce pays. Nous ne nous en occupons pas, tout en respectant les lois en vigueur, en nous fiant aux décisions des organismes de référence.

Par conséquent, notre comité se trouve souvent confronté à l'inadéquation entre notre organisation structurelle et l'organisation géopolitique qui régent nos sommets. Les exemples foisonnent.

Nous avons dû décider en son temps que nos continents étaient uniquement géographiques et que la structuration de nos listes se basait sur une notion géographique et non administrative. Les colonies ou les territoires d'Outre-Mer de pays, éloignés et situés géographiquement sur d'autres continents, ne seront pas inclus dans la même zone que leur mère patrie. La survie de notre zone12 de l'époque en dépendait. Les challenges nationaux auront donc aussi des sections autonomes pour ces territoires éloignés.

Les cols frontaliers, aux appellations bilingues ou trilingues, ont été intégrés dans une zone plutôt qu'une autre pour des raisons internes, visant un multiple de 5 par zone et un listage du Nord-Ouest vers le Sud-Est. Le remplacement, rare mais existant, de sommets devenus inaccessibles nous a contraint à modifier certains de ces cols frontaliers en les glissant dans une autre zone, mieux adaptée à notre structuration, afin de ne pas perturber complètement la présentation générale. L'intitulé a parfois changé de langue, le sommet a parfois glissé légèrement d'un iota pour correspondre à sa nouvelle intégration. Ce n'est pas une décision politique mais structurelle. Ce n'est pas une erreur chiffrée mais un choix stratégique. Ce n'est pas un choix philosophique mais organisationnel.

Les pays à droite de l'Ancien Rideau de Fer ont été intégrés de plus en plus dans nos challenges, après le démantèlement de celui-ci, à juste titre. Il a donc fallu adapter les intitulés des zones et modifier nos pays d'appartenance en fonction des indépendances qui se sont succédées. Nous tentons sans cesse de nous adapter tout en conservant une lisibilité rationnelle et raisonnable. Ce n'est pas si simple. Des demandes d'apparence simple issues de membres ne le sont pas, car elles soumettent la liste à une refonte qui l'améliore sur un détail mais la pénalise sur la cohérence de son ensemble. Et nous comprenons que cette vision puisse échapper à nos cyclogrimpeurs. C'est pourquoi nous la leur expliquons ou tentons de le faire.

A l'heure des challenges nationaux, nous devons nous conformer aux pays existants mais également organiser les pays en fonction d'éventuelles indépendances à venir, sans prendre parti. Nous avons, par exemple, refusé les demandes de challenge catalan, basque, wallon, flamand, écossais,... Jusqu'à présent ! Mais nous avons fait en sorte que chaque partie d'un Etat, demandeuse potentielle d'indépendance, soit elle-même un multiple de 25 comme tous les challenges nationaux entiers, pour ne pas être mal pris, s'il y a un jour scission. Prévenir mais sans prendre parti évidemment, car cela n'entre pas dans nos prérogatives.

Nous comprenons vos demandes à ce sujet, souvent liées à votre vécu au quotidien, à vos racines ô combien respectables. Mais notre but est de faire du cyclogrimpisme, donc de faire grimper à vélo et non de faire de la politique. Nous gérons la présentation de nos listes et l'intégration des sommets dans celles-ci le maximum en fonction des appartenances en vigueur, mais aussi en fonction de la facilité d'emploi que notre structuration donnera à nos membres.

Certains peuvent éprouver de la tristesse à cet égard. Nous en sommes vraiment désolés. Nous espérons qu'ils comprendront nos décisions en faveur de l'intérêt général et non d'intérêts particuliers éloignés du sujet de nos challenges.

Le BIG21, c'est comme le Covid19 : les pays prennent des mesures personnalisées et il est traité différemment partout mais sa structure profonde reste indentique au-delà des frontières. La seule différence, c'est que l'un des deux va



disparaître et ce ne sera pas nous.

A word from the president

### Our apolitical geography

Our playing field is geographic. And the earth's geography has always been administratively politicized by countries, nations, states, regions. Our members belong to these countries and climb in other countries. But a 10% kilometer is the same everywhere. If our climbs inherit the media or local tourist heritage, they are nevertheless simply and uniquely a great sporting effort made on a bicycle, whatever the country and whatever the policy of that country. We do not deal with it, while respecting the laws in force, relying on the decisions of reference organizations.

As a result, our committee often finds itself confronted with the mismatch between our structural organization and the geopolitical organization that governs our summits. Examples are not few.

We had to decide a long time ago that our continents were only geographical and that the structuring of our lists was based on a geographical and not an administrative notion. Colonies or Overseas Territories of countries, distant and geographically located on other continents, will not be included in the same area as their motherland. The survival of our zone12 at the time depended on it. The national challenges will therefore also have independent sections for these distant territories.

The border passes, with bilingual or trilingual names, have been integrated into one zone rather than another for internal reasons, aiming for a multiple of 5 per zone and a listing from the North-West to the South-East. The rare but existing replacement of peaks that became inaccessible forced us to modify some of these border passes, by sliding them into another zone, better suited to our structure, so as not to completely disrupt the general presentation. The name given sometimes changed, moving in another language, sometimes the top slipped slightly a little to match its new integration. This is not a political decision, but a structural one. This is not a quantified error but a strategic choice. It is not a philosophical choice but an organizational one.

The countries on the right of the Old Iron Curtain have been included more and more in our challenges, after the dismantling of it, and rightly so. It was therefore necessary to adapt the titles of the zones and modify our home countries according to the successive independences. We are constantly trying to adapt, while keeping a rational and reasonable readability. It is not so simple. Simple looking requests from members are not simple like they write, because they subject the list to a move that improves on one detail but penalizes it on the consistency of the whole. And we understand that this vision can escape our cycloclimbers. That's why we explain it to them or try to do it.

In this time of national challenges, we must conform them to the existing countries but also organize their contents according to possible future independence, without giving our opinion. For example, we refused requests for a Catalan, Basque, Walloon, Flemish, Scottish challenge, and so on... So far! But we ensured the lists, managing that each part of a State, potential applicant for independence, is itself a multiple of 25, like all entire national challenges, so as not to be badly surprised, if there is a split one day. To prevent but without giving opinion, of course because it is not within our prerogatives.

We understand your requests on this subject, often linked to your daily life, to your very respectable roots. But our goal is to manage cycloclimbing, therefore to climb on a bike, and not to play politics. We manage the presentation of our lists and the integration of our summits into them as much as possible according to the world administrative decisions, but also according to the ease of use that our structure will give to our members.

Some may feel sad about this. We are very sorry about this. We hope that they will understand our decisions in favor of the general interest and not of special interests distant from the subject of our challenges.

BIG21 is like Covid19 : countries take personalized measures and it is treated differently everywhere, but its deep structure remains the same across borders. The only difference is that one of the two is going to disappear and it won't be us.

Daniel Gobert



**ZONE 01**

1	Hrafnseyrarheiði	is
2	Öxnadalsheiði	is
3	Námaskarð	is
4	Halfdan	is
5	Hellisheiði	is
6	Oddskarð	is
7	Almannáskarð	is
8	Nordkapp	no
9	Guolasjavri	no
10	Saltfjellet	no
11	Umskardet	no
12	Trøn	no
13	Dovrefjell	no
14	Blåhø	no
15	Vestkap	no
16	Trollstigveien	no
17	Dalsnibba	no
18	Gamle Strynefjellsveino	no
19	Sognefjell Hytta	no
20	Valdresflya	no
21	Tyin Øsen	no
22	Juvasshytta	no
23	Osen	no
24	Nystölen	no
25	Stalheimkleiva	no
26	Aurlandsvegen	no
27	Hardangervidda	no
28	Gaustatoppen	no
29	DyrskarPass	no
30	Lysefjordsveien	no
31	Luossavaara	se
32	Ullådalen	se
33	Stekkenjokk	se
34	Flatruet	se
35	Sälens Högfjällshotelse	se
36	Vemdalskalet	se
37	Nipstugan Pass	se
38	Klevaliden	se
39	Tossebergsklätten	se
40	Hunneberg	se
41	Högkullen	se
42	Kilpisjärvi	fi
43	Kaunispää	fi
44	Palastunturi	fi
45	Rukatunturi	fi
46	Tunturi-Ylläs	fi
47	Vuokatti	fi
48	Ukko-Koli	fi
49	Ejer Bavnehøj	dk
50	Himmelbjergtet	dk

**ZONE 02**

51	Sperrin	nrth
52	Spelga Dam	nrth
53	Gap of Mamore	ie
54	Grianan of Aileach	ie
55	Glengesh Pass	ie
56	Cliffs of Moher	ie
57	Connor Pass	ie
58	Coomakesta Pass	ie
59	Ballaghasheen Pass	ie
60	Ballaghbeama Gap	ie
61	Healy Pass	ie
62	Mullaghanish	ie
63	Slieve Bloom Mount	ie
64	Sally Gap	ie
65	Wicklow Gap	ie
66	Bealach Na Ba	sco
67	Bealach Ratagain	sco
68	Lowther Hill	sco
69	Cairn Gorm	sco
70	Lecht Road	sco
71	Tom Dubh	sco
72	The Strone	sco
73	Devil's Elbow	sco
74	Glen Quaich	sco
75	Carter Bar	sco
76	Great Dun Fell	engl
77	Westernhope Moor	engl
78	Hartside Cross	engl
79	Whinlatter Pass	engl
80	Honister Pass	engl
81	Hard Knott Pass	engl
82	Wrynose Pass	engl
83	Kirkstone Pass	engl
84	Fleet Moss	engl
85	Rosedale Head	engl
86	Cow & Calf	engl
87	Oxenhope Moor	engl
88	Holme Moss	engl
89	Snake Pass	engl
90	Mam Tor	engl
91	Bush Down	engl
92	Exe Plain	engl
93	Dunkery Beacon	engl
94	Chineway Hill	engl
95	Cheddar Gorge	engl
96	Llanberis Pass	wales
97	Horseshoe Pass	wales
98	Bwlch-y-Groes	wales
99	Devil's Staircase	wales
100	Gospel Pass	wales

**Zone 3**

101	Posbankl	nl
102	Italiaanse Weg	nl
103	Oude Holleweg	nl
104	Cauberg	nl
105	Keutenberg	nl
106	Eyserbos	nl
107	Oude Huls	nl
108	Gulpenerberg	nl
109	Vijlenerbos	nl
110	Drielandenpunt	nl
111	Rodeberg	be
112	Kemmelberg	be
113	Koppenberg	be
114	Kluisberg	be
115	Oude Kwaremont	be
116	Paterberg	be
117	Muur	be
118	Mont Saint Aubert	be
119	Ry de Rome	be
120	Triple Mur Monty	be
121	La Gayolle	be
122	Montagne Croix	be
123	Col de Corbion	be
124	Col du Satibe	be
125	Mur de Huy	be
126	Signal de Botrange	be
127	Ferme Libert	be
128	Côte de la Redoute	be
129	Col du Rideux	be
130	Les Hézalles	be
131	Col du Rosier	be
132	Côte de Wanne	be
133	Col du Stockeu	be
134	Baraque de Fraiture	be
135	Cheval de Bois	be
136	Col d'Haussire	be
137	Pied Monti	be
138	Côte de Munshausen	lu
139	Mont Saint Nicolas	lu
140	Bourscheid	lu
141	Jardin Napoléon	lu
142	Côte d'Eschdorf	lu
143	Ferme de Masseler	lu
144	Herrenberg	lu
145	Gorges du Loup	lu
146	Altrier	lu
147	Côte d'Houwald	lu
148	Eoliennes Pafebiere	lu
149	Birgerkraiz	lu
150	Mont Saint Jean	lu
151	Waseberg	de
152	Hermannsdenkmal	de
153	Hoher Meissner	de
154	Hoherodskopf	de
155	Mützenichde	de
156	Schwarzer Mann	de
157	Hohe Achtde	de
158	Krautscheid	de
159	Steigung Bremm	de
160	Stumpfer Turm	de
161	Erbeskopf	de
162	Festung Königstein	de
163	Schaumberg	de
164	Hesselberg	de
165	Donnersberg	de
166	Trifels	de
167	Hornisgrinde	de
168	Schliff Kopf	de
169	Löcherbergwasen	de
170	Kandel	de
171	Schauinsland	de
172	Belchen	de
173	Herzogenhorn	de
174	Blauen	de
175	Lochen Pass	de
176	Weißerbach Sattel	de
177	Petersberg	de
178	Kahler Asten	de
179	Großer Inselberg	de
180	Waßerkuppe	de
181	Hohe Wurzel	de
182	Großer Feldberg	de
183	Katzenbuckel	de
184	Sonnenberg	de
185	Brocken	de
186	Roßtrappe	de
187	Auersberg	de
188	Fichtelberg	de
189	Schwarzriegel	de
190	Großer Arber	de
191	Oberjoch Paß	de
192	Nebelhorn	de
193	Riedbergpaß	de
194	Allgäuer Berghof	de
195	Keßelbergstraße	de
196	Wallberg Straße	de
197	Spitzing Sattel	de
198	Südfeld	de
199	Hirschbichl	de
200	Roßfeld	de



**ZONE 05**

201	Roc Trevezel	fr
202	Ménez-Hom	fr
203	Ménez-Kerque	fr
204	Montagne Locronan	fr
205	Roc de Toullaëron	fr
206	Ménez-Bré	fr
207	Mûr-de-Bretagne	fr
208	Mont Bel Air	fr
209	Cap Fréhel	fr
210	Mont Dol	fr
211	Mont Cassel	fr
212	Mont Noir	fr
213	Mont Tranet	fr
214	Col du Loup	fr
215	Mont Saint-Walfroy	fr
216	Grand Wintersberg	fr
217	Col du Donon	fr
218	Champ du Feu	fr
219	Col Grosse Pierre	fr
220	Col de la Schlucht	fr
221	Petit Drumond	fr
222	Petit Ballon	fr
223	Grand Ballon	fr
224	Ballon de Servance	fr
225	Ballon d'Alsace	fr
226	Butte Montenoison	fr
227	Mont Beuvray	fr
228	Mont de Sène	fr
229	Signal d'Uchon	fr
230	Butte du Suin	fr
231	Col de Favardy	fr
232	Mont Poupet	fr
233	Grand Taureau	fr
234	Mont Morond	fr
235	Mont d'Or	fr
236	Fort de Chaudanne	fr
237	Haut-Crêt	fr
238	Col de la Faucille	fr
239	Cirque Avalanches	fr
240	Signal du Cuiron	fr
241	Relais de Planachat	fr
242	Col de Saint-Thomas	fr
243	Col du Chevalard	fr
244	Puy-de-Dôme	fr
245	Col de Guéry	fr
246	Col Croix-Morand	fr
247	Col Cx Saint-Robert	fr
248	Col du Béal	fr
249	Col de Baracuchet	fr
250	Col Cx Homme Mort	fr
251	Chaise-Dieu	fr
252	Col de la République	fr
253	Crêt de l'Oeillon	fr
254	Col de Charousse	fr
255	Pas de Peyrol	fr
256	Col de Légal	fr
257	Col de Finiels	fr
258	Pré de la Dame	fr
259	Col de Meyrand	fr
260	Croix de Boutières	fr
261	Gerbier de Jonc	fr
262	Col de Serre-Mûre	fr
263	Chartreuse Portes	fr
264	Col Grand Colombier	fr
265	Crêt de Châtillon	fr
266	Mont du Chat	fr
267	Mont Revard	fr
268	Col du Granier	fr
269	Col de Porte	fr
270	Col des Arces	fr
271	Col de la Ramaz	fr
272	Col de l'Encrenaz	fr
273	Avoriaz	fr

274	Col de Joux-Plane	fr
275	Mont Salève	fr
276	Col de la Colombière	fr
277	Col de la Croix-Fry	fr
278	Col Grand Cucheron	fr
279	Collet d'Allevard	fr
280	Col de la Madeleine	fr
281	Signal de Bisanne	fr
282	Cornet d'Arêches	fr
283	Cornet de Roselend	fr



284	La Plagne	fr
285	Col Petit St-Bernard	fr
286	Col de l'Iseran	fr
287	Col de Croix-de-Fer	fr
288	Col du Mont Cenis	fr
289	Chamrousse	fr
290	Alpe d'Huez	fr
291	Col du Galibier	fr
292	Col du Granon	fr
293	Pré Madame Carle	fr
294	Col d'Izoard	fr
295	Sommet du Bûcher	fr
296	Chapelle de Clausis	fr
297	Col de Tourniol	fr
298	Col du Rousset	fr
299	Col de Ménéé	fr
300	Col du Noyer	fr
301	Mont Ventoux	fr
302	Mont Colombis	fr
303	Col du Pontis	fr
304	Col du Parpaillon	fr
305	Col de Vars	fr
306	Col d'Allos	fr
307	Col de la Cayolle	fr
308	Cime de la Bonette	fr
309	Col de la Lombarde	fr
310	Col des Champs	fr
311	Col de la Couillole	fr
312	Col de Rieisse	fr
313	Mont Aigoual	fr
314	Col des Faisses	fr
315	Pic de Nore	fr
316	Col de l'Espinouse	fr
317	Pic de Tantajo	fr
318	Mont Saint-Baudille	fr
319	Mont Saint-Clair	fr
320	Guidon du Bouquet	fr
321	Mont Faron	fr
322	Cirque de Vaumale	fr
323	Col de Valferrière	fr
324	Montagne Doublier	fr

325	Col Saint-Martin	fr
326	Mont Vial	fr
327	Madonne d'Utelle	fr
328	L'Authion	fr
329	Col de Braus	fr
330	Artzamendi	fr
331	Col Bagargui-Iraty	fr
332	Col Pierre St-Martin	fr
333	Col Marie-Blanche	fr
334	Col d'Aubisque	fr

**ZONE 06**

376	Monte Aboia	es
377	Vixia Herbeira	es
378	Alto de San Clodio	es
379	Puerto del Buey	es
380	Cabeza dManzaneda	es
381	Puerto de Ancares	es
382	El Sestil	es
383	Paso del Morredero	es
384	Puerto Foncebadón	es
385	Puerto del Palo	es
386	Pozo Mujer Muertas	es
387	Puerto del Connio	es
388	Monasterio Obona	es
389	Santuario del Acebo	es
390	Puerto de Somiedo	es
391	Puerto San Lorenzo	es
392	Puerto de Ventana	es
393	L'Angliru	es
394	La Cobertoria	es
395	Puerto de la Cubilla	es
396	Puerto de Pajares	es
397	Puerto de San Isidro	es
398	Collado Los Bedules	es
399	Puert Panderruedas	es
400	Lagos de Covadonga	es
401	Collado Barreda	es
402	Puerto de San Glorio	es
403	Alto Campoo	es
404	Puerto Palombera	es
405	Puerto del Escudo	es
406	Puerto Est. Trueba	es
407	Portillo de Lunada	es
408	Peña Cabarga	es
409	Portillo de la Sia	es
410	Puerto de Orduña	es
411	Puerto de Urkiola	es
412	Alto de Jaizkibel	es
413	Alto de Azurki	es
414	Alto de Hachueta	es
415	Puerto de la Herrera	es
416	Puerto de Urbasa	es
417	Puerto de Lizárraga	es
418	Higa de Monreal	es
419	Orzanzurieteta	es
420	Puerto de Larrau	es
421	Puerto de Sompont	es
422	Castillo de Loarre	es
423	Collado de Sahún	es
424	Cerler	es
425	El Portillon	es
426	Collado Bonaigua	es
427	Llac de Sant Maurici	es
428	Coll de Cantó	es
429	Rasos de Peguera	es
430	Coll de Pal	es
431	Vallter 2000	es
432	Coll de Bracons	es
433	Turó de l'Home	es
434	Coll Formic	es
435	MonasterMontserrates	es
436	Arcalis	ad
437	Coll de Ordino	ad
438	Els Cortals	ad
439	Port d'Envalira	ad
440	Port de Cabus	ad
441	Bosc de la Rabassa	ad
442	Lagunas de Neila	es
443	Cruz de la Demanda	es
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465	Puerto de Mijares	es	539	Paßwang	ch	613	Rettenbachtal	at	687	Prato Nevoso	it
466	Puerto Guadarrama	es	540	Regensberg	ch	614	Timmelsjoch	at	688	Passo dello Spluga	it
467	Bola del Mundo	es	541	Bachtel	ch	615	Mutterbergalm	at	689	Menarola	it
468	Puerto de Morcuera	es	542	Haut-Chia	ch	616	Speich-Zillergründl	at	690	Passo di San Marco	it
469	Puerto de la Quesera	es	543	Col de Jaman	ch	617	Halltal	at	691	Rif Barbara Lowrie	it
470	Alto del Campello	es	544	Col des Mosses	ch	618	Zillertaler Höhenstr	at	692	Val Malenco	it
471	Puerto de Ares	es	545	Col de la Croix	ch	619	Sagalm	at	693	Passo del Vivione	it
472	Puerto de Tudons	es	546	Jaunpaß	ch	620	Kitzbühler Horn	at	694	Passo del Mortirolo	it
473	Cerro Espuña	es	547	Gurnigelpaß	ch	621	Steinplatte-Kammer	at	695	Passo di Foscagno	it
474	Galilea	es	548	Glaubenbergpaß	ch	622	Gerlospaß	at	696	Passo di Gavia	it
475	Coll de Soller	es	549	Glaubenbüelenpaß	ch	623	Staller Sattel	at	697	Passo dello Stelvio	it
476	La Corbata	es	550	Ächerlipaß	ch	624	Loferer Alpe	at	698	Val Martello	it
477	Puig Major	es	551	Melchsee-Frutt	ch	625	Hochtor	at	699	Val Senales	it
478	Monasterio Cura	es	552	Engstlenalp	ch	626	Neues-Luckner H.	at	700	Passo Monte Giovio	it
479	Mon. San Salvador	es	553	Etzelpaß	ch	627	Volkzeiner Hütte	at	701	Passo di Pennes	it
480	Las Palomas Ronda	es	554	Pragelpaß	ch	628	Oscheniksee	at	702	Merano 2000	it
481	Gibraltar	es	555	Stoß	ch	629	Hochstein	at	703	Passo delle Palade	it
482	Alto de Cascajares	es	556	Schrina-Hochrugg	ch	630	Dientner Sattel	at	704	Passo della Mendola	it
483	Puerto del León	es	557	Buchs-Malbun	ch	631	Gaisberg Straße	at	705	Val Genova	it
484	Puerto del Sol	es	558	Ovronnaz	ch	632	Arthur Haus	at	706	Monte Bondone	it
485	Mirad Cabra Montés	es	559	Col du Sanetsch	ch	633	Zirknitztal	at	707	Passo Manghen	it
486	Puerto Lobo	es	560	Lac de Tseuzier	ch	634	Plöckenpass	at	708	Torri del Vajolet	it
487	Pico Veleta	es	561	Crans-Montana	ch	635	Jamng Hütte	at	709	Passo Furcia	it
488	Puerto Haza Lino	es	562	Gorneren	ch	636	Mokdaublick	at	710	Passo delle Erbe	it
489	Puerto de la Ragua	es	563	Faferalp	ch	637	Loser Hütte	at	711	Passo di Gardena	it
490	Puerto de Tiscar	es	564	Axalp	ch	638	Stoderzinken	at	712	Passo di Sella	it
491	Las Palomas Cazorra	es	565	Große Scheidegg	ch	639	Roßbrand	at	713	Passo Pordoí	it
492	Alto de la Sagra	es	566	Oberaarsee	ch	640	Hochwurzen	at	714	Passo di Fedaiia	it
493	Puerto Padilla	es	567	Sustenpaß	ch	641	Tauernpaß	at	715	Passo di Valparola	it
494	Calar Alto	es	568	Furkapaß	ch	642	Maltatal	at	716	Passo di Giau	it
495	Las Cañadas	es	569	Oberalppaß	ch	643	Katschberg	at	717	Passo Duran	it
496	Pico del Inglés	es	570	Klausenpaß	ch	644	Naßfeldpaß	at	718	Forcelta Cibiana	it
497	Pozo de las Nieves	es	571	Tannenbodenalp	ch	645	Poludniger Alm	at	719	Tre Cime Lavaredo	it
498	Roq los Muchachos	es	572	Pas de Morgins	ch	646	Turracher Höhe	at	720	Monte Zoncolan	it
499	Cumbrecita	es	573	Col de la Forclaz	ch	647	Falkertsee-Hütte	at	721	Monte Paularo	it
500	Garajonay	es	574	Col des Planches	ch	648	Villicher Alpenstr.	at	722	Passo Caslon Lanza	it
501	Monte do Faro	pt	575	Monte Generoso	ch	649	Kanzelhöhe	at	723	Sella Carnizza	it
502	Nossa Senhor Graça	pt	576	Barrage Mauvoisin	ch	650	Gerlitzten	at	724	Mataiur	it
503	Barragem do Alvaio	pt	577	Thyon 2000	ch	651	Oberst-Klinke Hütte	at	725	Piancavallo	it
504	Alto de Espinho	pt	578	Barrage Gde Dixence	ch	652	Hochkar Gleischläg	at	726	Passo Tomba	it
505	Marofa	pt	579	Arolla	ch	653	Sölker Paß	at	727	Monte Grappa	it
506	Buçaco	pt	580	Glacier de Moiry	ch	654	Gleinalmsattel	at	728	Passo Porte Pasubio	it
507	Torre	pt	581	Chandolin	ch	655	Lammersdorfer Bg	at	729	Passo Campogrosso	it
508	Bom Jesús	pt	582	Mattmarksee	ch	656	Gaberlsattel	at	730	Alpe Cheggio	it
509	Alto do Trevim	pt	583	Simplonpaß	ch	657	Klippitztörl	at	731	Alpe Rossobolmo	it
510	Caramulinho	pt	584	Nufenenpaß	ch	658	Magdalensberg	at	732	Cascata del Toce	it
511	Sao Mamede	pt	585	Sankt-Gothardpaß	ch	659	Großer Speikkogel	at	733	Il Mottarone	it
512	Marvao	pt	586	Lago di Naret	ch	660	Eisenkappler Hütte	at	734	Passo Cuvignone	it
513	Capela São Macario	pt	587	Lukmanierpaß	ch	661	Seeberg Sattel	at	735	Campo dei Fiori	it
514	Monsanto	pt	588	Lago Luzzone	ch	662	Weinebene	at	736	San Martino	it
515	Alto de Sintra	pt	589	Passo di Neggia	ch	663	Jauerling	at	737	P. Gran S. Bernardo	it
516	Serra da Arrábida	pt	590	PasSan Bernardino	ch	664	Grubberg	at	738	Monte Bisbino	it
517	Monte Foia	pt	591	Glaspas	ch	665	Zellerain	at	739	Monte Legnoncino	it
518	Montejunto	pt	592	Lenzerheidepaß	ch	666	Bürgeralm	at	740	Monte Croce Muggio	it
519	Eira do Serrado	pt	593	Arosa	ch	667	Rohrer Sattel	at	741	Madonna Ghisallo	it
520	Bocca Encumeada	pt	594	Flüelapaß	ch	668	Hocheck	at	742	Giogo di Bala	it
521	Cabo Girao	pt	595	Ofenpaß	ch	669	Hohe Wand	at	743	Passo Coe	it
522	Pico Arieiro	pt	596	Albulapaß	ch	670	Preiner Gscheid	at	744	Rifugio Alpo	it
523	Lagoa do Canário	pt	597	Julierpaß	ch	671	Sonnwendstein	at	745	Passo di Tremalzo	it

746	Prati di Nago	it	820	Balestrier i	it	904	Manastir Ostrog	me	965	Kojšovská Hoľa	SK
747	Telegrafo	it	821	P.Punta Masiennera	it	905	Popova Sapka	mk	966	Herlianske sedlo	SK
748	Colle Garezzo	it	822	SpClubMonte Spada	it	906	Bukovo	mk	967	Szár-hegy	HU
749	Poggio di San Remo	it	823	Arcu Correboi	it	907	Babuna Pass	mk	968	Tokaji-hegy	HU
750	La Cipressa	it	824	Genna Silana	it	908	Vitsi-Nymfeo O	gr	969	Hörmann-forrás	HU
			825	Serpeddi	it	909	Lailias ski center	gr	970	Tihany	HU
751	Colma di Sormano	it	<b>ZONE 10</b>			910	Pissoderi ski center	gr	971	Vysoké Sedlo	CZ
752	Passo di Mebgno	it	826	Przehyba	pl	911	Hortiatias	gr	972	Měděnec - Mednik	CZ
753	Monte Beigua	it	827	Przełęcz Okraj	pl	912	Seli ski center	gr	973	Komáři Vížka	CZ
754	Passo del Faiallo	it	828	Przeł Salmopolska	pl	913	Pantokrator	gr	974	Strahov České Radio	CZ
755	Passo Bocchetta	it	829	Przełęcz Krowiarki	pl	914	Prionia-Olympos	gr	975	Podvrší tower	CZ
756	Passo del Penice	it	830	Cyrhla nad Biąlką	pl	915	Megaló Papingo	gr	976	Lysá Hora	CZ
757	Passo del Ghiffi	it	831	Pereval Užhokskiy	ua	916	Katara Pass A	gr	977	Blejski grad	SI
758	Colle dei Due Santi	it	832	Bukovel	ua	917	Great Meteoro	gr	978	Korte	SI
759	Passo del Cirone	it	833	Pereval Vyshkovskiy	ua	918	Pliasidhi	gr	979	Strma Reber	SI
760	Passo Lagastrello	it	834	Pereval Shurdyn	ua	919	Velouchi ski center	gr	980	Trdinov Vrh	SI
761	Passo di Pradarena	it	835	Tysovets	ua	920	Mount Didima	gr	981	Pasul Gutài	RO
762	San Pellegrino Alpe	it	836	Vrbatova Bouda	cz	921	Pterolaka ski center	gr	982	Mănăstirea Feredeu	RO
763	Abetone	it	837	Špindlerova Bouda	cz	922	Enos de Kefalonia	gr	983	Semenic (Stațiunea)	RO
764	Croce Arcana	it	838	Suchý vrch	cz	923	Apollo Epikourios	gr	984	Pasul Urdele	RO
765	Passo della Futa	it	839	Červenohorské Sedl	cz	924	Mycenae Citadel	gr	985	Transbucegi	RO
766	Passo la Calla	it	840	Praděd	cz	925	Karabola-Parnitha	gr	986	Niculitel	RO
767	Passo dei Mandrioli	it	841	Pancfř	cz	926	Oligirtos Σ	gr	987	Dyulinski Prohod	BG
768	Val Monte Fumaïolo	it	842	Klet'	cz	927	Kosmas Pass	gr	988	Balgarka	BG
769	San Marino	sm	843	Ťatliakovo jazero	sk	928	Langada Pass A	gr	989	Dardhë-ski Bigell	AL
770	Abazzia La Verna	it	844	Sedlo Čertovica	sk	929	Omabs	gr	990	Gracen	AL
771	Bocca Trabária	it	845	Slieszky Dom	sk	930	Akones	gr	991	Koprivštica - Zavoj J	RS
772	Monte Amiata	it	846	Martinské Hole	sk	931	Idéon Antron	gr	992	Vlasinsko Jezero	RS
773	Monte Argentario	it	847	Skalka	sk	932	Giouhtas	gr	993	Miroč	RS
774	Montefiascone	it	848	Sitno	sk	933	Asfendilia	gr	994	Zhegoc/Zegovac	KS
775	Sella di Leonessa	it	849	Panske Sedlo	sk	934	Dikteon Andre	gr	995	Prevala ski center	KS
776	Forca Canapine	it	850	Dobogókó	hu	935	Aleko-Vitosha	bg	996	Tal-Merhla	ML
777	Forcola di Presta	it	851	Galyatető	hu	936	Trojanski Prohod	bg	997	Ta' Dmejrek	ML
778	Gran Sasso d'Italia	it	852	Kékestető	hu	937	Sipcenski Prohod	bg	998	Saint-Hilarion castle	CY
779	Campo Felice	it	853	Pannonhalma	hu	938	Maljovica Complex	bg	999	Pentadaktybos	CY
780	Monte Perone	it	854	Felső-Borovnyák	hu	939	Riski Manastir	bg	1000	Kantara castle	CY
781	Campo Staffi	it	855	Misina	hu	940	Rožen Manastir	bg			
782	Campo Catino	it	856	Pasul Prislop	ro	941	Popski Preslop	bg			
783	Passo Diavolo	it	857	Pasul Tihuta	ro	942	Snezhanka	bg			
784	Forca d'Acero	it	858	Pasul Ciumarna	ro	943	Rožafá	al			
785	Valico Monte Godi	it	859	Pasul Rarău	ro	944	Qafá ë Llogorasë	al			
786	Blockhaus Maiella	it	860	Pasul Bicaz	ro	945	Chryssorrogiatissa	cy			
787	Monte Carpegna	it	861	Páltinis	ro	946	Makarios Gravel	cy			
788	Monte Sant'Angelo	it	862	Pasul Bălea	ro	947	Olympus	cy			
789	Ab.Montecassino	it	863	Pasul Bran	ro	948	Adelphi	cy			
790	Campitello Matese	it	864	Stana de Vale	ro	949	Makheras	cy			
791	Rifugio Calvanico	it	865	Pasul Bratocea	ro	950	Stavrovouni	cy			
792	Monte Taburno	it	876	Vršič	si						
793	Monte Vergine	it	877	Rogla	si						
794	Vesuvio	it	878	Mariborsko Pohorje	si						
795	Monte Nerone	it	879	Črnivec	si						
796	San Pietro	it	880	Mangrťsko Sedlo	si	<b>ZONE 10+</b>					
797	Monte Faito	it	881	Pavličevo Sedlo	si	866	Sem' Vetrov	RU			
798	Cima Mutali	it	882	šljeme	hr	867	Akhun monastery	RU			
799	Monte Vulture	it	883	Učka Vojak	hr	868	Bakuriani ski resort	GE			
800	M. Sacro o Gélbison	it	884	Motovun	hr	869	Gomborskiy pereval	GE			
801	Monte Armizzone	it	885	Vratnik	hr	870	Pushkin Pass	AR			
802	Colle del Dragone	it	886	Zavizan	hr	871	Kari Lake	AR			
803	Serra di Tuono	it	887	Stara Vrata	hr	872	Selim Pass	AR			
804	Passo Crocetta	it	888	Nevoljas Pass	hr	873	Shahdag ski resort	AZ			
805	Botte Donato	it	889	Sveti Jure	hr	874	Pirqulu's observator	AZ			
806	Colle d'Ascione	it	890	Kupreška Vrata	ba	875	Baku old city	AZ			
807	St. Forest-Latteria	it	891	Makljen	ba	951	Stóg Izerski	PL			
808	Monte Sirino	it	892	Mrakoviča	ba	952	Czarna Góra	PL			
809	Passo Pietra Spada	it	893	Jahorina	ba	953	Święty Krzyż	PL			
810	Monte Alto Cocuzza	it	894	Metaljka	ba	954	Jawor	PL			
811	Portella di Bova	it	895	Gornje Opine	ba	955	Przełęcz Wýsna	PL			
812	Erice	it	896	Mount Avala	rs	956	Süür Munamägi	EE			
813	Pellegrino	it	897	Iriski Venac	rs	957	Turaidas castle	LV			
814	Carbonara	it	898	Kapaonik	rs	958	Trijų Kryžių Vilnius	LT			
815	Femmina Morta	it	899	Vinčina Voda	rs	959	Malačka	HR			
816	Portella dello Zoppo	it	900	Čakor	me	960	Vratnik Zrinska Gora	HR			
817	Sella Mandrazzi	it	901	Orjen	me	961	Kamzík (Televízna)	SK			
818	Castelmola	it	902	Durmitor Sedlo	me	962	Kohútka ski center	SK			
819	Etna	it	903	Njegošev Mausolej	me	963	Sedlo Brezina	SK			
						964	Králova Hoľa	SK			





