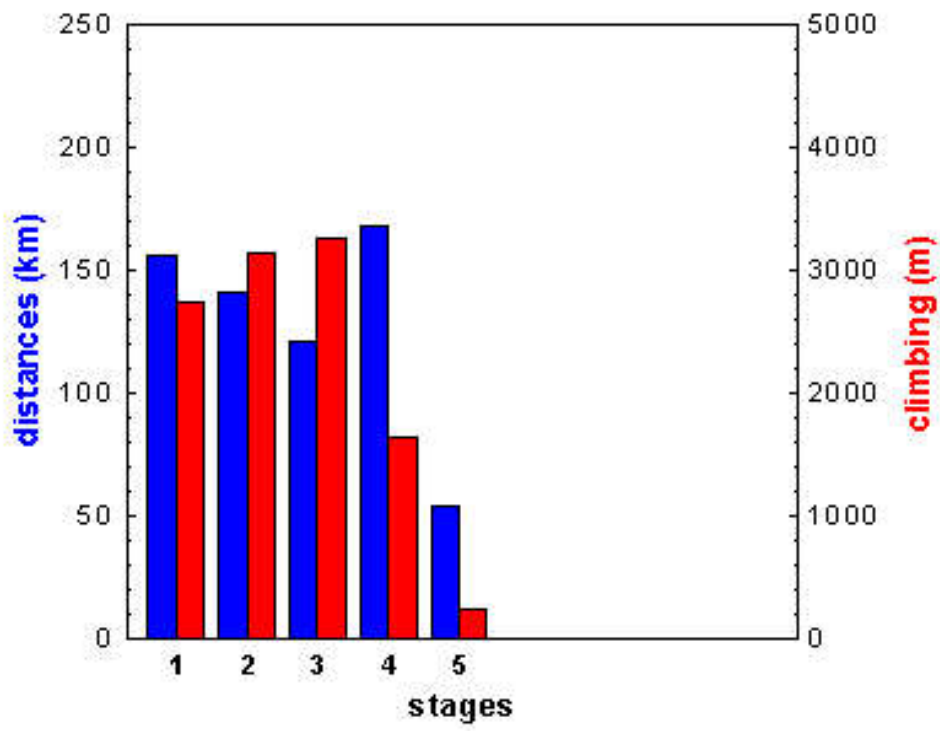


Bicycle tour 2007, 14 - 18 July

Patrick Schleppe

| stage | distance (km) | climbing (m) |
|---|---------------|--------------|
| Aviano - Monte Rest - Chianzutan - Tanamea | 156 | 2760 |
| Tanamea - Carnizza - Predil - Vršič - Wurzen - Riegersdorf | 141 | 3100 |
| Riegersdorf - Windische Höhe - Radenthein - Nockalm - Schönfeld | 120 | 3280 |
| Schönfeld - Radstädter Tauernpass - Pinzgau - Thurn | 164 | 1640 |
| Thurn - Kitzbühel - Wörgl | 54 | 250 |
| total | 635 | 11030 |





Forcella di Monte Rest, north side, valley of the Tagliamento



Valley of the Koritnica towards the Predil pass



Eisentalhöhe, south side (Grundtal)



