

Rider's Narrative Summary – by Christian Krause, Denmark.

Story from Cross Country solo record attempt: The United Kingdom West-East (also Wales West-East and England West-East) crossing August 1, 2015. The UK 578 km in 21 hours and 46 minutes – Wales 186 km in 6 hours and 2 minutes – England 392 km in 15 hours and 44 minutes.

1. Record attempt:

Cross Country, solo, normal bike, The United Kingdom from West to East and also Wales W-E and England W-E.

That meant starting in Wales and finishing in England so included in the record attempt across the UK was also Wales West-East and England West-East – three (3) record attempts in total.



2. Name of rider:

Christian Krause, 49 years.

3. Start date and exact start time to the nearest minute

Started in Western Wales August 1, 2015 at exactly 08:15 local UK satellite time.

Crossed the Wales/England border August 1, 2015 at exactly 14:17 local UK satellite time.

4. Exact start location described.



Start location for Wales:

The most western point of Wales – Whitesands Beach Parking lot, end of road B4583, just outside the city of St Davids in Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. Position N51 53.836 W5 17.631. There is a Pub named City Inn (<http://www.cityinnstdavids.co.uk/>) in St Davids with the possibility of Bed & Breakfast for a large crew – just 3 km from the start location.

Crossing the Wales/England border:

West of Kington City where B4595 meets A44. Position N52 13.023 W3 04.846.

(Unique position but the actual border is 200 meter further east).

5. What were conditions like?

Started at 08:15 in heavy rain and thunderstorm. Despite the rain the temperature was perfect – around 13-15 degrees which meant I could start in normal jersey and bibshorts – no need for rain-cover. The heavy rain lasted for the first two hours and after that I sort of rode in the edge of the rain/thunderstorm giving me a mix of crosswind and tailwind for the entire route through Wales and beginning of England. In the early afternoon the wind died out and when darkness came there were no wind at all. The rest of the ride was in no wind condition.

Wales is very bumpy – within the first 65 km I had to climb 19 small hills, all of them above 15 degrees – 3 hills above 20 degrees and 1 hill above 30 degrees – but all very short in length. My experience was the road was continuously going up and down and that the road engineer originally drew a straight line and that the road worker laid down the tarmac in the same straight line. I would have expected a natural bended climb as in France and Italy – but now – a 30 degree straight line tarmac over the top – interesting!

Wales had good tarmac – the second I crossed over and into England the tarmac became worse. Road conditions in general were okay – but I was glad for my 25 mm tires to smooth out the ride.

6. Why did you want to do a record?

In the old days, Denmark ruled over most of Europe, but has lost it all at war. Thought it was time to reclaim the UK – now a Dane holds the record for going across.

Well actually, cross country record setting is a part of my five year plan. I started in 2011 by finishing Race Across America on a four man team, did Paris-Brest-Paris solo in 2011, did set a record cross Denmark in 2012, did finish Race Around Ireland solo in 2013, did set a record cross Germany in 2014 and now a record across the UK. It all leads up to Race Across America solo in 2016.

And think I might squeeze in another cross country record in 2016!

7. What equipment did you use? Anything special?



I am using a bike frame build for long distance biking – a Specialized Roubaix S-works SL4. I use a full carbon handlebar with big corners for resting the hands, with gel pads underneath and a gel handlebar tape.

I use carbon Zipp 60 wheels for effective wind resistance.

I have switched to a brand new technology in tires – the Challenge Criterium 25 mm clincher tire. The new thing is that this tire actually has adopted the tubular technology (where the tire/tube is glued on the rim) for a better road contact and less rolling resistance but still has the foldable clincher technology (normal tire and tube) mounting. This tire rolls perfect – and I did not have any puncture and a 25 mm tire gives you a more comfortable ride, if the roads are bumpy. Some roads were very bumpy and poor in conditions – I was very glad for the Roubaix bike and 25 mm tires.

I also used the new Specialized Evade aero helmet – perhaps that saved me some time also!?

I have aerobars attached my race handlebar – to get weights of the hands and relax the back. And the speed also increases quite a lot, when getting down and being aero.