**Les Chiffres /Numbers B.I.G 2020**

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

<b>GENERAL</b>					
1 MAYEUR Etienne	08-09-2011 S 1000	33 COULON Daniel	hf 535	67 OTEMAN Luc	375
2 LUCAS Eric	25-12-2011 S 1000	34 GOBERT Daniel	hf 500	68 PIRET Véronique	373
3 JACQUEMIN Domin	14-07-2018 S 1000	35 VANSTIPHOUT Dominique	hf 500	69 CHARBONNIER Robert	368
4 OOSTRA Ard	20-06-2019 S 1000			70 Gomez, Manel	367
5 BRIOLLET Daniel	21-06-2019 S 1000	36 VAN SCHAİK Ronald	483	71 CAPELLANI Luigi	365
6 SPINA Luigi	22-09-2020 S 1000	37 VAN DER SLUIJS Herman	476	72 DEJACE Jules (+)	365
		38 NOOTENBOOM Louis	476	73 ANDELТ Radek	355
7 SPEED Kevin	15-09-2018 E 1000	39 OPOLECKY Hynek	472	74 VON HEYDEBRECK Anja	352
8 JACQUEMIN Alain	30-09-2018 E 1000	40 NILSON Jerry	456	75 NIMMEGEERS Stefaan	349
		41 CIJSOUW Jakob	455	76 FROGNEUX Bernard	345
9 SEGUY Marc	hf 978	42 SCHILLEMANS Coen	451	77 DELAHAIE LIONEL	342
10 VAN ELS Wim	hf 973	43 VAN LONKHUYZEN Michiel	449	78 ALLEMEERSCH Kris	341
11 TAYLOR Martin	hf 929	44 SCHNEIDER Irene	444	79 RUBIO COMPTE Jordi	341
12 RAFOLS Frederic	hf 837	45 OLDEMAN Gerrit-Rudolf	442	80 JACQUEMIN Renaud	338
13 ESCUER MESTRES Nuria	hf 831	46 JACQUEMIN Gilles	431	81 CHARY Denise	337
14 VERLAET Johan	hf 779	47 DEMAESSCHALCK Patrick	426	82 MARTINS Juris	336
15 TORELLI Cecilia	hf 768	48 BOYENK Arnold	424	83 HUNZIKER Hanspeter	336
16 LINNERT Heiko	hf 741	49 PLAINE Patrick(+)	424	84 JANSEN Axel	335
17 KARBAUSKIENE Lina	hf 700	50 KREICSI Gabor	423	85 ANGERER Elisabeth	335
18 BERASATEGUI Ruben	hf 700	51 VAN HECKE Marnix418		86 VALLEJO PARTE Luis Fern	333
19 BRENNER Karl	hf 697	52 MATTE Jean-Luc	408	87 CHOZAS Eduardo	331
20 SZILAGYI Andras	hf 694	53 RECKHAUS Juergen(+)	405	88 SALA Roger	331
21 MORALES GARCIA Angel	hf 676	54 RUIZ-OPITZ Mario	403	89 DEKKERS Helmuth	330
22 VAN AMEIJDEN Richard	hf 669	55 MEIJERING Gerard	400	90 HINK Mark	329
23 NOTTEN Peter	hf 643	56 KOOL Martin	399	91 LAULHE Jean-Luc	326
24 SOMMER-Brenner Claudia	hf 623	57 VANDENBUSSCHE Tom	399	92 CASOLARI Bortolomeo	323
25 AARD Miki	hf 601	58 ALBERINI Enrico	396	93 JACQUEMIN Julien	319
26 HILSON Daniel	hf 599	59 HANSEN Rob	395	94 CANDELI Luigi	316
27 CATTANEO Luciano	hf 577	60 ANTXUSTEGI Aitor	394	95 MONTEFUSCO Claudio	314
28 WEYTMANS Christiaan	hf 568	61 PEETERS Marc	394	96 BETTA Enrico	314
29 BOSDIJK Rob	hf 544	62 COSIALS Xavier	392	97 SVEHLIK Karel	313
30 NOTTEN Jean-Pierre	hf 540	63 ÁBRAHÁM Balázs	389	98 KODIJKER Hans	312
31 HUL Philip	hf 539	64 DEWEZ Rudy	389	99 HOPPE Ulla	312
32 PARTHOENS Jean	hf 535	65 MENARD Michel	389	100 WINTER Charles	311
		66 BERNEGGER Klaus	383		

**Classement année 2020/ year 2020 ranking - TOP50**

1 KARBAUSKIENE Lina	102	19 CHARBONNIER Robert	36	37 BONACHELA Francisco	22
2 WEYTMANS Christiaan	91	20 VON HEYDEBRECK Anja	34	38 Tiegel Andreas	21
3 AARD Miki	84	21 RECARTE Ibon	33	39 TIEGEL Alena	21
4 MEIJERING Gerard	51	22 DE VRENG Arno	33	40 ANTXUSTEGI Aitor	21
5 SZILAGYI Andras	48	23 SCHILLEMANS Coen	32	41 ZWERUS Arie	21
6 MARTINS Juris	45	24 MORAGAS ROIG JOSEP	31	42 BUSCHMANN Dirk	21
7 SPINA Luigi	42	25 GÓMEZ Domingo	29	43 LINNERT Heiko	21
8 HERMES Benno	42	26 GRANDIA Ruud	28	44 VAN DER SLUIJS Herman	21
9 GORKA Bidegain	42	27 ALLEMEERSCH Kris	28	45 EZKURRA Miguel	20
10 FULOP Tibor	40	28 NOOTENBOOM Louis	28	46 CAIRO ANDRES Josep Maria	20
11 VAN DE LAAR Tim	40	29 MARC Font Rimbau	27	47 HOEFKENS Jan	20
12 DE LEEUW kris	39	30 TORELLI Cecilia	26	48 KLEINENDORST robert	19
13 NOIJ Daan	39	31 RUBIO COMPTE Jordi	26	49 JACOBS Floris	19
14 MORALES GARCIA Angel	39	32 BAENA David	25	50 HISLP Pavel	19
15 TAYLOR Martin	38	33 DENYS Brecht	24	51 JOHN Achim	19
16 KOPPEN Roger	37	34 TIGGELOVEN Pim	23	52 DEMAESSCHALCK Patrick	19
17 VERLAET Johan	36	35 LANGERAK Jacco	22	53 OLIEMAN Roland	19
18 PIESSENS Kevin	36	36 LE CONTE Jos	22		

**Classement général Ironbig / General overall godfathers ranking**

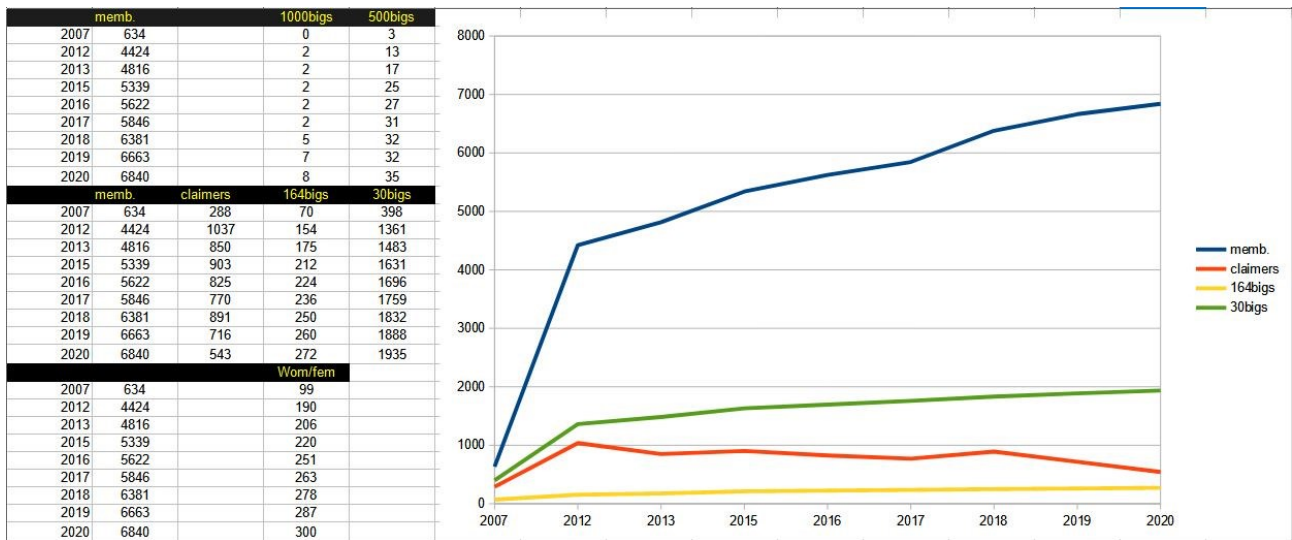
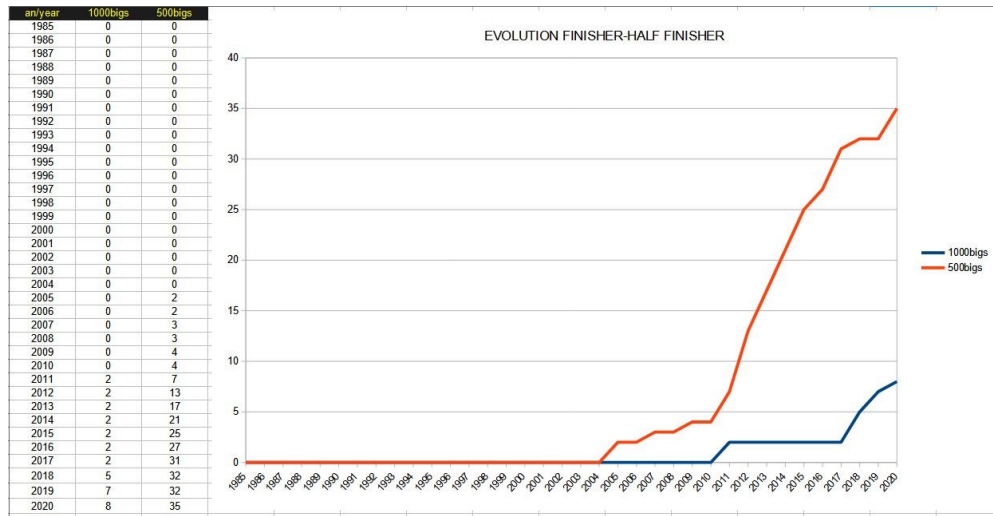
1 MENARD Michel	xl 50	6 ÁBRAHÁM Balázs	17	13 VIJVER Silvan	7
2 KREICSI Gabor	xl 50	7 DEKKERS Helmuth	13	14 LINNERT Heiko	6
		8 MAYEUR Etienne	12	15 SPINA Luigi	6
3 PUSKAS Aladár	sl 27	9 GRANERO NAV.Miguel Angel	11	16 MAZON DEL CAMPO Carlos	4
		10 ANTXUSTEGI Aitor	10	17 SCHUYER Roland	4
4 WEYTMANS Christiaan	19	11 GOBERT Daniel	9	18 CATTANEO Luciano	4
5 JOHN Achim	17	12 JANSEN Axel	7	19 KARBAUSKIENE Lina	4

**Classement général Dames / General overall women ranking**

1 ESCUER MESTRES Nuria	hf 831	12 VERKUIJLEN Tineke	273	24 VEUL Ria	147
2 TORELLI Cecilia	hf 768	13 GERLIER Sylvie	239	25 DONNERS Patricia	142
3 KARBAUSKIENE Lina	hf 700	14 MAAS Marlou	216	26 BENISTRAND Catherine	131
4 SOMMER-Brenner Claudia	hf 623	15 TIMMERMANS Wil	204	27 GROOT Heleen	128
5 VANSTIPHOUT Dominique	hf 500	16 SALA Chantal	197	28 BOKHORST Jantine	126
		17 SIRET Françoise	191	29 GROUX Michele	124
6 SCHNEIDER Irene	444	18 JANSEN Vivian	171	30 STOELZAET Jamien	121
7 PIRET Véronique	373	19 BERTING Corrie	170	31 HAYCRAFT Anne	120
8 VON HEYDEBRECK Anja	352	20 NAGY Andrea	163	32 FLORET Sandrine	114
9 CHARY Denise	337	21 GEORGE Nathalie	156	33 CROZAZ Pascale	110
10 ANGERER Elisabeth	335	22 LONGO Jeannie	155	34 JACQUEMIN Odile	103
11 HOPPE Ulla	312	23 TIEGEL Alena	155	35 CORNET Bernadette	102

## 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)  
 2018 : 6381 (+535)  
 2019 : 6663 (+282)  
 2020 : 6840 (+177)



## Quality of increasing

	2007	2012	2013	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
1000 bigs	0	2	2	2	2	2	5(+3)	7(+2)	8(+1)
> 500 bigs	3	13	17(+4)	25 (+8)	27 (+2)	31 (+4)	32 (+1)	32 (+0)	35(+3)
> 164 bigs	70	154	175 (+21)	212 (+37)	224 (+12)	236 (+12)	250 (+14)	260(+10)	272(+12)
> 30 bigs	398	1361	1483 (+122)	1631 (+148)	1696 (+65)	1759 (+63)	1832 (+73)	1888 (+56)	1935(+47)
Women / femmes	99	190	206 (+16)	220 (+14)	251 (+31)	263 (+12)	278 (+15)	287 (+9)	300(+13)

## Claims 2019 / Réussites 2019

543 members claimed in the year 2020 / membres ayant déclaré en 2020 including 135 members with more than 10 BIGs /avec plus de 10 bigs

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

1 Alpe d'Huez	2424	16 Col du Rosier	1452	31 Col de Vars	1189
2 Mont Ventoux	2293	17 Passo Sella	1415	32 Passo Gavia	1181
3 Col du Galibier	2245	18 Vijlenerbos	1406	33 Col de la Schlucht	1173
4 Cauberg	1973	19 Col du Stockeu	1352	34 Col de la Madeleine	1154
5 Col de la Croix-de-Fer	1876	20 Passo Gardena	1339	35 Passo Giau	1154
6 Keutenberg / Dodeman	1814	21 Posbank	1338	36 Passo di Valparola	1135
7 Drielandenpunt	1773	22 Col d'Aubisque	1329	37 Col de l'Iseran	1113
8 Eyserbosweg	1748	23 Cime de la Bonette	1295	38 Huls	1108
9 Passo dello Stelvio	1746	24 Oude Kwaremont	1293	39 Kluisberg	1072
10 Côte de la Redoute	1674	25 Grand Ballon	1292	40 Col de Peyresourde	1067
11 Gulperberg	1638	26 Muur Geraardsbergen	1280	41 Italiaanse Weg	1054
12 Col du Tourmalet	1602	27 Col d'Aspin	1246	42 Passo Fedaila	1015
13 Col de l'Izoard	1516	28 Paterberg	1238		
14 Côte de Wanne	1513	29 Koppenberg	1229		
15 Passo Pordoi	1499	30 Ballon d'Alsace	1207		

### Godfathers/Parrains

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Godfathers	61	37	77	37	32	23	30	35	46	38	38

Total : 454

### Badges



**MAYEUR Etienne  
BRIOLLET Daniel**

**LUCAS Eric  
SPINA Luigi**

**JACQUEMIN Dominique**

**OOSTRA Ard**

### **Challenge BIG**



**JACQUEMIN Alain    SPEED Kevin**



**SEGUY Marc  
VAN ELS Wim  
TAYLOR Martin  
RAFOLS Frederic  
ESCUER MESTRES Nuria  
VERLAET Johan  
TORELLI Cecilia  
LINNERTheiko  
KARBAUSKIENE Lina**

**BERASATEGUI Ruben  
BRENNER Karl  
SZILAGYI Andras  
MORALES GARCIA Angel  
VAN AMEIJDEN Richard  
NOTTEN Peter  
SOMMER-Brenner Claudia  
AARD Miki  
HILSON Daniel**

**CATTANEO Luciano  
WEYTMANS Christiaan  
BOSDIJK Rob  
NOTTEN Jean-Pierre  
HUL Philip  
PARTHOENS Jean  
COULON Daniel  
GOBERT Daniel  
VANSTIPHOUT Dominique**

Challenge IRONBIG



MENARD Michel KREICSI Gabór



PUSKAS Aladar



WEYTMANS Christiaan JOHN Achim

ÁBRAHÁM Balázs

DEKKERS Helmuth

MAYEUR Etienne

GRANERO NAV. Miguel Angel

ANTXUSTEGI Aitor

Challenge NATACHA



- |   |                 |      |
|---|-----------------|------|
| 1 | PAL Gabor       | F 75 |
| 2 | SZILAGYI Andras | F 75 |
| 3 | ÁBRAHÁM Balázs  | F 75 |
| 4 | PUSKAS Aladar   | F 75 |
| 5 | KREICSI Gabor   | F 75 |



- |    |                 |       |
|----|-----------------|-------|
| 6  | JARVAS Tamas    | hF 67 |
| 7  | DOMONKOS György | hF 60 |
| 8  | GALCSIK Robert  | hF 57 |
| 9  | WILLEM Luc      | hF 48 |
| 10 | VINCZE Gabor    | hF 44 |
| 11 | SZILVAGYI Péter | hF 43 |
| 12 | CSONTOS Ivett   | hF 42 |
| 13 | BERGMANN Peter  | hF 39 |



- |   |                |       |
|---|----------------|-------|
| 1 | MOGA Claudiu   | hF 85 |
| 2 | CHEREGI Marius | hF 81 |
| 3 | POP Adrian     | hF 73 |



- |   |              |      |
|---|--------------|------|
| 1 | CODINA Arnau | F 25 |
| 2 | GOMEZ Manel  | F 25 |



1 LINNERT Heiko F 375



- |    |                    |       |
|----|--------------------|-------|
| 3  | HILSON Daniel      | hF 24 |
| 4  | LEGAL Patrice      | hF 22 |
| 5  | LE TUTOUR Jean-Luc | hF 21 |
| 6  | GOMES-MUÑOZ Aug.   | hF 20 |
| 7  | COLL EROLES Roger  | hF 18 |
| 8  | RUBIO COMPTE Jordi | hF 17 |
| 9  | PEREZ GAÑAN David  | hF 14 |
| 10 | LANGERAK Jacco     | hF 13 |



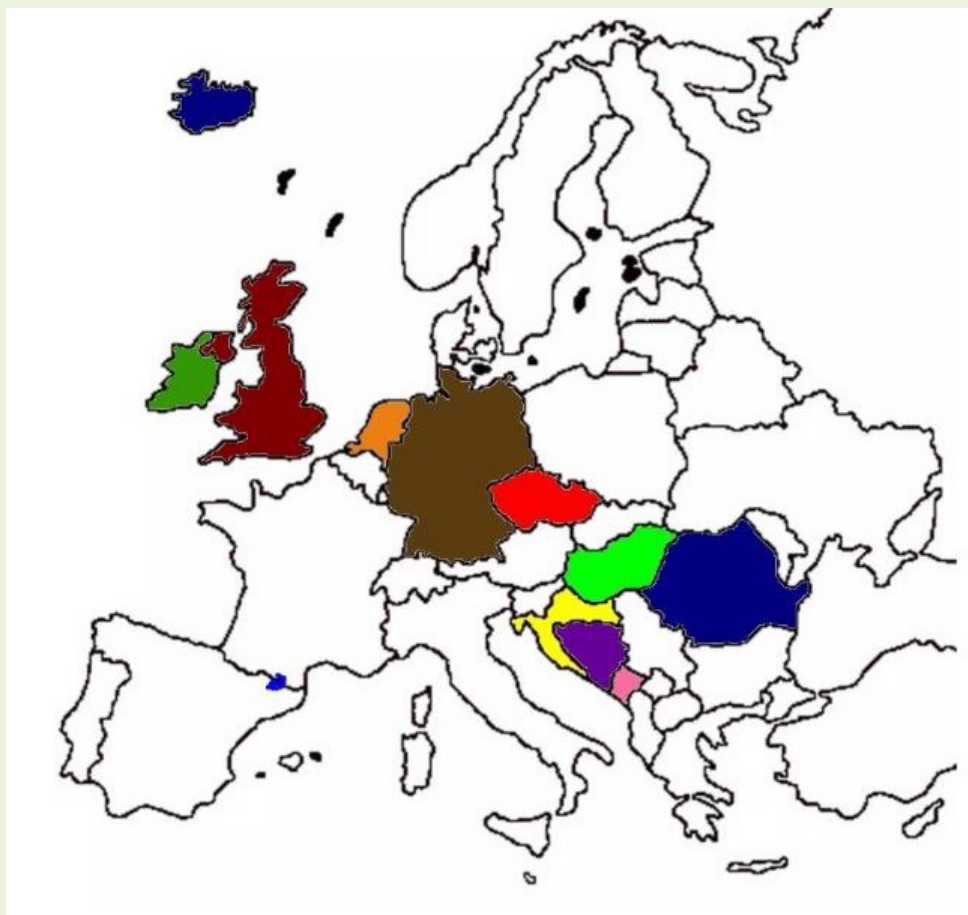
2 JOHN Achim hF 292  
3 BRENNER Karl hF 190





1      SPEED Kevin      hF 235

1      SCHUYER Roland      hF 34  
 2      VAN ELS Wim      hF 31  
 3      VAN HAK Marcel      hF 27  
 4      LANGERAK Jacco      hF 25



# Outcomings and incomings 2020

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

## 1) Solde au 31/12/2019 / Balance on 31/12/2019

Compte Triodos / Triodos account	621,96
Compte d'épargne Triodos / Triodos savings account	2004,53
Compte PayPal / PayPal account	62,42
Compte rendez-vous / meetings account	37,87
Compte vêtements / clothes account	76,33
Caisse vêtements / clothes cash	48,30
<b>Total</b>	<b>2851,41</b>

### Stocks :

- vêtements / clothes (total : 10679,00 ; nouveaux/new : 10008,00 ; anciens/old : 671,00)
- sacs à dos / rucksacks
- auto-collants / stickers
- ramettes de papier / paper sheets blocks
- couvertures plastifiées / laminated covers
- enveloppes / envelopes

Au 31/12/2019, il y avait 6668 membres dont 220 cotisants 2019.  
On 31/12/2019, there were 6668 members, including 220 contributors 2019.

## 2) Dépenses et recettes / Outcomings and incomings

Dépenses / Outcomings		Recettes / Incomings	
Site web / website	744,15	Cotisations / Contributions	1995
Stickers	631,62	Dons / Donations	390
Revue / Reviews	586,51	Revue / Reviews	650
Diplômes et médailles / Diplomas and trophies	73,38		
Vêtements / Clothes	618,95	Vêtements / Clothes	1546,8
	19,55		
Rendez-vous / Official Meeting	0	Rendez-vous / Official Meeting	240,25
Réunion / Meeting	51,44		
Frais bancaires / Banking charges :			
• PayPal	98,12		
• Triodos	36		
• Rendez-vous / meetings	41,90		
<b>Total dépenses / outcomings</b>	<b>2901,62</b>	<b>Total recettes / incomings</b>	<b>4822,05</b>

## 3) Solde au 31/12/2020 / Balance on 31/12/2020

Compte Triodos / Triodos account	1880,51
Compte d'épargne Triodos / Triodos savings account	1804,53
Compte PayPal / PayPal account	745,51
Compte rendez-vous / meetings account	236,22
Compte vêtements / clothes account	76,33
Caisse vêtements / clothes cash	28,75
<b>Total</b>	<b>4771,85</b>

Stocks vêtements / clothes ,

Pas de réponse de la responsable des vêtements / No answer from the clothing manager

Au 31/12/2020, il y avait 6841 membres dont 171 cotisants 2020.

On 31/12/2020, there were 6841 members contributors 2020.

## Budget prévisionnel 2021 Estimated budget 2021

Tous les montants sont exprimés en Euro.

All the amounts are expressed in Euro.

Dépenses / Outcomings		Recettes / Incomings	
Site web / website	750,00	Cotisations / Contributions	1400,00
Revue / Reviews	550	Dons / Donations	250,00
trophées / trophies	150,00	Revue / Reviews	550,00
Badges/Stickers	300	Vêtements / Clothes	500
Assemblée Générale / General Assembly	130,00		
Frais postaux / Postage			
• Vêtements / Clothes	200		
Frais bancaires / Banking charges :			
• PayPal	100		
• Triodos	36,00		
• rendez-vous	41,90		
<b>Total dépenses / outcomings</b>	<b>2257,9</b>	<b>Total recettes / incomings</b>	<b>2700</b>

N°	Nom	Prénom	Classements des Iron BIG-man : Tableau									31 décembre 2020			
			Sur la journée			Sur le mois			Sur l'année			Classements			
			Nbre d'Ironbig	Nbre de point	Classement	Nbre d'Ironbig	Nbre de point	Classement	Nbre d'Ironbig	Nbre de point	Classement	Total point	Général	En catégorie	Nbre total d'Ironbig
1	KREICSI	Gabor	32	32	2	14	28	1er	4	16	1er	76	1er	1er	50
2	MENARD	Michel	36	36	1er	14	28	.				64	2	.	.
3	PUSKAS	Aladar	19	19	3	5	10	5	3	12	4	41	3	3	27
4	JOHN	Achim	8	8	8	7	14	3	2	8	11	30	4	5	17
5	GRANERO NAVAR	Miguel Angel				7	14	.	4	16	1er	.	.	9	11
6	ANTXUSTEGI	Aitor	1	1	13	5	10	5	.	.	.	27	6	10	10
7	ABRAHAM	Balazs	11	11	6	5	10	.	1	4	19	25	7	5	17
8	WEYTMANS	Christiaan	18	18	4	1	2	12				20	8	4	19
9	SPINA	Luigi	1	1	13	2	4	10	3	12	4	17	9	14	6
10	MAYEUR	Étienne	9	9	7	3	6	8				15	10	8	12
11	DEKKERS	Helmuth	13	13	5							13	11	7	13
12	CATTANEO	Luciano	1	1	13				3	12	4	.	.	16	4
13	KARBAUSKIENE	Lina	.	.	.				.	.	.	.	.	.	.
14	CASTAGNOLI	Giordano							.	.	.	12	14	18	3
15	HOCHULI	Olivier							.	.	.	.	.	.	.
16	DE CARVELHO	Guillaume							.	.	.	.	.	.	.
17	GOBERT	Daniel	8	8	8	1	2	12				10	17	11	9
18	JANSEN	Axel	4	4	12	3	6	8				.	.	12	7
19	DOMONKOS	György	1	1	13				2	8	11	9	19	18	3
20	SCHILLEWAERT	Pierre x				2	4	10	1	4	19	8	20	.	.
21	GLAJARIU WANTU	Claudiu							2	8	11	.	.	25	2
22	DAVID	Lionel							.	.	.	.	.	.	.
23	NICODIN	Gheorghe							.	.	.	.	.	.	.
24	LORENZONI	Oswaldo							.	.	.	.	.	.	.
25	OOSTRA	Ard							.	.	.	.	.	.	.
26	RAOSSANALY	Idris							.	.	.	.	.	.	.
27	VIJVER	Silvan	7	7	10							7	27	12	7
28	LINNERT	Heiko	5	5	11	1	2	12				.	.	14	6
29	VINCZE	Gabor	1	1	13	.	.	.	1	4	19	.	.	18	3
30	COULON	Daniel	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
31	SUPLICZ	Ferenc				.	.	.	.	.	.	6	31	25	2
32	NOBODY	Gabor	1	1	13				.	.	.	5	32	.	.
33	ALBERINI	Enrico	.	.	.				.	.	.	.	.	.	.
34	KRETSKO	Vilmos	.	.	.				.	.	.	.	.	.	.
35	HERNALSTEEN	Janv x	.	.	.				.	.	.	.	.	.	.

Comme il y a des ex aequo:

Afin d'éclaircir le tableau, les points **noirs** / **rouges** / ou **verts** indiquent sa propre position dans le tableau, ils matérialisent un chiffre

Pour connaître sa situation: **Se référer au chiffre supérieur de chaque colonne verticale.**

**Rappel: 1 point Ironbig sur la journée / 2 points sur le mois / 4 points sur l'année.**



## ANALYSE

### Remarques du tableau, classement des Iron BIG-men :

Deuxième après Michel Ménard, en venant d'atteindre le cap des **50** Ironbigs ; Gabor Kreicsi se classe désormais premier au classement **général**, détrônant ainsi Michel pour la première fois depuis presque une décennie, avec 76 points contre 64.

On remarquera que :

1. Michel conserve toutefois la première place au classement sur la journée.
2. Sur le mois, Michel et Gabor sont premier ex aequo.
3. Et sur l'année, Gabor conserve sa première place.

D'autres remarques :

- **35** IRONBIG-Mann ont plus de 5 points soit 2 (x) de plus que l'an dernier.
- Gabor a encore réalisé le plus grand nombre de Parrainage en cours d'année, soit **11** ; mais :
- Michel détient toujours le record absolu avec **15** en **2012**.
- Bien classée, **Lina** est toujours la seule féminine représentée dans le tableau.
- Aladar Puskas conserve sa 3<sup>ème</sup> place et le classement reste aussi inchangé après la 8<sup>ème</sup> place (Sans compter **Schillewaert** qui viens s'intercalé à la 20<sup>ème</sup> place, et Heiko Linnert qui gagne deux places).

### Résultat à l'IRONBIG au 31 décembre 2020

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> Parrains (soit 20 de plus)
2012	<b>175</b> (soit 77 de plus)	<b>94</b> (soit 19 de plus)
2013	<b>212</b> (soit 37 de plus)	<b>103</b> (soit 9 de plus)
2014	<b>244</b> (soit 32 de plus)	<b>112</b> (soit 9 de plus)
2015	<b>266</b> (soit 22 de plus)	<b>115</b> (soit 3 de plus)
2016	<b>297</b> (soit 31 de plus)	<b>121</b> (soit 6 de plus)
2017	<b>332</b> (soit 35 de plus)	<b>127</b> (soit 6 de plus)
2018	<b>378</b> (soit 46 de plus)	<b>129</b> (soit 2 de plus)
2019	<b>416</b> (soit 38 de plus)	<b>132</b> (soit 3 de plus)
2020	↔ <b>3</b> (?)	<b>133</b> 1
2020	<b>454</b> (soit 35 de plus)	<b>140</b> (soit 7 de plus)
	↘ 314 Parrainages multiples	↓ <b>61 récidivistes</b> ou multirécidivistes

(?) Il s'agit de Pierre **Schillewaert**, nouvellement répertorié avec **3** Parrainages : **1** en 1989 / 2017 / 2019. Je n'ai pas voulu tout bouleverser sur les résultats initiaux ; j'ai comptabilisé ses 3 Parrainages en début d'année 2020.

