

Velo Teifi Cycling Club

Tour of France 2009

The Chairman's Diary

(Le journal intime du Chairman)

Saturday 18th July 2009

Day 2. Ou est le chalet, s'il vous plait?

So we're in Bourg St. Maurice. *Les Echines? Ou est Les Echines?* Madam Tom Tom – if you would be so kind. Oh, it's up there a bit...

One mile later.

It can't be much further. Or higher.

Another mile passes.

Seriously. How much further? How much higher? People are beginning to glare at me. "Come on Team! Are we having fun or what?" I shout to a scowling VTCC posse/gang/furious mob.

Three miles.

Just tilt your head back; the nose bleed will soon stop. It's just around the corner kids.

Four point two miles from downtown Bourg St. Maurice and 500metres of climbing later we arrive at *notre chalet*. Blimey. Nipping out for a pint will be challenging. We exit our space capsules and make our way to the entrance; someone ties Lynn's foot to one of the moon-buggies to prevent the reduced atmospheric effect lifting her away.

Still, the views from our new home are stunning...





All this scenery and still the muttering mob are looking at me... Look guys, the air's good for you (altitude training), the ride up each day will make you stronger and the down-hill will hone your descending skills. They all make a move towards me, seemingly wanting to shake my... neck. I beat a hasty retreat to find the housekeeper and gain access to the Space Station.

I'm told Madam Imperial is a babe. I'll ask this old crone who's just wandered over.

"Excusez moi, Madam. Est votre grand fille pres de? Oh, pardon. Votre grand, grand fille!"
A blank look. Oh dear. I realise my error. *"Madam Imperial? Ahhhhhh. Bonjour"*. Too late, the damage is done. The stone faced, altitude-dwelling harpie would seem to have eaten the gorgeous Madam. Still, she seems to know how to access the chalet...

And we're in. Interesting. Communal living. Nice. The harpie shows us around, extorts 500 Euros deposit from the Royal Bank of Andrew and exits the Space Station.

A quick unloading of the vehicles (taking care not to bounce into airliners flying at cruising altitudes) and we're back down the hill to get provisions. And beer. Oh yes. There are men amongst us and we drink beer. Lots of it. Better get half a dozen slabs or so and some wine for the ladies. Real men, oh yes.

"I'm starvin' like Marvin," says someone. "Me too," say others. Let's eat. Fine French cuisine? Traditional Savoie fair? B*****ks to that – pizza it is. Woo hoo, the Brits abroad, eh?

Back at Apollo 17, the ladies get bedrooms, two boys volunteer to spoon in a third and the reminder set up their ghetto-shacks in various locations on various mezzanine floors. Beer before bedtime anyone? Gruff noises, men noises. Beer swilling noises? Nope. Nighty night then.

No-one snores, do they? Ha ha. How we laughed.