

Namibia

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Date: 27-apr-2006

Stage: Buitepos to Witvlei

Distance: 160km

Time: 7h 52m

GPS at destination: E 18°29'30" S 22°24'36"

Country: Namibia

Irmie, the one that has malaria, got a big surprise this morning, her husband John flew to Windhoek, took a car and drove to our camp. He was too late to get into camp as the gate was closed, so slept at the police station and surprise Irmie in the early morning when the gate opened. John came to celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary this coming Monday on the first day of the last section from Windhoek to Cape Town. We celebrated this evening already in the evening with a nice glass of South African wine that John brought with him.

Jenny and Kees are cycling together again! With a nice tail wind, Jenny was able to break her record of speed on a flat road, it went up to 37,6 km/h



according to our odometer.

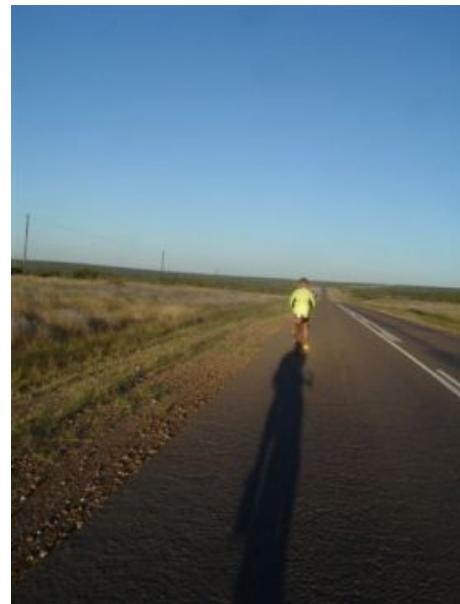
We started early in the morning, which again gave these nice shadows that we had seen some many days now!

The race ended before the town of Gobabis, but we still needed to go for a while to the campsite, so we decided to take a lunch in that town, which can best be described as a town from a Midwest American village in the mid 50ies.

When we just went back on the road together with Judy, the 4*4 (buggy) passed and in it there was a very happy Wendie, who made it across the border with the help of Randy, great news!

The tailwind continued to help us to get to camp, so we had time to stop from time to time, for instance to take a photo from a boy that was carrying his dog "because he did not wanted to walk anymore".

In Windhoek some people are leaving us, among others Christian and Madeleine. They are not going to cycle tomorrow, so one of us decided that it was time to put his bike in a strange place (see photo).



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Date: 28-apr-2006

Stage: Witvlei to Windhoek

Distance: 160km

Time: 8h 49m

GPS at destination: not registered

Country: Namibia

Loneliness, which is the best way to describe the roads we have been taken the last couple of days. Only after we passed the airport of Windhoek (40km from the city) we had mountains again. That was not exactly the moment after 5 days of cycling and more than 800km, but it at least changed the scenery. It became more interesting.

In the early morning we thought we saw an antelope, but it was too far to be sure and the light was to dim to see the animal better.

Alongside the road there was still a remainder of the old days when telephone needed wires, the birds are taking advantage of the fact that these remainders are no longer needed.

Philippe, the only Frenchman left in the tour, joined us to go to camp, as we were told that it was safer to go with at least 2 riders through town. We had a little doubt about the road for a while, but found the camp and our hotel room relatively easily and were happy that the 840km of the last 5 days were over. We are going to enjoy the 2 days rest we get here, that is certain!

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[Date: 29/30-apr-2006](#)
[Stage: Rest days Windhoek](#)
[Country: Namibia](#)

We had three priorities for the two rest days in Windhoek. First to really get rest, secondly to buy clothes for the farewell party on the 13th of May in Cape Town (as we had not anything else then cycling and sport clothes with us), and three to have some nice meals.

We succeeded to fulfill all of the 3 priorities, the last one is clear from the two pictures; Kees had to most marvelous mascarpone with fruit that he will remember always! The weather during these 2 days was strange, the mornings were cold (but we are above 1000 meter attitude here) and the afternoons gave us violent thunderstorms with rain and a significant temperature drop. We start to get worried if we have enough clothes to keep us warm till Cape Town.

Dieder, our Belgian rider, started an excellent initiative, he has asked everybody to donate photo's and offered to put it all together and give those that donated their photos a copy of the CD! During these two days a lot of progress was made during long session on the terrace of the restaurant.

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Date: 01-may-2006

Stage: Windhoek to Bush camp

Distance: 153 km

Time: 6h 53m

GPS at destination:E 17°22'51" S 23°48'47"

Country: Namibia

We decided to take the copious breakfast in the hotel first, before going off to the bush camp and enjoy the fact that the weather had improved significantly, although it was still cool in the morning the sun was out and we enjoyed the ride. The landscape was beautiful (how many times we have said that now during this trip?) and we saw monkeys, a snake and a lot of birds.

On top of that all we had a tailwind that blew us with high speeds to the Tropique of Capricorne ($23^{\circ}27'$) and into the bush camp.

Meeting people becomes less obvious; those that encounter are in a car and most are white people as well. Arriving at bush camp there was a family of half dark people that was riding on their donkey cart, and these people are more accessible and we had a nice chat with them.

You learn something new everyday, it had never occurred to us that in English there is no song to sing for a couple that have their 30th wedding anniversary as Irmie and John had, so the Dutch team (8 in total) decided to sing the Lang Zullen Ze Leven song for them.