On remarquera que l'IRONBIG se porte toujours très bien, avec une moyenne régulière de participants.

## Congratulazioni al nostro Finichert 2020

### 1) Eccoti a 1000, quali sono i tuoi sentimenti ?

Ho provato una gioia enorme, un grande sollievo ma subito un senso di vuoto... e adesso cosa devo fare? La crisi è stata immediatamente superata, ci sono ancora tante salite e tante cose da fare nella vita, comprese le altre sfide del BIG Challenge, Natasha, padrinaggi, ecc.

### 2) Come e perchè hai cominciato ad andare in bicicletta ?

Ho cominciato ad andare in bicicletta a 6 anni, nelle Alpi, a Gressoney Saint Jean. Mia zia Pina mi dette una normale bici da donna da 26", e dopo 10 metri ero già indipendente.

Nel 1965, all'età di 14 anni, con un gruppo di Boy Scout, mio fratello di 13 anni ed io abbiamo viaggiato da Torino a Edinburgo in Scozia. Le nostre biciclette a tre rapporti erano equipaggiate con borse e tenda , e durante il viaggio siamo stati completamente autonomi.

Non ho mai smesso di pedalare le mie amate biciclette, nel 1999 ho portato a termine la Paris-Brest-Paris e nel 2002 sono andato a Nordkapp in bicicletta con le borse e la tenda.

### 3) Come e perchè hai cominciato il BIG challenge ?

L'emozione di salire i miti dei Pirenei e l'università della bici nelle Dolomiti e nelle Alpi, insieme con la profonda emozione di correre gare famose come Paris-Roubaix, Giro delle Fiandre e Tilff-Bastogne-Tilff. Decisi di partecipare al BIG Challenge dopo aver visto che le côtes belghe e i muri delle Fiandre erano compresi nella sfida.

### 4) C'è stato qualcuno che ti ha motivato all'inizio ?

Mi sono motivato da solo, ma allo stesso tempo Enrico Alberini nel 2008 mi ha incoraggiato a continuare seriamente il challenge.

### 5) In quale momento hai pensato: "Arriverò a 1000"?

Pedalando nelle nebbie della Bosnia, e dopo diversi viaggi oltremare, ho pensato che si poteva finirli tutti, ma solo nel 2017 ho capito che potevo farcela a completare i 1000 BIG.

### 6) Riguardo all'evoluzione del tuo score, quali sono stati gli eventi nella tua vita privata che lo hanno incrementato o frenato?

È stato molto importante avere una compagna come Cecilia che scalava i BIG con me.

### 7) Quali sono stati i paesi dove hai trovato le maggiori difficoltà per pedalare ?

Ho trovato difficoltà nei Balcani in generale, alcuni BIG in Montenegro, Bosnia e Macedonia sono stati esecrabili.

### 8) Quali sono i più bei paesaggi che hai incontrato ?

Provo una profonda gratitudine per gli ideatori del Challenge BIG, che ci hanno permesso di frequentare in bicicletta luoghi meravigliosi. I paesaggi più belli li ho trovati in Svizzera, Engstlenalp sopra tutti, nei monti Gergeti in Georgia, così come il Llac de Sant Maurici e altri in Spagna, nell'Atlante marocchino, nelle montagne austriache , I vulcani della Nuova Zelanda, i



templi Buddisti di Kyoto in Giappone, ma ovunque nel mondo ho incontrato paesaggi meravigliosi .

### 9) Hai pensato spesso: sto mettendo le mie ruote "dove I corridori professionisti hanno messo le loro" oppure "dove altri membri BIG l'hanno fatto"?

L'ho pensato, in particolare salendo sulla Redoute, il Muro di Grammont (Muur of Gerardsbergen) e il Colle delle Finestre.

Ho ripercorso la strada della caduta fatale di Roger Rivière, che inseguiva Gastone Nencini nella discesa che diede la vittoria del Tour 1960 all'italiano che divenne il mio campione preferito, e infine sulla discesa dal Portet d'Aspet con una preghiera recitata dove morì Casartelli.

### 10) C'è stata una competizione finale o gara fra quelli che alla fine erano vicini a completare il traguardo dei 1000 BIG ?

No, una simile competizione ha senso forse per il primo posto, ma anche in questo caso il primo finisher non poteva essere diverso da Etienne.

Tutti gli altri amici nelle prime posizioni dalla classifica mi hanno incoraggiato e sostenuto fino alla fine, in particolare nell'ultimo anno al meeting sul GSB del 25 giugno con Etienne, Marc e molti altri. Anche Ard e Heiko mi hanno incoraggiato salendo insieme a me il BIG Tron, ultima bestia della Norvegia, e infine hanno fatto un incoraggiamento in diretta per telefono sul 1000° BIG, Caldeira do Faial nelle Azzorre.

### 11) Quali sono i tuoi migliori ricordi sulle relazioni nel BIG world ?

Fra i miei migliori ricordi, il meeting BIG 2012 nei Carpazi, in Repubblica Ceca, Slovacchia e Polonia, dove con PresiDan, Wim, François, i fratelli Notten e i top Biggers ho festeggiato il mio BIG n. 500. Il bellissimo viaggio in Georgia nel 2018 con Ard, Heiko e Wim e molto bello l'incontro casuale e fortunato in Corsica con Helmut e Patricia nel 2011.

### 12) Hai dei brutti ricordi fra i 1000 ?

I ricordi spiacevoli sono presto dimenticati, tuttavia potrei ricordare alcune salite pericolose in Serbia (Iriski Venac) e Montenegro (Crkvine, old BIG), o strade difficili come il Babuna Pass in Macedonia, ma nulla ha mai fatto venir meno la passione

**13) Le molte lingue usate nel BIG Cycling World: questo rappresenta un interesse addizionale o è un problema per te?**

Amo le lingue straniere, mi trovo bene con il tedesco, lo spagnolo, il francese e ho studiato il russo per non avere difficoltà nei paesi dell'Est. Il BIG Challenge è stato per me una reale motivazione per imparare il russo, che ho usato in Bulgaria, Serbia, Ucraina, Slovacchia e Georgia.

**14) Pensi che il tuo tipo di passione sia molto simile nella maggioranza degli altri membri che hai incontrato?**

Penso di sì, quasi tutti i compagni che si sfidano nel BIG Challenge hanno la stessa passione di compiere salite mitiche e viaggiare in paesi diversi e lontani.

**15) Hai un buon feedback nel tuo paese, quando si parla di BIG ?**

Sì, molto, quasi tutti i miei amici di bicicletta ammirano il BIG Challenge o ne fanno parte.

**16) Pensi che il challenge nazionale Italiano darà un ulteriore interesse ai tuoi compagni italiani, e cosa pensi in generale delle sfide parallele, Ironbigs, Natasha ecc. ?**

Sicuramente sì, attendiamo con impazienza la pubblicazione dei Natasha Italia, che permetteranno di fare salite in luoghi meravigliosi e ricchi di storia. Le sfide parallele sono di grande interesse, sono un complemento e una buona attività quando non si possono fare lunghi viaggi, tuttavia non possono avere lo stesso fascino del Challenge BIG.

**17) Tra i tuoi 1000, quali sono stati i più difficili per le pendenze?**

I BIG dell'Austria sono veramente duri da salire, con pendenze estreme e talvolta salite molto lunghe, Oscheniksee, Zillertaler Höhenstraße and Großer Speikkogel, per nominarne alcuni.

**18) Cosa pensano la tua famiglia e i tuoi amici per questa passione di andare in bicicletta per l'Europa ?**

La mia famiglia e i miei amici conoscono e apprezzano la mia passione per i viaggi, per la bicicletta e per le collezioni di ogni genere.

**19) Hai qualche cattivo o spiacevole sensazione riguardo a tutti questi anni usati per completare i tuoi BIG ?**

Ho solo dei bellissimi ricordi, nulla da rimpiangere, grazie.

**20) Come vedi per il futuro la tua pratica di ciclista?**

Mi interessa molto viaggiare ancora in bici in Francia, Germania, Spagna, Belgio, Italia, per andare in paesi amici dei ciclisti. Ci sono molte sfide da fare, per esempio il challenge del Club des Cent Cols, i Monts de France e i Natasha della Germania. Aspetto anche con viva impazienza i Natasha Italia.

**21) Cosa vorresti dire a chi comincia il BIG adesso ?**

Il BIG Challenge è l'occasione per viaggiare e andare in bicicletta in tutto il mondo, per praticare uno sport bello e adatto a qualsiasi età della vita.

**22) Puoi riassumere il BIG in una corta frase ?**

Non avrei mai potuto vedere così tante parti del mondo senza il BIG Challenge, grazie infinite!

\*\*\*\*\*

**Congratulations to our Finicher 2020****1) What are your feelings reaching the arrival ?**

I felt a great gladness, a deep relief, but at same time I felt a sense of lack: and now, what have I to do? However this crisis was immediately over, there are many climbs and things to do in the life, including others BIG activities, as Natashas, goodfathering etc.

**2) Why and how did you begin to cycle ?**

I started cycle aging 6 in the Alps, in Gressoney Saint Jean. My aunt Pina give me a normal 26" lady bike, after ten meters I was independent. In 1965, aging 14, with a group of Boy Scouts, my brother aging 13 and me voyaged from Turin to Edinburgh in Scotland. Our bicycles were equipped with tents, during the trip we were completely autonomous. I never stopped to ride my beloved bicycles, in 1999 I completed the Paris-Brest-Paris and in 2002 I went to Nordkapp by bicycle with bags and tent.

**3) Why and how did you begin the BIG challenge ?**

I feel a great emotion climbing mythical passes in Pyrenees, and in the bicycle university in Alps and Dolomites. Same sensations I feel riding famous races as Paris-Roubaix, Ronde van Vlaanderen and Tilff-Bastogne-Tilff.

I decided to participate to the BIG Challenge after seeing in 2005 that Belgians côtes and Flemish cobbled climbs were part of the challenge. The sporty aspect was the most interesting for me at the beginning.

\*\*\*\*\*

**4) Was there someone who motivated you in the beginning ?**

I motivated myself, but in the meantime Enrico in 2008 encouraged me to continue seriously the challenge.

**5) At which moment did you think : "I'll reach 1000"?**

Cycling in the Bosnian fogs, and after several overseas trips, I got the desire to complete the challenge. Only in 2017 I realized that it was possible to reach 1000 BIGs.

**6) About your score evolution, were there events in your private life that increased or decreased it ?**

It was very important to me, to have a partner as Cecilia, to travel and climb BIGs together.

**7) What were the countries where you found more difficulties to cycle ?**

In general I found difficulties in Balkans countries, some climbs in Serbia and Montenegro were very dangerous for cyclists.

**8) What are the most beautiful sceneries (landscapes) that you met ?**

I feel enormous gratitude for the creators of the challenge, who allowed us to cycle in wonderful places. The most beautiful sceneries I found in Switzerland, Engstlenalp above all, and in Gergeti mountains of Georgia, as well the Llac de Sant Maurici and others in Spain, in Morocco Atlas, in Austrian mountains, the volcanoes of New Zealand, the Buddhist temples

of Kyoto in Japan, but all over the world I have met wonderful landscapes.

**9) Did you often think : "I put my wheels where professional racers put theirs" or "where other BIG members put theirs" ?**

I thought this, in particular cycling the Redoute and the Muur of Gerardsbergen and Colle delle Finestre.

I remembered also Roger Rivière on the Pyrenean descent, on the site where he fell, chasing Gastone Nencini, who then won the Tour de France 1960.

**10) Were there a final competition or race between those at the end who were near the Grail of 1000 ?**

Not at all, a similar competition it can only make sense for the first place, but in this case the first finisher it could only have been Etienne. All my friends in the top positions of standing supported and encouraged me, in particular on the Grand San Bernardo meeting on 25 June, with Marc, Etienne and others. Ard and Heiko encouraged me climbing together my last Norwegian BIG, Tron, and indirectly participating by phone by the final 1000th climb Caldeira do Faial in Azores.

**11) What are your best souvenirs of relationships sharing in the BIG world ?**

My best souvenirs are the meeting Big 2012 in Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland, were with Dan, Wim, François, brothers Notten and top Biggers we celebrated my BIG n. 500. The adventure in Georgia 2018 with Ard, Heiko e Wim. Last but not least, the chance to meet unexpectedly in Corsica Helmut and Patricia in 2011.



**12) What are your worst souvenirs inside the 1000 ?**

Unpleasant memories are quickly forgotten, however I can remember some dangerous climbs in Serbia (Iriski Venac) and Montenegro (Crkvine, old BIG), or difficult roads as Babuna Pass in Macedonia, but nothing has



ever made passion fail.

**13) The several languages used in the BIG Cycling World : is this an additional interest or a real problem for you ?**

I love foreign languages, I feel me good with German, Spanish, French, and I studied Russian with the aim of not having difficulties in Eastern countries. The Big Challenge was for me a real motivation to learn Russian, that I used in Bulgaria, Serbia, Ukraine, Bosnia, Slovakia and Georgia.

**14) Do you think that your kind of passion is very similar to the majority of the other members that you met ?**

I think so, almost all the companions who compete in the Big Challenge have the same passion for climbing mythical passes and traveling in different and far countries.

**15) Had you a good feedback inside your country when talking about the BIG ?**

Yes, fast all my bicycle friends admire the BIG challenge, and are part of it.



**17) Among your 1000, what are the most difficult ones with the slopes ?**

Austrian BIGs were very hard to climb, extreme and sometimes very long slopes, Oscheniksee, Zillertaler Höhenstraße and Großer Speikkogel, to name a few among all.

**18) What do your family and friends think about this passion for cyclo-climbing in Europe ?**

My family and friends know and appreciate my passion for bicycle, travels and all kinds of collections.

**19) Do you have any bad or sorry feelings somewhere about all these years used to build your score in BIG ?**

I have only good and positive feelings, nothing to regret, thank you.

**20) How do you see your future in your cycling practice ?**

I have still interest to ride in France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, to ride in friendly nations for the cyclists. There are many challenges to do, for example the challenges Club de Cent Cols, Monts de France and Natasha Deutschland. I'm also waiting with pleasure for the start of Natasha Italia.

**21) What do you want to say to those who begin the BIG now ?**

The BIG Challenge is a perfect occasion to travel and cycle all over the world, to practice a wonderful sport that adapts to every age of life

**22) Can you sum up BIG in one short sentence ?**

I would never have seen so many parts of the world without the BIG Challenge, thank you very much!

**16) Do you think that the national Italian challenge will give an additional interest to your fellow countrymen ? What do you think generally about the parallel challenges ?**

Surely, we all look forward to the publication of Natasha Italia. Parallel challenges are of great interest, they are a complement and a good activity when long journeys cannot be made, however they cannot have the same charm as the BIG Challenge.



## He passed away

Etienne Mayeur



Cet été au cours du Carrefour Mont Blanc il était prévu une rencontre BIG avec les membres italiens des 100 cols et de l'UIC à Aoste en vue de grimper tous ensemble au Grand Saint Bernard. A cette occasion j'espérais compter sur la présence de Georges Rossini membre actuel ou passé des 3 confréries et habitant non loin de là à proximité du lac Léman. Je savais que Georges n'était pas en grande forme lorsque quelques jours avant notre rendez-vous j'ai appris son décès. Notre ascension s'est muée en hommage à Georges. Celui-ci était l'organisateur des Randonnées Alpines Côte d'Azur-Léman et Thonon-Trieste entre autres. Jamais à cours d'idée, il était occupé à un nouveau challenge comprenant exclusivement des ascensions de l'arc alpin. Puisse ses héritiers mener à bien cette nouvelle aventure en concrétisant son projet.

Rencontré en 1985 chez lui au départ de ma première randonnée alpine, le courant était passé rapidement avec Georges. Il m'avait donné quelques conseils sur les étapes, le parcours et les hôtels. Il m'avait fourni une carte du Touring Club Italien impossible à trouver chez nous à l'époque.

Notre seconde rencontre eut lieu à Trento lors du rendez-vous annuel de l'UIC de 2007 où j'ai aussi eu la chance de rencontrer Jules Dejace et Jacques Franck avant de grimper tous ensemble le Monte Bondone ou Aldo Moser nous attendait au sommet pour la photo. A Sion en 2008 Georges méfiant sur la météo nous rejoint en voiture et fera des photos vers Moiry. Effectivement il ne fait pas bon il neige en ce mois d'août, certains s'en souviendront.

En 2011 je me joins une nouvelle fois à un Raduno de l'UIC. J'arrive tard, après 23h00, à Arta Terme où l'hôtel est déjà endormi...ou presque. 2 cyclos m'attendent : Jules Dejace et...Georges Rossini. Les vecchio ronzino comme ils aiment s'appeler ne sont pas allés se coucher pour me souhaiter la bienvenue et me guider vers ma chambre car le patron dort déjà lui aussi. Merci à eux et aux bons moments passés ensemble.

2016 est le moment choisi pour s'attaquer à la randonnée préalpine : Antibes-Thonon. Je prends le TGV jusqu'à Antibes avec mon vélo. Le train prend une heure de retard suite à un incident sur la voie et arrive vers 20h à destination. Sur le quai Georges m'attend, il me conduit à un hôtel tout proche et nous discutons sur ses futurs projets. Cette année-là, j'irai jusqu'à Grenoble en 4 jours avant de redescendre retrouver Laurence pour nos vacances au Mont Ventoux. C'est l'année suivante que je termine l'aventure et que je vois Georges pour la dernière fois en lui remettant en main propre ma feuille de route remplie de mes preuves de passage. Il m'invite chez lui et se presse d'homologuer ma réussite.

Merci à lui pour sa bonne humeur, convivialité, conseils et les magnifiques parcours en montagne issus de son imagination. Ciao Giorgio, tu manqueras à beaucoup de monde.





« Mais pourquoi tu grimpes à vélo ? ».

Combien de fois dans ma vie (bien remplie !) cette question ne m'a-t-elle pas été posée.



C'est peut-être le moment d'y répondre.

Je monte les cols à vélo simplement et tout d'abord parce que j'aime le vélo, l'effort, le dépassement de soi et surtout parce qu'il y a la montagne qui ne peut laisser l'âme humaine indifférente. Monter, c'est être curieux, aller voir ce qu'il y a de l'autre côté. Grimper, c'est jouer avec ses muscles et son corps, c'est se dépasser. C'est aussi goûter au beau et au bon. Bref monter, c'est atteindre le carrefour d'un ensemble de plaisirs divers et variés : la curiosité, la fête du corps, la joie esthétique, le dépassement et même la recherche de soi. Tous ces plaisirs diffus s'entremêlent en montagne et constituent le pain du randonneur. Plus simplement, je monte parce qu'en montagne je suis bien. Comme l'écrivait Michel Sébastien dans «Sommets pyrénéens : « La vérité en montagne comme ailleurs n'est écrite nulle part ; chacun doit la chercher ». Dans La Montagne et l'Homme, Georges Sonnier écrit de son côté: « L'immensité de la montagne ne se conçoit qu'à l'échelle de l'homme, qui lui donne sa mesure (...) En traiter, c'est traiter de l'homme en même temps ». Je peux dire aussi que je monte parce que la montagne à vélo donne le plaisir des sens.

A vélo, on profite du son et des odeurs. L'oreille écoute le cliquetis du riu et la complainte du vent. L'œil, étonné, découvre et apprécie la dentelle des crêtes sans cesse renouvelée, le bleu du ciel où bourgeonnent les nuages, l'éclat du névé blanc et, à l'occasion, la marmotte qui s'égayé mais, peureuse, lance un cri strident pour alerter ses congénères et se sauver à mon passage. Les parfums variés enivrent de joie : l'odeur particulière de la gentiane mêlée à celle plus forte des pins et des genêts ; l'odeur âcre de la terre après la pluie ou celle plus douce de la roche sous le soleil éclatant. Tous ces plaisirs sensoriels sont simples et vrais. C'est cette simplicité qui justement donne sa dimension à l'effort consenti. C'est cette simplicité qui constitue la joie de la découverte de chaque instant. Je conserve aussi le souvenir moins agréable, mais très rare, du coup de bambou à tel passage, de l'épuisement après l'effort total. Mais la joie de l'effort est à lui-même sa propre récompense. La randonnée ainsi vécue m'apporte le bien-être, le mieux-être tant physique que moral, bref une certaine philosophie. Quelle grande joie, quel grand plaisir lorsqu'arrivé au sommet d'un col, je m'attarde durant quelques instants pour communier avec cette nature. J'entre alors pour quelques instants dans son intimité, celle peut-être de son Créateur et j'apprécie la majesté et la plénitude des lieux et de l'instant pour un moment véritablement suspendu. Ce bonheur est alors sain et gratuit : il touche à celui du Grand Lama aux portes du Nirvana...



Le cyclisme de haute montagne suppose cependant un minimum de condition physique. Il n'est plus contesté que le cyclisme est un des meilleurs remèdes contre la sédentarité qui caractérise notre époque. A partir du moment où le cyclisme est pratiqué en ayant soin d'éliminer les facteurs de risque, on peut commencer à en retirer un réel profit pour la santé : cœur plus fort et au rythme plus lent, meilleure circulation sanguine, bien-être pendant et après l'effort, espérance de vie notablement accrue. C'est très à propos que Raymond Poulidor affirmait : « Si la vieillesse est un naufrage, la bicyclette est certainement l'un des plus sûrs moyens d'éviter la noyade ». Ce sport exige de respecter une hygiène de vie afin d'éliminer les facteurs de risque sous peine de précipiter les maux qu'il veut écarter. L'aspect le plus important est celui du cœur, cible principale des « ventres mous ». Même chez les sportifs confirmés, le cœur a parfois ses raisons que l'activité physique ignore : des morts subites de grands



sportifs sont là pour nous le rappeler. Que dire alors de tous ces sportifs anonymes du dimanche qui décèdent le week-end ? Il convient donc de s'astreindre à une hygiène de vie et d'éliminer principalement la surcharge pondérale.

De tout cela, je vais prendre réellement conscience lors du mois d'août 1982 lorsque je découvris la montagne à vélo: je pesais alors pas loin de 12 kg de trop par rapport à mon poids idéal, mon poids de forme pour bien grimper. Aussi, dès mon retour, je vais m'astreindre à un régime alimentaire sérieux basé essentiellement sur la prise en compte des calories. Pour maigrir, c'est simple : il suffit de dépenser plus de calories que celles que nous absorbons en nous alimentant ! Je deviendrai alors progressivement un véritable spécialiste capable de déterminer facilement la charge calorique des aliments habituels. A l'époque, j'appréciais encore un verre de vin rouge. Je ne buvais (et n'ai jamais bu) aucun autre alcool. Le souci c'est que je n'appréciais vraiment que les « grands bourgognes » très capiteux donc très caloriques. Dès que je m'en suis rendu compte et pour mettre toutes les chances de mon côté en vue de retrouver au plus vite mon poids de forme, je déciderai, un peu comme un... extrémiste, de radicalement bannir de ma vie l'absorption de vin rouge puisque de tous les autres alcools, il n'était déjà auparavant jamais question pour moi. Et très vite, je retrouverai une ligne plus en relation avec la pratique de mon sport. Et cette décision, je la tiendrai fermement et fidèlement jusqu'à ce jour.

Août 1982 sera donc pour moi le début d'une grande aventure avec la montagne. A vélo. Cette aventure me conduira sur les plus hauts sommets cyclables aux 4 coins du monde. Je poserai les roues de mon vélo sur les 5 continents.

Je termine ici en paraphrasant Antoine Blondin (« Joies de la bicyclette », Hachette, 1977) pour qui la haute montagne offre le privilège coutumier de retrancher une fois pour toutes les vrais cyclistes du reste des gens qui pratiquent la bicyclette pour aller au marché, redresser leur squelette ou faire fondre leur ventre. « Il mérite le beau nom de champion celui qui s'est fait porteur, par-delà les sommets, du message de bravoure et d'amitié que les vallées s'adressent depuis la nuit des temps. L'homme qui a franchi la montagne est chargé de prestige. Ce n'est plus une différence de qualité qui est en cause, c'est une différence de nature. Cet homme possède ses petites entrées à l'Olympe. Il échappe à la mesure commune ».

Stavelot, décembre 2020

Pierre SCHILLEWAERT



# Anglesey and Gwynedd September 2020

Kevin Speed

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Holmes Chapel to Chester, then coast road 116 miles.



An early start driving from home to Chester then the A55 coast road as far as Bangor where I took a coffee and toilet break then drove on over the wider Menai Bridge and followed the main road into Holyhead, turning off just at the approach to the town and parked up at Llaingoch on South Stacks Road at a small car park behind a bus stop at the edge of the village and cycled the country road, gorse and heather lined and took the first right and began the steep climb to the headland. It's so different this side of the island to the buzz of the port terminal. It's not too steep a road and soon reached the white lighthouse standing on a separate rock away from the main island and far below it. Due to the 2020 pandemic visiting the lighthouse wasn't possible. UKD351 **South Stack** From South Stack Road head north west

From there, back to the car then a 20 mile drive from Holyhead to Amlwch



UKD352 **Parys Mountain**. From Pen Cei Road and parking on the free car park to the east of Amlwch estuary. It's not a difficult route but slightly confusing without mobile phone mapping. On to Quay Street then right at T junction on to Machine Road at The Liverpool Arms. Heading west then south west over A5025, now on B5111 to top. There's an old mine working at the top, now disused. A car park at the top and an outdoor café. There was much quarry working here in the past. From the south (which I didn't cycle) start at City Dulas on A5025 head NW to Llan Ddulas cottages, Llanruddog then head west. From here driving 20 miles Amlwch to Llanddona and parked in the village and freewheeled down to the coast for the climb back up again through a covering of trees to an eventual clearing nearer to the top. Very quiet beach and narrow lane to the village to UKD353 **Llanddona** . From the coast headed north. Top at Owain Glyndwr Inn

From here to Beaumaris for a lunch stop of pasta and wine in my car with a view over the Menai Straits towards Snowdonia Mountains beckoning and my next climb 15 miles away from Llanddona over the other Menai bridge to the head of Llyn Padarn just short of Llanberis. Parking on the lip road at Pen-y-llyn at the head of the lake just before the Caernarvon road, headed over the bridge for Brynrefail then to the right on a narrow road skirting the north shore of the lake. The road leaves the lake and

climbs away through Fachwen and becomes steeper. Through Dinorwig village



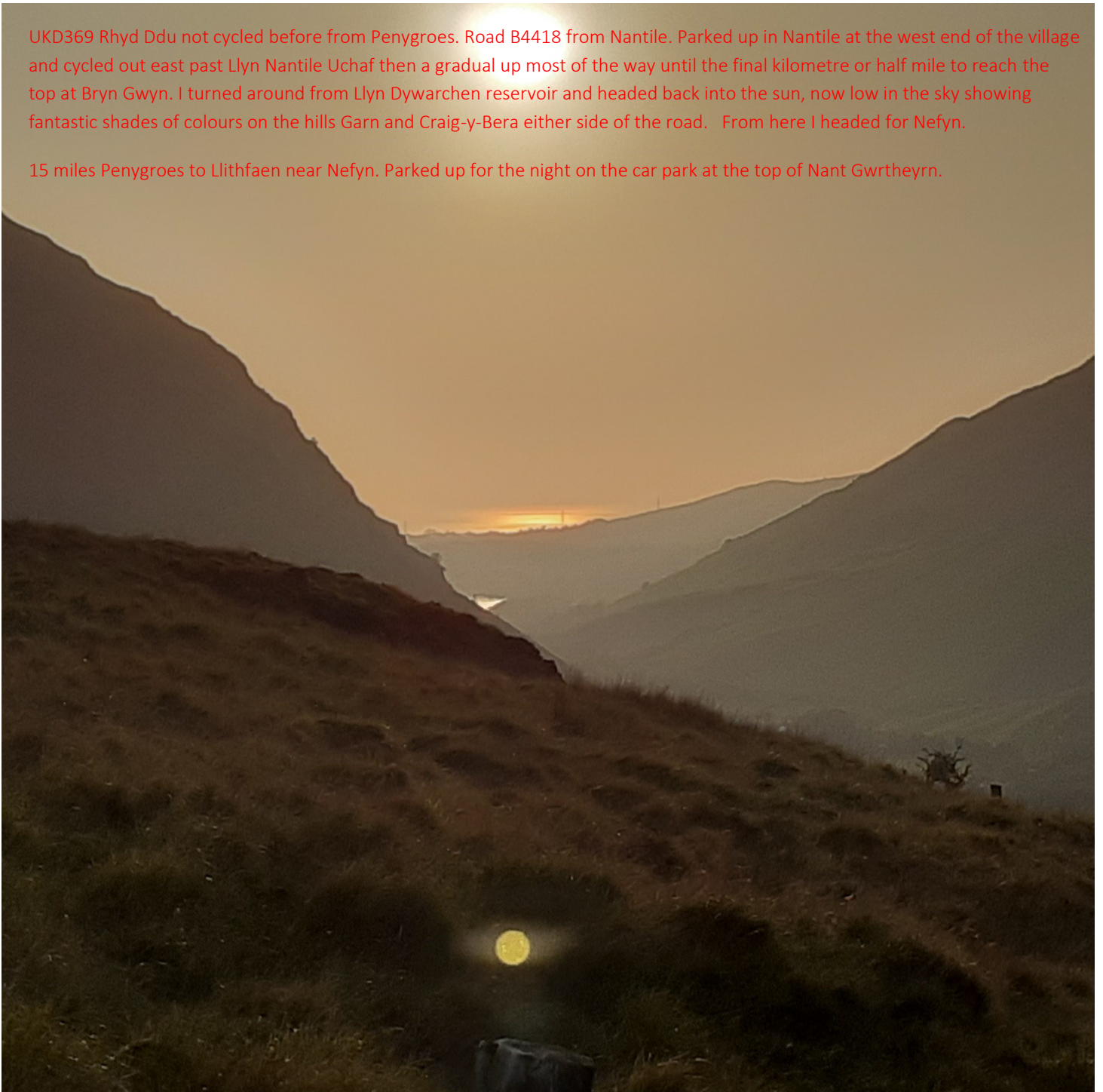
UKD367 **Marchlyn Mawr Reservoir** 8km heading south east from Brynrefail at north end of Llyn Padarn, Llanberis. Through Dinorwig to reach the reservoir. Parked at the loop road by the old cridge off the Caernarvon to Llanberis road. Cycled along the north shore of Llyn Padarn and past the end of the Llanberis Lake Railway then as the

road begins to leave the shore it's a sudden steep rise through Fachwen to Dinorwig village then headed north on a lesser climb to Tan-y-foel. From here a right turn and the start of serious climbing and open wild country. There's a metal gate barrier at Talywaen crossroads then a private unfenced road belonging to Welsh Water. No cars allowed along here but fine for cyclists. It's a long drag up for a mile to where the road bends begin. Two sweeping bends to the reservoir dam below Pillar of Elider rock escarpment. Great view across the lake and north west over the Menai Straits to Anglesey, over Parys Mountain and Holyhead, on a clear day like today the distinct greyish shape of the Isle of Man on the horizon. Later back down via Deiniolen and to the main road at Bryn Rhydd and south to the car.

20 miles Llyn Padarn to Penygroes

UKD369 Rhyd Ddu not cycled before from Penygroes. Road B4418 from Nantile. Parked up in Nantile at the west end of the village and cycled out east past Llyn Nantile Uchaf then a gradual up most of the way until the final kilometre or half mile to reach the top at Bryn Gwyn. I turned around from Llyn Dywarchen reservoir and headed back into the sun, now low in the sky showing fantastic shades of colours on the hills Garn and Craig-y-Bera either side of the road. From here I headed for Nefyn.

15 miles Penygroes to Llithfaen near Nefyn. Parked up for the night on the car park at the top of Nant Gwrtheyrn.



Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2020

UKD370 Nant Gwrtheyrn N 1.7km. SW 5.8km. North though shorter is more difficult. Top is just south of Llithfaen near Yr Eifl car park.



