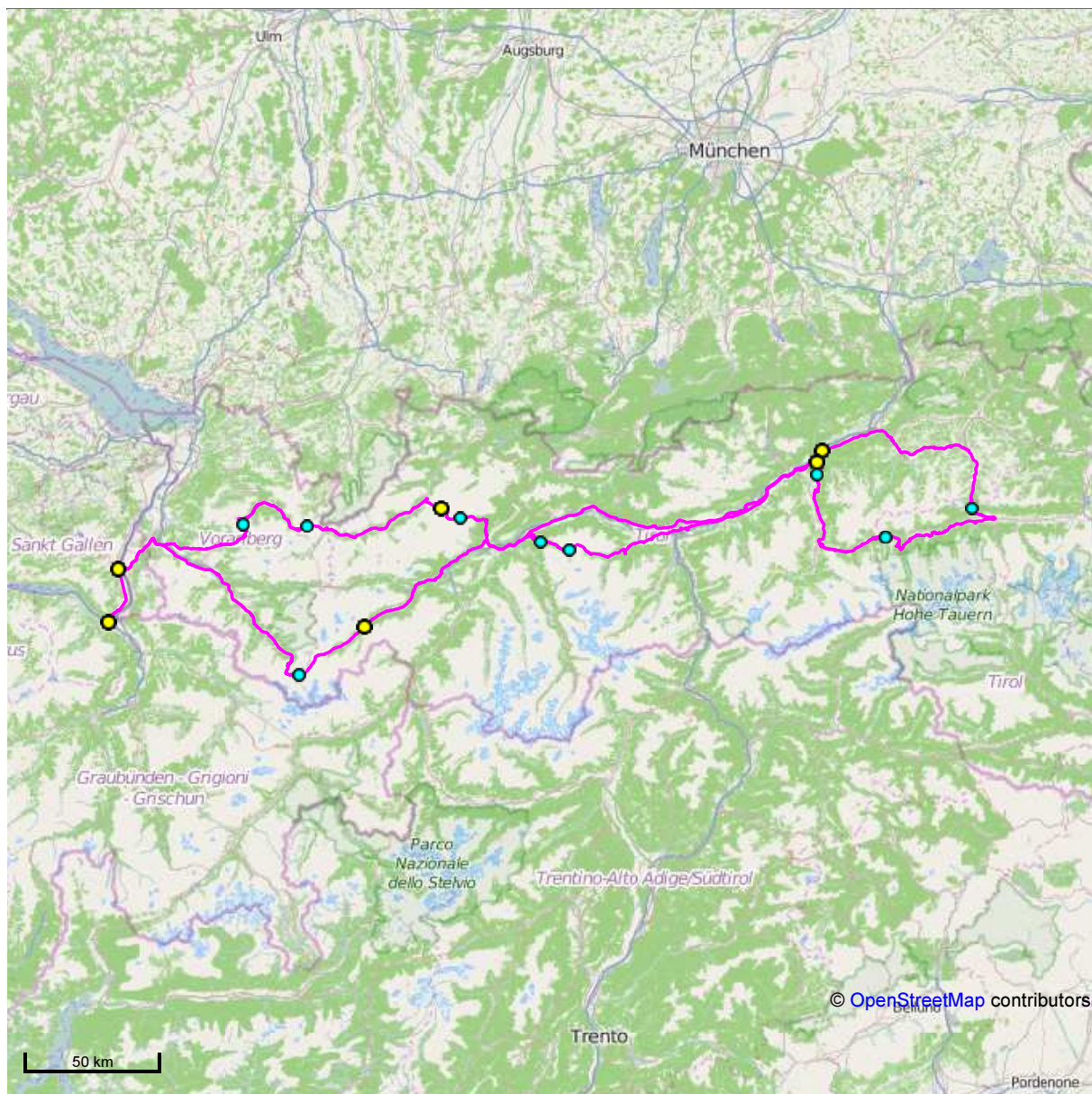
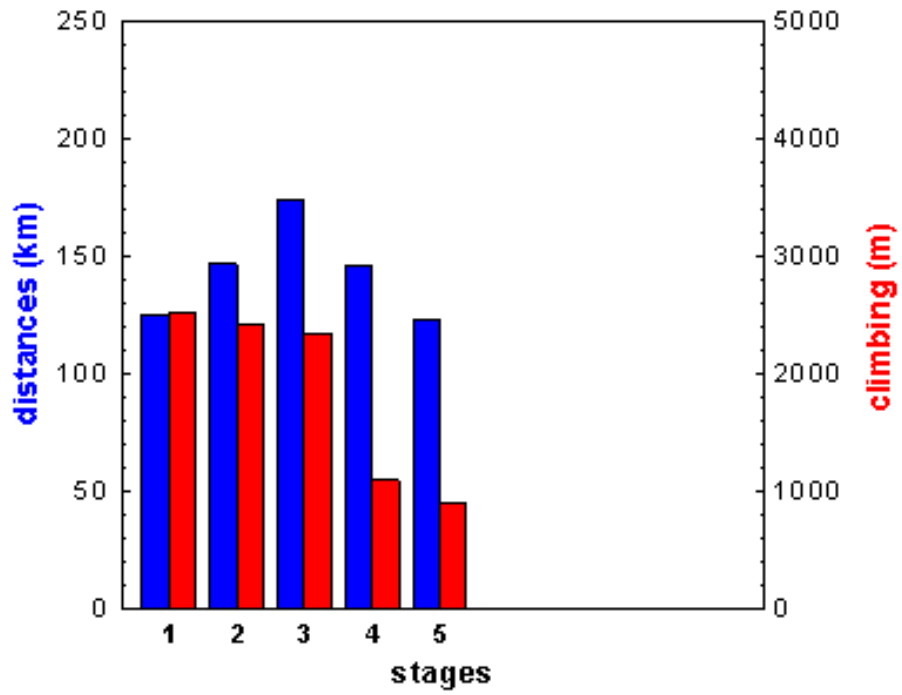


