

Zambia

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Date: 07-apr-2006

Stage: Lilongwe to Chipata

Distance: 143 km

Time: 8h 25m

GPS at destination: E 32°39'08" S13°38'39"

Country: Malawi/Zambia

Unfortunately we had to wait for the convoy, for us leisure riders that is often delaying our departure with up to an hour and as we had to do 140+ km it is a pity that the organization cannot arrange for us to start earlier. Again a sign that this TdA is really for racers, not for leisure riders. As said before we feel like an afterthought!

The roads were a bit the same as the day before, but we found a place to eat chips alongside the road, just before passing the border to Zambia. As we wanted both to be on the picture for a change, we asked the chipmaker to take a picture from us, as you can see it needed some tries before we were both on it...



Passing the frontier was easy, took only 30 minutes and we did not have to pay a visa as we are in a group.



For the first time we saw an advertisement of Plan International, just before we arrived at the Chipata camp.



There our new tent took the first thunderstorm and survived the test. Tomorrow we like to get up really early, leave at 5:30am as we have almost 200km to pedal.

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Date: 08-apr-2006

Stage: Chipata to bush camp near Minga

Distance: 195km

Time: 11h 45m

GPS at destination: E 31°10'49" S 14°22'09"

Country: Zambia

We started 20minutes later as anticipated, but felt good about our early departure.



What was not so good was the fact that when we arrived at the lunch stop there was no bread left, the organisation had difficulty to buy bread as the local shop was only prepared to sell 2 per person and that delayed them finding enough bread.

We are again having a negative point on the food, it starts to get at us a bit, especially because we do not see

improvements promised to us early about the type of food we get, not only a lunch but also at breakfast (porridge!) and in the evening. Especially those that are vegetarian have difficulties to get the right food for the physical effort we have to do.

Somewhere on the road one of the children said: "How are u Mammi!" to Jenny. That is the way she wants to be called by our grandson Christopher in the future, it's the French way of saying grandmother. It moved her towards tears in her eyes.

We had long stretches up and down and after the afternoon stop we had to do still 50km, it was a bit too much actually, but we made it. Jenny was exhausted and decided to take the morning off tomorrow.



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Date: 09-apr-2006

Stage: Bushcamp to Luangwa river camp

Distance: 151km (Jenny 80km from lunch truck)

Time: 8h 02m

GPS at destination: E 30°12'52" S 15°00'18"

Country: Zambia

Kees started the day on his own, Jenny would take the lunch truck and start from there. Kees was catching her and Judy 25km after lunch, Jenny had cramps in her stomach; similar as Kees a couple of days before.

We saw several monkeys crossing the road, but except for those and a flattened



snake or two, no wildlife is visible here in Zambia along the road. What is also funny is that since Malawi we do not see donkeys used for transportation at all, but only carts with cows.

What we do see on the road are tourist buses, on one of them the text: "In GOD we trust" was written, may be that's the reason that they ride as devil!

Cyclist here driven on the right side of the road, against the traffic, similar to what we do in Europe when we walk on a narrow street. Sometimes confusing, but they must have good experience with this approach.

Children on the road are friendly and enthusiastic. Occasionally they beg for money or a pen. Their English is not always 100%, they ask: Give me my money!

After the finish, but before going to camp, we took a Cokestop, where we also found sausages, egg and pommes frites, we ate a lot of it!

The campsite was beautiful at the borders of the river. The owner is Dutch, lived in South Africa, but still talks Dutch and served us a homemade "kroket".

We went to bed late and tried to get to sleep on a cramped campsite. A lot of snoring and farting was audible during the night.

Big Mike is again to the hospital, this time to check why he has pain in his knee, Tobias and Jon expect blood in the wrong place, which potentially can be dangerous. Mike is unlucky, but he stays positive and definitely likes to finish in Cape Town. We hope he will be able to do so and that he gets back on the tour soon.

