

Reddimee Ride Report

A long weekend, some expected fine weather and the opportunity to ride AUDAX with some familiar faces is all the ingredients necessary for a casual 160km loop that is Reddimee. Mind you I only decided the night before of my own attendance which is a practice I don't like to do and normally don't do so apologies for not setting the right example.

A 4 a.m. wake up, breakfast had I was on the road for a planned 5:30 arrival at the start. Mick and Ant had already arrived and were fast getting ready. But where was our RO especially with only 30 minutes to go? Brian, the documented RO was somewhere down near Coffs on annual leave so deputised Chris R for the role. Had his deputy failed in his call of duty or would he crest Barber Street in time.....the later would eventuate. In addition to Mick, Ant and I we were joined by Hugh and Anne (both whom rode to the start), Chris E, Chris R and new comer Liz riding her first AUDAX event. A last minute nature call saw Mick depart but return in time for the 6 a.m. start. Sorry Mick but nothings sacred when I'm around.

Pre ride talk over, brevets in order the group set off with a weather forecast of hot conditions although the morning was nothing short of perfect. Our course today would take us over the Samford Range, up and down Mt Mee, out to the Redcliffe Peninsula before tracking back to Ferny Grove.

No sooner had we left that the first wrong turn was taken down to Samford Road. I think Chris just wanted to enjoy the downhill run of Gordon Street. Anyway back on track the group quickly established a nice pace before the climb up the Samford Range which splintered riders from one another. A dropped chain at the foot of the climb upset my rhythm but was able to regain composure and set about getting to the top. Upon cresting the summit the climbers sat up to allow a regrouping to take place before setting off down through the rural area of Camp Mountain Road.

The push out to Dayboro went very quickly as the group worked together setting a fairly good pace mind you I think Ant and Liz did a fair amount of the front end work. A convenience stop at Dayboro also allowed riders to take advantage of topping up water bottles before the next section up Mt Mee. Riders set off in smaller groups with Anne, Liz and myself leaving last. It afforded the opportunity to have a quick chat with Liz and welcome her to the AUDAX style of riding something I think Liz was very excited about exploring more in the coming months.

Myself, I had a pre ride plan to ride Mt Mee this time round. Take it easy on the lower slopes where the road surface is good before increasing the tempo on the rougher top section to the summit. I was feeling good when the climb proper was reached and quickly established a good rhythm. My objective was to catch Ant and Mick who I assumed were at the front of the group but to do so I needed to ride at a constant pace that would not see me burn out too early. Something I do regularly. Making my way up the climb I was pleased with my tempo and was feeling good and strong passing other riders before seeing Mick and Ant just ahead. A refocus to ensure I maintained my tempo saw me eventually catch them but mistakenly adjust my tempo to theirs once reached. This break in rhythm meant I now found it harder to keep with them and once the second half of the climb was reached I began yo yoing and having to change up a couple of gears each time to get back on. Whilst I was pleased at having the strength to get back on each time it should not have got to this and the effort sapped me of energy needed to keep with them getting dropped insight of the summit. When I looked back at the whole ride up Mt Mee I was pretty pleased.

Summit reached I used the opportunity to take photos of the riders as they came to the top, Hugh, then Liz followed by Chris R, Chris E and Anne one by one all reaching the summit in readiness for the push along the top.



Ant and Mick decided to push on and not stop and with the increasing temperature perhaps a good move.

Checkpoint One at Wamuran was still 30 odd kms away with the undulations across the top and the descent off the mountain still to come.

Hugh Liz and I rode this section together and was when Liz mentioned to me she had not ridden this road before and was suitably impressed by its panoramic views, forested sections and green fields. Mt Mee is certainly a

picturesque location to ride through and one I personally love to ride through.

The Ocean View lookout just before the descent provided Hugh and I the opportunity to stop at the coffee van and fill up the water bottles to make the final 20kms easier, we waited for Liz and Anne and planned to ride to CP1 together. Liz arrived, took in the views of the Glasshouse Mountains before pushing on alone. Chris R and Chris E whizzed on past with an endorsing wave of the hand but no Anne. Hugh and I waited for a while and even went back along the road. Little did we know she had gone through without our seeing her and so wasted some 15 minutes?

We eventually made the decision to push on however both of us were not comfortable in doing so. Comfort was afforded in the knowledge Anne is a very competent AUDAX rider and certainly skilled enough to get herself out of any difficult situation, well we hoped so anyway. Call me old fashioned but I like to know where every rider is on the road and if there is some stragglers I like to ride with them and help them enjoy the ride in company. One of my earliest AUDAX rides saw me do an entire 200km BRM alone and I found it tough being new to cycling (not that I didn't mind the challenge) but it would have been nice to have had a riding buddy that day.

Descent done, Wamuran reached and not before time as the mercury was now rising and a cold drink and some much needed food needed. Two small meat pies, an apricot turnover, chocolate milk drink and a soft drink were on the menu and devoured in good time. Oh yeah, guess who was at Wamuran? Anne.

