

**Alsace Cycle Challenge
2017 – Day 2 for the Gibley
Wheelers team led by
Amicus ITS' Ben Davis**

29th September 2017



L-R: Dave Penfold of BMI Consultancy, Ben Davis of Amicus ITS, Kevin Cooke of Axa and Simon Longhurst of SML Consultancy stop for a few minutes to strike a pose as the Hampshire posse – were they aware they were just outside the village cemetery?)

Amicus ITS Senior Account Manager, Ben Davis, reports in his Alsace Journal on Day 2 of the cycle challenge through Champagne country:

"I led the team out at 7am from a dark and misty Epernay.

4 miles into the ride and following a gradual incline we were again amongst the champagne fields – then out of the mist appeared a little village - with a savage hill climb.

Steep for about 3 miles, the road wound around and then ran up through the town. A turn to the left, then one to the right and then pure wonder... suddenly revealed in front of us, an awesome view of the region below, mostly in cloud. PS I was cycling so you will have to take my word on this. This is a hill that had beaten me once before many years back, but not today.

After 12 miles and a lovely 40mph downhill zoom, I had done my first stint and arrived at our staging post for a deserved break. So began Day 2. Only 168 miles to Nancy".



L Ben Davis strikes his Captain Fantastic end stage pose in Epernay – or we wondered - had he just been to a Spa?

Passing through Verdun en route to Nancy. Verdun has a notable military history



Day 2 Ben's review /Contd.. :

"What a lovely day's ride. Misty morning turned into sunny day in pleasant 20 degree heat. We made our way from Epernay to a very busy Nancy. Some extraordinary views along the way for us all, including cycling through WW1 battlegrounds including Verdun (*see below). We finished up with a time trial around a lovely lake. A 10 minute drive into hectic Nancy rounded the day off".*



Nancy also provided the Amicus ITS Gibley Wheelers with their two accidental bashes on the van's wing mirror. Oops



"We had to park miles away from our hotel in Nancy and carry our bikes and luggage in!

Could have done without that!

Team are doing well.

Looking forward to a 14,000 ft climb tomorrow as we make the 140 miles from Nancy before finishing in Obernai. Onwards men....!!"

L: An epic view over the roof tops of Nancy

History Note

* Verdun is remarkable, like many of the places we passed through. A snapshot of its war history is briefly drawn here: *The Battle of Verdun (Latin name for "strong fort")*, was fought from 21 February to 18 December 1916. It was the largest and longest battle of WWI on the Western Front between the German and French armies, involving nearly one million casualties on both sides. The impact of the battle on the French army was a primary reason why the British started the Battle of the Somme in July 1916 in an effort to take German pressure off the French at Verdun. This forced the German army to retreat as they no longer had the resources to carry out the annihilation that hoped for. The battle took place on the hills north of Verdun-sur-Meuse in north-east France. (battle field pictures today below)



End of Day 2 report

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Amicus ITS is proud to support this somewhat mad but noble endeavour. If you would like to give your support to the team and help them hit their target for the charities below, please make a donation now by clicking on the url link and follow the instructions.

Click here: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/teamamicusrepresent>

### Challenge Adventure Charities

For 22 years, we have organised cycle events, mainly in Europe. We have raised some £4,054,344 mainly for cancer research and other medical charities. We pride ourselves that EVERY PENNY that has been raised has been paid to charity - our participants paying the full cost of event entry themselves. Charity Registration No. 1057920