Up from Nant Gwrtheyrn or from Nefyn. An early start at 07.00 and slowly descended the steep road to Vortigerns Valley and the coast cafe and walkers' route along the coastal path. No one else there except a delivery van bringing in supplies to the cafe. I had a look around the area – so peaceful. Climbing back up it's a 25% for sure, along a narrow but good surface road with bracken and woods but fortunately not on the coastal side so there's great views looking back down into the valley and across to the heights of Yr Eifl, the extinct volcano shape that dominates the whole area. It was so steep down that thought there would be difficulty staying on the bike for the return but I did and surprised that it was shorter than thought. Perhaps my mind was occupied in taking in the glorious view on the way. At the top, back to the car, grabbed my wallet and mask and made off down the other side of the mountain for Nefyn in search of breakfast. I passed through Pistyll – a narrow road with parked cars blocking but OK cycling. On to Nefyn and Morfa Nefyn. I had in my mind a beach cafe I remember some years back but when I reached there it was closed, due to the virus. I tried another road, a long straight road uphill that led to the golf course and cafe there but again, this was closed. Back to Nefyn and found the only hotel there, Gwesty Nanhoren Arms, where I enjoyed a good fry-up and plenty of coffee for a reasonable price – very reasonable considering I slept in the car last night! Revitalised I cycled back through Pistyll and the gradual climb back to Llithfaen. The section after Pistyll to Llithfaen is steep but not as steep as the short rise from the village up to the car park at the top of the climb. Reunited with the car and bundling the bike back in, I drove a good distance south west to Rhiw along the narrow B4417 then south from Four Crosses to Rhiw village.

18 miles Llithfaen to Rhiw



UKD371 Rhiw Hill. 3km from coast through Rhiw top slightly to west of the hill

Cycling downhill steeply to the coast, left turn from the top then return from Hells Mouth back to the top on a steep, narrow road with high hedges. From there I continued on to Aberdaron on the direct minor road. Plenty of tourists milling around the small centre here so on with the mask. An interesting place that we've visited in the past and no doubt will again so about turn and back up the steep hill out of the village then an easier ride until reaching the lower slopes of Mynydd Rhiw. Continuing through the village past the car and took a left then a right turn up to the final left turn up to the transmitters on the top of Rhiw Mountain / Mynydd Rhiw. From here great views looking across both coastlines, Aberdaron, Porthmadog area and Snowdonia in the distance. Back to the car for the next climb and heading east again for Porthmadog. Drove 26 miles Rhiw to Prenteg via busy Pwllheli.



**UKD 372 Llyn Du..** From Pwllheli and Criccieth then through Tremadog to Prenteg on the A498 Beddgelert road. Situated north of Porthmadog and 2.2km From Prenteg heading west. It's a steep climb from the start of the village, very steep and no respite. Mainly up through a line of woods and loose stone walls and emerging half way at a clearing. Two cattle grids to negotiate along the way which can be dangerous on a wet day as their on the steep gradient however fortunately today was dry. Fantastic view from the top over Tramadog Bay along to Rhiw Mountain one way and to the south over Harlech towards Barmouth. Later back to the car and drove 12 miles to Blaenau Ffestiniog

**UKD373 Stwlan Dam** 3.4km From Tanygrisiau at the top of the lake, at north west corner head north away from the lake, following river that's on the right to reach Stwlan Dam. Today though this was a failure. I couldn't find the correct road so I need to make a return visit. (Went again the following week – and eureka!) My road ended slightly north of where I should have been in Tanygrisiau. I asked a girl the way but she was high on drugs! "Shake my hand" she said" No, because of the Covid" I said "Well give me a kiss then" and she came towards me so backed off quickly. "Oh, OK then – has to be elbow touches" I agreed to that, but she sent me to the wrong place. I should have set my mobiles sat-nav but would it show a

private road? I came to the end of the road above the village where a stoney path begins. This definitely wasn't the way so turned back and steeply back down to village under the Ffestiniog line bridge and back to the car. Hairpins to top (on the correct route!). Drove south to Pengwern then A496 to Maentwrog then south on A497 to Trawsfynydd and filled up with petrol in the village for the final time on this trip then south again to Rhiw Goch

#### **UKD375 Blwch –Pen-y-Feidiog..**

From WE 8.5km 2 miles south of Trawsfynydd reservoir parked by a large group of wooden holiday homes for the final climb. The route took me over two junctions and turning left so had to remember because there was a possibility that I might be losing daylight on the descent. This was a fantastic wild open country climb but it was a very lonely climb. Except for one mobile home parked up for the night halfway up to the top of the climb there wasn't a soul. I thought part way up if I have a problem here, I'd have to call on them, but didn't. The route took me over three cattle grids and at about a third of the way there are steep sections and again towards the top where the metal gate is reached and this is the only gate on the road from the west side. Back down again the same way with glorious views of the mountains in front and the setting sun so needed sunglasses as well as the jacket for the descent.

Back to the car just as night fell then headed out for Bala, north on A470 then east from Trawsfynydd on A4212 past Llyn Celyn to Bala then headed for Corwen but at Ty'n-y-cefn headed north east on A5104 via Llandegla and Broughton to Chester then A54 home at 22.00



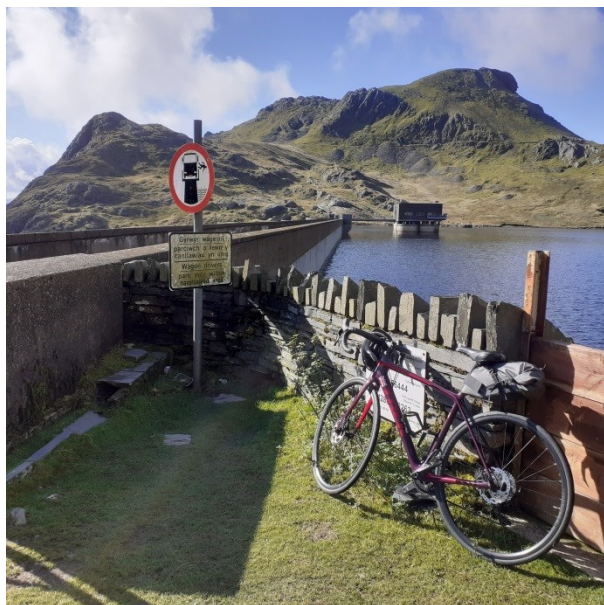
## 2020 Mid Wales

## Kevin Speed

Thursday 1st October 2020

Drove Holmes Chapel, Chester, North Wales coast road, an early start from home via Chester then the A55 coast road to Llandudno Junction at the head of the Conwy Valley then headed south inland to Blaenau Ffestiniog 102 miles in 2.5 hours. From just south at Blaenau at Tanygrisiau parked up

UKD 373 Stwlan Dam, 3.4km from Tanygrisiau at the top of the lake and at the north west corner away from the lake, following the river that's on the right to reach



Stwlan Dam, Hairpins close to top under the wall of the dam. Great scenery looking back from the straight stretch in the middle of the climb. Taled to some walkers and asked them to photo me on the climb and send to my 'Whatsapp', which they did. It took an hour to reach the top. The reservoir is surrounded by hills rising sheer around the water. 10.15 to 12.00

Drive 15 miles Tanygrisiau to Harlech road A496 to Maentwrog then continue on A496 to Harlech but keep right following the coast into Harlech at the foot of the castle. Car parking at Premier shop opposite Queens Hotel 45 minute drive

UKD 374 Fford Pen Llech Harlech 1.8km Start from A496 below Harlech Castle then take an acute left turn immediately after crossing the level crossing on to Hwylfar Nant Groes, soon a right turn then extremely steep up Fford Pen Llech and over main road in Harlech village and continue up on Strydd Fawr and along Pen Dref to top at crossroads at Rhiwgoch 1.5 hours. 12.30 to 13.15 From the foot by Harlech station the road rises abruptly and around the first bend the 43% gradient is encountered so it means dig in and head over the handlebars and struggle up. I managed a short section but soon had to get off the bike. In doing so I bust a shoe cleat but only discovered it on the way down later. From the higher part of Harlech the road is not as steep and later it eases off approaching the crossroads at the top by a chapel. Great views over Tremadog Bay to Porthmadog on the way back down. On the way there's an old stone baptistry on the left.

Drive 22 miles Harlech to Arthog 45 minutes via Barmouth then toll road £1.00 or via Dolgellau. Park at foot of next climb in a wider section of the main road.

UKD 378 Llynau Cregennen 3.3km heading south from Arthog from Afon Arthog east of the village then an acute right turn heading for Cregennan Lakes 45 minutes. 15.00 to 16.30 Car left near Arthog at the foot of the climb on



the Dolgellau road. An interesting area of lakes that for me resembles Covadonga lake area in Asturias, Spain – but in miniature of course. Beyond the lakes rises Cadair Idris, this being the closest road to the mountain



Drive 14 miles Arthog to Cross Foxes, south east of Dolgellau 30 minutes

UKD 379 Cwm Ratgoed From the north 3.6km from Cross Foxes Inn, parking there A470 east of Dolgellau then head south on Machynlleth road for blue sign indication via 2 hours. From the gate around the left side of a wooded area and the woods. From there, massive wooded area , again. From the south north to top 4.1km car was parked at Cross open before the Welsh a long straight mile the climb. From the pub minutes and a further 28 for the night and slept in at Waun-fawr on finding Cefn Lan climb for the dark along the Aberystwyth Total time = 12 hours



1.5km then follow Sustrans route, metal gate on the left then climb. the narrow road rises steeply the hill and continues up to reach another gate just before the top in down the other side into a down to Aberllefenni then back up starting at Aberllefenni, head (harder route). 17.15 to 18.45 The Foxes pub car park which was Covid lockdown. From there it was cycling to the gate off the road for drove 20 miles to Machynlleth 30 miles to Aberystwyth. Parked up the car outside of town at a lay-by Machynlleth road after first the morning and a brief walk in waterfront and pier in

Friday 2nd October 2020



UKD 382 Cefn Lan From road Rhiw Brialli then left at fork on to Cefn Lan. Ignore road off to right that is also Cefn Lan but main section Cefn Lan continues to road coming from left at an angle – then to the top. Only 1km but extremely steep 30 minutes 08.30 to 09.30. Just in time to meet the university and schools drop off as Cefn Lan is lined with both places – and the road lined with traffic dropping off their little darlings. After a night in the car this short but very steep climb woke me up. The first part of the climb is at least 25% and no fun on a crowded road. From here back into the town to find a cafe for breakfast. I asked around and was directed to the best one called ‘Sophie’s’ and was given a table away from others but on the other side of the window and outside was a woman chain smoking so my breakfast although good didn’t help my enjoyment of it. Later away from the town along A487 to Talybont, halfway along to Machynlleth and parked up for the next climb

UKD 381 Nany-y-Moch 8.3km. Heading east just north of river bridge on main road in Talybont north of Aberystwyth. Following the Afon Coulan stream to its head with a long sweep to the right that ends at a col –



steep rocks on either side. From here over to Nant-y-Moch Reservoir and returned back the same way. On approaching my car again I saw an incredible sight. A woman was crawling underneath my car! She explained to me when I asked her what she was doing “Oh, I was looking for my car key. I dropped it down here earlier” I backed up the car so she could retrieve it. 2 hours 10.45 to 12.00 at top, 12.30 at bottom and car.

From Talybont to Machynlleth then west along the north side of the Dovey estuary to Aberdovey. UKD 380 Aberdovey Panorama Walk 2.5km from Aberdovey waterfront 1 hour.

Parked along the waterfront and cycled inland from the church on the front high up to a caravan and mobile home park then a right turn on to the Panorama Walk along to what’s signposted from the waterfront as ‘The Bearded Lake’. This is the view from the top of the Panorama Walk down into a valley of dense trees – the bearded lake. From the top there’s great views looking south along the coastline 14.00 to 15.00. From here my intention was to drive 38 miles to Dinas Mawddwy 1 hour and cycle

UKD 377 Bwlch-y-Groes. Not cycled from south or north 8.7km from Llanuwchllyn B4403 south of Lake Bala / Llyn Tegid, heading east then first right after crossing the river, then follow the river upstream. From the south side at Dinas Mawddwy 5.6km extremely steep from Llanymawddwy. 3 hours. 15.00 to 18.00 Total 11.5 hours.

The weather turned nasty – terrific storm on the way north of Machynlleth – so decided to continue on to Bala and head home via Corwen, Llangollen and Chester. Totalled 341 miles



## South West England

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2020

### Day 1



Dover's Hill UKD 271 It was extremely disappointing that it wasn't possible to cycle the Land's End to John O' Groats adventure with my European friends because of the lockdown in parts of the UK and also there were travel restrictions for European nationals. If they were to come to the UK it would have meant that they would have to self isolate in the UK for two weeks before meeting with other people and also they would have to provide an address to the border control and stay at that one address. This of course wasn't feasible so the trip was called off at the start of August. I really wanted a cycling holiday and had set my mind on south west England to cycle – well the hilly bits anyway- so I planned a route that would take me there in stages but driving the distance with cycle climbs of the B.I.G. National Challenge (Natacha) en-route. Starting at 07.45 I drove the M6 to the junction with the M5 and left the motorway at junction 6 and took the B4084 to Evesham. From there it was the B4035 from Worcestershire into Gloucestershire and to the village of Weston–sub-Edge for the first challenge. I parked the car at the edge of the village by a farm gate with space for one car by the side of it then out with the bike and took Church Road by the side of the church, signposted Chipping Campden and headed for **Dover's Hill UKD 271**, **30minutes** climb. The first part is an easy section but after passing the houses the road rises and soon becomes steeper and high banks each side of the road as it winds its way up through an avenue of trees. At the top on the left is a National Trust sign indicating Dover's Hill. The way forward from the road is across a well-worn field to a viewpoint with an orientation plate at the top and a great view north. From here back down to car, stopping at the book exchange red telephone box on the way, then through Mickleton to just before Ilmington where the climb to Larkstoke Hill starts. This is the most northerly section of the Cotswold Hills. It wasn't easy to find and had to back-track from Ilmington to the only road heading south from before the village and parked up at a dirt lay by at a wide bend then to the un-signposted lane heading uphill. It was obvious really when a bunch of cyclists passed me as I bundled the bike out of the boot and they turned off on to the narrow lane heading up. It's a stiff climb of approx 15% for about 2km to reach the top at radio masts. Much of the road has a central grass ridge so not well used by traffic. From here back to the car and I now had a long drive heading south west as far as Bath, about two hours drive with traffic hold ups at Stow in the Wold. First I took a peak at Broadway Tower having visited it last in the 1970's – cycled the whole way then from home. At the time it was a peaceful place but now it's a real tourist attraction and nowhere to park without paying and queuing so gave it a miss. I'll cycle this area again in the future but driving here would be an effort. Police caes at the road entrance and didn't want to find a 'private' place to park and walk and perhaps they observed me doing a quick entrance and exit to the tower area.

Continuing on, the route was the A44 then A424 through Stow – slow Stow- as I was caught up in slow moving traffic and breathed a sigh of relief to eventually reach open road again but still a lot of traffic but at least it was moving, sometimes too slow and I really wanted to reach Bath in good time to cycle and reach my planned destination for a night's kip in the car. I took the A429 through Northleach and Cirencester then the A433 through Tetbury and A46 for Bath but turned off at Cold Ashton crossroads and the lane heading south on the Bristol road for Sir Bevil Grenville's Monument. Just south of this and near a school was a lay-by so parked and out with the bike looking for Weston Hill. First of all I went down to Beckfords Tower and down to the city on a steep road then back up again and on to the left on Lansdown Lane and down to Weston realising just how steep this road was for the return ride back up. From the roundabout i stayed on the bike for the 20% climb, more difficult toward the end of the climb once past all the buildings. **Weston Hill UKD 278** . It took me ½ an hour then back to the car and realised I needed petrol. I'd driven almost 200 miles and needed a fill up quickly, and remembered there was a garage at Cold Ashton so rather than wate time around Bath, filled up there then on for the final climb in the Bath area, **Prospect Place UKD 279**. The best way to reach this and avoid confusion of city streets was to continue on the Bristol to Chippenham road then head south after passing through Marshfield and head for Batheaston. I parked up on a steep hill down on Bannersdown Road just short of the River Avon at West View Road then out with the bike and cycled down to the river then across to Bathford then first left on to Bathford Hill and began the climb. It's certainly a steep climb up – first off up to the edge of the city and end of Bathford in Ashley Wood then back and first left up the continuing climb up Prospect Place and **Farleigh**

Rise to Monkton Farleigh then back to car. From here I drove 32 miles into Wiltshire from Avon along the A4 through Chippenham and Calne to Avebury. After Calne I see

the area of the white chalk horses for the first time and the first one on Cherhill Down on the rise up to Avebury. Lansdowne Column and the Cherhill White Horse are very interesting on the slopes of the downs. I didn't stop at Avebury but passed through slowly to catch sight of the large upright stones along the road on this side of the village. The centre of the village is encompassed by a perfect circle of ancient stones but I didn't take the half mile turn-off to the centre as I wanted to complete my last climb of the day before dark. From here 3 miles to Broad Hinton through Avebury and parked by the village hall. The pub in the centre was buzzing – everybody socially distancing. There was an hour or so of daylight left bundled the bike out and cycled **Hackpen White Horse UKD 280** 2.3km, easy as far as Fiddlers Hill over the crossroads then steeply up 200 metres, a left bend then a right bend in front of the white horse and reached the top by a small car park where the Ridgeway intersects the climb. I left the bike and wandered up to the chalk horse for a closer look.

On the way back it started to rain but not much. Returning back down to the car in the village there are great views looking back to the chalk figure with a rainbow backdrop. I had a chicken salad and some wine in the car then drove on. I planned to reach the foot of my next climb for first action in the morning. I passed through Marlborough and it's impressive Georgian architecture and wide main street; so wide cars could park in the centre of the town. I didn't stop but passed through slowly and on to Hungerford and from Wiltshire into Berkshire. I stopped to buy a kebab and chips and a bottle of wine from the Co-op then drove along the lanes using my mobile's sat-nav as it was now dark. I parked up for the night in Inkpen village at the solitary pub car park. Due to the pandemic the pub wasn't open so I slept in the car at the car park for the night, phoned Ruth, had another Aldi salad and wine to ensure sleep would happen soon and nodded off, well off the road but it was only a quiet lane and very little traffic. I had driven 256 miles today from home and parked up for the night at 20.00



**Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

**Day 2**



complete with the cross-piece of the gibbet. People were hung from here so that the local populace could be reminded of what happens when you break the law- a bit gruesome. To get here from the road it's a well worn, wide stony track that's possible to cycle as not steep. Back down to the car – and another red telephone box book depository – and this time I took a couple of books. From here on Hurstbourne Tarrant to the south along a pleasant quiet valley, and into Hampshire from Berkshire. There were plenty of cyclists along here and felt obliged to wind

Sleep was good through the night, only woke up once – and there was an outside toilet behind the pub. I thought it best to drive out of the pub and park in the village triangle. I asked a local to point out the way to Coombe Gibbet hill as it wasn't signposted in the village. I had parked the car close to it. Early on the day I cycled to **Combe Gibbet (Walbury Hill)** NW from Inkpen 2.5km, S from Netherton 5km **UKD 318 1 hour**. I enjoyed cycling in unfamiliar countryside as the smooth chalk hills are so different from the ruggedness of climbs in the north or Wales. The lower slopes of Walbury Hill are gentle and no problem but it gets steeper towards the top. I cycled to the left at the top where there's a memorial to the paratroopers who dropped behind German lines at the start of D-Day to secure positions and soften up the enemy, Prior to D-Day they had used the slopes of Walbury Hill as training ground jumps from aircraft. From here across to the higher hill where there was a large wooden pole. I didn't know, having not read up on the area beforehand, that this was Coombe Gibbet –



down the window to apologise for disturbing their peace as I was the only car for miles..

Drove south over to Hurstbourne Tarrant. From here rejoining the main road A343 10 miles then 10 miles south to Andover and 12 miles south to Stockbridge on B3057 **1.5 hours**. Winton Hill is part of Stockbridge, east of the small town and just a slight rise above it so that can't be the hill. The road continues on to Stockbridge Down so took that to be the top for **Winton Hill UKD 320** from Stockbridge 1.5km **1 hour** The car was parked at the smaller Stockbridge Down car park on the left, over the rise, 2 miles out from Stockbridge. From there I freewheeled down to the small town and noticed the Winton Hill road sign just before the foot of the hill. I went around the roundabout into the town where both the sides of the road were barricaded off to stop parking and aid easier social distancing. One feature of the town is the barred off stream running alongside the road on the left from the roundabout. On the other side of the road a few of the buildings have wooden balconies. We saw similar styles of building in Swellendam, South Africa but it's unusual here. Up again from the roundabout to the top and I lifted my bike over a stile to the left and rode up the grassy hill to the top of Stockbridge Down for the view, the other side of the small wood. From here to the car then took the road west to Salisbury.

From Stockbridge A36 15 miles to Salisbury for Old Sarum **UKD 283 Camp Hill** 2.4km cycle on Amesbury Lane following River Avon. **2 hours**

Before reaching the city I parked on Aldi car park to check the map and set the mobiles sat-nav voice for Stratford via Old Sarum then took the turn for Amesbury. Along the main road at Old Sarum parked up on the right, opposite the entrance



then crossed the busy road for a short walk around the outer perimeter of the mound. There wasn't time to waste exploring Old Sarum itself, that's for the future. From the mound I could see Salisbury Cathedral. On from here then the next left for Stratford, skirting the northern edge of Old Sarum, another left and parked up in the village. It was a very warm sunny day as I bundled the bike from the boot and cycled over the Avon and took the next left for the climb to Camp Hill, the top itself just to the north of the junction meeting the main road. Nothing at the top, it's just the climb that's the interest, being a fairly steep winding road with a wide left bend to the top. Back to the car, then drove back to the bridge where I'd seen a bench by the river and enjoyed another chicken salad with wine.

Drove on from Salisbury along to Woodford on the Avon then west to Stapleford and the A36 north west 21 miles to Warminster along the Wyllye Valley for Longleat **1hour**.| Passing through Warminster, parked the car at a lay-by between the town and the Longleat entrance roundabout, having tried first to park nearer to at a National Trust car park past the roundabout but this was full. I cycled through the entrance on the Frome road and followed Longcombe Road from A362 to quaint Horningsham village then back up the hill to the entrance road and found a road to the left of it where cyclists were going so I followed them as this is a parallel wide track.

I was told this led to a bike hire point but it also leads to an intersection behind the entrance gates and at the top of Park Hill. From here free-wheeled down **Park Hill UKD 282** to Longleat House and stop for photos and along the level drive to the exit then return to Longleat House and climb back up the hill with views of the animals at the safari park down below to the left, mainly camels and rhinos. It's a tough climb 2 hours total cycling.



(From the North: M4 (J18) – A46 towards Bath – A36 towards Salisbury. Longleat is just off the A362 between Warminster and Frome.)



From Warminster drove A350 19 miles to Shaftsbury to cycle **Gold Hill UKD 286** 0.2km. **1.5 hours**. Here I in road a second fill of petrol at Tesco garage then parked on the edge of the town by the main road and made my way along narrow streets to find Gold Hill. First I kept the brakes on and carefully descended the cobbles to the bottom then phlysiched myself up to begin the climb. A girl was taking photos of buildings at the bottom so suggested to her that I was about to attempt to cycle the cobbles to the top of Gold Hill. I was hoping that she would have then she could send me the photos on Whats App! She didn't but when I reached the top I saw a guy taking photos of me so asked if he could send them on to me. He promptly did. Drove 28 miles south on A350 then south west on A354 to Dorchester **1 hour** then 30 minutes heading north on A352 Sherborne road to Cerne Abbas and parked just off the main road at the viewpoint for the Cerne Abbas Giant. Cycle **Cerne Abbas Giant UKD 287** 2km **1 hour** From there into the village then up the steep hill through the woods to the right of the giant took a left turn at the top and along the lane to the caravan site on the brow of the hill that marks the top, back down again to the car and changed clothes as it was getting dark now and this was the best place to change. From there to Dorchester. (Total 6 climbs today). I set the mobiles sat-nav to direct me to my accommodation as it was dark when I entered Dorchester **Total 9.0 hours Overnight at Bay Tree House, 4 Athelstan Road**. I was directed to a pub 10 minutes away on the Wareham road and ate well. I needed the bed tonight as two nights together sleeping in the car is not good. Total mileage 403 cumulative.

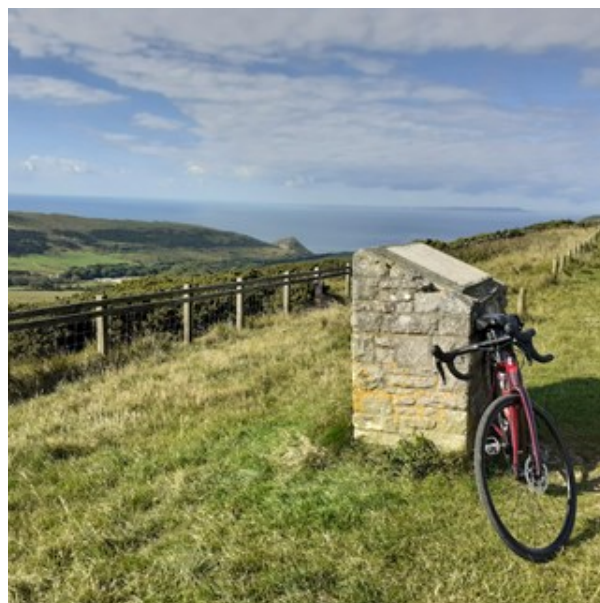
### Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020

### Day 3

Ten miles east to Wareham then cycled **Purbeck Hill UKD 290** (09.30 to 11.20) from

south of Wareham **1.5 hours** 5.4km. My parking point was Grange Gate red telephone box (no books – it's a working phone!) There's parking at the woods there at the foot of Purbeck Hill. The rise is 25% up through the woods on the north side of the long hill but it's not a long struggle. At the top the view is magnificent, taking in the whole stretch of coast from the Isle of Wight and the Needles with Poole Harbour and Hengistbury Head nearer to – then across the other way to Portland Bill.

At the top of Purbeck Hill there's a wide grassy area for parking, flying a kite or riding a bike. I did the latter. I enjoyed the views up here so much that it was worth exploring further so continued on along the ridge then down the other side to East Lulworth village. It even has a red telephone box book exchange point! I didn't take anything. Back up the hill and helped a girl reattaching a chain who told me she couldn't get back on the bike on a hill. Told her to cycle down a few yards then turn around in the road – now that's a good idea – it worked. Further on along the ridge I took a right for Tyneham village that's just the same as it was in the 1940's. It even has a telephone box! This time it's a grey one as in the 1940's. This village is inside the military training area and when manouvers happen tanks roll through here. Back up the steep hill then over the top and back down to the car. On the way down is an interesting large house in its own grounds just before Creech Bottom. From here back to Wareham and drove 10 miles west to Weymouth. On the way stopped to look at the white horse and rider called the Osmington White Horse. Drove on over causeway but this took awhile as there was plenty of traffic passing through Weymouth. Most of it though was heading for Weymouth . I was passing through to Portland Bill. Traffic over the causeway was plenty though. Just over the causeway I found a parking spot near the marina to cycle Portland Bill, **Verne Hill UKD 289** 1 hour 2.5km. From Victoria Square, next to where the car was parked, the climb begins gradually along Fotuneswell and much steeper at Verne Hill Road to the left where I turned off on to this much quieter road leading to the top.



It's narrow with parked cars all along the road to the right so hoped no traffic was coming down. I was fortunate and reached the sharp right bend on Glacis, in front of the Victorian prison gate. From here to the right its open ground with a farm zoo 'Fancys Farm' the left. From here along New Ground along the edge of the hill with views across Chesil Beach and Portland Harbour. Along here are information boards on the area around including the history of quarrying Portland stone. At the end of the road and at the highest point at Priory Road there's a ring of upright Portland stones opposite The Heights



Hotel. From here I took the main road, New Road, back down to the causeway and my car. From there it was an 18 mile drive on B3157 west to Abbotsbury. I had some problem parking here and felt sorry for the people who live in this pretty village that have to put up with the volume of traffic passing through on the narrow road. There were even lorries threading their way between the old stone cottages so close to the road. I found a place just beyond the village then cycled to the junction for Martinstown. This took me to **Hardy Monument UKD 288 1.5 hours** 6km up and along a pleasant lane to Black Down with great views over to Weymouth and a group of ships leaving port. Over a crossroads then a short way to the tall monument in memory of Vice Admiral Sir Thomas Hardy, a commander at the Battle of Trafalgar, great views of the coast from the top. The road isn't particularly steep, the steepest section was leaving Abbotsbury. From here back to the car and drove the coast road to Bridport with plenty of views along the coast from the ridge heading down to the town. From there heading north through Broadwindsor's confusing one-way road system through the small village. On past the Perrot villages and joined the main road at Haselbury then slowly on looking for East Chinnock for the next climb. I parked in the village and found the next climb on my list starting opposite the large church on the main road. Cycled **Chinnock Hollow UKD 285** 1km from East Chinnock **30 minutes** from the A30. The rise up here short but steep passing through a literal hollow as the road is an overgrown cutting with high banks of rock and tree roots, trees jutting out of the rock. The way up is through a dark canopy of trees to an open clearing and to crossroads at Odcombe. Back down to the car and on through Yeovil then north 18 miles to Compton Dundon just south of Street. Parking up in the village and had to ask at the village pub the way to **Admiral Hood Monument UKD 284** from Compton in SW or Butleigh Wooton in NE. **2 hours** as there was no indication of how to get to the monument on Windmill Hill. The turn was to the right by a white house at a small road junction. From here a short way then a left turn and up a steep rise through a tree lined shade to a wider lane at a 'T' junction. I took the left – but should have been right as soon found out so back along and headed for Butleigh as I knew this was the other way to the top. Just before the descent spotted a gap of two large stones and the beginning of an overgrown path and could see the monument through the dense canopy of trees and wheeled the bike the short distance to the monument in a clearing. It wasn't well kept; just some thrashing away at the tall grass around the monument. Admiral Hood wouldn't have been well pleased. On top of the tall monument is a ship. From here looking north there is a gap through the trees heading directly to Glastonbury Tor which is clearly visible in the distance. I followed the lower path down through the undergrowth to rejoin the lane climbed up and back to the car. I changed from cycling clothing and put on warmer clothes for sleeping in the car later. My next climb would be from west of Taunton in the morning so now I took the road heading west through Somerton and Langport at dusk and into Taunton just as it was getting dark. I searched for a pub where I could buy a meal but nowhere where I could leave the car so passed through and found a good pub at Wilton on the edge of the town. Here I enjoyed a mixed and two Guinness to help me sleep. I had no intention of driving on and slept at the pub's car park well away from the road. Some wine in the car brought on sleep quickly enough.

