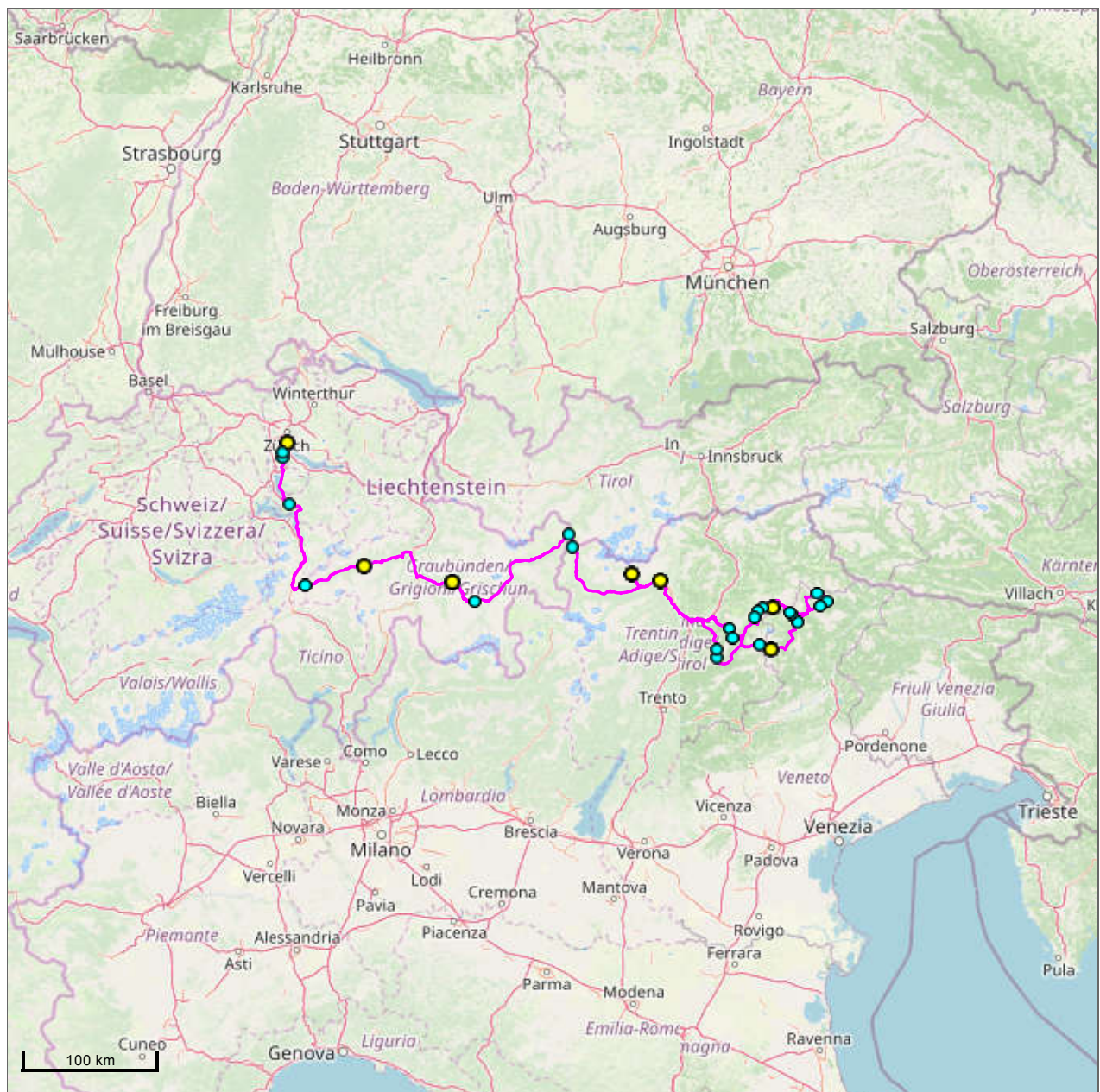
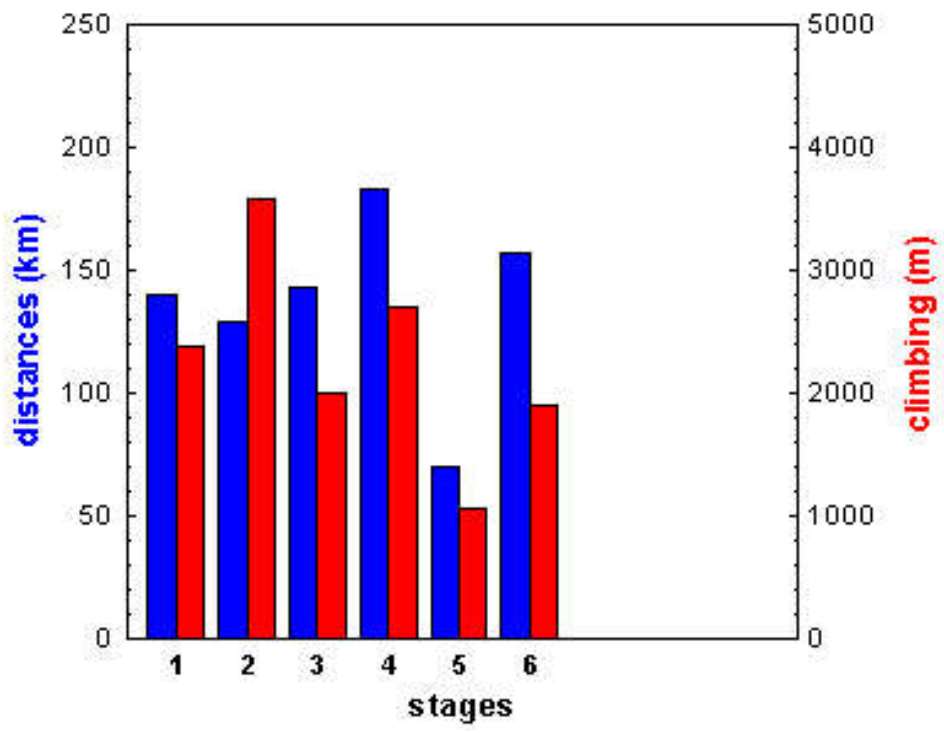


