

PRESIDENT'S PEN

See separate newsletter circulated by Tony Gillespie.

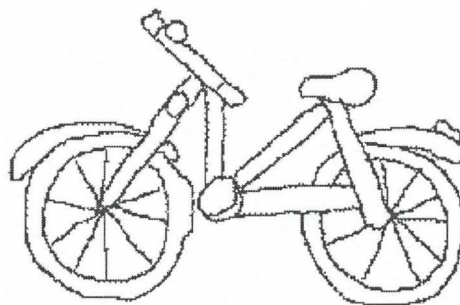


TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Pen

Membership - annual renewal date

Awards - Audax Australia

Date Claims

Bigger rides being held around Australia

Nature stops vs toilets - local knowledge

Ride reports - local featuring

Quindanning Pub Loop

Hydration tips

Road hazards - Kwinana PSP

In the Pyrenees - Members travelling overseas

Ride reports - interstate featuring

Beaches and Beyond S-E Qld;

Gran Turismo Far North Qld

This was your AUDAX WA Club newsletter.

Your contributions and feedback are welcome.

Editor: Caroline Williams - caz.williams@gmail.com

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the respective authors and not necessarily those of Audax WA or its members.

MEMBERSHIP - annual renewal date

As at the end of September, Audax WA is proud to announce that we currently have 77 members on our books, the strongest we have been for a long time. Please consider renewing your membership at the end of October and try to recruit another person to join our Audax.

AWARDS - Audax Australia

The Awards Policy was rewritten in 2012, with a number of designated distance awards being replaced by cumulative distance awards. There are a range of cumulative awards for members and each successfully completed ride may count towards an award in each of the four Riding Award categories:

- Single Season - defined rides
- Single Season - cumulative distance
- Multi Season - defined rides
- Multi Season - cumulative distance

Current Awards

Single Season Defined Rides	Single Season Cumulative Distance	Multi Season Defined Rides	Multi Season Cumulative Distance
<u>Super Randonneur</u>	<u>Audax Australia Annual</u>	<u>Woodrup 5000</u>	<u>Australian Randonneur</u>
<u>Super Randonneur Interstate</u>		<u>Ultra Randonneur</u>	
<u>GT Super Randonneur</u>			
<u>Year Round Randonneur</u>			
<u>Dirt Award</u>			
<u>Nouveau Randonneur</u>			

For further information, refer to the Audax website: www.audax.org.au.

Start sorting through your brevet cards and decide which awards you might be eligible to apply for as the end of another Audax year comes to a close.

DATE CLAIMS

Wed 17 October - National Ride to Work Day

Sun 25 November - AUDAX WA end of year/start of new season party

Time: 12noon-5pm

Venue: Bedford Bowling Club, 145 Grand Promenade, Bedford

BBQs are provided - BYO meat. BAR is provided at bowling club prices - so NO BYO alcohol.

SALADS & DESSERTS to share. If anyone would like to bring a salad or dessert, contact Alison McLernon, almac237@gmail.com, 0407 276 675

Bowling rinks will be available for those who feel the need to tread the green, no stilettos allowed male or female, only soft shoes, socks or bare feet. White gear or lycra is not compulsory, but feel free if it makes you happy. A cost of \$5 per person to play a game of bowls, this includes the supply of the bowls.

Audax WA Awards for acts of genuine or comical nature. Nominations can be provided to Wayne Hickman, whrecord@gmail.com; 0457 766 810.

BIGGER RIDES BEING HELD AROUND AUSTRALIA

Grand Southern Randonnee - Victoria - 29 October

This 1200km ride travels along the Great Ocean Road through some of Victoria's most spectacular coastal scenery before heading inland to the Grampians area and then returning along the coast to Anglesea near Geelong.

Audax Alpine Classic - Sunday 27 January 2013

The Alpine Classic is Audax Australia's flagship event and the world's largest annual Audax event. Held annually in the town of Bright in North East Victoria, this event attracts over 2400 riders. A range of routes and distances are available from 60/72/130/140 or 200.

Then there is the ...

ACE - Alpine Classic Extreme 250km

Ride the ACE250 route over 2 days - two options overnight in Dinner Plain or Omeo.

Aha, the ACE could be a walk in the park after having achieved the Quindanning Pub Loop 600! [Ed.]

Local knowledge - nature stops vs toilets

Mandurah - Peel around Peel 16 Sept ride - the regular roundabout coffee shops have closed down. This area now makes a great spot for those who bring their own food and don't have a need for a coffee or breakfast. For those needing coffee and food and toilets, Charters cafe, on the left, just before the roundabout, is recommended for its great food, quick and friendly customer service and clean high quality toilets out the back. Beats using the public toilets across the road in the foreshore park. Then again, for the fellas, anywhere out on the ride in the bush is fine!

RIDE REPORTS

Dambusters

160km - 30 June - John Eden

Error noted in July newsletter. Apologies to Robert Branch who was one of the deserved few who rode.

