

# Freewheeling

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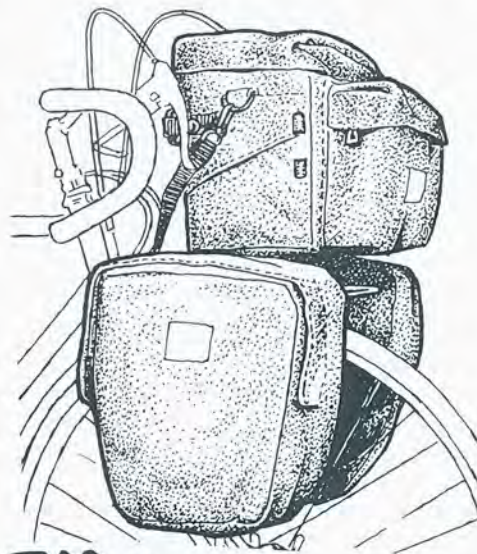
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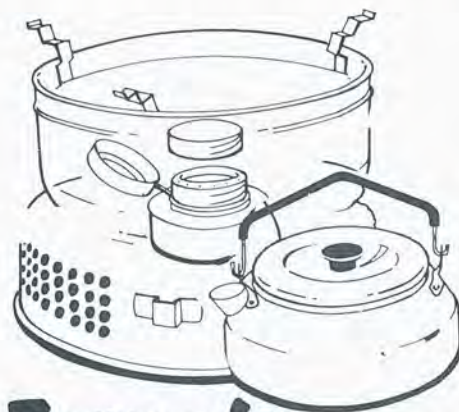
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# Freewheeling 11

JUNE 1981



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AUTHORS & CONTRIBUTIONS: Well researched articles (preferably accompanied by photos or graphics) are welcomed by the publisher. The text should be typed double-spaced and black and white photographs should be accompanied by captions. Touring articles should come with a clear map of the route described. These will be returned to authors after publication.

Letters for the reader's column *Write on* are also welcomed — typed if possible.

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## Stop press

Issue 10 is a collector's item already.

Because of muddled communications with our printer, we have ended up with slightly fewer copies of *Freewheeling 10* than are needed for distribution. We apologise to anyone inconvenienced by this error. As we usually print extra copies to have on hand for our back issue sales, there could be a considerable shortfall in supplies of that issue. For back issue sales, we will have to rely on the copies returned by newsagents after this issue goes on sale.

If you missed out, send in the order form on page 39 and don't delay. All subscribers would have received copies, but those who buy through retail outlets may have missed out.

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Cover photograph Amanda Holt,

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# Write On

## The Nylon Fetishist

I read with great interest your article, *The Leather Fetishist's Guide* . . . Having made my own panniers I was interested to read how other people have approached the same problems. You illustrate a couple of possibilities for hooks. After a nasty experience with commercial bags making suicide leaps from a rack, I was keen to obtain a hook with a deeper hook than those I had seen. My hooks are nylon fairleads, available at yachting shops. They are heavier than the Moss-type hooks but more importantly have a long prong to the hooks which absolutely defy accidental unmounting of the bags. The bags have now had nearly a year's use and the hooks are performing well. Instead of three-ply, which I have found unplies itself in bags, I use 4mm chipboard. I reinforced the top edge with a strip of light aluminium and bolted the top hole of the hooks through both the board and the strip. This may be somewhat over-designed but it is performing very well. Holes in the board are an excellent idea as they provide stowage for flat objects, eg maps, papers, spokes.

To help improve conspicuity, I attached strips of reflective fabric to the outside of the bags. This material, which I obtained from the Bicycle Institute of

Victoria, shows up well very well at night and adds a pleasing finish to the bags.

An article in *Transportation, Volume 10, Number 1* is of particular interest to the leather fetishist. Raleigh has developed cowhide-faced brake blocks which offer a dramatic improvement in wet-weather braking. Bicycles tested under International Standards Organization procedures stopped from 24km/h in 8m compared with 24 m for standard brake blocks. The wet weather was simulated. Dry-weather braking is also claimed to be slightly better than with conventional brake blocks. When the leather wears away, a rubber block remains giving similar braking to any other one. The leather works by absorbing the water on the chromed rim of the wheel, instead of the water forming a thin film between the rim and the block.

Peter Mathews  
Camberwell 3124

## Expendable Cyclists

After reading the article by Neil Jones, in the No. 9 edition of *Freewheeling*, I feel that I must add an account of my own experiences on the roads of Sydney.