Drive to Taunton, 30 miles A30 to Chard, A358 north to Taunton. A38 Wellington. **1 hour Total 9.5 hours** (Total 6 climbs) sleep in car

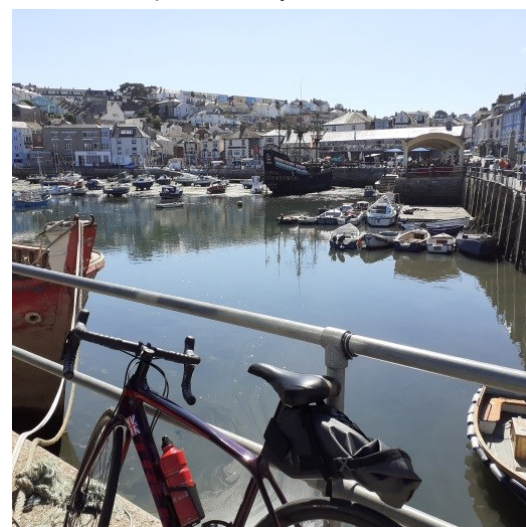
09.00 to 20.30 Total mileage 538 cumulative

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020

Day 4

Awake early and used the pub's facilities as it was open for breakfast but I didn't succumb but would eat later – still full up from last night! I parked up on Barnes Mead Road, Wellington then cycled Monument Road to Wellington Hill and over the M5 then steeply up the hill, especially the final section where there are sharp road bends to the crossroads at the Devon boundary. From here a right turn for a short way then a right turn into the woods and cycled under the avenue of trees in a dead straight line that led to the **Wellington Monument UKD 296 1 hour** 3.1km. at the highest point on the Blackdown Hills. The monument is undergoing restoration currently and is covered completely with scaffolding so it resembles something like a Cape Canaveral moonshot. It was disappointing so must pay a return visit after it's completed next year. From here driving along the A38 heading for Exeter and stopped off to have breakfast just before the fast road to the south west. I was soon in the Exeter area but then wasted too much time looking for the road heading north away from the city. It would have been better if I had taken the lane through Huxham and Stoke Canon on to the Tiverton road from the A38 and reached Cowley without having to pass through the city but as usual with city streets I was confused and lost! I was directed from a garage and set my mobiles sat-nav that took me through the centre of the city. I parked up by the road join for Tiverton and Barnstaple roads and took the small road to the right from that roundabout - Wrefords Lane that led to Hilltop Riding School and Secret Garden Cafe at the top of **Stoke Hill / The Pike UKD 297 1.9km. 2 hours** in Cowley north of Exeter. A gradual climb past the houses to begin with then away from the houses the road narrows and becomes steeper to the top. The top itself is to the right from the road junction. From here my south west England tour really began. Drive 42 miles to Salcombe. **1.5 hours – but 3 hours with a visit to Brixham**

I headed off along the A38 over Haldon Hill then headed for Torbay along the A380. Passing over Kingkerswell Hill and remembering past times when I'd cycled from Dartmoor to Torbay I had passed over here, the difference was a bit disheartening. What was once a pleasant main road and not too busy and safe to cycle was now a noisy dual carriageway – almost motorway. I was so glad I had enjoyed this road in the past and certainly wouldn't cycle it now. How can Torbay put up with such a huge influx of visitors? I continued on and parked up on Hunters Tor Drive, Galmpton and cycled into Brixham to go and admire one of our favourite holiday haunts briefly, a 10 mile circuit to see the waterfront and return. Again the traffic was heavy so there were delays but once out again and on my way to Salcombe through Totnes and Kingsbridge



the traffic was moving freely. From but there was only light traffic and a down into Salcombe. I parked on St Dunstons Road hill at the end of the main road then cycled out down steep Sandhills Road to Cliff Road, smiled at the name of a cafe passed – The Winking Prawn. Sure the prawn didn't wink when it was picked. Along Moulton Road to South Sands where there were plenty of bathers but all keeping their distance. From there I began the climb I came for;

Totnes heading south the road is narrow pleasant approach over high ground

**Overbecks UKD 303 1.5 hours** 0.7km. It's a tough 24% climb over a short distance. I wheeled the bike after reaching the top and walked the paved path along the outer wall of Overbecks to admire the view along the coast then walked to the entrance. There were no visitors, business wasn't good and because I'd cycled they allowed me in free – I didn't ask! Had a look around the grounds containing many exotic plants and trees and took in the view from the terrace. From there back to the car, following an old gentleman from the house in an equally old car descending the hill at 5mph! Not really bothered as the scenery along the road was great. Back up Cliff Road to its junction with Bennett Road and a stiff ride back to the car. From here my plan was to drive through the South Hams via Modbury, 26 miles via Kingsbridge to Plymouth to reach the final climb of the day from Callington to Kit Hill in Cornwall but it wasn't to be because of serious delays due to a fatality on Tamar Bridge, the only way out to Cornwall from Plymouth without going a distance north to Tavistock – but then, as I heard on the car radio, there was a serious accident before Tavistock so it would have meant a long drive up to Princetown on

Dartmoor then across from there. At first I wasn't aware of the bad news at the Tamar Bridge so joined the crawling queue for an hour as it slowly approached the river crossing. Switching the radio on before reaching the diversion sign on the last road away from the Tamar approach came to realise the situation so followed the diversion for the next crossing point at Tavistock only to discover on the approach to Yelverton of the second serious event before Tavistock and the road was closed. I sat for a while and prayed. What now? Then I heard on the radio that the Tamar Bridge crossing had been cleared so then a fast return to Plymouth and followed all signs for Liskeard and over the bridge where the traffic had now cleared so quickly on along A38 and took the road for Looe and Polperro A387. I phoned the B&B to say I might not be there for 20.00 but in reality it didn't take so long, arriving at 19.30. It was dusk at Looe and dark on arrival in Polperro. I soon found the accommodation at Penrhyn House Hotel, The Coombes, Polperro. 08.00 to 19.30 Mileage cumulative total 712 miles. I ate at the Three Pilchards Inn by the quay in the evening. Tables were spaced apart, one way in and separate way out and hand cleanser provided. (Total 3 climbs) **Total 11.5 hours** .



### Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020

**Day 5** good night's sleep and before breakfast cycled Longcombe Lane heading north from the village, a steep single track road and no traffic as it's just a farmer's road. Back down and cycled the main road to the top of the hill and approach to the village and by then it was time for my breakfast slot at 08.30. Afterwards I rode down to the quay then up to **Talland Hill UKD 302 1 hour** 0.9km to the left of the waterfront, a very steep 25%+ climb to the caravan park at Carey Park. For all the good scenery in the area there is nothing to take a photo of at the top, it's only a mucky field! The attraction is the climb itself. Back down to the car at Penrhyn House then drove off heading for Callington to catch up on what should have been yesterday's final climb. Driving 24 miles through Looe and Liskeard to Callington then took the second right turn on the Tavistock road for Harrowbarrow and parked up.





This is the foot of the climb for **Kitt Hill UKD 301**. **1.5 hours** Callington Road, east of Callington in Harrowbarrow, mainly a narrow farmer's road but almost level then just before Callington village an acute right turn on to A390 for a mile on a busy road uphill so cycled the footpath then north east off that on to a lane signposted Kit Hill and a steep rise, further on a final left and steeply up to the top where there's a tower and viewpoint as the hill is higher than all around between Dartmoor and Caradon Hill on Bodmin Moor. From here back to the car the same way then drove back through Callington and Liskeard and headed for St Austell, 20 miles. This was a mistake as the traffic was so busy and progress was slow so turned off north at Lostwithiel on B3268 for Bodmin but left before reaching there and on to the A30 at Lanivet and followed the A30 dual carriageway and fast road to Redruth. I despaired when I saw the huge amount of traffic moving at a snail's pace heading back east. It was the only way back and I would have to join that queue later. On top of that it started raining for the first time and I was in two minds whether to carry on for my most westerly climb just before Land's End or postpone and cycle it again in the future but then I

thought – it's an awful long way just to cycle one short climb, even if it could be matched with others in the area – so I carried on. Traffic was horrendous leaving Penzance heading east and here was me like a lemming heading west to join up with that long traffic jam later. By-passing Penzance and still raining I took the Land's End road and parked up in a small housing estate in Sennenayed for the rain to stop, then rode down to Sennen Cove and had a look around the small harbour, had a photo taken and posed in rain jacket then began the climb up **Cove Hill UKD 310**. Then the rain stopped. I put the jacket away and cycled up the steep hill from Little Bo Cafe at the foot - dry. Great view looking back down. It's only a short climb but very steep, especially the first section. Back



to the car and made my way back to Penzance to join the A30 queue – but there wasn't one – it had cleared! It was amazing! (Should i be surprised? Prayer changes things. There was an open road the whole way so now I re-planned. I knew that the climb from Redruth should be possible, plenty of time. From Redruth drove the Falmouth road to The Fox & Hounds on the A393 at Comford and left the car at the pub car park and cycled south west on A393 then took the second right turn to **Buller Downs UKD 309** 1.5 hours 4km. Most of the way it was high open country. I headed for the TV mast. The road is a pleasant country lane with only one turn at a 'T' junction to head right to the top.



There's no landmark except the transmitter mast but that's far away from the road. Back down the same way and rejoined the car to head for another climb between Wadebridge 56 miles away and Bodmin but this was a long distance away but should be able to achieve it before nightfall and find the accommodation later. Along the A30 and eventually the A39 turn to Wadebridge. I set my mobiles sat-nav for Burlawn. From Wadebridge and passing the final house the road narrows considerably and drops sharply and into a thick wood that after a few miles realised was a forest! I was a bit apprehensive having never been here before. What was I letting myself into? I came across cyclists which made me feel more comfortable – there must be *something* here! There was barely room for the width of the car and hope I didn't meet oncoming traffic. The only people met were two other cyclists after parking my car in a farm gateway past the top of the climb. I met them at the top of **Bishops Wood UKD 308 1 hour** 0.5km and asked them to take my photo with my phone. From there they went and I carefully freewheeled down the 25% hill to the water depth marker at the ford and bottom of the hill. The road is uneven and also wet after the rain earlier so a difficult climb up. The climb though short is a real challenge and would be better challenged with a mountain bike. Once at the top I saw the car park at the top on the right. I wish I'd seen that earlier rather than risk it and leave the car in a farm gateway. Earlier I had first tried to park in a farm driveway but was told off by a lady toff who rasped out to move –ya. So I did. When I arrived back at the car in the farm gateway another lady passed me as I was about to push my bike back into the car. She told me that I shouldn't park there as the entrance was constantly in use by farm traffic. Fortunately there was none while I was cycling but assured her that it won't happen again as I'll use the car park at the top of the hill and told her I wasn't a local and wasn't aware of the car park or would have used it. "Make sure you do, next time!" she said. There won't be a next time – too far from home. I set my mobiles sat-nav to tonight's accommodation at Trehellas Country House Hotel, Washaway, Bodmin but it seemed to lead me into different directions but probably I had misunderstood the instructions. I was on my way towards Polbrock on the Ruthernbridge road but then the sat-nav sent me into Bodmin then back into the forest again to Burlorne for the road up to Washaway and as I emerged on to the main road my accommodation was on the other side of the road to the left and it was just beginning to get dark. I didn't want to be on those narrow lanes in the dark. The set meal with wine was excellent and good accommodation. Guests and staff were very friendly  
Cumulative mileage 901 miles 09.00 to 20.00

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Day 6



**Tintagel Castle UKD 307 2 hours** 6.5km. 10 miles to Camelford, 7 miles to Tintagel and return. From Tintagel Castle, S.E. through Tintagel, Regatta, Trewarmett, Penpethy to B3263 at Tintagel brewery. Drove B3314 20 miles to Tintagel. It was very low cloud, misty and raining. Far from the perfect weather for cycling but 200 miles from home I have to make the best of. In the future I might come this way again but I really wanted to have a bash at this climb. From the main road A39 drove to the highest point at Tintagel Brewery near Penpethy and parked up at the entrance, bundled the bike out of the boot then freewheeled down to Tintagel Castle. The mist was so bad that I couldn't make out the castle on the promontory, but I was here at the end of the road. I went down on the footpath and clicked into the bottom gear for the climb back up on the road. At the castle entrance I was asked by a rain soaked guide if I wanted to go in and replied that it really wasn't worth it and was only here for the

climb back up again to Camelford. She gave me a strange look. No wonder, we're a strange lot us cyclo-climbers! I cycled back to the brewery with no road turns, just a continuous road to the top, passing through a couple villages. From Camelford I stopped off at the King Arthur labyrinth for quick look at the shop then drove on along A39 to the coast at Wanson, 25 miles to Millook. The weather was dy now. Parking at the beach at Wanson Mouth it's a steep climb up through the gorse for a kilometre to the top. Only one turn at the hotel part way up the a left to continue up to **Millook UKD 306 1.5 hours** Foot of climb at Millook Haven and heading south west to Dizzard. At the top of the climb there's an indication for a 40% drop on the other side. Maybe this should be included in the Natacha list as a second side. Driving on from here along the A39 for 38 miles to Clovelly. **1 hour**. I turned off at Clovelly



Cross and parked just outside Clovelly before the car park so I could have easy access to return to the main road later. Freewheeled down the steep hill to the village and the coast, 25% gradient and straight into the presence of the coastal ranger but didn't realise who it was at first. "Any hills around here?" I asked "No it's all flat" he said flatly. "You need to wear your mask as it's crowded with all you tourists" No problem, on with the mask. I took a few photos of the picturesque village hemmed in by the steep cliffs then began to cycle the 0.6km **Clovelly** to Donkey Stables **UKD 305 1.5 hours and return** from harbour to the top at Clovelly Cross. The same ranger came back down the hill in his landrover as I was struggling up. "You made me come off!" "Ah there's plenty of traffic coming down yur" he said, but the only traffic allowed is for those staying at the beach hotel – which is small. The way up is tough, very steep and at least 25% but a short distance so calls for total commitment to stay on the saddle knowing that the pain is short! At the top is a red telephone box exchange library! Great – this time I did succumb. From here along the A39 again, Drive 35 miles to Woolacombe A39 then A361 from Barnstaple. **1.5 hours** Through Bideford to Barnstaple. There was no problem passing through here as the signs were clear enough for Ilfracombe. I passed over the wide estuary of the River Taw by a wide bridge then an easy 10 miles to Mullacott Cross and the first indication for Woolacombe and the alternative coastal resort to Ilfracombe. Four miles along here then parked up at a restricted area allowing me one free parking. That was enough time. Out with the bike and cycled **Challacombe Hill UKD 304 1.3km 1.5hours**. From Woolacombe head heading north east. It was obvious where it was as from the resort cars were seen slowly ascending the hill, many perhaps going to the caravan park up there. It's a steep road up between the short grass and gorse area to the top. I returned to car and shopped for a warm pie – a proper tidy oggi, and also a bottle of wine. That was my late afternoon meal – not all the wine though! On from here back to Barnstaple then headed south east on the A377 to Colleton Mills on the main road then west and cycled **Burrington Balls Hill UKD 295 2km 1 hour**. A parking space on the east side of the crossroads here then cycled west from Colleton Mills on A377. Along here to Golland Lane. I tried this road but ends up at a farmstead! Go right here and reach the top along a pleasant country lane but no real challenge as no more than 10% climb. There's another way up from Winswood that would include a 25% climb. I went down part way to the brook and returned to Burrington Balls and returned back to the car the same way. From here back to the A377 heading north for two miles at Kings Nympton Station then off to the right on B3226 for South Molton, an interesting large village with a centre containing Georgian buildings. From here I needed the Simonsbath road but the accommodation was in High Bray, I reached High Bray but it wasn't there and dusk was approaching. I set the mobile sat-nav and was to go back to Rabscott near South Molton and take the road further east and almost parallel and sure enough I was there. I was also on the correct road for Simonsbath the following morning. Some confusion at the B&B as the owner thought he had double booked but after a while he was sorted. He was really Covid conscious but that was good. All precautions were taken. A good night's stay and good to chat with the other guests who were from Norfolk

**Total 10.5 hours.** (Total 4) **Accommodation: Chancery House, Molland Cross, Highbray.** Mileage cumulative total 1043 miles **Total 9 hours** (Total 6)

## Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2020

## Day 7

A really good filling breakfast to set me up for the morning. A little rain but soon went off and parked in Simonsbath by a disused farm gate, bundled out the bike for **ExePlain** and cycled to top and return 1 hour, an easy ride. There were hunters up here with their 4x4's and sleek horses. As I was cycling up a toff in red tunic riding down said "easier my way on a horse" and I replied "Yes but my mount does exactly what it's told, no fighting back" as he was having some problem with the reins. I came to the same cattle grid reached last year up from Lynmouth so now I've cycled both sides of the BIG. On from here a short distance through Exford on B3224 to Wheddon Cross for **Dunkery Beacon** 1 hour and cycled the south side, an easy ride and no steep gradient. I couldn't risk cycling the track to the Beacon itself at maybe a mile away, and in my opinion should be ridden with a mountain bike because the path is stony with troughs and also large stones at that. I saw mountain bikers there as I walked part of the path. From Wheddon Cross down to Dunster and parked up at Carhampton to go bike on the bike and explore. I cycled the town then back to the car and headed east on A39 coast road then right on the A358 from Williton **2 hours** 60 miles for the Quantocks climb cycling the very steep 1.3km **Crowcombe Combe UKD 294. 1 hour 18 minutes 0.8 mile 14.00 to 15.15.**



I drove back up Crowcombe Coombe and over to Nether Stowey. At the top it's an open clearing where people were walking and picnicking. North east from Crowcombe Church drive 60 miles to Bristol; **2 hours**. Total 3 hours

Over Severn Bridge to South Wales **1 hour**, into Chepstow. I had the idea of taking a look at Weston Super Mare but the roads south of Bristol were so busy so decided to head straight for the Severn Bridge and arrive in Chepstow and good time in order to cycle my first climb in South Wales before the end of the day. I left the car at Castle Road car park, just under the castle and would leave it there for the night. For the last time today I bundled the bike out and cycled out past the racecourse and took a right on to Penterry Lane to Penterry Church, both under the radio masts of Gaer Hill then back to the main road, up a steep section to the turn for Gaer Farm then up there on a quiet road to **UKD 425 Wyndcliff / Gaer Hill** 7km from south at Chepstow, start at Bridge Street on north side of Chepstow. Becomes Bank Street then at The George turn right on B4293 Welsh Street then A466 at roundabout (third turn off) heading north. Later turn off left in same direction on to lane as the A466 bends to the right, then left at Eagles Nest car park. Later a right turn at crossroads on to Penterry Lane to top **1.5 hours** Total cumulative mileage 1139 miles  
Beaufort Hotel, Beaufort Square, Chepstow NP16 5EP £45 with breakfast  
**Total 8.5 hours**. Overnight. (Total 2)

**Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

**Day 8**

After a good breakfast I set the sat-nav which took me along a maze of lanes through Gaer-llwyd and Pen-y-caemawr to Llantrisant. From Chepstow B4235 heading north west for Abergavenny 15 miles then at A449 Newport-Monmouth road head south for Newport only as far as Llantrisant - 3 **UKD 424 Wentwood Ridge**. West of Chepstow, half way between Chepstow and Newport near A449. Llantrisant village then east of A449, heading south-south-east to Pen-y-Cae-Mawr **1 hour** 3.3km. Parked just north of the village church at a pub car park at the foot of the climb then up to the National Trust area of Cadeira Beeches. The way up is a tree covered road with occasional glimpses across to the area around Newport. At the top are forest walkways. Drove north on A449 Monmouth road then NW on A40 to Abergavenny 15 miles then A465 Merthyr Tydfil road 3 miles only to Govilon village **1.5 hour**

Returning to the car and drove through Usk with its interesting Georgian clocktower and square then following the river to Gilwern west of Abergavenny off the busy dual carriageway then the lane west to Gofllon / Govilon, parked for the next climb.

**UKD 423 The Tumble**. From A465 south west of Abergavenny. At east side of Govilon village leave A465 on B4246. Over river bridge, sharp left then right bends on B4246 to top where road from Llanellen comes in from the east (left) **1 hour**

The road rises through a wooded area then a clearing for half the distance up. There's a height marker at the top for cyclists giving the detail of gradient and height. A top is a small lake. Back to the car then drove from Govilon further on west on A465 for 7 miles to Gilwern then right turn on Brecon road A4077 to Crickhowell **30 minutes** to begin **UKD 403 Cefn Onneu** from Crickhowell on

road A40 then A4077 in the village road west (Hillside Road) from The Vine Llangattock, later a left turn at fork off Hillside Road at Bethesda Chapel 7.4km then left on B4560 to top **1 hour**. Parked up by a chapel in Llangattock over the River Usk. I took the wrong road at first heading south to Hen Castle and after asking a local was back on the correct road heading west and steeply up the side of Craig-y-castell following the Cwm Onneu valley upstream to the road junction with the Brecon to Bryn Mawr road then took a left a short distance to the windy top. I met two other cyclists there who had come along the Brecon road. They were on a long tour north-south across Wales and carrying panniers. Back down again the same way with the Sugar Loaf mountain ahead of me. Filled up with petrol again at Crickhowell the tried to take the direct road for Talgarth heading north, however the road was closed. Drove on further west Bwlch on the A40 Brecon road then headed north through Llangorse which was now taking all the traffic which would have taken the direct road so consequently the narrow street through the village was clogged up with the two way traffic and long tail backs. Eventually through the village and passed through Talgarth to reach Hay-on-Wye at 17.00. Just in time to have a look around a couple of Hay's well known bookshops before closing and a quick meander round the town. I noticed a fish and chip take-away so would be there later after completing my final climb. I drove on a short way to the head of the valley to cycle



south side of **Gospel Pass UKD 400** and return. I parked up at the large car park of the Hay Medical Centre, bundled my bike out of the car boot for the final time on this trip and cycled out along Forest Road to climb the western side of Black Mountain to the Gospel Pass. I had the saved the best to the last as this is a glorious climb that begins along a hedged road in low ground and gradually climbs to an open clearing then high moorland with the heights of Lord Hereford's Knob and Hay Bluff either side of the road. A memorable event was meeting a young couple at the top who had taken their shiny new motor bike out on its first long trip and were enjoying the scenery at the top. We had a good conversation and we all, posed for photographs. It was a chance meeting and glad that I could have some good photos at the top. After about half an hour we were all on our way down again. They took a left part way down for the road to Glasbury and Talgarth and was taking some great photos of the sunset over the Brecon Beacons. It was perfect timing and arrived back at the car at dusk. I changed into warmer clothing for the long drive home. I bought fish and chips and ate just over the border at the large Co-Op car park. Although now in England the Co-Op has its hoardings in Welsh and English. From here I took the Hereford and Leominster road and a bit confused in the dark when I reached a barrier at a planked bridge and had to put a pound in the slot to raise the barrier over the River Wye crossing then A4153 to A438 Leominster then A49 home **3 hours** via Ludlow, Shrewsbury or via A479 from Crickhowell then north-west through Hay on Wye A438 Weobley, Leominster then A49 to home 4 hours. **Total 9 hrs**  
(Total 4 climbs) Total cumulative mileage 1303 miles at home



**Kevin Speed**

## BIGS in Berchtesgadenerland JULY 2020 .



2020 was a strange year indeed .. Due of the corona crisis we waited longer to book summer holidays , and we also didn't want to go to far...

My German girlfriend told me about , for me , an undiscovered region in South East Bavaria , very close to the border with Austria. This part of South Germany belongs to the Alps , and offers some very nice peaks and surroundings .

The most famous peak is the Watzmann. This region has also a very big historical history, as the Obersalzberg was a sort of headquarters for the leaders of

Germany during the second world war.

Above this all , the Königssee didn't steal it's name... this lake is really amazing, even looks like a real Norwegian fjord. And ... some real nice BIGs and Natacha's are there to be discovered .

During our 8 days in July , I went also to Austria for Arthur Haus, Dientner Sattel and the Tauernpass, but in this review I would like to write a bit about the Berchtesgadenerland climbs.

**The Rossfeld strasse** (BIG 200) is a real nice "loop" , which brings you back to your starting point.

The Westside takes you via a very steep street in Berchtesgaden to the B160 , where you find the climb at your right side. The first part is heavy, between 10 a 12%, but before you reach the Maut station you can already recover.

As you cycle through the forest , the views are not so wide, but once you reach the plateau, the Panoramastrasse is there. I was unlucky , cause clouds and a bit or rain spoiled the surroundings . In the rain I went back down , very carefully.



The second BIG in this part of Germany is the **Hirschbichl (BIG 199)** , a borderclimb with Austria.

I was very surprised in a good way. From Ramsau , the climb is 12700m long , average 4%... but this is a bit misleading ... It is indeed a very beautiful climb , for different reasons.

As you leave Ramsau, you follow the road via a nice green valley , as you pass also the lake called "Hintersee". In July and corona times , there were a lot of tourists.. But as a cyclist, you are lucky .

One kilometer further , the road stops for cars, and behind the barrier , a smaller , well asphaltated foot and cycling path continues .

This is a real extra ordinary wonderful experience . As the last 7 to 8km are traffic free, the first 3 to 4km are taking

you very easy up at 4%. When you are reaching the first "stone gletsjer" at your right side , the climb is getting a three – stage rocket, with a first steep part up to 13%. Lucky for your legs, this part is not so long , and the recovery is quickly there. As the climb continues easy, a second very steep part is waiting for you , once you reach a small forest. In front of you there is a wall waiting. Via a right and a even steeper left bend , you struggle yourself up, as the gradient reaches the 25% .... This a hell..



Trying to keep your pedals going , a bend to the right get's you out of this heavy improvement.. Try to recover , cause 1,5km further , just before reaching the border and the top, a last steep part is waiting with peaks to 17%.

Hanging over your bike , you can see the bus stop and at your right side a nice place to eat something. The top is only a left bend away , in the forest, where the sign of climb is.

This is definitely a hard climb , but also very beautiful and attractive , cause of the closed road for cars. I never knew that South Germany could be so wonderful .

Dirk Vissers , BIG member 2569. December 2020.



## 35 YEARS BIGCYCLING: 35 BIGs in 1 TRIP: TOUR DE FRANCE 2020

This year BIGCYCLING exists 35 years. That is why Heiko Linnert and Kevin Speed wanted to cycle all the British BIGs in 1 tour: all by bike from Lands End in Cornwall to John o`Groats in Scotland. Being BIGCYCLINGs Meetings-Manager, I decided to help them in organizing this famous trip and arranged all the hotels. But then came Covid... And we had to cancel the trip... Shit happens in this shitty year...

But then I got the opportunity to cycle all alone and do it in a safe way: driving in my own car, sleeping on almost empty campsites in my own small tent, sometimes sleeping in my car, preparing my own meals and cycling all day alone on mostly deserted mountains. Every 3 or 4 days I needed to go shopping and that was scary: in supermarkets everyone gathered together and it was crowded and there are just too many people on too small a surface: shopping was the biggest risk I took in this journey which started on 27th of September 2020. My plan was to start in Switzerland, do some BIGs in Italy, but the main goal was France: cycling in the same area as the Tour de France.



In Switzerland I wanted to start with Fafleralp. To reach this location I needed to take the car-train through the mountain. This train has existed for more than 100 years. But as I entered the parking place it appeared that I had to wait for 1 hour. It's better to wait than go over the pass, so I waited, and took the train, and enjoyed the lovely views at the south-side of the mountain looking over the valley of the Rhône. I descended the crowded pinnacle-road to the start of Fafleralp, but when I started cycling there was a barrier across the road. I had heard of earlier landslides in the region so I did not dare to cross the barrier and I went back to my car. Looking at the notes of Fafleralp I discovered that I had to climb the busy road, go through a very long tunnel and then climb to the top. But it was already late in the afternoon, it was cold and windy so I decided to cancel Fafleralp and travel on to Italy: taking the car-train again from Brig to Iselle. After a few hours of driving, it was too dark and I could not find a camping site, so I slept in my car.

My goal was Ornavasso, because on my trip "Italian Lakes" in 2018 Juris and I decided to skip Alpe Rossonbolmo (1). Now I had my MTB and had all day to cycle this heavy climb. It was



nice weather and that helped me to survive this “beasty climb” as someone described it. But at the top there was a reward: a beautiful view over the Lago Maggiore .

As I was all alone at this trip, without reservations in a hotel, I could decide myself where to go. And after I received a message from an old friend, I decided to travel to Pontremoli to meet that friend. But there was a misunderstanding and we missed each other. I decided next day that I would ‘clean the zone’ from the south: starting with Croce Arcana (2), going on to



Abetone (3), and finishing with San Pellegrino in Alpe (4). The next day I drove in my car over San Pellegrino and it appeared that I had cycled the easy side. I did not mind because I enjoyed the views and more climbs waited for me: Passo Citrone(5) and Colle dei Due Santi(6). I did spend the night again in Pontremoli where I found a perfect place to sleep in my car.



Next day I climbed Pradarena (7) and headed for Lagastrello. But it was so hot that I decided to look for a camping-place and sleep the first night in my tent. At the foot of the climb in the small village of Pontebosio I found an Agriturismo (Il Podoretto) where I spent the afternoon in the shadow at the side of the swimmingpool. To find this place I had to cross an old bridge, small squares, very narrow cobbled streets and eventually I had to walk to reach my destination. In the evening I climbed Lagastrello (8) and afterwards had a wonderful meal in the Agriturismo Il Podoretto including my own brand bottle of wine: this is the good life...



Saving some climbs for my next trip (already planned in October, I call it: Giro 2020) I headed north-West to the border of France where I climbed with my MTB Colle Garezzo (9). I wrote the following note after I finished it: “I did this climb on 21-8-2020 and I agree with Dominique: How shitty to bounce on these loose rocks, I do not like it, for me it is no fun and they should remove this climb as soon as possible: there are so many other nicer climbs in this region...” But I have to admit: nice views.

Next day I did the “classics” Poggio(10) and Cipressa (11) in a nice 80 km tour along the coast. It was very lovely weather and I liked

the cycle path but, in contrast with the mountains where you meet no-one, it was very busy at the coast and that fact drove me over the border of France to a nice camping-place in Sospel where I stayed a few days.

Colle di Tenda(12) (from the French side) was busy at the start, but after the side-way before the tunnel I met no-one anymore so I could enjoy the views: what a nice mountain and what a pleasure to enjoy the sun and the silence after the business of the Italian coast.

I started the climb of L`Authion (13) under the threat of rain, first time this trip. When I passed the arch to the chapel



(I had to climb up and make a nice picture), the weather was still acceptable, but a few kilometers before the Col de Turini, it started to rain. I decided to turn and raced down to the camping. I managed to reach it before the rain got heavy so I spent the rest of the day sleeping in my tent. Next day with beautiful weather again, I started with the Col de Braus(14) and finished the climb to l`Authion. On the top of that strange circuit, it was foggy and cold. On the way back, on the Col de Turini I made a picture of the Movistar Team: they were preparing for the start of the Tour de France in Nice. I did not want to visit the Tour to avoid a massive crowd and to stay healthy.

Nr 15 of my trip was Madonna d`Utelle: what a nice climb with the always changing view on the village in the depth and the monastery on top: really nice! The next BIG was Col St Martin (16). I missed this BIG last year in the tour with Etienne Mayeur so I was glad to do it now: zig-zag, done, up to the next.

Montagne de Doublie (17) was even more beautiful with a splendid view from the top. This climb has a common part with the climb of Valferières. At the junction is a prison. When I descended from Montagne de Doublie and reached the prison my rear-tire exploded, it was like a gunshot. It alarmed the staff of the prison. When they saw it was just a poor cyclist with mechanical failure, they offered help. But I could repair my tire myself and continued the long and boring climb to Valferières (18). And at the top there was another sign that the Tour would come by in the next days.

I tried to reach the region of Lac de Serre-Poncon but it was too far away: I got stuck in Castellane where I found a camping loaded with fans of the Tour de France. There I checked the BIG website and found out that I was quite near the Gorge du Verdon. So, I decided to make a tour at the north side of the gorge to the lake, climb the Cirque de Vaumale (19) and then cycle back to the camping at the southside of the gorge. It appeared to be a fantastic tour because of the wonderful scenery, a great and super-blue lake, an easy climb to the top where I filled my bottles at the well on the top without knowing that it actually was the top, descended in a small rain shower while enjoying the surrealistic scenery with rocks and deep gorges with and without water, cycling back to the camping, a nice tour of 120 km and a well-spent day.

The next day I had to leave the camping early because some roads could be shut down for the Tour de France and I wanted to go north for some heavy BIGs. I reached Embrun, set up my tent next to the lake but it started to rain and it did not stop: all day rain. So, I did some maintenance on my bike and walked to the village for a beer and took a rest for it was a heavy tour.





Nice weather again and 2 nice BIGs: Sommet de Bücher(20) and Chapelle de Clausis(21): 2 MTB-BIGs which I really enjoyed. And the next day: Parpaillon(22) the highest point of my tour, but the nicest climb of my tour was Mont Colombis (23): a nice steady climb, not too easy, not too steep, not too long, not too short and a marvelous view at the top). If I would be asked to design the most ideal climb it would look like Mont Colombis. After this highlight I went to Col de Noyer (24), but it was end of the day, not so sunny, so it turned out to be a grey colorless climb. So, I went onwards and found a camping place south of Chambéry where I stayed a few days.

In 2011 I met Nico Grootjes and Martin Plum. They introduced me into BIGCYCLING. On the first day of that cycling week, we climbed Cormet de Roselend from Bourg Saint Maurice together. My cycling day ended by reaching the top, but Nico and Martin descended to

Beaufort and also climbed Signal de Bisanne (and of course the other side of Cormet de Roselend to return back to Bourg Saint Maurice). Now, 9 years later, I could also climb Signal de Bisanne(25): it felt as an important climb in my BIGCYCLING-career, but it was hot.... And a tough climb.... It took me quite a while to reach the top. And then awaited the climb to Cormet d'Arêches(26), a really tough climb, especially the last part on the gravel with the rocks, not my kind of cycling with my road-bike, so the worst parts I walked. I was glad to return to Beaufort, a nice village where it seemed everyone cycles.

Another dream was cycling along the Lac d'Annecy, which I wanted to do after climbing Crêt de Châtillon(27). But a few km after the start of the climb, I broke my chain. Luckily, I could reach my car, took my MTB and went on climbing to the top. And it was quite a view on top with a magnificent view on the Mont Blanc. So instead of cycling along the lake I had to search for a repair-shop. I found it and he gave me a new chain and I was stupid enough of accepting it without changing the cassette. So, when I started on the next BIG (Mont Revard) I could not use my

road-bike because of chain/cassette-problems. And when I took my MTB I heard something scratch: it appeared to be a damaged front tire so I could not use this bike and again I needed to search for a repair-shop. He helped me with a new cassette (with 32 blade!!) so I was ready for the next day: the most beautiful day of my tour.

Starting with Mont Revard (28) from the south side this time, enjoying the beautiful views on the Mont Blanc and Lac du Bourget.



Then the horrible Mont du Chat(29). But what a relief to be on top... And what a view...I have never seen the Mont Blanc more beautiful. I took my time on top, but I had to move, move, move because I wanted to do the Grand Colombier(30). I drove in my car to Culoz, reserved the camping, and jumped on my bike around 18.00 hours. It was a race against the clock and despite this pressure, I enjoyed every minute of this beautiful classic climb. Just on time I reached the top to make some beautiful pictures of the Mont Blanc during sunset. It was almost dark when I reached the camping and ordered a big beer and a pizza: 3 BIGs with a 3300 Difference of Level, I really deserved it.