From Jochberg (near Kitzbühel) towards Pass Thurn

Stage 1 (14 July 2007): Aviano - Monte Rest - Chianzután - Tanamea

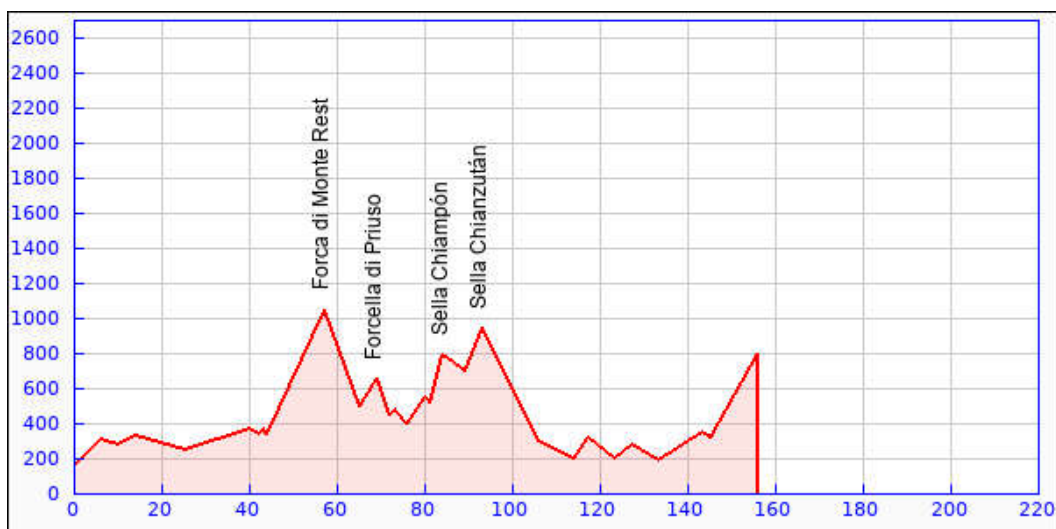
This year's tour did not start with a stage one but with a prologue: travelling by train to north-eastern Italy. I had a connection in Milano, but they did not let me take the bicycle into the next train (in spite of the fact that nothing of this sort was indicated on the internet site of the Italian railways, as I had checked in advance). I had to wait an hour and change once more. After a ten-hour journey, I finally arrived in Sacile, from where I rode to Aviano. In other words, day zero counted only about 30 km, but I was tired enough as I arrived.

The real tour start was on Saturday morning. I followed first the foot of the mountains to Meduno. From there, I went into the Tramonti valley. The climb was first a bit irregular but gentle. After the lake, it became more serious, with the narrow road making many hairpin curves in the forest. In the shade, these were ideal conditions for climbing to the **Monte Rest** pass. On the other side, however, the road was relatively bad and more attention than speed was required. After crossing the Tagliamento river, the road climbed again a bit to reach the **Forcella di Priuso**. On the ride over these first two passes, there was barely any traffic. This changed for the few kilometres that I had to ride on the main road bound to Tolmezzo, but I soon turned right and was again almost alone. The first half to the **Chiampón** pass was gentle, but then there was a sign indicating a 20% slope. My slope-meter actually never showed so much, but nevertheless about 15% for more than 1 km. This was quite challenging since, at the same time, I was digesting a good sandwich eaten in Socchieve.

After a short and gentle descent, I joined a somewhat bigger road, on which I climbed towards the **Chianzután** pass. Fortunately, this one was not so steep. After an easy climb, there was an easy descent. Approaching

Tolmezzo, I turned right, towards Gemona and then Tarcento. The roads went always again up and down, which was slowly but surely eating away my energy. Then, from Tarcento, it was all uphill as I climbed into the Torre valley. It was not very steep, but my right knee was aching a bit. I stopped short before reaching the **Tanamea** pass, where there was an attractive hotel. In the lobby, the television was on and I could just see the arrival of the stage of the Tour de France. It was not much different compared to one of my stages in terms of distance and climbing... but another world in terms of speed!

| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Aviano | 0 | 160 | |
| Giais | 6 | 310 | 150 |
| Malnisio | 10 | 280 | |
| Montereale | 14 | 330 | 50 |
| Fanna | 25 | 250 | |
| La Clevata | 40 | 370 | 120 |
| Tarcento (Tramonti di Sotto) | 42 | 340 | |
| Tramonti di Sotto | 43 | 370 | 30 |
| Matan (Tramonti di Mezzo) | 44 | 340 | |
| Forca di Monte Rest | 57 | 1050 | 710 |
| Serai / Tagliamento | 65 | 500 | |
| Forcella di Priuso | 69 | 660 | 160 |
| Priuso | 72 | 450 | |
| Mediis | 73 | 480 | 30 |
| Socchieve | 76 | 400 | |
| Lunas | 80 | 550 | 150 |
| Rio Masareit | 81 | 520 | |
| Sella Chiampón | 84 | 790 | 270 |
| Pozzis | 89 | 700 | |
| Sella Chianzután | 93 | 950 | 250 |
| Avons | 106 | 300 | |
| Lago di Cavazzo | 114 | 200 | |
| Chiamp (Bordano) | 117 | 320 | 120 |
| Braulins | 123 | 200 | |
| Gemona | 127 | 280 | 80 |
| Magnano | 133 | 190 | |
| S. Osvaldo | 143 | 350 | 160 |
| Vedronza | 145 | 320 | |
| Pian dei Ciclamini (Tanamea) | 156 | 800 | 480 |
| total | 156 | | 2760 |

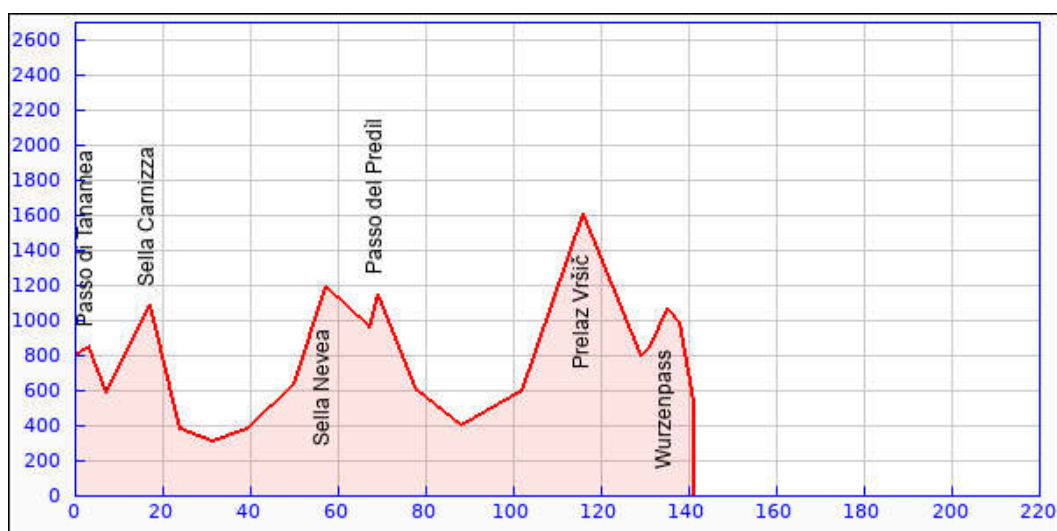


Stage 2 (15 July 2007): Tanamea - Carnizza - Predil - Vršič - Wurzen - Riegersdorf

Since i was almost at the [Tanamea](#) pass, i reached it soon after hitting the road again. However, my knee was aching and i began to wonder how far i could ride like this. I had to use low gears and try further. In the descent, just before reaching the border town of Ucea, i turned left to climb towards the [Sella Carnizza](#). The road was narrow, but not too narrow since i was absolutely alone there on this sunday morning. The climb would have been very nice if i could have forgotten my knee. At the pass, there were a few houses, obviously for vacations. Then came a steep and bumpy descent down to Resia. After the knee, the wrists suffered! Between Resia and Resiutta, there was much less slope. Arriving in the Ferro valley, i turned right on the main road. Thanks to the parallel highway, the traffic was not too heavy. Then i entered the Roccolana valley. The climb was first very gentle but my knee was still aching. Then it became very steep... and my knee was getting better. With the road signs, it was the contrary as the day before: 16% were announced, but my slope-meter showed 20%. I stopped short before the [Sella Nevea](#) for a sandwich and a soft drink, then continued to the Predil lake. After the lake, i followed the signs indicating Slovenia, which led me over the [Predil](#) pass. The climb was quite steep but short. The descent was much longer and very nice, only interrupted by a few stops to take pictures of the beautiful mountain landscape. Towards Bovec, i had some head wind. Logically, this became a slight tail wind as i turned left

