

Easter Eggsertion take 2

By John McMullan

I had grand ideas of riding 3 x 300km rides in sequential weekends starting with the Yeronga Medley 300, then Downs and back 300 finishing with the Easter Eggsertion. A couple of issues cropped up – some sort of lurgy that went round my office and my big ride with my grandson on the Tour de Brisbane. So, here is ride 3 of the series.....

I like the Easter Eggsertion due to the large amount of recovery time I can have before I return to work. It has a challenging lump in the middle for me called Mt Mee but a revised route removed the Peachester and Mooloolah lumpy bits making it more John friendly.

Pete Lovell and I had spoken about riding it and I promoted it as an achievable first 300.

The intrepid 5 departed at 7 in the morning but I discovered that I had loaded the wrong route into the GPS two days beforehand so I followed blindly to Sandgate where I stopped and loaded the correct route. Nothing like working out how to hotspot the GPS to the phone *and* load a route on the fly.

I headed off again and when I got to Boondal I encountered Pete in a GPS loop of diminishing returns and I offered to lead the way for a while, and our subsequent chat had us agree to ride together but with Peter imposing the 'no gravity assists and disappearing' condition on me. I was reasonably happy to oblige so we headed onwards through Banyo finally catching Vaughan at Toombul Road. Vaughan had let me know he was looking to ride a 15-17 hour day so I was puzzled til he told me he got his first puncture on that particular bike.

The ride northwards saw pretty us slowing or stopping at nearly every set of lights until Strathpine where we took Station road rather than Gympie which removed all lights until we crossed the railway lines after turning onto Samsonvale Rd. To make things more inconvenient, the McDonalds was really busy so we headed to the shopping center where Vaughan had his break but headed off reasonably quickly.

Peter and I separated a little on the road to Dayboro where we caught up at Dayboro. We agreed to regroup at the top so I watched Peter disappear up the hill in his usual fashion and I ground up, surprisingly arriving only 10 minutes later at the hall at Mt Mee. It was also surprising as I stopped to take a few photos and it rained as well. We had a brief rest, I topped up my energy reserves and water so we could continue on to Woodford then Kilcoy. The weather was quite unfriendly til Kilcoy with rain, dry, squally rain, torrential rain, dry, thunder, more rain and a bit more dry. Braking on the downhills required a lot more attention due to the wet roads. Fortunately traffic was light at that time of the day. Paul and Vaughan passed the other way (at separate times) between Woodford and Kilcoy. This was good as we were about half an hour 'up' compared to last year.

We arrived at Kilcoy to find the bakery surprisingly open at 4:30 in the afternoon. After taking more sustenance onboard, we headed back to Woodford in more rain, dry, rain (rinse and repeat). All this rain made the surface on Cove road a bit unfriendly with mud, potholes and more rain. The change of route along Commissioners Flat Road was much more pleasant than the main road and we quickly

arrived at Peachester for a much needed short stop before heading down the hill. It didn't seem to take too long til we arrived at Glenview for our next control. I elected to put on my jacket due to the dropping temperature as we left the control with alternate rain and dry periods setting in again. At Landsborough, Peter and I accidentally parted company – he to plastic shroud his phone and me ducking to the toilet. Unfortunately, Pete didn't see my lights so he headed onwards as he should.

Heading south I briefly stopped to send him a message regarding my whereabouts and delay but still continued through the rain which stopped just after Beerwah. I encountered a couple of young lads sitting on the path just before the turn onto Beerburum road who were in awe that 'old guys' would ride 300km in a day particularly when I was the second person they spoke to – I assume Peter was the other because they would have been sitting there for hours otherwise.

I received a message from Pete when I got to the Caboolture showgrounds letting me know he was at the control so I sent a 'I will be there in about 10-15' message. The only disturbing thing in Caboolture was the amount of glass on the road just before King St., some automotive, some not.

Peter was easy to find at the control and I had a bite to eat and a couple of drinks before leaving. A couple of police vehicles had arrived for their occupant's coffee break which was cut very short as they headed off with lights flashing just as we left. I took off reasonably quickly and Peter said he would be struggling a bit as he was sore (due to an Armco incident at Beerwah) and I was in need of a tree break. Timing was perfect as we headed to Burpengary to cross the highway and head on through the familiar roads on our way to Scarborough where the new route took us along Klinger Road to Elizabeth Avenue – much shorter return than previously.

Fatigue must have been setting in a bit by this stage because I was on the big chain ring and a small cog at the back at the red light crossing Anzac Avenue. I made the silly mistake of not releasing pressure on the chain when I shifted to the small chain ring and soon found myself going really slow with the chain jammed in the front derailleur. I had the good sense to unclip from the pedals before further disaster could set in and rolled across the intersection surprisingly still on a green light. Pete had a good start and was way off in the distance when I stopped to unjam the mess. Unfortunately the fatigue factor had me use brute force which resulted in a bent derailleur, a rubbing chain, a small chainring only option and no time to pull it apart to fix it. I caught up with Pete at the next set of lights and explained what had happened and of my decision to just finish the ride with the chain rubbing. I wasn't too worried about wear and breakage as the derailleur is a brute force mechanism and the chain rubs on it when changing anyway (somewhere around every couple of km on average.)

We crossed Hornibrook Esplanade at the lights and I rode relatively slowly onto the bridge and a bit concerned as I couldn't see Pete's lights behind me. I had thought that he stopped for a reason of his choice but alas had misjudged the turn and was treated to a fall into the garden. He caught up to me by halfway across the bridge and we rode at our own pace to PJ's arriving with 10 minutes to spare.

Our adventures were not over there though, I need to make my bike more ride-able so Pete helped me remove the bottle cage, chain, pump holder and front derailleur whilst in PJ's driveway, operating by bike light and finding the multitool to be a less user friendly item than we are all led to believe. It increased the disassembly time by double. I avoided much of the re-assembly time because most things were put in my jersey pockets for my 11km ride home on the small chain ring.

We headed off after about 40 minutes. My ride home was pretty uneventful but Pete had problems at the end of the street which I didn't see and was long gone while he fixed it.

Overall, the ride is still a good one, fatigue is manageable, and I will always ride to and from it rather than get in the car at the end.

Unfortunately for Pete, he is out for 6 weeks with 3 fractures. Me, two weeks as a result of wet weather caused irritations, Curly, two days as I picked up a derailleur on the Sunday afternoon and replaced it Monday.

One thing I have changed is my tooling for the rides. I no longer carry a multi-tool. I changed it out for four allen keys, a double ended screwdriver, a small folding knife and a compact chain breaker.