

## DIY ADVENTURE

### URBAN ESCAPE – WILD AUCKLAND

Track grade, 1-6

This ride starts at Waimauku on SH 16 just 30 minutes from the Auckland CBD. The route includes sealed back roads, gravel roads, forests and beach. Despite pressure to close the beach to vehicles, Muriwai's black iron sands, backed by dunes, is still a public road (with a 60 kph speed limit).

Though beautiful, Muriwai can be a remote and somewhat hazardous place. If you can, go during the week, best in a three-bike group. You need to be at Muriwai four hours after high tide, to allow a good four hour hard sand window, as from three quarters tide on the beach shrinks to nothing in places and all of it very soft sand littered with debris and driftwood. My route gives riders the option of shortening the ride to miss the challenging 80 plus km of beach riding.

At the top of the beach is the Kaipara Bombing range, where the military blow things up, though not so impressively now our attack Skyhawks are scrapped. A red flag flies at the beach entrance when they are feeling explosive, and when access is restricted.

The big dunes at the top of the beach are spectacular, though there is no legal access over the dunes or forest behind it. Endangered birds nest here over summer and DOC controls vehicle activity. Those with Paris to Dakar dreams may find the big dunes hard to resist, and beware, the dunes are treacherously soft and it is almost impossible to see anyone coming the other way. The beach also gets soft and unpredictable as you turn east toward the Kaipara entrance.

Leaving the beach via Rimmers Road takes you through Woodhill Forest to Hellensville (fuel) and Waitoki, where there's a nice cafe. At this point the ride can connect with the Kaipara Hills ride (BRM # 65). Slidey gravel back roads wind around Riverhead Forest, before the ride finally winds back to the start at Waimauku.

### FOLLOWING THE ROUTE INSTRUCTIONS

- Distances are in kilometers
- TL Turn left
- TR Turn right
- SO Straight on

Please note that road signs often change or are vandalized, so please remember this is an adventure. Odometer accuracy, tyre size and riding styles cause distance readings to vary.

### ROUTE GRADING

- 1 Tar sealed, all weather road.
- 2 Formed surfaced gravel road, all streams bridged.
- 3 Formed surfaced gravel road, surface uneven in parts, surfaced fords and or bridges.
- 4 Formed un-surfaced road, rough fords and or bridges.

- 5 Moderate un-surfaced track, moderately rough fords and or bridges, no major climbs.
- 6 Rough un-surfaced track, rough fords and or bridges, moderate climbs.
- 7 Rough un-surfaced track, rough fords and or bridges, steep climbs.
- 8 Very rough un-surfaced track, difficult fords and difficult climbs.
- 9 Nightmare un-surfaced track, very rough fords and very steep climbs.
- 10 Don't go there!

Please note. My idea of challenging may not be yours. Conditions change constantly, the area is remote, travel in company and be prepared for Adventure.

## ROUTE INSTRUCTIONS

Start/ Finish: Waimauku, SH 16

Total distance:

Route grade: 1-6. This is an easy grade 1-2 gravel and seal ride if the beach option is missed out. At low tide the beach is generally hard near the water. The most difficult part of the entire ride is getting off the beach at Rimmers Road, which I rate as a 6 climb. If you struggle, be prepared to return to Muriwai.

Dangers: Beware the occasional rutted section, other vehicle tracks, beach debris and especially, other vehicles.

Odometer (km)	Instruction	Notes
reset odometer here	Waimauku Service Station, SH16	Fill your tank?
	Take Muriwai Rd	School on right
1.0	TL School Rd	Windy road
2.7	SO Hinau Rd	More windy road
4.2	TR Hinau Rd	Yahoo, gravel!
5.9	SO Muriwai valley Rd	
7.6	Follow Taiapa Rd	More gravel!
13.3	TL Waitea Rd	Sea and beach views
14.7	Walk to see the gannets	Well worth it
14.9 and zero	TR and zero speedo	Slow, steep descents begin
00	Shop across the road	Last you will see for a while
00	<b>Easy option – want to miss the beach section? TR and follow Muriwai Rd to Waimauku. TL and follow SH 16 to Hellensville and pick up route</b>	The beach is fairly easy at low tide, but getting off the beach takes some verve and control
00	<b>Continue ride up beach</b>	
0.6	TL Coast Rd	Onto gravel
2.5	Soft sand track to beach	Now you earn your keep
3.3	TR up beach	
3.9	Ford Muriwai Stream	Its usually very shallow
19.9 and zero	Track to exit beach (takes sharp left turn up hill)	Watch for this, hard to spot track just after 60kph sign
00	Option time, <b>A</b> , continue on beach for 32 km to Kaipara Bombing Range, or exit beach now, option <b>B</b>	The exit tack is soft and uphill, so momentum is essential

00	<b>Option A continue on beach to Bombing Range</b>	Get going it's a fair hike
32 approx	Kaipara Bombing Range	Not legal to ride the dunes. Beware 4x4s and bikes!
34 approx	Views of Kaipara entrance	East into the harbour mouth, the sand becomes VERY soft. Dotterels also nest around here spring and summer
00	Return to Rimmers Rd beach exit	Take note of speedo reading
34 km approx	TL and pick up route at option <b>B</b>	Exit hard to spot
00	<b>Option B exit beach</b>	Up the hill and through car park (out of sight behind dunes)
-	Follow Rimmers Rd	You are now in Woodhill Forest
2.0 and zero	Road to motorcycle park on L	120 km of sand tracks available, go in, take a look
00	Rest speedo at Park entrance	Continue on Rimmers Rd
3.7	TR, seal	
8.0	TL, SH 16	
9.8	TR to Hellensville	Crossing Kaipara River
11.0	Hellensville	Fuel, cafes etc
Zero speedo	Hellensville Service Stn on left	Zero at service stn
0.8	TR Garfield Rd	The poshest street
1.3	TL Ruatawhiri Rd	Not the poshest street
1.9	TL Inland Rd, becomes gravel	Caution wooden bridge Once part of the NZ Rally
8.5 and zero	TR towards Kaukapakapa	Main road SH 16
1.1	Andersons Rd	Gravel
5.3	TL seal	80kph police tax area
6.7	TR, SH 16	
6.9	TR, Kaikatea Flat Rd	
12.0	TR at Wainui	Fuel and great cafe
14.4	TR Forestry Rd	
14.6	SO Horseshoe Bush Rd	Gravel
18.8	TL Austin Rd	More gravel
23.1	TR onto seal	Main rd
25.7	TR Dairy Flat	This is old SH1, fuel etc
28.8 and zero	TR Backbridge Rd	
00	Continue on Blackbridge Rd	Much new seal but gravel to come
8.3	TR Ireland Rd	Very windy
12.1	TL Forestry Rd	Again?
15.5	TR Bald Hill Rd	Riverhead Forest on left
27.7	TR Old North Rd	
30.0	TL at vineyard	Matua Valley, good wines
37.2	Cross rail	Yes, there are trains
37.8	Waimauku	You made it!