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Date: 10-apr-2006

Stage: Luangwa river camp to bush camp (on Jehovah conference centre)

Distance: 124km (Jenny in truck, stomach and foot problem)

Time: 7h 23m

GPS at destination: E 29°13'20" S 15°12'29"

Country: Zambia

Kees was leaving on his own for the 2nd day in a row. Jenny's stomach gave still problems after yesterday's ride. She also wanted to give her left foot a rest, although it did not prevent her from pedalling, the irritation of the skin was worrying her, and Tobias taped her foot in professionally to get it cured.

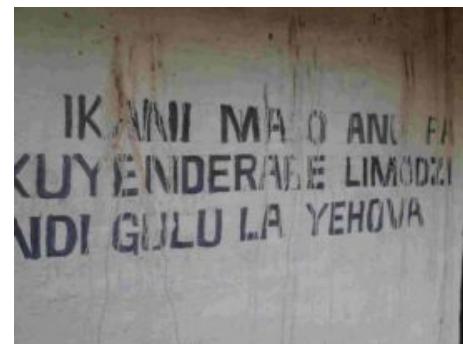
The landscape was very hilly in the beginning, before lunch we climbed more than 1000m (after another 600. Some of the descents were marvellous and as there was minimal traffic on the road, we reached speeds of over 70km/h.

Coke was difficult to get and as Kees did not had to wait for toilet stops of Jenny (!), he was flying into camp at 2:00pm, to great surprise of Jenny (and perhaps himself). She had already installed our big tent, so we only had to relax, talk and write in our dairies, until the Riders meeting was called.

Camp was at a special place, the Jehovah conference centre, we have seen several locations, both in Tanzania, Malawi and here in Zambia from Jehovah.



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Date: 11-apr-2006

Stage: Bushcamp to Lusaka

Distance: 104km

Time: 6h 15m

GPS at destination: Not taken, Lusaka

Country: Zambia

A strange noise in the early morning woke us up, a truck trying to avoid a pothole, left the road, and landed on his right side in the garden of the conference centre. Jehovah was with us, imagine he our group was waiting for the start on the road there!

The ride was easy, not too hilly and when we arrived in camp (garden of old hotel, with an empty swimming pool) we saw Big Mike back, who still have an infection, but is determined to get to Cape Town.

We received some great news from Rotterdam, Priscilla and Lucien have bought a house in Schiedam! We are going to celebrate that tonight, you can bet!



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Date: 12-apr-2006

Stage: Lusaka (restday)

Country: Zambia

Yester evening we already went to a almost un-African shopping centre, the Arcades and had a nice glass of wine in the local wine bar Rhapsody. The day after we went back to the centre, first do have a breakfast and next to do internetting and shopping. The rest of the day we took it easy, as we have to do 3 long days to Livingstone next.

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Date: 13-apr-2006

Stage: Lusaka to Bush camp

Distance: 160km

Time: 9h 17m (including 12km convoy)

GPS at destination: E 27° 36 ' 49 " N 15 ° 58 ' 33 "

Country: Zambia

Yesterday we had a real rest day in Lusaka. We went with the local bus to the shopping centre, which was a whole experience. On the bus there is someone that tries to get as many passengers as possible and he is often in direct competition with another bus. So you see 2 or 3 bus drivers trying to get a passenger in their bus, often almost pulling them in!



Our day yesterday was one of food; food to eat during the day (2 breakfasts, a hot lunch and a 3-course menu for dinner) and food we bought; our red box is more a food box than a clothes box right now.

We also had our regular 3-way telephone

call with our daughters; one calls the other via Skype and then the hotel reception. Works perfectly and this way we keep in close contact with each other using old (telephone) and new (Skype) technology. We also went to DHL again, a 2nd package with identical Visa cards was send to Dar-es- Salam and forwarded to Lusaka. Not sure why the Visa guys send 2 copies of the same card!

