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Ride Report – Rosstown Rail Trail

I know that a number of you have done this ride before, but it is such a good ride it is worth restating its value.

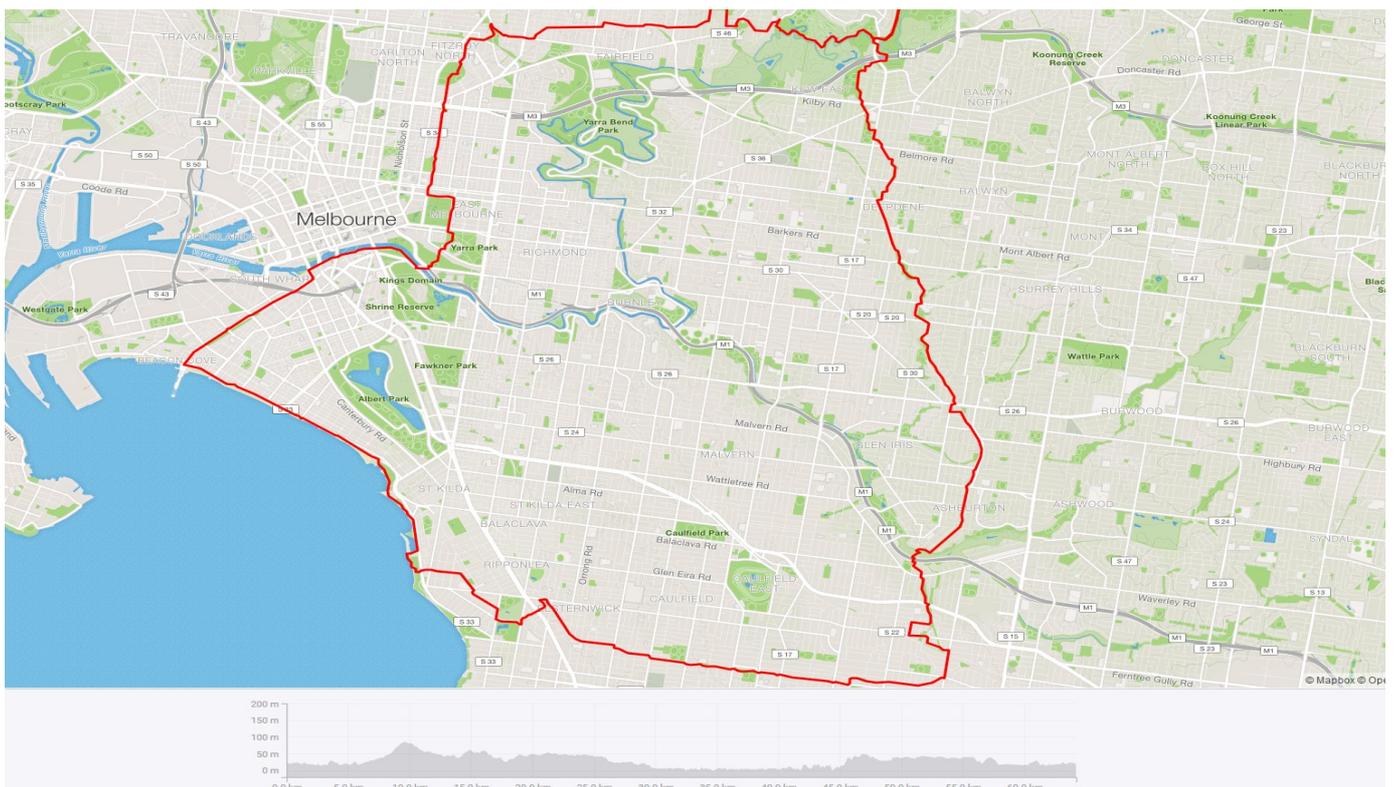
The Rosstown Rail Trail charts the original course of the private line which was the life long dream of William Murray Ross. From start to finish, the railway line was plagued with problems ranging from a lack of funds to construction delays. This brochure observes the contribution of one entrepreneur who made our City and its surrounds what it is today.

From a brochure by the Glen Eira Council

From Warringal Park, the ride takes in the Anniversary Trail, through the Urban Forest trail to Boyd Park. The start of the Rosstown Trail is at Elsternwick Station and more or less follows a straight line south to Oakleigh Station near Warrigul Rd. It is well sign-posted is generally on safe roads. However there are a few busy main roads to be crossed.

There are many things that are attractive on this ride, but the Urban Forest Reserve is a real delight. It is short and runs between Waverly Rd and Dandenong Rd where it becomes Boyd Park. After cycling over Monash Freeway this reserve is a real surprise of contrasts – from cars and concrete to birds and bush.

