

Ride 516 Report – 5 February 2017

The Less Old Farts Ride!

Hares: Ted Bogucki, Ditch, Bunny Tool & My Precious

Moods were high as a large turnout of riders converged at the top of Mandai Quarry Road, for most everyone had ridden here before and knew it to be prime Bike Hash territory. In fact, this could be some of the best remaining trail on mainland Singapore – largely rideable, and offering no shortage of hills and long descents.

It turns out that the Hares exceeded expectations – they created a superb 20km ride that made up in energy expenditure what it lacked in distance. The Hares' instincts were right on target, too, as the majority of riders finished a few minutes before or slightly after noon. It was a textbook-perfect Bike Hash.

The most dangerous part of the ride was just getting to the proper in-point, which involved 40 lycra-clad riders running across 4 lanes of busy road before enjoying a traffic-free ride for the remainder of our 2-hour outing.

From there, the ride maneuvered through kilometers of fire roads, which were characterized by broken gravel and plenty of inclines. The best part was seeing our cast of mid-life crisis alpha males try to 'man-up' and ascend 20% inclines until their stamina or willpower abandoned them. Too Easy was loving it and no doubt was humiliating the men she passed on the ascents. For her, this was just another XTerra training session. The words of MTB Coach Pat Fitzpatrick haunted me as I could hear him call out to me to put my chin near the handlebars and lean forward as I tackled at least a few sharp inclines.

The route was carefully laid and the Hares did a tremendous job of keeping us together through countless junctions and turn-offs. The route was quite maze-like, and without their attention to detail the ride could have become a study in chaos. The FRB's – or front-riding bastards - did a commendable job of breaking the checks, creatively using water bottle spray to indicate which way the circle was broken.

The weather become mercilessly hot and unforgiving; those who had left home without applying suntan lotion may have gone to work the next day with a 'farmer's tan.' A few among us endured the ordeal with insufficient water – those 'camels' will be made apparent in short order.

At about 12:15pm, GM Bunny Tool called the circle to order, and the faithful gathered obligingly. The Virgins amongst us were called in to identify themselves. First up was George English, AKA Charly; Denis, a Francophile with 2.5 years in

Singapore; David, who was a bit confused about his Belgian-Spanish lineage; and Patrick, a youthful American who was celebrating not only his first Bike Hash, but also his first time ever to ride a Mountain Bike. No doubt Patrick will be an FRB after a few outings with us. While the other members of the lineup had been in Singapore for a matter of years, Patrick had only been here for 4.5 days. David was lauded by Bunny Tool for being a fellow Belgian, but bullied for not being able to drink beer like one (*Why are we waiting, oh why, why, why?*) Will they back? Yes, they all say – but only time will tell for sure. We have heard ‘yes’ from countless imposters before...

The Crash of the Day recipient – a Frenchman no less - stepped forward. He had slid down a hill, took a spill, and imbibed his down-down like a gentleman. At that point, another Virgin rode into the circle, looking exhausted and still having ‘helmet head.’ Despite being in Singapore for 11 years, he only made it to the Bike Hash today, so let’s give him a note despite it taking him 11 years to find a good thing. Apparently this Virgin was water-deprived, thinking he had enough water for 2 hours but not being accustomed to a strenuous Bike Hash ride where riders are pushed to their limits. With the choir singing, *Here’s to the Virgin, he’s true blue...* our man of the hour drank a few glasses of 100 Plus in quick succession. Good on him for giving the Bike Hash a go and we welcome him back with open arms.

Richard Mathews called in Fat Crashing Bastard for what he called an ‘ironic’ Crash of the Day. At one point that morning, FCB scolded the riders around him and declared that the terrain was definitely ‘rideable!’ He then pedaled vigorously for a few strokes before finding himself falling sideways into the pitted grassland. Was it dangerous? No. Was it ironic? Yes, according to Richard. And the crowd bellowed the refrain: *He ought to be publicly pissed on...*

Our frequent returnee, Tancha McKenzie was then called into the circle for a down-down, which he drank with aplomb and a smile. Will he actually join the SBH this year? Only time will tell. *Here’s to returnee, he’s true blue, he’s a bastard, through and through...*

The scribe was then ushered into the circle for a humorous rant by Fat Crashing Bastard, who reminded everyone of how I took a tumble onto asphalt at Gilman Barracks as I tried to carry a bottle of wine in one hand while using my front brake to navigate over a speed bump. Arriving at The Red Baron looking like an extra from the movie *Braveheart*, it was clear that I failed in my mission to cycle with a wine bottle. I managed to avoid any glass when I fell, but banged my elbow and hip and took my worst fall since I joined the Bike Hash over a decade ago. My only regret was that the wine bottle was not Jacob’s Creek, which I wouldn’t even recommend to anyone for cooking coq-au-vin. As what I dropped was a fine vintage from Chile, losing the wine bottle was as worse an ordeal as falling onto the tarmac. The fashion police were out again in full force that day – for while I have recently purchased baggy cycling shorts (and even proper cycling undershorts) – apparently I am due for buttock implants. Is there no end to the fashion etiquette on the Bike Hash?

Wan King stepped forward to call forth the Hares, who were lambasted for laying trail with black-and-yellow striped tape. He claimed this color scheme was lost to the eye amongst the greenery. No matter – the riders eventually found their way and My Precious did an outstanding job of sweeping and clearing the entire trail of all of the ‘camouflage’ tape. On the list of sins it would not be considered a cardinal sin... perhaps just a minor infraction.

There were some among us who had forgotten to bring water in their Camelbacks that day, but no one’s story topped Ted Bogucki’s tale of how he had lost his keys down an elevator shaft and also managed to forget his Camelback at home. Being a true Scotsman, he called himself into the circle to give himself his own charge and down a Tiger in the process. *B-I-M-B-O, B-I-M-B-O, B-I-M-B-O and Bimbo was his name-o.* From one part-Scotsman to another, I salute you....Some other ‘guilty parties’ who forgot their Camelbaks - or used just a few water bottles in lieu – came into the circle for a deserved note and to rehydrate.

Fat Crashing Bastard came forward to call in Slippery Nipples, the Hare for our next ride in Batam. Due to pressing business matters, Slippery Nipples will not be joining his own Hash and we will have FCB and Too Easy as our surrogate ‘Hares’ that day. Look for them at Level 2 of Harbour Front Centre if you are a confirmed rider for the next hash on 19th February. Slippery Nipples stepped into the circle only to be slandered with a rousing chant of *He’s the meanest... the remainder of which shall not be posted online.*

On another note, I am waiting to call Slippery Nipples into the circle in the future to have him shout, “And now we dance!,” made famous by the incomparable Mike Myers on Saturday Night Live. Check out Sprockets here if you haven’t seen it before: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?gl=SG&hl=en-GB&v=QHZR9SA5pOg>

A large group drove or cycled to the on-on at Blooie’s, where FCB held court and was overhead to give cycling advice to first-time mountain biker, Patrick. “Mountain Biking,” FCB confessed, “is much like making love to a woman. You need to know when to hold back, when to push hard, and when to release the pedals.” Well said, FCB, and spoken like a true connoisseur! For our young American friend, it was a true education.

As the SBH contingency prepares for our first overseas outing of 2017, let’s look ahead for another wonderful year of smiles and camaraderie. We are off to a tremendous start and look forward to the upcoming excursion to Drak Bike Park in Batam. For those of you not joining us on that day, you can visit their well-managed facility by making a reservation with them via their Facebook page: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?gl=SG&hl=en-GB&v=QHZR9SA5pOg>

Until the next ride, on on!

Scribed by: Knobby Boy Scout