into the valley leading to Trenta. Up to this town, the slope was very gentle. Afterwards, however, there were many hairpin curves up to the [Vršič](#) pass. The curves were numbered, beginning with 50. Fortunately, i knew that both sides are counted in this number, with 25 curves each. For the south side, it may be useful to note two of them: there is a fountain at curve 38 and the steepest part is just before curve 27, that is close to the pass. Because it was hot and there was not much shade even in the forest, i had to drink about 3 liters only for this climb. I took my time and reached the pass without any problem. In the descent to Kranjska Gora, the curves were covered with cobblestones. Then, for the short stretch on the main road, i had a good tail wind. I stopped in Podkoren to have a lemonade at a restaurant. There was a group of austrian tourists there on the terrace. They were very interested in my tour and payed my lemonade in return of my bicycle stories. Then i went over the last pass of the day, the [Wurzen](#) pass, on the border to Austria. The climb was short and the descent extremely irregular, with very steep parts. As i was reaching the first town on the austrian side, i had no problem to find a small guest house with a free room.

| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Pian dei Ciclamini (Tanamea) | 0 | 800 | |
| Passo di Tanamea | 3 | 850 | 50 |
| Ucea | 7 | 590 | |
| Sella Carnizza | 17 | 1090 | 500 |
| Résia | 24 | 380 | |
| Resiutta | 31 | 310 | |
| Chiusaforte | 39 | 380 | 70 |
| Pian della Sega | 50 | 640 | 260 |
| Sella Nevea | 57 | 1190 | 550 |
| Lago del Predil | 67 | 960 | |
| Passo del Predil | 69 | 1150 | 190 |
| Spodnji Log | 78 | 600 | |
| Maljnik | 88 | 400 | |
| Trenta | 102 | 600 | 200 |
| Prelaz Vršič | 116 | 1610 | 1010 |
| Kranjska Gora | 129 | 800 | |
| Podkoren | 131 | 850 | 50 |
| Wurzenpass | 135 | 1070 | 220 |
| Mauth | 138 | 990 | |
| Riegersdorf | 141 | 540 | |
| total | 141 | | 3100 |

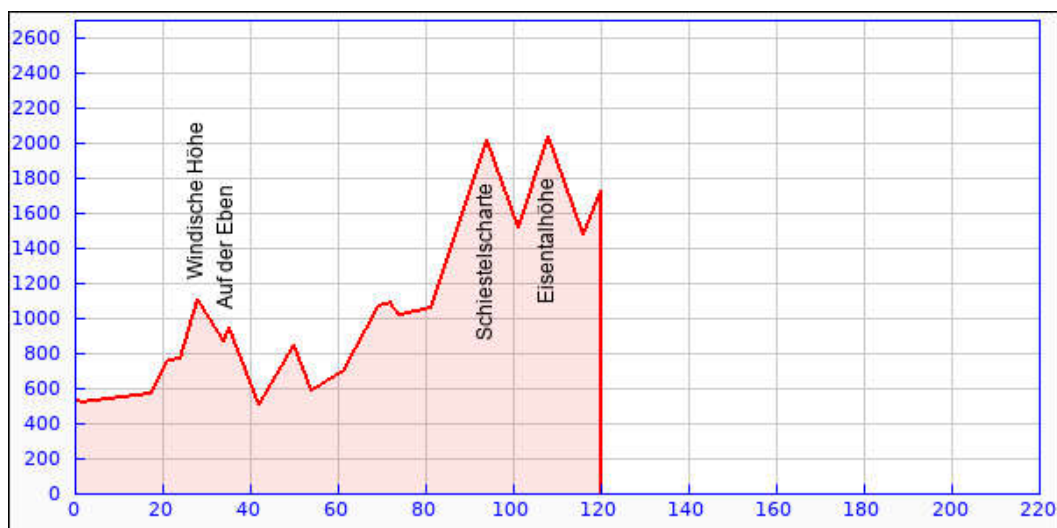


Stage 3 (16 July 2007): Riegersdorf - Windische Höhe - Radenthein - Nockalm - Schönfeld

