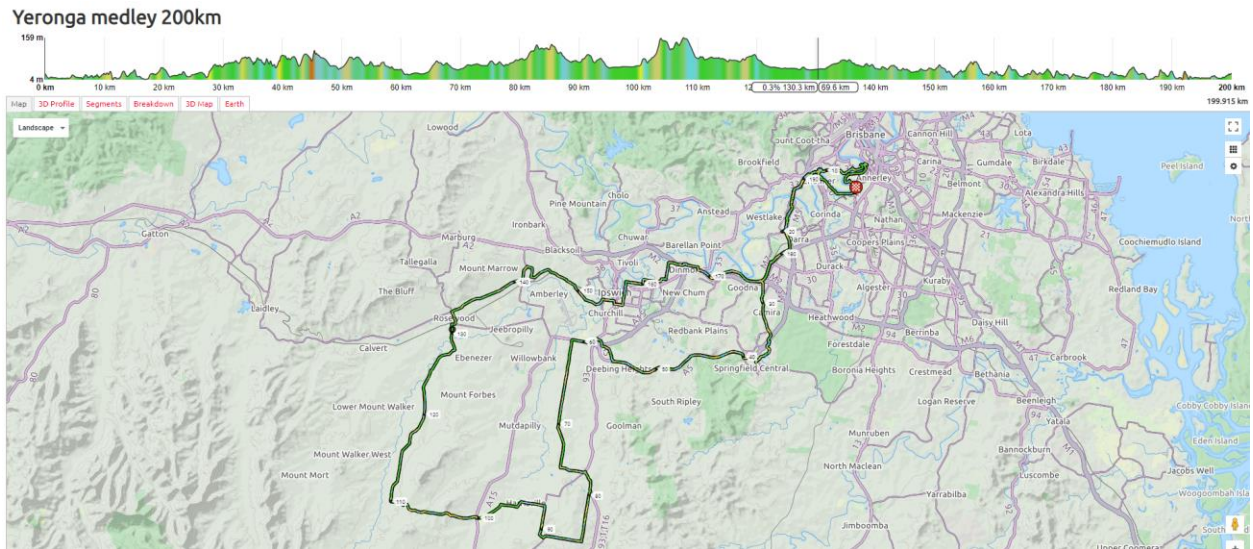


Yeronga Medley 200km – October 2018

Keith Heinrich



The Yeronga Medley 200 is a reasonably gentle ride. The course undulates moderately for the most part as it winds its way west from Brisbane and out through the scenic rim region. The roads are typically straight with little traffic and it's a nice place for a ride in the country. Mild climbs lead to long straight descents permitting time to reflect on the peaks in the distance as you coast serenely through the countryside. A moderate 27 degrees was forecast suggesting perfect conditions on this idyllic course.



What could possibly go wrong??



I'd been keenly anticipating this ride and carefully contemplating which bike to take. I really wanted to take out Bling, a vintage steel framed machine, but sensibly chose the Defy which while less engaging to ride is a much better idea for a long day on the bike. The electronic shifting on this machine has all been moved to one lever and is a thing that requires no effort to operate.

Manual shifting on Bling's Campy drivetrain is more satisfying to operate from a tactile perspective, but is a thing that would have driven me crazy as the day unfolded I am sure.