Tour à vélo 2013, 10 - 14 August

Patrick Schleppe

| stage | distance (km) | climbing (m) |
|---|---------------|--------------|
| Buchs - Faschinajoch - Hochtannberg - Bsclabs | 125 | 2530 |
| Bsclabs - Hahntennjoch - Kühtai - Innsbruck - Radfeld | 147 | 2420 |
| Radfeld - Kitzbühel - Gerlos - Reith i.A. | 174 | 2350 |
| Reith i.A. - Innsbruck - Landeck - Ischgl | 146 | 1110 |
| Ischgl - Bielerhöhe - Feldkirch - Sargans | 123 | 910 |
| total | 715 | 9320 |





Sonntag in Grosses Walsertal



Above Bsclabs, sight towards Lechtal



The upper Pinzgau valley as seen from the Pass-Thurn road

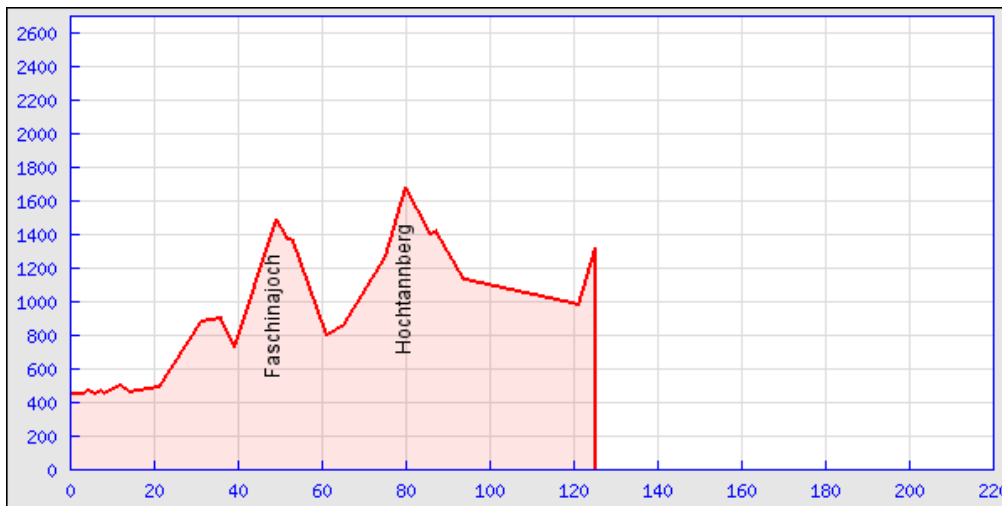


Some of the numerous hairpin curves of the Silretta road in the Ill valley

Stage 1 (10 August 2013): Buchs - Faschinajoch - Hochtannberg - Bsclabs

Saturday morning, nice weather: the first train from Zurich to Sargans was fully overcrowded with bicycles. Good that i was early and could still easily find a place for mine. After changing train in Sargans, i arrived in Buchs at 8 and could start the bicycle journey from there. After less than 2 km (and crossing the Rhine) i was already abroad, in Liechtenstein. A few more km, and here was the third country: Austria. I crossed Feldkirch and rode to Frastanz, where i turned left, gently climbing along the side of the valley. This climb and then a short descent brought me to the Grosswalsertal. The air was cool, the green landscape beautiful and the traffic not too heavy: everything perfect to climb into this valley. From the village of Sonntag, however, it