Ron Masterman UAF

100km - 5 August - Tony Gillespie

Caroline Williams

For some, this ride was a lesson in nutrition before and during the ride. Timing of eating can be crucial when you have to factor in a long distance from home to the start (eg Ellenbrook to Mundijong) and whether you ride or catch public transport or drive. Perry's birthday was celebrated at the home of Tony and Rose Gillespie for the half way stop, with birthday cake along with many other delicious treats to tempt a hungry hoarde of cyclists. A relatively social UAF ride, except Caroline struggling with breathing; Perry held back to keep me company. *See separate article about hydration.*

Pinjarra Supa Loopa

200km - 11 August - Danny Rock

Last year's inaugural summer ride was ridden during an intense heatwave and riders were required to be cautious of hydration and heat exhaustion. This year, this ride was held in winter. *See separate article preparing you for summer 2012-2013.*

Quindanning Loop 600km

600 - Sept/Oct long weekend - Adrian Yurisich

From the eyes of a non-Audax member: James Quinton

Riders: Adrian Yurisich, Perry Raison, Tony Gillespie, Wayne Bertram, Robert Branch and James Quinton
Support: Virginia Yurisich, Janice Bertram, Caroline Williams

Having completed a 4000km ride from Darwin to Perth in mid-August, I kept my eye out for a challenging ride around Perth. The Audax 600km, two day ride tickled my fancy so I emailed Adrian, the organiser through their website. He was very responsive and supportive. "If you've done the five dams, it'll be easy. It's all mental anyway," he said. 260km was the longest ride I'd ever done. And that was just one day. This was 300km two days in a row. So, in mental preparation during the week leading up to the ride, I tapered off riding completely and forced myself to a strict regime of ice cream and couch.

Sure enough, as is the want of the universe, the big day came along. Was difficult getting to sleep as I forced myself to bed as early as possible and woke up a few times with images of bikes in my head, but then the alarm went off and it was time to go. My sister, who I live with, was dropping me off, but she decided to go out the night before so dragging her to the car was a bit of a task. I actually felt nervous as we crossed the narrows. Imagining different scenarios, and visualising "keeping on going" after 200-300 km had merged into a ball of energy in my stomach that just wanted to get going and get this thing started.

At Adrian's house, beginning to unload their car Janice and Wayne, keen as mustard at 6:35am. Not long after Adrian strolled out in his ugh boots offering coffee and toast inside. I'd seen who turned out to be Tony riding along South St and he arrived soon after having already ridden from Singleton. Then Rob rocked up, and Perry. That was all of us.

Jeez, I thought to myself, no wonder Adrian sounded so keen on the phone. Adrian's supportive wife Virginia helped by toasting bread, making coffee and calling us nut cases. In the support vehicle, Janice and Veronica were going to meet us in York, Pingelly and Williams. And then on the Sunday, somewhere between Williams and Dwellingup.



After a photo or two, we were off. The forecast for the two days was for the most perfect riding conditions you could wish for. Clear skies, low to mid twenties and little wind. I didn't talk too much to begin with, but once I started chatting to Tony it soon emerged he was the guy I dropped a few weeks earlier when I was riding around Golden Bay. Poor bloke got sucked in riding his heavy fixed gear, when I was cruising along at 30km/h and then slowly ramped up to 40km/h for about 5km. I don't mean to say this to show off, and I don't think Tony was offended, it was just a nice coincidence to be riding with someone with whom you had a brief interlude two weeks earlier. Perry and Wayne unhitched from the group at the Welshpool Rd road lights but, by the time we reached Kalamunda Road, we were back together again. However, once the road tilted upwards, the group splintered once more. Everyone was riding pretty conservatively, simply making it up the Darlington Hill as a matter of course. Going in to the red at all this early would be a big mistake. Adrian was chatting about Paris-Brest-Paris which I enjoyed as it's a ride I'd like to do one day. We decided to fill our water bottles at Mundaring and I did that as quick as possible but, by the time I emerged from the little dunny, no one was around so I took off as quick as possible thinking they'd left. After about 5km I realised I was in front and soft-pedalled to Wooroloo.

I also realised in my efforts to clean up the bike for the ride, I'd pushed some grains of dirt into the bottom bracket bearing threads which, from past experience, causes an annoying clunking sound. This would either have to wait until Williams to fix it or put up with it. Only a five minute job, but as usual when you have a break you always forget to do everything and you don't remember until you start riding again and then you say you'll fix it next time you stop ad infinitum.

Bakers Hill was just up the crest. We were at the peak of the scarp then and a good time for a fill up. Excellent bakery too. Wayne had well and truly dropped off at this stage and arrived twenty minutes later. Long enough for Perry to down a litre of choc milk: "I don't mess around." The bakery was so good I was sucked into a second order and added a chocolate donut on top of a shepherd's pie and a thick Winners bar with a coffee chill. This was a big mistake because the donut sat like the ball of nervous energy felt early in the day: big and heavy in my gut. Problem was the donut hung around for way too long. Each sip of water attempting to wiggle its way around the gooey dough.

After reinserting his little silver radio into his pocket (brought along to listen to the grand final), Adrian must have felt the opposite to me because he blasted away from Bakers Hill toward Northam. I couldn't really figure out where he was coming from and not knowing his riding abilities from a tin of chamois cream, I thought either he was trying to drop me and make me suffer or was kind of drilling himself as he went along at 35km on rough roads into a slight headwind towards Northam. Later, Tony would inform me that indeed, Adrian is half bull. We were well and truly in Wheatbelt country now where most of the trees are in water courses.

In York, we were warmly greeted by Caroline who had been out riding York-Beverley-York earlier in the day. Then Perry rolled in, then Rob, then Tony. The footy was half time and the game was close. Everyone except Perry seemed over the ride already. The comfort of the café and the realisation that we had 200km more to go that day

sunk in. The visual monotony of the Wheatbelt had begun and you either had to chat to your riding partners or start talking to yourself. Virginia and Janice arrived and soon after Perry took off somewhere. Thinking he had headed toward Beverley, I left about five minutes later. Was quite good actually, because I'd never ridden from York to Williams before and I could roll along at my own pace while my stomach felt like exploding.

