

The Dirty Golspie.

Total Distance 157km

Time: 2 Hr 30 min

Road Surface: Tar Approx 100km, Dirt 57km. Dirt ranges from excellent to moderately loose gravel.

Bike Suitability: ADV, Dual Sport and Standard Road Bike, not suitable for Sport Bikes or Cruisers with limited rear suspension travel.

Fuel: Available in Taralga on week days only, or detour into Crookwell from Laggan on any day.

Most local riders are very familiar with the fabulous Goulburn- Taralga- Crookwell - Goulburn loop, it contains a perfect set of roads that are generally in good condition, sweeping curves, some tighter corners and more. The section between Laggan and Taralga is especially loved now that the road has been repaired and upgraded.

But what if you want to get a little more adventurous and don't mind the dirty stuff? Yep there is an offering for that too.

This ride combines tar, tight dirt, open dirt and wonderful scenery, it is a little longer than the standard route and will take more time due to the slower dirt sections. For the most part you will not encounter much in the way of road traffic, though kangaroos, wombats, sheep and cattle might pop up along the way.



Start Your Engines:

Like always we start from Belmore Park in the middle of Goulburn. Turn left onto Sloane St and proceed along Sloane street which will become Grafton St, follow this through to the traffic lights at Lagoon St, proceed through the lights and along Union St. At the T intersection turn right and follow Chantry Street and over the Bridge and then turn left onto Middle Arm Road. Proceed through the roundabout and follow Middle Arm Road out of town.

Middle Arm Road is tarred for the first 20 kilometres or so, it is a good surface and gradually gains elevation until you reach the Fire Shed on the intersection of Ryanna Road and Middle Arm Road, if you pull up at the Fire Shed and look back towards Goulburn the view is rather nice. Ryanna Road is a nice journey as well and maybe we'll over that on another ride article.

Proceed along Middle Arm Road, which now enters a hilly section, just be careful of other oncoming traffic as there are many people living on smaller allotments in the area and it's also a popular road for cyclists who ride to the end of the tar before returning to Goulburn.

You will cross a narrow and rough bridge once the road opens up beyond the hills be careful there is a tight turn following on from this, now proceed to the dirt section about 3km further ahead.

Once you reach the dirt, slow right down, the road narrows quite a bit and the surface is somewhat loose. This section contains several low creek crossings that often have water flowing and are at as minimum rough and muddy. Some parts of the road are quite narrow and tight so beware of farmers in Ford Rangers, farm bikes and 4 wheelers and motorists going too fast for the conditions.

Stay safe and you will be rewarded with some stunning views along valleys.



Eventually the road opens up into a less wooded area where it straightens out, but watch out for a couple of 90 degree bends that contain loose gravel. As you come up to Carrabungla Rd on the right the road becomes tar, you'll then cross the remnants of the old Goulburn-Crookwell rail line and on your right will be the old remains of the Roslyn rail station followed by the intersection with Woodhouselee Rd, at which point you turn right.

Approximately 3 km along the road you'll find the turn off to Roslyn Rd, don't turn, continue on towards Laggan, the road returns to dirt, however this section is good quality, generally nice and wide with a smattering of local traffic.

You'll come to a stop sign at Laggan, proceed across the road to go through Laggan, you are now on Peelwood Rd. If you want a break you can stop at the Laggan Pub or maybe the Laggan Pantry, depending on the time, both have excellent reputations.



Laggan Mill is located down Mill Road on the right and has been set up as Whisky Distillery.

Continue on through Laggan and head out of town on Peelwood Rd, approximately 1.5 kms down the road you will find Golspie Rd of to the right, you are going to take this. Be extra vigilant for the first kilometre as the road is narrow and the tar is in poor condition with some really nasty defects, after that things improve. This road will take you through open country side with lovely views to the north and north/west. There is a nice view as you cross the Bolong River looking northwards and the countryside in this area is mostly rolling hills. Not far beyond the left hand turn onto Leighwood Road you'll come onto dirt, for most parts it is wide and in good condition but some corners are corrugated and covered in loose gravel, so caution is advised.

The section between the Tyrl Tyrl/Cockatoo cross road and Yalbrath Rd is the most challenging due to a combination of loose gravel, rough surface and road lining trees casting shadows making pothole identification difficult, but at say 60-70kph you'll be fine.



Be aware that when you get to the Scabbed Flat road intersection take the left option which is the continuation of Golspie Road, it is easy to get confused here as the right one looks more like the main road option, just beyond this point the road reverts to tar.

There is a one lane bridge across Woolshed Creek but you get adequate warning and before you know it you're entering into the upper side of Taralga, via Hillas St.

Rest options in Taralga are the Taralga General Store and the Taralga Hotel, all of these will be on your right, should you need a toilet stop there are clean toilets in Goodhew Park, also on the right fuel if open is available on the corner of Orchard St and Bannaby Road.

You now have the ride back into Goulburn, this is actually a nice section and quite scenic on the Taralga end. The road surface is generally good, however there are a few sections that have been pothole infested now for around 4 years and seem to evade all efforts to correct, some are signposted as "Rough Surface" and they are not kidding.



If you want a detour that is nicely scenic but partially dirt you can take a right turn at Parsons Lane, approximately 10km from Taralga and then pick up the Ryanna Rd which will take you through to Middle Arm Road, joining it at the Fire Shed you road past on the way out of Goulburn.

You will find several small roads off to the left along Taralga Rd, all of these are dead ends, however they can be worth taking a short wander as the views towards the Cookbundoon Ranges are rather lovely, good options are Hillcrest Road and Chapmans Lane.

As you come into Goulburn the road is signposted 60kph from a fair way out, don't disregard this as it is often patrolled. Approximately 3 km from the 60kph signs you will find yourself at the

intersection on your right for Middle Arm Road, so from here on into town it just a case of retracing your steps you did on the way out of town.

There you have it, a wonderful mixed surface ride with great scenery, little traffic, nice bends and plenty of fun. Take your time, stop along the way to take it all in and stick to a moderate pace and you will have a top time.

One last note for this who are not local, don't do this ride in Winter, you won't get snowed on, well you might like I did once, but more likely you will find the weather and wind bitterly cold and challenging out around the Laggan to Taralga section, especially around Golspie locality which is very open and exposed to westerly winds. Ultimately this is a perfect early to mid Autumn and late Spring ride.

Enjoy the Ride.