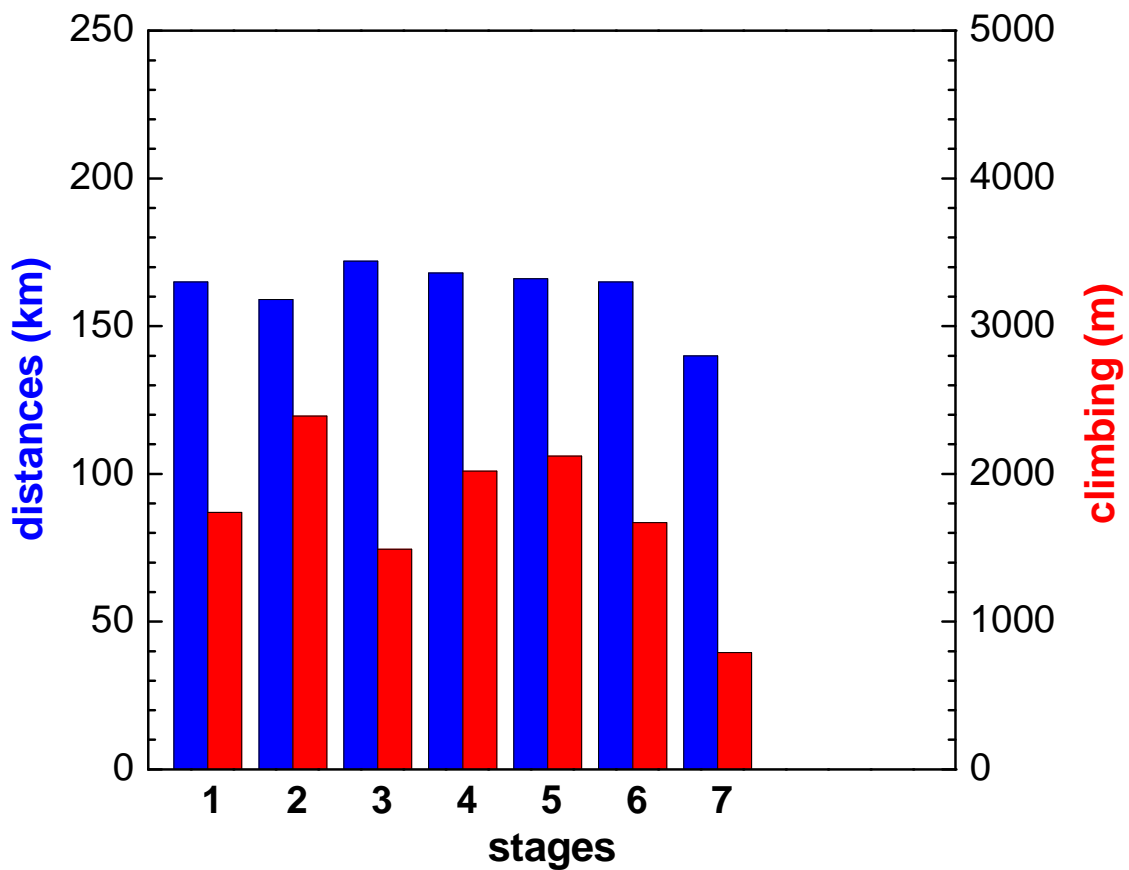


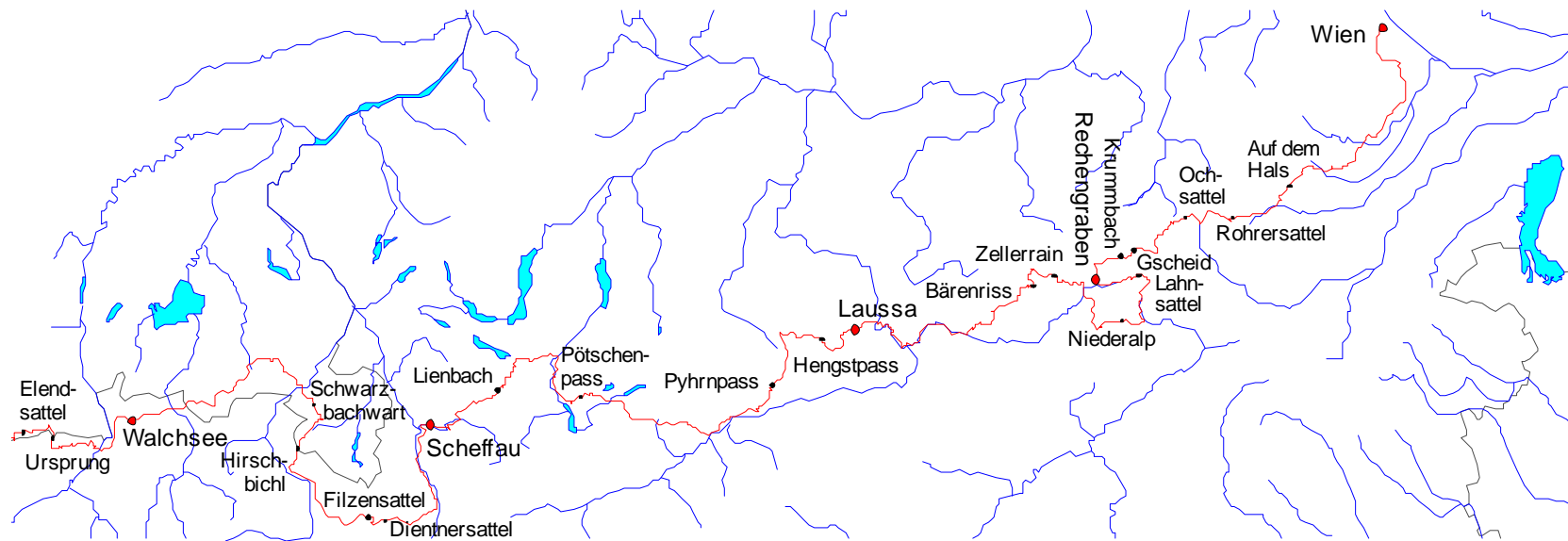
