

## **YERONGA MEDLEY 1 - 300KM - 16th Feb 2019**

The Yeronga Medley was the prime choice for my first 300km ride. Leading up to the day, the hot weather was not on my side, and with the ordeal that was the Marburg Warthog still fresh in my mind, I was ready to bail if the weather didn't lower to my needs.

A sizeable team gathered in the early light of what was predicted to be the coolest day we'd had for over a week. Plenty of 200km riders, as well as riders for the 100km and 400km, with 4 of us doing the 300km and the daredevils completing the 2 day 600km event. I was so excited I briefly forgot to start the Garmin recording as we set off along the corso. I'd ridden the first 50km before, so relaxed and followed advice to pace myself, to not overdo things at the start. The break at Yamanto was quick, with most of the riders already restocked and gone. There were still a few enjoying the breakfast burger. I stopped at the garage for a classic chocolate milk - the guy behind the counter, eager to play his part asking "would you like me to sign your card?...we've had a few through" he explained.

My dodgy foot was starting to tingle, I had half a painkiller and took off with a couple of 200 riders and was soon lost in the other world that is Middle Road. The going up was slow and the going down seemed even slower, with a gentle yet persistent wind adding to the difficulty. Before too long I decided to have the other half painkiller. Luckily, there was a chemist and I topped up my supply in Boonah at the Dr Foote chemist - how appropriate?

"Having fun yet" I was asked - I'm not sure you do this one for fun --- but yes --- the Yeronga Medley 300 is an excellent ride, passing through some of Brisbane's outlying suburbs and continuing into stretches of rolling folds of road undulating to reach through the small towns of Peaks Crossing, Boonah, Mt Alford, Lake Moogerah, Kalbar, Harrisville and Rosewood. Sweetly picturesque. There is something primally joyful about riding - through towns, passing breathtaking landscape - while you soar along using your body's own power.

Oh Mt Alford! Now wasn't that a surprise. Rising up out of the flat with bend after bend hiding the next ascent. Mark had taken off and was nowhere in sight. I started up the climb and quickly felt my foot begin to complain. My mind was not on task and after the next bend decided to dismount and walk. I noticed Mark smashed the ascent and sailed on ahead to Rosewood. Well done. Later when I caught up with Craig (doing the 600 - for the Interstate) he helped me appreciate the benefits of my decision. "A chance to stretch the legs and take in the scenery" Much appreciated, thanks.

Coming into Rosewood I was feeling a little disheartened about how late it was. I felt I had plenty in reserve, so finishing was not yet in doubt - just when that might be was unclear. I joined Mark and Craig at Vie's for a small dinner. My appetite was poor and I struggled to finish some steamed rice and dim sims. I felt a bit nervous with the approach of night. Craig had further to go and headed off with the possibility of beating us back to Yeronga. Remembering the advice from John to have my back ups ready, I took out the energy gel I purchased in 2017 (!) for the FNQ ride. Half had spilled in my pack over the years and I decided it was time. The gel was a clear, sickly sweet concoction and I rinsed it down with water. A top up of painkillers and it was time to push on.

Mark led the way to Grandchester with his super bright lights and my spirits started to rise. Back in the saddle nerves fell away, replaced with bubbling adventure and excitement. Got a bit of a wake up call as we left Rosewood for the second time - I was in front and went onto some gravelly shoulder. We had a few cars pass, however the road was good quality and I felt secure. We were lit up like a couple of christmas trees and heard the shout of "good gear" as we sailed through a roundabout at Booval. I was pleased to be wearing the Audax high viz vest generously given to me.

The route became familiar again and the final stretch was cool and breezy. I gave a few bursts of speed. I wanted to finish before midnight - when I might turn into a pumpkin : )

11:42 and I was there!

Ruth.