

## **Botswana**

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[Date: 18-apr-2006](#)

[Stage: Livingstone to Kasane](#)

[Distance: 82km](#)

[Time: 4h 40 m](#)

[GPS at destination: E25°10'56" S17°47'09"](#)

[Country: Zambia/Botswana](#)

An early breakfast with Johannes and an early start of the trip to Botswana through the Mosi-Os-Tunya National Park started our last day in Zambia.

We saw giraffes for the first times and also a couple of baboons.

The crossing of the Zambezi river on the ferryboat was a bit chaotic. We first were not allowed to go on the ferry with our bikes, but when one of us bought a ticket all the others could get on as well. The ferry lands in Botswana, on the small piece of land that touches the river, 100 meters left is Zimbabwe, 100 meters right Namibia. Getting our visa was easy, our bikes needed to go through a basin of water with products to prevent mouth and foot disease; Botswana is



protecting their cattle!

Alongside the road plenty of trucks are waiting to get across the border, it takes them 2 to 3 days to do so.

We arrived early in camp and with almost all the bikers, we went on a safari on a boat to see wildlife and a beautiful sunset over the river.

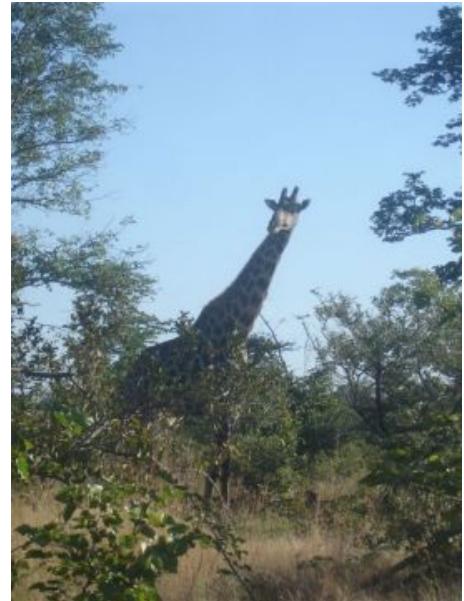
Let us introduce a couple of riders that did their first day of the TdA:

Jenny is no longer the eldest woman in the group, Ayala is, the grandmother of Sem (the youngest rider, 19 year). From the USA Vanessa, Michelle and Tom joined us.

There are 2 Dutchies, Willem, who rides the bike and his wife Olga who rides the truck.

Dirk from Germany replaces Sven in the Siemens team, and that completes the introduction of the "new fish", as those that started in Cairo likes to call them.

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## Travel journal

Gepubliceerd: vrijdag 10 mei 2019 11:40  
Geschreven door Kees Vonk

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Date: 19-apr-2006  
Stage: Kasana to bush camp  
Distance: 160 km  
Time: 9h 34m  
GPS at destination: E29°40'52" S19°00'04"  
Country: Botswana

Randy warned us, the coming 4 days we could have headwind and see wildlife. Headwind we got, and as the landscape is very flat towards Nata, there is no escape from it.

So some riders decided to take parts of the day by truck, but we drove all the kms and got rewarded with our first elephant in Botswana.



In the bush camp, Big Mike arranged ice-cream, his initiative was greatly appreciated, we swallowed 30 liters between us!

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**Date: 20-apr-2006**

**Stage: Bush camp to Nata (Nata Lodge on road to Francistown)**

**Distance: 157km**

**Time: 8h 28m**

**GPS at destination: E 26°16'06" S 20°13'30"**

**Country: Botswana**

Making kilometres on long straight roads was the main topic today, with one elephant just before lunch and a nice camp at the Nata Lodge, worth the 9km detour we had to make.

Lyle surprised Christa and us with a birthday cake with candles, before we went to the tent to get some sleep to be fit for the long stretch tomorrow.

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**Date: 21-apr-2006**

**Stage: Nata to Bush camp**

**Distance: 171km**

**Time: 9h 15m**

**GPS at destination: E24°40'57" S20°14'23"**

**Country: Botswana**

In the morning we saw a lot of water alongside the road from Nata to Maun.

We saw two beautiful birds, black and white, someone told me that they are called sacred kiwi's but honestly, we are not birdwatchers, so we are not sure about that. No other wild animals were seen this day, except numerous dead snakes as a result of the traffic. A bit surprising we were about the lack of wild animals; we passed through two national parks!

