

# Ride 526 Report – 30 July 2017

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## Bastille Day Ride!

### Hares: Old Worn Stump, FCB & Too Easy

It was 9:15am and co-Hare FCB was glancing nervously at his watch in a car park in the middle of nowhere in Johor. For in 15 minutes, his ride was due to kick off and only about eight riders were kitted up and in standby mode. Among them was a *Gweilo* in fashionable, Lance Armstrong-inspired road cycling togs. This was a 50+ year-old virgin rider - a Kiwi one at that – named Paul, who had made a 2-hour journey on his bike from Singapore's Harbour Front area. Little did he know that he turned up for what would emerge as a contender for the coveted SBH Ride of the Year Award.

FCB looked down at his watch again and saw that it was 9:25 – with just 5 minutes to go until the scheduled 9:30 start time. By now, another ten riders had clustered around and more were on the way. Just then, a phone rang and Ditch called frantically to say “don't start quite yet – I'll be there in 10 minutes.” This gave everyone a chance to test-drive their bikes and to pay their dues to No Good, who deserves ample credit for dutifully taking the public's money for all of these years. It gave the scribe time to lube his bike and that of Rough Sex, and his liberal use of chain lube brought the heartiest of belly laughs to onlookers Wet Beaver and FCB... we won't reveal their inside joke but we can infer that it had something to do with applying too much lubricant.

The phone rang again and Ditch gave an update that he would arrive in 2 minutes' time. 10 minutes later, FCB had had enough empty promises and a cohort of two dozen eager cyclists followed his pointing fingers out to the paved road that would mark the start of a long and satisfying ride. Ditch was 'ditched,' but never underestimate our American friend as he had some surprises yet up his sleeve.

The Hares had cunningly placed a few T-checks in the first 6-8km of the ride, as at the 8km point there was a long-short split and the short route was ridden by everyone (with the long riders doing an extra loop out to what FCB described as a 'finger.')

Ultimately, everyone was able to ride in the vicinity of 22-29km. The terrain was perfect – primarily fire-roads through palm plantations – from which narrow footpaths ('singletrack' in MTB lingo) made by generations of rubber plantation workers created 'offshoots' through which we explored the endless, magical greenery. A highlight was cycling through a 500 meter 'tunnel' that was formed by trees and branches that had all grown in an identical, overhanging pattern. The Hares credit their unique trail to a local rider who generously shared his insider knowledge with them during some recce rides. Now that this brilliant trail network is loaded into our GPS units (*Editor's Note: The ride GPS file is available upon request from the Webmaster*), we hope that it won't be the last time that SBH makes the journey to reach this pristine cycling site.

I spent the last 25 minutes of the ride on my own, going in circles trying to find the paper as I reached a vast and open area that had some construction or quarry activity going on. I detoured and took a right turn, hoping to find an out point but found none. At that point, I sat in the shade until our friend Paul came by. Hearing that I couldn't find the out point and was 'off paper,' we sat under a tree and consulted his Google Maps to check our bearings. We were about to set off when Coo Chi Coo cycled by, and I told him to keep an eye out for any paper and shout out if he found any. He cycled into the horizon and a few minutes later we heard a faint "On on." We cycled up the slope – further than I had originally gone – and found the tell-tale paper markers that were placed on each side of the path (like a 'gate' to the promised land). A few kilometres later, the pond appeared and we were soon back at the familiar parking lot. Riders returned in dribs and drabs, with Ditch riding his steed out of the jungle as if in slow motion with musical accompaniment. Rough Sex finally emerged, dismounted, and

hobbled slowly back to the car – another victim of the unruly Malaysian outback. After the riders loaded their bikes and had freshened up, we gathered for our post-ride ritual – the Circle.