Bicycle tour 2000, 20 - 25 July

Patrick Schleppe

stage	distance (km)	climbing (m)
Karthus - Bolzano - Costalunga - Falcade	140	2450
Falcade - Giau - Tre Croci - Valparola - Corvara	129	3480
Corvara - Gardena - Sella - Lavazè - Forst	143	1980
Forst - Reschenpass - Albula - Filisur	183	2760
Filisur - Versam - Giraniga	71	1090
Giraniga - Alpsu - Brunnen - Albis - Kilchberg	157	1930
total	823	13690





Rain Anterior river under Versam



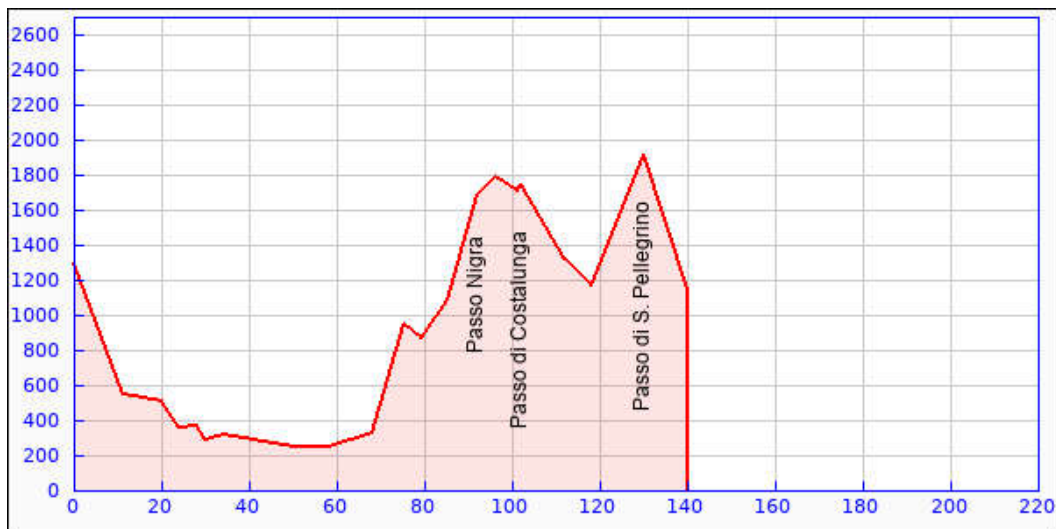
Falcade

Stage 1 (20 July 2000): Karthaus - Bolzano - Costalunga - Falcade

After participating to the [gigathlon 2000](#) (i had the bicycle stage Savognin - Niederurnen... mostly under the rain), i left with my girlfriend Catrina for short vacations in the Schnalstal/Val Senales, South Tirol. We enjoyed hiking and visiting the region, but then each of us took a different way: Catrina (by car) back to Obersaxen to finish a work for the university and me (by bike) towards the Dolomites.

After descending to the main valley (Vinschgau/Val Venosta), i found nice little roads across the orchards. Then, however, i had to join the main road and its cars and trucks. In the valley between Meran/Merano and Bozen/Bolzano, i found again smaller roads, but not without several detours and a first (and last) flat