

## Kidman Trail Summary: Willunga to Kapunda

### Riding Stats:

Km's Covered: 275.51

Ride Time: 18 hours 46 minutes

Average Speed km's: 14.9 km/h

The notes on the following pages are designed to be used in conjunction with the Kidman Trail Maps.

They should help any person taking on the challenge of completing the Kidman Trail.

They are a summary of my mountain bike journey.

Michael WOOD

Date: 23-5-09 Willunga to the Intersection of Concannon & Battunga Rd 2 km's South of Echunga.

Weather: Low 20's, Gusty NE Winds, Overcast.

Track Conditions: Dry.

Riding Stats:

Start: 9.20 am

End: 2.30 pm

Ride Time: 3 hours 20 minutes

Km's Covered: 48.2

Average Speed km's: 14.4

Max Speed km's : 40.4

Starting at Willunga the trails follows the Shiraz Trail for 3 km's before turning east and heading toward the South Mt Lofty Ranges. The trail follows mainly unsealed roads for 8 km's before reaching the base of the Mt Lofty ranges a 'seriously' steep climb up Thomas Hill Rd for about 2 km's takes you up to Range Road. The trail begins its descent along an off-road track which sees you in Kuinto Forest within 20 minutes.

The trail for the next 10km's follows one of the many vehicle tracks all sign posted with various 'trail signs and arrows' in Kuinto Forest, so make sure you stick to the Kidman Trail Signs. The trail is up and down with another short steep climb just before you descend toward Kuinto Forest Ranger Head Quarters. Riders should note that if one of your destinations is Kuinto Forest Ranger Head Quarters then you will have to turn left at a trail marker that indicates right. You will know the one that I am referring to as it is at the bottom of a steep rough descent. You will be able to see an oval through the trees to the left. (NOTE: Each time I visited their there has been a number of kangaroo's resting on it). The Ranger Station is further to the left of the oval.

Leaving the Ranger Station you rejoin the trail, a short stint on the trail sees you cross Brookman Rd after 2 km's and continue through a mixture of forest and farmland for the next 18 km's finishing at the intersection of Concannon & Battunga Rd 2 km's South of Echunga.

The stage from the Ranger Station to just south of Echunga is much easier than the stage from Willunga to the Ranger Station as long as the conditions are dry.

Date: 18-6-09 Intersection of Concannon & Battunga Rd 2 km's South of Echungung to intersection of Ironstone Range Rd & Old Princes Highway 2 km's East of Nairne.

Weather: Cold to Cool Day Temperature in Mid Teens, Calm, Clear.

Track Conditions:

- Unsealed Roads – Dry, excellent condition.
- Tracks- long wet grass, littered with tree branches, tracks are concealed. Many gates, slow going.

Riding Stats:

Start: 9.20 am

End: 2.25 pm

Ride Time: 3 hours 50 minutes

Km's Covered: 47.92

Average Speed km's: 12.4

Max Speed km's : 56.1

The trail starts with a 1 km steep climb up to Hack Range Road. The view on a clear day along this road is spectacular and is well worth the climb. As the trail crosses over Main Rd & Greenhills Road it veers off to the left before following an off road trail. The trail is easily missed as the trail marker is set back off the 'left' of the sealed road. The off road trail links up with an unsealed road which takes you into Macclesfield.

A steep 'sealed' climb takes the trail out of Macclesfield as it makes its way east. The next 13 or so km's to Hender Rd are hard work. Numerous gates, along undulating off road trails with knee deep and in one place shoulder deep wet grass comprise the trail along with tree branches and debris make this section hard work.

At Hender Rd the trail descends toward Mount Barker Creek. As Hender Rd finishes the trail turns left and can be easily lost. The trail marker is on a fence post and the trail goes to the rear of the only house on the right hand side of the track. NOTE: if you are faced with an electric fence / gate, turn back about 50 metres up the hill and look left.

The trail descends into Mount Barker Creek and back up the other side. If you can ride up to the top you can ride anywhere! At the top, the trail again offers spectacular views to the south east as it heads down toward the tunnel under South Eastern Freeway. The trail takes a smooth, undulating Ironstone Range Rd to Old Princes Highway.

Date: 28-12-09 Ironstone Range Rd & Old Princes Highway 2 km's East of Nairne to Tungkillo.

Weather: Cool start 12 C, Hot Early Afternoon 34 C. Calm, Clear, Sunny. Light Breeze from South.

Track Conditions:

- Unsealed Roads – Dry, Rough, Stony, Sandy condition.
- Tracks- sandy and rough only a few gates compared to previous stage.

Riding Stats:

Start: 6.55 am

End: 1.25 pm

Ride Time: 4 hours 9 minutes

Km's Covered: 60.26

Average Speed km's: 14.4

Max Speed km's : 49.2

The trail for the entire stage is almost always undulating. As soon as you make one descent you will begin a climb.

The trail starts with a 4.5 km ride along McIntyre Road and Harrogate Road. Keep a look out for the trail marker which has the trail heading off road for a couple of hundred metres.