Not far before Brookton, the support vehicles overtook me and then, about a km or two up the road, stopped to offer a Coke and some fruit cake. Perry caught up soon after. Janice was pontificating about how many loaves of bread were potentially in each crop field. Not sure how the other riders were feeling, but it was still too early in the ride to be truly enjoying the scenery. We overtook an elderly gentleman on a bike on a small hill leaving Brookton which I mistook for Wagin. He must have thought the local bike shop was having a sale with all these cyclists around.

By the time I reached Pingelly, the donut had really entrenched itself and I was feeling awful but, other than that, the stop at Pingelly was really good. Perry commented about how lucky and privileged he felt to have a support crew and, while holding back spew while trying to force soup down, I wholeheartedly agreed. After dinner, it was time to rug up and "light up" as Rob would say. Rob; the dark horse. More accurate at measuring out his energy than a digital scale. The guy was in for the long haul. He took as many turns at the front as a cart does with a horse. He donned his bandana across his face like a belligerent bushranger and rode on. The chilly night settled in. The rest of the night was a bit of a blur. We stopped at one point for a nature break and then after that splintered up a bit as Adrian went a bit mad again chasing the support vehicle to let me know we'd catch up with them in Narrogin. In the process, he had a flat tyre, and we all kind of limped into Narrogin like stray dogs. In the confusion, Janice had forgotten to turn off the car high beam lights and was duly held up by the boys and girls in blue. They refused to eat Adrian's ANZAC biscuits that were tremendous. Perry was already on his way to Williams by now and a couple of hills and a nice slow descent, we joined him just before 10pm.



For hours you dream of the moment you dismount, thinking what bliss it will be, but when you dismount you wonder what all the fuss was about. Evidently Adrian was having the opposite experience. Stoically he kept his rear end injury to himself for the latter half of the day. Perhaps in order to avoid nicknames like 'rear end reamer', 'the rump stump' or 'Rudolph's other end' or, perhaps in the hope that by keeping it to himself, he might come good by the morning and be able to continue. Sadly, he was not able to go on. The broom wagon came and swept him up during the night as a warm bed and reverse cycle air-conditioning enabled his mind to think clearly above the heroic war-cries of his pulsating quads. For the men that were left, we tossed and turned all night knowing full well another 280km awaited at 7am. Rob made sure I didn't sleep too deeply by rumbling through his nose all night. Gallant Wayne crunched through the gravel covered driveway at 11:15pm, like a lone wolf falling into the arms of his waiting, beloved, she-wolf.

Poor chap was gone again by 6am just before Tony tucked into some bacon and eggs at the servo and Rob and I had some Weetbix. Fortuitously, however, as they say in Williams: 'the weather was f-ing perfect'. No other way of putting it. A slight easterly and a touch warmer than the day before the sun's rays licked our tender back muscles. Here Tony showed his experience. He may have been slightly buoyed by knowing he had 50 odd kms less than us to go, or maybe he's always like that, but his long solid turns at the front, occasional rotations of the head side to side (to remind us to keep an eye on the views), and more importantly keeping up the conversation, he held us together.

Just little things. Small talk keeps you out of your own head and before you know it another 20km/half an hour has passed. I was conscious not to get my heart rate over 150bpm minute all day to try to make it to the end. Also I was not going to overeat. Not long before the Pinjarra/Marradong Rd, the support vehicles were waiting for us at the top of the hill. These little breaks made all the difference. A stretch, a bite to eat, a wee, a quick chat. Afterwards, a few km's to get back into the swing, but energy slightly higher.

The next section was the toughest of the entire ride. I guess in some ways you're better off not knowing what's ahead; you're less apprehensive of difficult sections. But 100 hilly kms lay ahead all the way to Waroona. My cranks were still making noise and my ankles were swollen like buggery, but you had to just keep going. Hill after hill after hill. Impossible to find a rhythm. As I was riding a 53/39, the lower cadence was started to wear thin too. Long sections of cadence as low as 50rpm isn't much fun as you like to switch between lung work and muscle work. Perry was gone like a flatulence and Tony, Rob and I battled along. If Pinjarra was a candle, we definitely burnt it at both ends on this ride, as we would do a 100km loop around it heading the wrong way home.

At Dwellingup, we were 20km from Pinjarra and then 5 hours later we were 10kms from Pinjarra on the opposite (western) side. Really good sandwiches and refuel at Dwellingup and we headed south along Nanga Road. Up the third or fourth steep rise, I began to lose patience. Willing the day over. So close, yet so far. Motorbikes whizzing by like birds. Every muscle in protest after the short break at the deli. When you reach a milestone, it takes a little while to switch gears to the next milestone and my lovely chicken and avocado sandwich was preventing any swift gear shifts. I imagine Wayne's massive hamburger prevented any new-found enthusiasm from emerging rapidly as well. We all caught Wayne at the Waroona turn-off. He looked like the way I was feeling. Over it, like the sky is over the earth. "You guys go on, I'll only drop back anyway," he said, as images of tents along the Murray River were still fresh in our minds. Problem with mobile phones is, if you're thinking about quitting, they make the process one step quicker. We would learn later from Janice that Wayne had ridden through a real rough patch. But he had made it to Waroona, where Rob, Tony and I stopped for coffee.