was really steep till i reached (at 11 o'clock) the first pass of this tour, [Faschinajoch](#). The first part of the descent, down to Damüls, was steep and very tricky because of the mechanically grooved macadam. After turning right at Au, i joined the route of my [1999 tour](#) with the climb to the [Hochtannberg](#) pass, with also some really steep parts. The descent was very different, first also quite steep, but then less and less, accordingly much longer. I had to ride against the wind along the Lechtal valley, which was somewhat exhausting. Arriving finally near Elmen, i had still plenty of time but was not sure if i would have enough energy left for the whole next climb. I was thus glad to find an inn along the road, in Bsclabs.

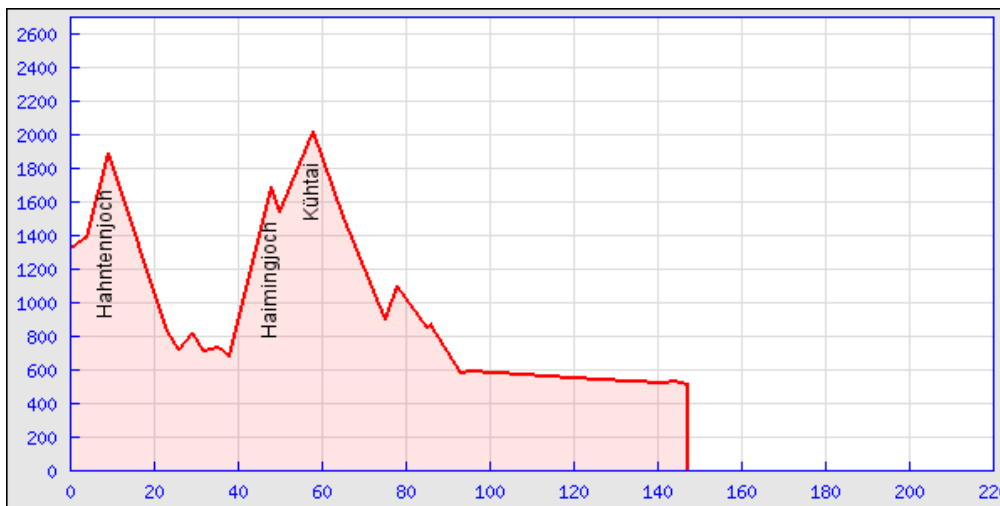
| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Buchs | 0 | 450 | |
| Schaan | 3 | 450 | |
| Forstwald | 4 | 470 | 20 |
| Äscher | 6 | 450 | |
| Nendeln | 7 | 470 | 20 |
| Nendeln | 8 | 450 | |
| Tisis | 12 | 500 | 50 |
| Feldkirch | 14 | 460 | |
| Satteins | 21 | 490 | 30 |
| Thüringerberg | 31 | 880 | 390 |
| Blons | 36 | 900 | 20 |
| Garsella | 39 | 730 | |
| Faschinajoch | 49 | 1490 | 760 |
| Madlener (Damüls) | 52 | 1370 | |
| Dreihäuser | 53 | 1360 | |
| Au | 61 | 800 | |
| Schopperrau | 65 | 860 | 60 |
| Schröcken | 75 | 1270 | 410 |
| Hochtannberg | 80 | 1680 | 410 |
| Gehren | 86 | 1400 | |
| Waldstl | 87 | 1420 | 20 |
| Prenten (Steeg) | 94 | 1130 | |
| Elmen | 121 | 980 | |
| Bsclabs | 125 | 1320 | 340 |
| total | 125 | | 2530 |