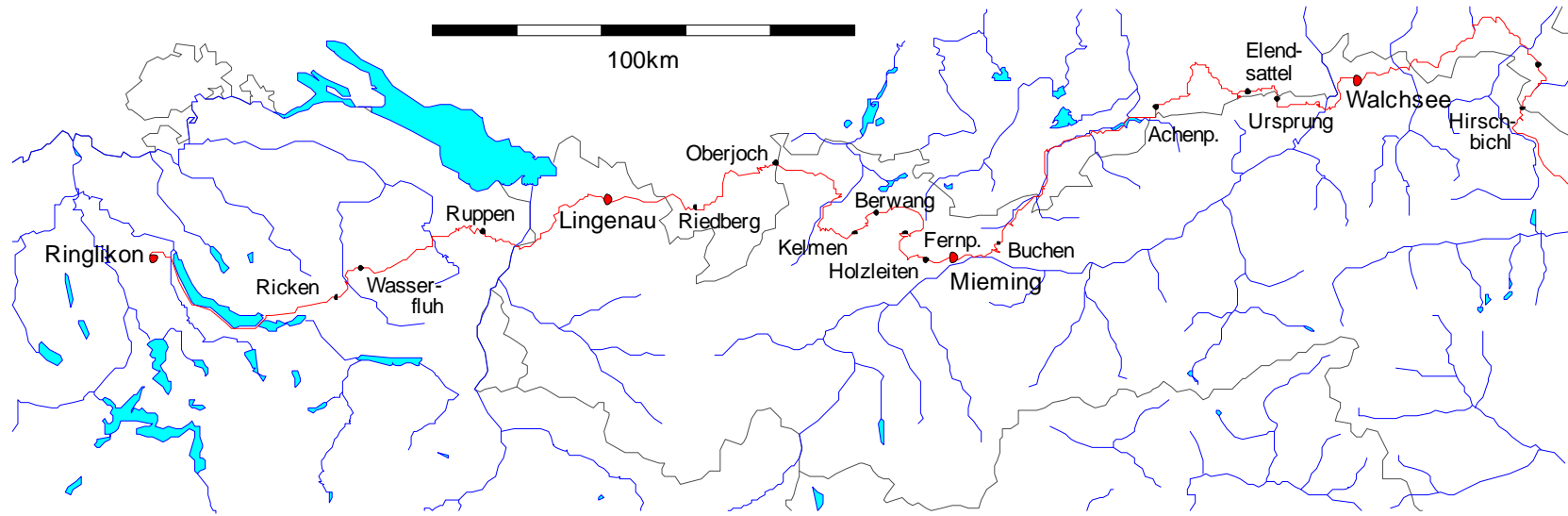
# Bicycle tour 2005