The scenery was excellent above Waroona and the descent back down to South West Highway possibly the longest in the south-west. Views out over the Swan coastal plain were uplifting as finally we had visual clues that this epic pedal would terminate. After about 30km on the flats, my legs started to feel good again. Nevertheless, we rounded a bend, before us a massive dunal hill stood towering above. Oh Jesus, I thought, here we go. Funny though, next thought I had was "well, come on then". Felt like the bodiless Black Knight in Monty Python: "come on, then I'll take you on" or "had enough hey?", when surely the hill would have broken me. Thankfully, we took a side road that was hidden from view at that moment. I asked Tony if we could stop at 40km for a stretch and he said there was an ice-cream shop about 10km on and perhaps we should keep going until then. Not a minute later, Janice pulled over in her car and mosquitoes attacked us as we stood around chatting. As mentioned earlier, Wayne had rung Janice and it didn't sound good. He said he was utterly exhausted. I said that if he wasn't utterly exhausted he wasn't human. The lure of ice-cream spurred me on and all of a sudden my legs returned like boomerangs. Ah yes, 35km/h again. Sadly, however, just as my body was coming together, the bike was breaking down and, over a small hill, a spoke in the front wheels snapped. Very odd after riding 500km. Perhaps it had been knocked in the car. The ice-cream was excellent and, once a brake pad was removed, there was enough clearance for the heavily wobbled wheel to rotate without rubbing.

Over the Dawesville Cut, through Mandurah and back toward Pinjarra, we'd seen the most of it. The obligatory object thrown at us in Mandurah let us know we were in the right place. A mighty healthy southerly was witnessed in the white flags of some car sales yard and we knew all was well. Rob was keen to "light up" at Paganoni Road. I'd stupidly left my lights in the car as I thought we were catching up with the support car again (Janice had driven back to Adrian's and got her car), so luckily Rob had some spare lights to lend me. Tony was heading home from here; you could sense his elation, his endorphins and joy. A very strong rider, humbling in his strength. Only 45km left for Rob and myself. The freeway bike path nice and smooth, I decided to ride all the way home to North Perth, so another 15km for me but it was smooth sailing. Was too tired for reflection as I looked out across the water to the line of streetlights along Riverside Drive. The whole point of riding is to live, not reflect. Thank you to Virginia, Janice and Caroline.

Ed: Congratulations to Wayne Bertram and James Quentin in achieving their first Audax 600. Bring on PBP 2015 for your longer term goals. Congratulations also to Rob Branch in achieving his first WA 600 after recently completing the Gran Turismo series in Queensland (see separate article).

Hydration tips - summer is upon us, be prepared

Be particularly sensitive to your overall fluid balance (loss vs replacement) as the risks of DEhydration as well as OVERhydration increase with longer events. One strategy is to weigh yourself regularly during training and after and/or during longer events; 1kg lost equates to 1 litre of fluid lost. Ageing athletes have a reduced ability to thermoregulate (in the heat and cold) due to factors such as 25-40% lower skin blood flow, reduced sweat output, reduced ability to sense thirst, decreased muscle mass and kidney function.

In 2009, Audax held a seminar presented by John Annear (sports physiotherapist and Hawaii ironman competitor) who discussed fuel (hydration and nutrition) for endurance events. He advised if fuel intake is not sufficient, fuel metabolism will be severely impeded and result in BONKING. Dehydration can be prevented by considering your daily food and liquid intake - from days before to during and after an event, acclimatisation and clothing.

Salt replacement beyond that in a normal diet (ie commercially available sports drinks) is necessary under extreme weather conditions and/or in events lasting longer than 8-10 hours. The January 2011 Pinjarra Supa Loopa hit the high 40s in the middle of the day. Consider how much fluid (sweat) you lose when in hot and/or humid weather, eg 20°C, 30°C, 40°C, 50° C. Electrolyte replacement of sodium and potassium is necessary - drinks like Gatorade provide carbohydrates, sodium and potassium. Fluid replacement should be combined with calorie and electrolyte intake and NOT just water.

The Masters Athlete by Peter Reaburn (sports scientist and masters athlete) recommends the following guidelines for preventing heat injuries in the ageing athlete when exercising in the heat:

Fluid replacement. Drink as much fluid (suggested 500ml) as tolerable 30-45 minutes before training. Drink a cup of fluid (100-300ml) every 15 minutes during exercise to ideally replace what you lose. Drinking any more than 1-1.2 litres of fluid per hour is not recommended for gut absorption. After exercise, drink about 150% more fluid than the amount that quenches your thirst, eat meals high in water content (fruit and vegetables), and to replace the sodium lost in sweat, a sports drink (such as Gatorade is recommended during and after exercise longer than one hour. Drinking water alone during exercise may lower the concentration of electrolytes in the blood that may lead to a reduced desire to drink, thus not restoring our blood volume lost through excessive sweating. Sports drinks that contain 6-8% (6.8g/100ml) carbohydrate and sodium are best. Given that fructose has been linked to gut upsets, it may pay to avoid any sports drink that contains fructose.

Consider hyperhydrating, that is, storing more water in your body before an endurance event. Glycerol is a hyperhydrating agent available from chemists that has been shown to benefit endurance performance in athletes riding in hot and humid conditions. Take at the rate of 1-1.2g/kg body weight with a large amount of fluid (20-25ml diet cordial - to hide taste! per kg of body weight) in the 1-2 hours prior to an event.