After this absolute highlight of my tour, I started heading home while climbing Planachat(31) (where I got lost in the forest and climbed up a black MTB-route), Chartreuse de Portes(32), Signal de Cuiron(33), Mont Poupet(34) (where I almost lost the battle with a runner on the steepest part of the climb) and Fort de Chaudanne(35). For a few weeks I was the leader in the ranking of 2020 and despite the fact that this eventually changed I was very glad with this nice trip with 35 BIGs for BIGCYCLINGs 35th anniversary.



Mont Revard



Mont Colombis



Mont du chat



Grand Colombier

Christiaan Weytmans

Quelques futurs natachas français (grimpés durant l'été).

Marc Seguy



Natacha 199, le col de Peyra Taillade, que doit bien connaître Romain Bardet "l'enfant du pays".

**N° 199, le col de Peyra-Taillade** en Haute Loire (alt: 1190 m; dist:8,3 km; moy: 7,4%; max: 14%). Depuis le petit village de Prades la route s'élève constamment et la vue sur les gorges de l'Allier fait presque oublier une pente parfois sévère. Qu'on s'intéresse à la géologie (méandres, orgues basaltiques), ou aux belles maisons en pierres, ou aux cultures, il suffira de choisir un circuit quelconque, d'emprunter de petites routes, de traverser des hameaux et le temps passera agréablement .... et pourtant les routes réserveront parfois de belles surprises bien raides !

**N°154, le mont Gargan** en Haute Vienne. Cette partie du Limousin que je décide de parcourir, pour passer par ce mont, m'a paru bien sèche. Le final est sévère mais cela ne dure pas et suivant l'heure de la journée de très beaux hêtres procurent une ombre bien venue. Les 100 derniers mètres sont muletiers mais tout à fait praticables à vélo de route. Il paraît que la bruyère omniprésente est à l'origine de l'autre nom du mont «la montagne rouge ».

**N°147, le Pech de Lamoulère** dans le Lot et Garonne. Depuis Tournon d'Agenais la montée est correcte et ensuite il y a moyen de tracer de beaux parcours bien accidentés pour aller quérir les 2 seuls cols du département. Le dépaysement, la tranquillité sont garantis. A observer au mois d'août, la cueillette de la prune d'Ente (la seule variété à supporter le séchage) et sa transformation en pruneau d'Agen: c'est en demandant confirmation de ma route à des ouvriers travaillant dans un vaste hangar que j'ai pu observer la production de ce fruit aux vertus thérapeutiques, le meilleur allié de la forme, d'après la pub locale !!

**N°477, le col du Mont Noir** en Isère, à l'est du parc naturel régional du Vercors. La montée nord par Saint Gervais fut un régal pour les yeux (et pour les jambes aussi, je ne les oublie pas). La route



Les gorges du Nan, superbe canyon vers Cognin les Gorges, dans le massif du Vercors.

passer par le col de Romeyère et les occasions de faire des photos ne manquent pas. Attention au tunnel des Ecouges (à l'état brut) d'une longueur de 500 m: **il n'est pas du tout éclairé et ce n'est pas une ligne droite !!** J'avais choisi de me rendre ensuite vers le col de Pra l'Etang, de rebrousser chemin, de poursuivre sur ce qui n'était plus qu'un CV et de rentrer à Cognin par Malleval. Ce final emprunte les superbes gorges du Nan, une route accrochée à la paroi, des points de vue à

couper le souffle. Comment ne pas essayer d'imaginer le travail des ouvriers lors de la construction de cette voie quasi aérienne parfois? J'ai repensé immédiatement à l'ancienne route des Grands Goulets, «définitivement» fermée, mais dont un secteur pourrait être rouvert aux marcheurs et aux cyclistes si un projet récent voyait le jour. Suivons l'affaire cela vaudra le déplacement c'est sûr.

**N°432, le col des Cyclotouristes** en Savoie. Il faut bien sûr commencer par dire que ce n'est pas un «vrai» col. Mais quelle importance! Il est carrément qualifié de « trésor du Beaufortin pour les cyclistes » et a été élevé,

par la pose du panneau, au rang de sanctuaire pour les cyclos en 1969. Depuis Albertville la pente moyenne est de 7,67% (pour 13 km et 1 020 m de dénivelé), tout de même! Car, si j'ose une comparaison ... le versant «Bédoin» du Ventoux c'est 7,6% et son versant Malaucène 7,24% (d'accord, ils sont plus longs). La vue sur la vallée est souvent belle, le revêtement bon, seuls les 2 ou 3 derniers km, après le fort, sont très rugueux et de qualité moyenne. Je n'ai pas



Natacha 432,  
le "col" des cyclotouristes

engrangé de col aujourd'hui mais je ne le regrette absolument pas.

**N°416, La route Bernard Hinault** en Haute Savoie. Je me souviens du superbe spectacle offert par les participants à ce championnat du monde en 1980 et notamment par la détermination, l'aisance et le brio du «Blaireau» ce jour là, et je suis heureux d'avoir parcouru cette route mythique aujourd'hui. Je n'ai pas pu partir assez tôt à cause de la fraîcheur et par conséquent le flot de véhicules en tout genre est venu ternir quelque peu mon plaisir. Peu importe les souvenirs sont encore mieux ancrés à présent.

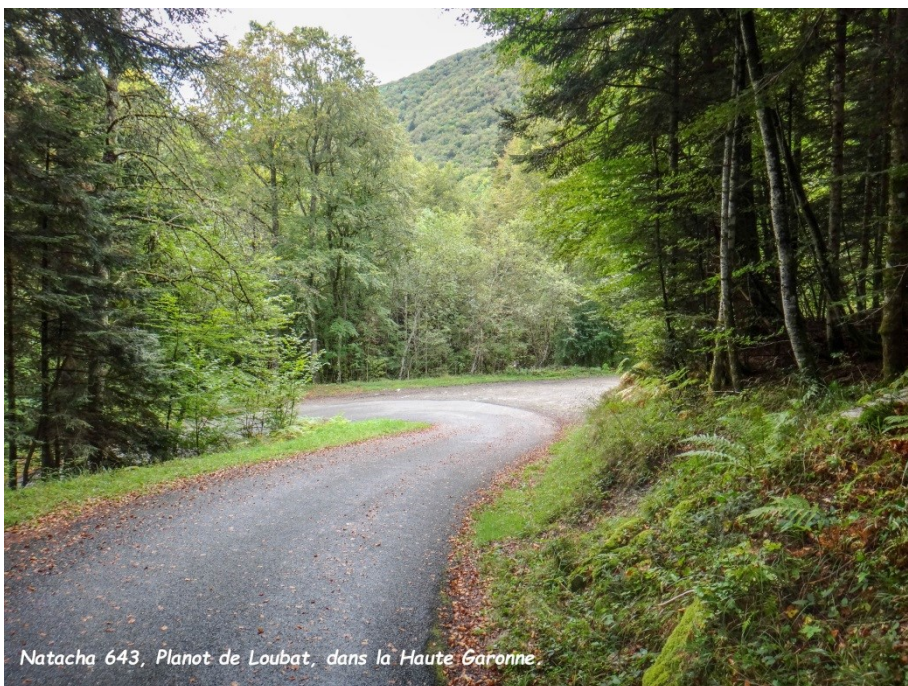
**N°259, Candes dans le Lot.** Quelle belle région à découvrir par ces routes sauvages, très souvent bordées d'arbres à l'ombre toujours bienvenue par ces grosses chaleurs persistantes de septembre. En passant par Laval de Cère, le départ de ce natacha, on comprend vite tant ce village est au fond d'un trou, qu'il va falloir s'employer pour en sortir. Et en se dirigeant vers Comiac la montée emprunte les gorges profondes de la Cère, passe par un secteur à 12% d'après le panneau puis quasiment au terme j'ai eu l'impression de changer d'époque en rentrant dans ce village de Candes aux maisons de caractère en pierres apparentes. Ce coin du Quercy recèle des trésors à photographier.

**N°255, Castille de St Bernard dans le Tarn et Garonne.** Une rude montée nommée « côte de la Rodanèze » d'après un plan local du village médiéval de Saint Antonin Noble Val à visiter bien sûr. Une vue sur cette petite ville presque dans le final, pour le reste seul l'aspect sportif est à retenir. Au delà l'abbaye de Beaulieu en Rouergue vaut le détour tout comme les villages de Laguëpie ou Cordes sur Ciel.

**N°294, col de la Lusette** dans le parc national des Cévennes au sud du mont Aigoual. J'avais vu l'étape du tour qui empruntait cette route assez souvent étroite et ... c'est bien vrai la pente est belle (voilà un euphémisme facile) jusqu'au «Cap de Côte» un col à 3 km du sommet environ. Malgré la chaleur et les raidillons il faisait bon avancer parmi des chênes, des châtaigniers, et de superbes hêtres. Il est très facile de tracer des parcours pour engranger des cols dans le secteur mais très très vite on atteint les 2 000 m de dénivelé, quand même!



*Natacha 294, le col de la Lusette, dans le parc national des Cévennes.*



*Natacha 643, Planot de Loubat, dans la Haute-Garonne.*

**N°643, Planot de Loubat** ou « fontaine de l'ours » d'après le panneau (Haute-Garonne). Une très belle montée aussi bien sportivement que touristiquement: des châtaigniers tout au long du final, très très peu de touristes, certes 2 ou 3 chiens pas très rassurants, de l'habitat dispersé mais peu de belles demeures. Enfin de quoi faire des photos et passer de belles heures sur le vélo, surtout en aller-retour depuis Aspet.



## PUY DE DOME: DE VERBODEN BERG

Gerard Meijering

In mijn ambitie alle befaamde bergen in Europa ooit een keer beklommen te hebben, mag natuurlijk **Le Puy de Dome BIG-nr. 244** niet ontbreken. De berg in het Centraal Massief van Frankrijk waar Poulidor in een heroïsch duel zij aan zij strijdde met Anquetil om de Tourwinst. Ook de berg waar Eddy Merckx een vuistslag tegen z'n lever kreeg wat het begin van het einde markeerde van zijn jarenlange zegenreeks in de Tour de France.

Er is echter een probleem. De bergweg is door de aanleg van een toeristentreinspoor zo smal geworden waarbij die ook het spoor gevaarlijk kruist waardoor de weg verboden is voor fiets- en autotoeristen. Slechts 1 x per jaar op de 3e zondag van juni wordt de weg opengesteld voor maximaal 300 racefietsers. Tja dan moet je maar net op dat moment daar in de buurt zijn.

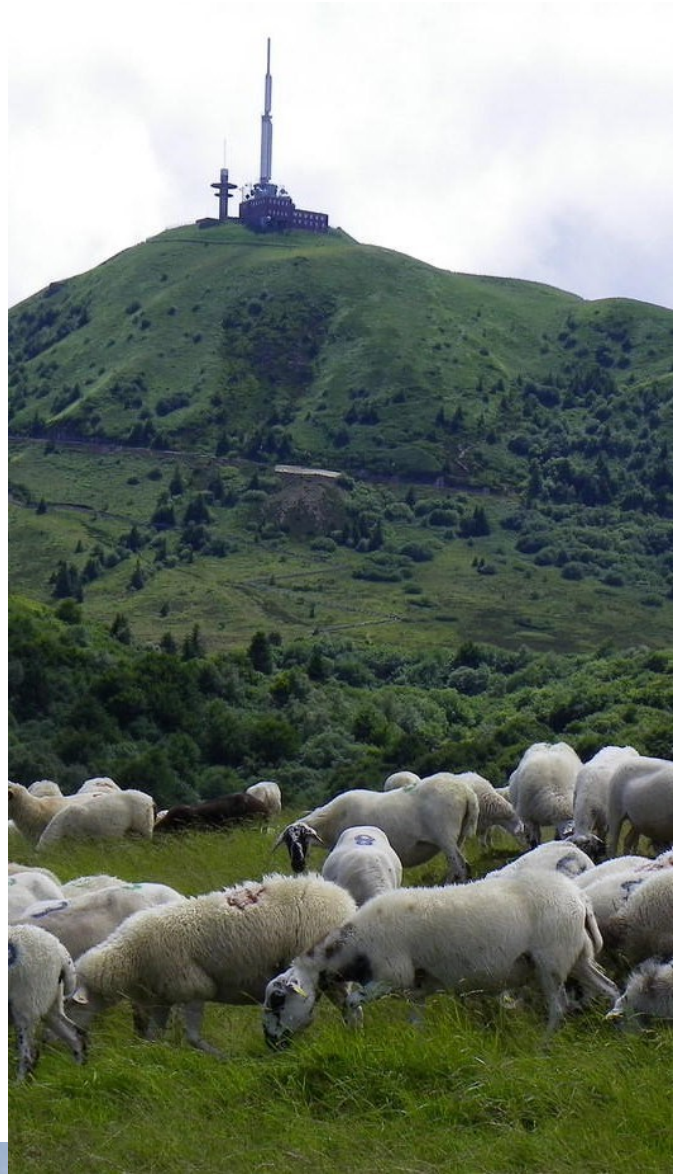


Toen ik in augustus van 2020 op een klein uurtje rijden van de voet van de berg op vakantie in de Auvergne was, zag ik het als een kans om de verboden berg te beklimmen. Hierbij er goed van doordrongen dat ik tegengehouden zou kunnen worden of nog erger een boete zou kunnen krijgen. Om die kans te verkleinen, ging ik op zondag 16 augustus in het donker heel vroeg m'n campingbed uit om rond zonsopkomst aan de voet van de iconische berg te staan. Net voordat ik wilde beginnen, gooide een regenbui roet in het eten. Dan maar weer terug de auto in en wachten tot het iets droger wordt. Om de kans op gedoe met de politie of andere weggebruikers te verminderen, ging ik licht gespannen in de vroege miezerregen toch maar op pad. Het eerste deel van de 10 km lange beklimming was met z'n 7% goed te doen. Vervolgens stuitte ik op een gesloten slagboom. Gelukkig zag ik daar geen camera's of gendarmes die mij tegen wilden houden op dit vroege tijdstip.

Na passeren van dit obstakel, begon de beklimming van de vulkanische berg pas echt: een smalle weg naast een spoorlijn was kilometerslang het nieuwe parcours. Gedachten gingen over een noodplan: wat te doen als er opeens een auto van boven of van beneden op mij af zou komen. Waar zou ik bescherming zoeken? Links of rechts in de berm? Gelukkig was er geen auto te bekennen. Toch fietste ik zo snel mogelijk naar boven om de kans op een onaangename ontmoeting te verkleinen. Echt snel ging het niet. De laatste 4,5 km bleef de weg met een stijgingspercentage van 11% onerbarmelijk rechts om de berg heen draaien om nog zo'n 500 hoogtemeters te overwinnen. Gelukkig klaarde de lucht op en trokken de buien langzaam weg. Nog even het toeristentreinspoor over en de finish werd bereikt zonder verkeer te zijn tegen gekomen!! Uiteindelijk zag ik op het laatst één auto naar boven komen die als bestemming het panoramarestaurant had. Waarschijnlijk een medewerker die de horecagelegenheid wilde openen. Het maakte niet uit. Ik was al boven.



Yes, het is mij gelukt om deze berg te beklimmen!!! Euforie maakte zich meester van mij. Juist als je niet zeker weet of een expeditie gaat lukken, smaakt de overwinning des te zoeter. Door het opgeklaarde weer, was de beloning een mooi panorama van wolken die ter hoogte van de top van de berg zweefde. Nu snel nog wat foto's maken en zorgen dat ik rapido beneden kom. Ook tijdens de afdaling ben ik geen (fietsende of autorijdende) kip tegen gekomen. Wel was in het dichtsbijzijnde dorpje een bakker open waar slaperige Fransen hun ontbijtdeegwaar kochten. Mijzelf heb ik heerlijk verwend met een lekker gebakje vanwege het slagen van de lastige missie.





# Suivre le guide Mi-chemin

Daniel Gobert

J'étais à 486 bigs quand le Covid nous a pris en traître. Le début de l'année nous a contraints à une distanciation sociale avec l'objectif de l'année, objectif qui était de joindre le nombre fatidique de 500, claironnant la déclaration de la moitié des ascensions de la superliste. Entre confinements, ouvertures ou non des frontières, quarantaines et activités autorisées ou non, il a fallu jongler et suivre le bon guide Mi-chemin pour trouver l'ouverture, la période ad hoc, le créneau de la seule chance, pour y parvenir.

Même si le nombre de 500 paraît énorme pour un amateur ignorant de nos pratiques, ce même nombre semble dérisoire si un connaisseur examine mon départ en 1985 pour ce challenge. 35 années pour atteindre 500, c'est un peu moins de 15 par an. Bien entendu, tous les lauréats au-dessus de moi n'ont pas une charge de famille aussi lourde, ni une aéronautophobie identique à la mienne, et ont sans doute plus de temps libre pour grimper à l'étranger. Je comptais bien sur le meeting officiel du Pays basque pour en faire 12 et faire les 2 derniers lors des vacances familiales. Et soudain, exit Pais Vasco pero està muy difícil con el Covid. Que faire ? Quatre durant les vacances familiales sans perturber trop celles-ci et demander à ma dulcinée de m'accompagner pour une conquête des dix derniers en quelques jours ardues en dénivellation totale, avec pour point d'orgue un 500<sup>e</sup> au renom certain.

Bref, le créneau s'est présenté entre le début juillet et la mi-août. Destination Pyrénées à Loudenvielle, arrivée d'étape du tour de France en 2020, pour les vacances familiales dans un superbe chalet au bord du lac avec 4 bigs prévus. Et quelques jours plus tard, défi costaud avec 10 bigs à l'horizon et de la transhumance depuis le Jura suisse jusqu'à la Lombardie. Point d'orgue de la Mi-chemin choisi : ce sera le Passo di Gavia, le terrain de légende des Campionissimi, le théâtre d'une des pires étapes les plus froides du Giro en 1988, un plus de 2600m. Un pur, un dur, un vrai.

Mais dans ce programme, aucune mauvaise surprise ne pourra arriver : le timing étant trop serré. On tente le coup.

A Loudenvielle, on a 6 jours, puisque la location fait une semaine et qu'il faut éliminer les temps d'arrivée et de départ. Dès le lendemain de l'arrivée, Nathalie et moi partons du lac pour nous diriger vers le pied de **Val-Louron-Azet**. Les premiers kilomètres de montagne de l'année, même si nous sommes bien préparés dans nos côtes ardennaises, semblent toujours plus pentus qu'ils ne le sont vraiment. A mi-parcours, on distingue bien les immeubles de Val Louron sur la gauche mais la route du col d'Azet emprunte un virage à 180° sur la droite pour rejoindre le col. Au sommet, de nombreux amateurs de parapente et une roulotte offrant quelques snacks. Rien d'autre. 487.

Dès le lendemain, on repart du même endroit pour quérir un des quatres mousquetaires pyrénéens de la quadrilogie Pau-Luchon : le **Peyresourde**. Comme un tourniquet très long dans les villages du pied, puis une ligne droite qui n'en finit pas de finir pour les derniers kilomètres. On perçoit près de la fin, sur notre droite, la route nouvelle qui part bien dressée vers la station de Peyragudes. Pas grand-chose au sommet sinon la



vue sur l'autre versant, et peu avant, une maisonnette faisant des crêpes. Rien à voir avec le côté majestueux du Tourmalet. 488.

Nous savons que les deux derniers auront pour point de départ Luchon. Après une heure de route, on trouve facilement à se garer et on vise d'abord le **Port de Balès**. Il commence par le versant opposé du Peyresourde, de manière assez confortable, puis alors que la route de Peyresourde, repart à l'extrême-gauche, Balès nous invite tout droit. Et à cet endroit-là, durant 2-3 kilomètres, la pente nous fait souffrir, mettant nos mollets à l'épreuve, pour se calmer en un replat salvateur jusqu'au seul village de cette vallée. A l'entrée de celui-ci, c'est à droite pour les derniers kilomètres dans un cadre magique. Le sommet avec vaches, marchands ambulants et surtout, un décor de rêve, vaut le détour. La nature gigantesque et en même temps paisible qui vous prend dans ses bras et que vos yeux ne peuvent plus lâcher. 489.

Retour à Luchon, même parking, la veille du retour. Objectif, le **Portillon**. Mais stress infini, le nord de l'Espagne est en reconfinement. Pourra-t-on aller jusqu'au col qui est juste à la frontière ? Rampes après rampes, car il y en a, nous sommes contents d'approcher du terme. Et en haut, nous voyons un groupe avec des habits matelassés. Des policiers, nous disons-nous ! Non, de simples motards. Le confinement dans les villes n'a pas le même suivi policier que le confinement dans les cols. Heureusement. 490.



Nous repartons donc deux semaines plus tard, alors que les conditions de voyage à l'étranger, deviennent drastiques, quarantaines à l'appui exigées si fréquentation d'autres personnes. Mais nous serons deux dans notre bulle et voyagerons juste dans notre voiture avec des hôtels de dimension réduite à la montagne.

Et arrivés dans le Jura après six heures de route, nous attaquons le monstre du Jura suisse, **La Barillette**, comme en témoigne la pancarte du sommet à côté de laquelle je pose. La montée fut en effet très rude après 3 kilomètres d'introduction plus posés. Il faisait chaud et nous eûmes le suprême cadeau d'un panorama inouï au sommet sur le Lac léman. Quelle belle ascension et quel site motivant au sommet ! Nous étions heureux. Il était temps de redescendre chercher la voiture et repasser la frontière pour loger à Divonne-les-Bains. 491.

Le lendemain, énorme programme avec pas mal de voitures dont la difficile traversée de

Montreux et deux ascensions pas piquées des vers. Le premier est un big discret, inconnu même des autochtones (sic), au doux nom d'**Auta-Chia**. La première partie est bucolique jusqu'à un village où un virage à gauche nous mène droit... dans le mur. Il dure un peu plus d'un kilomètre mais il est terrible, fréquente souvent les 15-20 % et on ne devine pas bien ce qui nous attend. On ahane, pas besoin de Covid pour s'époumonner. La pente s'adoucit alors mais nous avons un stress soudain : le bitume disparaît. Pas pour longtemps heureusement, juste 300 mètres et l'asphalte revient sur une pente plus convenable menant à un premier restaurant. On demande si on est à Auta-Chia. Que nenni les amis, il faut redescendre un tantinet et la dernière rampe est à nouveau bien costaute. Puis, c'est la récompense. Une terrasse ensoleillée dans un décor de rêve et une heure sans bouger à siroter nos boissons. Quelle beauté panoramique ! 492.

Et le trafic à Montreux est réel. Nous n'arriverons pas à notre but du jour. Arrivés au magnifique hôtel du Prilet à Saint-Luc sur les hauteurs de Vissoie, nous avons pu prévisualiser l'ascension. On balance nos bagages, on prend nos vélos à fond la caisse jusqu'à Sierre au pied. A l'autoroute, on fait demi-tour et les longues lignes droites où des camions nous dépassent sont étouffantes. Le repas est à 20h maximum. Nous n'y arriverons décidément pas. L'ascension est d'une grande longueur et à Vissoie, on décide de s'arrêter à l'hôtel pour charger le programme du lendemain de la fin de l'ascension en se levant tôt. Repas de montagne avalé et repos mérité car la fatigue nous a gagnés. Le lendemain, dès l'aube, on termine l'ascension. Et on assiste au départ des randonneurs dans la station de **Chandolin**. 493.

On redescend, on prend la voiture pour les quelques kilomètres vers Sion où on attaque la longue, très longue grimpe vers **Thyon 2000**. Nous grimpons à notre aise car on a revu le programme de la suite en trouvant des bigs plus proches de notre ligne de voyage via un tunnel pour les jours à venir. Ouf ! L'immense parking vide de monde nous laisse savourer la journée bien accomplie. 494.



On repart alors vers l'est et les Grisons. Le voyage de 200 kilomètres en voiture nous prend ... 4 heures mais les paysages sont tellement beaux qu'on ne voit pas le temps passer. Nous nous garons au pied du **Passo di San Bernardino**. L'ascension est plus courte mais est magistrale avec des lacets successifs et un décor de haute montagne. 495.

Un peu plus loin, nous comprenons que la pluie arrive et qu'il ne faudra pas traîner dans l'ascension du **Passo della Spluga**. La dernière très longue ligne droite se déroule en effet sous la pluie mais le but s'approche. 496.

Nous logeons dans un hôtel qui, en plus du Covid, a une ... panne d'électricité. Expérience unique mais un peu troublante, d'autant que les nouvelles à la télévision parlent de plus en plus de la Suisse comme zone très rouge.

Encore deux montées au programme du lendemain. Le matin, nous faisons l'**Albula Pass**. Et ces paysages qui n'en finissent pas de nous étonner. Les ascensions des deux derniers jours ne nous épuisent pas, elles ne sont pas très longues, ont parfois des passages sévères, mais le début du périple était bien plus difficile. 497.

Nous nous dirigeons alors vers l'Italie et grimpons le **Passo della Bernina** avec son hospice et son paysage de carte postale au sommet. De côtes sèches en replats successifs, nous voici à deux numéros du but. 498.

La frontière se passe sans encombre et nous logeons dans l'ascension du Gavia, dans un magnifique hôtel des 3 Seigneurs. Nous aurions aimé rencontrer Mauro Repetti et dîner avec lui mais les mesures sanitaires nous en empêchent. Bref, on prépare les deux derniers jours. L'avant-dernier jour, un peu de visite et un seul col : celui de **Foscagno**. Au départ de Bormio. Nous sommes étonnés de la circulation intense mais nous comprendrons lors du retour : Livigno, un peu plus loin est une zone tax-free. L'essence est à 0,76 € le litre. Nous en profiterons mais on comprend aussi pourquoi les automobilistes utilisent cette voie et pourquoi des policiers occupent le col. Cette grimpée fut agréable sous un soleil juste comme il le faut. Aucun stress de temps et visite de



Bormio. Journée de repos en quelque sorte avant le moment ultime de ce voyage, le jour J. 499.

Il reste le Gavia, le mythique **Gavia**, le Sieur Gavia, le monstre Gavia. L'« ascension peut se couper en deux parties : une première faite de tape-culs et de replats longue de 13 kilomètres. Puis, 13 autres kilomètres de haute montagne avec une pente s'approchant souvent de manière régulière des 10 %. Un vrai grand col, une vraie récompense de 35 ans de vélo en montagne.



Un moment magique quand la pancarte se pointe après le lac et quand on visite toutes les curiosités du sommet. Un moment de satisfaction commune avec Nathalie que je remercie vraiment pour cet accompagnement dans un voyage au timing endiablé et dont j'approuve chaque jour un peu plus la capacité cycliste. Elle a tout fait, sans rechigner.

Oui, c'est fait ; je suis half-finisher. Je suis à 500. Il me reste 35 ans pour finir le 1000<sup>e</sup> à 97 ans au sommet du Nebelhorn.

## Half-Finisher



## Lisbonne, Madère



Je m'étais dit cette année que Madère serait une bonne destination pour le mois de février, et je pense avoir eu raison, puisqu'à part un jour de pluie, tout s'est bien passé : beau temps et températures agréables.

Il n'y a pas de vol direct pour Madère depuis Nice, j'ai dû faire escale à Lisbonne, et j'en ai profité pour ajouter aux quatre BIG madérois la visite de trois BIG sur le continent. A l'aller, j'ai consacré une après-midi au **BIG 516 Serra da Arrábida** et au retour j'ai fait un tour de deux jours pour monter jusqu'au **BIG 518 Montejunto** en passant par le **BIG 515 Alto de Sintra** lors du retour vers Lisbonne.



Arrivé à Lisbonne le samedi en début d'après-midi, je pars prendre le train pour Coïna à la gare de Roma-Areeiro, car les routes pour atteindre le pied de la **Serra da Arrábida** n'avaient pas l'air agréables, plates et assez importantes. Le train franchit l'estuaire du Tage par le gigantesque pont du 25-Avril, où la voie ferrée passe sous l'autoroute.

Le départ de la gare de Coïna se fait comme prévu par une nationale bien chargée, que j'essaye d'éviter autant que possible par les petites rues latérales. J'arrive enfin à la route touristique de la Serra da Arrábida où la vraie montée commence. Je contourne la colline par son versant ouest et bientôt la mer apparaît. Plus je monte, plus le panorama est vaste et les vues plongeantes sur la côte magnifiques. Le point culminant de la route se situe immédiatement après le « Miradouro Portinho da Arrábida », où apparemment la jeunesse du coin aime bien venir se prendre en photo, le selfie sur fond d'océan est de rigueur ☺.

La route ondule ensuite sur la crête, offrant de temps en temps des vues sur l'intérieur des terres, tout en dominant la côte en permanence. Au fur et à mesure de la descente, je me rapproche de Setúbal et de la péninsule de Troia qui me proposent aussi de jolis spectacles. Je rejoins en bas de la

descente la nationale du début par une petite route qui monte et redescend un petit peu. Il y a toujours beaucoup de voitures, mais aussi une large bande latérale et le parcours est plutôt en descente, donc le tronçon n'est pas trop horrible et vite passé. Je reprends le train pour Lisbonne où je passe la nuit.

Le lendemain matin, je suis très tôt dans l'avion de Madère. L'Aerobus est un moyen pratique et rapide pour rejoindre Funchal et peu après onze heures je m'élance vers mes deux premiers objectifs de l'île, le **BIG 519 Eira do Serrado** et le **BIG 522 Pico Arieiro**. Dès le départ je suis confronté à de fortes pentes.

A Madère le 12% est la norme, ce n'est qu'autour de 20% qu'on commence à se dire que c'est pentu. Plus je monte vers l'Eira do Serrado, plus je me rapproche du brouillard.

Pour la dernière partie de la montée, je tourne à gauche juste avant un tunnel, je passe par quelques petites descentes et remontées avant l'arrivée, où je suis heureusement juste en dessous des nuages. Je peux ainsi profiter de jolies vues vers la vallée de Curral das Freiras.

Je fais ensuite demi-tour car ce BIG est un cul-de-sac, et deux kilomètres plus loin, je prends à gauche la bifurcation vers le **BIG 522 Pico Arieiro**. Je me trouve brusquement face à un mur, creusé dans la montagne !







Pendant au moins deux kilomètres, les rampes à plus de 20% se succèdent et je regrette bien de ne pas avoir installé ma cassette de 30 avant de partir. Je suis trop occupé à me battre avec la pente pour regarder le paysage, mais je suis de toute façon dans le brouillard. Je finis par sortir, à la fois du brouillard et des pentes assassines, et me retrouve en plein soleil, au-dessus d'une mer de nuages, déchirée çà et là par des pics acérés. La vision est splendide.

Je rejoins la route de Poiso pour les deux derniers kilomètres de la montée. Arrivée au pic, la route se termine sur un rond-point, d'où part une rampe pavée suivie d'une petite montée en zigzag qui amène au panneau **Pico do Arieiro 1810 metros**. Je descends ensuite par le Paso do Poiso et allonge un peu mon périple en rejoignant la route de Camacha qui me ramène vers Funchal.

Le lendemain je pars vers les deux autres BIG de Madère, le **BIG 521 Cabo Girao** et le **BIG 520 Boca Encumeada**. La sortie de Funchal se fait au milieu des palaces 5 étoiles, et j'aperçois bientôt la grande falaise du Cabo Girao. L'arrivée officielle se trouve au point le plus haut de la zone, sur l'esplanade d'une belle église toute blanche,



mais tout l'intérêt du BIG se trouve au Miradouro voisin. A travers la plate-forme, transparente, et par-dessus la rambarde, si on arrive à s'y pencher, on aperçoit la grève et les bananeraies 580 m en contrebas.

La route directe vers la Boca de Encumeada est une nationale importante, qui plus est au débouché de l'autoroute de Funchal. Je choisis donc de continuer le long du littoral pour rejoindre la crête de l'île par une route plus tranquille. Passé Ribeira Brava, je monte, je descends, je remonte jusqu'à Canhas où une dure montée commence. Quand j'arrive au plateau de Paul da Serra, j'ai grimpé 1000 m en 10 km. La végétation est surtout composée de petits buissons de couleur jaune, ce qui donne un joli tableau avec le vert des quelques bouquets d'arbres. Je continue à monter par des faux plats jusque vers 1600 m d'altitude, où commence la descente qui va m'amener à la **Boca Encumeada**. L'arrivée au BIG se fait par une route impressionnante, à flanc de falaise, qui domine de très haut la vallée qui redescend vers Ribeira Brava.

Après le BIG, je retrouve la nationale qui m'avait rebuté. Les camions qui me doublent ne me font pas regretter le détour que j'ai fait pour les éviter en montée. Je remonte ensuite à Câmara de Lobos où je tourne vers la Boca de los Namorados, qui offre à la fois un beau point de vue et un col répertorié aux cent cols. Tout cela se mérite et je bataille encore un moment dans les 20% et plus. La descente par l'autre côté m'affichera même un -30%, j'ai échappé au pire. Le Miradouro au bout de la route se trouve dans la même vallée que le **Eira do Serrado** et je peux l'apercevoir au loin, sur l'autre versant, ainsi qu'à nouveau le village de Cural das Freiras, d'un autre point de vue.

