

Midnight Century 2017 - Liz Nelson

Audax Midnight Century Report! What a fun ride. I met Graeme in the Fernvale Lions Park Carpark at about 11.45pm, replete with reflectors, spare lights and plenty of food and water.

I had mentally budgeted for about a six and a half hour ride (average 24-25km/hr) and a fairly steady social pace, however Audax rides are never what you think they are going to be. We started quite quickly with me hanging on to Graeme's wheel for dear life as we chased superstar rider, James Nitis, down the road.

We got dropped on one of the many unexpected hills during the first phase of the ride. Naturally, being me, I couldn't remember the terrain at all and we seemed to get pincher after pincher. It ended up being a good thing that we got dropped as James ended up getting lost. We then teamed up with Chris, who had caught up with us at a set of traffic lights and Matt Locker, who is one of my ex teammates from Koiled QCL racing. The four of us teamed up and started working together. I did a massive turn from Glamorganvale to Fernwood, but this was OK as there was food waiting for me in the car park. It was a carbohydrate lovers dream as I inhaled several jelly snakes.

It was then time for loop number two and on Matt's wheel, we screamed out to Lowood and then onto the Coominya Connection road which is relatively flat (though again I do a great job of rolling my turns into the hills!). The great part is, that being so dark, you don't realise you're going up hill until your legs start complaining. With a light tailwind, it was another quick run back to Fernvale along the Brisbane Valley Highway. It's highly recommended to ride along there at 2.30am - only one car passed us. The moon slid in and out of the clouds on our ride.

Finally it was time for the last loop and that "pimple" I had warned Graeme about. A solid turn from Marburg towards Rosewood from me had us primed for the Tallegala climb which was about 500m and 6%. The sun had started to make its appearance known at that stage and the views into the valley were spectacular. This particular climb wasn't that bad but tiring with 130km already in the legs. Matt then did an awesome pull into Minden, accompanied by Graeme and Chris putting in some solid work as well. Finally, we were in Lowood and Matt and I rolled the final 7km back to Fernvale. Total time: 5 hours 30minutes and a 29km/hr average.

Definitely much more of a smash fest than I had envisioned! Big props to Graeme for a super ride and effort and that he was still smiling at the end after five hours plus of solid riding. I got to meet Peter Fiechtner and some of the girls that had done the 100km, which was great. We were treated to some fantastic bacon and eggs, coffee and Coke and I was back home and in bed by 8.30am :)

Would definitely recommend Audax to anyone that wants to try riding longer distances in a supported environment. Usually I don't ride as hard or fast but the choice is yours. Hope everyone enjoyed the evening!