



THURSDAY NIGHT RIDES 2017

Feb 8, 2018

Report by Ron Milbanke

Local infrastructure improvements forced a last minute change of venue for this evenings ride. A huge hole appeared on a part of the track which was in the initial plan. So Donna and Kris came up with plan B and the start finish was moved to Endeavour Park. Hopefully all those intending to ride were informed in time to make the start line.

The course headed alongside the road from the carpark on a climb up to the ridgeline. A few tricky switchbacks slowed any momentum on the climb so the first couple of laps were part of a learning curve on which was the best approach to these corners.

From the outset Jimmy, Merrick and Jack attacked the hill in close formation, with newcomer/visitor Steve a little further back and in front of Logan. By the end of lap one Jimmy, on a borrowed bike, had switched to cruise mode, with Saturday's Coppermine event a priority and energy reserves to be conserved. So Merrick and Jack were at the front in a titanic struggle, neither giving an inch. Jimmy had settled back in third with Steve next and then Logan.

The front two continued their battle for the whole five laps with barely a wheel separating them. Jack in his formative years with not a lot of flesh on his raw bones was a stark contrast to Merrick who's build is more like that of a body builder. They continued to attack that climb for the duration and for the few spectators it was a case of who would outlast whom. At the finishing line it was close to a deadheat with Jack just prevailing, great effort guys and great spectating.

Meantime Steve was slowly catching Jimmy and after four laps Jimmy called it a day leaving Steve to complete the podium and joining the leaders to complete five laps. Jimmy and Logan both completed four laps with local John, Michael and Keith completing three. Michael attacked the hill on lap one not knowing the lie of the land and almost destroyed himself. On lap two he took a big swig of his favourite sports drink and on lap three deposited said drink in a floral spray over the unsuspecting bush. He finished the ride feeling much better.

Keith came home next, the eldest of the three generations of Richardson taking part. Glen guided Sofia and Sam around two laps. This was an impressive effort by these young guys, Sam's bike had blocks on the pedals, the tiny cranks not hesitating as he took the climb in his stride. At the tender age of just 5 he would put a few whingers to shame. Sofia also took the climb in her stride and they completed two laps to earn their pudding waiting at home.

Picton put on a glorious evening and with thirteen riders and a few spectators, it was very encouraging for the organisers. Thanks to Donna and Kris for setting out a challenging but enjoyable course. We fed the sandflies and departed content.

Several riders were not riding this evening in an effort to conserve their best for Saturday's Coppermine. We wish all Marlborough riders good fortune for this event and hope that the weather gods have sympathy and delay their worst until after the event. For those with anything left after that event we will be at Conders Bend next Thursday, 6:30 registration for a 6:45 start. Hope to see good numbers there.

O.T.R.