tire. I crossed Bolzano, then took the old road up to the [Nigra pass](#). This road is quite famous among cyclists because its maximal slope is given as 24%! Not necessary to write that it was hard... The new road joins the old one below Tiers/Tires and the slope becomes less crazy, but the climb was still hard. From this first pass to the next one ([Karepass/Costalunga](#)), it was much easier, there was only a small hill left. It was already close to 4 o'clock when i started to climb from Moena to the [San Pellegrino](#). The climb should not be very hard, but the straight road appeared almost endless. I decided not to ride much further than the pass and finally stopped at Falcade, a touristic place like many others in the Dolomites.

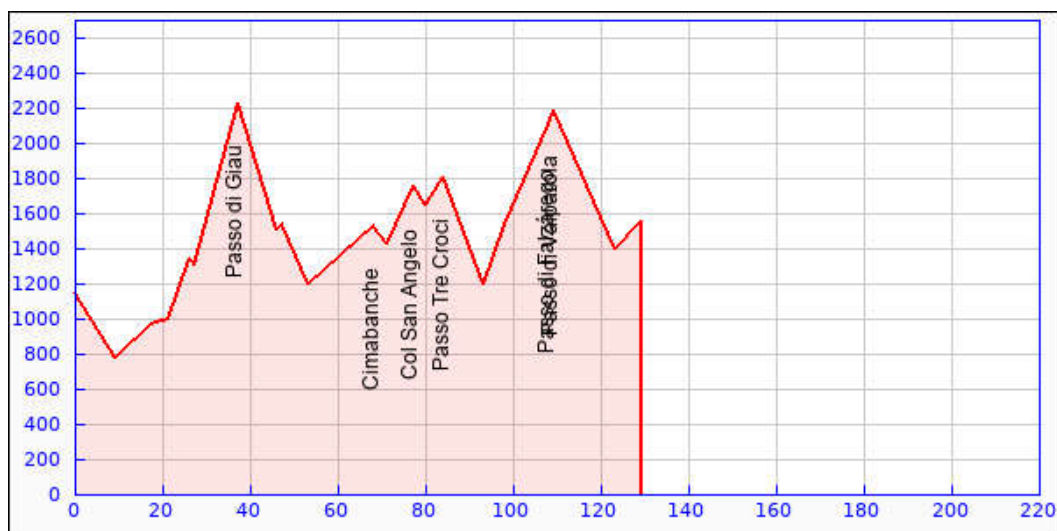
	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Karthaus	0	1300	
Schnals	11	550	
Töll	20	510	
Forst	24	360	
Marling	28	370	10
Tscherms	30	290	
Lana	34	320	30
Terlan	50	250	
Bolzano	58	250	
Prato all'Isarco	68	330	80
Aica di Sopra	75	950	620
Sta Caterina	79	870	
S. Cipriano	85	1090	220
Passo Nigra	92	1690	600
Colbleggio	96	1790	100
Val Carezza	101	1710	
Passo di Costalunga	102	1750	40
S. Giovanni	112	1320	
Moena	118	1170	
Passo di S. Pellegrino	130	1920	750
Falcade	140	1150	
total	140		2450



