



The Alpine Star • Der Alpenstern • L'Etoile Alpine • La Stella Alpina

The challenge

The Alpine Star is a series of three permanent rides, each starting and finishing in Andermatt and each taking in three major climbs.

Each loop counts as one separate permanent ride. However anyone completing all three loops, in any order, may claim a commemorative 'Alpine Star' cloth badge, free of charge, from me.

The routes

The routes are:

Furka - Nufenen - St.Gothard: 95km with 3269m of climbing

Susten - Grimsel – Furka: 119km with 3390m of climbing

Oberalpass – Lukmanier – St Gotthard: 158km with 3200m of climbing

The routes are very easy to follow, as there are very few roads in this part of Switzerland and the passes are clearly signposted. However the following maps may be useful.

Michelin 553 Regional 1:200 000 Suisse Sud-Ouest: This is an excellent map which covers all three routes. Recommended.

Swisstopo 101: 1:100 000 Thuner See – Zentralschweiz: This map covers both of the shorter routes, but some of the longer route through Biasca is missing.

For photos of the passes, Francis Cooke's excellent website has more information at <http://www.aukadia.net/alps/star.htm>

Terrain and Climate

Obviously, the overriding theme here is mountains, mountains, mountains! The climbs are all classic alpine, with lots of smooth hairpins on good quality roads. The Airolo side of the St Gotthard Pass is cobbled nearly all the way up, and for some of the way down. Please take care in wet weather!

The routes all use minor roads, which have mostly been superceded by tunnels and motorways. As a result, they may not be open until well into the summer. In 2006 some of the passes remained closed until June. You can get up-to-date pass information at <http://www.swisstxt.ch/SF1/494-00.html>

The Directions:

All routes start from the Post Office on the main road through Andermatt.

Route 1: Furka, Nufenen, St Gotthard

0.0	Head R, towards Hospenthal
0.6	Take route 19, towards Hospenthal, Realp
8.0	At Realp , follow signs for Furkapass
20.0	Furkapass Control
31.0	In Gletsch take route 19 through Oberwald to Ulrichen
42.0	Turn L, \$ Nufenenpass
55.0	Nufenenpass Control and descend to Airolo
68.0	After railway station turn L onto Via St Gottardo
68.5	R Zona San Carlo (be sure NOT to take route 2 – take the minor road \$ Passo St Gottardo)
81.5	St Gotthardpass Control
85.5	L onto route 2
92.0	In Hospenthal R to Andermatt
95.0	Finish Andermatt

Route 1: Climbing

Start	Altitude	Finish	Altitude	Altitude Gain
Andermatt	1447	Furka	2429	982
Ulrichen	1346	Nufenen	2478	1132
Airolo	1159	St Gotthard	2314	1155
Total				3269

This ride is worth 4.75 AAA points

Route 2: Susten - Grimsel – Furka

0.0	L onto route 10, \$ Wassen
10.0	L onto route 11, \$ Sustenpass
29.0	Sustenpass Control
57.0	In Innertkirchen R onto route 6 \$ Guttanen, Grimselpass
82.5	Grimselpass Control
88.0	In Gletsch L onto route 19, \$ Furkapass, Andermatt
99.0	Furkapass Control
117.0	L onto route 2 \$ Andermatt
119.0	Finish Andermatt

Route 2: Climbing

Start	Altitude	Finish	Altitude	Altitude Gain
Wassen	1046	Susten	2224	1178
Innertkirchen	625	Grimsel	2165	1540
Gletsch	1757	Furka	2429	675
Total				3390

This ride is worth 4.25 AAA points

Route 3: Oberal – Lukmanier – St Gotthard

0.0	Head R, towards Hospenthal
0.5	Take route 19, towards Hospenthal, Realp
2.5	L onto route 2 \$ St Gotthardpass
9.0	R onto cobbled road
13.0	St Gotthardpass Control
26.0	In Airolo continue along route 2 to Biasca
63.0	In Pasquero L onto Via Cantonale, \$ Disentis, Passo del Lucomango
104.5	Passo del Lucomango Control
125.0	In Disentis R onto route 19 \$ Andermatt, Oberalpass
145.0	Oberalpass Control
155.5	Finish Andermatt

Route 3: Climbing

Start	Altitude	Finish	Altitude	Altitude Gain
Hospenthal	1438	St Gotthard	2314	876
Biasca	300	Lukmaier	1916	1616
Disentis	1130	Oberal	2044	914
Total				3406

This ride is worth 3.25 AAA points

Controls:

Please obtain a till receipt, ATM slip or stamp at the beginning and end of each ride in Andermatt. All intermediate controls are at the heads of the passes.

For controls at the passes, the following are acceptable, in order of desirability:

- Stamp and signature or till receipt from café or tourist centre.
- GPS tracklog showing route along pass road. (This is recommended, if only as it guarantees you can track your ride if controls are closed.)
- Photo of your good self with bike at pass, however this is only if there really is nothing else to be had.

Some of the passes have better facilities than others; however none are guaranteed to have cafes or hostels that are open, especially in early summer or late autumn. Make sure you have enough provisions to get yourself over each climb, and be sure to allow a couple of hours for the shorter legs, three or more hours for some of the legs around Lukmanierpass.