Road hazards - Kwinana PSP

Stuart Keeling

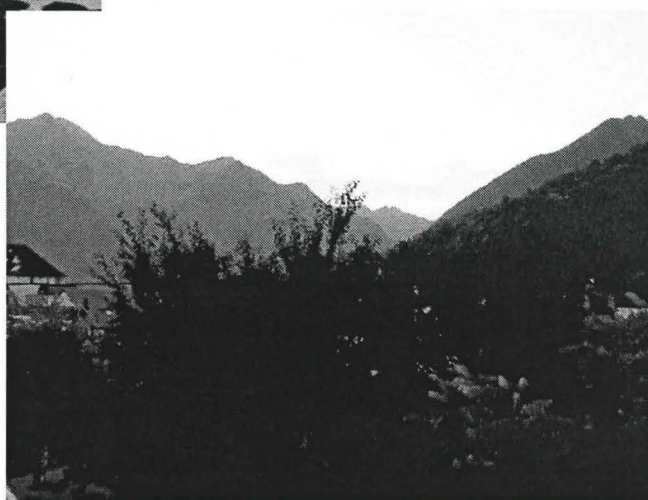
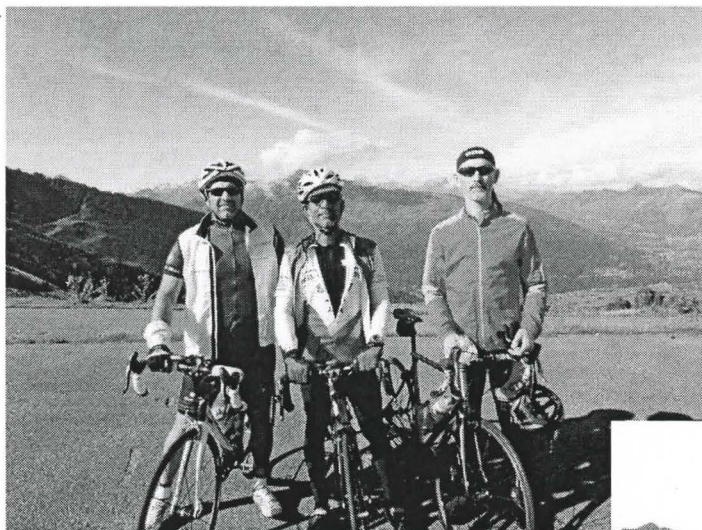
PSP stands for Principle Shared Path. Stuart Keeling, ride organiser for Peel around Peel, has requested riders to complain about the poor quality surface on the short section of path down Baldivis way south of Safety Bay Road. Stuart is encouraging all members to file a complaint about the substandard work. This section is extremely bumpy and felt like it hadn't been compacted correctly. Stuart noticed this bumpy section whilst riding a fully suspended trike, knowing it was likely rougher on a road bike. For Stuart, especially on a fully suspended trike, this quality surface was not particularly a pleasant experience. Websites to lodge such hazards were highlighted in the July newsletter. View the Bicycling Western Australia website: <http://www.bwa.org.au>.

In the coming months with Schoolies week and university students finishing their year's study, beware of the onslaught of masses of glass on bike paths, bike lanes and roadsides.

Alright for some - in the Pyrenees!

Eamonn McCloskey and Hari Goonatilake

10 day cycle but probably will lose some days to rain. So far: Luz Ardiden, Solour, Aubisque Cambasque, Borderes.



Travel over east ... to the south east of Queensland ...

BEACHES AND BEYOND (Frank Papp Memorial Ride)

600/1000km May 2012 Wayne Hickman

Frank Papp was a Queensland Audaxer who tragically was seriously injured when he collided with a kangaroo while descending a hill. After two weeks in hospital, his life support system was turned off. This ride was designed in his memory and included many of his favourite routes and hilly (mountain) rides.

Day 1 Kangaroo Point to Maroochydore 355km + 75km loop = 430km

Day 2 Maroochydore to Maroochydore 330km

Day 3 Maroochydore to Kangaroo Point 247km

A pre-ride Subway breakfast was eaten while meeting and greeting 13 fellow riders and the support crew. At Kangaroo Point, overlooking a dawning Brisbane skyline, the peloton was lead off by Stuart Dowell on a nippy morning heading to Scarborough. After only a few kms, I had to stop to retrieve my rear light from the pavement near the "Gabba", due to my apprentice mechanics' lack of skill, Alison, later redeeming herself as part of the great support crew. Now my first chase was on to catch the peloton; this was easily achieved, they encountered lots of red lights.

The first checkpoint was Scarborough and I was the last to arrive. Due to first day excitement, just before the wetlands cycle path, I grabbed a passing wheel which, unbeknown to me, was not part of our peloton and I proceeded to be led off course. The legendary Colin Farmer once gave me some good advice "you don't have to be fast on an Audax ride, you just have to know where you are going".

I left Scarborough with Dave Minter and, on the way to Mt Mee, we encountered two young hoons in a ute, who cut us off going into a servo, if I had not taken evasive action, I would have been travelling the rest of the ride in the back of a ute. Dave clearly let them know what he thought of them in his English/Queensland accent. I reached Mt Mee alone as Dave slowed up to ride with girlfriend Judith Sparrow, closely followed by Bec Morton (NSW) and Martin Pearson (Qld). The weather was fine and clear, allowing for a spectacular view across to the Glasshouse mountains, where we were soon to venture. Here I teamed up with Howard Dove and Warren Page (NSW). We became known as the Three Amigos and, as it happens, we ended up riding the entire ride together.

