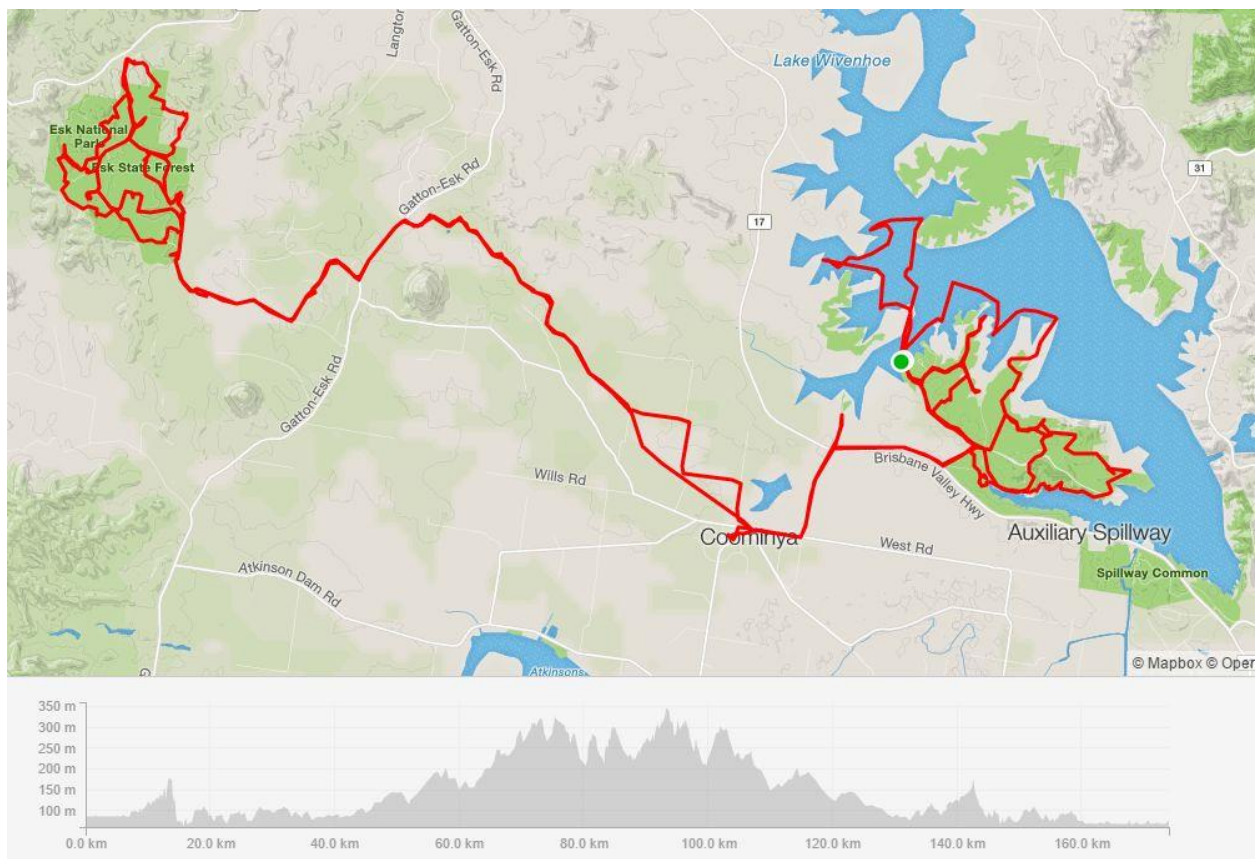


Carbon Carb Loaders 2017 Rogue Race Report (also featuring Team BroCann)

There were a few last minute changes to the team mix this year. I would join my cousin Steve, racing under team Carbon Carb Loaders, and my brother Mick would join my other brother Lukas to race under team BroCann. This would allow my brothers to join up with team Wild & Co, as Chris from this team was racing with my brothers at geoquest in a few weeks. Steve and I were happy too, as we had both done too much carb loading training (instead of real training). We also had both been renovating for the last 3 months which had a major impact on any real training. This would be Steve's first ride in 6 weeks, and between us we had done a single 10km paddle in the last 6 months. This was also my first adventure race in 12 months, however I had done a few foot Rogaine's, and we would both be navigating, so I knew that would be one of our strengths. Our strategy was to race solid, be out for 24hrs, and just keep moving. We planned to play to our strengths, which meant a shorter paddle, and most of the trekking and MTB. If we got everything we had planned (which we never do), we would be achieving around 110 points per hour. We would use this rate to determine on course what CP's to drop. Our plan was to be on the water for the final kayak at 8am, giving us 3 hrs to get as many of the final CP's as we could.



Map prep flied by as usual, and there was plenty of team banter between us, BroCann, and Wild & Co (Chris and Alex) who all prepped up under the same shelter. Everyone was throwing out fake route choices to throw the other teams off. I noted that Alex's pack was smaller than my water bladder. Later

on I heard him asking Chris to carry some food for him. What a great strategy, pack small, and get others to carry your stuff. May have to try this one in a future race.

Before we knew it, the race had started, and we were in second last position. We thought we may have done too much 'carb loading', as Steve was sitting in the water while paddling, and it felt more like a submarine than a kayak. We dropped CP 7, as at our current rate the 70pts CP would take us 1 hour, which was well under our estimated rate. We only did 1.5hrs on the first paddle, which put us right on our time schedule. We were not worried about dropping the CP's early, as we knew we would run out of time before we ran out of CP's.