Stage 2 (21 July 2000): Falcade - Giau - Tre Croci - Valparola - Corvara

After a long sleep and a good breakfast, i hit the road in a chilly morning air. Soon i was at the bottom of the descent at Cencenighe and took to the left in the valley towards Caprile, then climbed to Selva di Cadore and to the first really high pass of the day: **Passo di Giau**. It was still cool and the long climb was not too hard. Then, riding down to Cortina d'Ampezzo, i expected to find one of those artificial, soulless cities in the mountains. The former olympic station, however, surprised me with a still good, original character. I had the Cristallo mountains in front of me, which i wanted to ride around. On the way, i had three passes to climb: the **Cimabanche** (almost flat at the top), the **San Angelo** (a bit harder, but not long) and the **Tre Croci** (easy from that side, with a longer descent to Cortina). After this little round-trip, i climbed again the same road as when coming from the Giau. At Pocol, however, i went right to another pass, the **Falzàrego**. It was warm, my bottles went empty and i found no fountain along the way. Finally, i was able to refill from a small stream. I did not stop at the pass and just continued to the nearby **Passo di Valparola**. After the long descent, my legs were feeling tired and i only rode a short stretch up in the Alta Badia valley, just to reach Corvara. A place with many hotels, but not very exciting apart of that.

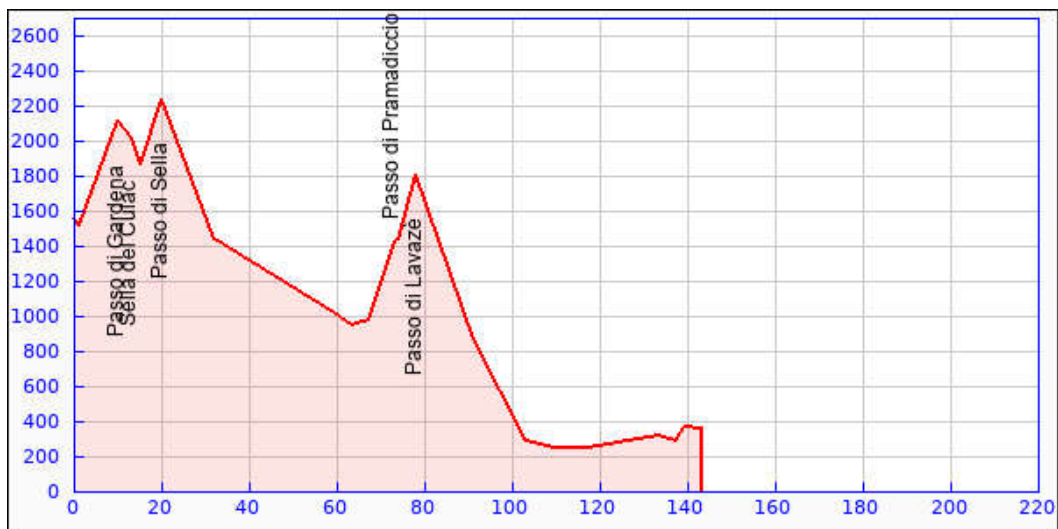
	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Falcade	0	1150	
Cencenighe	9	780	
Alleghe	17	970	190
Caprile	21	1000	30
Selva	26	1340	340
Codalonga	27	1310	
Passo di Giau	37	2230	920
Pezzié de Parù	46	1510	
Pocol	47	1540	30
Cortina	53	1200	
Cimabanche	68	1530	330
Carbonin	71	1430	
Col San Angelo	77	1760	330
Dogana Vecchia	80	1650	
Passo Tre Croci	84	1810	160
Cortina	93	1200	
Pocol	98	1540	340
Passo di Falzàrego	108	2110	570
Passo di Valparola	109	2190	80
La Ila	123	1400	
Corvara	129	1560	160
total	129		3480