After dinner a tire changing competition took place, Sem the youngest of the riders, won the competition.

We got two more new riders on this leg from Windhoek to the final destination Cape Town, Phil and Stan from Toronto.

And also the father of Danny, the nephew of Henry, the Godfather of the TdA; Tom. It's a family affair.



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Date: 02-may-2006

Stage: Bush camp to Bush camp

Distance: 179km

Time: 8h 35m

GPS at destination: E 17°49'20" S 25°09'40"

Country: Namibia

The roads were not that interesting this day, endless roads with about every 20km a tower for communication as a lighthouse during the day.

The last couple of days we saw a lot of crickets on the road that were crushed by the tires of the cars (and perhaps occasionally our bikes), their "friends" are using the remainders as their dinner, often while eating they get crushed as well, so the next one has a double portion!

In the evening at camp Corrie had organized a Trivia, the Dutch team ended last unfortunately.



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Date: 03-may-2006

Stage: Bush camp to Garas camp (near Keetmanshoop)

Distance: 150km

Time: 8h 15m

GPS at destination: E 18°11'23" S 26°25'07"

Country: Namibia

The road during the day was not worth mentioning, same as the day before, although we had a bit more mountains they were still long endless roads, but the campsite was special with a very nice sunset. The Garas camp is situated in an area with a lot of big stones and quiver trees, with gave it a very special atmosphere.

Big Mike had another brilliant idea, a competition to put up your tent blindfolded! Not obvious, finding your tent first and then to put it up in the short possible timeframe. It was amazing how quick the winners were able to get the tent up that way!

We have mentioned the food and their quality in previous newsletter, but we have to say that the last couple of days the food was excellent, reason? Our regular cook got a week off and the drivers took over and wanted to make a good impression. We loved it!

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Date: 04-may-2006

Stage: Garas camp to Roadhouse Canyon

Distance: 154km

Time: 8h 35m

GPS at destination: E 17°48'56" S 27°31'22"

Country: Namibia

The morning started nicely with a long downhill to Keetmanshoop, a small town with a lot of German influence. The landscape became very nice with mountains all around. We went off road, as one of the regular roads was closed and had to pass a river.

We stopped before the river and waited to see how a car came through it before deciding to go ourselves. A couple of boys were making a lot of noise, warning us that we would risk to glide on the algae's. Kees went first, in order to be able to take a photo of Jenny afterwards. Jenny indeed glided in the beginning and had to step off her bike. A 8 year old boy told her "I fucking told you so!"

Long winding and hilly roads we found the rest of the day, with a little stretch with headwind, before we arrived in camp, a beautiful spot with cold, drinks and nice food (they quickly ran out of it with so many hungry cyclists)



So we ate in camp and went for appfel struddel and icecream to the restaurant. Tomorrow we will leave later, first we like to have a full breakfast in the restaurant!

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Date: 05-may-2006

Stage: Roadhouse Canyon to Ai-Ais

Distance: 108km

Time: 7h 26m

GPS at destination: not registered

Country: Namibia

We first went to the entry of the Fish River Canyon Park, 17km from camp, to take the road to a viewpoint over the river, a stunning landscape, apparently the only canyon of that size in Africa.

The road were hilly to very steep in places, so we did not go so fast; the panoramas however were fantastic, with the quiver trees (kokerboom) making it interesting to take pictures.

The final stretch was downhill with a forceful headwind arriving at the bottom of the canyon at a place with old buildings, our campsite and hotel.

The resort is build around hot springs, which was frequently used by the tired



bikers.

In the evening we got explanation about the day of arrival in Cape Town. We almost cannot believe we are there next week!

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[Date: 06-may-2006](#)
[Stage: Restday Ai-Ais](#)
[Country: Namibia](#)

A real rest day, with a breakfast and lunch organized by Big Mike, time to work on the presentation for Cape Town (Kees is invited by his colleagues from PMI and the Cape Town group from the Orde van den Prince) and to update this report, that most likely will find it's way to you after we have reached Cape Town.

We even managed to get to talk to Priscilla, who called us on one of the public phones, and we still cannot believe ourselves that next week we are in Cape Town when we explain that over the phone to her.

In the evening the restaurant was a mess, when we entered at 18:45, some have been waiting for one hour to place an order, so we bought some sausages in the local shop and had a BBQ (braai called here) with the truck drivers and our South Africa "braai master" Jaco. Tomorrow we have a serious clime out of the canyon, so we tried to get some sleep early.

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Date: 07-may-2006

Stage: Ai-Ais to Vioolsdrift (Fiddlers Creek Camp)

Distance: 136km

Time: 9h 44m

GPS at destination: E 17°35'01" S 28°41'2504"

Country: Namibia/South Africa

We have reached the 10th country and only have 6 more days to cycle. For most of us this is unbelievable, the SA participants are exited to have entered their home country, we sympathize with them and would definitely fell the same entering Holland, still remember that feeling when we entered Holland on our trip from the Côte d'Azur to Amsterdam some years ago.

The clime to the road to Noordoewer was not too difficult; we left early and had a beautiful ride with nice panoramas as you can see.

The descent to the frontier was very nice, we had a 30km descent that was a nice compensation for the +1000mtr we climbed that day. We reached the frontier after having spend our last Namibian's during a lunch.

Seeing the sign of entering South Africa was almost emotional.

We got even more emotional watching the sunset over the Orange River from the campsite, a magnificent view indeed.

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