

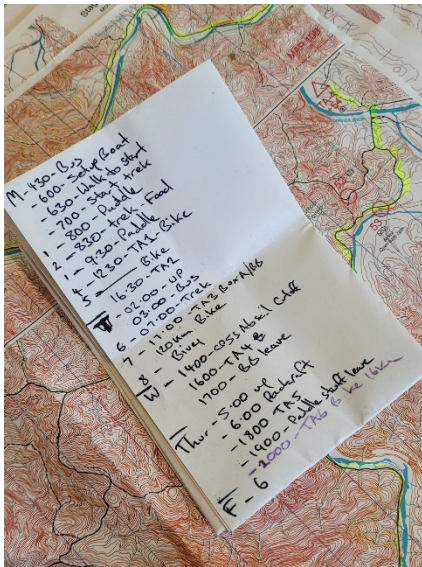
Raid100 2022 Adventure Race - a race report from Sunshine Unicycles.

TL;DR Couple spend 4 days 4 hours traversing 340km by foot, bike and kayak/packraft with wet feet finding orange flags in the bush and punching holes in a card to prove they were there. They had fun, might do it again.

Now grab a beverage if you are keen for the long version.

Route planning for this race was fairly easy for Andrew and I as our main aim was to get to the finish line under our own steam as we had short coursed the 2019 Raid100 (skipping the mega bike leg), knowing we had come into this race a bit undercooked we chose a very conservative route that we knew we could achieve. Looking through the race document we worked our way backwards from each TA determining when we had to leave each one by and put together timings that proved to be surprisingly accurate.

Monday 4.30am saw us on a bus the to Yamba to set up the kayaks, we were saved by the wonderful volunteers as we had missed an important bit of information but they sorted us out like the legend's they are. A leisurely walk including a stop to grab a coffee got us to the start line to get our phones sealed up and collect our GPS trackers for a 7am start. The 1st leg was a beautiful 3km coasteer via the lighthouse.



Next it was on to the kayaks where we had decided to head straight to Iluka where we did a 4km trek, collected one CP and got back in the kayak for the rest of our 20km paddle heading directly to TA1 collecting CPs along the way. After the excitement of a close encounter with a pod of dolphins we went a little too directly as we paddled straight past a CP (rookie mistake – the CP was under a fold in the

map) by the time we realised we were flying towards the TA with the wind at our backs and surfing trawler waves so no way we were turning back. At the TA in Harwood we were greeted by the legend's that are Michele, Greg and Mitchell, here we packed up our kayak gear and put our bikes together. With the TA next to the pub Andrew enjoyed a beef burger and I looked at a vegie burger and tried not to throw up, I did manage to get some (3) hot chips down. We headed out of the TA at around 2.30pm on the bikes for 60km of tar and dirt roads collecting 3 CPs along the way.

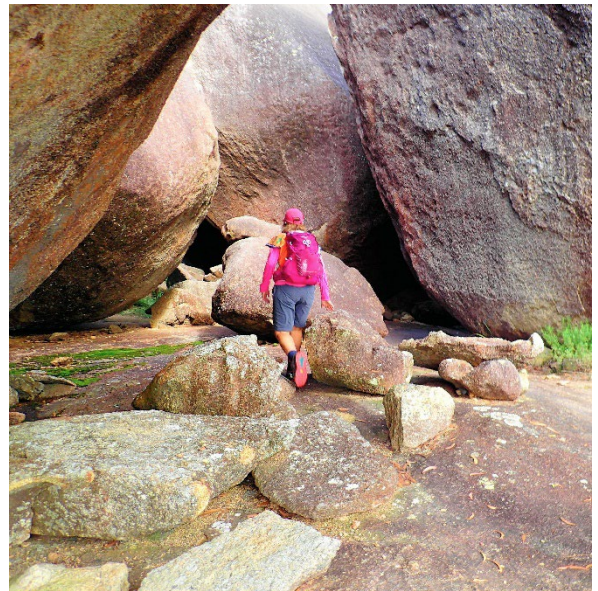


Arriving at TA2 in Lawrence at 7.30pm where we packed our bikes into boxes, had some dinner and put up our tent. After a decent sleep we were up at 2am to pack up our gear and hop on a bus at 3am with everyone else for the trip up to the Gibraltar Range NP for a 7am race restart at Mulligans Hut.