Following the idea of the guest house owner, i rode first across the Gail valley to a place called Oberschütt and, from there, took a small forest road on the left side of the river. This way was actually forbidden and had a barrier across, but i could easily ride around it. It was not entirely macadam, but good gravel, well rideable with a race bicycle. From Nötch, it began to climb to the [Windische Höhe](#). The slope was very irregular, with places around 20%. As i reached the pass, it was already hot and i made the first of many lemonade stops. After a descent, the road went up again, to Kreuzen, then down to Paternion in the Drau valley. I crossed this valley to climb on the other side towards Glanz. From there, i could see the lake of Millstatt. The descent led me to its eastern end at Döbriach. From there to Radenthein, the road went only slightly uphill and, with some tailwind, the ride was easy. Then things changed: to Bad Kleinkirchheim, the road was climbing again and it was really hot. After another descent and another flat stretch, i reached Ebene Reichenau. From there, i took the Nockalm road, which is a toll road running through a national park. Accordingly, the road was good and not too frequented and the landscape was beautiful. This was certainly a moral help, but the physical challenge remained: a 1000-meter climb followed by a 500-meter one. The Nockalm road runs indeed over two passes, first the [Schiestelscharte](#), then the [Eisentalhöhe](#),

| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Riegersdorf | 0 | 540 | |
| Neuhaus | 1 | 520 | |
| Nötsch | 17 | 570 | 50 |
| Wertschach (St. Georgen) | 21 | 760 | 190 |
| Kerschdorf | 24 | 770 | 10 |
| Windische Höhe | 28 | 1110 | 340 |
| Innere Kreuzen | 34 | 870 | |
| Auf der Eben | 35 | 950 | 80 |
| Paternion | 42 | 510 | |
| Eder | 50 | 850 | 340 |
| Döbriach | 54 | 590 | |
| Radenthein | 61 | 700 | 110 |
| Bad Kleinkirchheim | 69 | 1070 | 370 |
| Rottenstein | 72 | 1090 | 20 |
| Patergassen | 74 | 1020 | |
| Ebene Reichenau | 81 | 1060 | 40 |
| Schiestelscharte | 94 | 2020 | 960 |
| Sacklhütte | 101 | 1520 | |
| Eisentalhöhe | 108 | 2040 | 520 |
| Innerkrems | 116 | 1480 | |
| Mehrl-Hütte (Schönfeld) | 120 | 1730 | 250 |
| total | 120 | | 3280 |

which are the most eastern road passes of the Alps over 2000 m elevation. Like the previous day, it was necessary to drink a lot, which i did on each of these two passes, with the further rewards of the beautiful views from there, and of nice descents. Arriving finally in Innerkrems, i climbed towards Schönfeld. There, again, i found a room at the first place i was asking for one. Again very calm and quite cheap.



