

Three Large Circuits – Dave Minter

I can't rely on prompts from my 2006 brevet card for the Three Large Circuits 1000. That brevet card, along with virtually all of my cards before 2010, is stored in a shoe box halfway round the world in Oz, so I have to rely on my imperfect memory. When a couple of dozen 1000+km brevets ridden over a couple of decades is combined with general 'rando-amnesia', a lot of the details of this particular ride are missing in action. There have been many brevets held in Southeast Queensland over the past couple of decades, so memories of individual rides do tend to get jumbled together.

Joan Brown was the organiser (she is certainly missed) and her husband, daughter and other family members assisted at various checkpoints doing everything they could to keep us in decent shape but they weren't the only ones. The riders were far outnumbered by supporters, meaning that Vaughan and I never had any chance to quit. That would have wasted their efforts, willingly provided at all hours of the day and night.

Vaughan or even Dino would be better options for an entertaining story. Dino Morgante rode the first day of the 1000km, along with Catherine Johnson. Both rode with me through the worst of the weather (there was terrible rain that first day) before stopping. Vaughan was a bit further up the road most of the time as we rode a big loop flirting with the NSW border and back to the start near Ipswich. Apparently real life had commitments for both Catherine and Dino that prevented them enjoying the entire event - work is always the curse of cycling folk. Catherine went on to finish PBP07 (the wet PBP), despite a DNF rate double the norm. I had no doubts that she would have finished this one, if circumstances had allowed. Dino has been riding for a lot of years but still not got to the start of PBP. Hopefully we'll see him there in 2019.

There was a howling Westerly for virtually all of the second day. No rain but Vaughan and I rode together for most of the day, plugging into the teeth of the headwind. Somewhere near Laidley, I recall we were swapping turns on the flat every few minutes for a breather. Not far off a full time trial effort was getting us about 15km/h down the road, which was rather dispiriting to both of us. Only those folks giving up their day to assist kept me riding that day. When we finally hit the turn the other side of the Great Dividing Range in the late afternoon, it quickly died away, of course. We just plugged along that evening to get back to some beds.

The last day was cold but thankfully not wet or windy. There was nothing to stop us getting to the finish; it was just a case of ticking off the miles. A couple of folk joined us on the last day and we went somewhere out Kilcoy/ Esk direction but can't remember very much that is definitely from this ride, other than a couple of much appreciated supported roadside checkpoints. The sigh of relief when I realised that a catastrophic bike failure couldn't be a

problem, I was close enough to the finish to walk in and still finish within time - I certainly remember that.

Unfortunately I blotted my Queensland 1000 copybook by DNFing the Beaches and Beyond in 2012 with a day to go. That was a tougher than necessary route for a 1000. In the dying words of that great Aussie philosopher, "Such is life!".