In December 1980, I was knocked down by a car driven by a P-plate driver who crossed double yellow lines whilst

approaching a crest, then drove across me, thus forcing me onto the car and rolling me off the back onto the roadway. While I was phoning for the police he drove off. The police arrived 45 minutes later and with the aid of two witnesses I was able to give a good description of the incident. What was surprising was that the police did not want to know what had happened to my bicycle nor did they ask any questions as to the state of my injuries. I heard no more about the case.

In February this year, on the same road, another car ran into me. This car was turning a corner on the wrong side of the road and hit me square on. As a result much damage was done to the bicycle and also to my legs. Here again I was kept waiting for an hour before the police arrived. All through the proceedings the police were apologising to the driver for having to book him for negligent driving, disregarding the fact that a person had been injured due to this. When I enquired about my condition and the damage to the bicycle, the answer I got was "that is between you and the driver" then they got in their car and drove off. I was left with the distinct feeling that as far as the NSW police were concerned cyclists are an expendable



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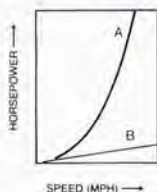
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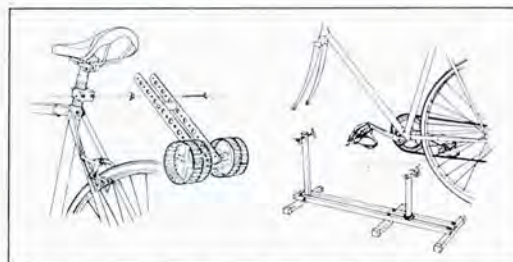
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item.

In my many years of cycling in Sydney, never ever have I heard of a cyclist having a sympathetic hearing. Before the motorists in this part of the world send us off to that great freewheeling carriageway in the sky, I would like to see our rights on the road clearly stated in the road handbook.

R. W. Needham

Freewheeler - Liverpool chapter

## Audax Australia

For many years cyclists in Europe have been participating in *randonnee* cycling events. These rides are usually from 200 km to 600 km, the average speed must not exceed 30 km/h, nor be less than 15 km/h. This may seem easy, but the longer rides become more challenging because the average speed is calculated on an overall basis.

The classic event for *randonnee* cyclists is the famous Paris-Brest-Paris, 1200 km to be completed in a maximum time of 90 hours. The event is held every four years and more than 1800 cyclists rode Paris-Brest-Paris in 1979. Just to complete this ride is quite an achievement. Sir Hubert Opperman was the

first rider home in 1931, a virtual non-stop effort of 49 hours. No other Australian riders have entered this event since, but in 1983 when P-B-P will be staged again a number of cyclists from Australia hope to be going.

To assist these riders to qualify for P-B-P and to encourage cyclists of all types to extend themselves both physically and mentally, Audax Australia was recently formed, we are affiliated with the European Audax Group, and in doing so our Australian *randonnees* will be internationally recognised. Anyone will be able to enter Audax events, membership of Audax is not necessary.

If you would like more information about Audax rides, or enquiries about membership, contact:

Russell Moore

President

77 Marshall Rd.,

Dundas 2117

(02) 872-4451 (ah)

or

Alan Walker

Secretary

P.O. Box 32,

Carlton 3053

(03) 531-6997 (ah)

## Victoriana

I am in the process of gathering information on the subject of bicycling in Victoria. This information I hope to convert into a book at a later stage.

The information I require covers a wide range of topics all related to bicycling in Victoria. The years I am looking at are from the early 1800s to the present day. I need information on when bicycles were first introduced to Victoria; what types of machines were to be found; their cost; the types of people who rode bikes and why; how the First and Second World Wars affected cycling; when the first bicycle touring clubs were formed; good illustrations and photographs; what type of touring equipment was available and is available now, and any other information relating to bicycling in Victoria.

I have checked through various books and magazines on cycling in Victoria and have found very little information which could be of help. I would greatly appreciate anything your readers would be able to send me. If they require the information to be returned, could a stamped, self-addressed envelope be sent with the material.

Kim Fawkes (Mr)

175 Lee Street,  
North Carlton, 3054





# Write On

## Sutherland Shire Cycle Touring Club (SSCTC)

The club was formed in June 1980 to provide non-competitive cycling activities in the Sutherland Shire, as well as to encourage the implementation of better cycling facilities for the commuting and recreational cyclist. It organises numerous rides of varying difficulties, and monitors the planning of bicycle facilities in the Shire.

Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30 pm, 7 Kiewa Place, Kirrawee. The club is fully affiliated with the Bicycle Institute of NSW, and the joining fee is \$3 for students, \$6 for individuals, and \$9 for families. For more information ring: President: John Ansell, 521 5505 [h], Secretary: David Cholson, 524 6718 [h], Treasurer: Martin Krause, 523 6594 [h].



## Accommodation list

I recently returned home from a cycling tour in northern and central America. Whilst there, I used a Touring Cyclists' Hospitality Directory, a list of people who offer simple one-night stops to cyclists on tour. A place to stay and shower is all that is implied, any more is by mutual agreement. The directory is distributed only to those in it, who in turn are willing to extend hospitality. In just a few years, the directory has grown to include more than 750 people. A similar directory has recently started in England.

I think the directory an excellent scheme and am disappointed to find no such directory exists for cyclists in Australia, a situation I now wish to remedy. I am compiling the first Cyclists' Accommodation Directory (of Australia) to be printed in August, 1981 and mailed to everyone in it. To be listed, please send me your name, address, and phone number (home and business) with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. An indication of where you live (eg 35km SE Canberra; 5km W of Sydney GPO) would also help. The directory will be printed and distributed privately and a small donation to defray costs would be appreciated. However, inclusion in the directory does not depend upon financial support.

I ask you to be listed in the directory and to encourage others also to be listed. The larger it is, the more useful and exciting it will be.

Rosemary Smith  
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Cartoon by Ian Taylor.

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The Aboriginal people of Australia.

What is a superstar?

The sun.

**Chain Reaction**  
Friends of the Earth Australia  
Published 21 October (November 1980) 1981



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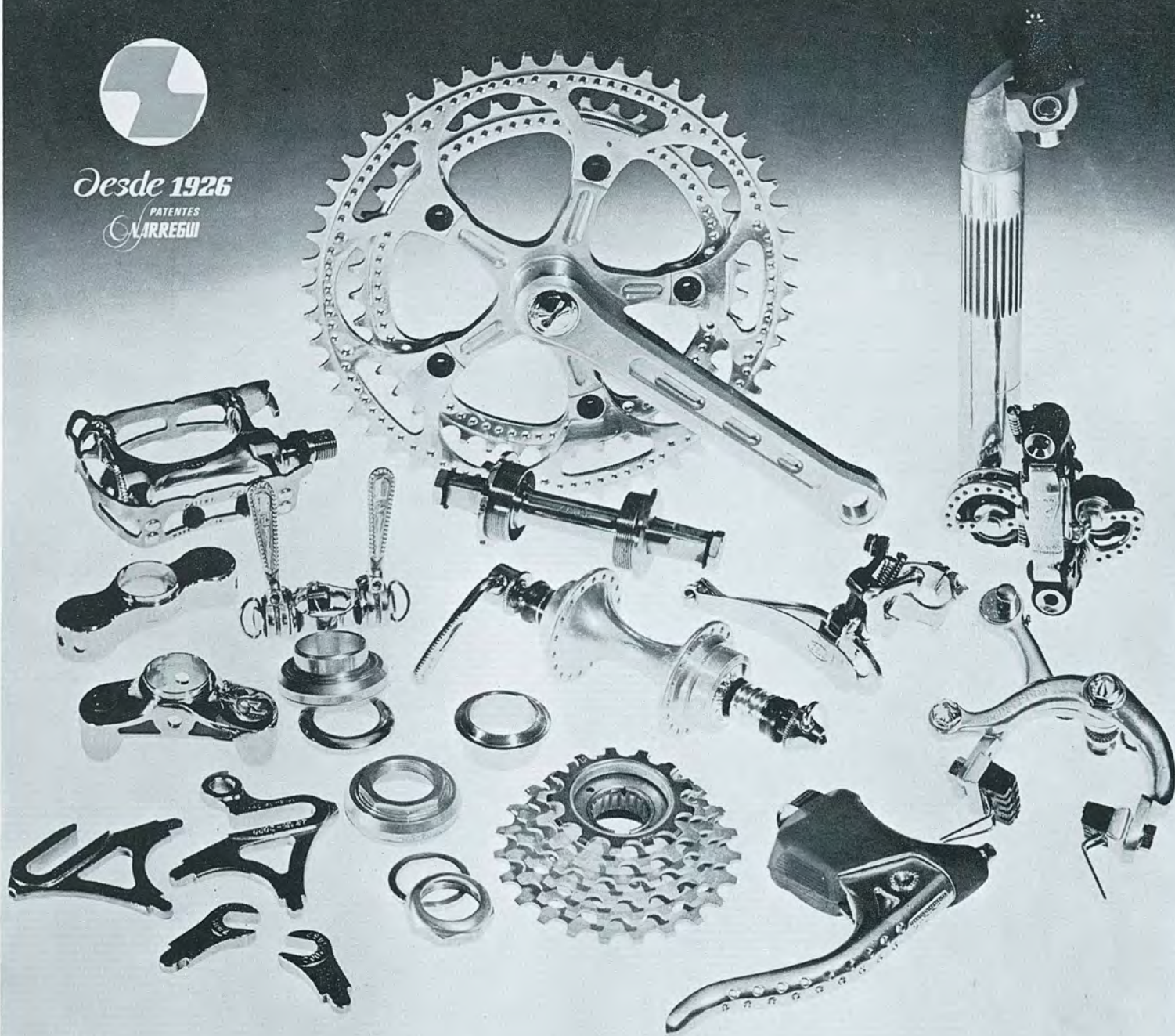
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# WOMEN'S BIKE CO-OP.