A round trip of this ride taking in a Bay cycle and through the CBD is around 65k. Even the last part of this ride before reaching the Bay at Elwood along the Elwood Canal is attractive.



Darebin Creek Bridge (The missed Link)

Many of us have lamented not being able to cross the Darebin near Fez's Wetland, but relief is in sight. Recent photographs show a bridge that is near completion with much improved entry ramps. To be able to use this bridge on not having to cycle along Chifley Dve (the horror of it all) will be a great relief.



... and – finally finished and open. Tuesday 28/8.



A Banyule BUG in Hamburg

Hello again fellow BUGs. Well I did it, The Hamburg Cyclastic's 100km race. I finished and what a fantastic day it was. More on that later.

Prior to the Cyclastic we did a tour through Spain, Morocco and Portugal. This was a Trafalgar tour and we can thoroughly recommend this tour, which we booked through Meridian Travel.

We arrived in Hamburg on the 30th July and were thrilled to see our grandson again as he was the primary reason for our trip.

A suitably attired Marlow checking out my hire bike



Leading up to the race:

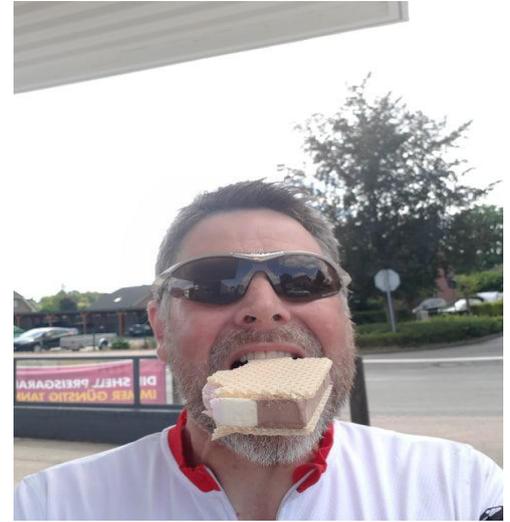
I was fortunate to be able to borrow a bike [got hire bike a few days before the race] so was able to have a few pre-race rides, in between babysitting. I had three rides in total, each around 70km. This was mostly out in the countryside and was really beautiful.

Given Germany is "bike friendly" I did not feel at all worried about riding on the other side of the road or the passing traffic.

The only downside was the borrow bike was a flat bar bike and a bit heavier than a normal road bike. It also did not have clip in pedals so I was in joggers. This made peddling a bit more challenging.

Given the weather was hot I liked that on the way back we stopped for an eis [ice-cream]. A great idea, me thinks.

