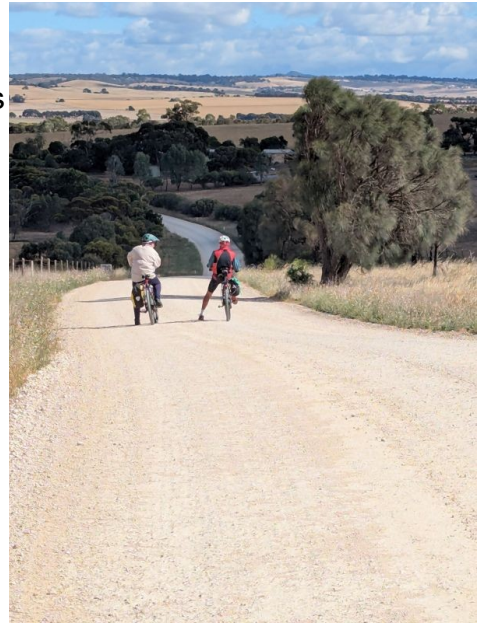


December PERFECT ride from Strathalbyn 1st December 2024

One of the enduring attractions of the monthly PERFECT rides is the exposure to the wide variety of landscapes that SA has to offer. If we ride in urban areas we see a particular, familiar view. If we're mostly in the Hills, then we see another and despite them both being interesting and picturesque, they are always familiar. The PERFECT rides on the other hand are anything but predictable or familiar. When we see the SARCC email announcement of a PERFECT ride in a particular area, we immediately conjure up a mental picture of how that country might look, or the physical features we might encounter, or the obstacles we might face. Despite this, the PERFECT ride always presents something different to what we expect and at the end of the day, we've learned something and had fun doing it.



December's ride offering was no different. Leaving Strathalbyn on a warmish windy Sunday morning, Kevin D, Chris J, Peter H and Kevin B headed east to deal with our first obstacle after only a couple of kms...the River Angas looking very 'snakey' and deep'ish so we changed tack and skirted around on another road. Heading northeast on gravel we moved from 'reliable rainfall' country into 'less reliable rainfall' environs and more marginal country where the

crop looked ok, but not 'mortgage busting'. (I imagined Goyder looking down on us and saying that his line was still relevant all these years later).

We passed a number of ruined dwellings, churches and farm buildings which pointed to a more optimistic time when maybe there was even some water in those now dried up watercourses. Then, as we turned to the west the country started to change and within just a few kilometers the red gums started to appear and the fields started to green up before our eyes. Once we were lunching and coffee'ing at Macclesfield, the country had taken on a much more gentle feel. After lunch it was back gravel roads to a connecting track. The sign on the gate said 'phone first', which we did but no answer so the busy downhill main road with the wind at our backs was the only option. A de-brief at the Terminus Hotel was very welcome and rounded off what was a typical PERFECT ride...a few challenges, a bit of climbing, a respectable distance, varied landscape and good company. It's the secret to staying young apparently, do things you love, with friends.

Kevin B.

