

11 out of 11

Today was a day of firsts. Not only was it the first day of the first month 2016, but today was the day my good mate Craig and I lost our virginity.

Today the temptress "Audax" lured us both into her clutches and seduced us for half a day. We had heard about her alluring features, long and beautiful meandering rides through some of Queensland's most delightful countryside on clear blue skies. So many people had told us that we must try "Audax"...."you won't be disappointed!"

So the day came, the first of. After meeting our co-ordinator Simon and fellow riders, Craig, my wife Cindy (she had lost her virginity only a few weeks earlier.. I felt betrayed!) and I set off on our 100km journey titled "11 out of 11". The route would take us on this delightful New Year's morning across all 11 cyclable Brisbane River bridges.

Off we set from Belmont, excited chatter between us, (well between Craig and myself, the others had a more seasoned approach, calm and dignified). We twisted and turned through the backstreets of Brisbane, zigging and zagging as we ticked off one bridge crossing after another, until we made it to our first stop in Dutton Park. Simon and his lens clicking buddy Michael had it all set up, cold drinks and a yummy range of foods.

Cards marked, we took off again in search of the Indooroopilly and Jindalee bridges, the day beginning to warm nicely. The group split up a little at this point as some riders preferred to enjoy the time alone, but not Craig and myself. We sat and watched closely as we followed Dave, who seemed to be the only rider who knew the entire course without having to fumble through the three pages of well documented directions. (Thanks Simon)

After passing through the stunning grounds of the Queensland University, we arrived full circle back to our hosts for a well-earned break. A good chance to refresh, but also a great opportunity to talk with some of the riders face to face.

Back on, we headed through West End and the colours of Southbank, dodging and weaving past all manner of people enjoying their "first of". Across the Goodwill Bridge, past the stunning cliffs of Kangaroo Point and onto the Story Bridge, we headed for our final bridge of the day, the towering Gateway. (or the "sting in the tail" of the ride as I heard one rider quip). Up I rode on my fancy Italian machine, thinking I was going very well! That is until Peter on his 'Bike Friday' came flying past, spinning like a helicopter all the way to the top. (Peter does only weigh 15 kgs, bastard!)

A few more turns and we all rode back into the Belmont Tavern for a well-earned coldy, and some final debrief.

One hundred kms done, 11 bridge crossings done and two former virgins with big smiles on their faces. The "Audax" goddess hadn't disappointed us, but like all goddesses, we know she can also be cruel and dangerous as well.

Cheers,

Glenn Pethely