I was given a GPS tracker by [RedKnows](#) so that everybody on the Internet could follow me during the trip from Denmark to the UK and during the record attempts. The tracker was in the follow vehicle and gave the position, speed and so on. Almost 200,000 people followed me.

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The follow vehicle is mounted up with all the required equipment – flashers, stickers and so on – but also two horn speakers wre my crew can give me directions and play music for me. Of course we either turned the music down or stopped it completely when coming into towns – and that is working really fine. Clear directions and loud music in the country side – keeps the motivation and speed up.



8. What did you eat & drink?

When talking about drinks: I use a two bottle system on the bike. One bottle contains salts and minerals – I use High5 Zero tablets – and the other bottle contains carbon hydrates, proteins and also some electrolytes. It is High 5's product called 4in1.

When talking foods: Mostly bananas, sandwiches and McDonalds. Yes – I know, but it is just over one day – so no need for special food.

9. What was the best part?

Having studied the best possible route from west to east – and taken quite a lot of decisions about going through or around the cities – I found that avoiding the cities in the first half of the 600 km worked fine. The last 300 km through some larger cities gave me more energy to see the people and the inner city and also hearing the locals cheering me on – that really works.

Have to say, that the best part was the population's patience when cars have to wait a little time for a spot to pass me – no one was honking the horn in anger – they all cheered and gave thumbs up. I also chose to use the small rest places along the road – when approaching one I took the exit and kept the speed, but the rest places were long enough for the few cars behind me to pass me and my follow vehicle and smoothly I could roll back on the road with no cars behind me.

The last 300 km were okay flat country with just a little rolling hills were I tried to keep a good speed. I could get back into the rhythm which the first 200 km didn't allow me to.

10. What was the hardest part?

In Denmark we drive in the right side (starboard) of the street! In the UK they drive in the left side (port) of the street. I really had to stay focused when turning and going into roundabouts! Below is an example of driving in the left side – beautiful scenery too.



Otherwise I would say Wales in general – almost 4,000 climbing meters in 186 km. I pushed perhaps a little too hard and had to deal with some cramps in my right thigh after Wales – but made it through thanks to my medic Wicky Fangel Petersen – thanks for that Wicky!

11. Did anything particularly unusual happen?

During the ride: I did ride into a broken power cable that hang down in the middle of the street, hitting it with my left hand. There were no power in the cable at the time – thank god for that – but I can tell you, that I could feel it. Luckily my speed pushed the power cable into the bushes in the side of the road so my sponsor follow vehicle did not get any scratches in the hood.

PR wise: My crew chief, Sheraz Alam, was also functioning as my PR person – publishing [reports and video interviews](#) with me before, during and after the record attempt. He has also arranged a direct line into the Danish National TV station called TV2, and that Saturday evening the 1st of August the TV station broadcasted a feature of my record attempt live during the evening prime time sports report right after the news. Approximately 1,5 million people are watching the sports report and after the feature I got more than 120,000 visits on my open facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/teamkrauseultracycling> and they followed me all the way “home” to eastern England.

I was a funny feeling knowing, that my crew and I managed to put UMCA and Ultracycling on the front page that day – and the following days.

12. Exact finish location described so that someone else could find the same spot.



The most eastern part of England – the city of Lowestoft, east end of Hamilton road by the harbour. At the end of the road there is an old marine building (with the two lifesavers on the wall) and the North sea is just behind that building – not possible to bike any further east! Position N52 28.578 E1 45.638.

13. Exact finish time



I arrived in eastern England in Lowestoft August 2, 2015 at 06:02 UK local satellite time.

That means I did bike the 578 km across the UK from western Wales to eastern England in 21 hours and 46 minutes in total.

Across Wales 186 km in 6 hours and 2 minutes – and across England 392 km in 15 hours and 44 minutes.

14. Why did I try to go fast?

I had to hurry home to my pregnant wife that could give birth any day in August. Luckily I made it home in time to see my son be born on August 11th 2015. Being 49 years old – that might just be some sort of record!

With regards, Christian Krause,
www.teamkrause.dk
<https://www.facebook.com/teamkrauseultracycling>