Stage 2 (11 August 2013): Bschlabs - Hahntennjoch - Kühtai - Innsbruck - Radfeld

Since i was already a good way in the climb, it was no longer so difficult to reach the [Hahntennjoch](#) pass. It was a really nice alpine landscape. The descent to Imst was steep and long, requiring much attention in the curves. After Imst, i had to ride on main roads, some of them with much traffic. I left then the road of the Inn valley a bit further than the confluence of the Ötztal, going into the climb to the [Haimingjoch](#) pass. This was a steep but nice climb, almost entirely in the shade of the forest. Then there was only a short descent and already it went uphill again, towards [Kühtai](#), which is a pass but also a touristic place, a ski station in the winter. As it is often the case for Austrian passes, this climb was very irregular in slope. The descent too, with some very steep parts. I left it in Sellrain to take a smaller road on the right-hand side, a road with much less car traffic but some motorcycles. After an initial climb, this brought me down to Innsbruck. Don't expect any clear signposting for bicycles there. I searched my way half on the map, half by some sense of orientation. Then, following a race cyclist who appeared to know his way, i eventually reached the Inn cycle route. I thought that it would be easier to follow this route. However, the signposting was poor and the route made many detours, including crossing industrial areas. The macadam was of bad quality. It was required to dismount the bicycle at several places. There was not a single place to have a drink along the route for many kilometres. And as if this would not be sufficient, there was headwind. Some people certainly appreciate that it is almost flat, but for me the Inn cycle route was no fun. I had decided to stop somewhere near Brixlegg. I found a sympathetic guesthouse in Radfeld, near the picturesque town of Rattenberg.

| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Bschlabs | 0 | 1320 | |
| Abzweigung Boden | 4 | 1390 | 70 |
| Hahntennjoch | 9 | 1890 | 500 |
| Imst | 23 | 830 | |
| Brennbichl | 26 | 720 | |
| Karres | 29 | 820 | 100 |
| Löckpuit | 32 | 710 | |
| Ötztal | 35 | 730 | 20 |
| Haiming | 38 | 680 | |
| Haimingjoch | 48 | 1690 | 1010 |
| Wald | 50 | 1540 | |
| Kühtai | 58 | 2020 | 480 |
| St. Sigismund | 65 | 1510 | |
| Sellrain | 75 | 900 | |
| Tanneben | 78 | 1100 | 200 |
| Axams | 85 | 850 | |
| Götzens | 86 | 870 | 20 |
| Wilten (Innsbruck) | 93 | 580 | |
| Pradl (Innsbruck) | 95 | 590 | 10 |
| Schwarz | 126 | 540 | |
| St. Gertraudi | 141 | 520 | |
| Brixlegg | 144 | 530 | 10 |
| Radfeld | 147 | 510 | |
| total | 147 | | 2420 |

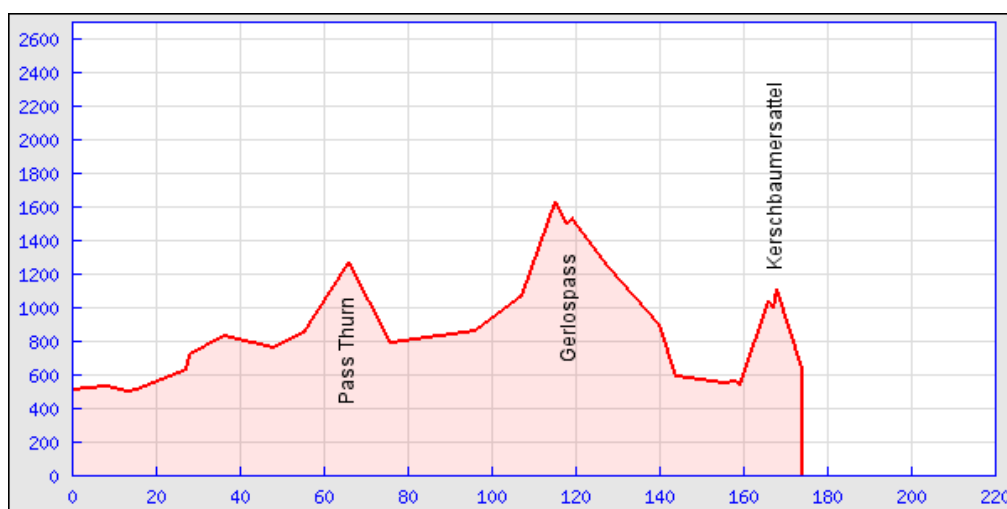


Stage 3 (12 August 2013): Radfeld - Kitzbühel - Gerlos - Reith i.A.

