

A long and successful day at the Tour de France



Where do I begin? It's 12:30am here, the next day, so this is going to be a bit on the brief side. Once again we took the train the Lannemezan, about an hour ten minutes to the east, and once again rode up the long & fairly-boring valley road but this time kept riding another 20k past the turnoff for the Col d'Aspin, past Arreau, all the way to the base of the Col d'Portet. The thunderstorms certainly weren't in evidence most of the day; it was low-80s in the valley, but once we began the very serious climb we were up into the mid-90s. Yikes! I had planned on stopping at the intersection where one way takes you to the Pla d'Adet, the other up to the Col d'Portet itself, and that plan turned out to be a good one, since they weren't allowing bikes up the hill.

Kevin and I parked ourselves in a pretty decent place, and waited a bit over 2 hours for the race to come to us. This was that crazy super-short stage, just 40 miles, with three big climbs. It was going to be fast and furious and there was an assumption it would actually decide something. In the end, it did. Despite Quintana winning the stage, he's way too far out of contention for the overall win to matter, but what we did see was Froome fading away, pretty much right in front of us. More later-



You can tell Quintana is in better shape here; Majka couldn't keep up at the end.



Lots more people cheering for Quintana than Froome!



The moment Sky got really confused about things, when Froome fell off the back.



Danny Martin pushing up the hill



Nieve and Kwiatkowski, former team mates on Sky