

Ride 461 Report – 02 March 2014

The Fast, Hard & Furious Ride!

Hares: TI Joe & Machine

Location: Mandai Quarry Road

An SMS was circulated a week before the ride for those interested in a ride around the Mandai area. When I got there it was like an unscheduled Hash with many familiar faces prepping themselves. Turned out this was going to be a recce for TI Joe's ride the following weekend. As we worked our way in and out of various dead end trails, the question was, would I remember it all. The following weekend, as everyone gathered, there were many bleary eyed faces as Wendy's birthday party had been organised to take place the night before. Her birthday present was the Porsche franchise for the whole of Australia, so she was a happy girl. Fuzzy heads combined with the ongoing, uncharacteristically dry weather during Chinese New Year was going to make this ride a bit of a blast. TI Joe told us that the ride was set with multi coloured strips of ribbon (which was going to be interesting), whilst Machine ranted on about how his rear derailleur had been mangled setting the paper the day before.

We headed off to Mandai Road then towards Upper Bukit Timah Road and onto the trail which took us into jungle. Most Hashers have a memory span of about one beer which accounts for the reason why so many riders went into the same jungle check T-check as last year. I suppose there is always the chance that, this time, the Hares might have hacked a way through. No. Having the hindsight of last year and previous weekend's ride I kept quiet and peddled up past the wire fence surrounding some building. This took us on trail through more jungle and out onto the rough clearing at the back of the houses, leading up towards Turf Club Avenue where we descended down onto the roadside path. Well that's what most people did. I straddled along slowly up top because that was what we did the week before, losing considerable ground in the process. We then cut back right into the broken up trail area and took in some interesting loops through the woods eventually picking up Mandai track 16 and under the BKE to the pipeline. The ribbons had been a bit thin on the ground by this point and spotting the odd bit of cloth was not that easy.

The short steep climb up the track took us to newly bulldozed trail full of tree roots jutting up through the parched soil. It was here that Machine's gears had been torn asunder the day before. More precarious was the sudden drop at the end of it before we reached the long hill climb. From the peak there was a slippery down hill slalom traversing years of fox hole dugouts until we reached the army huts below where the pack regrouped. At this stage, everyone was together. The hill opposite used to be lalang grass and you could see from top to bottom. It is now completely overgrown with tapioca roots all over the place, which meant we had to walk bikes two thirds of the way up to the area that was finally rideable. This provided another downhill slalom but there was the option of taking the road down if you were more of a woosie. Machine was waiting to catch anyone by the check at the bottom.

Somewhere around this point confusion began and I am not going to apportion blame but simple say that the name Guillaume was mentioned on numerous occasions. Depending which group you were in, you either ended up at the top of Hamburger Hill and eventually found ribbons going down a trail and then headed along jungle trail to eventually come out on Lorong Asrama or you didn't. Apparently, we were meant to go the other way. How this happened I don't know but it meant that some of the pack missed a chunk of the ride out.

Crossing over Mandai Road we headed into the adjoining military area and put in several loops eventually skirting the wire fence (I'm never quite sure where this is on Google Earth or what the road is called but it seems to come out near civilisation) where we regrouped and the ride split into a short and a long ride. It was here that the earlier froggie f*&k up began to be apparent, with a wide dispersion of riders. Once together, everyone opted to do the long stretch where the Hares led the way up the drainage escarpment and took us in through some great jungle trail which eventually brought us out on the track leading to the cars. Great fun.

Tim convened the circle in the knowledge that there was a seasoned Bash veteran, Ted, and an unseasoned bike Hash virgin who had not yet found their way home. Not to worry, there are no tigers in Singapore, unless you happen to ride into the tiger's pit at the zoo shouting On On! Everyone thought the ride to be top drawer stuff, too hot, too dry. The various guests, virgins and charges were on-downed and just as proceedings were drawing to a close, Ted and virgin miraculously appeared. Everyone immediately got into the cars and went to the On On which was held at Blooies.

Great ride and excellent use of the area.

Scribed by,
Wan King