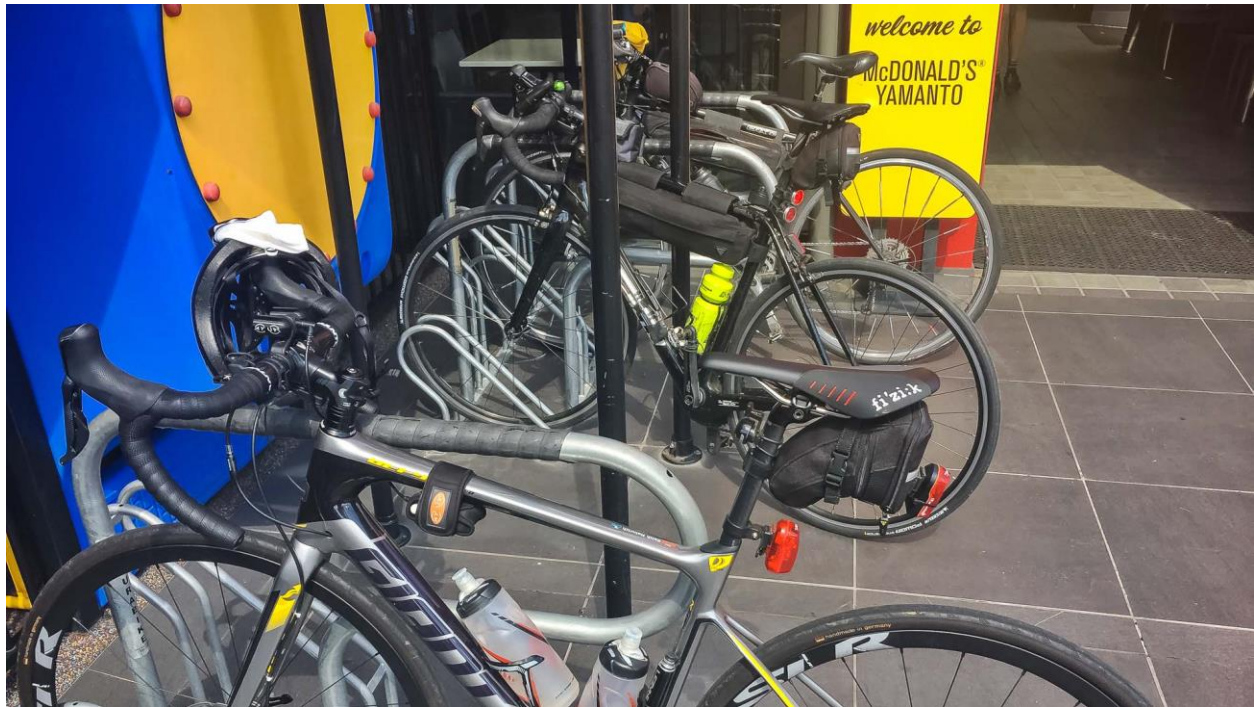
The troops gathered and I took the opportunity to admire the assembled hardware. The choices taken regarding suitable equipment was broad, and I paid particular attention to the specialized nature of the seasoned long distance riders steeds. These typically bore bulletproof tires on alloy rims, dynamo hubs, power distribution network, kitchen cupboard and lights galore. All of this equipment would be deemed essential because extra weight is a thing that no one would willingly add to their ride for no reason.

It was soon time to depart. Bunches formed and made their way alongside the river through the university and onwards. The weather was clear and slightly cool which looked promising. Soon John appeared and so we rode on together, by which I mean that I followed at a short distance.

Like Gandalf, John knows where to go and I figured I'd just follow since I had not ridden this course before. We set out at a comfortable pace on roads entirely unfamiliar to me, arriving at the Yamanto control with plenty of time to spare.

A very random piece of information – Adam Hanson at Gailes. Long story.





Yamanto is the gateway to the rural part of the course. We paused for breakfast and replenished, headed back onto the road. Traversing Middle Road, unfamiliar peaks appeared on the horizon and we rolled towards them. The recent rains have left plenty of water pooled on the ground and I became aware of the increasing temperature and humidity. Luckily a mild day was forecast and so I initially didn't think much more about it as I was too busy checking out the countryside.

By Harrisville however it had become apparent the weather forecast was defective.



I'd stopped a few times on the road to Harrisville and was beginning to drag the chain. John had generously observed that we were on schedule and it wasn't a problem, but I knew that my response to the heat and humidity wasn't likely to improve and that the increasingly frequent stops were becoming intrusive.

We paused at Harrisville for water, Panadol and icy poles, and set out for Warrill View, approximately the half way mark and about 5km from Harrisville.



Just past Warrill View the road rises to the highest point on the course, from where I was cheerily advised, it's all downhill. I set out in search of this demarcation point confident that all would be well, however the climb past the lookout took a very long time and it became clear that for me this would be the end of the ride. At the top I thanked John for being patient and headed back the way I came to organize a ride home.

I descended gently and rolling back into Warrill View was greeted by the local magpie. From there I meandered back to Harrisville. The magpie network was in full swing and I met another a few kilometres down the road. I was too cooked to care and this very persistent magpie took full advantage of my indifference as I rolled slowly towards the edge of town.



The ride into the center of Harrisville from the west requires some mountain climbing from the edge of town. Earlier in the day this road may have been a gentle rise but right now it was as insurmountable as Mt Everest and I wasn't riding any further today.

Luckily the Royal Hotel sits invitingly at the western edge of Harrisville at the bottom of this hill and stepping off the bike and into the bar requires no effort at all. I order lunch and a drink and sit on the verandah where a nice breeze has sprung up. John later reports that this breeze made the ride back in more challenging than he would have preferred, but its working out well for me.

The food and hospitality at the Royal proves epic and I spent a great afternoon there with the locals. Eventually Joan appeared to take me home, but we stayed a while longer chatting with the locals and generally having a good time.

I'll do this ride again, but I think I'll be a bit smarter about the weather and the distance. When riding I need to better manage heat sensitivity which is what caused the wheels to really fall off on this day.

Nonetheless, despite the heat, I had a great day and managed to get half way round. I'll take it.