7 stages, 18 - 24 June

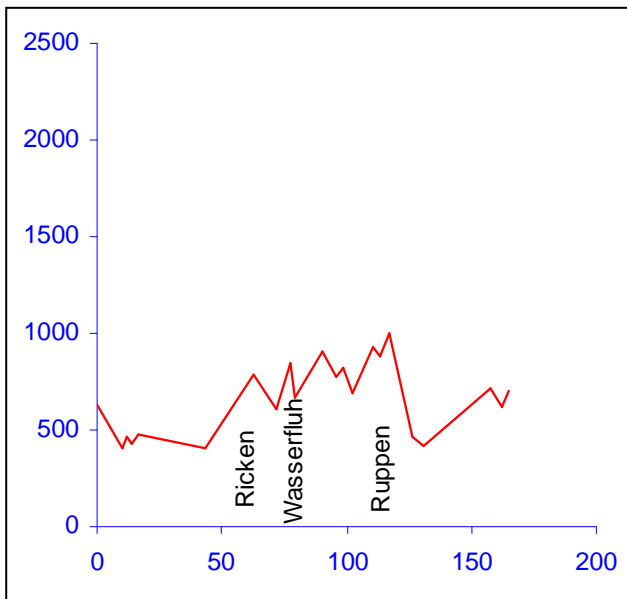
Patrick Schleppe

stage	distance (km)	climbing (m)
Ringlikon - Lingenau	165	1740
Lingenau - Mieming	159	2390
Mieming - Walchsee	172	1490
Walchsee - Scheffau	168	2020
Scheffau - Laussa	166	2120
Laussa - Rechengraben	165	1670
Rechengraben - Wien	140	790
<b>Total</b>	<b>1135</b>	<b>12 220</b>





## Stage 1 (18 June 2005): Ringlikon - Lingenau



The goal of this tour was, for the first time, a city: Vienna. And the goal of the first stage was to reach the mountains of the Vorarlberg. The weather forecasts were very good for at least four days and i could leave home with that security in mind. The first part of the journey was on well known roads, towards and along the lake of Zurich. The ride was easy, and it remained easy when, after crossing the dike to Rapperswil, the road gently began to climb to the Rickenpass. I rode a while with two other cyclists and that helped because we had headwind (the 'bise' wind). From the pass, i followed the bicycle itinerary to ride down to Wattwil, a small and nice road, steep in its last part. From Wattwil, i followed the Thur valley to Lichtensteig, and from there started to climb to the Wasserfluh pass, a quite steep but short climb. This morning, the temperature

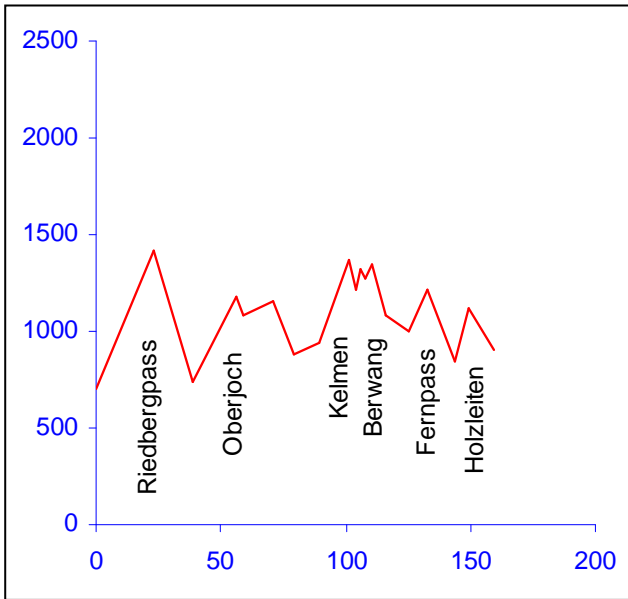
was perfect to ride. After the steep descent from the Wasserfluh, my road went up and down many times, but rather gently. I entered the canton of Appenzell, well known for its cheese and for the architecture of its farms, disseminated in the pastures on the many mountains and valley slopes.

