

BIG's News Letter - 2010.04

English Version

Edito: Dreamer

Dreamer, you're nothing but a dreamer....so the song goes and it is indeed the time of the year to dream rather than to be active. The night is longer now than the day too. So you have more time to dream. To dream of steep roads (or do you get night mares of these?) and beautiful Alpine passes going higher and higher when you cycle from one hairpin to another. Here is the last newsletter of this year with enough reading material to ignite your dreams. And the newsletter team hopes that you can realize your BIG dreams next year. For now, dream and next year we will wake you up with a new newsletter so you can start to realize your dreams..

1. TOP5 BIG news

TOP 1: New decisions

Quite some decisions have been taken lately and we take the chance to update you on these if you have for some reason missed out on these decisions:

1. We have decided that until 2015, no changes will be made in our Superlist.
During this period we will create a "group of analysts" who will carry out a deep analysis of Europe during these 5 years on the basis of the 5 main principles, while following the "BIG method" (see <http://bigascensions.free.fr/big-method.htm> for more details) which already proved to be reliable and this group will publish in 2015 the recasting of the Superlist.
Here are the 5 main principles used in the "BIG method":
1st principle: The BIGs must be dispatched in the most possible different mountainous regions
2nd principle: Some BIGs must help to discover the natural and cultural tourism
3rd principle: Some BIGs must be sportive climbs but the overview of the BIGs must show an average balance of difficulty
4th principle: Some BIGs must help to discover the main climbs included in the cycling history.
5th principle: The BIGs must be mainly surfaced roads, giving some place to gravelled roads only when they give an obvious additional interest.
2. We have decided to support national challenges.
National challenges are already being created for Hungary, Rumania, Czech Republic and Ukraine.
3. We have decided to offload the Judges by using a filter group and expert group.
The "filter group" will filter the requests for single changes during the 5 years as mentioned above and will answer the applicants in case of not-admissibility, will distinguish the practical cases without any need of votes and those to subject to the Judges vote of the List.

TOP 2 Clothes

We have a new article in our BIG clothes offering. It's a knee pant or pirate pant as it is sometimes also referred to:

The complete range of BIG clothes that can be bought can be found on: <http://big-shopping.over-blog.com/> Look at the left column where two diaporama under a menu called "album photos" give you a good idea about the clothes available, looking at members wearing these clothes and looking at mannequins with these clothes.

The products which we propose you are identical to those used by the professional team Bouygues Telecom for the season 2008. It proves the quality of these shirts and cycling shorts. We rely on the company of THEVENETNET



The Pirat pants or
seen from the front



knee pants
and the back.

As an extra we temporarily give away a rucksack when you buy BIG clothes (see also <http://www.challenge-big.eu/en/news/550>) So if you did not yet know what to ask for **Christmas** then here is an idea!

TOP 3: Iron BIG

The Iron BIG was an unexpected success. So if have not read it I will state it here again: We decided to keep the Iron BIG challenge alive for the coming years! That's good news if you had plans to become a Godfather or Godmother and did not get round to that in 2010! You can dream now about doing it in 2011☺☺☺.







Plural Godfathers:

Again we have Godfathers who have taken on an additional BIG to be Godfather of.

Our Romanian member and manager, **Gheorghe** (called Gigi) **Nicodin**, climbed 25 times in 6 months time the highest Romanian pass,: Pasul Balea or Transfagaras Road (the rules request 1 year maximum) after he already became Godfather of the Pasul Bran in the beginning of the year.

And we have **Axel Jansen** first cycled the Belgian "Côte de Wanne" in good company with Jean-Marie Pique. But now Axel Jansen succeeded in becoming the first double Iron BIG in two different countries with the addition of the French BIG 213: Mont Malgré-Tout in Revin (also called Mont Tranet). Congratulations!

Axel and Gigi have become part of the small group of Double Godfathers. But we also have **Triple Godfathers** even!! Here they are:

- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Giordano Castagnoli: |  | Bocca Trabária | & | Olivier Hochuli |  | Le Chasseral |
| |  | Monte Nerone | | |  | Vue des Alpes |
| |  | Santuario della Verna | | |  | Col de l'Aiguillon |

Special Godfathers

And we have seen **Ard Oostra**, our wellknown pioneer member and sticker's manager of Switzerland, who has not only become Godfather of BIG 528: Col du Marchairuz in Switzerland on 19th of November by cycling it 25 times but who also climbed 25 new BIGs in France, Spain and Portugal. Good for him that that the weather helped him a little and good for us that he has uploaded 180 pictures of these BIGs so we can enjoy and dream of new BIGs for next year. Look at the pictures for BIGs:

