

Not the Alpine Classic – Beth Darkwillow



[Andrew Bragg](#) said since I was first finished I have this honour?

[Mark Harris](#) [Mark Riley](#) and I kicked off from Canungra at 6am with [Jeff Franklin](#) unofficially joining us for the O'Riellys climb (it was his birthday so this is just what you do). I started off great, whilst madly trying to start Strava I lost sight of the group so started going the wrong way.... caught them up and off we went up the hill for some fun.

Never having done the climb before I was in for a treat for the senses, scenery was well worth it and it was a great easy climb for the most part. Pics at the top with the plane then a steady downhill back to Canungra (I don't much love the downs - for someone who loves the ups I am odd) Outpost Cafe does some amazing pies and scones I gotta say! Leaving here flanked by around 70 motorbikes we set off towards our next bit of fun - Springbrook via Pine Creek Rd.

This was a pure mental and physical test for the three of us. I had ridden down it once before but never up! Avg around 9kmph with Sound of Musics "High on a Hill was a Lonely Goat" going round in my head (don't ask it's just how I climb) I made it to the top without stopping and made straight for the fudge shop for a coke and icecream.

Harry caught up around 20mins later then Mark around 30mins after me, both having made it up that lovely HC climb. Harry and I headed off towards Best of All Lookout - another challenge in itself. I had ridden this once before but had to get off and walk part on that occasion but made it no troubles this time. Control point picture later and an amazing trip down a side road then off down Pine Creek Rd!

I didn't need to get off at the end of this one and sit for 5mins after a panic attack - I must be getting better with the downs?

A quick stop at Advancetown Hotel for water and 5mins of listening to some rocking tunes for Australia Day celebrations and we were off again. Harry and I became separated again at this point and I was off up Beechmont for the first time, a lovely easy climb even at this point of the day. Passed a couple sitting watching the views out towards the cliffs and I was almost tempted to ask for a glass of wine (I am sure that wouldn't be allowed).

Off up to Binna Burra also for the first time. The scenery again making up for any pains I was feeling but all in all a wonderful climb up to the Lodge where I met some people who had heard of Audax! I passed Harry on my way back down the Binna Burra climb then came the fun part... oh yes.... roughly 18km of pure downhill! I hit Canungra pub for final checkpoint at 7pm and I think I silenced the whole bar for a full 2sec with some shagged out chick in lycra rockin up and asking to have a card signed off! Harry came in about 25mins later.

Mark made it back though having missed the Binna Burra climb (I can't say this didn't pass through my head as well, it is amazing what you can talk yourself into or out off) but a massive effort from the two boys. Would I do this ride again? HELL YES!!! Please make it an annual event! Lots of sweat, smiles and great fun - this is what Audax is.

Thank you [Andrew Bragg](#), I only wish you could have joined us on your ride!