Over the last year, a group of Sydney women have been meeting and working together as the Women's Bike Co-op. Amanda Holt interviewed one of the members, Liz O'Wheel, so that others might see how such a group is formed and how it works.

A: How did the Women's Bike Co-op begin?

L: Two women got together about a year ago and started it, one of them was quite experienced, she had been on a number of tours and was able to repair her own bike, and the other had just bought herself a bike, a three-speed, and

she didn't know anything about it, but she wanted to learn. So they decided to get together and help each other. It grew from that to about ten women at the first meeting.

A: How did the others find out about it?

L: It was advertised. There were

notices put up in the Women's Warehouse, women's health centres, bike shops and all these women turned up on that day.

A: Was there only one experienced woman in the group?

L: No, at the first meeting there were two women who were familiar with bikes, one of them had worked in her family's bike shop for years and the other had taught herself.

A: How did you begin? What were you working on when you first got together?

L: We talked on just about everything in that first meeting. We talked about our reasons for forming the collective and the areas in which we wanted to work.

The first thing we wanted was workshops where we could teach each other how to fix our own bikes and what tools to use and what tools to take on a tour and things like that. We also talked about going on tours. Then we talked about bike politics and how we could be a lobby group and improve conditions for cyclists generally. We later went on the "Reclaim the Road" protest ride.

A: Did most women in the group have ten-speed bikes?

L: There were three three-speed bikes and the rest were ten-speed. Most of the women who rode the ten-speeds really didn't know much about them. Although I had done a lot of touring on my ten-speed, I didn't know anything about my own bike, except for repairing punctures.

It is to our advantage that there are different types of bikes in the group. Although I only knew vaguely about ten-speed bikes, I knew nothing about three-speeds. But while in the co-op I've also learnt quite a bit about three-speeds. Some women who had bikes in the back shed have brought them down to the shop, dusted the cobwebs off and got them in working order. They then started riding them around town, rather than waiting around to catch buses. They've decided to be more independent.

You see we're just interested in keeping our bikes serviceable. We're not obsessed with having all the best and newest gadgets and we're just not interested in tours where we get from A to B in the shortest time.

A: Where does the group meet?

L: We started off meeting in each other's houses repairing the bikes in the backyard. We have recently been meeting in the workshop of a bike shop, which is good, because we have use of the tools.

A: How did you get access to the bike shop?

L: Since the bike co-op was formed I've started working in a bike shop.





A: Were you one of the experienced bicycle mechanics in the bike co-op when it started?

L: No, I knew nothing about bikes, I just saw the ad for the co-op, and went to the first meeting.

A: Did you pick up knowledge about bikes and then work in the bike shop?

L: Oh no, it was the other way around, I mean, I was just really interested in bikes and I was changing jobs and I couldn't think of anything I would rather do. I became a sort of apprentice bicycle mechanic. So now the group is able to meet of an evening in the bike workshop.

A: How often do you meet?

L: We hold workshops once a month and we also go on tours once a month. The first tour we went on there were six of us. We went on a three-day tour on dirt roads, it was quite demanding, going to Maitland, the back way, up Mogo Hill. The next tour was a short ride.

We try to alternate between easy and more difficult rides.

A: How many women usually go on a tour?

L: It varies, but about six.

A: How do you go about organising a tour?

L: We usually sit down, get out the map, get out our diaries and try and work out between us when it's convenient to go and where we'd like to go to. We camp out and take food, fruit and vegetables and lots of chocolate.

A: Do you travel as a group or divide?

L: We usually ride in a group. When we are planning a ride we also take the fitness of all riders into consideration and plan the tour around that.

A: Do any children go on tours?