For this third day i first went further along the Inn valley, but this time on the main road. In Wörgl, i turned right and took the same road than 2007, but in the other direction. The first part of the climb had to be on a small road because the main road is forbidden for bicycles. After Hopfgarten, however, it was more difficult to decide between the road with more traffic and a cycle route with some surprises like unpaved stretches or failing signposting at crossings. Reaching Kitzbühel, i went across (and not around) the town, just to see how it looks like. From there, i continued to the south, towards [Pass Thurn](#). It was an easy climb, with a gentle slope and a road broad enough not to be at risk every time being passed by motor vehicles. The descent was fast, just with one or two stops to admire the view over the Pinzgau valley and to take pictures. Down in Mittersill, there was a big traffic jam and i was much faster with my bicycle than the column of cars. From this town, i found the cycling route along the valley. Compared to the Inn valley, this was almost like day and night: good little road, often directly along the Salzach river, small but mostly clear signposting and even backwind. Everything was good, at least up to Neukirschen, because further it was no longer so good for a race bicycle. From Wald, there were two roads leading to the [Gerlospass](#), one quite straight along the sunny valley slope, the other with a detour over Krimml. I took this second one, which gave me some nice views over the waterfalls of Krimml. The road was then quite steep, but i could reach the pass without any problem. The descent in the Ziller valley was quite long. In its last part, it made hairpin curves and was very steep. Arriving in the valley, i had big problems to find my way because there were road signs only meant for motor vehicles and leading to a highway forbidden for bicycles. Finally, after crossing the valley towards Zell and crossing it again to the right-hand side, i found the small road that runs parallel to the highway. I followed the valley, then left its bottom at Helfenstein, climbing to Hart and further to the [Kerschbaumersattel](#). The climb was hard because of the steepness of this small road. It was already past 17 when i reached the pass. Dark clouds in the sky told me to take the next good opportunity in search of a place to stay for the night. This was in Reith im Alpbachtal.

| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Radfeld | 0 | 510 | |
| Kundl | 8 | 530 | 20 |
| Lahntal | 13 | 500 | |
| Wörgl | 15 | 510 | 10 |
| Haslau | 27 | 630 | 120 |
| Windau | 28 | 720 | 90 |
| Bockern (Kirchberg) | 36 | 830 | 110 |
| Kitzbühel | 48 | 760 | |
| Hütte (Jochberg) | 55 | 850 | 90 |
| Pass Thurn | 66 | 1270 | 420 |
| Mittersill | 76 | 790 | |
| Neukirchen | 96 | 860 | 70 |
| Krimml | 107 | 1070 | 210 |
| Hochkrimml | 115 | 1630 | 560 |
| Plattwald | 118 | 1500 | |
| Gerlospass | 119 | 1530 | 30 |
| Gerlos | 128 | 1240 | |
| Hainzenberg | 140 | 900 | |
| Zell am Ziller | 144 | 590 | |
| Untermärz (Stumm) | 155 | 550 | |
| Haselbach | 158 | 560 | 10 |
| Helfenstein | 159 | 540 | |
| Bichl (Bruckerberg) | 166 | 1040 | 500 |
| Bruckerberg | 167 | 1000 | |
| Kerschbaumersattel | 168 | 1110 | 110 |
| Reith im Alpbachtal | 174 | 640 | |
| total | 174 | | 2350 |

I followed the valley, then left its bottom at Helfenstein, climbing to Hart and further to the [Kerschbaumersattel](#). The climb was hard because of the steepness of this small road. It was already past 17 when i reached the pass. Dark clouds in the sky told me to take the next good opportunity in search of a place to stay for the night. This was in Reith im Alpbachtal.



Stage 4 (13 August 2013): Reith i.A. - Innsbruck - Landeck - Ischgl

The next stage was not meant to be the most interesting one: up along the Inn valley. It had rained, it was still cloudy and the roads were wet when i left Reith. This made the descent down to the Inn extremely dangerous because the steep road had also been mechanically grooved. These scratched roads are a pain (not only for cyclists, also for motorcyclists), but for some non understandable reason, in Austria they seem to like them. Anyway, i was lucky to come down all on the bicycle.