The next control was Mary Cairncross Park at the top of ranges after having ridden up some very hilly terrain. We were spurred on, by some local Audax ladies who stopped their car and stood on the roadside, to cheer us on. Their encouragement was warmly received and caused a bit of lighthearted banter amongst us. We caught up to Stuart, Dave, Roger and Tina (who became known as the 4 musketeers) just before the control and arrived all together to a hearty warm meal. The sun was starting to set and there was a chill in the air, so I donned some long pants. A very large full moon was rising, as we headed to Kenilworth, to be greeted by Sandy and Alison for warm pasta. We geared up in warm reflector gear, then the girls waved us off into the very foggy night heading to Maroochydore. At Maroochydore, we had a few navigational problems locating the caravan park as there were several clustered together, we negotiated our way through a network of little roads, speed humps to find our cabins at the rear of the park, with bike lights blinking on the clothes line as beacons.

Here at last, in a warm cabin and hot food, we had to make a decision as to either ride the 75km loop up through the hills with a few nasty climbs at the end of day one or sleep and do the loop in the morning of day two. We decided to eat and ride on during the night, finally collapsing freezing cold into bed at about 3.30am and planned to be back on the bike by 7.30am. The four musketeers and Bec decided to eat, sleep and tackle the loop in the morning.

Glad to have done the 75km loop the previous night we managed to leave reasonably on schedule, en route to Noosa for a coffee and a much needed toilet break. At Boreen Point, there was Phil's smiling face manning a secret checkpoint with Coke and snacks at the ready. The road to Kin Kin was a series of undulations of varying gradients, some road works and gravel. Alison was manning this checkpoint opposite the local pub, which had a live band playing. The locals were very intrigued with the riding event, not the only one to visit town that day as there was also a small charity ride happening too. A meal of pasta and coke and we were on our way again, up the hill and out of town.

Still more hills, then finally coming to the coastal plain heading into Tin Can Bay, 1½ hours in and 1½ hours out round trip of long reasonably flat slightly undulating roads with very little hard shoulder, so single file all the way. This was the most unpleasant part of the ride for me. At Tin Can Bay, Brian Hornsby and partner Sue had spaghetti bog brewing. We set off for Gympie. On our way out of town, we met the four musketeers who were about an hour behind us,

then Bec and Dave, but no Martin. We later learned he had withdrawn at the turnoff to Tin Can Bay and had headed directly to Gympie where Sandy was waiting. As we headed to Gympie dodging a few rabbits and a low flying car, beep beep, it was Alison overtaking us, after helping Brian and Sue now heading to Gympie to give Sandy a hand. Lucky Howard and Warren had Garmins which seem to work alternatively so we managed to finally locate the control, a little better than Alison did who arrived after us, because she was using the cue sheet and eventually an iphone and ended up seeing a lot more of Gympie than we did.

The night was getting dark and cold as we headed out of Gympie and we were riding a road similar to the road from Chidlow to Bakers Hill. Warren was a good 200m ahead of Howard and myself and we were descending a hill, when Howard and I heard some terrified screams from Warren, my immediate thoughts were 'kangaroos' ... before I knew it, we were screaming like girls, as we had hit a section of loose gravel road with no warning signs. I took the weight on my pedals and dared not touch the brakes. We regrouped in the valley to regain our composure, amazed that none of us had come to grief. Howard had to retrace his tracks to gather his backlight and other bits that had fallen from his bike. I mentioned to Warren that it was okay Frank (Papp) was looking after us. Any further descents on this road were treated with much more respect.

Eddy was there to meet us at Moy Pocket control which was in the middle of nowhere, cold and in a roadside camping area. He had some soup on the go in a shelter that resembled a bus stop shelter, but it was very pleasant to be out of the chilly night air. Apparently riders who arrived after us had the luxury of a fire.

Onwards and upwards back to Maroochydore via the awesome Obi Obi Road which had a gradient of 15% in parts. Sections of this road were steeper than Patterson Road. As my right knee was playing up and my worn left cleat was coming out of the pedal, I decided it was a nice night for a moonlight walk. The last 3km of Obi Obi is one way due to the narrowness and steepness of the climb. We did have company on the climb (amble) in that two cars were time trialling up the climb, but they did not give us any trouble. They are probably still scratching their heads trying to figure out why some mad cyclists were on Obi Obi in the middle of the night. Once over the top, the road to Maroochydore was mostly downhill with an amazing view of Nambour, if you were game enough to look up while descending with speed. Then a flattish ride into Maroochydore, a nice meal of Guinness pie served up by Linda, Phil and Alison and again falling into bed about 3am.

Setting off in the morning after delicious bacon and eggs rolls, we headed to Peachester. My legs were pretty sore at this stage but it was a case of nursing them back to Brisbane, lucky I had time on my side. We arrived at Peachester after a very hilly section. Howard collapsed on to the grass and said "Wayne it is your shout for the coffee", with this Alison whipped 3 cappuccinos out of the back of the car, which she had just purchased just minutes before our arrival and had wrapped to keep warm. She also spoiled the four musketeers with the same precisely timed cappuccinos and the little local storekeeper was very happy too. Chicken sandwiches and coffee and back on the road to Kilcoy (home of the best beef in Oz), you guessed it up and down. The highlight being Howard thinking that he saw a 5ft python on the side of the road, but we told him he was delusional. Brian was waiting for us at Kilcoy with some hot food, Coke, lollies and orange juice. As we were getting ready to leave, Howard went for a comfort stop, while he was away we tied a heap of killer python lollies to his handle bar. On his return, he couldn't understand my hysterical laughter, but tiredness does this. I handed him his bike and said 'let's get going'. He was straddled ready to roll before he noticed his hitchhikers to which he said something that sounded like 'you barstood'. Howard had the last laugh, as he had his instant energy boost on hand whenever needed, he would just snap off another bit of snake, with no intention of sharing with his co-riders. I think I will patent this idea for future rides.