There was some popular bicycle race and, for kilometres, i kept crossing cyclists coming the other way (they had better luck with the wind, as i still had to fight against the bise). From Trogen, i went down and then up to the Ruppen pass, the first new pass of this tour. The climb was easy, but the descent steeper and longer. Down in the Rhine valley, the air was now warm. I crossed the river (and the border) to Austria and rode to Dornbirn, but i was glad as i could leave this town and its traffic to find a quieter road again. I climbed into the Bregenzerwald. There were clouds around the mountains but no rain. Arriving at Lingenau, i started to look

for an hotel room. This was no problem because the main season had not yet really begun.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Ringlikon	0	630	
Zürich	10	410	
Kilchberg	12	470	60
Rüschlikon	14	430	
Thalwil	17	480	50
Rapperswil	43	410	
Ricken	63	790	380
Lichtensteig	72	610	
Wasserfluh	77	840	230
Furth	79	670	
Brisig	90	900	230
Hundwil	96	770	
Stein	99	820	50
Rämsen	102	690	
Speicher	111	930	240
Trogen	113	880	
Ruppen	117	1000	120
Altstätten	126	460	
Kriessern	131	420	
Alberschwende	158	720	300
Müselbach	162	620	
Lingenau	165	700	80
<b>total</b>	<b>165</b>		<b>1740</b>

## Stage 2 (19 June 2005): Lingenau - Mieming



Sunday and full sunshine for this second day. And since it was sunny Sunday, there were many motorbikes on the pass roads. I had actually never seen so many motorbikes in one day! Only the first climb (Riedbergpass) was still quiet. Quiet but not easy: after entering Germany, between Balderschwang and the pass, the slope increased suddenly, and steep passages alternated with very steep ones. The descent to Obermeiselstein was more or less the same, except that brakes were now at work and no longer the legs. The i rode north to Sonthofen, and east again to Hindelang, where the next serious climb began, the Oberjochpass, which brought me back to Austria. Then there was a long descent with a few short and gentle climbs in between. I arrived at the Gaichtpass... descending. Why it is call a pass, i don't know. Sure, after it the

road was much steeper, down to Weissenbach.

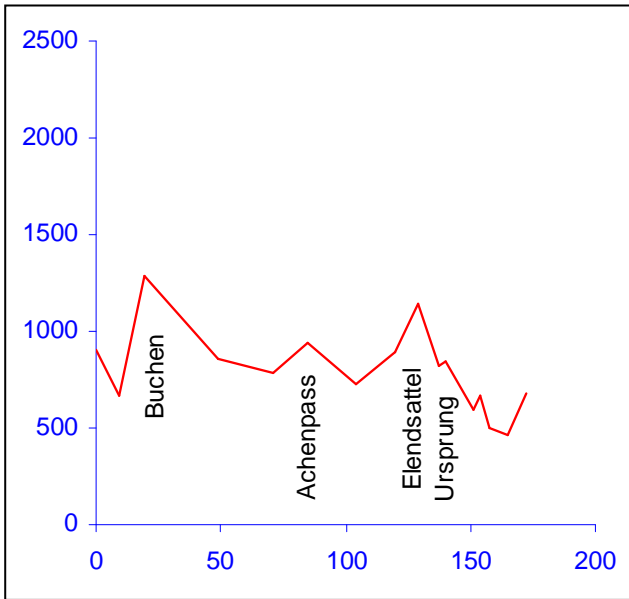
Arriving in the Lech valley, i went in direction south-west. South-west? Yes, i could finally take advantage of tailwinds and ride to Stanzach at a good speed. Then, however, i went into the next difficulty: the very irregular, partly really steep climb to Namlos and Berwang. I thought that this would just be one pass, but actually it was like three ones in a row. At least the descents between them were nice, as was the landscape of these medium mountains with many forests. As i came back to the valley in Bichlbach, i had to ride on a main road, except when it went into a tunnel to shortcut the town of Lermoos. This tunnel (and it's better) is forbidden for bicycles. As both the road around and the tunnel met again, in the climb towards the Fernpass, there was much traffic, including busses and caravans, but at least the road was broad enough for them to pass me without threatening my security. Just before the pass, i enjoyed the spectacular view to the Blindsee, with the Zugspitze in the background.