1. <http://www.challenge-big.eu/en/big/photos/319>
2. <http://www.challenge-big.eu/en/big/photos/362>
3. <http://www.challenge-big.eu/en/big/photos/429>
4. <http://www.challenge-big.eu/en/big/photos/430>
5. <http://www.challenge-big.eu/en/big/photos/448>
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24. <http://www.challenge-big.eu/en/big/photos/517>
25. <http://www.challenge-big.eu/en/big/photos/518>



TOP 4: A few new experiences for our members in 2011

There are some cycling events, BIG and none-BIG, that we want to bring to your attention:

- BIG related cycling events.
Note that I recommend once again these meetings to you as it is a **great way to get to know other BIG members** and share your passion for uphill cycling and BIG with them:
 - 10th Official BIG meeting on Corsica (F).
4 days of cycling with 10 BIGs! For details look at:
<http://bigascensions.free.fr/rendezvous/corsica/corsica.htm>
 - The 3rd Crossroad in the Provence region (F)
6 days of cycling to gain 12 BIGs (note that this program is not finalized yet) For details look at: <http://bigascensions.free.fr/rendezvous/cotdazlig2011/cotdazlig2011.htm>
- Non BIG related cycling events:
 - Viking tour 2011
A fantastic 7-day tour through the beautiful country of Norway with 9 BIGs in the tour (BIG 17-19 and BIG 21-26). For details and pictures you can go to: <http://www.vikingtour.no/>. Some BIG members have already subscribed. From Germany Anja von Heydebreck, Heiko Linnert, Ulla Hoppe and Dittmar Feist, Dutch members like Jip Coolen and Ingmar De Weijer and recently also our Double Iron BIG Axel Jansen from Belgium subscribed.
 - Nerone Challenge
Well, it might go a bit too far to say that it is not BIG related as the Monte Nerone is a BIG (Nr. 795 and the Nerone Challenge is organised by one of our most active members and Triple Godfather: Gisordano Castagnoli. But is an event not organised by BIG. It's a nice challenge though to cycle up Monte Nerone from 3 sides in one day. For details look at: <http://www.montenerone.it/2010/02/15/il-brevetto-di-monte-nerone-cicloturismo-e-avventura-marchigiana.html>
Or send and email to Giordano Castagnoli: giordano.eekhoorn@libero.it

- Crocodile Trophy
Our pioneer member, Kemmelberg Godfather and meeting organizer Marc Desender will take part in the Crocodile Trophy the longest and toughest MTB race in the world.. You can read all about it on: <http://www.ikwordvijftig.tk/> First choose Nederlands or Français then choose “Crocodile Trophy”.

TOP 5: BIGs included in the great professional tours

Like already stated in the previous newsletter, we are glad to see that our BIGs are part of mediatic races. We can add to the list the BIGs in the Tour de France and Giro d'Italia of 2011:

- **Tour de France:**
 - 4th stage: BIG 207: Mûr-de-Bretagne (arrival)
 - 5th stage: BIG 209: Cap Fréhel (arrival)
 - 8th stage: BIG 247: Col de la Croix-Saint-Robert
 - 8th stage: BIG 255: Pas de Peyrol(Puy-Mary)
 - 12th stage: BIG 341: Col du Tourmalet
BIG 338: Luz-Ardiden (arrival)
 - 13th stage: BIG 334: Col d'Aubisque
 - 14th stage: BIG 351: Col de Portet d'Aspet
BIG 353: Col d'Agnès
BIG 346: Plateau de Beille (arrival)
 - 18th stage: BIG 683: Colle dell' Agnello
BIG 294: Col d'Izoard
BIG 291: Col du Galibier (arrival, first time, Queens stage)
 - 19th stage: BIG 291: Col du Galibier
BIG 290: l'Alpe-d'Huez (arrival)
 - 20th stage: BIG 289: Chamrousse (the first part in the individual time-trial)
- **Giro d'Italia:**
 - 3rd stage: BIG 757: Passo del Ghiffi (Passo dello Bocco)
 - 4th stage: BIG 792: Monte Taburno
BIG 793: Monte Vergine (arrival)
 - 9th stage: BIG 819: Etna (2 times including the arrival)
 - 13th stage: BIG 625: Hochtort (more precisely 100m lower at a Großglockner car-park)
 - 14th stage: BIG 720: Monte Zoncolan (arrival)
 - 15th stage: BIG 725: Piancavallo
BIG 718: Forcella Cibiana
BIG 716: Passo di Giau
BIG 714: Passo di Fedaia
BIG 708: Torri del Vajolet (rifugio Gardeccia – arrival – first time)
 - 19th stage: BIG 733: Il Mottarone
 - 20th stage: BIG 680: Colle delle Finestre (with the gravelled section)

Though Media does not seem to be the most interesting aspect of a BIG. The result of a poll in the Forum (<http://big-forum.forumsmotion.com/>) showed that 51% finds the Touristic aspect (i.e. scenery) the most important aspect followed by 40% for the Sport aspect (i.e. difficulty) and last is the Mediatic aspect (i.e. well known climbs, cycling history) with only 8%.

