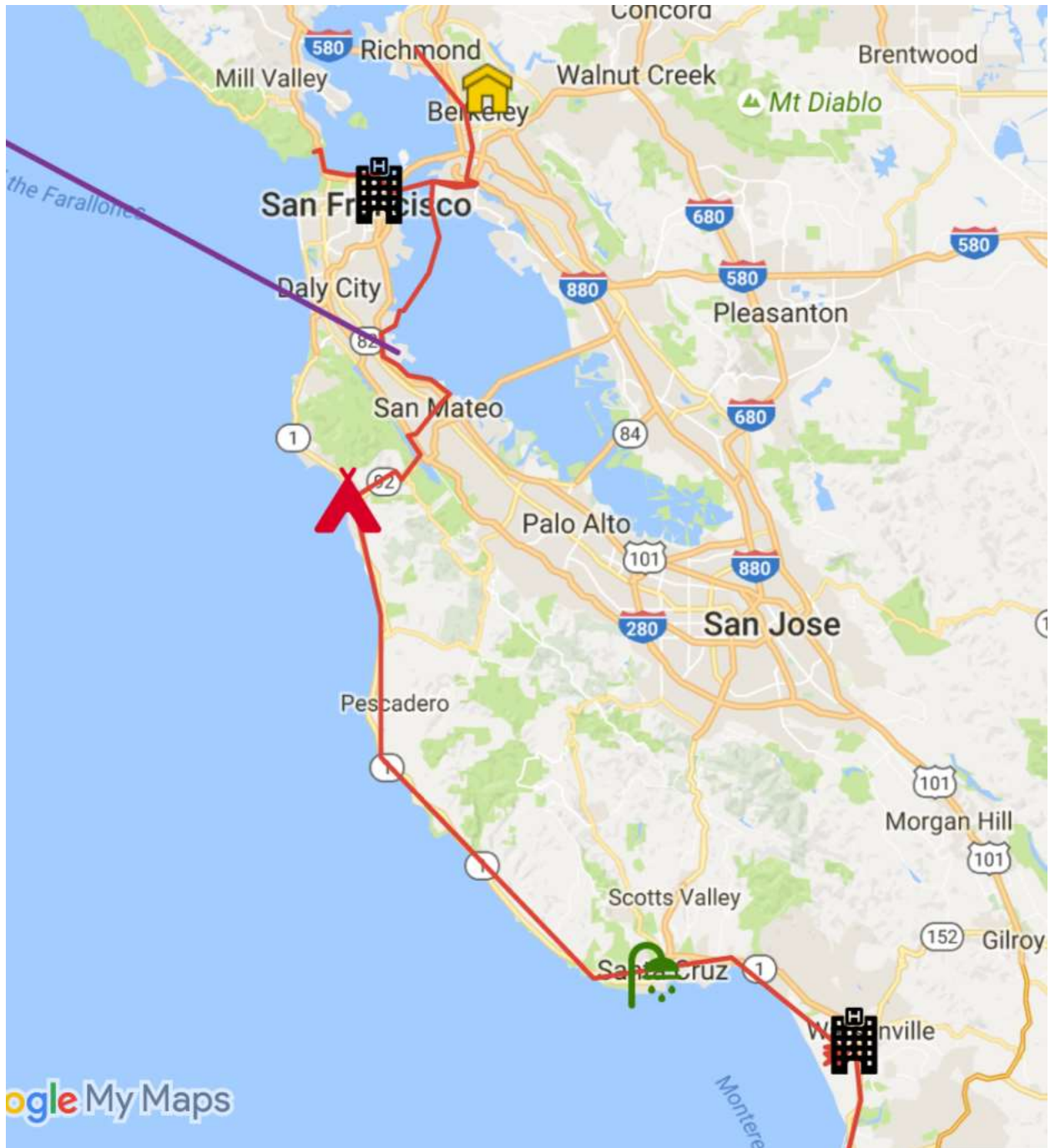


Season 5 – Part 3. Out of Big Sur.



Th 21.1.2016, day 193. Out of Big Sur.

We packed up quite efficiently, had breakfast and got off to a good early start. However we hadn't got far when I broke another spoke. This is really bad news. I had a close look at the spokes and they are all showing fatigue cracks. This means my spokes will be going one after the other. Bummer! I'll have to get my wheel rebuilt somewhere. Or continue replacing the spokes one by one and hope the new ones will

not show this failure behavior. As I was fixing the wheel we bumped into -guess who?- Yes, Stone! However this was going to be the last time, as he was not going further. A friend was driving his truck over from Monterey. He was done with biking.

The ride out of Big Sur was very nice and again far easier than I had anticipated. Only when we got to Monterey did it become quite hilly. After setting up camp we headed down to take in the sights of Monterey and to sit for coffee and internet. Then we biked back up the steep hill.













