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I LIKE...

The great road surface



WHERE IS IT?

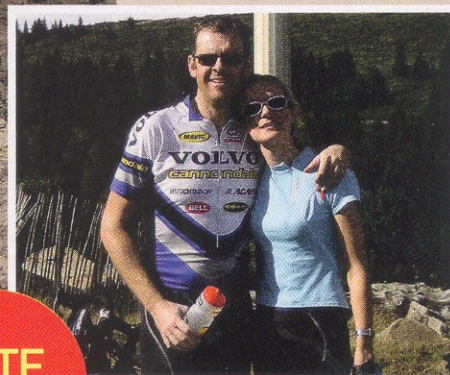
In the UAE, near Al Ain and close to the border with Oman

JEBEL HAFEET FACTS

- 14km/8.7 miles long
- 21m to 1240m altitude
- 1,219 metres of climbing
- 21 bends, dead end at top

MY PERSONAL BEST

1hr 8min is a good target time



I HATE...

The heat

KILLER CLIMB

Chris Balfour and Helen Budd's Jebel yell

Have you got a Killer Climb in your area?

Then why don't you tell us about it...

Write to us at: CW, IPC Media Ltd, Leon House, 233 High Street, Croydon CR9 1HZ. Or email CW at cycling@ipcmedia.com

NEXT WEEK

Blackfell

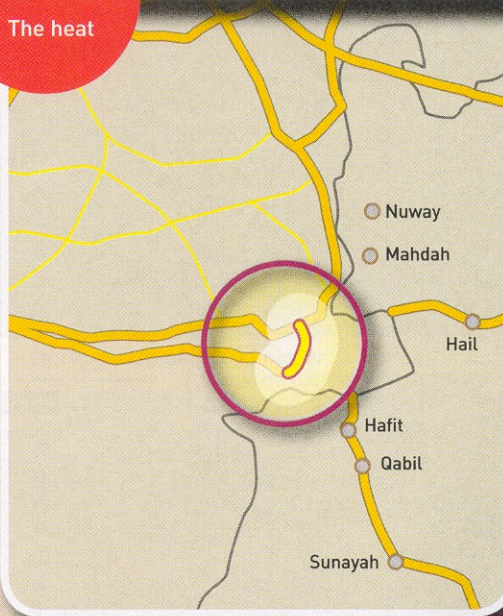
OK, FOLKS, so this might be a little off the beaten track but plenty of us do read *CW* even when we're a long way from the UK.

Jebel Hafeet, with its masts and moon-scape boulders rises Ventoux-like out of the desert, 120km inland from Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates. Officially, it's part of the emirate of Abu Dhabi, but since Dubai is as flat as a board, the thriving bike community here see Jebel Hafeet as 'their' climb.

In stark contrast to the rubble-and-sand landscape around it, Jebel Hafeet is, in part, a man-made wonder. The good Lord put the 1,240m pile of rock where it is, but the UAE's oil money most certainly takes the credit for the superbly surfaced three-lane highway that snakes up the mountainside. Approached at night, it's pretty intimidating to see the roadside lighting spiralling heavenwards over the 14km climb.

The base of the climb is handily marked with a monument to the late Sheikh Zayed (former ruler of the UAE) and you get a gentle rolling start for the first 2km. But the remaining 12km just go onwards and upwards. The hairpins come as a blessed relief, since the sections where the engineers were able to get the road going straight up are steep, shadeless and psychologically demoralising. The profile, of 14km at an average of nine per cent, creates a climb almost identical to Alpe d'Huez.

But beware, even ridden at 6am in the morning as we did recently, the thermometer is touching 85 degrees.



WE BE MOSTLY RIDING...

Helen is on a Scott Contessa Pro. I'm on a Trek Madone 5.2SL