Le mardi, je décide d'aller jeter un coup d'œil à la Ponta de Sao Lourenço, à l'extrémité est de l'île. Je choisis pour y aller la route du bord de mer, ayant déjà parcouru l'avant-veille la route de Camacha. La sortie de Funchal se passe bien, mais vers Caniço, un flux énorme de voitures rejoint ma route, d'autant plus important qu'il est l'heure de pointe pour aller travailler. Je prends vite sur la gauche une route latérale pour rejoindre Camacha, au moment où la pluie commence à tomber.

J'arrive trempé à Camacha et continue toujours sous la pluie jusqu'au miradouro de la Portela (d'où je ne vois pas grand-chose). Là je dois me décider, si je descends vers Machico ou renonce à la sortie. Au moment précis où je m'engage sur la route de Machico, la pluie redouble brusquement. Je perds alors l'espoir de voir les choses s'arranger, et fais demi-tour vers Funchal. J'y suis de retour assez tôt et profite de l'après-midi et de la pluie qui s'arrête pour visiter la ville.

Le lendemain, échaudé par mon expérience de la veille sur la route du littoral, je prends directement la direction de Camacha. Après la descente vers Machico la route remonte jusqu'à un tunnel. Juste avant l'entrée de celui-ci, une petite route se détache à droite vers le pico do Facho. De ce promontoire, on jouit d'une très belle vue vers Machico et sa plage d'un côté, sur le port de Caniçal et la pointe de Sao Lourenço de l'autre. J'en redescends ensuite, traverse le tunnel et m'engage vers la pointe proprement dite.

Les photos que j'avais pu voir de l'endroit me faisaient espérer un joli spectacle, et je n'ai pas été déçu. Les vues le long de cette pointe sont époustouflantes, particulièrement celle du Miradouro da Ponta do Rosto, d'où l'on voit la mer battre les falaises colorées et les pointes déchiquetées surgissant des flots. C'est magnifique. J'y reste un bon moment, puis reprends le chemin de Funchal. Au milieu de l'après-midi la circulation est raisonnable et je peux rentrer sans souffrir par la côte, clôturant ainsi mon séjour à Madère



De retour le jeudi matin à Lisbonne, je pars en direction du **Montejunto**. Je sors de l'aéroport par de larges avenues urbaines et me retrouve sur la route de Loures. J'ai un peu de circulation au début mais à partir de Bucelas je suis tranquille. La route s'élève un long moment mais les pentes n'ont rien à voir avec celles de Madère, heureusement. Je traverse ainsi tranquillement la campagne lisboète et arrive à Vila Verde dos Francos, au pied du BIG.

Le début de la montée se fait dans une ambiance toujours agricole. Je peux contempler au passage de jolis moulins à vent tout blancs. Après une petite descente, je tourne à droite pour la dernière partie de la montée. Au sommet figurent quelques bâtiments anciens, dont quelques-uns en ruine, ainsi qu'un nombre impressionnant d'antennes.

La situation du Montejunto est vraiment particulière puisque c'est la seule montagne un peu importante à des dizaines de kilomètres à la ronde. La vision s'étend donc très loin et dans toutes les directions. Avant de descendre, je pousse jusqu'à la boule du radar à proximité mais un militaire en faction me fait comprendre qu'il serait bon de ne pas trop m'attarder. Je repars ensuite vers le sud et m'arrête pour la nuit à Torres Vedras. Le lendemain je traverse Mafras en

passant devant l'impressionnant Palácio Nacional et sors de la ville par une nationale à quatre voies pas très agréable, en montée de surcroît.

Les routes pour arriver à Sintra sont un peu plus encombrées que celles que j'ai pu parcourir la veille, mais j'y arrive quand même. La montée vers le **Alto de Sintra** se fait par une petite route sous les arbres, avec des pentes assez costaud. Tout le long de la montée, je suis dépassé continuellement par de petits triporteurs qui montent les touristes sur la colline. Les moteurs fument et pétaradent, la qualité de l'air ne semble pas la préoccupation première sur le site. L'arrivée du BIG se trouve à l'entrée du château dont on aperçoit quelques murailles multicolores.



Je repars en sens interdit, pour m'éviter un trop grand détour, vers la serra de Sintra. Après quelques kilomètres agréables dans la forêt, je redescends vers la mer et longe l'océan jusqu'à Cascais. Les falaises et les larges plages de sable alternent, balayées par la houle du large. Je fais ma rentrée à Lisbonne par Belem et sa célèbre tour, et pars visiter quelques sites de la ville : la Praça do Comércio, le parc Eduardo VII, l'aqueduc des Águas Livres, etc. Je monte au Bairro Alto, puis à Alfama, ce qui revient à grimper une dizaine de Koppenberg agrémentés de rails de tramway et de voitures dans tous les sens.

Après avoir ainsi sacrifié au tourisme, je passe ma dernière nuit à Lisbonne. Le lendemain, dans l'avion du retour, je prends une belle photo du Montejunto par le hublot, j'oublie de ranger mon appareil et à l'arrivée à Nice je sors de l'avion sans plus y penser, me privant pour toujours des belles photos souvenir de ce voyage, snif.

Charbonnier Robert



## La Palma Island Kevin Speed



Starting off early for my longest climb on La Palma and take 6 hours to reach Las Muchachos. Ruth also goes to the mountain on a TUI coach trip that takes in a good part of the island as well as visiting the observatories. I set off at 08.00 biking through Santa Cruz heading north along the coast. The road soon rises over a headland outside of the town then after that slightly inland where the junction for the road LP4 branches off to the left. I start the climb at 09.15. It's a steep road up after leaving the houses behind. There are plenty of hairpins and most of the way is up along a tree shaded road. A motorist heading towards me stopped to tell me that the road ahead was closed and he suspected the road was blocked. I thanked him and carried on, telling him I would take the risk. Eventually when the turn to the left for Pico de la Nieve (Peak of the Snow) the road ahead to Roque Muchachos was barricaded off. Some of it was only cordoned off with warning tape though, so I raised this and passed under. This was at the 26km marker from Santa Cruz and a further 12km from the observatories. Shortly afterwards I approached the snowline and soon caught sight of the observatories ahead. At 30km there was snow either side of the road and some ice on the road surface. The road passes alongside the mountain at this point and away from the sun so I could feel the cold here. It really is a contrast to the warmth along the coast. At 30km the road goes over the side of the mountain and descends 2km to the 32km marker. From that point it's a further

7km to reach the green height marker at the top of Roque de los Muchachos BIG 498. There were far too many cars parked up at the narrow paved shelf at the top of the mountain, the highest point in La Palma. They were like birds on a wire, jostling for position. The road here to the left ascends past several radio telescopes. Men were working on them at the time. From the road the silver plate construction glistens in the bright sunlight. The road is indicated as private but there were cars going up and

down so thought it would be OK to continue. I took few photos but then my camera developed a fault. The zoom extension wouldn't operate. Ruth said later why hadn't I used my mobile to take photos. I was so concerned about the camera that I didn't think of that. Well, I'll just have to revisit in the future to get some good photos. Returning back down the mountain at 18.00 and passed along the road under the mountain again – it was so cold! The area was like a huge icing cake. In the shadow of the mountain winter had returned. On the other side I stopped at Los Andenes to take in the view down into the crater. This is the only viewing area along here for a view of the crater. Being aware of the time now it was definitely the hour to get a move on as it would be dark in two hours and didn't want to be caught up the



mountain on a long descent to Santa Cruz. I took a wrong turning near the foot of the mountain and skirted high ground along road LP401 then LP101 to Las Neives then descended into Santa Cruz at the point where the replica of Santa Maria boat is situated, just as it was getting dark. From here through the town and back to Los Cancajos, arriving back at 20.00. I enjoyed my dinner that evening! I had a drink with the Su Bici bike hire shop owner on return of the bike. I'd really recommend this place to hire bikes from.



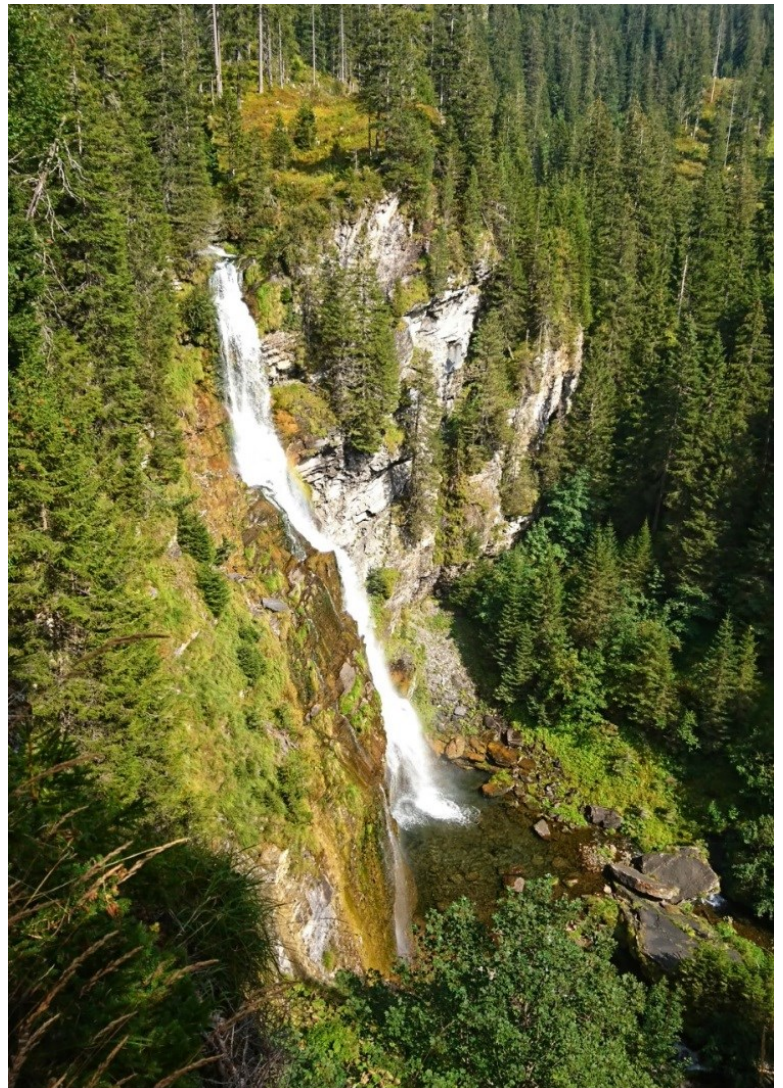
When you follow the road from Innertkirchen (CH) to the Sustenpass, after a few kilometers you take a left turn to a road with a dead end, but a very nice dead end. This 13 km road is at times very strenuous but leads you into one of the most beautiful valleys of Central Switzerland: the Gental.

The climb is from start to finish 17,7 kilometers and can be divided into 4 parts:

- Starting with the about 4 km busy road out of Innertkirchen (alt 625 m) to the turn off to the Gental.
- The second part is the steep 3,5 km section (8,5% - 11%) , through dense forests, to the toll station at about 1.200 m altitude (no toll for cyclists).
- The third part starts at the toll station, is about km long and winds, slightly climbing, through meadows to just a couple of hundred meters before the village of Schwarzenal (alt ca 1350 m).

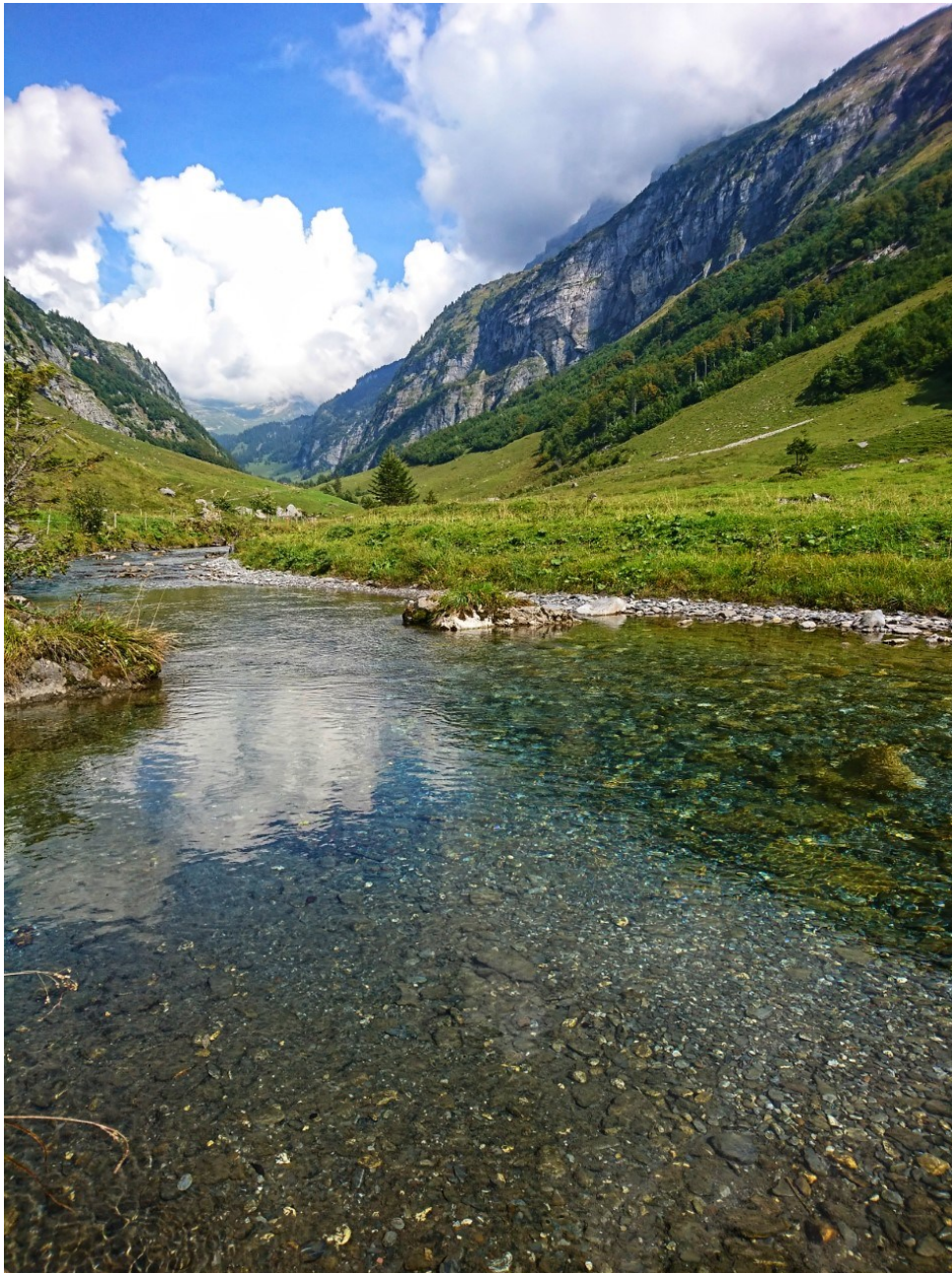
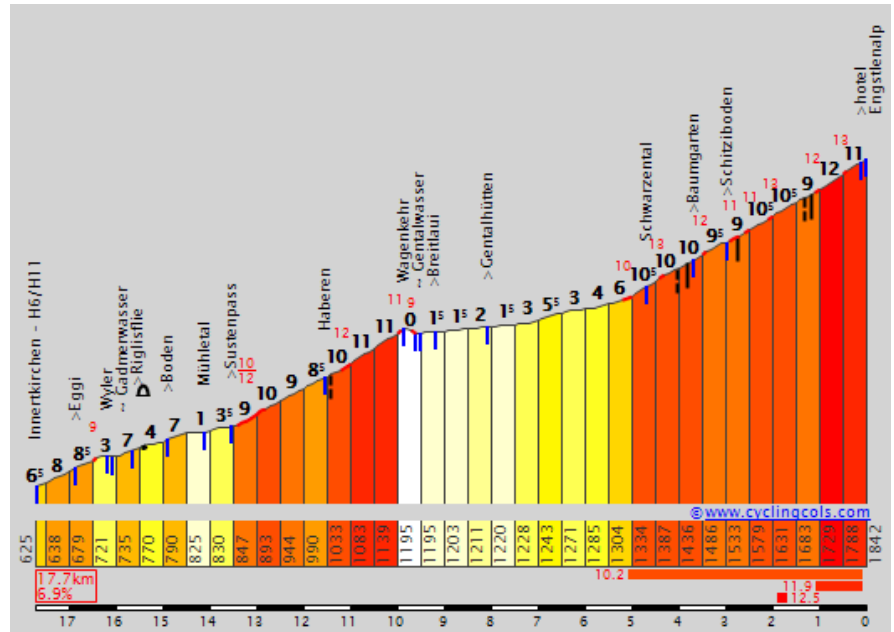
- Part four and last part starts near Schwarzenal and takes you to the Engstlenalp (alt 1837 m): the 5 km long road has an average climbing percentage of 10,2%.

These are the figures (see the profile of [www.cyclingcols.com](http://www.cyclingcols.com)), but what makes this climb so interesting, is the astonishing scenery especially of the Gental (3rd stage of this climb). It's a typical valley U-shaped by glaciers and covered in pastures and swamps. Very green with almost vertical walls from which lots of waterfalls contribute to the filling of the Gentalwasser (Gental River). There're some scattered farms and a small village (Schwarzenal), very peaceful and quiet; but what can be seen in abundance are dairy cows (and their waste on the tarmac). The easy part of the climb helps to get a good view around. Save your breath on this section because you'll need it for the last part, which is steep: 5 km at 10,2% average, including 1 km of 11,2% and a maximum of 14% (data from [CyclingCols.com](http://CyclingCols.com)). Here too the views are breathcatching: snow covered mountains, waterfalls, alpine marmots, birds of prey etc. (by the way: the steep climb on it's own was breathtaking enough to me). Pictures say way more than words, so see those.



## Zone 7

Engstlenalp is the end of the journey, not only for cyclists but also for some tourists. As soon as you enter the Engstlenalp the tarmac part is over and a rubble track begins. By that rough road you can go to the lake for a nice scene or to a small restaurant for beverages and food. I choose the restaurant to replace some lost body fluids. The sparkling water was very expensive, but luckily it came with a very small glass, so it took me some time to consume. Going downhill is the opposite of climbing but a lot faster. So the nice scenery flashes by, but gladly you had a very good look on your way going up.



(www.cyclingcols.)

## CYCLING BETWEEN THE PEAKS OF THE CORONA-VALLEY

Gerard Meijering

Unfortunately, until now it has not been possible to ride beautiful mountains with several other BIG-ers in a challenging area. So in 2020 finally the moment was there that the Baskian tour would take place in May. However, Covid-19 came along and got a hold on all of us, which urged us to stay in our own country. Plans had to be changed. Since the Austrian border would open on Monday June 15 for Dutch people, I decided to not lose any time anymore and decided to give it a go on the Saturday before to cross the border. If that would not be possible, I would ride my bike in Germany for 2 additional days until Monday.

I was lucky that I could already cross the Austrian border on Saturday June 13, 2 days before the official opening. I was as happy as a child that I could ride my first foreign BIG in 2020 (**Hirschbirch; BIG-nr 199**). A short steep entrant with an increase up to 30%!! Although in the Northern part of Austria there were more mountains on the programme, I decided to go to the more southern Lienz because of the upcoming bad weather.

The next day in Lienz I climbed the Hochstein **Parkplatz (BIG-nr. 629)** in the rain. The biggest challenge in this bad weather was not the climb but the very steep descent (average 10.7%; 12 km). With all of the strength in my hands I was continuously braking causing my brake pads to melt down quickly. Numb and barely being able to undress myself from my wet clothes, a hot shower at the camping side was my last resource to gather all my courage to go for the next climb.

A beautiful tour was climbing the **Staller Sattel (BIG-nr 623)** from Hubben. Thereafter, it was a long descent in Italy to be able to make a shortcut to **Plan de Coronas (BIG-nr. 709)**. The last steep gravel road could, unfortunately, not be done on a racingbike. The magnificent 360-degrees view compensated for everything!! The whole journey was longer than was expected at front though. Well, and then you have to go back to the top of Staller Sattel and descent again to get to your car. Quitting or taking a shortcut was not an option anymore. Eventually, Strava told me that I rode more than 155 km within about 10 hours, and conquered almost 4000 altimeters! A performance for which complacency defeated fatigue!



At the time the weather got better, finally the famous **Grossglockner (Hochtor BIG-nr. 625)** was on the programme. From the northern part a beautiful panoramic climb of more than 25 kilometres of which the summit lays just above 2500 meters. With lack of oxygen I came at the summit. With climbing this iconic mountain I suppressed the last big Alpine pass in my mission to conquer the total Alps.



In this article the **Kitzbuhler Horn (BIG-nr. 620)** can surely not be skipped. Oops, what a steep one was that (average 12.4%). It takes forever to travel 10 km! Also this one was a 360-degrees mountain with magnificent view on the lower situated clouds and the tens of mountains surrounding it.

Later on, the famous Christiaan Weytmans came to the same camping side as I was in Lienz to climb some beautiful mountains together. We decided to ride the **Zirknitztal (BIG-nr. 633)**. A challenging climb over a very narrow path. After climbing for 8 kilometres we came across a farmer riding a tractor who, with lots of facial expression, he tried to explain us that it was way to 'lebensgefährlich' to ride any further because of the 'steinslag und waldarbeit'. Disappointed about not fulfilling our climbing mission we dripped off and descended back to the foot of the mountain. Next, I decided to ride a Fiets (Bike) 500 mountain called Grossee which could be reached from the same foot. Christiaan decided to drive with the car to the foot of another BIG. While I was climbing the Grossee, I was surprised that it was the same route as Zirknitztal and I wondered where and when the exit to the Grossee would come. Eventually, I came to the exact same location as where we stranded before. The Grossee appeared to be exactly the same climb as Zirknitztal! In other words, I stranded halfway down the exact same climb twice on one day! How frustrating was that?!!

Fortunately, Christiaan and myself aren't easily discouraged! In the end on Sunday, two days later, we went again to the same mountain. Assuming that there would not be 'waldarbeit' on Sunday. This time we did the first part by car, and on the second part we took our bikes. Although, biking.... we had to crawl under gate bars and clamber across chopped trees. It wasn't easy for us! Just before the summit we rode in the clouds, it was freezingly cold causing frosty hands.





And then, the **Ocheniksee (BIG-nr. 628)** was on the programme. In my whole life I have climbed more than 800 mountains, including many 'light' Dutch 'mountains. However, no other mountain, according to the BIG-formula, was heavier than Ocheniksee. The last 9 kilometres the rate of increase was on average 13%!!! Quite difficult to ride your bike if your back wheel is slipping away due to wet leaves and fallen twigs. The bad road surface with many holes in it made it extra difficult. Life-threatening, descending like that! I was terrified that I would get into such a hole and would roll over. Again with this climb I was experiencing an euphoric and undescrivable feeling when conquering this Giants-killer. The more, since I completed this dangerous descent uninjured.

Finally, my project in the surrounding area of Lienz was accomplished. Remarkably, none of the mountains close to Lienz could be done effortlessly. The statistics back me up on this. The 21 climbs were on average 8% over 17 km for which each time again 1100 altimeters were to be conquered. I do not know any heavier mountain range in Europe!

After that, I travelled to the Dolomites where several lacking mountains were on my list. For me personally, the Dolomites area keeps being the most beautiful biking area due to it's unique landscape with sharp protruding rock formations. For example,



**Passo delle Erbe (BIG-nr. 710)** was mere joy to climb due to it's surprisingly and dazzling beauty!

During all through the time of my holiday I had my mountain bike at the roof of my car with only one goal: to climb the **Passo Porte del Pasubio (BIG-nr. 728)**. In May 2019 I stranded together with Christiaan Weytmans at 5 km before the summit on my racing bike due to fact that the rough gravel path was still covered with snow. This time I made it to the summit. Boldness, endurance, steermanship and certainly being free of fear for heights (for sake of the dazzling abyss) were prerequisites to ride this path (that even for hikers is prohibited to pass due to the falling rocks). It was a high to achieve the summit of this monstrous mountain on a second attempt.



Not everything went that well however. For instance, I forgot to replace the cap on my oil engine tank after refilling the engine oil of my care causing an empty oil tank. My tight time schedule didn't leave me any room to lose any time and wait till after the weekend for the garages to open again and buy a new cap. Therefore, I improved something with industrial tape. This, unfortunately, didn't go well resulting in a smoking car. However, that was a problem for later. First, before it would get dark, the mountain I was close to was to be climbed. After this climb I had to sleep in the car at a parking lot. The next day I got the brilliant idea to block the oil tank with a racing sock and some more industrial tape. By doing so, the problem with the car didn't hinder the ambitious programme. In the end I was able to climb 44 mountains within 18 days and look back at it with a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction because I could experience amazing adventures despite 8 months of traveling restraints.



## Colle delle Finestre op de racefiets.

De beklimming van de Colle delle Finestre stond al lang op mijn verlanglijstje. En ja, in 2020 moest het dan toch maar gebeuren, ondanks Corona. Jaarlijks ga ik samen met mijn fietsvriend Martin een weekje op fietsvakantie; wij verstaan elkaar, weten precies wat we aan elkaar hebben en kunnen er op vertrouwen dat zo'n week dan eigenlijk altijd een succes wordt. Uiteraard dient dan het weer wel een klein beetje mee te werken. Als het spreekwoord klopt dat je krijgt wat je verdient, dan hebben we vast een hoop verdient! In de 20 jaar dat we nu samen op vakantie gaan kunnen we de slecht weer dagen op één hand tellen!

Ook dit jaar mag ik zeggen dat we geluk hebben gehad met het weer, een gegeven dat bij de beklimming van de onverharde Finestre echt wel mee telt!

Onze vakantie begon afgelopen jaar in Zwitserland, Sion. Met de losse auto is dat goed aan te rijden in één dag, we hadden zelfs nog tijd om aan het eind van de dag even de Pas de Morgins te beklimmen, lekker op het gemakje om de benen weer los te werken na de autorit.

De volgende dag vertrokken we vanuit ons appartement in Sion, echter niet voordat we in het plaatselijke café van het mini-ontbijt hadden genoten (door Corona niet in het appartement te verkrijgen). Aangezien we niet de gehele dag konden teren op een croissant en twee kleine witte bolletjes met jam, moesten we in de klim naar de Barrage de la Grande Dixence (zie foto van prachtig kerkje onderweg) al weer snel op zoek naar een bakkertje voor de broodnodige brandstof.

De beklimming naar het grote bassin was prachtig, maar aldaar aangekomen toch enigszins een domper omdat je het meer niet te zien krijgt, de weg en BIG stoppen aan de voet van de dam...wat rest is een onverhard pad, verboden voor fietsers!

Als toetje hadden we die dag de beklimming naar Ovronnaz gepland. Ovronnaz is een ski-oord zoals zovelen, de weg er naar toe was dat zeker niet, stijgingen tot 15% en een stuk van 5km met een gemiddelde van 11,3% zorgden er voor dat we tot het uiterste moesten gaan. De BIG-site geeft een max. van 13,6% aan,

maar soms vertrouw ik dan toch meer op mijn Garmin! Toch zijn we vanaf de top van de BIG nog een stukje verder doorgereden tot aan Jorasse, een boerderij die via een verhard geitenpad bereikbaar is en toch al snel enkel honderden meters hoger ligt dan het dorp Ovronnaz! Een BIG-fanaat zoekt altijd het hoogst mogelijke op...

De volgende dag (dag 2) parkeerden we de auto in Martigny en reden daarna eerst naar de Barrage de Mauvoisin (zie foto), waar je (in tegenstelling tot de Dixence) wél het meer kunt zien met prachtige vergezichten! Het eerste stuk van de beklimming fiets je over de (te) drukke weg richting Grand Saint Bernard, vanaf Sembrancher sla je linksaf, maar blijft het een drukke weg. Pas vanaf Le Chable verlaat je de drukke weg en kom je in een oase van rust. Aangezien het een doodlopende weg is wordt het richting top alleen maar rustiger.

De tweede beklimming die dag was de Col de la Forclaz vanuit Martigny. We moesten wel een beetje



haast maken, want er wachtte ons ook nog een verplaatsing naar Aosta! Ondanks dat deze Col via een hele brede weg beklommen wordt, viel de drukte aldaar gelukkig mee. Onderweg genieten van de magnifieke uitzichten op Martigny dat bocht na bocht steeds kleiner werd. Boven natuurlijk nog een koffiestop, want in Corona tijd moet je pakken wat je pakken kunt, ook al kost het een rib uit je lijf met die Zwitserse prijzen. Dat laatste zou in ieder geval gaan beteren...

De dag van tevoren hadden we een leuk hotelletje gevonden, net buiten Aosta. Het centrum was goed aan te lopen om aldaar van het diner te genieten. Het diner proberen wij altijd buiten het hotel te nemen, zodat je wat meer keuze hebt qua gerechten en entourage.

Op dag 3 was Aosta de uitvalsbasis voor de beklimmingen van Breuil-Cervina (zie foto) en de Colle San Carlo. Normaal gesproken geven wij er de voorkeur aan om een rondje te fietsen vanuit het hotel, maar dat was in dit geval niet mogelijk; in de auto op weg naar Saint-Vincent dus. De klim was relatief gemakkelijk, maar wel weer een ontzettend drukke weg, waar achter elkaar rijden het devies is. Ook bij deze BIG is het mogelijk om na de top nog enkele honderden hoogtemeters extra te maken. We hadden echter geen tijd om alle bergwegen te verkennen en kozen er 1 waarvan wij dachten dat die potentie had, het resultaat viel dit keer tegen; de beklimming aan de andere zijde van het dal was fraaier geweest!

Na de afdaling op een toch wel behoorlijk afgetakelde weg (dat merk je pas bij de afdaling) terug in de auto op weg naar Morgex om de Colle San Carlo te fietsen.

Dat was wel even uit een ander vaatje tappen! Met een gemiddelde van 9,8% en een maximum van 14,9% zeker geen ontspannen klimmetje, wel een uitdaging!

De volgende dag besloten we dat we beter twee verplaatsingen konden doen met de auto om zo een dag eerder aan te komen in de uitvalsbasis van waaruit we de Colle delle Finestre zouden beklimmen. Om dat te



verwezenlijken reden we de volgende ochtend eerst naar Locana, aan de voet de de Colle del Nivolet. Een juweel van de col, enig minpuntje is de lengte van 40 km, zodat je op je vingers kunt uittellen dat het in het begin waarschijnlijke weer veel verkeer geeft. Dat duurde inderdaad zo'n 25 km; wat restte was een

schitterend decor, waarbij je uiteindelijk tot een duizelingwekkende hoogte van 2617m boven zeeniveau reikt. Van te voren waren we een beetje huiverig over de temperatuur boven op de col, het was immers al half september, maar dat viel gelukkig alles mee. Niet dat het warm was, maar we konden wel met zomertenuue omhoog en met een jasje naar beneden. Tot dusver was dit wel de mooiste klim van deze vakantie, al was het alleen maar vanwege de hoogte en de magnifieke uitzichten (zie foto) over het dal.

Na de afdaling weer terug in de auto om naar het B&B in Chiusa di San Michele te rijden. Al met al toch een vermoeiende dag met 2000hm op de fiets en 400km in de auto...

Voordeel was wel dat we nu een dag extra hadden in onze laatste overnachtingsplaats. Dit kwam Martin in het bijzonder goed uit, want de vermoeidheid had met name bij hem toch wel zijn sporen achter gelaten. Omdat het weer de volgende dag ook nog eens



onbetrouwbaar was besloot hij een dag rust te nemen en mij te begeleiden in mijn beklimming van de Mont Cenis vanuit Susa, een BIG die hij toch al op zijn palmares had staan. Voor mij een extra veiligheidje omdat ik bij een weeromslag veilig in de auto terug kon rijden! De beklimming zelf loopt heerlijk, met een gemiddeld stijgingspercentage van 6,1% over 25 km en maximaal "slechts" 9% een verademing ten opzichte van wat we die week gewend waren.. De weg was hier en daar nog een beetje nat van een nachtelijk buitje, maar de beklimming zelf reed ik lekker in de zon, tot de laatste 3 km! Op het open stuk net onder de top begonnen de donkere wolken zich samen te spannen om per direct tot uitbarsting te komen. Door wat extra inspanning kon ik een nat pak net voorkomen, maar van de optie om met de auto naar beneden te gaan maakte ik dankbaar gebruik. Dat dit nodig was bleek al na 2 km in de afdaling waar de ruitenwissers overuren maakten..



De volgende dag stond dan toch echt de Colle delle Finestre (zie foto) op het menu, een uitbundig diner was die dag wel op zijn plaats, maar daar hadden onze B&B eigenaren wel een oplossing voor; een fraai restaurantje in een naburig dorpje waar we heerlijk gegeten hebben.