After my bad experience of the previous Sunday, i was obviously not eager to join the Inn cycling way and preferred to stay on the main road. This made the ride to Innsbruck one third faster. Entering Innsbruck was however a challenge, especially when mandatory cycle paths end just at a big road crossing, with no other way out than using the pedestrian crosswalk. Strange way of road engineering. Further on, luckily, my sense of orientation brought me through the city without many detours. Then i went over Zirl and Telfs. It began to rain as i was approaching Silz. I took this as an opportunity for a light snack and a drink. Twenty minutes later, the rain had receded and i could stay dry. As i was riding towards Imst, i knew that this would mean some ups and downs in the road profile. In Imst, i was able to avoid a motorhome not yielding when entering a roundabout. Apart from this, the traffic was not a big problem. Near Mils, i had to put on my rain jacket, but i could remove it in Landeck and then the weather was largely sunny. In Landeck, i also left the Inn and went towards the Paznaun valley. I rode almost up to Ischgl and stopped at a very comfortable but very affordable hotel.

| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Reith im Alpbachtal | 0 | 640 | |
| St. Gertraudi | 3 | 520 | |
| Innsbruck | 45 | 570 | 50 |
| Kranebitten | 51 | 620 | 50 |
| Martinsbühel | 54 | 590 | |
| Zirl | 58 | 630 | 40 |
| Eigenhofen | 60 | 600 | |
| Haiming | 89 | 680 | 80 |
| Ötztal | 91 | 730 | 50 |
| Löckpuit | 94 | 710 | |
| Karres | 97 | 820 | 110 |
| Brennbichl | 100 | 720 | |
| Weinberg (Imst) | 103 | 830 | 110 |
| Mils | 109 | 730 | |
| Starkenbach | 112 | 760 | 30 |
| Platte (Zams) | 114 | 740 | |
| Landeck | 121 | 780 | 40 |
| Pians | 126 | 900 | 120 |
| Trisannabrücke | 127 | 860 | |
| See | 132 | 1030 | 170 |
| Ulmicher Wald | 145 | 1290 | 260 |
| Ebene (Ischgl) | 146 | 1270 | |
| total | 146 | | 1110 |



Stage 5 (14 August 2013): Ischgl - Bielerhöhe - Feldkirch - Sargans

It was cool to start the fifth (and last) day of this trip, obviously also because it began at an altitude of almost 1300 m. I went up to Ischgl, then Mathon and Galtür. Up to Wirl, there were many hotels and guesthouses, but then only the Silvretta road climbing up the valley towards [Bielerhöhe](#). The climb was quite easy, even if steeper towards the end. I stopped at the pass for a few pictures, then went into the descent. The very first part was steep and straight, thus very fast. After the Vermunt reservoir, it was also steep, but no longer so fast because of many hairpin curves. Quite vertiginous. From Partenen down to Bludenz, in the Montafon valley, there was more traffic, tourists or locals. After Bludenz, certainly thanks to the parallel highway, the main road was relatively quite. I was coming along at a good pace and in Frastanz i joined again the road taken on the first day of this tour. After crossing Feldkirch and Liechtenstein, i came back to my starting point, Buchs. The next train to Sargans would have been almost an hour later, so i decided to ride there. Thanks to some tailwind, this took me just a bit more than half an hour. In Sargans, i took the next train to return to Zurich. Except for the very questionable Austrian cycle ways and roads, this had been a very nice tour.

| | distance (km) | altitude (m) | climbing (m) |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Ebene (Ischgl) | 0 | 1270 | |
| Aussertschafein | 11 | 1550 | 280 |
| Tschafein | 12 | 1540 | |
| Wirl | 15 | 1630 | 90 |
| Engadiner Hütte | 22 | 1870 | 240 |
| Bielerhöhe | 24 | 2040 | 170 |
| Vermuntamm | 30 | 1740 | |
| Partenen | 39 | 1050 | |
| St. Anton | 63 | 620 | |
| St. Anton | 64 | 640 | 20 |
| Bludenz | 71 | 560 | |
| Nenzing | 81 | 520 | |
| Feldkirch | 92 | 460 | |
| Tisis | 94 | 500 | 40 |
| Nendeln | 98 | 450 | |
| Nendeln | 99 | 470 | 20 |
| Äscher | 100 | 450 | |
| Forstwald | 102 | 470 | 20 |
| Schaan | 103 | 450 | |
| Buchs | 106 | 450 | |
| Sargans | 123 | 480 | 30 |
| total | 123 | | 910 |