The first Rogaine went well. We had planned to dropped 2 CP's (14, 17) from the far east, and get the rest. We had a few problems around cp15, as the different in water line % threw us out a bit. We lost about 20minutes here. We eventually found it and this was where we say Mick and Lukas for the first time. We didn't see many teams out on the race, but team BroCann and us obviously had similar routes, as we saw BroCann about 6 times out on the course. We thought this meant they were ahead of us, as they would have done more paddling then us in the first kayak.



Team BroCann

I stopped to address a hot spot on my foot, and where we lost another 10 minutes. We passed BroCann again coming out of CP 10. This meant we were 20 minutes behind them. We decided to drop CP 9 as it was only 30pts, and came in to the bike leg on schedule. Liam said team BroCann had just left, which meant they must have picked up the 30pt CP we had dropped. We decided to drop the top end of the MTB around Esk, as didn't think the extra 110 points were worth the time, and thought we could make more points using this time in the kayak at the end.

We saw team BroCann again where we could cross the highway. They were fixing up a loose mapboard. We turned right, as we wanted to get CP 50 on the way out so we would forget in on the way back. Our brothers had a strange look on their face as we parted in different directions. We enjoyed a lovely roll down a 1 km hill. We got to the gate at the bottom, I went to check the description, and noted that it wasn't there. Oh no, we had marked a kayak CP as a bike one, and went down the hill for no reason. The stuff up would have felt a little better, if it wasn't right where we left my brothers. A lesson learnt ... hopefully.

We saw team BroCann again at the next CP (22) in the town of Coominya, and were happy we had not lost much time. We got all but 1 of the MTB forest CP's before arriving at the TA. Our strategy was to use the major tracks, as we thought the minor's would be overgrown. It was only a little further to do this, and it paid off as we got all of the CP's with no dramas. We saw team BroCann again at this TA. They were just leaving when we arrived, so figured they were about 15 minutes in front of us. They were only going to do a minor loop on the second trek, and we had planned to clear it, so we figured we would see them again.

We had packed pizza and coke into the TA box, so it was exciting to arrive. It meant a slower than normal transition, however it was worth it. So were the clean dry shoes and socks. They always feel amazing on tired wet feet.

We cleared this trek with no dramas, apart from having to bypass some lantana coming out of CP 37. Having 2 navigators is always a bonus, as we both pick up on mistakes early. The lack of training was hitting us now, and we were feeling the hills. We usually jog all the downhills and flats, but a couple of times we walked the flats.

Arriving at the TA box again, we finished the coke and pizza, put on our limited warm clothing, and started the ride home. We passed a team looking lost on the southern border of the Rogaine forest trek. They asked if they were close to the boxes. I could feel their pain when I showed them where they were on the map, as they had that really tired, hungry, lost look, and they were still a long way to get to their TA boxes. I really felt for them as it reminded me of when I had been in that situation.

The ride home was fast. I quickly realized that not packing a thermal top was a mistake, and I froze on the ride home. I had a skins top and arm warmers, but these did not cut it. I was hoping for some hills to warm the body up, but was only met with pretty much of 30km of downhill. Man was I cold. This did help keep me awake though. Another thing to keep us awake was hitting some patches of sand at high speed on the bottom of a big hill on the way to CP 31. We were both lucky not to be thrown off. Come to think of it, it may have done a little more than just keep us awake. After a quick toilet stop (just

joking), we continued back along the rail trail. While I was freezing, Steve was nice and warm, which was probably why he was seeing 'goannas' all the way home. He said he wasn't hallucinating, and he was just tired, as all the sticks on the trail looked like goannas. Kind of sounds like hallucinating to me.



The MTB loop around the dam was a slow one. We were both feeling the lack of training, and the sore butts from the riding. There was also a bit of walking up pinchy sections of the hills, as the legs didn't have much left. We got to the top of pine hill right on sunrise, which was a treat. We also rode past a cheery Liam doing training run around the dam a little after that. We got to CP 18, and moved on to get our final MTB CP 44. The CP was about a 2km ride from 18, and when we were almost there, I went to check the description only to realize this was a kayak CP. That was pretty deflating. Made the same mistake twice. Marked the kayak CP as a MTB one. I wasn't a happy camper, however the stuff up gave us an extra spurt of energy to make to the TA.

We rolled into TA for the last kayak leg at 8am, so we were right on schedule. We decided which CP's to get on the last kayak leg and off we went. It felt so good to be off the bike seat. Our plan was to paddle straight across to the other side picking up the high value CP's (46 and 49), and come back by the western side and get as many as time allowed. It was a lovely morning for a paddle, however we were still submarining a bit. From CP 49 to 48 we felt like gun paddlers. We seemed to be going so fast, however I think it was just because we were paddling against the wind. 48 to 49 took us much longer due to the lower dam levels and having to paddle around a pit outlet, which meant we had to make a call about getting both 43 and 42, or dropping 42. We estimated we had 30 minutes, and it was an extra

3km. After going back and forward trying to decide, we decided to have an easier paddle back and not risk it. On the way home, we thought we saw team BroCann about 100m in front. We thought it would be good to try and pass them, so we put all our energy into catching them. After 10 minutes of flat out paddling, we got close enough to realize it wasn't them. Bummer!

We finished the race with 30 minutes to spare, but were happy with what we had done. We completed our goal of a solid race, being out there for the full race, and just keep moving. We got a score of 2140, which put us 10 points behind team BroCann and Wild & Co, who got 2150. We were happy with that as it meant we had played to our strengths (which wasn't fitness). During presentations, Steve noticed a 30 point penalty deduction on our score sheet (Ed Note: for forgetting to punch the brief punch). We queried this and had it removed, which meant we actually finished on 2170 (13th overall, 2nd in Men's Veterans). More importantly it meant we beat my brothers (not that we are competitive😊), and showed that this sport is not just about fitness, which gives us hope.