The departure was again in convoy, traffic was lively, but drivers were leaving us enough space. Again, it is a pity that the slow leisure riders need to wait for the convoy, we could easily have taken off 1 hour earlier, and that is a lot of daylight for 160km that we have to do today!

The road was nice, with a beautiful crossing over the river Kafue. The road started to clime a bit after a right-hand turn that we almost missed (later we heard that many made the same mistake) to a pass where Livingstone saw the river Kafue for the first time.

In camp two people of the crew, Wendy and Sem, shared an iPod of one of the riders, after a day of work.

Tomorrow will be a long day, so we will try to leave at 6 o'clock latest, we'll see!

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Date: 14-apr-2006

Stage: Bush to bush camp

Distance: 176km

Time: 10h 08m

GPS at destination: E 26°44'03" S 16°59'34"
Country: Zambia

We made it! Leaving at 6 that is. The sun just came up when we did our first 10kms, a beautiful way to start the day. The day itself was mainly a day of making enough progress to try to be in camp around 4pm, and we were successful in doing that. The road was easy to ride, with some minor elevation and from time to time a little village for a coke stop. Some of us transform these stops into a sleep stop!



Once in a while there are police controls on the road, normally we can just go on, but today we were stopped because our tires needed to be sprayed, there seems to be foot and mouth disease here, that's why.

As it was Good Friday today we saw a procession in Choma. A cross was carried over the street and brought to a church with many people following, only a few were singing unfortunately.

We arrived at bush camp, or should we saw grass camp; the grass was higher as most of our tents and the grass is not the same as in Europe, it is hard and difficult to bend.

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Date: 15-apr-2006
Stage: Bush camp to Livingstone
Distance: 160 km
Time: 9h 06m
GPS at destination: E25 ° 52' 13" S 17 ° 52 ' 49 "

Country: Zambia

We started early again, which gives these nice long shadows in front of us, as the road goes east/west to Livingstone.

All racers and some leisure riders did a time trial, but we decided just to take it easy (as always!)

We saw many dead snakes on the road the last couple of days, but for once we had a living snake in front of our bike. Kees almost ran over it! The snake jumped up, just in front of the front tire, fortunately he did not try to bite the tire or Kees' foot!

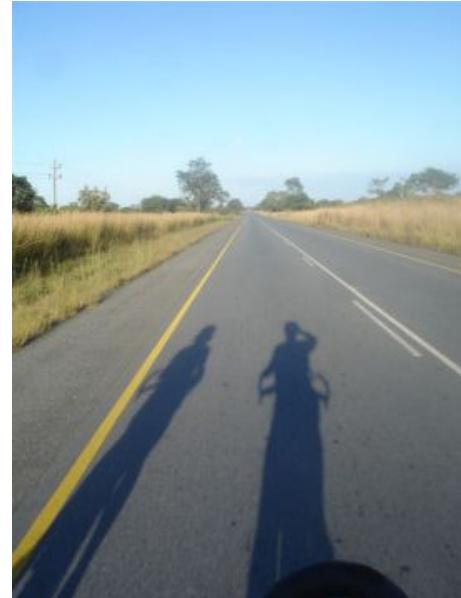
A bit further we heard music, alongside the road a flutist was playing a song. When we stopped to listen and asked if he could play a song for us. For a little bit of Kwachas he was prepared to do so.

Arriving in Livingstone we saw the mist of the Victoria Falls, that we plan to visit on one of the two days that we have rest.

Just before arriving a minibus, fortunately not to serious, hit Jenny but we were not pleased to say the least. The campsite is wonderful (Livingstone Safari Park) and the owner comes from Friesland (the province where Jenny is born). So she tried to practice her Frisian, but a lot of it is a bit rusty after so many years in France and now 3 months on the road speaking mainly English.

Some people are leaving the tour here, others will join before we leave on Tuesday.