About Somerset Dam, Sandy and Martin passed us so we stopped for a Coke, and a lay on the grass in the sun which proved to be way too comfortable and it turned into a 30 minute stop. Sandy and Martin were on their way to man the last control before Brisbane, Ferndale. Sandy had set the control up on a park bench, good job that it was not raining. This may have been the last control before Brisbane but it was by no means that last of the hills. Martin warned us of the hills along Lake Manchester Road and then there were more short steep climbs along Swenson Road, we were beginning to wonder would it ever end. During the course of this epic ride, Howard recounted to me that he was over these hills, I said to him 'That every time we got to the top of a hill, think that we are a little closer to Frank'. About 45 minutes after leaving the control, we came to a T junction where Warren pulled over with a puncture, our first and only one for the entire trip. We did not want the four musketeers to pass us at this late stage, I joked with Warren that, if lights came over the hill, Howard and I would abandon him. Hence the puncture was repaired in record time and we were rolling along in the dark over the hills again.

About 30kms from the end, I spied what looked like my hire car on a dark side road. On further investigation, it was Alison who had come out to check on our progress to report back to Phil who was at the finish line. She was checking route sheets, iphone maps etc to find where she was, where we were and where we would all be heading in this very dark area (it was like the back of Chidlow at night with few houses and street lights). After a quick break, we summons the energy for the final leg to Kangaroo Point. We had some difficulty locating the cycle path, as did

most of the other riders, including the locals but once on the cycle path it was only about 12kms to go but it seemed to take forever. Then a weave and wind through Southbank up one last climb to the Kangaroo Point finish line where Phil, Alison and Vaughan (who completed the 600km) were waiting to cheer us over the line. Phil told us to start rehydrating straight away and thrust a beer into our cold tired hands. About 9.30pm, after a few photos and a couple of beers, rode the short distance to the motel, said our goodnights, headed for a well deserved hot shower and bed.

A great big thank you to all the volunteers, as it was a ride where they worked harder than the riders to help us pay tribute to Frank Papp. RIP

Ed: The latest Checkpoint also has an article about this ride written by NSW member, Bec Morton.

... more of Queensland ...

The Far North Queensland - Gran Turismo from the perspective of an Audax "apprentice"

400/200/300/600 with a few rest days in between August 2012

Robert Branch, one of Audax WA's newer members

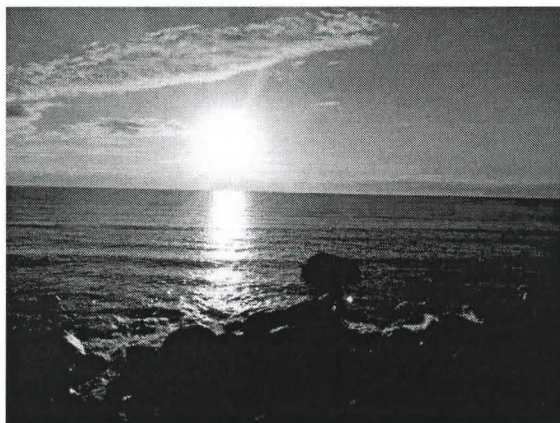
As far as authors go, I think I make a reasonable tarmac treadler. However, only relatively new to long distance cycling the Audax way, I have so much to learn and appreciate with regards equipment, lights, saddles etc.

A strangely motivated journey it has been. My "bucket" has as one of its inclusions the ACE250, and when I researched entry into the event, it soon became apparent of the need to pre-qualify with other amazing feats of endurance and a little mental toughness.

Amongst qualifiers for the ACE was a GT series. Piece of cake really, as it really is only 7.5 x 200km rides! A 200, a 300 (1.5 x 200), a 400 (2 x 200) and a 600 (3 x 200). I mean, hey, I had done 2 x 200s previously, with 12 months gap between each of the 200s. So, in for a penny, in for a pound, into the deep end, sink or swim and many other clichés, membership to Audax was submitted and I was very soon cycling on my first 300 (Run to Guilderton) with Tony Gillespie.

Jump forward a few months to Townsville, 48 hours before the start of the FNQ GT series, and I find myself enjoying supper in the company of some very (very) experienced Audax personalities. As the only representative from WA and also only a member for a few months, it was wonderful to meet many of the GT'ers. Indeed, the individual and combined k's and ride hours make the GT pale by comparison. The total "PBPs" of the GT participants is inspiring by itself. When asked about my own long distance pedigree, I responded with "I have done a 300". Till then, anxiety, kept nicely controlled at about 90%, almost became panic as I "read" the faces of the experienced participants. Some of those same faces would utter words at the completion of the GT in Port Douglas that it was indeed a tough four ride series.