Departing from CP1 Liz scored the first flat, Chris R asked if I was feeling good and if I would remain behind and he'd go ahead with the group at a slower pace to enable our catching up...agreed.

These plans are generally full proof but when a tiny error creeps in the result can be somewhat different. So what was that tiny error.....well Liz and I entered Old North Road and left it at Caboolture River Road....problem was we were meant to exit at Bellmere Road... This explained why we didn't catch them up. All that time we were questioning Chris and his comment about riding slower, sorry Chris. Hugh even made a comment later in the ride to me he looked back once and saw us a coming but then never saw us again.

Now being the longer AUDAX member of the two I ask the membership if I can pull rank on Liz by saying I wasn't issued with a route sheet (which I wasn't) and Liz had a Garmin (which I did not). Does that switch the blame...sorry Liz? Anyway Liz enjoyed her ride along Old North Road with its undulations, oven like conditions and rough road surface. The landscape out there is so unforgiving with its continual radiating heat from the road and surrounding fields devoid of tress and greenery. It is a horrible section of road that I so dislike. Perhaps if we took the right road it may not have been so horrible. Insert lesson one Liz....follow route sheet...it's the bible of AUDAX.

We did however ride strongly when we did hit the flats of Caboolture River Road, adopting a time trial approach with our speed around 35kph in an effort to catch the group....but where were they??? A quick stop at a bus stop to hydrate and double check our location using the iPhone to cross reference with the route sheet concurred we were on the right track...it just wasn't making sense. Again we questioned had Chris told us a furphy and rode much faster than we were told ???? It was here we worked out the error of our ways, oh well cannot undo what has happened...ride on we say, get back on course quickly which we did.

The time spent together meant we were able to talk about our various cycling careers, Liz's was much more compelling than mine but it's always great to hear what some else has done, where they have come from and what they think of AUDAX. Something tells me Liz will be back.

We reached the Bruce, and shortly thereafter we spotted a lone cyclist in the distance, was it one of our riders? Closing in fast we identified it as Hugh achieved kindly by his decision to do a complete circle of the roundabout onto Old Bay Road. We caught Hugh shortly afterwards and decided to ride together into CP2 at Redcliffe.

Soon after though Hugh was showing signs of not feeling well and began dropping of the pace, I told Liz to go ahead to the checkpoint and I'll ride with Hugh. We entered Klinger Road, then Boardman Road then Griffith Road. Still 8kms from CP2 Hugh made a quick veer to the left and onto the path way before coming to a complete stop underneath a tree. The heat had finally placed its strengthening grip on Hugh to a level he could not seek release from forcing much needed respite from the heat and sun.



With shoes & socks off, top removed Hugh set about cooling himself down through laying down and simply resting. A passing motorist stopped to see if we were ok which was somewhat scary given the amount of traffic that had passed already without stopping. Thumbs up given we thanked them sincerely for their concerns before they were on their way. I used the break myself to remove my own shoes and socks and take a nice wade in the canal which was cool clean and refreshing to the body. I will take the opportunity and

thank Hugh for picking a delightful spot to take the break, it was picturesque as much as suburbia can get.

After a good 40 odd minutes Hugh was still hot and made the call to abandon the ride. Being so far from anywhere I told Hugh he was not going home alone in that condition and so also pulled from the ride. Our plan was formulated which included a short ride to a shopping centre about a 1km away to get some drinks and food then down to Sandgate to the train station to get him home. A servo half way would provide an additional rest top if needed.

We reached Sandgate train station without too much additional trouble or concerns but as we were purchasing our ticket the train came and went meaning an extra 30 minute wait was before us. Not ideal but it allowed us to go over the road and soak our hot heads under a running tap at the 7 Eleven servo. This was kind of unique as we shared the tap with a fellow rider (of some sorts) with his trusty K9 in tow on his very own bike trailer complete with blanket and cushion.

Back to the station and before we knew it all aboard and we were off to Bowen Hills were a change of trains would take us to Gaythorne and Ferny Grove. Insert reference for Bowen Hills train station....bloody hot place to be...in fact ridiculously hot.

Hugh had recovered well over the course of the trip home, a combination of being in air conditioning, out of the direct sunlight and not exerting himself any more combined to give him enough energy to get home. His departure at Gaythorne and my own 5 stations further on at Ferny Grove ended an eventful ride leaving only the small ride up to Brian's house left. My arrival to no cars meant all had come and gone including Liz's whom we had fears that she had been left behind by the group at CP2 to ride the last 30 odd kms home by herself. Some post ride calls confirmed this had not taken place meaning all riders accounted for.

Thanks everyone for the day and to Hugh, mate I hope your feeling much better and see you out and about somewhere else. To Liz I hope you enjoyed your first AUDAX experience and hope to see you on another ride.