

Trip Journal 2

Day 7

Distance: 101.25 km

TDTD: 526.55 km

Today was entirely on the TCH. It was relatively flat (compared to the other days) but it was a tough day due to a constant headwind. The first half of the route had rumble strips and the width of the pavement kept varying which forced me to go into traffic when it narrowed. This was actually more dangerous as I risk a spasm every time I cross the rumble strips so I ended up biking in traffic with my right tire on the white line. The second half of the route didn't have rumble strips which allowed me to bike on the shoulder. I had originally planned on taking the rail trail which runs parallel to the TCH. I was able to view the trail from the highway and decided not to use it. It was loose, large gravel with many potholes filled with water. It is also used by ATVs which leave tire ruts making the trail uneven and difficult to navigate with a wheelchair. It looked beautiful but work needs to be done to make it accessible. As it is it would only be able to be used by an able bodied person on a mountain bike.

Difficulty: 2 (4 with headwind)

Safety: 2

Rest Spots: 1

Scenery: 1

Day 8

Distance: 88.56 km

TDTD: 615.11

Another day on the TCH. Flattest day yet. No rumble strips so I had the shoulder and was not in traffic. I felt really tired today. We are stopped at a really beautiful campsite overlooking the ocean with amazing cliffs in the background. It was a happy mistake. I had made reservations 10 km up the road. As we were biking by this campground I was thinking that we should have stayed here and then I saw the RV. Candice stopped at the wrong campground and it is perfect. I was fighting low blood pressure for the last bit of our ride so I was happy to stop.

Difficulty: 2

Safety: 4

Rest Spots: 1

Scenery: 2

Day 9

Distance: 127.61 km

TDTD: 742.72 km

Long Day. All TCH. Really flat again. Most of it had no rumble strips and large shoulders. The last 20 km had rumble strips and no shoulder so I was in traffic. We had planned on doing 100 km and having Candice pick us up but there was absolutely no where to pull over and load me into the RV safely. So we made it all the way from South Brook to Deer Lake. Went from cold to really hot.

Difficulty: 2

Safety: 3
Rest Spots: 1
Scenery: 2

Day 10

Another “Rest Day”. I woke up and my front wheel on my wheelchair fell off. We fixed it and went out for Moose Burgers. We went to Earls in Rocky Harbour. It was amazing! We had booked a boat tour to go to Gross Morne National Park. I biked the 3km trail out to the boat terminal. I was able to bike on the trail as it was wide enough but a few steep sections where I needed assistance. When we got to the dock we were told that we had booked the tour at the wrong location and there were no more tours today so they transferred it to tomorrow. We went back into town and went to the Lobster Head Cove Lighthouse. After that we went for an amazing Lobster dinner.

Day 11

We woke up today ready to go for our boat tour and were just pulling out of the camp sight and our RV stopped working. Candice diagnosed the problem as low antifreeze. We were leaking antifreeze. Candice was driven into town by the park warden and picked up jugs of antifreeze. It was actively leaking and was just able to get into Rocky Harbour. We called CAA and were towed to Deer Lake an hour away. The driver was really nice and let me stay in the RV so I didn't need to get an accessible taxi which would have been really difficult. Right now we are dry docking in front of a repair shop. We have someone coming tomorrow to try repair it and are going to try bike then. Really need to start biking so we can make the ferry.

Day 12

Distance: 51.01 km
TDTD: 793.93 km

We woke up this morning in front of the repair shop. The mechanic was able to fix our RV so we were able to bike. The route was mostly flat today. It was a shorter ride due to available campsites. We went from Deer Lake to Corner Brook. It was really beautiful coming into Corner Brook with cliffs and rivers. We went to see Steady Brook Falls but I was not able to access it. Nikki was able to see it and thought it was spectacular. We were at a great campsite and I was able to have a great shower which was huge and accessible. The only issue was that the path to the showers was really rough and difficult in a wheelchair.

Difficulty: 2
Safety: 3
Rest Spots: 1
Scenery: 4

Day 13

Distance: 130.0 km
TDTD: 923.93 km

Really long day today. Started with a 6 km “detour”. To get back to the TCH we decided to follow a large logging truck as I reasoned that it would be heading to the TCH. We followed it for 200 m and ended up at a milling yard. We found our way back to the TCH but the on ramp was closed and blocked with a barrier. NikkiD had to lift me and my bikes over a few curbs and we went up the closed on ramp. Today was really hilly. We had 1500m of ascent which is our most so far. There was on hill in Corner Brook which was a 10% grade. We had 2, 9% grade hills and a bunch of 7%. Nikki and I have yet to see a moose on our ride. Candice has seen 3 mooses? 3 moose? 3 moosi? 3 meese? Candice saw a moose. Then she saw 2 more. Difficulty: 4
Safety: 3
Rest Spots: 1
Scenery: 1

Day 14

Distance: 84.31

TDTD: 1008.24

This was the most crazy and dangerous day of biking I have ever experienced. Before my injury I considered myself an outdoorsman and did a lot of solo back country trips. This was scarier than anything I have experienced. I am not sure if it is because my perspective is different from when I was able bodied. Before my injury I was totally self sufficient and today I was relying on NikkiD to keep me safe. When we started off the weather was calling for winds at 40 km/hr and gusts up to 64 km/hr with 1mm of rain/Hr. We knew it was going to be a slower, wet ride but we were not prepared for what was to come. We had to bike today because we needed to make the ferry tomorrow. There were no weather warnings. We started off and there was a headwind for the first 20 km so it was slow going. The wind died down and it started raining but the riding was still really fun. We then started getting rain with wind and it felt like we were being pelted with shards of glass but we were still doing ok. At around the 50 km mark with 39 km to go we saw a lighted construction sign which said “Warning winds in excess of 100 km/hr. Advised to pull over”. Then a few kilometres later there was a permanent sign which said “Warning. High wind area for the next 20 km”, then 10 km later there was the same sign. Then the wind started getting crazy. It would switch from a tail wind, to a head wind, to a side wind. At on point I had to lean completely side ways into the wind while biking to prevent from being blown over. The tail winds were actually the most scary as the wind would just take you

whatever direction it wanted to. We had a few really huge gusts which were really scary so we decided to take shelter between a building and a shed. We had done 60 km and had 29 km to go. We were sheltered from the wind a little but it was still raining. We reasoned that we needed to just keep biking slowly. There was no way we could have gotten Candice to pick us up. It would have been way to dangerous for her to pick us up. We couldn't stay where we were for hours because we would go hypothermic. So we started off again biking really slowly. Then we got to an area called Wreck House. We had the entire road to ourselves. The wind was insane. It was an open field blowing out to the ocean. The wind was well over 100 km/hr and it was really exposed. I was

almost blown over multiple times. NikkiD and I had to stop and huddle and lean into the wind to prevent being blown over. We had 15 km to go. NikkiD suggested that we start walking as we needed to keep moving. She walked beside me with one hand holding my wheelchair stabilizing me and one hand holding her bike which was flying around in the wind like a kite. I cranked slowly beside her. We walked for 3 km. We biked the remaining 12 km really slowly. At one point I stopped on a downhill and the wind blew me back up hill. NikkiD was amazing. She was cool, calm and collected. She got me to the trailer safely. Difficulty: 5

Safety: 1

Rest Spots: 1

Scenery: 3 (would have been higher but we couldn't enjoy it)

Day 15

Distance: 9.72 km

TDTD: 1017.96 km

So Newfoundland stayed consistent to the last day. It was rainy windy and cold. We had a short ride. Made it to the ferry. We did it!

Difficulty: 2

Safety: 3

Rest Spots: 1

Scenery: 1