

# Fixed Gear Gran Fondo

*Cycling 176KM through rain and wind*

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Apr. 10, 2021



Today I took my fixed gear bike for a ride, 176KM from Amsterdam to America (Limburg, The Netherlands). Rain and wind added to the challenge, creating an ultimate test for man and machine. Let some of my fun be of inspiration to you!

## Gran Fondo

The Italians call a big cycle ride (>120KM) a “gran fondo”. You better prepare yourself as these long distance rides can be very demanding. Can you ride for hours and hours, alone? Through unknown terrain withstanding ever changing weather?

If you have been following my blog, you know that I like the occasional long distance ride:

- [Solo around the Markermeer 211KM](#)
- [Fietselfstedentocht Friesland 235KM](#)

This time, however, I decided to do it more hardcore... on a [fixed gear road bike](#)! That means that whatever weather, wind, or pain you are suffering, there is only one gear. Strong wind? Pedal harder! Going downhill? Pedal faster! Pain? Grunt!! GRRRRRR!



*Schindelhauer Siegfried Road - a fixed gear bike with a Gates Carbon belt drive*

To prepare myself for my ride from Amsterdam to America, I gradually cycled longer rides. You feel your stamina improve each ride, building confidence in the success of this maddening endeavour. Believe you can do it, and sure you will!



*Training through chilling hail... (Haarlemmermeerpolder)*



*... and through radiating sunshine! (Zwiderheide, near Laren)*

## The Ride

My wife and son took the family car to America to visit our family, leaving me to follow them by bike! Unlike [my ride around the Markermeer](#) where I brought plenty of food, I decided to trust my ability to source supplies along the route.





*Getting ready for departure: Some coffee and 176 kilometers to go!*



*The mighty “Prinses Irenesluizen” connect the Amsterdam-Rijnkanaal to the southern rivers of The Netherlands, Lek, Waal and Maas*



