

11 out of 11 2019

D Booth

This is a ride that I look forward to, having participated on several occasions. Due to the 'bridges' theme, the route tends to be more complicated than Jacques Anquetil's love life, but this New Year, although Simon has made a few sensible changes to the start and finish, the tricky bits of the route remain the same and I am unlikely to get lost. The weather forecast looks good and I need a Long Steady Distance (LSD) fat-burning ride, following carpal tunnel surgery. The only preparation needed is to lubricate the bike chain with sewing machine oil and to wrap the 'bars with inner tube to reduce bike path vibrations.

There were over forty entries for the ride but I do not see many after the start. If anybody passes me I determine to maintain my own pace as part of the training regime. No point in saying "LSD" by way of excuse to explain my slow pace; these days the response would probably be "You should change your supplier!" I recognise only Mark, on martialling duties, riding a steel framed, sensibly-gearred bike, 'en-danseuse' up the climbs.

The route over the Gateway Bridge is wind-assistedly easy and it's tempting, but too foolhardy, to tear down to the Creek Road traffic lights to cruise up the following climb. Reaching South Bank, there is a number of early morning cyclists and runners on the path but no concerns other than the new electric scooters, probably approved by the Brisbane City Council's DDI, yet another addition to the bike-path congestion that is allegedly a problem. Still, there are no motorists to avoid! However, I do come across a group of colleagues debating where to go next.

After the Dutton Park control, the temperature rises and there are undulations. Short climbs which would normally be attacked are humoured, to keep the heart-rate down. It proves impossible to resist the shade of a 'bus shelter at the foot of a rise. A few minutes later, at the top of the same rise, I come across others at the next 'bus shelter, easing my conscience. Barges on the river are presumably from last night's fireworks or maybe part of another bridge project. So it continues until the next control, at the same Dutton Park location, where I meet John and David.

We more or less keep together for the remainder of the ride. Having fitted a bell conveniently to the 'bars, I take the opportunity to alert a rollerblader that John is about to pass. Obliging, she halts at the side of the path but moves out without looking as I come past. I use the bell again to alert a group of young girls on the Storey Bridge. Generally pedestrians either do not hear the bell or ignore it, proving to me that the tried and tested alerts are more effective.

I walk up Queens Road and we share a shaded area at the top to regroup. Then it is downhill or flat to the finish. I am disappointed that I do not feel any slimmer but this ride gets better every year so thanks Simon and Vaughan, your efforts are appreciated.