

# Cape to Killimanjaro

Charel Schreuder is embarking on a five year motorcycle odyssey on which he will raise funds for Motorcycle Outreach, the charity sponsored by the late FEMA General Secretary Simon Milward. Here's one he did earlier . . .

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**29 June 2006**

It is 04h00 and I haven't slept at all due excitement. Cape to Kilimanjaro, camping on the beach, good riding on the 1st day, no problems.

**30 June 2006**

A casual ride through Grahamstown where the annual arts festival was in full swing. We mixed with the locals for a while and attacked the road through Transkei looking out for potholes, animals and pedestrians, concentration intense. We were making our way through to Kokstad the last bit of travelling, Kokstad, Underberg, Himeville was going to be in the dark, exactly what we did not want to do. We will have to look at our planning. It was very cold. A chalet with a fire place. Such luxury!

**1 July 2006**

Rode to the bottom of the Sani Pass Border Post, I left my passport at the Inn and we could not ride to the top. Set off for Pietermaritzburg to meet a friend, Rob Isaacs to find out about the condition of the roads etc. We stayed for two hours

and left for Ballito Bay on the Natal Coast. My friend Otto Hoffman has a lovely flat on the beach overlooking the Indian Ocean. We stay a day extra to 'chill'.

**2 July 2006**

We revised our strategy to riding a couple of days at a time before relaxing a couple of days in the worthwhile places. Start early and to try and avoid camping because it takes too long to get going in the mornings. We don't have to stick to our original schedule or route, we will play the cards as they are dealt. Tomorrow is a long day, through Swaziland into Mozambique to Xai-Xai.

**3 July 2006**

On the road before sunrise. The Natal North Coast road is in perfect condition and a pleasure to ride, a bit boring but it makes for a relaxing ride. We are close to Golela, the border crossing into Swaziland. Our plan is to ride through Swaziland into Mozambique to Xai-Xai and overnight at Honeypot as per Rob Isaacs. Accommodation clean, warm water, a good bed and reasonably priced. It was a

long day with two border crossings we were both tired. Up to here the road was good, just have to be on the lookout for allsorts in the road. Fast asleep at 2000hs.

**4 July 2006**

Changed South African Rands for Meticas to save USD for further North. If you have no indication of the correct exchange rates prepare to be robbed. In Xai-Xai the roads were bad. Just outside Xai-Xai we get to a 28m truck broadside in the road, bags of cement everywhere, the fact that it did not overturn and nobody was injured, a miracle. Up to Maxixe the road was still reasonable and from there for short sections ok and for the rest under construction. The dirt roads are bad. Riding single file behind busses, trucks and mini-bus taxi's for km's on end, the concentration is energy sapping, "Africa is not a place for sissies". Our overnight point is Vilankoulos. We stayed at The Casa Rex an excellent choice. After a cold beer and good meal, everything started to look better again. Spoke to local contractors regarding the road further north and it was bad news. They said that if you travel after dark in Africa you go home in a coffin. Chew on that one.

**5 July 2006**

We skipped breakfast to get on the road early enough. We have no idea of what lies ahead, just 'don't ride after dark'. We want to get home on our bikes. The roads are badly potholed but the locals drive it like it's the M25 you can see it by the condition of their vehicles. We ride carefully, we still have a long way to go. Darkness catches us at 1830 and we ride the last 30 minutes in the dark. Right next to the road practically on the bank of the Zambezi river we stay in the Tete Motel. The accommodation is clean, the food Halaal and no alcohol, I mix my drinks, 1 Fanta, 1 Coke. Early to bed, tomorrow we enter Malawi.

**6 July 2006**

The bridge over the Zambezi is impressive. From here (Tete) the roads are good. Getting through the border is a hassle the counters are not marked, the people not helpful, then you have to buy an import permit, road insurance, pay road tax etc. You just want to get out of there, it feels like you are being robbed from the moment you walk in. Most understand English but do not show it, they just say



'you pay'. And then came the road blocks, one after another. At one road block the policeman told my friend Johan, when he is finished with his bike Johan must give it to him. Johan said "my name is Johan, not Father Christmas" the others had a good

7 July 2006

To Karonga. The road is good. At one road block we saw guys transporting wood on their bicycles. We stopped at Namiashi Lodge for a beer and saw the worst pool table in the world, but they play on it. We learned that the road to Karonga was newly tarred. So it was a nice easy ride and we arrived early and stayed at Mufa Lodge, but do not be misled, the conditions were severe African. We had fish that was freshly caught in Lake Malawi.



The world's worst pool table?



8 July 2006

Early on the road again. We decided that we were going to spend a couple of days on Zanzibar and Pemba Island just North of Zanzibar, so we want to get to Dar es Salaam in Tanzania soonest. Same chaos at the Border so we just went with the flow. We met two guys on motorcycles from Dubai on their way to Cape Town, South Africa and a family that has just travelled through Zambia into Malawi, they were not happy with Zambia. They reckoned everything is expensive and that the people there want to make sure that you do not get out of their country with any money. Little did we know and we still have to pass through Zambia on our return journey. At Uyole just before Mbeya we turn right, it is cold but the roads are in good condition and we enjoy the ride. We wanted to overnight in Iringa but the directions that we got from the two bikers at the border was not up to scratch and we decide to travel on and see how far we get before dark. For the first time in Tanzania we get potholes and we lose valuable time against the dark. We rode in the dark for about 45 min, it is hectic, donkeys, bicycles, people, pick-ups and trucks. Gratefully we reach Mikumi, filled up with petrol and looked for accommodation. 1900hs book into Kilimanjaro Lodge, do not be fooled by a name. We order curry vegetables (canned) and rice from the menu. At 0215hs I was woken up by a massive explosion that shook the whole town and automatic machine gun fire. After a couple of minutes a smaller explosion, sporadic machine gun fire and vehicles racing up and down.

the East Coast of Africa to Dar es Salaam, all that is left now is Kilimanjaro and then across Africa (Indian Ocean to Atlantic Ocean) and down the West Coast through Namibia to Cape Town.

**I was woken up by a massive explosion that shook the whole town and automatic machine gun fire**



Do the mountain, drink the beer



Senga Bay, Lake Malawi



A Baobab tree



9 July 2006

While we were packing the manager of the hotel came to tell us that the bank was robbed in the early hours of the morning. They practically demolished the building. We still want to leave immediately because we are the odd ones out in the town at that moment. We ride through Mikumi National Park to arrive at the Silversands Hotel. The place has deteriorated badly since 1998 when we were here last but the rooms are clean. The manager adapts prices as it suits him but we argue until everybody is reasonably satisfied. We have reached our first goal, up



Johan with his R1200GS

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