After a last descent to Nassereith, i went into that village and took a small road towards Aschland, but then

left it again to climb on a half-decomposed road (used to sledge in the winter) to reach Holzleiten away from the big traffic. After the pass, i started to look for an hotel or a bed-and-breakfast, and finally stayed in Mieming, on a plateau above the Inn valley.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Lingenau	0	700	
Riedbergpass	23	1420	720
Sonthofen	39	740	
Oberjoch	56	1180	440
Schattwald	59	1080	
Nesselwängle	71	1150	70
Weissenbach	79	880	
Stanzach	89	940	60
Kelmen	101	1370	430
...	104	1220	
Brand	106	1320	100
Rauth	108	1270	
Berwang	111	1340	70
Bichlbach	116	1080	
Lermoos	125	1000	
Fernpass	133	1220	220
Nassereith	144	840	
Holzleiten	149	1120	280
Obermieming	159	910	
<b>total</b>	<b>159</b>		<b>2390</b>

### Stage 3 (20 June 2005): Mieming - Walchsee



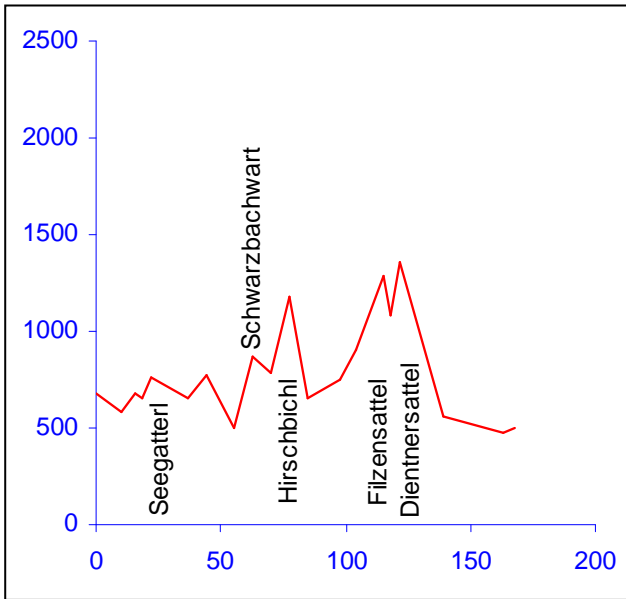
After a good sleep and a good breakfast, i hit the road again and went down to Telfs, then climbed over the Buchener Höhe to Leutasch. What a difference with the previous day: much less traffic. I arrived so in a beautiful broad valley, gently going down to the german border. Just the last stretch before Mittenwald was very steep. From there, i could ride on a bike path and avoid the heavier traffic. I rode through Wallgau, turning right just after coming out of this town and taking a nice little road along the Isar. Because this was a toll road, there were only a few cars and a few other cyclists between Wallgau and Vorderriss, then just some more motor vehicles towards and along the Sylvenstein lake.

After this lake, there was a slight climb towards the austrian border, then i went left to the german boder

again and, somewhat steeper, to the Achenpass. I stopped in Kreuth to eat and drink, then went a few kilometres further north to Rottach. I had to ask a few people till someone could tell me the way up to Valepp... but nobody was able to tell anything about the kind of road going from there to the east. Even the guy at the toll station in the valley had no idea! Well, the climb to Valepp was irregular, with some really steep parts, but the road was good. Further, however, there was only a gravel road. I did not like the idea of riding back and making a large detour, so i decided to try riding these approximately 12 kilometres. The gravel itself was not bad, but sometimes it was steep and really at the limit for a road bicycle. Twice i had to rely on my sense of orientation because there were other forest roads... but not on my map. I arrived at a small pass called Elendsattel, which means misery. Apart of the misery of the gravel, however, it was beautiful. Would just be better by mountain bike. After the descent, i arrived on the main road running south to the Ursprungpass and again to Austria. Then i had a long descent to Kufstein with just a short climb on the way. In Kufstein, i had to search and to ask, but finally found my way north to Ebbs, a town from which i could turn right and climb towards Walchsee.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Obermieming	0	910	
Telfs	9	670	
Buchen	19	1290	620
Wallgau	49	860	
Fall	71	780	
Achenpass	85	940	160
Rottach	104	730	
Valepp	120	890	160
Elendsattel	129	1140	250
Zipflwirt	137	820	
Ursprungpass	140	840	20
Vorderthiersee	151	600	
Thierberg	154	670	70
Kufstein	158	500	
Ebbs	165	470	
Walchsee-Durchholzen	172	680	10
<b>total</b>	<b>172</b>		<b>1490</b>