Today we had just a bit of headwind, but mostly from the side and sometimes even tailwind. So the long distance (we needed to go so far as we could not to stay in the park overnight), was relatively easily conquered.

The traffic is very limited, occasionally we see a car, sometimes a truck and seldom a bus. Most of the cars are 4x4 and have South African (ZA) number plates; many South Africans are taking their holiday here or are traveling through Botswana to go to for instance the Victoria Falls in Zambia.

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**Date: 22-apr-2006**

**Stage: Bush camp to Maun**

**Distance: 153km**

**Time: 10h 00m <±>**

**GPS at destination: E 23°28'38" S19°57'11"**

**Country: Botswana**

The morning in the bush camp started with nice surprises for Kees, who celebrated his 60th birthday today. He got two birthday cards from his daughters, son in

laws and grandson. One card saying that the children will give him a puppy when he's back home! Jenny also wrote a nice poem and decorated Kees' bicycle with a red and a green balloon. As an old sailor he fastened the green balloon on the right side, could not find a place on the left for the red, so put it on his number plate! (For those wondering what this is all about, ships have a green light on the right and a red on the left...)

The road was less interesting as yesterday, the only highlights of the day were kind of negative. First the electric fence that runs across Botswana for the reasons explained earlier (mouth and foot disease), it's an ugly thing to look at and from an ecological point of few has some drawbacks. Animals can no longer freely walk the tracks that they have taken for centuries and long before man came on earth.

The next event was related to a wheel from the International Truck. It came off! All bolts broke as perhaps they were not well fastened. The Mercedes had to come to rescue, they welded all bolts to get the International to camp! Monday the final solution needs to be put into place, but at least all cyclist who had their red boxes in the International could get their tent and clothes.

Of the next two events one could have had a dramatic outcome, Irish Paul was warned (he left before sunrise) by a car that 15 wild dogs were on the road and he hitchhiked on a pickup to get past it. Jimmy was unaware of this, saw them, got scared and turned around, but the dogs started to follow him. He finally saw another rider and together they managed to get past the dogs by using a truck that went in their directions as a "shield". More riders saw the dogs, but



thought that they were "normal" dogs.

The last event was unfortunate, Catharine, while taking a picture of her fellow cyclist, did not see a pot hole, fell of her bike and broke her left elbow. She needs to go to Cape Town to get an operation. This way she can at least be with us in Cape Town at the Farewell Party. We hope that plan will work out, it is sad to loose a rider who started in Cairo so close to the finish!

The very last event was very fortunate! Jenny gave Kees a big, big surprise party when we arrived in camp, all riders were waiting for Kees to arrive, and we had a nice party organized by Jenny with the help of Rita, Madeleine, Huberte and Big Mike. The pictures from this event might come later, Kees forgot to take them as he was enjoying the moment. The evening was even more perfect. We took a dinner together with Rob, Martin, Freek, Geert-Jan and Dieter in the hotel where their was a performance of dancers of the Qungh tribe who live in the northern part of the Kalahari Desert. A 60th birthday to never forget!

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(By Rob van der Valk)



(By Rob van der Valk)

Date: 23-apr-2006  
Stage: Restday Maun  
Country: Botswana

We will write more about this day in our next report as this Newsletter had to go out in the morning before we enjoyed the day. But we can already say that we stayed in a superb chalet on the campground. With 2 bedrooms we invited Geert-Jan to sleep in a real bed for two nights, and a lovely stay at the hotel, where in the afternoon we plan to empty a bottle of champagne that Kees got a birthday present from the van der Valks.

P.S. After all we did not send the report, as the afternoon was taken up by another event or actually a surprise. We were invited to join the van der Valks to make a 1 hour flight over the Okavango Delta, north of 8aun! Once we came back and had celebrated the flight with the bottle of champagne, the Internet facilities were closed (on top of that it was a Sunday).

The flight was superb, we got a good impression of the Delta with all the rivers flowing into it; and saw plenty of animals, dozens of elephants, giraffes, and we think we saw lions as well.