Stage 3 (22 July 2000): Corvara - Gardena - Sella - Lavazè - Forst

The third stage went right uphill to [Passo Gardena](#). A regular climb in a beautiful landscape, with the typical tower-shaped mountains of the Dolomites around. After a short descent, as i was climbing to [Passo Sella](#), there was even a light- show, with the sun shining between the mountains through a light fog. As soon as i began to ride down to Canazei, however, the natural spectacle was forgotten and replaced by a technical one: long columns of cars on the road. Astonishingly enough, it was also, by far, the time i saw the most other cyclists during this tour, as if they would like the smell of exhaust fumes (?) Along the Fassa and Fiemme valleys, there was also very much traffic. Fortunately, because it was Saturday, there were no trucks. I was able to ride quite fast as the road was slightly going down. It was still a big relief as i was able to leave the main road after Predazzo. From Tesero, i was on the way to the next pass, a small one called [Pramadiccio](#), which is something like a first step towards the [Lavazè](#). A road sign then indicated a slope of 15%... down. Even if my legs were clearly telling me that they had a hard job going *up* (another indication of the reliability of road signs in Italy)! After a good soup at the pass, i had the reward of a superb ride down the Eggental, on a good road in a narrow valley, then through a deep canyon. That's how i literally came *out* of the Dolomites. After crossing again the city of Bozen, i hoped to find tail winds in the Etschtal... and i was right. Now knowing the way, i was able to ride faster than coming the same way during the first stage. This was especially good as the temperature was climbing up to 30 degrees. After a few unsuccessful trials, i finally was able to find a room near Forst, in a nice pension in the middle of the orchards.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Corvara	0	1560	
Costa	1	1520	
Passo di Gardena	10	2120	600
Sella del Culac	13	2020	
Plan de Gralba	15	1870	
Passo di Sella	20	2240	370
Canazei	32	1440	
Predazzo	59	1020	
Ziano	63	950	
Tesero	67	980	30
Passo di Pramadiccio	73	1430	450
Val di Gambis	74	1440	10
Passo di Lavazè	78	1810	370
Ponte Nova	91	870	
Cardano	103	290	
Bolzano	109	250	
Terlan	117	250	
Lana	133	320	70
Tscherms	137	290	
Marling	139	370	80
Forst	143	360	
total	143		1980



Stage 4 (23 July 2000): Forst - Reschenpass - Albula - Filisur

To ride up the Vinschgau, i knew only a dozen of kilometres of roads through the orchards and, for the rest, had to take the main road. Starting shortly after 8 on this Sunday morning, it was no problem with the traffic. As the time passed, however, there were more and more cars. Fortunately, the wind was again with me and i could ride at a good pace. At the end of the valley, i took to the north, i.e. towards the [Reschenpass](#). Many cars were on the same way, some returning from vacations, more going only to the pass where there was a huge summer festival. This was for me an unique opportunity of overtaking a 10-km-long queue of cars! From the lake to the pass and then on the Austrian side (a long rather than steep ride), everything was back to normal. At Nauders, i turned left to the [Norberthöhe](#), on the road towards Switzerland. After a nice descent in the forest, i reentered my country at Martina, the lowest village in Engiadina.

Because the weather forecasts were bad for the evening and for the next day, i wanted to ride as far as possible before it rained. I got a few drops already after Scuol and always again to Susch. From Susch to Zernez, on the top of that, there was a terrible head wind. At S-chanf, the rain got more serious and i stopped at a restaurant. Looking through the window, i was wondering if it was the place to take a room for the night. I finally put my rain jacket and went on as soon as the rain was receding. Since the sky was not bad over the [Albula](#), i decided (in spite of already 150 km for the day) to continue that way up. This was not a bad idea as the temperature was now just perfect and the rain completely stopped. From the pass, the road was dry, which was really better for this beautiful but very bumpy descent. After 7 1/2 hours on the bike (not counting many breaks), i finally reached Filisur, a nice village at the confluent of the Albula and Landwasser streams.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Forst	0	360	
Töll	4	510	150
Schlanders	30	720	210
Laas	36	920	200
Salinen (Laas)	38	870	
Schluderns	49	920	50
St. Valentin	65	1470	550
Reschenpass	75	1510	40
Nauders	80	1340	
Norbertshöhe	82	1410	70
Martina	88	1030	
Crusch (Sent)	100	1240	210
Scuol	107	1270	30
Kurhaus (Vulpera)	108	1190	
Ardez	116	1460	270
Giarsun	120	1390	
Zernez	132	1470	80
Brail	140	1640	170
Cinuos-Chel	142	1620	
Zuoz	149	1720	100
Madulain	152	1680	
La Punt	153	1690	10
Pass d'Alvra	162	2310	620
Bravuogn	175	1370	
Filisur	183	1030	
total	183		2760



