

68 ?

BHNB HASH RIDE NUMBER 66
MAY 32

Some of us ended up at Farm Ang Thong, others drove by the turn off and missed the HHH sign on the right, we all eventually ended up at the designated Wat for May's ride on the first day of June. No sweat that some turned up for a 3pm roll off (Hon Sec says read your newsletters and don't worry about the spelling mistakes!!). However, the whole pack sure got together during the ride. Why was this? Because there was much confusion on the checks which needed the mind of a Kasparov (or preferably a Deep Blue programme) to work them out. But in the words of Trish Morgan, this was to be the best ride she had been on; for nearly all time, nearly all the pack were together. Ah, nostalgia is a wonderful thing - if you can remember..... I remember that Dean and Rudi our hares, put together last year's AGM ride number 54 at Farm Ang Thong. Was today's ride to be of a similar high standard or had the pollution of Bangkok finally taken its toll. Read on.....

While the pack sniffed off to the left, a man well acquainted with safari work and GM of the Monday Hash no less, showed his immaculate perception of the psychology of trail setting, finding paper in the opposite direction. Yours truly following closely behind, very nearly wiping out a passing local in the middle of his Sunday reverie. This to be outdone later in the ride when Mark Levoie came close to putting a visitor into the side of truck!

The first check at the picturesque klong gates had the experienced bikers looking for a trail on the other side, but fortunately, before they came across the IN trail, shouts of ON ON were heard which took the whole pack on a murrum road going east. It took the combined brainpower of the 30 odd pack nearly twenty minutes to locate the trail and in the meantime, every (well, nearly every) other possibility had been sniffed out. The trail must have been a kilometre from the check on road, but on a rugged and hardly recognisable path, just within the recommended 400 metres as the crow flies, or as the goat traverses. Noriega took the direct route with his steed on his shoulder. At 16km the pack descended like locusts on an unsuspecting general store, wiping them out of cold drinks. Bikers coming in behind were left with a choice between warm orange and even warmer soya milk. GM recommended that we look around the store which sold many interesting and useful products. These included fan belts of all sizes, bicycle seats, motor cycle lamps and chains, nails and wrenches. Less important items included packets of noodles and fruit. Ted was seen taking some notes, and no doubt we will shortly be reading a suitably erudite and revealing article in the FT about the Role of the Local Store in the Level of Dependency of the Rural Peoples in Thailand. Whatever, it would make a good title for charades. But I digress

There had been a check left and right at the store, Tom Heinz called ON ON over the wooden bridge and off to the left. This turned out to be a U bend and half the returning pack met the other half coming the other way. Here there seemed to be a parting of the ways, and one half was left checking out all directions yet again, while the other half had disappeared.

Eventually, paper was found on the trail at least a kilometre ahead and GM showed his innate concern for the welfare of all riders, by returning to the store to inform the rest. It was not long thereafter that the late comers caught up with the pack. From this point it seemed that the trail was more easily read, but as sods law normally dictates, it was not long before every biker was gathered on a trail on which paper had just run out. Back and fore, right and left, but not a shred of paper. It was now 5.20pm (The hares had expected us to return by 4.30pm!!) and someone had to make a firm decision. GM got off his expensive steed and declared, let us get back to the **#\$!! start whatever we do - or something like that anyway. And this of course is what is expected of GM's. Indeed, they are trained for precisely this leadership role. It's rather like the shepherd and his sheep where the sheep are allowed to roam at will, but when darkness falls and because of their stupidity they often lose the trail and appear lost. He is there to guide them safely home. GM, your wisdom is ineffable, thank you.

However, back to the real world as we all followed the leader. Lo and behold, we came upon evidence that the hares had been this way before. Yes, paper! With confidence returning we pedalled boldly on, your scribe recognising the far side of the picturesque klong gates referred to in the first paragraph. ON IN on the out trail, but at 6pm nobody cared that we should have come in to the Wat by road, although I think some did. The consensus of opinion was that it was an environmentally friendly ride - a politically correct term for 'not much bleeding paper'. The far flung checks had most of us confused, but what the hell, I had 93kms on the clock and enjoyed the exercise in a part of urban Bangkok which within living memory suburban Bangkok used to look like. Down downs were given to the hares for the ride, and additionally to Rudi the trailmaster no less, for coming back with a bag full of paper. As Tom, the Religious Adviser succinctly pointed out, one is supposed to lay the paper for the benefit of the riders, not bring it all back. Many visitors were introduced, two others were given down downs for disrespectful behaviour (being recumbent during a circle). Tom, whose memory never fails him, gave a down down to yours truly for the previous months ride, where again there apparently was very little paper on the trail (it was there before the worst storm in living memory, honest!!). GM gave details of his party and of the next ride at Ayuthaya on 21/22 June.

Some of you will remember the excellent programme put together by Lauer and Levoie at Ayuthaya last year. Which reminds me, there was a final down down to Mark for failing to light the charcoal on the returning boat at that time. My abiding memory of that boat trip was the desperate pleas to the Captain to dock at a riverside store to top up on beer.

Last but not least, farewell to Dean and family who are off to New Delhi. Thanks for the ride, snacks, beers etc, we wish you all the best.

ON ON.....

Lem Morgan.