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## Travel journal

Gepubliceerd: vrijdag 10 mei 2019 11:40  
Geschreven door Kees Vonk

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Date: 24-apr-2006  
Stage: Maun to bush camp  
Distance: 158km (Kees alone, Jenny in truck)  
Time: 8h 10m  
GPS at destination: E 22°27'16" S 20°49'04"  
Country: Botswana

How comfortable it is to wake up in a

real bed, taking a hot shower and shave, not having to worry about the tent and take a real breakfast with toast, scrambled eggs and cornflakes with milk!



The road was long and empty, the only wild animals were some birds. We believe we saw a marabou.

The most interesting sign was the sign saying that we are on the right way to Namibia and South Africa.

Jenny did not ride the bike, her neck was hurting too much, so she decided to take the truck, drive to camp and take a rest there.



She is less fortunate than Irmie, she has been diagnosed with malaria and cannot ride her bike for some time. We hope she will be able to cycle the last section into Cape Town.



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Date: 25-apr-2006

Stage: Bush camp to Ghanzi

Distance: 153km (Kees alone, Jenny in truck)

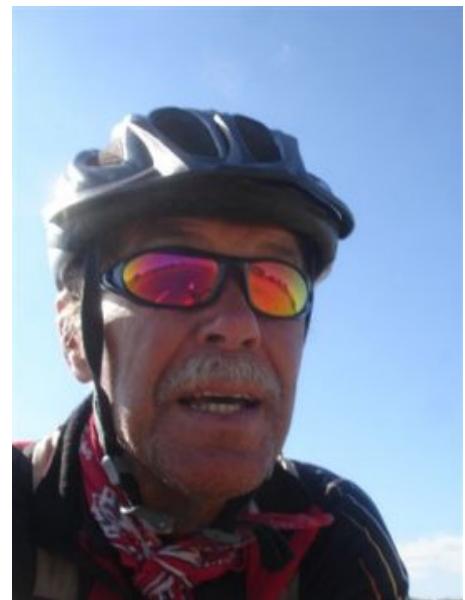
Time: 6h 44m

GPS at destination: E 21°38'57" S 21°43'23"

Country: Botswana

Jenny had a difficult night with a lot of pain on her neck and decided to take it easy and go into the truck, so Kees was a "bachelor" again.

Kees started together with Corrie, but he was going to fast early in the morning; caught up with Paul for a while, but saw his opportunity when Martin and Rob passed and sprinted to get into their wheel and cruised with them till lunch. After lunch Kees drove together with Big Mike for an hour, and afterwards with Martin till Ghanzi, where the Spar was the first Coke stop on the road. Internet facilities were down there, so we pushed on to the Khawa lodge, where Jenny was surprised to see Kees that early.



The only wildlife experience today were two donkeys who ran in front of us for a kilometer, went to the side when we passed and followed us after that.

In the morning Kees and Paul were chased by a dog, so Kees could demonstrate his Dazzer again, it still works!

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**Date: 26-apr-2006**

**Stage: Ghanzi to border Namibia**

**Distance: 210km (Kees, Jenny 123km from lunch truck)**

**Time: 9h 02m**

**GPS at destination: E 19°59'23" S 22°16'57"**

**Country: Botswana/Namibia**

The morning had two surprises, first there were omelet's, prepared by Big Mike and Wendie; and there was mist. Kees started alone, Jenny felt that +200km was perhaps too much for her neck. She planned to start at lunch, after ±80km.

Kees start just after 6 o'clock, leaving as the first cyclist on the road. There was perhaps 150m of visibility, so when a car came from behind you needed to take extra care, but fortunately there were very few cars on the road.

After 2 hours the 3 van der Valks joined and the speed went up to 30km/h. When another group overtook the 4, we went even up to 35km/h. It was good that that was just before lunch, that speed on our bikes is a bit too much!

Kees's goal was to try to catch up with



Jenny before the border and he just made that! At the afternoon stop at 150km he was told that Jenny left 15-20 minutes before, he tried hard but could not find her for a long time, just 10 km before the border he was told that she left a Coke stop 5 minutes before and that motivated enough to try to catch her, 5 meters (YES) before the finish flag he overtook her and needless to say that both were very happy, especially Kees!

Wendie was not so happy (he is from Ethiopia and is with us since the border of that country many weeks ago), he was not allowed to get into Namibia as he had no visa and could not get one at the border. Randy managed to get him to camp for the night, but it is not sure at all if he will be able to go to Cape Town with us.



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