Marlow's Grandpa's, one Australian, one German and the welcome eis

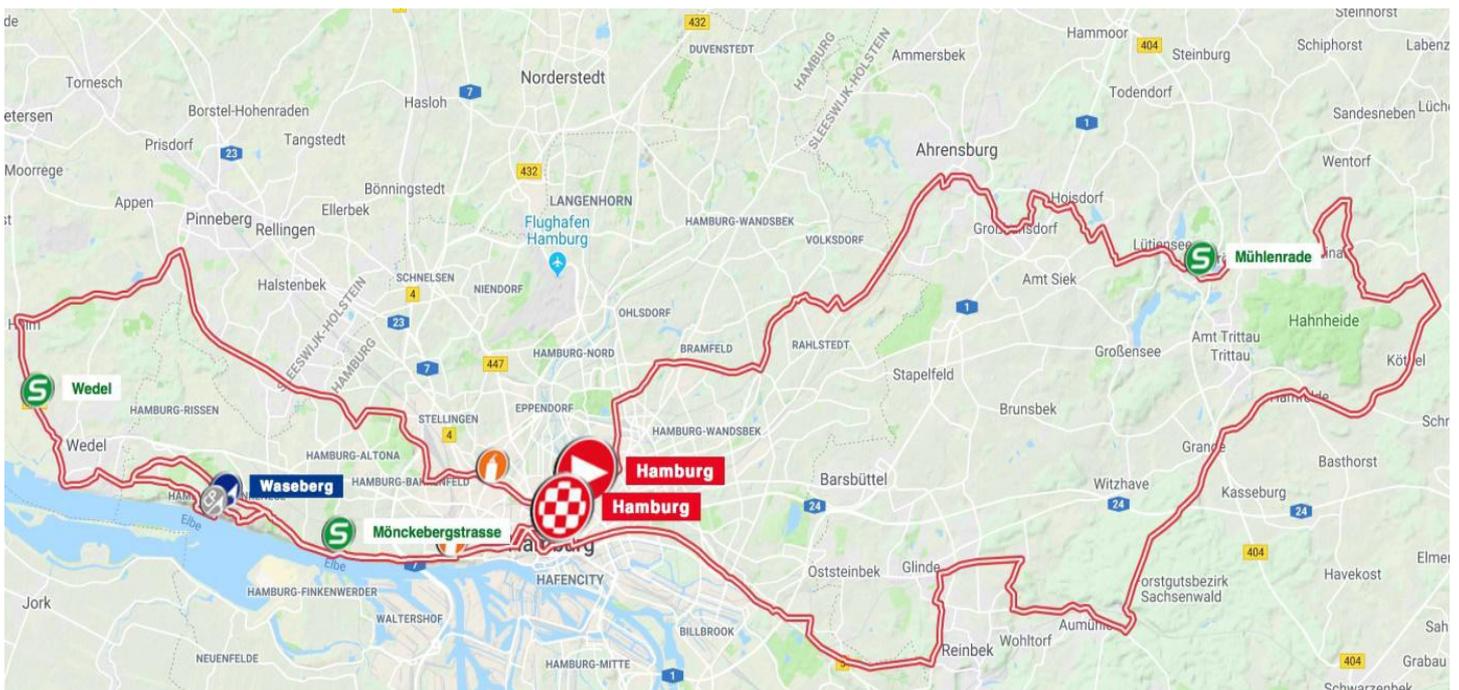


The Event

The Hamburg Cyclastic is an annual event for both Professional and amateur riders and is held in August, this year Sunday the 19th.

It is highly anticipated not just by the riders but the hundreds of thousands of spectators that scatter around the courses.

The course to the left is the 60K, the right the 100K



The support that these people give you as you ride by is sensational. As you start and ride through the Hamburg suburbs hundreds are cheering and waving you past. As you ride through the many small country

towns the course went through it was party time for the locals. Cheering, horn blowing, clackers and words of encouragement helped you keep going. In one town there was even a band playing, drums, guitars and singing. And this is for the amateurs, can only imagine the noise when the Pro's go past. Then you hit the finish on the famous Monckebergstrasse in the heart of Hamburg the noise level goes ballistic.

Pre-race

In the days leading into the race you can register and pick up your race pack which consists of your race identification, timing chip, drink bottle, and other important info. I also picked up my hire bike, which was a Giant road bike.

There is also a cycle expo where you can see and buy anything bike related, beer stalls and food galore. It is a real festive occasion and massively attended by locals and visitors alike.

Finding my name and pre-race carb-loading !!!!!!!!!!!!!



The Pros start around 11:30am.

For the amateurs riders are grouped into starting zones [based on what average speed you had indicated when registering for the event] for both the 60km or the 100/160km courses and are released zone by zone from 7:30am for the 60km and 8:30 for the 100/160km.

Even at this early start there are thousands of spectators out and about.

The start area for the 100/160km



Professional's

The Pro's race was run over a distance of 216.4km which was essentially a combo of the 100km and 60km courses with a few extra circuits and hills thrown in for good measure.

For the second year running the winner was Italian Elia Viviani in a time of 4:46:02 at an average speed of 45.39km.

Second was Arnaud Demare, third Alexander Kristoff. The best placed Aussie was Simon Gerrans in 57th place.

Elia at the finish and celebrating with an Erdinger, a truly splendid brew.





My Race, the 100km – ACTUALLY, 108.9km

I've used the term race and for the Pro's and a number of amateurs it is a race, however for many of us it was a race against the clock as there is a time cut off that means you cannot finish.

I have never done a bike race like this so my goal was to finish in less than four hours. Yeah, let's average a bit better than 25km and all will be sweet. Well that was my thinking.

I'm in my starting zone and about 10 minutes before our zone was to start – DISASTER. A tap on the shoulder, turn around and they point to my back wheel. FLAT. I'd checked that morning, all OK so what happened???? Anyway I pick bike up, leave zone to replace tube. I CANNOT remove the tyre. I have never seen such a difficult, tight tyre. I get help from other competitors but similar, virtually impossible. We finally have tyre off, new tube in but struggle getting tyre back on.

My zone is due to start and my mates depart. I am nearly in tears. 10,000km to a race I don't even start. Fortunately one of the starting officials worked in a bike shop and he got the tyre on. Pumping madly I got the tyre inflated and joined the race.

Riding in a large group of people means you need to concentrate and watch, especially into corners. There were a few accidents, some bloodied heads and did see people being put into ambulances, others sitting on the side of the road waiting for assistance. The medical support was very good and thankfully, for me, I kept safe and escaped any major issues, although had a couple of close shaves nearly caused by other riders cutting across my line..... Oh well.

For the first 50km's I was averaging just on 30km hour and was feeling pretty good. The second 50km had a few more, not hills, but upward gradients and this, together with the distance travelled was starting to bite.