Stage 4 (17 July 2007): Schönfeld - Radstädter Tauernpass - Pinzgau - Thurn

I had only a few pedal strokes to reach the first pass of the day, [Schönfeldsattel](#). The descent from there to the north was very nice except that i had a flat tire ('snake bite') at Bundschuh. After changing the tube, i could continue towards the Lungau valley. On the opposite slope, i took the gentle climb towards Neusess, which was followed by a flat road to Mauterndorf. The weather was still nice but not yet too hot and so i climbed easily towards the [Radstädter Tauernpass](#). The slope was (again) a bit irregular, but still quite easy. Around the pass, there is the station of Obertauern, with many hotels and ski lifts. The place is expansive, at least according to the soft drink i took there, the most expansive of the whole tour. The road was very good and the descent fast. Arriving at Radstadt, i went to the west, which would be my general direction for the remaining of the stage. From the Enns valley, i had a very gentle climb up to the [Wagrainer Höhe](#), then a descent down to St. Johann. From there, the road went slightly uphill in the Pongau, then Pinzau valley, all as a main road, but partly with bike lanes, bike paths or small parallel roads, sometimes well indicated, sometimes poorly or not at all. The valley was narrow in its lower part (V-shaped), then it became broad (glacial U-shape). My chance was to take advantage of a good, steady tailwind. Due to the heat, i had to make many drink stops, but between them i came quite fast along. This led me all the way to Mittersill, where i turned towards the Thurn pass. I finished this stage by stopping at a hotel not far from the pass.

| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Mehrl-Hütte (Schönfeld) | 0 | 1730 | |
| Schönfeld | 1 | 1740 | 10 |
| Bundschuh | 12 | 1240 | |
| Schmalzeralm | 13 | 1290 | 50 |
| Moos (St. Margarethen) | 17 | 1020 | |
| St. Margarethen | 18 | 1070 | 50 |
| Oberbayrdorf | 19 | 1030 | |
| Neusess | 24 | 1130 | 100 |
| Mauterndorf | 27 | 1120 | |
| Tweng | 37 | 1230 | 110 |
| Radstädter Tauernpass | 45 | 1740 | 510 |
| Weissenhof | 66 | 830 | |
| Radstadt | 68 | 870 | 40 |
| Altenmarkt | 71 | 840 | |
| Wagrainer Höhe | 81 | 960 | 120 |
| Hallmoosbrücke | 88 | 700 | |
| Grubhöhe | 90 | 740 | 40 |
| St. Johann im Pongau | 93 | 570 | |
| Lend | 109 | 640 | 70 |
| Taxenbach | 117 | 760 | 120 |
| Rauris | 119 | 720 | |
| Walchen | 140 | 790 | 70 |
| Niedersill | 143 | 770 | |
| Mittersill | 155 | 790 | 20 |
| Dietsteinhof (Passthurn) | 164 | 1120 | 330 |
| total | 164 | | 1640 |



Stage 5 (18 July 2007): Thurn - Kitzbühel - Wörgl

The last stage was a short one, the goal being just to catch a train home. Fortunately, this could be a direct connection to Zurich. I made the reservation (which is necessary for the bicycle) the evening before. There was already no place any more available in the noon train from Wörgl, so i had to take the next one, two hours later. This left me plenty of time for this last half-stage.

I had first to climb the remaining distance to the [Thurn](#) pass. No big deal. The descent towards Kitzbühel was very easy: except in two hairpin curves, it was not necessary to touch the brakes. In Kitzbühel, i turned left on the main road to Wörgl. There was much traffic, which did not make the ride

enjoyable, especially not in the tunnel just at the beginning of the climb from Kitzbühel to Kirchberg. In Kirchberg, i could leave the main road and ride through the town rather then through another tunnel. Further down, after Hopfgarten, bicycles are not allowed on the main road. There was first no indication of any alternate way, but i discovered it soon: a small road on the left side of the valley towards Wörgl. I arrived early enough there to take my ticket, write my report of the stage, eat, drink, read newspapers and finally board the train.

This was the end of yet another tour in the Alps, not a very long one but i had to be back the next day. It had not been easy to find a period of nice weather in this poor summer 2007, but finally i had been lucky with these few days in the eastern part of the Alps.

| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Dietsteinhof (Passthurn) | 0 | 1120 | |
| Pass Thurn | 3 | 1270 | 150 |
| Hütte (Jochberg) | 13 | 850 | |
| Kitzbühel | 22 | 740 | |
| Spertendorf (Kirchberg) | 31 | 840 | 100 |
| Windau | 40 | 720 | |
| Haslau | 41 | 630 | |
| Wörgl | 54 | 510 | |
| total | 54 | | 250 |