First of all Isabelle and her boyfriend



Richard (who joined in Lilongwe) and also the friend of Edwina, the rider that did the 2004 tour and liked it so much that she wants to do the last part again.

In Lilongwe we also were joined by Sandy, who did the 2003 (the first one) tour and also liked it so much that she does the last part again (although the route in 2003 was different from Lilongwe to Cape Town, they went via Zimbabwe and Mozambique) . Her main objective she told us is to loose weight, she seemed to have lost 40 pounds in 2003 and want do that again!

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[Date: 16-apr-2006](#)

Stage: Rest day Livingstone

Country: Zambia

We went to town to do some shopping. Livingstone is an Americanlike town, one long wide street with shop etc. on both sides. You almost expect to see some cowboys on horseback riding through the streets.

After shopping we sat by the tent, Jenny to do a little bit of washing (we prefer to wash the spandex ourselves) and writing. Kees prepared his speeches for Cape Town on Rob pc, who did not needed it, as he was rafting with the others.

Some prepared their own food, we took a nice bbq-ed fish from the local restaurant here.

Tomorrow we plan to be more active and go to the falls.

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Date: 17-apr-2006

Stage: Rest day Livingstone

Country: Zambia

We have seen the Victoria Falls, are impressed and also got soaking wet! It is difficult to describe the scene; we'll try, but hope that our pictures will complement our words.

Driving in the direction of the falls you see the clouds of fine mist hanging over the trees like the fumes of a water tower from a nuclear power plant.

Then you start hearing a thundering rumbling that gets louder and louder, and after entering the park it's like you get into a jungle; all trees are dripping



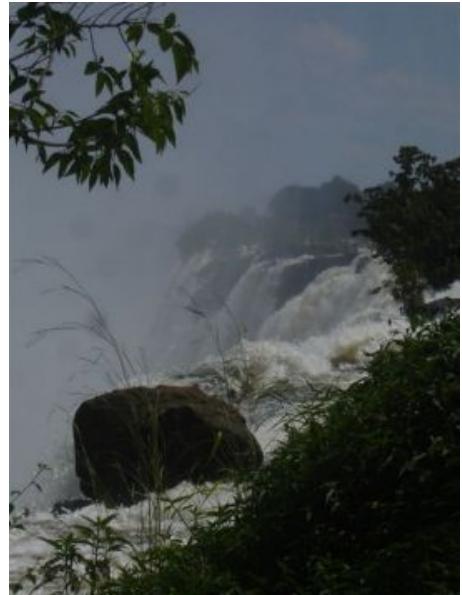
water and alongside the footpaths the ground is like a swamp with small rivers of water.

The clothes of the tourists are wet, so although we took our yellow cycle raincoat with us, we also hired a poncho to try to keep us dry. That was a good decision, because by getting closer to the falls, you are walking in a multi-million shower and there is no way to turn it off!

The footpath first goes opposite the falls, almost at the same height as where the water falls over the cliff and later descends to a small bridge that brings you directly into the mist of water with the thundering sound making it almost impossible to speak to each other. You need to cross this bridge twice, as it goes to a kind of island, from which you have a view on the part of the falls that lies in Zimbabwe, as well as to the bridge that goes over the river from Zambia to Zimbabwe. After this impressive walk opposite and almost through the falls, we walked alongside the river upstream, and came within 5 meters from where the water falls over the cliff, from where we called our daughters to let them hear the thundering sound of the falling water.

We completed our visit by having a nice lunch with wine on the terrace of the nearby Zambezi Sun hotel. Dr. David Livingstone must have had a similar experience in 1855 as we, but he was the only white man and we were with hundreds and his lunch was without doubt less luxurious than ours!

Back at the campsite we completed this highly successful day with taking it easy and having a good conversation with the Frisian owner of the Livingstone Safari



(By Rob van der Valk)



(By Rob van der Valk)

camp, Johannes, who is taking care of 10 African children besides running the camp. A courageous man indeed!

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