

RIDE REPORT

AUDAX IN THE WEST



600KM RIDE

The ride started at Kelmscott at 6.00am on Saturday and had been informally organised so that the "Fast Riders" would leave one hour later than us slower types.

It was cold but we soon warmed up as we climbed the Brookton Highway hill and headed off following Colin Farmer's new blinking LED taillight. Three faster riders, Peter Bombaderi, Duncan Faux and Justin Garvin who started with us soon disappeared into the darkness. At the top near the Rock Inn, Don Briggs had his first of four punctures and calmly waved everyone past. Another hour went by before he caught up to Colin Farmer and Ken Ward who were riding along at a very reasonable pace. Another 10km further on we came across Justin Garvin standing in the sun. He had been left behind and was a little worse for wear, being very cold. A little coaxing and he was back in the saddle and going along nicely. This was when Brett Rutherford, Brian Hawes and Sam Burton passed us; they had left at 7.00am and set a very good pace and were out to catch Duncan and Peter. The first stop where John and Aileen Martin were tending an "open fire" was a relief from the cold and nobody grizzled about the smoke. After feeding and getting cards signed we set off for Brookton and Popanyinning - our next stop.

The weather had warmed up by the time we arrived at Popanyinning where the Martins had laid out our gear and made a hot cup of coffee. While we ate, one of the local storekeeper's (there is only one) walked over and gave us each a bottle of Glucose drink. These were carefully stored away for the oncoming cold night riding ahead and as we sat and ate we heard that he and his wife were on an around Australia trip and had been at this very small location for the last two years. He said he was originally from Victoria and by strange coincidence the subject of the Australian Football League or the West Coast Eagles never came up. Our next stop was Williams and we arrived about half an hour ahead of the estimated time given to our new support crew, Terry Ord by Aileen and John. Terry also made very good coffee, milo or tea and gave the usual you blokes are doing very well speech. The run from Popanyinning was made with only

a small stop for Colin who had to find a large tree somewhere between Narrogin and Williams.

We left about 5.00pm and as night was drawing near we put on our warm clothing and fortunately for Justin. Terry had brought along a pair of long riding pants which fitted him like a glove (I won't attempt to explain that). The hills to Darkin seemed to be a little steeper this year but as Colin says, "It's all in the mind".

Darkin came and went and the road to Moodearup via Duranilin was without a centre line which made riding in the moonlight relatively easy but when clouds rolled in it was impossible. Terry had some very tasty hot soup at Moodearup and as tuckered up we talked about the next very hilly section ahead to Dinnimup and Boyup Brook.

Ken accidentally ran into Colin on the road near Dinnimup and Don was waiting on the top of the very steep hill ahead. After about half an hour Justin, Ken and Colin arrived and told Don to go on to Boyup Brook while they took it a bit easier over the last 20km. At Boyup Brook everything was quiet and everyone was in bed asleep but Don and Colin had to wake John Martin to get their sleeping bags from the support van. Another half an hour and all was quiet. 5.30am Sunday and we were up again to an Aileen Martin special oatmeal breakfast, toast and coffee. It was very foggy outside and those of us who wore glasses found it very hard to see but by using our fingers as windscreen wipers it was almost tolerable. Don had his second puncture just before Mumbleup and was also looking for more energy to carry on. Ken Ward finished his Super Randonnée at Lowden. He was only doing 400km to complete his series of rides - not bad for a young 60 plus biker.

Phil Giddins had dropped back to see us up into Wellington Mills and the view from the top of the hill was one of the finest in the Southwest. At the turn-off toward Burekup Don had his third puncture and this time changed the tyre as well. We were making very good time through to Wokalup on the Southwest Highway where we met John and Aileen again who were looking after the slow riders while Terry went on ahead of the faster ones. We turned off the Highway and travelled towards Pinjarra on one of the many back roads catering for the Dairy Farms in the area. Pinjarra was our last stop before Kelmscott. After we had stocked up and had a warm drink we were on our way up one of the side roads where Don had his fourth puncture, this time in the front tyre. Colin and Justin were both hoping that this was the last mishap for the trip but more was to come near Kelmscott. A car driver with a boat on a trailer overtook Duncan knocking him forward into Sam which damaged

both bikes and produced some bruises on both riders. It seemed that the slower riders were not to have all the fun and Colin, Justin and Don arrived safely, no more punctures, cold and tired back to the starting point where warm cars were waiting to take them home. Without the support crews and organisers these randonnées would be almost impossible and I'm sure I speak for all of the riders in saying you all did a very good job on that weekend.

DONNELLY RIVER 200KM - SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1991

If the prospect of a challenging 200km Audax ride through some of our beautiful southwest Karri forests sounds appealing then the Donnelly River 200 is a Randonnée you should not miss. Starting at Donnelly River it heads off towards Bridgetown then cuts back to Nannup. We then take the road to Pemberton passing through Beedlup National Park and those giant Karri trees. After Pemberton it's on to Manjimup via some scenic back roads and then finally back to Donnelly for a hot "cuppa" in front of a log fire.

The ride is a fairly demanding one but that only heightens the satisfaction from completing our first randonnée held in the South West. There will be the normal backup facilities for this ride. Accommodation at Donnelly is \$20 per person or \$150 per cottage to sleep 8. Bookings for accommodation close August 15th.

Organiser Brett Rutherford Ph. 339 7059

CONGRATULATIONS to Arie Lemson and Kristina Swan and Shane Ritchie and Vicki on their engagements and also to Colin Farmer and Kevin Norris who completed the Paris - Brest - Paris ride!