

Ride 434 Report – 01 July 2012

American Independence Day Ride.....!

Hares: “The Yanks”, Ditch, Mummy’s Boy, Craig and Friends

Having missed the last few rides through a fractured hand, a cold and whatever other plague or pestilence hit me, I was relishing the chance to do the Bike Hash again, this time set by the Yanks for the 4th of July. This was a curious event in that little country's history whereby everyone was totally happy being British until a small group of trouble makers took it upon themselves to declare independence. Somehow, this early vestige of 'democracy' eventually got its way and now, look at the place! Next thing you know we'll have a gay female president.

But back to the ride. This was being set from my favourite stamping ground around the Bukit Batok/Jalan Lam Sam precinct starting from the commercial vehicle park at the junction of Bukit Batok Road and Jurong Road. Close enough to ride there. Arriving at the site, Ross immediately rounded on me to tell me that everyone was away for some reason or another and that Coo Chi Choo was over at Tampines doing some veteran MTB ride. I was to run the circle. Thanks. At first, few people seemed to be as enthusiastic about July 4th as one would expect with the Hares outnumbering the pack. However, as kickoff time came closer, a sudden rush of Bike Hashers began to arrive, including, Coo Chi Choo!

The Hares gave a quick briefing to the effect that we were going to be on paper, chalk, etc. and who was staying for pizza? On On was over to the corner of the car park and into the allotments. Having set a running Hash through this same spot a few weeks back I began to wonder if we were going to be carrying our bikes across a tree trunk spanning the drains. To normal people a non starter, but the Hares come from a culture of imaginary weapons of mass destruction, so nothing is beyond their imagination. As it happened, we were taken through quite a good short section through the unofficial nurseries which eventually ended with a steep slope back into the commercial park. Most people bottled going down the daunting steepness so early in the ride. Out of the car park again and across Bukit Batok Road over to Bukit Batok West Avenue 8 and eventually to some off-road trail which seemed unexplored. At this point, a sharp left turn had us scaling a steep hill broken up with crevices. This would have been a good challenge if my sodding gears had worked and I could have shifted into the small ring. At the top it seemed to offer all sorts of promise for trails but most were probably overgrown now so we hit the first (or second) of what was to be many T-checks. As is the case in Europe, nobody listens to the English when it comes to common sense and the Frogs immediately descended down the slope again as people attempted the climb. No accidents fortunately but the hill was a good technical piece.

From the hill we entered what is now renowned territory for Leptospirosis, which several Hashers have contracted following runs in this area. For those unfamiliar with this, Leptospirosis is caused by exposure to several types of the *Leptospira* bacteria, which can be found in fresh water that has been contaminated by animal urine. It occurs in warmer climates.

Risk factors include:

Occupational exposure -- farmers, ranchers, slaughterhouse workers, trappers, veterinarians, loggers, sewer workers, rice field workers, and military personnel and Hashers.

Recreational activities -- fresh water swimming, canoeing, kayaking, and Bike Hashing in warm areas.

Household exposure -- pet dogs, domesticated livestock, rainwater catchment systems, and infected rodents and hash partners.

A mixture of workers quarters and rats probably contributes something to the infection rate in the area. Everyone washed off thoroughly after the ride once the word about the area was spread. Into areas of broken logs and mud, up to the top of the hill and another T-check. This was broken down the hill and took us along a long grassed trail into the woods and thence through unridable bamboo woods. Then it all goes a little blurry. We eventually came out onto Bukit Batok Road.

It's always a worrying sign when the Hares are waving you on down the side of a drain, you just know that it is leading to something ominous. Sure enough, half way down the drain and the paper stops only to be seen winking at us from the other side of the drain. The water wasn't deep but the sides of the drain were steep, particularly when you are wearing cycling shoes. A war time chain began to form to help ferry people and bikes up the far side of the drain. The trail then entered the jungle further down towards the road and into, what for me, was the best part of the ride with some terrific biking trail and no T-checks! (mental note, must revisit that area). The trail eventually brought us out onto Brickland Road, a place where I mashed my shoulder a few years back which, I was reliably informed this week, has ultimately led to my bicep muscle becoming permanently detached from my shoulder. Just thought I would throw that one in.

I had somehow become detached from the peloton at this stage and was gamely riding into Jalan Lam Sam when it dawned on me that there were no markings and not a soul in sight. Back tracking I realised that everyone had scooted on down the drain into the Lam Sam zone. A check was in progress (not sure if it was a T-check) which was broken through undergrowth up a hill to the right. This used to be quite rideable but not anymore. This was followed by another dastardly check which Coo Chi Choo broke (yes really and he called everyone on!), a few laps around the open ground and then home through the large rhubarb. First rider back was me, but I cheated. Coo Chi Choo the veteran racer was first in, but remember, it's not a race!

The circle was a sedate affair with people comfortable in their chairs, salivating over the stack of America Day pizzas that had been specially flown in from New York that morning. Ok they were really from Canadian Pizza, how ironic is that.

Verdict, a beautiful country inhabited by complete fuckwits who describe both the creation of the universe and a hotdog as awesome, one of ten words in the complete Microsoft English dictionary. For all that, the retards still managed to set a cracking ride. Names have been omitted to protect the innocent and I can't remember.

OnOn

Scribed by,
Wan King



6/30/2012 5:49 pm

Track 002

Image © 2012 DigitalGlobe
Image © 2012 GeoEye

Google earth

Imagery Date: 4/13/2011 2001

1°21'43.34" N 103°44'22.49" E elev 18 m

Eye alt 4.52 km