## Stage 4 (21 June 2005): Walchsee - Scheffau



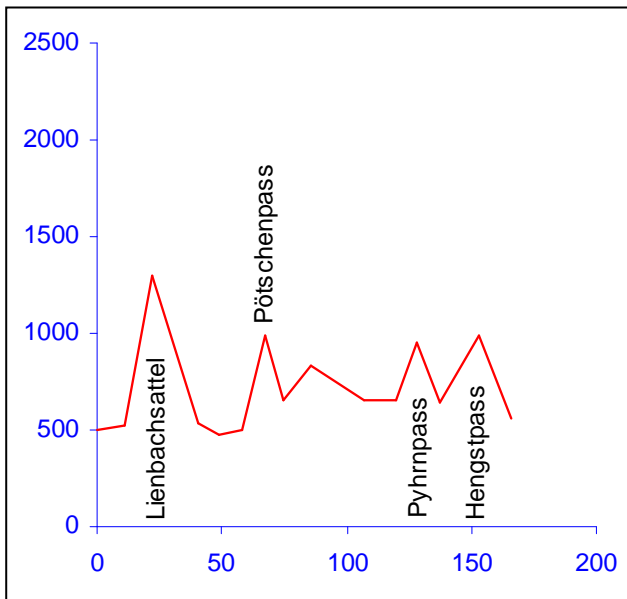
Same weather, similar programme! First ride east, enter Germany, take the german alpine road, go south over a steep pass, reenter Austria and make a loop south-east-north. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> stages had much in common. The main difference is that i did not have to ride again on gravel. The first two hours were an easy ride leading over Reit im Winkel towards Schmelz. After a fast descent to Schneitzlreuth came a steep climb to the Schwarzbachwartsattel, not the longest climb but perhaps the longest pass name! Just after the pass, i took a small road to the right, rode down to the a lake (Hintersee) and had a short stop at a restaurant there: i needed all my strengths for the next climb, the steepest i ever did on my road bicycle. On my map, the Hirschbichl was given with 23%, which is probably exact for the steepest (but fortunately

short) stretches. At least it was macadam all the way, except just for two avalanche gullies. The 30% sign in the descent, however, was probably exaggerated!

After a flat road to Saalfelden, i climbed to the Filzensattel. Up to Maria Alm, the slope was very gentle, but then it became really steep. After this pass, the descent was fast but short, leading to Dienten, from where it climbed again, to the Dientnersattel. The descent from there to Bischofshofen was much longer. From this town to the north, i encountered some furious headwinds. I was riding down, but had to pedal as if it would have been flat or even uphill. I was therefore quite surprised as i noticed that my bicycle computer indicated more than 100 km/h! Well, the sensor is sensitive to electromagnetic fields, like from the railway which was running parallel to the road. In Golling, i could finally leave the main road. I felt that it was very warm and that i had done enough for the day. Thus i started to look for some green sign 'Zimmer frei'. And i found one in Scheffau, a small village a bit away from the road.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Walchsee-Durchholzen	0	680	
Kössen	10	580	
Reit im Winkel	16	680	100
Groissenbach	18	660	
Seegatterl	22	760	100
Waich	37	660	
Schmelz	44	770	110
Schneitzlreuth	55	500	
Schwarzbachwartsattel	63	870	370
Hintersee	70	780	
Hirschbichl	77	1180	400
Weissbach	85	650	
Saalfelden	98	750	100
Maria Alm	104	900	150
Filzensattel	115	1290	390
Dienten	118	1080	
Dientnersattel	122	1360	280
Bischofshofen	139	560	
Golling	163	480	
Unterscheffau	168	500	20
<b>total</b>	<b>168</b>		<b>2020</b>

