

# Mini-Rogue Adventuregaine

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In preparation for an event later this year (the rogue 24) I spent yet another weekend racing and not climbing. Not a bad thing, but I guess this is just a warning that more tangential information is included in this post.

Despite the threat of rain on the forecast I woke up fresh and ready (lie) at around 5am race day. Turns out there was no need to worry about a wet course, conditions were perfect, sunny but cool and we made it to the event centre adjoining Moggill State Forest pepped and rearing to go (lie). Map hand out went smoothly and we were, for the first time, somewhere near the start of the queue.

We made a cracking start by thinking the race began earlier than it actually did, and subsequently rushed a bit of our race plan, a mistake that bit us later on in the day. Still, we were feeling relaxed, had what we thought was a decent route mapped out within our limits and were optimistic the day would go well. By the time we lined up for the briefing and start I quickly realised I was without my compass, a fairly critical error given the first stage of our course required following some off trail bearings. Back to the car, search the bushes, locate compass, back to the start, ready to go, go!

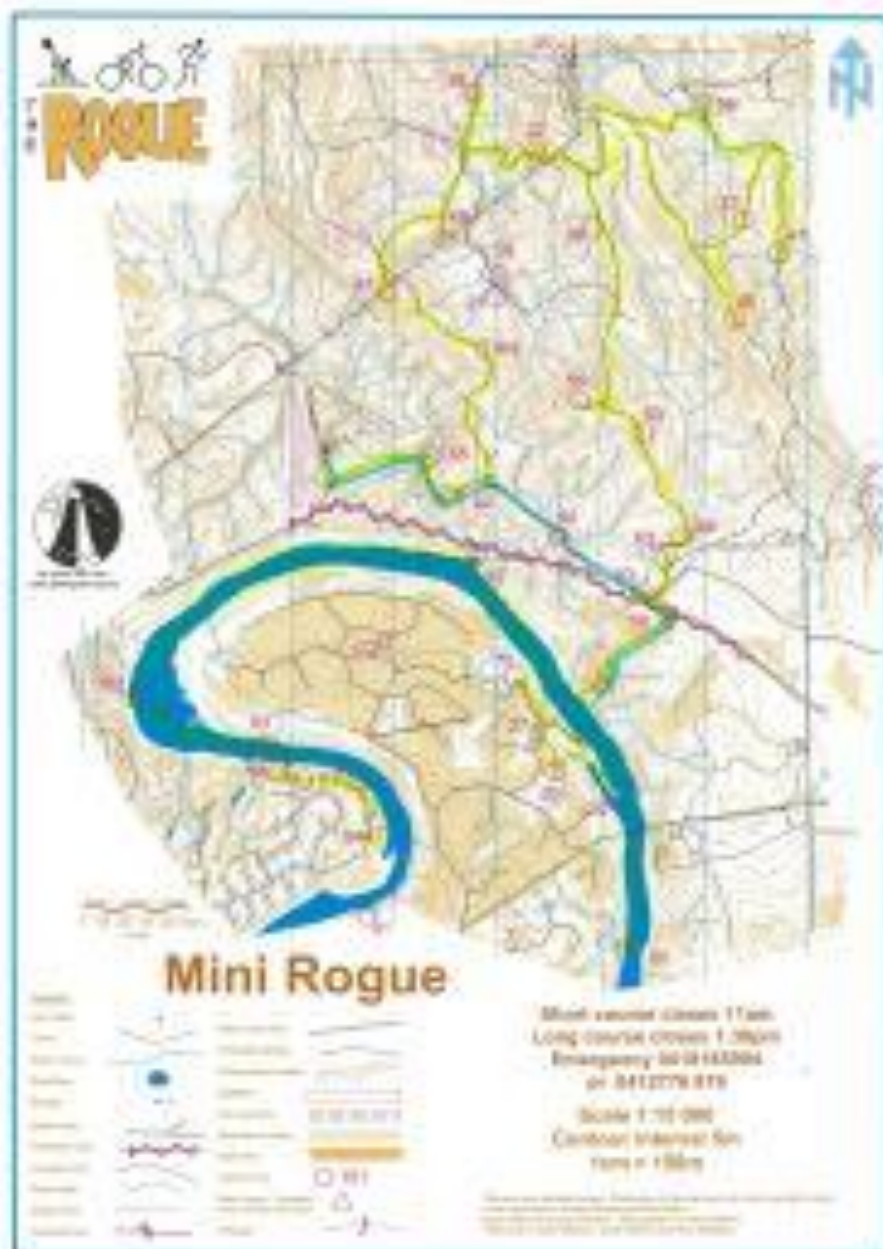
We set off fairly well, some minor physical concerns from the teammate given she'd spent the previous day moving house up and down several flights of stairs, but otherwise we were on track, in keeping with tradition making a beeline directly for the inevitable lantana. Down and up the creek to CP33 was smooth, popping up right next to the control. Following a bearing east we were continually foiled by dense, spiky, viny foliage which pushed us off track and has us a bit worried. After finding the pipes the CP was marked on, or so we thought, we spent a minute scratching our heads before realising that while we had the right pipes, we had stumbled upon them in the wrong spot. Crashing into an unmarked creek we eventually spat out onto the main creek line only 50 or so metres away from CP61 and the very obvious pipe/creek crossing.