L: Unfortunately we haven't gone on any long tours with kids as yet. We have had some Sunday rides with kids and we want to include them on longer trips soon.

It was great for me to go touring with women. Previously I had always toured with men and I found I didn't have the same comradeship. It's good to be with women who are interested in extending their knowledge and broadening their horizons, who aren't afraid of sweating and getting dirty.

A: Getting back to the workshops, how are they conducted? Do you study something specific each time?

L: Yes we usually do. When we started we made out a program, so that the people passing on the skills wouldn't have to keep going over the same things. We started off with easy things like adjusting brakes and then gears, and discussed tools, how to use tools and what tools to buy. We just talked about the mechanics of a bike and how all the parts function.

We are now no longer afraid of the bicycle as a machine. We look at it and know how it works — we now realise it is



quite a simple machine and knowing this is a good introduction to mechanical processes generally. It's just a matter of looking at things and finding out how they work.

I'll give you an example. On our second tour one of the bikes broke down, it was a broken derailleur. We just sat down on the side of the road looking at the bike, worked out what was wrong and made an improvisation which lasted for the rest of the journey.

A: Do you discuss the comparative values of different bike products?

L: Yes, we do, but this is limited a lot by finance. The sharing of tools and equipment is one of the positive aspects of the co-op. It's not always necessary to go out and buy yourself a new pair of panniers or other gear.

A: Were many of the women friends

before they joined the co-op?

L: Well, the two women who started it were obviously friends but some women, like myself, didn't know anyone, just saw the sign somewhere and went to the meeting, and have since become friends.

We are different ages, from different backgrounds and have different attitudes to bikes. Some of us ride our bikes all the time and other only use them for touring. We all have one common interest — bicycles, but in the group are artists, social workers, some of the women have children, one woman is a karate instructor and a couple of women now work in bike workshops — it has been good to meet each other.

It's all very easy going. There are no formal meetings with a chairperson and secretarial minutes. We are a collective and don't need that patriarchal organ-





A: Do you see the group continuing as it is?

L: A few of us have long-term plans to go on an extended tour of the outback and across the Nullarbor, but that is a long way off, and meanwhile the co-op is still going strong.

A: Is the group still open for new members?

L: Oh yes, the group actually works in two ways. Co-op members are able to pass on information to other women who don't have time to be fully involved in the group, like friends of ours who come up to us when they're having a problem with their bike. That's why it's good that people know about us. They then know that somebody in the group knows about bikes and they can ask for help when they need it, they can even ring up for advice without waiting for a meeting.

These women want to know their own bikes and work on their bikes themselves, not take it in to a bikeshop and get, usually a male mechanic to fix it – still not knowing what went wrong or how it works. Working with women means we don't get patronising advice and are encouraged to do it for ourselves.

A: If there are any women interested in joining the group who can they contact?



L: Well there's me, Liz, my number at work is (02) 660 6605, and my home number is 560 6495, and there's Antoinette at 560 4330 and Lyndall at 698 7440.

isation. We are not an 'established' group, that is, a closed collective. You don't have to be a bicycle fanatic or a particular type of woman to join.

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# Great Ocean Road

by David Martin

This is an account of a two week tour I made in January, covering a total of 1 200 kilometres from Mt Gambier to Melbourne via the Great Ocean Road, and then Albury to Canberra via the Alpine Way, detouring up Mt Kosciusko. Other cycling tourists may be interested in the details and the road conditions — the ride offers a combination of spectacular scenery and exhilarating and challenging riding which are the essence of good bicycle touring. Every person has different reasons for riding; for some, touring is a pleasant, relaxing meander from place to place, for others a challenge to cover as much ground as possible each day, and for others like myself, a balance between

the two. With a group of riders touring there can often be conflicts unless people are reasonably well matched in motivation and fitness. I did the ride on my own but this has its disadvantages too. It is not only that gear that could be shared in a group — like tent, stove, tools and spares — still has to be carried by the solo rider, but also in difficult or exhausting sections there is no one to share with and spur you on. However, I would certainly recommend this tour to the fairly fit, reasonably well-equipped and self-reliant cyclist. In this issue, I cover the section from Mt. Gambier to Melbourne (570 km).

## Preparation and Equipment

I live in a remote area of Cape York in north Queensland, and had not been on a bicycle for two years, so the first month of my holiday in Adelaide was spent in clocking up some 1,000 kilometres around the Adelaide hills, alternating long rides of 80-130 km for endurance with shorter, faster runs of 30-40 km. I think it is tremendously important to the success of a bike tour that you be fit — nothing is more guaranteed to ruin the enjoyment than the misery of total exhaustion that takes so long to recover from when you're unfit.