Coo Chi Coo reprised his role as GM to bring in co-Hares FCB, Too Easy and Old Worn Stump. When asked about the consensus on the ride, Ditch bellowed out, “Excellent trail, shitty location!” as others shouted, “Not enough single-track!” Coo Chi Coo, in his inimitable style, said, “What you can do is set this ride for later in the year, only the other way around...” To acknowledge a monumental effort of epic proportions, the riders voiced their appreciation for a truly stunning ride, “Here’s to the Hares, they’re true blue...” Coo Chi Coo deemed it “the best ride thus far of August 2017,” although it was in fact only July 30. Virgin Paul was ushered into the centre to introduce himself, and Coo Chi Coo then asked him when he was planning to pay the \$500 entry fee. A comedian among us bellowed out, “C’mon, he’s a Kiwi!” (meaning he’ll never pay up \$100, let alone \$500). Coo Chi Coo himself was shocked to hear that this Virgin Hasher had cycled 2 hours just to get to the start point... could it be that Coo Chi Coo has competition for his Alpha male pole position? And with that, the choir sang out a note for this hard-core bike Hash newbie. “Here’s to the clever Kiwi, he’s true blue...”

The COD’s – or Crashes of the Day - were brought in and Ditch summoned Whorenet to come front and centre. Our Spanish veteran Hasher was apparently brought down by a menacing vine. Rough Sex came forth, holding her bum in one hand with the other hand fending off an overly-inquisitive Coo Chi Coo, who thought it best to inspect the damage. Jar Jar Binks was also brought in and made a towering presence, as always. “Here’s to the COD’s, they’re true blue, they are bastards through and through...”

There was the usual banter about the next ride, which is still a work-in-progress so stay tuned to the website for more details.

Ditch brought in Time for a penalty charge: guilty of having low value on his Malaysian toll card and scaring Customs officials and passers-by while running around manically in his spandex cycling togs. For causing Ditch to get out of sorts and use profanities, let’s give Time a note for causing them not to arrive on time.

The scribe was summoned forth and given a note for being overly generous with the lube... bike lube that is. Coo Chi Coo also gave him a note for making the most senior amongst us do the hard work of riding up a hill and looking for the on-on markers.



Moments before we pulled out of the lot, we were traumatized by the sight of an aging, bare-chested Aussie in a Speedo pouring water over himself. As we shouted “Boo!” and held our noses from the safety of our car, we managed to take a photo of this half-naked man offending local customs (see adjacent photo).

After the Circle, a dozen of us went to the on-on at Amansari Residence Restaurant, where we indulged in a 10-course Chinese luncheon (all for only 50 ringgit) accompanied by copious amounts of Tiger beer for the non-drivers. There was some drama as we made the 2km drive from the parking lot to the hotel, because after 500 meters an object fell off of FCB’s car and onto the road. Wet Beaver stopped abruptly and we got out to retrieve FCB’s second most important possession: his mobile phone (the first being his Specialized bike). As I passed it to him, I uttered “Saved by the Yanks,” as he offered reluctant thanks and avoided any eye contact. FCB must have been pondering quite a bit about all of this, because as he entered the restaurant parking lot the cherished bikes on the back of his car narrowly missed the parking barrier. He was apparently as ready to tuck into a filling and relaxing meal as we all were.

After this lycra-busting feast, we hobbled to our cars while Paul mounted his bike and proceeded to cycle the two hours back home to Harbour Front. I half-expected him to pass by us as we

encountered heavy traffic a few kilometres from the Customs checkpoint. As we sat in traffic during the 90-minute jam, I thought to myself that Paul's gung-ho, foolhardy spirit is exactly what the Singapore Bike Hash needs. He is a committed – perhaps a bit daft - rider with a sense of humour to boot. Isn't this the DNA of the idealized Hasher? So let's hope that Paul and a large turn-out of members, guests and visitors can make it to the upcoming bike Hash that will take place at 10am sharp on August 20<sup>th</sup> – this time a bit closer to home.

Until the next ride, on on!

Scribed by: Knobby Boy Scout

*(Editors Note:*

*Some statistics from the Hares:*

*28km of trail, only 1 km of tarmac, 22+km of really good dry SINGLE TRACK*

*Took us 2 days and 36 rolls of toilet paper.....!)*