After that it was through the clearing and, after a tiny bit of backtracking in order to find the damn thing, onto the small track towards CP81. We ticked that, followed quickly by CP101 then up the creek to CP82. Smooth and easy terrain followed, down an unmarked set of stairs that finished right on top of CP55 and along the path to CP31. An unmarked trail kept us on our toes as we inadvertently ended up back at CP82, a quickly rectified mistake only costing us a minute or so as we were back on track to CP51. Another small misadventure up the wrong spur eventually led us to CP62.

Next was the most navigationally challenging section of our trek route, a 300-400 metre cross country bash on a bearing. We made decent time, and were fortunate enough to stumble into another team as we swept down the spur together, spotting CP42 and retreating via the conveniently placed power lines. Back to the HH was an easy run down a ridge and over a creek collecting CP73. In general the trek went well, a few small mistakes slowed us and we perhaps should have dropped the 40 points at CP42 in favour of spending that time on the bike where we might have been able to grab an extra 80-100 instead.



Onto the bikes ahead of our projected schedule by half an hour we were feeling alright, and joined a queue of others picking up the obvious CP45 and CP52. We stuck north and powered along the track to CP64, and then up and over the hill to CP91 without incident. CP49 and CP39 followed with equal ease and it was here that our poor planning started to catch up with us. Predicting that cycling would have taken much longer given the hilly terrain, we were well ahead of schedule, instead of continuing up the hill to CP35 as we should of, we kept to our (terrible) plan of avoiding the steep hill in the north for 30 points to what turned out to be an equally steep hill for 20 points at CP22.



Bike/Kayak Route



At the junction to the east of CP22 we spent a minute evaluating our position. We had shot through this portion of the course and had time to spare. In the planning stage we had allocated an extra loop in the north east of the course in case we found ourselves with surplus time. After some discussion the team mate convinced me it was worth the ride, she was more than right by the way, and we shot around the bend to CP36 and CP47, up the colossal and demoralising hike-a-bike to CP23 and then in and out to CP46. Given the benefit of hindsight I can now see any number of other ways in which we could have attacked this bike leg. We were unstuck by incorrectly estimating our ability to cover distance, which we achieved much better than expected, and by poorly planning the additional points we wished to pick up if we had the time. In reality we had the time and ability to clear, or at least get a lot closer to clearing, the bike leg. It's a small shame that retrospective analysis only counts as learning for next time and not upping our total points on the day. As I always seem to say, at least we'll know better for next time, although I've proven my inability to learn from mistakes more times than I'd care to mention.

The rest of the bike was a breeze, mostly downhill with next to no confusing nav and logging CP38, CP56, CP53, CP48, CP63, CP83 and, after dutifully dismounting bikes, CP58 in just under 15 minutes.



Heading out from CP56 – Photo from Globe Trekker Adventure Gear

After dropping bikes of at the TA and restocking our dwindling water supply we took the excellent roped drop down to the river to collect our kayaks from a novel floating collection point. Given this cut out entirely on the dreaded portage and allowed me to cool off in the water I was thrilled as we set out on this final leg. Conditions proved perfect for kayaking, and despite this traditionally being our least enjoyable leg, we found ourselves having a great time. As did others in the kayak who, in the distance started singing! Well, so we thought, turns out cramp had stuck and what we heard was not, in fact, a delightful shanty but instead was agonised wailing. By this stage, having elected to prioritise the high concentration of big value CP's to the south west, we had breezed through CP92 and managed to pull up close enough to make sure everyone was alright. All being, at least relatively well, we quickly notched CP102, CP93 and hit the shore to quickly grab CP65, CP71, the astonishingly high value CP150 and CP 94 before turning and heading back downstream. Hitting land just across the way from the TA, we made quick work of the three 20 pointers CP25, CP26 and, after a quick use of the convenient facilities, CP27. Heading up the path to CP70 we were scratching our heads in deciding whether to make the easy run to CP57 or test our newfound kayaking skills (I suppose we have been training a little to improve those) in making a run for the higher value CP85.

Time was becoming a concern at this point, but, sensing we were probably a bit behind the higher scoring teams after losing time on the trek and some poor planning on our bike route, we threw caution to the wind and went for the big points. It was the right call, and after a relatively speedy paddle we ticked off CP85 and headed back to the TA for the final ride home. This is where the only small inconvenience on the kayak leg occurred, contending with both tides and headwind slowed our pace significantly in the last 500 metres back to shore.

Back up the SES rope (what amazing volunteers that really added to the event) and onto the bikes, we were part of a chain of teams racing the clock back to the HH. We trickled in with 5 and a half minutes left on the race clock, improving on the 30 seconds we'd left ourselves at the last mini-rogue.

In total we managed 2330 points, good enough to put us in 6<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the mixed open category, a result we were very happy with given how competitive that category can be.



Mini Rogue Route and Elevation Profile

We learnt a few things, most importantly about proper map planning, this, along with improving our off trail navigation, will be really telling factors in how well we do in future. Ideally I'd like for us to be able to plan a full route we can be happy with even after the event. And most importantly we had a great day, thanks to organisers and volunteers for putting together a really high quality race.

Perhaps next time I'll post about climbing again. We'll see.

Lex