De volgende dag was het werkelijk stralend weer, we hadden niet beter kunnen wensen. We zouden vanuit de B&B via de Colle delle Finestre (als alles goed loopt) aan de andere kant afdalen en via de Colle Braida terugkeren.

De vele verhalen rondom de Finestre met daarin een zeer diverse uiteenzetting van de conditie van het onverharde deel van deze col boezemden ons van tevoren toch enige angst in; voor de profs wordt de wals van stal gehaald en lijkt de gravelweg wel een halve asfaltklim. Voor ons en alle andere strijders die in de voetsporen van de profs naar boven willen rijden rest een laatste strook van 9 km met grove keien, stenen en gaten. Met name de motoren zorgen er voor dat de weg continue wordt veranderd en dat de fietsers bij elke meter moeten kijken hoe ze die het best kunnen aanvallen. Nu heb ik gelukkig de nodige ervaring op de crossfiets, waarop ik in de winter (buiten Coronatijd) mijn wedstrijdjes rijd in een regionale competitie bij de WBVC. Zo snel laten wij ons niet bang maken!

Toch was er natuurlijk die (gezonde) stress naar de werkelijk omstandigheden waar we mee te maken zouden krijgen. Je weet pas wat het is als je er bent...

De eerste, verharde, km's beginnen al goed met een stukje van 14% bij de voet van de klim, echt gemakkelijk wordt het daarna nooit meer. Het asfalt gedeelte was wel zeer fraai om te fietsen, zeer grof asfalt (werkijs) in een dichte bebossing met heel veel medefietsers en (helaas) groepjes motoren. De medefietsers waren eigenlijk stuk voor stuk mountainbikers, de meeste ook nog eens voorzien van de nodige ondersteuning middels een hulpmotortje. Wel leuk om die gasten gewoon voorbij te rijden overigens, haha.

Een paar km verder zie ik toch ineens een tweetal racefietsen, mooie Bianchi's. Dichterbij komende vindt ik dat de beide heren, ondanks hun additionele gewicht toch wel erg gemakkelijk omhoog fietsen. Jawel, ook deze fietsen waren voorzien van een zacht zoemend hulpmiddel. Wij hadden als enige extra wapen voor deze klim gekozen voor steviger schoeisel; in plaats van de reguliere Conti 5000 banden hadden we speciaal voor vandaag de 4-seizoenenband van Conti om de velg gespannen. Dit vooral om een mogelijke snake-bite op het onverharde gedeelte te voorkomen. Qua rolweerstand kan ik overigens niet zeggen dat deze banden erg veel meer weerstand bieden dan de 5000-serie, maar ze zijn sowieso stugger.



Na een kleine 10 km op asfalt kwamen we aan bij het onverharde stuk. In het begin viel dat alles mee, relatief kleine steentjes en een tweetal sporen die redelijk vlak lagen. De bochten echter waren stuk voor stuk afgetrapt door de vele (off-road) motoren. Daar was het zaak om zoveel mogelijk de buitenbocht te nemen, die lag nog enigszins vlak. Vanuit de bocht dan vaak weer dwars over de motorsporen naar de andere zijde omdat die een net wat beter vooruitzicht had. Je moet bij zo'n klim altijd enkele meters vooruit kijken en denken; ik was als cyclo-crosser in mijn element. Maar ook ik was er nog niet; 9 km onverhard is niet te vergelijken met 10 km op asfalt, de snelheid ligt toch echt een paar km/u lager. Na een km of 5 op onverhard terrein krijg je zicht op de top. Hoewel het nog een heel eind fietsen is, vindt ik dat toch altijd een psychologisch voordeel. Het tempo ging weer omhoog, mede omdat de laatste km's gelukkig wat minder

steil zijn.

Een geweldig zicht op de beklimming belooft de eenzame fietser bij bovenkomst; je ziet de weg kronkelend 4-5 km naar beneden lopen en ik had een mooi zicht op de verrichtingen van mijn medestanders in deze strijd. Ook voor Martin was dit een ervaring om nooit te vergeten; hij is meer de flyer, heeft wat minder power op de steile en lastige trajecten, maar kwam knap fietsend naar boven. Samen nog even tijd genomen de nodige foto's te maken en gezien het feit dat alles voorspoedig liep tevens besloten door te rijden en de asfalt afdaling richting Fenestrelle te nemen. In de afdaling komen we dan nog in een prachtig bergdorp waar de tijd schijnbaar stil heeft gestaan, idyllisch gewoon.

In de het dal was het natuurlijk zoeken naar een café voor de hoognodige koffiestop, we moesten nog wel een stukje rijden met de nodige klimkilometers....

De afdaling gevolgd tot in Pinerolo, van waaruit we besloten hadden om de grote weg zoveel mogelijk te vermijden om via twee klein tussenklimmetjes naar de voet van de Colle Braida reden.

De Colle Braida is werkelijk een lokale meeting waar dagelijks tientallen fietsers naar boven rijden. Eén keer per jaar is de gehele Col ook afgesloten voor autoverkeer en gereserveerd voor de fietsers, het is een soort bedevaartsoord, mede vanwege de Sacra di San Michele (zie foto), een schitterend gelegen abdij net onder de top. Deze monumentale abdij is een symbool voor de regio Piemonte, gebouwd in 985 na Chr. Voor ons toch ook wel een hoogtepunt van de dag, naast het bereiken van de top van de Finestre uiteraard.

Restte ons nog om in ons favoriete restaurantje het laatste diner te nuttigen, de eigenaars van de B&B te bedanken voor hun gastvrijheid en na een welverdiende nachtrust weer huiswaarts te reizen, om thuis weer langzaam ideeën op te doen voor de volgende vakantieweek...



Coen Schillemans  
BIG 229

## Becoming godfather of Monte Beigua: analysis and thoughts

Gabriele Brunetti

As members of BIG, we plan year by year new climbs. The major limit for planning is the time available from work, family and other life duties etc. This year our agenda was strongly modified. We were deprived of the freedom to travel and even to move due the covid-19 restrictions. In Italy the lockdown was harder, earlier and longer than other EU countries. We were not allowed to leave our home for about two months even for cycling. After then, it was legal to move only in our own area. I was very lucky to live at the foot of M Beigua in the municipality of Varazze. With no alternative, I made several times this ascent in few weeks. It was fun! Never feeling bored! This was a surprise for me. Eventually, I launched the BIG Challenge to become Beigua godfather.

It was a great experience that eventually led me to revise my idea and concepts about climbs.

### Summary of the Challenge

Total climbs	25
South side	19
North side	6
N. of days	19 days in 8 months
First ascent	14 march
Last ascent	24 october
Total km	1430
Total elevation gain	35,800 m
Solitary ascents	7
Ascents with friends	18



### Major routes to Monte Beigua

Side	Start (Altitude, m)	Length km	Route	Features
S1	Varazze (0)	18	Pero, Alpicella	14.4 km at 8.2%, 10.5 km is the last common track, max 15%
N1	S. Pietro d'Olba (523)	11.6	Piampaludo	11.6 km at 6.8%, 7.5 km is the last common track, max 18%
N2	Sassello (380)	25	La Carta (pass), Alberola	First 14 km at 4.3%, last 7.1 km at 5.7%, max 17%

### Minor Variants of road cycling to M Beigua

Side	Start (Altitude, m)	Length Km	Route
S2	Cogoleto (0)	32	Lerca, Sciarborasca, Eremo, Passo Muraglione, Faie, Alpicella
S3	Varazze (0)	24	Casanova, Passo Muraglione, Faie, Alpicella
S4	Celle (0)	24	Sanda, Stella S. Martino, Alpicella
S5	Albisola ss 334, bv Gameragna (60)	22	Gameragna, Stella S. Martino, Alpicella
N4	S. Pietro d'Olba (523)	22	La Carta, Alberola
N3	S. Pietro d'Olba (523)	22	Vara Inferiore, Dano, Piampaludo



Typical house Beigua

### Classic loops including Monte Beigua from Riviera

Side	Start	Route	Direction	Distance (km)	Elevation gain
S1	Varazze	Alpicella, M Beigua, S. Pietro d'Olba, La Carta, Sassello, Colle del Giovo, Stella S. Martino, Varazze	Anti-clockwise	70	1700+
N2	Varazze	Voltri, Passo del Turchino, Passo del Faiallo, S. Pietro d'Olba, M.Beigua, Varazze	Anti-clockwise	90	2000m+
S4	Cogoleto	Lerca, Sciarborasca, Eremo, Passo Muraglione, Alpicella, M. Beigua, Alberola, La Carta, Sassello	Anti-clockwise	90	1800m+

This article describe the features that makes M Beigua a great climb. A knowledge of a climb may require several experience from all sides.



### 1. A peak at two steps from sea

You jump from the busy and noisy beach to a quiet and solitary summit that it is just in front of you at the start from the central pier in Varazze. For road bikers the distance is 18 km, for hikers is only 10 km. M Beigua is the iconic climb for Liguria where mountain and sea are so close.



### 2. Location & climate

The location, close to motorway and in a touristic area including Genoa, makes the access easy. The mild climate makes the climb feasible all the year round as compared to only 4-5 months for the alpine climbs; Fauniera and Prato Nevoso are far only 100 km from Beigua area. From nov to feb the available days for climb are on average 4-5 per month.

### 3. The highest peak in a mountain range

It is not an isolated mountain like Ventoux, Mottarone, Grappa. It is the highest peak of the Beigua group which extends for 26 km between Colle del Giovo (516) and Turchino pass (542). The Beigua group is a border area between Apennine and Alps. It forms a wonderful balcony (plateau) above 1000 m overlooking the sea and the Po Valley. The minimum distance of the ridge is only 5 km from the sea.

### 4. A climb across contrasting landscapes

You pass from the busy beach and coastal town to the country inside with orange, lemon and olive trees. You go up along green roads through cultivated area or Mediterranean flora. The mountain is inhabited by farmers up to 450 m. Above it is wild and protected area with pine woods. On the top the road runs on the ridge and summit prairies pointed by greenish boulders. The north side is covered by beech and chestnut forests. There are spectacular stretches and spectacular views on the sea, mountains and the Po valleys. It is a landscape of contrasting and intense colours of sea, sky, rocks, prairies and woods.





### 5. Great Challenge

Beigua is must-do climb. It is long and difficult climb. The elevation gain (1287+) is that of HC or cat 1 climb. The most challenging side is from south even if the steepest stretches are on the north sides (max 17%). The first 3 km from San Pietro d'Olba are tough as well as the last 2 km after Pra' Riondo. Also the 2.5 km including the snail stretch from Alpicella (south) is constantly above 10% with a max 15%.

### 6. Beigua Unesco Global Geopark -

Most of the routes are inside the park which is remarkable for geodiversity and biodiversity, and a rich heritage of historical-cultural findings. There are no cars (except on the weekend) after the last village Alpicella - at 10.4 km from the top. It is easier to meet a deer or wild pig than people.



## 7. The Giro d'Italia

M Beigua is not a legendary climb. Giro d'Italia (GdI) climbed only once in 1997 with finish line in Varazze. The descent is difficult and dangerous. After a beautiful large and straight segment where racers can reach a maximum speed over 90 km/h there is suddenly a narrow and winding stretch. To avoid the cyclists jump in the empty outside the road, the external side was protected by heaps of straw like a circuit of motorbike GP. M Beigua was included in GdI women 2-3 times one in time trial from the south side.

## 8. Historic location for BIG Meetings

Varazze is familiar for Italian BIG member. It was the location of a BIG meeting in 2009. Monte Beigua was the main climb in the agenda. It was a very successful meeting with Luigi Capellani, Luigi Candeli, Mauro Repetti, Marco Mosconi, Georges Rossini. We had the pleasure to have Etienne Mayeur, the first finisher of the superbig 1000.

## 9. Mount and Col (pass) along the route

For col/pass lovers, M. Beigua is a unique climb as it offers a col and a summit 2 km apart. At the top, there is the small church of Regina Pacis surrounded by high antennas. The natural geographical pass is located at Rifugio Pra Riondo (1100 m) which can be used by walkers and MTB to descent to Varazze by using a track which connects to paved road at Faie. Pra Riondo is located on the Altavia dei Monti Liguri, the high-mountain route (400 km long) for hikers, MTB and horse-riding from the border of Liguria with Tuscany to Ventimiglia, at the border with France.

## 10. A network of green roads

The Beigua cycleways consist of a network of about 140 km of green roads. Low traffic, medium-large with road signs for cyclists. There are five starting points (S1-S5) on the south side along the famous Aurelia, the road of Milano-Sanremo race. All south routes join in Alpicella. S. Pietro d'Olba is the starting point of the north sides (N1-N3) with Sassello (N4). The central route (N1) go straight to Piampaludo, with a brutal 3 km attack. The north-east route (N3) reaches Vara inferiore (on Faiallo pass descent) and Dano a solitary chapel in a dense and dark forest. The north-west route (N4) reaches La Carta and then Alberola which was the closest ski-resort to the sea in Italy. Due to climate change the snow is not lasting and the temperature are too mild for snow shooters. The north routes join at Piampaludo a remote mountain village. Even in a sunny day the light disappears when you cross a dark and cool forest a bit before reaching Prato Riondo. The 2-km stretch from the mountain hut to the top is the most spectacular with views on the Ligurian Gulf, the Alps and the Po Valley.

## 11. Two fantastic loops

The classic tour from Riviera is 90 km counter-clock wise (2000 m+) with the superb Faiallo. This tour gives the opportunity to cycle on the famous Aurelia, the roman road that follows the coastline and famous for the Milano-



Sanremo. This is one of the greatest experience you may have in Italy following the Alps, Campo Imperatore (Gran Sasso), Block Haus, Forca di Presta (Pian Grande) and few other.

Alternatively, the Beigua Cycleway 80 km (1500 m+) is a circular route that starts from Cogoleto and cross a variety of landscapes and typical villages via Eremo del Deserto crossing astonishing mountain landscape close to the sea.

## 12. Comparison with other climbs in Liguria (Dominance over own area)

Based on the key objective measures Beigua and Faiallo are superior to any other climb in Liguria.



## The Value of Climb

We share the passion for mountain and hill climbs. We share also the passion of travel which restrict our audience. We are a well defined subset of cyclists. I like to discuss with other members about climbs. The Super BIG Challenge is a game and an incentive to make new discoveries but is very demanding . However the competition has some adverse effects. It put the emphasis on the quantity rather than value or quality of climbs.

Due to travel limitation, I challenge Beigua to become godfather. After more than 30-yr of climbing, it is time to ask: what is the value of M Beigua as climb? How Beigua compares with other climbs in Italy?

This is a relevant issue that may help to build up a priority list, a rank in a list with several climbs and help members to make choice when they select Italy as destination.

Based on the objective elements described above, M. Beigua is a must-do climb, included in my top-30 list of the most beautiful climbs and the loop Faiallo-Beigua in the top-20 best experiences you can have in Italy. We all know that climb are different each other. There are climbs that are unforgettable and give emotions and memories that are for lifetime. Other climbs are nice but without special features.



I miss a rank lists which may drive our choice. For Italy the right size may be the top 100, perhaps in groups of ten to simplify the work and reduce potential criticism. There are books and websites that have proposed ones at different level (country, Europe world) but the selection is erratic and unsubstantiated.

In my view, each climb has an intrinsic value which is based on two main factors - sport (length, elevation, gradient) and location & route of the climb (nature and landscape, quality of road, amount of traffic, regional dominance). All the rest is secondary. The value, the quality of the climb is what translate in emotions, pleasure, gratification and all positive effects on our body and mind that we feel during and after climbing. This is what really matters to us. It is time to develop a method to provide a value to climbs.

Unfortunately, this translation is greatly influenced by the variable and transient conditions we have during climbing (adverse weather conditions, heavy traffic, quality of surface road). These conditions are often far from being ideal. We like and love climbs because they are beautiful. We like silence, quiet and solitude. We hate confusion and crowd. We love panorama and views from top. We love conquer a summit. We feel proud. The experience is subjective but its value is objective. You can over- or underrate a climb following a single climb due the influence of the perceived conditions (positive or negative). Great knowledge of the region and country are essential for making a top list. The case story of M. Beigua may be helpful and be applied for discriminate climbs with similar measures. I am proud to become godfather of a great climb, M Beigua.



**Aerial view to Ponente**



Au CHILI, à 10 km environ de San Pedro de Atacama.

## Quelques-uns de mes BIGs (ou Natachas) 2020 *par Marc Séguy.*

### Le Chili (en janvier).

La route n° 23 va de Calama à San Pedro de Atacama ( 2 442 m d'altitude). Elle passe relativement près de La Bolivie et son point culminant à 3 426 m c'est le **BIG 2174**. Elle longe également la «Reserva Nacional Los Flamencos», la « Valle della Luna » et la « Valle Marte » appelée par abus « vallée de la mort » (3 visites intéressantes). Il y fait chaud et j'ai vraiment l'impression de rouler dans un désert mais sur du bitume tout de même ! Les gros poids lourds chargés avancent avec une lenteur extrême dans la montée et réchauffent l'atmosphère comme si cela ne suffisait pas. Depuis la sortie de San Pedro, il n'y a pas une seule boutique, pas un bar, pas un abri à l'ombre, pas un seul arbre en 36 km, seulement 2 buissons maigrelets et hauts de 1,50 m, pas plus: l'ombre qu'ils offrent est peu abondante et pourtant une âme généreuse a déposé à chacun de leur pied une bonbonne d'eau de 12 litres !!!



Au CHILI, en montant vers la "Cruz Verde de Andacollo.

- Des virages larges, très larges, que les longs poids lourds prennent en occupant toute la route: il fait chaud dans ce **BIG 2080, Cruz Verde de Andacollo**: et au sommet, à la croix verte bien sûr, la vue sur la ville d'Andacollo au fond du ravin. La grande basilique que je découvre dans la descente peut accueillir jusqu'à 10 000 personnes, paraît-il. Au loin la mine de cuivre et d'or.

Il fait encore plus chaud sur les pentes entre Pisco Elqui et le terme du **BIG 1845, Alcohuas**. Imaginez une peau de léopard et vous aurez une idée de la couleur des monts environnants: un fond jaune pâle à marron chamois (la terre) marqué de taches noires (les buissons brûlés par le soleil). La route serpente dans une haute vallée en U, (la vallée de la rivière Elqui) les collines sont sèches mais grâce aux nombreux réservoirs hydrauliques les multiples champs de vignes en fond de vallée sont verts, très verts.



Au CHILI, en montant vers El Indio.

• **La aduana Juntas del Toro** c'est le **BIG 2081**, nommé sur le site **El Indio**. Ce point de contrôle frontière est situé à un peu plus de 40 km de Guanta, le dernier hameau sur la route 41 car au-delà pas un seul point d'eau !!!! Pas de vent en partant le matin, une chaleur agréable qui s'est vite transformée en chaleur épaisse (36°). Mais le pire, c'est qu'au retour, sur cette route peu pentue, un violent vent de face ne permettait plus une descente facile comme je l'espérais. Évidemment à 20 km de Guanta j'avais vidé



Au Chili, La aduana Juntas del Toro (nommé aussi El Indio) sur la route vers l'Argentine.

mon 4<sup>ème</sup> bidon d'1 litre ! Alors là .... j'ai mendié, oui, oui. Je me suis arrêté et j'ai tendu mon bidon au 1<sup>er</sup> véhicule qui passait. Et ça a marché 2 fois à 10 km d'intervalles environ. Ouf.



Au Chili, un des nombreux mémoriaux de bord de route

**Las Minillas** est le nom du **BIG 2168**. C'est une remontée qui s'effectue le long d'une rivière à sec en janvier, Estero del Arrayan. Celle-ci prend sa source pas très loin du sommet du BIG. Par 6 fois des ponts numérotés l'enjambent et tous portent le même nom «Puente Los Angeles n°.....»: pourquoi un tel nom? Tout au long de la route large, on peut voir, comme partout ailleurs au Chili, de nombreux mémoriaux souvent très bien décorés et entretenus, parfois entourés d'une clôture. Ils ressemblent à des maisonnettes, certaines d'entre elles contiennent un véhicule de taille réduite. Voilà un témoignage touchant du culte fort que les vivants portent à la mémoire de leurs morts par accident. Les collines portent des cactus ciérges par

milliers mais aucun en fleur, la photo manquera à ma collection. Le petit vent dans le dos à l'aller m'a bien plu. Toutefois au retour, je l'ai trouvé chaud, épais, pas du tout rafraîchissant et pour cause il faisait 34 °.

Depuis le début des pointages des BIGs au Chili sur une carte, j'avais l'intention de me rendre au BIG 1641, tunnel Cristo Redentor. Voilà une montée sur laquelle se déroule une course de côte et qui est présentée comme mythique sur certains sites (<https://www.redbull.com/be-fr/les-ascensions-cyclistes-les-plus-difficiles>): la longueur (30 km), l'altitude (3185 m), le tracé (25 boucles en épingles), la situation (au cœur de la Cordillère des Andes) contribuent largement à faire rêver un cycliste.

Au CHILI, sur la fameuse route vers le "Tunnel Cristo Redentor"

De l'autre côté du tunnel c'est l'Argentine.



Plus je grimpais, plus la température devenait clémente (15°) agrémentée, cerise sur le gâteau, d'un petit vent favorable. J'ai encore en tête les nombreux encouragements dans tout le secteur sinueux. Comment ne pas ressortir tonifié par ces couleurs et ces beautés minérales accumulées, par ces paysages grandioses, puissants et immortels? Arrivé au sommet (devant le tunnel), le temps de poser le vélo devant le seul bâtiment et d'enfiler le coupe vent, un préposé au passage sort, me fait signe de le suivre vers son pick-up et de charger le vélo: il pensait que j'avais l'intention de me rendre en Argentine, le tunnel étant interdit aux cyclistes. Et malgré tous ces points positifs, le mythe en prend un petit coup.

En effet, même si la route est qualifiée de touristique sur certains panneaux avant le pied du BIG, il faut dire qu'elle a surtout une fonction économique très importante entre le Chili et l'Argentine, entre Santiago et Mendoza. Les poids lourds se comptent par plusieurs dizaines. Rien à dire sur la sécurité, les voies sont assez larges (un peu moins dans les tunnels), très légèrement dégradées quand même. Mais comment ne pas évoquer l'inévitable cortège de pollutions: le bruit, la chaleur, l'odeur de la gomme des pneus collée à la route et celle des freins? Quant aux déchets, ils sont légion.



Le blason du CHILI, photographié au "tunnel Cristo Redentor".



*La route qui part de San Alfonso vers Lo Valdes, BIG 2074, c'est l'axe d'évacuation en cas de réveil des volcans Maipo ou San José: plusieurs panneaux le rappellent. Cette région c'est aussi, d'après la publicité, le poumon vert de Santiago, idéal pour prendre un bol d'air frais !! Pas de chance pour moi, en 63 km je n'ai jamais été rafraîchi. C'est une montée par palier, pas très difficile mais la chaleur peut la rendre pénible: il faut choisir au mieux ses horaires d'ascension.*



*Au CHILI, un autre type de paysage, vers Lo Valdes, BIG 2074.*

## 2020 ou quand l'année du rat en Chine devient celle du coronavirus dans le monde...

*« Plus on voyage, plus la connaissance s'éloigne » (Lao-tseu)*



Depuis des années le Yunnan me faisait rêver. Province du sud de la Chine, elle a su garder son authenticité. Peuplée de minorités, chassées pour la plupart de leur terre d'origine, elle a été la dernière, à ce jour, à être rattachée à la Chine. Ainsi, les Naxi, les Dongha, les Bai, les Mosso et autres Yi, ces minorités ont-elles gardé leur langue, leur culture, leurs vêtements colorés, leurs danses, etc. Il s'agit donc d'une région de grande diversité culturelle. C'est ce qui m'y attire, non seulement comme cycliste mais aussi et surtout comme photographe. Fils de Brugeois, je rêvais notamment de Lijang, cette « Venise chinoise » et des photos que j'allais pouvoir y capturer. Parmi tous mes amis cyclistes, qui mieux que mon ami australien Jean-Pierre Vallée pour m'y accompagner ? Le choix est très vite fait. Jean-Pierre connaît bien l'Asie pour y avoir voyagé à vélo à de nombreuses reprises. Ainsi fut-il décidé que le début 2020, année du Rat en Chine, serait la date de cette aventure nouvelle. Nous nous mîmes à la tâche pour préparer ce voyage tout de même un peu compliqué sur le plan administratif et organisationnel. Tout début janvier 2020, nous sommes fin prêts. L'heure du grand départ, le 24 janvier, approche.

Au moment de notre départ, peu avant le Nouvel An chinois, nous étions loin de savoir que la chauve-souris, porteuse du coronavirus et qui le transmet à l'homme, allait transformer l'année du rat en Chine en celle du Coronavirus dans le monde ! Et pour couronner le tout, que notre voyage allait prendre une « drôle de tournure »... Nous étions néanmoins informés des « événements » en Chine mais étions encore loin d'imaginer combien la Covid-19 allait modifier fondamentalement la manière de vivre de l'humanité entière ! C'est d'ailleurs quelque peu sous forme de clin d'œil qu'au départ, on se fit photographier

porteurs d'un masque... Deux semaines plus tard, il ne s'agira plus aucunement de rire à ce sujet devenu sérieux et... préoccupant là où nous voyageons, tandis qu'en Belgique, même début mars, nos autorités n'ont toujours pas pris la mesure de la « catastrophe » !



Le 25 janvier, après nous être retrouvés à Bangkok, lui en provenance de Sydney, moi de Bruxelles, nous prenons le vol pour Chang-Mai dans le nord de la Thaïlande afin de nous diriger ensuite sur Phrae d'où nous prendrons le « vrai » départ de notre nouvelle aventure. A vélo nous prenons la route vers la frontière avec le Laos pour gagner les rives du Mékong à Chiang Khong et rejoindre sur l'autre rive Houayxay où nous embarquerons sur de frêles embarcations pour descendre, deux jours durant, le fil du Mékong et rejoindre ainsi Luang Prabang, « *World heritage town* ».



Avant même de quitter bientôt le Nord Laos, les nouvelles de plus en plus inquiétantes concernant la propagation du virus en Chine et dans d'autres pays d'Asie comme le Vietnam, où nous étions sur le point d'arriver, m'incitent à prendre la décision de ne pas entrer en Chine.



Je parviens à en convaincre Jean-Pierre qui, lui, souhaitait encore, à ce moment, ne rien changer de notre projet. Nous sommes alors à Muang Khua, sur la Nam Ou River, face à la montagne, à deux jours de la frontière avec le Vietnam. Ces deux jours seront deux journées d'ascensions jusqu'à la frontière entre le Laos et le Vietnam en passant d'abord le 1<sup>er</sup> jour par Muang Mai où nous ferons étape. Après le repas du soir, la nuit tombée, pendant que mon ami Jean-Pierre récupère des fatigues de la journée (avec ses 75

printemps, il est 6 ans plus âgé que moi !), mon attention est attirée par des chants si caractéristiques : celui de moines bouddhistes. C'est l'heure de la prière du soir. Je m'y rends dans l'obscurité quasi totale, aidé en pleine nuit d'encre par mon seul sens de l'orientation et l'éclairage de mon téléphone portable. Le monastère est situé en haut d'une colline escarpée : ce sera ma dernière ascension du jour... Je suis seul avec les moines qui m'invitent à me rapprocher et à me joindre à eux. Je m'installerai alors pour un long moment de méditation.



Dans le brouillard du petit matin suivant, les moines descendent au village quêmander leur riz quotidien. Nous nous mettons en route avec comme objectif d'arriver à Diên Biên Phu en fin de journée. Nous pédalerons tout au long du jour dans une nature luxuriante et superbe, avec notamment le passage d'un col de plus de 20 km (pardonnez-moi les puristes d'en ignorer le nom ; bien que « number one », ça fait très longtemps que je ne « comptabilise » plus mes innombrables ascensions de par le monde ! Mon plaisir

est de voyager et de grimper, pas de tenir une comptabilité) qui nous fera « gagner » 1.075 m d'altitude (merci mon GPS) et arriver au poste frontière laotien où nous devons nous soumettre à... un test température (eh oui !) comme du reste quelques kilomètres plus loin au poste frontière vietnamien. A partir de là, ce sera une superbe descente vertigineuse sur Diên Biên Phu, descente qui à elle seule valait le voyage ! Le paysage est grandiose.



Une fois arrivés à Diên Biên Phu au Vietnam, alors que Jean-Pierre pensait tout de même prolonger le voyage mais sans évidemment entrer en Chine, mon 6<sup>ème</sup> sens me pousse à décider de... mettre fin à ce voyage et de rentrer à la maison au plus vite. Je me félicite encore aujourd'hui d'avoir vu juste et d'avoir eu l'intelligence de prendre cette décision car,

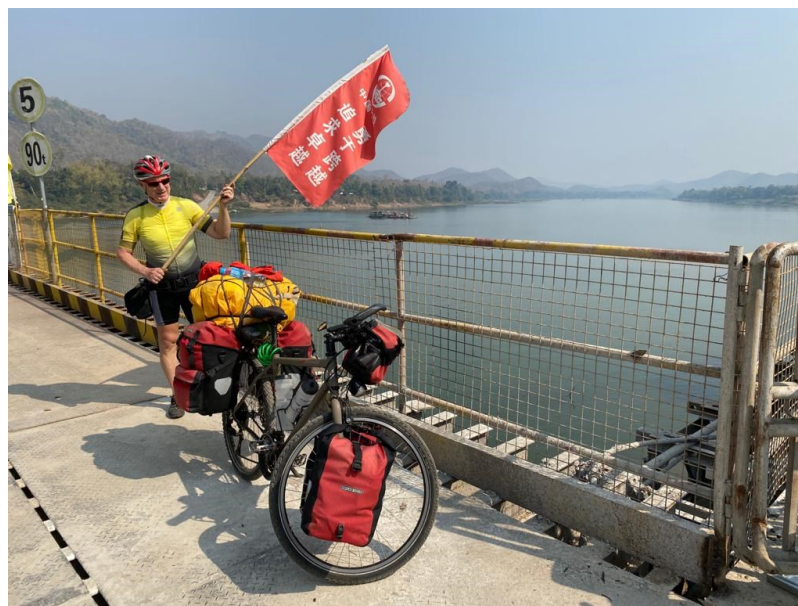
à peine rentré à Stavelot, j'apprenais, quelques deux semaines après, que les vols retour de Thaïlande par Thai Airways étaient tous annulés !

Ils n'ont repris que fin juillet... Ainsi, une fois arrivés à Hanoï, nous chercherons une compagnie aérienne susceptible de nous ramener, moi en Belgique et Jean-Pierre en Australie. J'ai bien tenté d'anticiper mon retour par Thai Airways puisque je disposais d'un billet retour de cette compagnie pour le 8 avril mais impossible : tous les vols étaient complets ! Finalement, je trouverai un vol retour par Qatar Airways via Bangkok et Doha pour arriver à Bruxelles, sans virus, le dimanche 23 février. Le vendredi 13 mars à minuit, tout le pays était confiné pour tenter d'empêcher la propagation du virus...

Maintenant, « bas les masques ! »

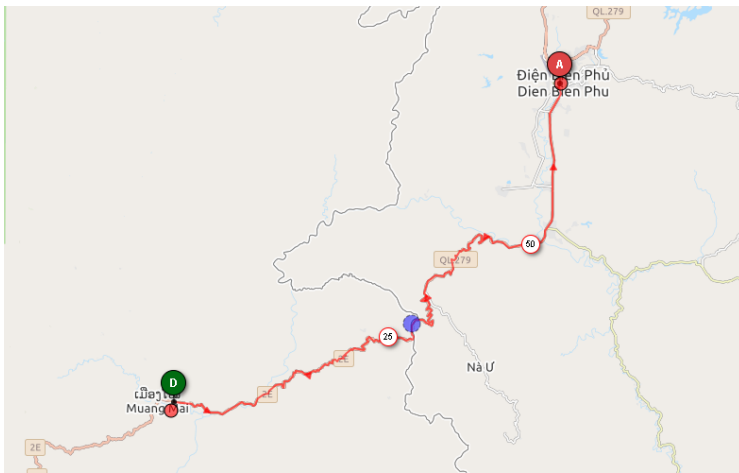


J'attends d'être vacciné et de pouvoir reprendre bientôt la route : mon vélo m'attend, lui, en Asie où il est resté en de bonnes mains. Ainsi, je devrai m'obliger d'y retourner. Pour terminer ce voyage inachevé. C'est ici le virus du vélo qui a frappé !



Sur ce drapeau est écrit "N'ayez pas peur de traverser"!

Col de « Border Crossing 113 Vietnam – Laos »



Départ à Sophun (Sophoun)  
à 9 km de Muang Mai au Laos  
sur la route qui va à Dien Bien Phu  
au Vietnam.  
Altitude du pied : 394 m  
Sommet : à la frontière : 1208 m  
Distance : 20 Km  
% maximum : 14 %

