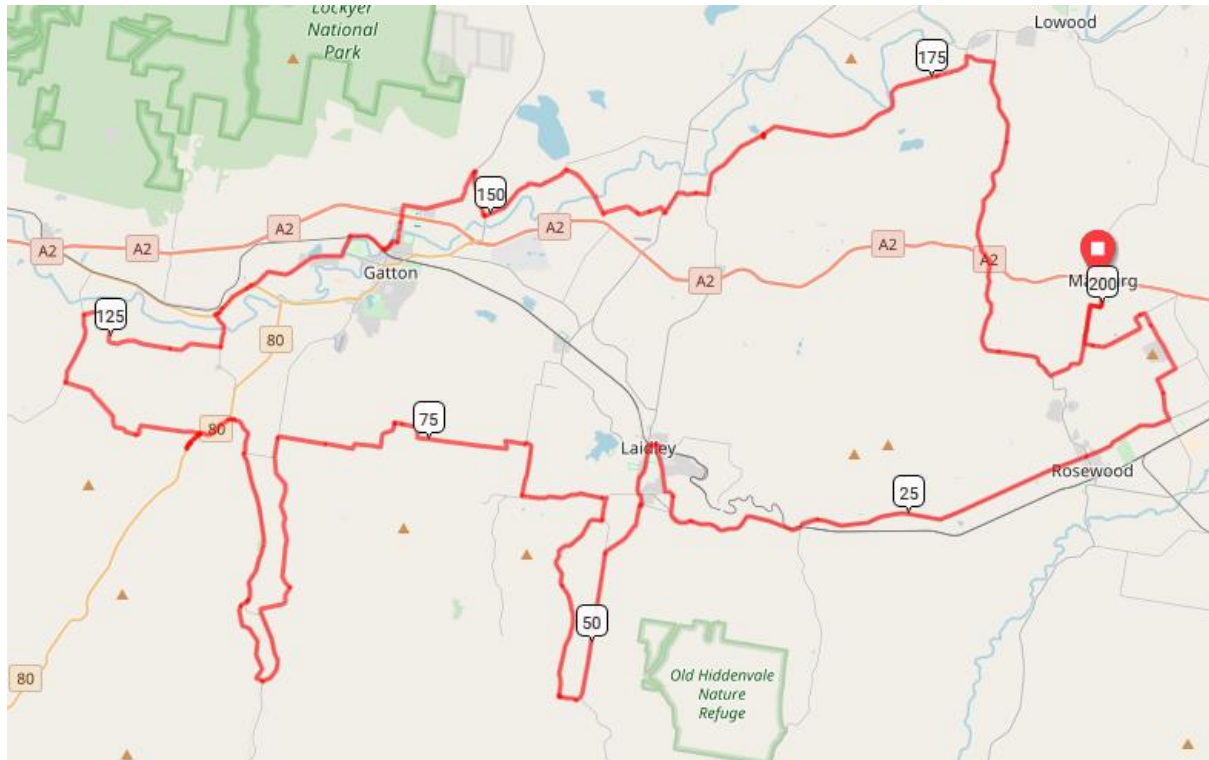


Marburg Ridgeback Warthog – John McMullan

This was my second ride of the Marburg Warthog although I considered the first to be more of a ridgeback. Just like the ride time, this report is a bit shorter than last year.



The start was a little nippy as we assembled in the carpark at Marburg along with a few finely broken glass bottles. We had a mix of 100 and 200km riders and I was pleased to see David and Laura at the start and have a bit of time for a pre-ride chat. David and I are still committed to conquering Tomewin Hill on the upcoming Franks ride and discussed our gearing up for it (literally - with new cassettes)

Off we went on our way with me needing a bit of time to warm up as we headed south towards Mt Marrow. I soon found myself at my usual location - towards the tail of the riders. Pete Watson and Dave Foster soon passed me until I took advantage of the first downhill and left David somewhat behind but I was surprised as he caught up on the next climb. Playing leapfrog I managed to get to a nice photo spot and encouraged David to hurry up and get into the shot. Kind of returning the favour for David's good photos recently. I watched Dave disappear down the hill while I put the phone away and continued riding myself.



When arriving at the turn to Rosewood I discovered that we were merging with the Ipswich 100 riders and spent my time to Rosewood chatting, drafting, falling behind and watching David get further ahead. Just like everyone else on the Audax I failed to follow the marshals' directions and soon I could see both Daves on the road in front of me - one at the undulations and one half way to them.

Settling into my usual rhythm and contemplating the climb at Grandchester I was surprised to see that I wasn't making ground on David and thought that our challenge of Tomewin may be successful later in the year. Having put 1500km on the bike in the previous month including Mt Mee and Peachester helped me steadily climb Grandchester - finally passing David half way up. Once over the top I relaxed on the descent and had David catch up just before the turn off the main road.

Taking advantage of the lack of traffic we sauntered through Laidley chatting and then arriving at the control with plenty of time to spare finding a collection of riders, locals and border collies enjoying the location.

After a short break the 100 and 200 riders parted company and off I went in search of amenities and more water.

Unlike last year I found the hills a lot easier to climb and apart from some nasty little orange insect getting his milligram of flesh when I was navigating a river crossing I started to enjoy the tailwinds to make some good speed on the way to Ma Ma Creek passing Laura at the start of Back Mt Sylvia road.

Turning towards MaMa Creek saw me passing the tail of the medium pace riders and soon at the cafe for another well deserved rest. For some reason they were out of pies (and no Mark to blame) so I had a couple of pieces of carrot cake and some drinks for refreshments whilst

Laura arrived feeling a little worse for wear. While we were there I think Jeff's ute driver must have gone past us as there was some unintelligible but obvious abuse coming out the window of a white dual-cab.

I headed off after a longer than expected break and soon found Laura heading the other way. My extended break made the hills seem easy for once as the tail winds pushed me along. I got a rare front wheel puncture on the hogs tail and once fixed headed eastwards into a not so pleasant headwind that for once wasn't directly on the nose for a change.

The kilometers seemed to go by quite smoothly as I rode through Grantham and Gatton with a remarkably uneventful journey to Brightview for a bite to eat. No winds on the nose through the Grantham-Brightview section either so speeds were up a bit.

Burger consumed, drinks had, havis on I headed off for the final two challenges, crossing the highway and climbing Tallegalla hill without stopping. The highway crossing seemed to be the biggest challenge because the ride up from Minden seemed to be quicker than I expected and the climb up Tallegalla was very easy compared to last year. The run down to Marburg was a pleasant run with no wildlife and very few cars.

I finished about an hour quicker than last year due to my better fitness but a lot was due to the better wind direction and the lack of rain.

Challenges achieved: Tallegalla without stopping and getting in quicker by about an hour. It would have been nice to get back in daylight - maybe next year.