## Stage 5 (22 June 2005): Scheffau - Laussa



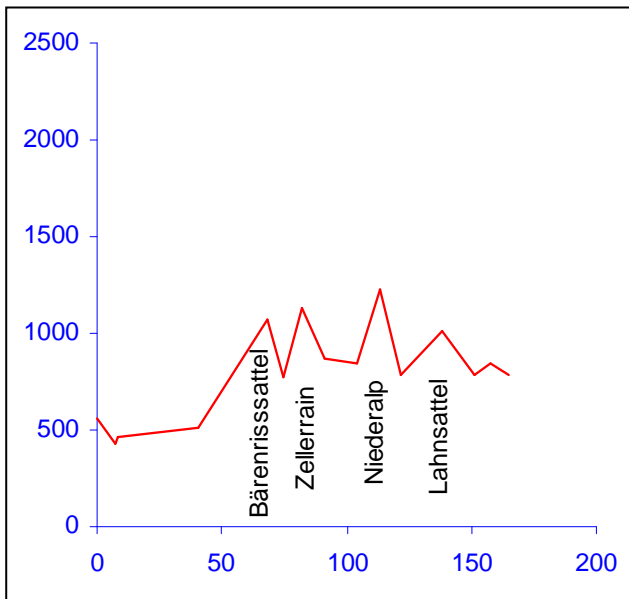
This stage was full of contrasts. The first pass, the Lienbachsattel was a beautiful ride over the largest alpine pasture of Austria (Postalm) and i enjoyed it very much. Both up and downhill. Then, however, i had to ride over main roads with much traffic for about 80 km, including the Pötschenpass which, in spite of its slope, is passed by many trucks. On some stretches, the roads to Liezen had a bicycle lane or something approximately like a bicycle lane. Other places, there was a separate small road, but then with poor indications of direction... or none at all. For sure, i'll not keep a very good memory of this part of the tour, but there was not really a way around.

The Pyhrnpass was already much better: less traffic, nice landscape and a good road for an easy but fast descent. Approaching Windischgarten, i took a

road to the right leading to the Hengstpass. And the day ended as it had begun: with a nice pass ride away from the trucks and from too many cars. The weather was now overcast and, compared to the previous days, it was not too warm towards the end of the stage. The climb was regular and thus no too hard. The descent was long, its lower part along the canyon of the Laussa river. I stopped at the first 'Gasthaus' i found. I took a shower and washed my clothes. Only afterwards, i was told that there was only something cold for supper (sausage-salad and bread). Too bad for my cyclist's hunger, but i did not want to hit the road again. Especially because the shower was now also outside!

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Unterscheffau	0	500	
Pichl	11	520	20
Lienbachsattel	22	1300	780
Aigen	41	540	
Bad Ischl	49	480	
Bad Goisern	58	500	20
Pötschenpass	67	990	490
Bad Aussee	75	660	
Kainisch	86	830	170
Stainach	107	660	
Liezen	120	660	
Pyhrnpass	128	950	290
Spital	137	640	
Hengstpass	153	990	350
Unterlaussa	166	560	
<b>total</b>	<b>166</b>		<b>2120</b>

## Stage 6 (23 June 2005): Laussa - Rechengraben



The sixth stage began with the remaining of the descent from the Hengstpass to Altenmarkt. There, i joined the main (but quiet) road to Mariazell. It was following a river all the way, but instead of keeping the same slope it was going many times up and down. Obviously, austrian engineers never ride bicycles! After this unplanned interval training, i took a narrow road to the left leading into a small valley... and into the wilderness. Again, i had asked about the quality of the road, since maps are never really reliable in this regard. I was told that it was paved all the way. Well, sometimes no answer would be better than a wrong one! After the place called Klaus, i found... gravel. Fortunately it was fine gravel, easy to ride even with a road bicycle. After a few kilometres, there was another problem: the road was closed because of forest works. I decided to try

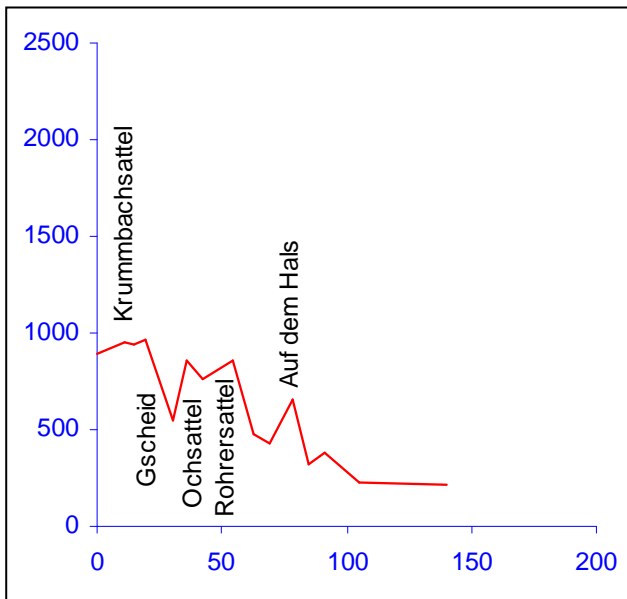
anyway and didn't see anybody at all. So i reached the pass of Bärenriss without even hitting the bear. The descent to Holzhüttenboden was also on gravel and also without anybody in sight.