My bike I built up myself, from an

*Left: The Devil's Elbow, looking towards Fairhaven, about 1932. Right: The Great Ocean Road, about 1981.*





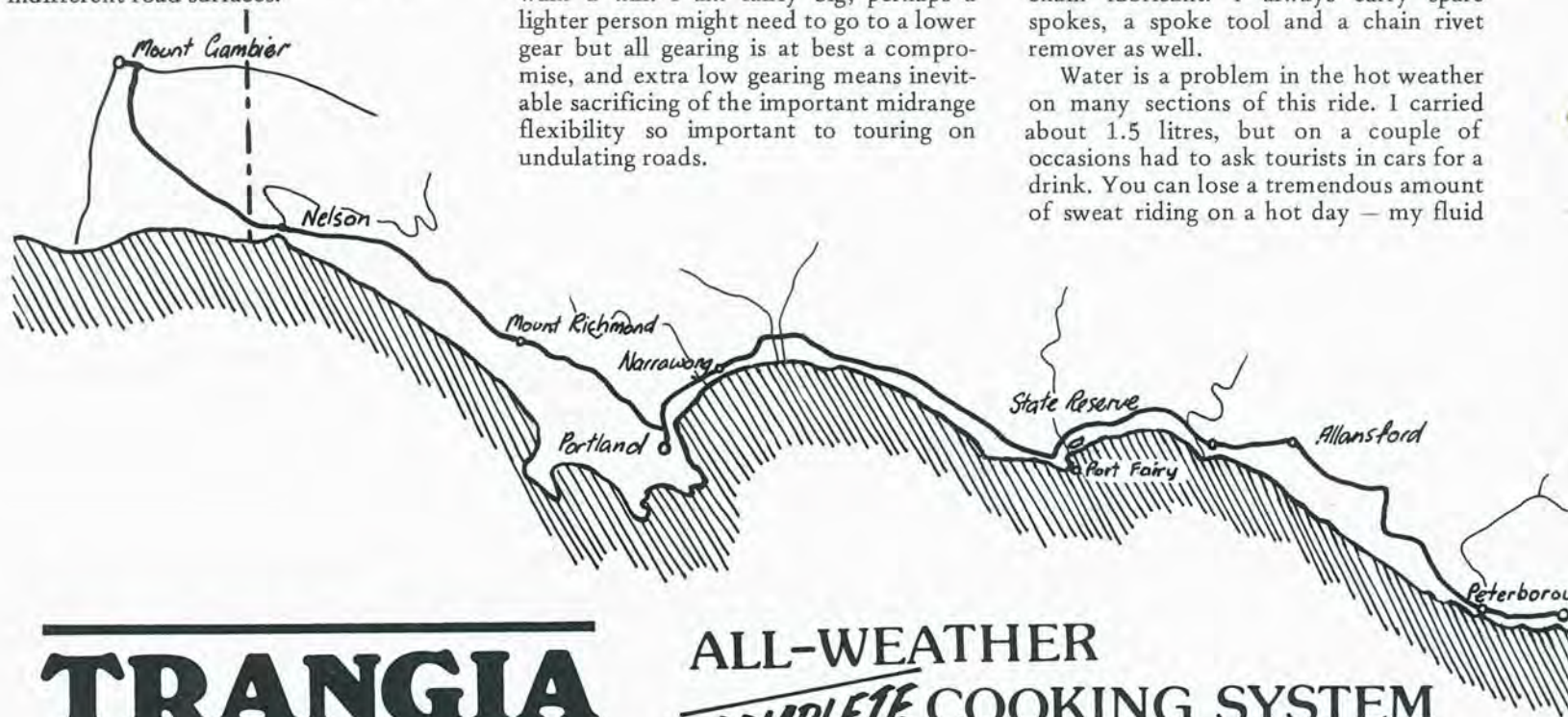
Alami handbuilt, extra-strong frame and good quality alloy gear that takes pounds off the weight without sacrificing strength. I built wheels from the new Weinmann deep profile alloy rims and 14 gauge spokes; I used Cheng Shin 27 x 1 1/8 high pressure tyres and had no blow-outs even on the roughest gravel sections. Most tourists seem to use 27 x 1 1/4 inch, which may be more robust but have a higher rolling resistance. Perhaps these would be better for very long trips or indifferent road surfaces.