This leg saw us complete a 25km trek through the beautiful and somewhat damp Gibraltar NP enjoying the creeks and rocky outcrops along the way to TA3 at Boundary Falls where Jan from TriAdventure was excited to greet us as the 1st team into the TA, neat thing about Rogaine format races you can be 1st into a TA and be coming 30th





Once again it was time to put our bikes together and with the next leg being a 120km bike we chose to get going and bivouac out on the course. The 1st part of this leg was slow going with some nice rough mountain biking and swamp crossing on the Bicentennial Trail followed by some beautiful dirt roads through green cattle farms, we finished the evening by zipping down the range with Ian and AP (team 36) to get to CP49 at 7.30pm with about 50km done. After Vegemite and cheese on Vita Wheats for dinner we set up a tarp and slid into our Sol Bivvies for an amazingly good nights sleep especially once I had an epiphany and inflated a ziplock freezer bag put it in my filthy bike knicks and use that as a pillow...seemed like the height of luxury at the time.





Getting up with the birds had us hitting the road at 6.30am for an easy ride along the rivers edge to get to CP53 for an abseil down a cliff into packrafts on the river, then it was back onto the bikes for the short ride getting us to TA4 (Buccarumbi) by 3.30pm.





At TA4 we were greeted and given the run down of a considerable chunk of information by a very organized and patient Fiona. It was at this TA we discovered that the mystery activity was climbing a massive pine tree to collect a checkpoint 20m up using just the branches and two lanyards with carabiners, Andrew could not have been more excited and was up and down in 20mins. After a good rest and a snack of chips we got to work pulling our bikes apart and putting them in boxes again, blew up our pack raft and sorted out our seats, paddles and how we would attach our gear and did a dry land practice of our calls and technique for the upcoming rapids, this resulted in Andrew questioning, once again, my grasp of left and right and as we all know right is right and left is wrong – simple! Knowing that we could complete the 44km packraft leg in a day we decided to camp for the night and head out 1st thing in the morning.



That afternoon a number of teams had gotten tipped in and lost some or all of their gear so a safety briefing in the morning had us feeling nervous but we decided to attempt the packraft and wow are we glad we did, we had a blast! I was surprised at how secure I felt in our trusty packraft with my feet firmly wedged under my pack which was tightly lashed in front of me. We had a scare when Andrews split paddle stopped locking in place, fortunately I had a little roll of duct tape easy to get to in my pack, amazingly it was still sticky after being carried around unused for about 8 years, so we were able to effect repairs on the go. At CP 60 we buddied up as per instruction and our group consisted of us, Team36 Ian and Andrew and ½ of Team12, Ellie and Silas. The remainder of the paddle consisted of 3 very difficult and time-consuming portages around Grade 4 rapids but was made up for by some fantastic Grade 3 and lower rapids which all 3 boats made it through without getting tipped in. It rained much of the day but that just added to the whole experience.

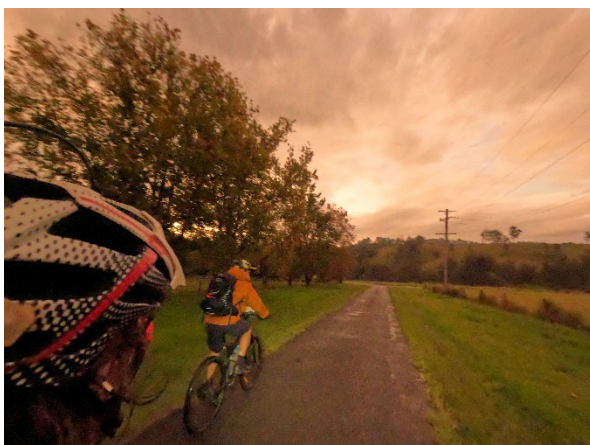




At TA5 (Jackadgery) Jan was even more excited to see us than last time, no doubt it would be stressful waiting for teams to come in after all the drama of the day before. It was here that my appetite finally kicked in and Andrew and I shared the best burger I've ever enjoyed, this was enough energy to get us through the tasks of deflating and packing up the packraft and paddle gear, put our bikes back together and change into bike gear although I did keep my paddle socks on as night was coming on and my feet were wet (as they had been all day every day for the last three days) but cozy.



We headed off into the evening and once again we chose the most conservative route – 16km of wet dirt roads to TA6 at Lilydale. Getting to the TA at 7pm meant that our bike boxes hadn't arrived yet so we set up camp and had honey porridge for dinner, our bike boxes arrived by 9pm so we packed our bikes into their boxes before bed.



As the final day dawned conditions were perfect for the somewhat daunting 48km paddle ahead of us, it started with some fun swift water but the Clarence River soon became wide and deep and the paddle seemed to go forever, we had definitely had enough by the time we arrived at HQ with 30mins to spare.



Thank you to Liam and his family and the wonderful volunteers that made this an amazing race, your effort and time is truly appreciated.

Could we have raced harder, sure, would we have been able to complete the last kayak in time if we had hmm... not sure, what I do know is we had a great time and finished feeling great! I was sure that this would be my last multi day race but Andrew and I are already talking about how we could do things better so I guess I'm not ready to retire just yet.