*Find tasty croissants in Kesteren's local bakery, Bakkerij de Greef!*



*Bridge over the Waal river near Nijmegen*





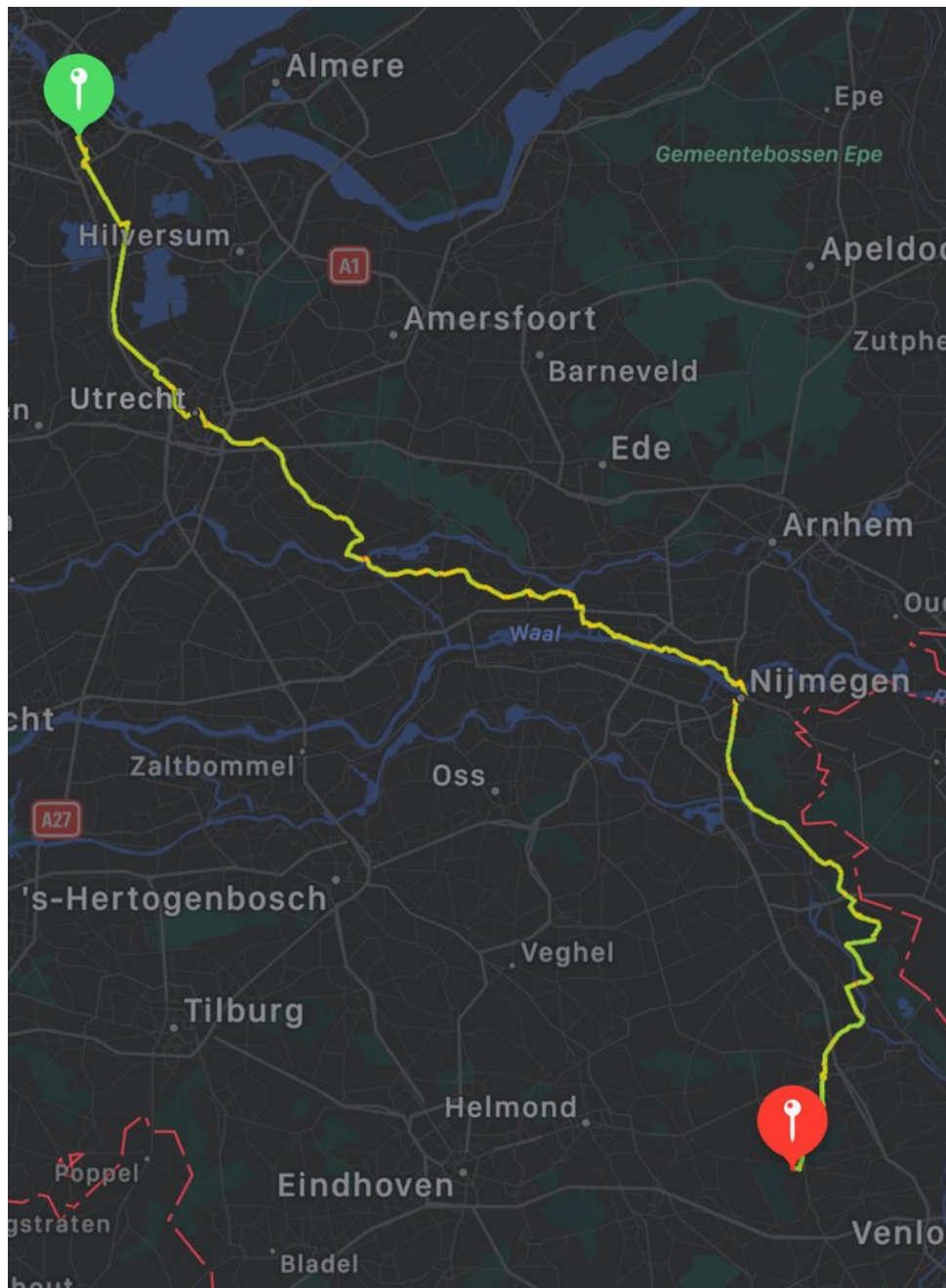
*Nijmegen skyline*



*Crossing the last river by ferry*

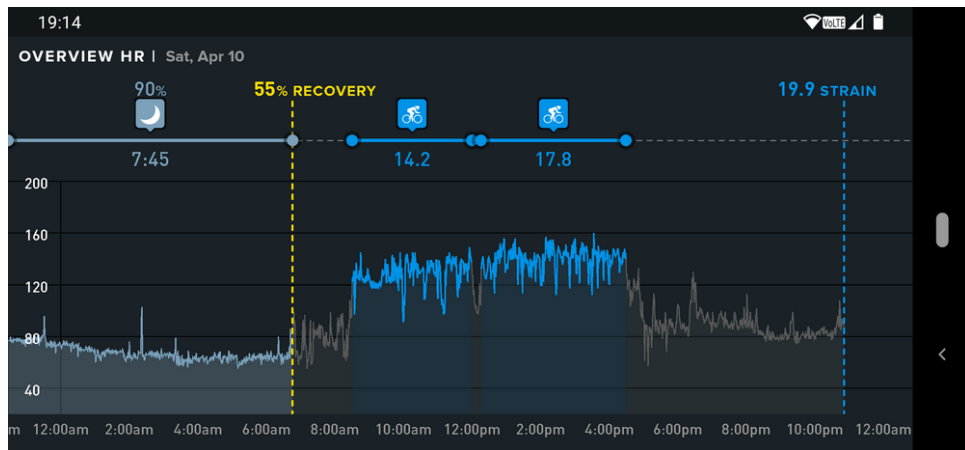


*There is no such thing as bad weather... only bad gear!*



*Cycling route as recorded by Apple Watch*





*My heart rate during the entire day, by WHOOP*

## Conclusion

Challenge yourself and push the limits! Get to know *you*, physically and mentally. I love gran fondos for this uncensored view in one's inner self.

Finish and feel victorious, a lasting feeling that fuels future ambition! Ready for the next challenge, whatever it may be!



*Daddy arriving by bike inspired the next generation!*