For contributing members one can find the scores for a BIG for the Mediatic and Touristic aspects for a BIG in the “Score” tab.

The Mediatic score is determined as follows:

- If a climb has been included in 1 of the 3 great tours or in a classical races (Protour), score > 5 ; if not score < 5
- If this climb was included from 1 to 5 times: +1; from 6 to 10 times: +2; from 11 to 15 times: +3; from 16 to 20 times: +4 and more than 20 times: +5.

For example, climb X 13 times in Amstel Gold Race = 5 + 2 = 7 points.

climb Y 28 times in Giro d'Italia = 5 + 5 = 10 points

- If it's another climb, not included in the great tours or classical races, it's 1 point if one appearance in a professional race of the calendar ; 2 and 3 points are reserved to few or many appearances in race 2.x and 3 and 4 for few or many appearances in races 1.x (higher level for the UCI).

Other interesting news items

a) Money, Money, Money

We bring to your attention that in case you are a contributing member that it is before the **15th of January** that the contribution has to be paid in order to keep access to the information that your are used to have access too.

For non contributing members we ask kindly to become contributing members as it is just 5 Euros per year. Give it a try!

b) Review 2011

Are you interested to get your cycling story published? This is possible via the BIG's Review. Have a look at the 2010 Review that you can read on: http://danielgobert.free.fr/2010/Revue_2010.pdf. For contributing members who pay 15 Euro we also send out a paper copy. Nice to sit with in your favourite chair so you can read it comfortably and dream away...

So look back and share your experiences on the bike with us. Or look forward to the next season and tell us about your cycling plans for 2011.

The paper version of the Review 2011 will appear in March of 2011 and contains as usual several rankings, experiences and news about BIG-activities. The softcopy will become available via our web pages (<http://www.challenge-big.eu/en/page/reviews>) half a year later.

Please make sure that we receive your data before 15 januari 2011.

Send your article only in MS-Word and your pictures in JPEG-format to: mm.kool@quicknet.nl

Hope to hear from you soon,

Martin Kool

c) GPS Masterfile

Our GPS manager Marnix Van Hecke has a GPS file (GDB format) with all the feets and tops of the BIGs available. You can load it in you GPS and use it to find the BIGs more easily. If you are interested in this file and you are a contributing member then you can request this file by sending an email to Marnix: marnix.van.hecke@telenet.be

d) The top of the classements changes

After almost 25 years the top of the BIG classement for members is no longer purely Belgium. Wim van Els has managed to make his way into the top 3. A fantastic achievement after his record year in 2009 where he passed the magical limit of 500 BIGs he has now made the move by cycling 121 BIGs this year into the top 3. But how long will he be able to stay there?

Wim van Els is also the number 3 in the 2010 ranking where Rob Bosdijk is the current number 1 with 151 BIGs and Martin Taylor is threatening his position, all in good spirit of course, as he has cycled 149 BIGs this year. Who will be the 2010 number 1?

And this year we see for the first time also a new BIG on the number one position for most cycled BIG of the year. This year it was not Col du Galibier but l'Alpe d'Huez that was visited the most often.

About a BIG: LuxemBIG

They are thirteen BIGs in Luxemburg. This country has the biggest density of BIGs per km² (excluding Republic of San Marino and the Principality of Andorra).

I had the honor to "stick" these 13 bigs and I appreciated them all: the magnificent sights on Clervaux, foot of Munshausen (138), on Esch-sur-sûre, foot of Eschorf (142), on the castle of Bourscheid (140), the gorges du Loup (145), the vertiginous descent of Biigerkräiz (149) and the garden of Mont Saint Jean (150). I also keep a touched memory of the wind turbines of Pafebiërg (148) which I attacked from Born, straight in the slope, finishing in a not passable path: certainly the stiffest part of my trip.



But I had to choose one of them for to you. Then I chose Mont Saint Nicolas (N 139). Not for the ascent which is not the most beautiful but for its foot: the magnificent city of Vianden and for the descent I rode.

Vianden is surmounted by the majestic silhouette of the castle of the counts of Vianden which dates XIth century. At its foot, some narrow medieval streets lead you along the river Our which crosses the flowered Commune:



Finally we cannot evoke the city of Vianden without speaking about Victor Hugo who was exiled by Napoleon " the small " then expelled from Belgium in 1871 and fell in love with the city and made his possible to become it known.