A lot has been written about gearing suitable for touring, and many people have front sprockets as low as 39 with rear ones up to 34, which gives a gear of about 31 inches. Some advocate triple chainwheels where you can get even lower and have greater flexibility. I feel it is very largely a matter of fitness and strength. I carried a load of about 18-20 kilograms, my lowest gear was about 41 inches (42 chainwheel, 28 rear sprocket), and not once did I have to dismount and walk a hill. I am fairly big; perhaps a lighter person might need to go to a lower gear but all gearing is at best a compromise, and extra low gearing means inevitable sacrificing of the important midrange flexibility so important to touring on undulating roads.

The ride covers some extremely steep downhill sections; very good brakes and spare cables and rubbers are a must.

Briefly, I carried in Karrimor front and rear panniers a change of clothing, parka, jumper, small self-priming petrol stove, with cooking utensils, sleeping bag and tent, a good quantity of dried fruit, nuts, oats, milk powder, sugar, Milo etc, and a good complement of spares and tools. Those are heavy, but absolutely essential — including bearing grease and chain lubricant. I always carry spare spokes, a spoke tool and a chain rivet remover as well.

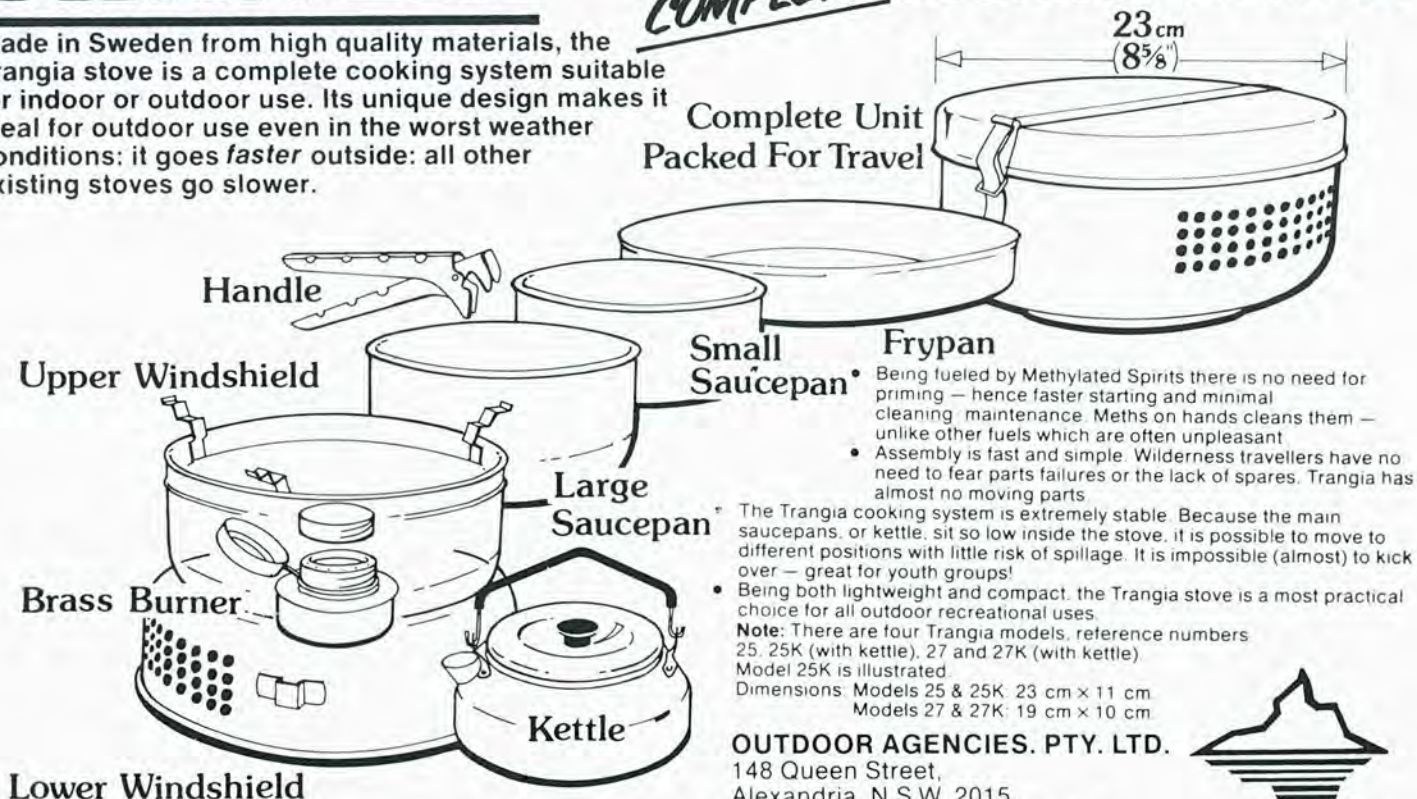
Water is a problem in the hot weather on many sections of this ride. I carried about 1.5 litres, but on a couple of occasions had to ask tourists in cars for a drink. You can lose a tremendous amount of sweat riding on a hot day — my fluid



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**Note:** There are four Trangia models, reference numbers 25, 25K (with kettle), 27 and 27K (with kettle). Model 25K is illustrated.

