

Ride 515 Report – 15 January 2017

Is This a Girl Guide Ride?

Hares: Knobby Boy Scout, Wet Beaver, Andrew Seddon & Stuart Thompson

It can be said with absolute certainty that this is the best ride of 2017 – as of mid-January. Let's see what the remaining 11.5 months ahead of us hold in store for the Singapore Bike Hash... In any case, the year got off to a fun-filled course that was hot but definitely 'rideable' for both our veterans and newbies alike. As the Green Corridor is now closed for renovations, we discovered that it is no easy task to lay trail without this prime real estate which we perhaps took for granted.

A lot has happened this month. Barack Obama is no longer the President of the USA, as he has been replaced this week by #TheRealDonaldTrump. My advice to everyone – regardless of age, gender or nationality – is to STAY CALM AND KEEP PEDDLING.

And peddling is what we did that fine morning, with a turnout of 40 riders navigating a classic 24km tour of Singapore's West Coast. We began with a 'shortcut' that brought us through the woods and onto a pavement at Telok Blangah Heights. From there, we cycled up Henderson Road before ascending the sharp incline of Telok Blangah Green. Despite some confusion and lack of paper at the outset of the ride, everyone managed to stay on course and meander through the park until we emerged at Depot Road.

The pack made their way through some off-road pockets of greenery – albeit alongside a freeway - before crossing a bridge that took us over towards Jalan Bukit Merah, where Wet Beaver found some hidden passageways behind some industrial buildings that led to a steep green embankment that kept the Hashers puffing hard.

We came back over another bridge behind Hewlett Packard and continued into the verdant hills around Winchester Road. We tackled some choice terrain before entering Kent Ridge Park and Hort Park. And what Hash through the West Coast would be complete without a visit to the downhill track at Kent Ridge Park?

From there, we headed up South Buena Vista Road before turning left onto a long paved road that brought us into the NUS Campus. The adventurous among us showed off their cycling chops as they descended some perilous slopes before arriving at Clementi Road.

We crossed over to Clementi Woods before heading to West Coast Park and continuing along a back road to Pasir Panjang Food Court. Despite the Hares' inability to apply the usual chalk and paper inside a food court, those who recall Wet Beaver's 2016 ride sniffed out the scent and continued along the narrow canal and parking lot that ultimately led back to West Coast Road.

An unmarked jaunt through Labrador Park and a return via the boardwalk was the final leg of the ride that saw the front pack complete the course in one hour and forty-five minutes. The remainder finished throughout the next half hour, with some even making their arrival during the Circle itself.

Our GM Bunny Tool called the Circle to order and began the nonsense with a toast to the Hares, who in this case consisted of just Andrew Seddon and yours truly. Wet Beaver was still out sweeping, and doing a fine job of it as everyone returned intact and smiling.

Special thanks are due to Stuart Thompson and Kiyoko, as Stuart joined us for a recce the week before on what turned out to be a long, hot ride. Unfortunately, he couldn't make it to the ride itself due to other commitments, but we appreciate his fine work on the recce. Kudos to Wet Beaver for doing the recce while jet-lagged – she had only touched down in Singapore the night before.

Kiyoko is still recovering from a stiff back, but came out for the ride and cleared much of the paper that the Hares had laid. For their hard work and dedication, let's give Stuart, Wet Beaver and Kiyoko a note in absentia! *"Why were they born so beautiful...?"*

At that point, it was time to bring our Virgins in for a note. Troels, Vi, and Oliver stepped forward to introduce themselves and take their 'punishment.' It turns out that it has taken Troels 26 years of residing in Singapore to finally turn up at his first Bike Hash. For Pete's sake, man, you could almost have been one of the Founding Fathers of the Singapore Bike Hash! In any case, we are delighted that you have found our group after 26 years and we hope that it won't take you another 26 years to return for your next ride. Vi and Oliver have been here for 5 years, so they have less explaining to do and we look forward to them joining us often in 2017. *"Here's to the Virgins, they're true blue..."*

Returnee Stephan was called in, but as he was not present a lookalike accepted a beer on his behalf. Note to the lookalike: beards are encouraged at the Hash, but no hats in the Circle, ha ha. *"Here's to the Returnee, he's true blue..."*

"We need another song," someone uttered, and another chimed in, *"We need another circle!"* Actually, the scribe agrees that a greater variety of songs are woefully needed. Can some kind soul offer us some new songs so that we don't have to offend women and small children with a refrain of *"He's the meanest..."*? Perhaps we can nominate a song meister for the SBH...

The Crash of the Day candidate was called in, and the guilty stepped forward as charged. Handbag, who broke his fall with his thumb, nearly managed to break his thumb in the process. Fortunately, he survived the ordeal and managed to hold his glass of beer as evidence. *"He ought be publicly pissed on..."*

"We have some special recipients of an honorary membership," decreed the GM, and upon cue My Precious entered the circle on his bike, having gotten a bit lost on the ride. He escaped unscathed but gave everyone a hearty laugh in the process.

"Forget about the rest of you – you will never get an honorary membership," Bunny Tool exclaimed in a commanding voice. For their thankless dedication and long service to the Singapore Bike Hash, let us thank Graeme Douglas and Back Entrance by awarding them an honorary membership for 2017. Both men have helped to make the Hash what it is today – never mind the nonsense and mismanagement.

When a smart-alec Hasher said, *"Give it to all of the pensioners over 65,"* he was rebuffed and when told that he will have to prove his age, Fat Crashing Bastard said that Coochie Coo should drop his pants and prove it. *"No thanks!"* moaned the defenseless onlookers.

Coochie Coo beckoned Ditch into the circle for a down-down. It seems as if Ditch was having a problem with his head (his bike head), for it had stiffened up and needed servicing. Coochie Coo retorted that his wife can help him to grease a stiff head, to which Ditch replied, *"Oh no, she doesn't know anything about bikes."* Thus spoke the dirty old man to the gullible among us... *"Three, two, one, drink it down down down down down..."*

Coochie Coo then took the safety-conscious scribe to task for gingerly stepping off his bike and jumping over the concrete ditch we encountered at the start of the ride. Apparently I was seen placing my bike into the ditch and retrieving it once I had reached the other side. Our veteran biking expert, on the other hand, leaped across with his bike neatly tucked under his arm. This is what separates the men from the boys on the Hash. *"Why was he born so beautiful, why was he born at all...?"*

On a related charge, Ditch escorted our newly-returned French *ami*, David Sicard, into the circle for a deserved down-down. David had been spotted at this very same concrete ditch, doing a comedy act reminiscent of Jacques Tati as he nearly fell in while bringing his bike across. Arms flailing, the victim nearly qualified for Crash of the Day but somehow managed to stay upright and avoid calamity. And the chorus sang, *"B-I-M-B-O, and Bimbo was his name-o!"*

And with that, Wet Beaver emerged from the bush (as they do) and joined her co-Hares in the circle for a note. *"Here's to the Hares, they're true blue..."*

And on that note, the cohort made their way to The Red Baron, a stylish café in Gillman Barracks that offers food and drink with outdoor seating and a fine view to boot. Good things are worth waiting for, and lunch that day was no exception. Well-fed and recovered from an exhilarating ride, the riders made their way home to live another day and take a much-deserved hot shower.

Until the next ride, on on!

Scribed by: Knobby Boy Scout

