

Ride Report QLD AGM 2016

As the calendar entry said, the objective of this ride (apart from a rare chance of riding a 50) was to set the mood for the AGM.

And so it came to pass that the RO was allowed to lead the peloton for the initial 49 of the the entire 50km, with just one notable exception. Simon had previously decided that this would be his day to establish a new P.B. over this distance. As mentioned earlier, 50 km rides are a bit like the proverbial (insert favourite definition of rare commodity here) so it would have been churlish of us to catch him and slow him down. At the rate at which he took off, it would also have been impossible, so we just muttered a lot and carried on riding at what we considered a sensible, AGM mood setting pace or, as I like to think of it, UAF pace. (22.5km/h)

And thus we proceeded until I spotted Simon in the distance on the hill in Childs Rd. and increased the pace in order to (hopefully) see him swamped by our peloton. We were gaining rapidly and my heart rate increased accordingly, while I did all I could to remain the cool, calm, unruffled RO, although I'm sure I wasn't deceiving the stronger riders behind me who were weaving across the road to avoid overtaking me.

Disappointment was mine when the rider ahead came to a halt and turned not to be Simon at all.

By this time we were heading downhill in St. Vincents Rd. so I was able to keep going without missing a beat as we passed the Banyo Library, which happens to be the start/finish for March Madness 300 on March 26. (Free Plug for my next gig as R.O.; a ride not to be missed, featuring two guest Audax members from Tasmania)

We continued along Sandgate Rd. where I was able to skilfully manipulate our arrival at every intersection to coincide with a red light, thereby keeping the peloton intact. Not everyone appreciated this gift with which I'm blessed but it stopped us spreading out.

This routine continued until we approached my immediate neighbourhood, when I began to hope that a neighbour or two would spot me leading a dozen fit looking cyclists and perhaps think that I do more than just ride around the block occasionally. This caused me to overthink the situation; too far ahead of the pack and they might not think I was part of the group. Not far enough ahead and they'd think I was about to be overtaken. As it happened, my fears were groundless as no-one I know saw us. That did start me thinking though, about how Le Tour de France has become so commercialised in recent years as it's a long time since I've heard Phil Liggett tell us that a virtual unknown is currently leading the stage because the race passes through his home town or because it's his birthday. Perhaps I'm getting old.....

Everything continued nicely until we encountered ex cyclone Winston whipping up a gale along Flinders Pde. at Sandgate. I must have started to

flag at this point as Ant asked if I'd like a rest, which I appreciated – Thanks Ant – but I was able to respectfully decline his offer as we'd moved up on a couple of cyclists who led us up to the next turn and out of the direct headwind.

The trip through the Boondall Wetlands and along the cycleway back to the Hamilton Pine Rivers Wheelers clubhouse was as pleasant as ever and my place at the head of the peloton remained unchallenged until we entered the criterium circuit.

There's been a lot said and written about one of the virtues of Audax being the fact that it's not competitive. We use this unashamedly when promoting ourselves to potential new members. So what happened at the 49km mark? Why did everyone change up the big ring (well.... nearly everyone – Dino only has one chainring) and take off like it was the Champs Elysee, leaving me feeling like Mark Renshaw?

Next year, the crit circuit forms the first kilometre of the ride instead of the last.

I am reminded that the difference between Sportive cyclists and Randonneurs is that Sportive Riders tell you they're racing but they aren't really, while Randonneurs tell you they aren't racing but they are.

All in all, an enjoyable AGM mood setting ride, particularly for Simon, who achieved that elusive P.B.