The arrival on Mont Saint Nicolas is a curiosity: we wonder what hides this protected height. You have to climb some steps to discover a magnificent lake which feeds the main electric installation of the country.

In the descent, I followed a road sign "point of view". I believed I will deviate slightly from the road but I started a terrible slope which lead me to Bivels in the valley of Our river. In other direction, it is certainly the most difficult ascent of this Big. I did not however regret my choice: the point of view, discovered by Victor Hugo was magnificent, the landscapes over the Our valley and the return on the castle of Vianden were splendid.



Luxembourg is a beautiful country for riding, thus it sounds normal that it is producing again famous champions.

François Candau

The BIG is on line:



Frederic Rafols: 125 BIGS of Spain and Andorra. 27 years climbing BIGS

(This is an extract of a longer article published in catalan language in the blog of Frederic Rafols <http://bici.blogcindario.com/> with lots of pictures and the description of all the climbs)

October 9th 2010, summit of **Orzanzurieta, Navarra, above Ibañeta**, at 1563 m height, I have achieved a new step in the conquest of the highest climbs.

After a hard fight and a long sprint that lasted almost one year I have just advanced the belgian **Eric Lucas** and the dutch **Wim van Els**, leaders of zone 6 of the challenge Big, and I get the small honour of being the first to complete the climbing of all 125 BIGs of Spain and Andorra. Further down in the standings have been illustrious figures of cycling like Mario Ruiz or former pro rider Eduardo Chozas. In this struggle the most interested people are of small countries.

To complete the Bigs of these two countries after 27 years means to have reached 125 culminant points up on two wheels, two pedals and a chain. Riding from the flat and the valleys to link the highest mountains or to cross the most splendid crests, dominating the most charismatic points, enjoying the nicest ones. 125 corners normally interesting and beautiful, hard and difficult, often lonely places and magnificent viewpoints, 125 cols or climbs, often through deserted and precarious roads with worn pavement, 125 histories or adventures, dawns and sunsets, hours that finish quickly and days with missing hours, dozens of unexpected situations, heavy rain, thunder and lightning, thousands of feelings and experiences. More or less as anyone that practice cicloturism.

A goal achieved, a step to reach many more. Just a question of time and health.

Unknowingly, not even sensing that I would spend the most of my free hours on a bike, at that time not even the list of BIGs was created, an autumn of 1983 three mates planned an excursion to Montserrat from Vilanova with a stop in the middle, 75 kilometers, a huge amount of them for us, who had never exceeded 50 km. This way, I got my first BIG, ignoring what a BIG was and before the very concept began to exist.



I have climbed Montserrat more than 30 times, most of them coming from Vilanova, some of them behind better riders than me, some others slowly accompanying new ones, one time with my younger son, some times in cicloturism rides or giving it all in the last stage of Volta Cicloturista al Cor de Catalunya. The penultimate time precisely to mark the 25th anniversary of the creation of the list and last in the Mountain Bike for paths from Vilanova... All this makes Montserrat my Big par excellence, the most traditional and most repeated.



Afterwards, next year I climbed **Envalira**, the roof of the Pyrenees, and in 1985 la **Bonaigua**, eth **Portilhó**, in 1986 **Vallter-2000**. **Rasos de Peguera** would come in 1987 and so slowly, looking for new horizons, new challenges, new adventures.



Those were years of friction changes , pedal clips, great cycling caps already forgotten boiled swollen feet, maximum gears 42 x 24, very, very bad roads with gravel, impressive bonks, many legends about miraculous products, years when the "good riders" went with tubular and joked about tire levers, sandwich wrapped in newspaper... Another time, or rather, another era.

(...)

And, for the moment, we have arrived here.

Translation from Catalan by Claudio MONTEFUSCO

Conclusion:

It's the end of this newsletter and the end of the year. Not only time to dream but also to look back. Some newsletter team members wonder if the effort we put in the newsletters is worth it. It's indeed for the team good to know if the newsletters are indeed read. So I ask you to send a mail just to let us know if you read the newsletter and if you think it is good to have these newsletters.

So I invite you all to send a mail to secretary@challenge-big.eu. Just put in the header: "Newsletter: Yes" or "Newsletter: No". Thank you on behalf of the newsletter team.

Regards, the newsletters team:

***Enrico ALBERINI
François CANDAU
Gerd DAMEN
Helmuth DEKKERS
Jean GANGOLF
Joël GANGOLF
Daniel GOBERT
Claudio MONTEFUSCO
Luc OTEMAN***