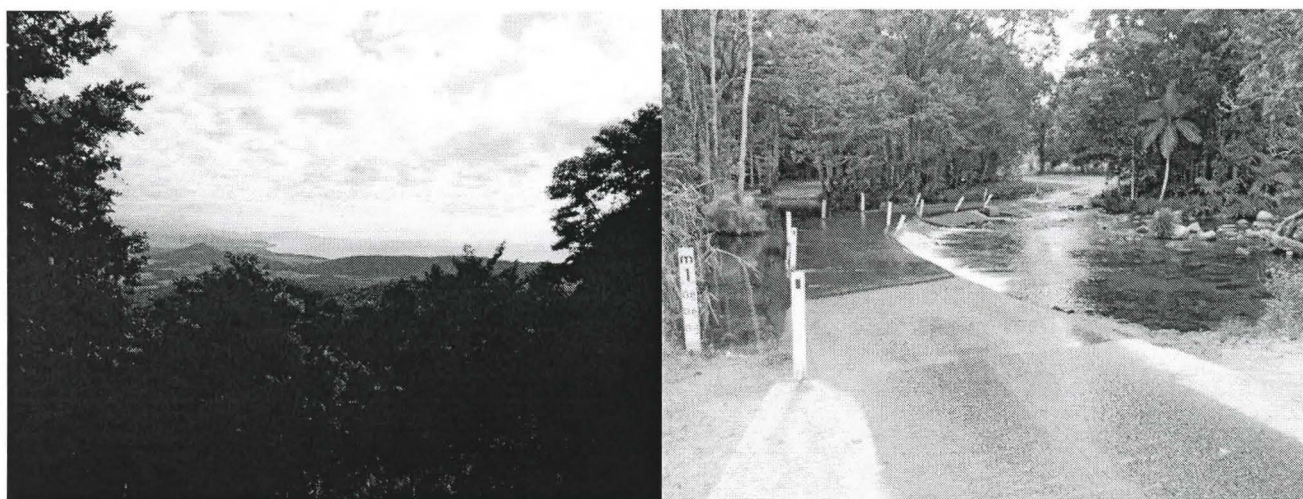
With only a handful of continuous hours of night riding before the 9.00pm finish of the Guilderton 300, the start of the GT 400 would turn out to present perhaps the greatest challenge personally. The level of concentration and alertness is greatly heightened which in-turn added to the rate of fatigue, not to mention the 6 degree temperature for several hours pre-dawn. Not long after sunrise, breakfast was very welcome for all at Mission Beach. In total, the first 300 of the 400 was quite flat with about 800 metres total ascent. The next fifty was about 1300 metres and a much needed leisurely stop at Millaa Millaa for a slab of lasagna. The final 50km to Atherton presented an additional 800 or so height metres at night fall for good measure.



After a rest day in Atherton, it was a 200km (had ridden a couple of those) to Cairns. Some gentle and some not so gentle undulations took us to the crater lakes of Barrine and Eacham before an absolutely magnificent descent of the Gillie's Pass (dropping 800 m of about 15km). The sting in the tail of the 200, at about the 150km point, was a 9km - 540 height metre ascent behind Cairns up to Copperlode (or Cop-a-load "of that") Dam. In my very short (comparatively) time as a road cyclist, I soon came to appreciate the descent from Copperlode (same road) as the most technical I have yet ridden, due to the tightness and narrowness of the turns as well as an unhealthy sprinkling of sand and/or gravel on some corners. Arriving in Cairns at 7.00pm it was to be a relaxing two days before we would again saddle up for the long 300km savannah trundle to Cooktown.

Tom did a fabulous job organising the GT and its accommodations and amenities. Most overnight stops and rest days were within walking distance of respective town centres.

The 300 (323) to Cooktown was one of great contrast in scenery and road environs. The lushness of the coast gave way to the sparse open savannah on the inland, but not before a 500m ascent to Julatten. A few "cattle grids" were negotiated, the best one being a painted grid on a section of road. If Britain had mad cows, FNQ must have "easily fooled" cows. The final hours to Cooktown was again negotiated with lights shining searchingly into the darkened void. Unfenced road meant small herds of cattle were able to cross metres in front as well the odd "macropus unknownus".



With the 200, 300 and 400 completed, all that remained to challenge us was the 600 (double 300) to Port Douglas with an organized night stop in Atherton. Managing 4 hours solid sleep (albeit snoring - apologies to Bec and Howard) all riders were back on the bikes by 4.00am the following morning in order to stay in front of the hourly average. The "loop" (130km) from Atherton to Millaa Millaa and Ravenshoe was perhaps the toughest of the whole GT. Not only did it entail approx 2100 metres of climbing, but also 5 degree temperatures before dawn, with plentiful mists. With daylight though, there were prevailing strong headwinds of which Perth would have been proud. Throw in a few GPS misreads and the inherent nervousness regarding control point closure times and it was certainly a section worthy of entry into Audax GT folklore.

From Atherton it was literally and figuratively all downhill to Port Douglas, with only 150km to go. The GT had many wonderful downhill sections, some long, some short. The descent from Julatten (climbed three days previously) was arguably the most enjoyable. The asphalt surface was the smoothest and finest experienced anywhere, with virtually no litter or obstacle to present a danger to the riders. At the bottom of the descent we were once again in cane country with plentiful cane train crossings to negotiate and one special and picturesque fresh water stream to wash the wheels in.

If you ever wonder about entering and completing a GT, in the name of a famous sports clothing company "Just Do It". The pace is yours to decide, quickly or slow. Lessons learned from the experienced riders are invaluable. As with there being no bike snobbery in Audax, there is no snobbery amongst riders from all "walks" (cyclists don't walk - only on the really really tough hills) of life. They shared their knowledge and experience selflessly and truly enjoy the adventure of cycling.