The final 20km's was tough. No back or neck pain but I was feeling it in my hands, finding it hard to get a comfortable grip on the handle bars. Bottom of feet, yep knew they were there. And the bum, oh yeah. Nothing was going to stop me though and my spirits were buoyed when I could see the church spires I knew were near the finish line. Heading up the Monckebergstrasse to the finish line was spine tingling. I had done it.

Round to the riders finish area I received my finisher medal and headed straight to the Erdinger Beer stall to celebrate my achievement. Never has a beer tasted so good.

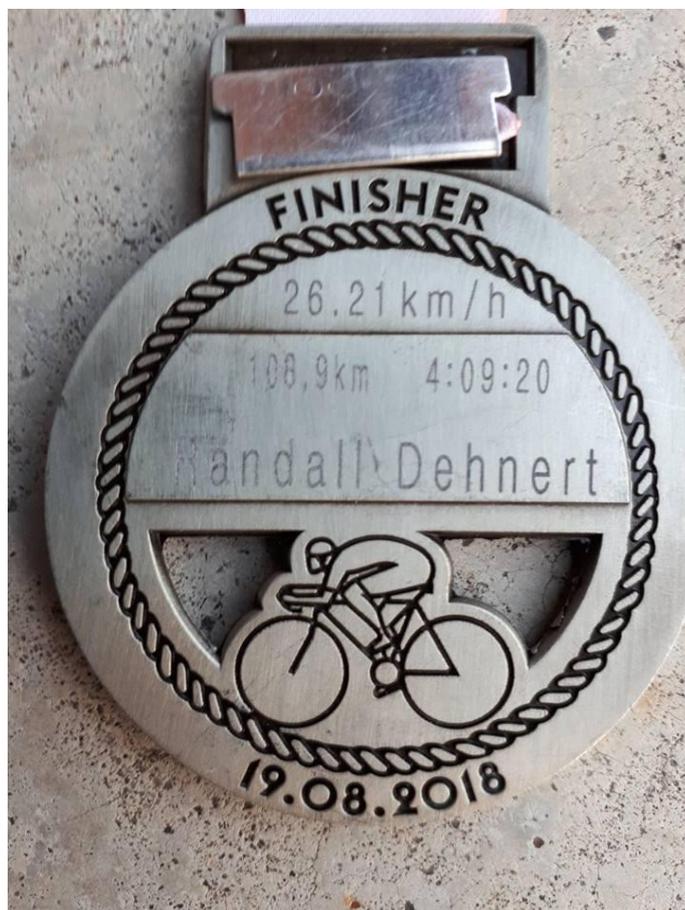
For the record I did the 108.9km in 4:09:20 at an average speed of 26.21km.

So my pre-race goal of doing 100km in less than 4 hours, did I achieve that?

YES, did 100km in 3:48:55. Actually proud of that

By the way the winner of the 100km did the 108.9km in 2:30:23 at an average speed of 43.93km. Wow.

Finished and my finisher medal



I am planning my next Hamburg Cyclassic in 2019 but prior to that I am doing the 100km Sorrento to Melbourne leg of the Around the bay in a day and then the Cadel Evans peoples ride in late January. In between those I will continue to ride with and enjoy the friendship of the Banyule BUG's to whom I am forever grateful for helping me get "back on the bike".

From the web

[Ernie Old "Cycling by bread alone".](#)

When Ernie Old told his story about the Australia he loved and his experience on a gruelling overland bicycle trek, Ernie wrote

"The bush is so old, that one loves to come here to lounge and dream. The soft-toned Australian bushland with it's grey-green smokey-tinted foliage misty rustling woods and pale sky Time means nothing here."

If you are considering adding an electric motor to your bike, you might find this link of interest.

[**The 5 Best Electric Bike Conversion Kits Reviewed – \[2018 / 2019\]**](#)

The Ten Best Bikerides In Melbourne.

Do you agree?



The picture to the left is included to further the on-going education of all bike riders. One of the major decisions taken on any ride is where is the coffee stop and what to have. The board makes this all important decision making a little easier. However, I did notice there is no Chicory on offer.

While on the issue of coffee, readers might be interested in this article which is included out of interest and does not purport to be a definitive medical opinion of this newsletter.

The Effects of Caffeine on Your Body

Bloke on Bike

This is a great cycling site with lots of information about rail trails and other notable cycling locations.

Hazards of cycling

Now, as cyclists, we all realise the perils of cycling in September and October. Apart from the usual hazards of being on a bike, the magpies are swooping and the snakes are slithering. Here is one members solution to the hazards of magpie swooping.



Remember. Send your contributions for inclusion in this newsletter to:-

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