I finally came back to the civilisation as i reached the road up to the Zellerrain pass. After a short drink-stop there, i rode down to Mariazell (fast but not so beautiful). From this pilgrimage town, i wanted to add a loop over two further passes: Niederalp and Lahnsattel, but arriving at the foot of the first one in Wegscheid, i saw a sign indicating that the second one was closed because of landslides. I thought about another way to continue the journey and decided to ask people later, in Mürzsteg, between both passes. The Niederalp climb was quite hard because of the heat, but the descent was much fun, also as it was no longer steep: i got help from a nice tailwind. In Mürzsteg, i was told that the landslide was very small. And, this time, the information was correct. It was essentially closed to any traffic, but even the policeman who was there did not tell anything as i rode between the stones lying on the road. A big advantage: there was no other traffic over the Lahnsattel. Then i went down almost to Mariazell again, but turned right to the small lake of Hubertus. And i stayed along this small road for the night, in a small bed-and-breakfast.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Unterlaussa	0	560	
Engl	7	430	
Altenmarkt	8	460	30
Abraham	41	510	50
Bärenrissattel	68	1070	560
Holzhüttenboden	75	770	
Zellerrain	82	1130	360
Mariazell	91	870	
Wegscheid	104	840	
Niederalp	113	1230	390
Mürzsteg	122	780	
Lahnsattel	138	1010	230
Rechengraben	151	790	
Hubertussee	158	840	50
Rechengraben	165	790	
<b>total</b>	<b>165</b>		<b>1670</b>



## Stage 7 (24 June 2005): Rechengraben - Wien



The first thing which i noticed as i woke up was the light: i had already travelled 7° of longitude to the east without changing time zone; the day was thus about half an hour earlier. The second thing: it was chilly in the narrow Walstern valley, the cold air flowing down like the stream. As i left after breakfast, the temperature was still around 12°, but the weather was nice again. I first climbed to the Krummbachsattel, a nice and quiet little road. Even over the Gscheid and down to St-Aegydy, on a broader road, i encountered only few traffic. The landscape was still made of small but relatively steep hills, with forests and some pastures. The next passes to the east, Ochsattel and Rohrsattel, were not very different, even their altitude was the same. I stopped at Pernitz to buy something to eat and drink, which i did in nearby park, watching a

school class practicing outdoors for a dance performance. Then i rode to the last pass of this tour, a small but very nice one: auf dem Hals. It was mostly in the forest and i appreciated the shade because it was warmer and warmer.

It is only after a small hill north-east of Pottenstein that i finally saw the Danube valley. However, i had still some 50 km to ride and they were not the most enjoyable ones. I was approaching Vienna and the traffic was more and more dense. I finally entered the city, not among the most bicycle-friendly, and had to stop to find out where i was on a city map. For this, i took advantage of a restaurant terrace in the shade of the trees. With the help of two customers who knew something about Vienna by bicycle, i was able to find an easy way to ride to the quarter of Döbling, almost at the other end of Austria's capital.

There i met my friends Anne and Dieter and their children Loïc and Chloé. The mother of Dieter was also there to help packing everything: preparing to move back to Switzerland. Yes, it was really the last opportunity to visit them as long as they were in Vienna! So we could have a nice evening together, and i could tell them about this journey with its many passes, many kilometres, much sun and no rain, no puncture, no incident or injury.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Rechengraben	0	890	
Krummbachsattel	11	950	60
Knollenhals	15	940	
Gscheid	19	970	30
Mitterbach	30	550	
Ochsattel	36	860	310
Gstettner	42	760	
Rohrsattel	54	860	100
Gutenstein	63	480	
Pernitz	69	430	
Auf dem Hals	78	660	230
Pottenstein	85	320	
Grossau	91	380	60
Traiskirchen	105	230	
Wien	140	210	
<b>total</b>	<b>140</b>		<b>790</b>