

PERFECT ride 17th July 2022 from Cambrai.

The cold, the fog, the rain! Fortunately this was the outlook at home but on the eastern side of the range it was a different story as the sun was out and shining on the sleepy hamlet of Cambrai as four PERFECT riders (Peter, Damien, Clive and Kevin D.) assembled to enjoy a day of cycling. Having placated a grumpy Cambraian resident who thought it was too early for us to be unloading bikes, talking and “setting his dog off” we cycled east along the Marne, towards the hills and into intensifying gusts of wind.

We turned northward and made our way past farm ruins heading for Pine Hut Road and the growing anticipation of a seven kilometre climb. My ascent up the escarpment this time did not seem as taxing as on previous rides despite the now constant headwind ... maybe I was distracted by the menacing clumps of black cloud starting to appear on the horizon. More than likely it was the wonderful vista eastward across the plain and the rustic beauty of the enduring stone walls that eased the climb.



No sign of wealth at the end of this rainbow.



Looking east over the stone walls and plain.

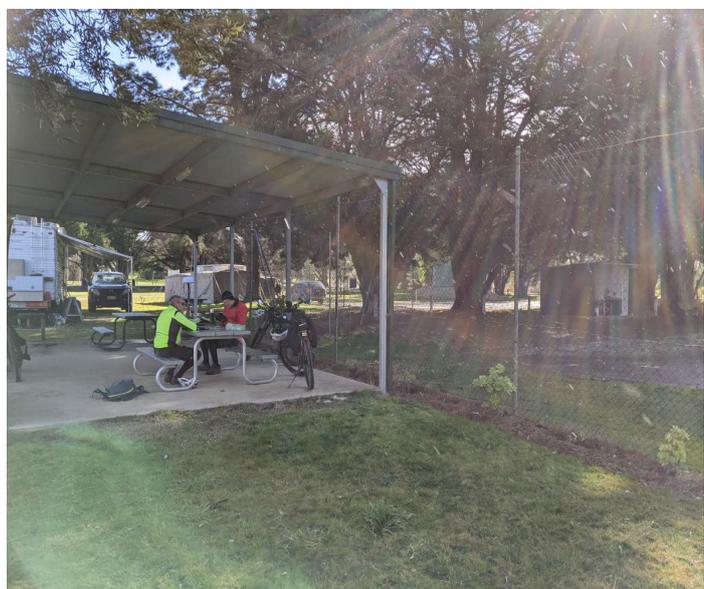
Once we had crested the range we stopped to celebrate our efforts with morning tea. Each of us finding a suitable tree trunk to shield us from the now strong and cold easterly wind.

After this short respite we again braved the elements and spent the next few kilometres dodging isolated downpours which left the roads quite slippery. Some of the short climbs were made longer due to the back tyres slipping in the mud with each pedal stroke. I am sure my bike picked up a couple of extra kilograms in mud as a result!

Crossing the Springton – Angaston main road we looped around to the south and then west for a fast downhill run back onto Eden Valley Road. This saw us nicely sheltered in the Eden Valley Caravan Park/Oval for lunch, fortunately in time to again avoid getting soaked as another heavy downpour scuttled overhead.



Damien found a bear!



Lunch in a shower.

With lunch and the rain dispatched we said goodbye to Damien's new furry friend and revelled in the tailwind pushing us back to the top of the escarpment once again.

The glorious downhill run (tailwind assisted) on Pine Hut Road took us out to Lake Moodie where we were caught by a dark clump of rain cloud that had chased us down the hill. It took the opportunity to empty it's contents upon us as we turned right for the last few kilometres back into a now sodden Cambrai. Our arrival back in town promptly "set off the dog" ... again!



The Cambrai Hotel is still closed so we adjourned to the Mount Pleasant Hotel for our debrief. *A stonewalled avenue.*

So was it worth the damp, cold and windy conditions that caked our clothes and bikes with dirt? PERFECTly balanced by the spectacular views, satisfying climb and exhilarating descents the answer would have to be a resounding YES!

Note that next month's (August 14th.) PERFECT ride is combined with Jilden's Memorial Ride from Kanmantoo. Jilden was a frequent PERFECT rider and leader whose company, knowledge and debating skills were greatly appreciated on PERFECT rides. Come along to reminisce, meet other club members and enjoy another great ride.