The first 10 km's is a comfortable ride with a mixture of sealed, unsealed and off road track riding. This will bring you to about the intersection of Hope Watts Road and Military Road to this point most of the track is downhill.

The Next 10 km's which finishes around the top of Steep Hill Road is comprised of rocky unsealed roads and rough fire track.

The next 23 km's are rough undulating and hard work. Toward the end of this section the trail turns north from Kubenk Road, travels across private land before joining Bottroff Hill Road. This section can be confusing as there is no trail markers and also no track on the ground to follow in the second half of this 3.7 km section. The trail also climbs in this section therefore you will not see Bottroff Hill Road / Fire Track until you have gone through a gate and followed the fence line, west up the hill. You will be about 100 metres from the gate that gets you off private property and onto Bottroff Hill Road / Fire Track before you can see it. To navigate this section use your map and make sure you know which way is north.

5 km's further on and the trail reaches an intersection part of which goes to Thorlindah Homestead. As at this date the trail marker and the Kidman Trail Map went in different directions. The trail marker indicates to travel north along Henschke Road whilst the map sends the trail west then north along Brinkworth Road. It doesn't really matter which way you decide to go as the trail(s) will link up at John Rollonds Road before going across private property for a kilometre and on to Tungkillo.

Date: 8-6-10 Tungkillo to Angaston / Swan Reach Road Keyneton

Weather:

- Cold 10C (Mt Crawford), Over cast, Fresh West / North West Breeze.

Track Conditions:

- Unsealed Roads – Dry, Rough and Stony.
- Tracks- sandy, muddy in parts and rough.
- Good for mountain bikes, more tracks and trails and fewer gates. Not as stop start as previous stages.

Riding Stats:

Start: 10.05 am

End: 3.00 pm

Ride Time: 3 hours 52 minutes

Km's Covered: 63.75

Average Speed km's: 16.5

Max Speed km's: 53.5

The trail is a little flatter than previous stages with only one steep short climb over the side of Little Mount Crawford. The roads are rough and stony in many places with the exception of some smooth riding on trails in Mount Crawford Forest.

After setting off from Tungkillo the trail starts with a climb on unsealed roads and then levels out as it heads toward Mt Pleasant (7 km's). Another 7 km's of stony unsealed roads from Mt Pleasant and the trail enters Mt Crawford Forest and follows Glendevon Road for a little over a 1 km.

Once you turn into Mt Crawford Forest you will need your map to navigate your way through. There are numerous trails and trail markers for other trails. Use your map, your odometer and know where north is to get to the Ponderosa House Camp.

It unlikely you will lose your way in this part however it is easy to find yourself on the wrong trail. Especially when you are about 4 km into Mt Crawford Forest and you reach a point where the Kidman Trail branches away from the Mawson Trail (5 tracks intersect!). The Kidman Trail heads west between the pine trees and looks least like a bike or horse trail and definitely the least used. However once you get over the rise you will see Starkey Road and be on route to the Ponderosa House Camp.

Providing the track is dry, the trail is relatively fast until you hit a climb at the side of Little Mount Crawford. However once that is negotiated, a short steep decent then precedes the remainder of the stage, about 30 km's of stony unsealed roads.

Date: 22-7-10 Angaston / Swan Reach Road Keyneton to Kapunda

Weather:

- Cold 11C Mainly Fine, Light East South East breeze.

Track Conditions:

- Unsealed Roads – muddy (if it has rained recently), but smooth and fast at times.
- Tracks- muddy, rough and stony.
- Fastest stage.

Riding Stats:

Start: 8.55 am

End: 12.15 pm

Ride Time: 3 hours 15 minutes

Km's Covered: 55.38

Average Speed km's: 17.0

Max Speed km's: 47.1

The majority of this stage of the trail is flat or gentle downhill. With the exception of a couple of short steep climbs during the off road (trail) sections just before Stockwell which will see you off your bike. This is mainly due to the long grass and the numerous tree branches which stall your momentum. Also in this section observe the signs that say, 'Stay Close to the Fence Line'. The fence line is the best way to stay on the trail when going through private property. Move away from the fence line and you will find yourself off the trail and having to navigate your way back. There are few trail markers on private property.

The scenery is great as the trail takes you through some of the eastern Mt Lofty Ranges / Barossa Valley wine growing areas around Keyneton, Moculta and Stockwell.

Recent rains and the passage of 4WD's on the Vehicular Tracks and Private Access roads along this section of the trail makes riding a little more challenging given the tracks are easily turned to mud. But if it hasn't rained for a week and the track is dry, the going would be pretty quick and smooth.

The Kidman Trail joins the Mawson Trail 8 km's east of Stockwell and follows it nearly all the way to Kapunda before branching off on Mary McKillop Walk just before East Terrace on the southern outskirts of Kapunda.

When you reach Adelaide Road in Kapunda you can cross over it and turn right to complete your ride at the tourist information centre in Kapunda where you will find a map and information regarding the trail at the rear of the tourist information centre. Alternatively you can continue up to the trotting track 1km after Adelaide Road.

