

BHBB 67TH RIDE AT FARM ANG THONG, PAKKRET

It takes either a brave or foolish man to volunteer to set a ride on the last Sunday of the month. The auguries did not indicate this as a most propitious time, and so it proved. With just one day to do the recce on return from a back-to-back bike tour of Sikkim and Southern Thailand, the hare got two punctures and a broken pump for his efforts. Then, to top off a miserable day, the heavens opened (just as they would the next day!) which embedded hare's bike in the thick clay at WatYai.

Arriving late I didn't think I would have a chance of keeping up with the pack, especially as last Saturday at the Kanchanaburi World Actions 30km race I came in an hour behind the last rider. There is something to be said for sleeping with the hare, though, and I set out with a nice hand-drawn map of the route and plenty of advice on shortcuts that I could take to reduce the 47km ride to a pleasant 30-35km.

As to the actual ride, the day started at a sweltering 100F as about thirty bikers prepared their gear at Farm Ang Tong restaurant. However, just moments after we left, the heavens opened and dropped some serious wind and rainfall on us. Limbo saw a tree smoking as the result of a lightning strike, and probably wisely decided that this was a clear sign to return. Dauntless as he is, he decided to look at the 'in' trail, but like the hare on the previous day, got a bike full of clay which prevented all parts of his bike from moving.

Meanwhile, out on the 'out' trail things were getting tough, the strong wind lashing our faces. All those checks laid lovingly in weevil ridden cake mix had all been unceremoniously washed away. This, and the fact that the paper which apparently sat in the blistering sun on gently waving grasses some hours previously, had sunk to the ground, sometimes without any trace, led to a tough ride, and for many, a ride to nowhere!! Your scribe ended up completing the optional 7km loop successfully, but went astray after passing under the highway, missing a crucial left turn, which apparently led to the gravel road to Wat Yai. By this time however, the weather had improved and the ride was much more tolerable, even though Dave Rockey, never short of a word on life's crucial matters, guided us around and about for some of the way. But Bang Bua Thong is not a pretty place, and it is even less appealing

when you are there at sunset, absolutely lost. The long and the short of my story is that we ended up in Racha Restaurant on Rattana Thibet (next to the 'Hash Bridge') and eventually negotiated a boat to return us to Farm Ang Thong at 6.30pm.

I believe that others were also lost and even the redoubtable Raincoat Rainer, a man well versed in the geography of Bangkok's hashing areas, got all turned round and visited the picturesque klong water gates twice. Paul PogMahon and Tim W displayed great courage by taking off at least half an hour after the start in the lashing rain, to find their own way for 25kms. Tim Calves Dowden as usual, displayed similar fortitude taking off after the pack and ending back home safely. Paul and Tim and Tim (confused?) having already participated in the Rayong triathlon that very morning and Paul had the scars to prove it. John Capt Squall, also a latecomer, took off in his normal nonchalant manner to complete his own leisurely ride, and a pack of about six riders, led by Hash Cash, Noriega and Tom Bulldog Heinz, pedalled in some time later.20

All in all, an interesting ride of between 25 and 55kms, depending on which route you ended up on. Chad clocked up nearer 55kms

Due to the dispersed arrival of the pack between 4pm and 6.30pm, the circle was dispensed with and down downs promised to the Hare and Co on the next ride.

ON ON!

Turn out, RIDE #67	
Hares	2
Members	26
Visitors	8
Total	<u>36</u>