Fr 22.1.2016, day 194. Lost in another deluge.

The weather forecast was not great for the day, but also did not predict huge amounts of rain. Also, Windguru was predicting good kitesurfing wind! So the plan was to ride as far as the Kite Spot at Moss Landing, do some epic kitesurfing and then ride on as far as Sunset State Beach in Watsonville. However the day turned out completely differently. We had nothing for breakfast, so we headed off on an empty stomach. It soon started to drizzle but nothing too serious. We got to Marina where we had some bagels at Starbucks for breakfast. Afterwards we went shopping. We were in no hurry, as there was absolutely no wind, so Kitesurfing didn't seem realistic. Soon after we had done with shopping it started to rain. Actually it was more than raining. This was angry rain, pouring down out of the sky. Nonstop and relentless. We soon were completely drenched and it was impossible to read the maps on the phones. Soon the roads turned into rivers dumping soil from the farmlands around us on the roads. We missed a turning somewhere and climbed a steep hill and down the other side only to end up in a cul de sac. Spirits were quite low and it was starting to get dark. Siria made it quite clear that she was not going to camp and we were going to head to Watsonville to find a hotel. After getting directions from some passing cars we were soon on the right track. I was not really very optimistic and already saw ourselves biking round and round looking for a hotel and ending up paying huge amounts of cash. However, we had hardly reached the outskirts of the city, when we stumbled on a Roadside Inn, that was even quite cheap! What luck! Very soon we were in the hotel room unpacking all the drenched stuff. The smell was quite horrific! And very soon after that we had had a nice warm shower and were tucked in bed watching TV.

Sa 23.1.2016, day 195. A great Warm Shower and a Basketball game in Santa Cruz.

We were going to have a really short day. We slept out and had a terrible breakfast in the Hotel. They didn't even have a waffle machine! The ride to Santa Cruz was quite uneventful. We stocked up on groceries and did a complete laundry of everything except what we were wearing including shoes as things were quite wet and smelly after the couple of days of rain we had had. Right next door there was a place selling fantastic Tamales so it was actually quite a pleasant laundry session except that I was quite cold as I was wearing nothing but a tee shirt, bike shorts and a pair of wet socks. Everything else was in the washing machine...

The Warm Shower in Santa Cruz was another great experience. We stayed at Rita's place and we felt fully at home. In the evening we took a walk downtown to the boardwalk and the casinos, had a look at the old wooden roller coaster and strolled through the horrific gambling dens.

While walking direction downtown we stumbled upon the basketball arena and had the good fortune to be offered two free tickets for the game. It was great to watch and turned out to be a nail biting finish. The Santa Cruz warriors seemed to be hopelessly behind, but they caught up and managed to draw the game, so it went into a first overtime. There a last second effort by the Vipers closely missed the basket and the game was tied also after the first overtime and went into second overtime. And finally the Warriors won by 2 points with about 0.1 s left on the clock. It was crazy!!

We strolled back through down town and stopped for some great ice cream with toasted marshmallow fluff.





Su 24.1.2016, day 196. First moderately strenuous bike day in weeks...

We had an excellent breakfast with Rita and hit the road at about 9 am. We had about 85 km to do to get to Half Moon Bay. It was moderately hilly but what made the going tough was the constant head wind. On the way we got talking to a very cool Kitesurfer called Nick, who stopped when he saw my kite board. Apparently he had had a good kite day two days ago when we were being drowned by a downpour. This is typical for the problem of bike and kite. You simply can't get to a good kite location fast enough and also you have no way of taking shelter from the elements... It turns out that Nick also spent one month biking and kiting in Japan and said he had a fantastic time. We really have to make an effort to get to Japan!! We cooked Spaghetti on a great beach and arrived at the Half Moon State Park just in time to enjoy a great sunset. We spent the evening in Starbucks doing administrative stuff. Back in the tent we had a feast of vegetables and cottage cheese washed down with an IPA.



Mo 25.1.2016, day 197. Administrative day in Half Moon Bay.

The news is that we are flying out of San Francisco Saturday 30th of January, heading for the Philippines. We spent most of the day organizing our upcoming stay in San Francisco, ordering spare parts for the bike and having them shipped to REI, organizing a service of our bikes at the Rohloff Specialist in Berkeley, booking flights to and out of the Philippines, checking about bike transport with the airlines, booking a hostel in the Philippines, organizing Warm Showers in the Philippines, checking the map on how to get around on the islands. It really is quite amazing how much organization a trip like this

requires. I sometimes catch myself thinking: “Ah, let’s just go ahead and wing it!”. But it really doesn’t work that way. If you try you will end up spending lots of money because things get booked out or you find yourself in the wrong place at the wrong time....

In the evening I went for a wonderful run along the beach and afterwards we cooked some rice and vegetables.









