

Ride On the Ice Sheet

When I first talked to Philip about the idea of going to Greenland, he was instantly hooked. I told him about my plan to ride the Arctic Circle Trail: from Kangerlussuaq—the city that is the furthest inland and situated right on the ice sheet—to the coastal town Sisimiut.

The route mostly goes over lakes and rivers, so it is practically inaccessible by bike in the summer. But in the winter, when the lakes are frozen over, you can conquer it in five days.

Since there are not many people who have already taken this tour or have experienced biking at minus 30 degrees, I consulted our friend Max. He had been riding his bike in Lapland, Finland the year before and was already experienced with the necessary technology and knew how to handle the cold.

The first piece of information he gave us was: "Try to take as few hydraulic parts on your bike as

possible. The cold is not a big problem for humans as long as you keep moving, but for the bikes it is hell. The suspension will not work at all as nothing moves in the cold. The hydraulic seat post and the brakes can lead to even bigger problems. If the oil is not designed to withstand these low temperatures, the seat post, in particular, will no longer work."

The last thing you need to deal with on a five-day tour is a saddle that cannot be loaded, so we took the appropriate precautions before we left. Since I already knew from my experience with bicycle races on glaciers that the shifter and pinion would freeze when they are sprayed with snow, we looked for an alternative solution. Thus, we came up with a bike with a gearbox, where the entire shifting process is separated from external influences. Also, it is highly recommended to check the brakes for their compatibility with extremely cold weather conditions. You want them to work properly when cycling on an icy underground. >>>