Stage 5 (24 July 2000): Filisur - Versam - Giraniga

Still in the bed, i was glad to be already on that side of the Albula, because it was now raining. And it looked like it would be so all the day. The goal of that 5th stage was no longer very far, just about 70 km to Obersaxen, to the vacation house of my girlfriend's father. After breakfast, i put my rain jacket on and hit the road. The big reflective stripe in the back of the jacket was an advantage in the tunnels of the descent towards Thusis. It really requires good nerves when big trucks are roaring from behind you in a long tunnel! Just the last (and newest) tunnel is forbidden for bikes and then it's possible to take the older road instead. I arrived safely in the Domleschg. Still in the rain, it was quite boring till i climbed from Bonaduz towards Versam, a road known from previous rides, but which i was taking from the first time from that side. The Rhine canyon appeared even wilder than under better weather conditions. After the descent to Ilanz, i could finally take off the rain jacket for the final climb to Obersaxen, where i arrived just at lunch time. I would have enough time to clean the bike during the afternoon.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Filisur	0	1030	
Tiefencastel	9	850	
Valmala (Alvaschagn)	11	960	110
Sils i. D.	21	680	
Thusis	23	700	20
Rothenbrunnen	31	620	
Bonaduz	37	660	40
Zault	41	780	120
Versamer Tobel	43	730	
Versam	45	910	180
Ilanz	57	700	
Affeier	66	1320	620
Giraniga	71	1260	
total	71		1090



Stage 6 (25 July 2000): Giraniga - Alpsu - Brunnen - Albis - Kilchberg

It rained the whole Monday and part of the night but, when waking up on Tuesday, i saw the sun and a blue sky. Since i had to go to work on Thursday and since the forecasts were bad again for Wednesday, i decided to start again. No rest day at Obersaxen!

First, i had to ride down to the Rhine valley, then up along it. These were ideal conditions for riding: cool but sunny (except a few clouds forming along the slopes from the humidity of yesterday's rain). Up to Disentis, the slope of the road is gentle, with some flat or even slightly descending parts. In this long approach, it is therefore mainly a matter of saving strengths for the final climb after Disentis to the Oberalp pass. The bright blue sky and the deep green valley were so beautiful that i didn't fell like hurrying up anyway. At the pass and twice later, i also took time for eating and drinking stops. This helped: even after the long (usually boring) ride through Uri and along the lakes of Lucerne and Zug, i was still felling in good shape for climbing to the Albis, the last pass of this tour. Where i, once again, had to notice that road sides are dirty around Zurich, throwing garbage through the car window being there a very popular sport. :-)

I arrived around 3 o'clock, happy about this tour 2000 which had shown me many new passes, new landscapes and mostly a good weather. And from which i was coming back in good shape.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Giraniga	0	1260	
Tavanasa	6	820	
Sumvitg	15	1060	240
Punt Grondo	18	1030	
Mustér / Disentis	22	1140	110
Rueras	33	1400	260
Oberalppass	43	2040	640
Wassen	64	920	
Amsteg	76	520	
Ried (Schattdorf)	86	450	
Grund (Schattdorf)	88	490	40
Flüelen	93	430	
Tellsplatte	97	510	80
Brunnen	105	440	
Lücken (Schwyz)	110	480	40
Seewen	111	450	
Bernerhöchi	117	560	110
Arth	121	420	
Baar	137	440	20
Tüfenbach	145	670	230
Albispass	148	790	120
Adliswil	154	450	
Kilchberg	156	490	40
Oberer Mönchhof (Kilchberg)	157	450	
total	157		1930

