

Goat Track Gamble - 2018

I'd been feeling pretty chuffed completing Frank's Ride and keeping an eye out for some longer rides – my usual weekly comes in around the 40-60km with occasional 100 depending on my riding buddies.

I'd seen the first Goat Track Gambol postcard....and heard Mark being impressed with a female rider on last year's event. So, with Tara showing the way, Saturday was suddenly filled with potential , with a capital "P"

The Anzac Park start was a bonus, practically next door for me. I saw John had signed up and with a sense of comradery we started off with no delay. Having completed the 60km Bedrock in May the ride out to Samford was familiar and I was looking forward to seeing the renowned Goat Track myself.



– spectacular views, no cars (not counting ones from yesteryear) and mystical bear trees. Unfortunately, the track doesn't quite take you all the way and getting to the first Control point proved excruciating within the time – some adjustment for the terrain would seem prudent. Still, I'd made reasonably good time and other first timers also succeeded.

I was keen to get going and enjoy some downhill rewards. The words of caution were appreciated, the steep curves and hairpin corners meant pressures on the

brakes were permanent. A couple of cars passed and I wondered if the burning smell was them or me...

Finally down and I got to trundle along to Fernvale where the smart , seasoned and sensible lot took a break with delicious hot food (bakeries - another good reason for travelling by bike). I pushed on, conscious of time and travelling with some pre-packaged sustenance. This decision was acknowledged with sympathy from above. Yes, I got totally wet - a good test for any neoprene foot warmers.

I reached the Marburg Control point almost dry, took off my shoes when the gang arrived. I was determined to keep a few behind me, this proved challenging. I lost my light (a favourite), and as I doubled back to have a second look, fellow riders started to whiz by. This reminded me what a good rule the 2 light system is.

Mark slowed down, checked I was ok and guided me through the left/rights and over the 2km of good, slightly rutted dirt road before leading the way to the long, lifeless and not quite flat Middle Road. Seeing riding lights ahead in the distance showed me a way out of this time/space continuum and back to civilisation, Yamanto and Control point 3.

I was seriously starting to flag and only just caught up to the group at Macca's. The 100% female success rate was casually mentioned - I couldn't let the team down. Seeking any help I could, I set off with the others and used their presence to pull me home. Aiming to keep at least one rider behind me, Brian and I played tag back along the Western Fwy till I realised I still had my sunnies on!!

The ride was a real challenge, the goat track spectacular. This is definitely one to have on your list.