Dimensions: Models 25 & 25K: 23 cm x 11 cm.  
Models 27 & 27K: 19 cm x 10 cm.

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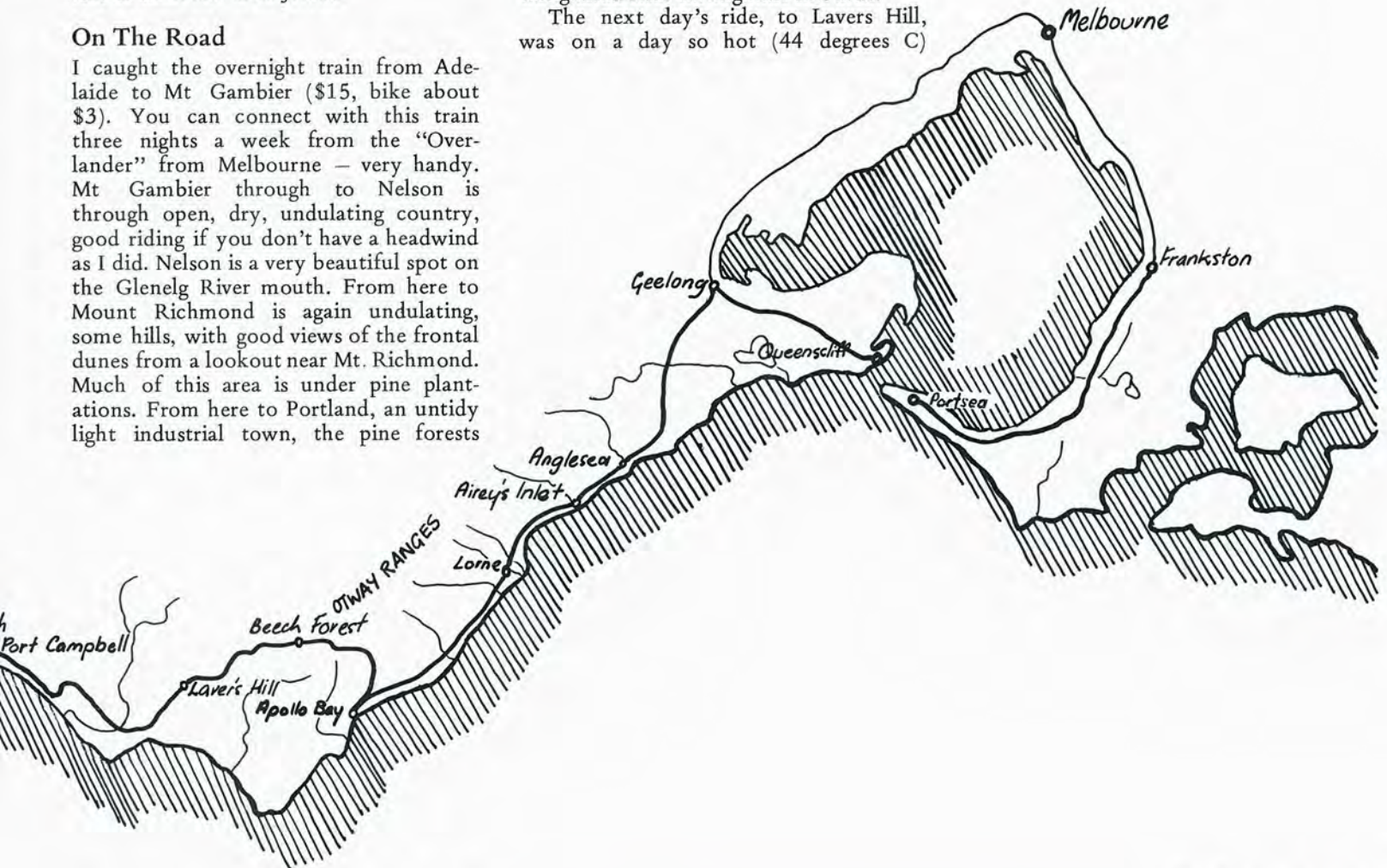
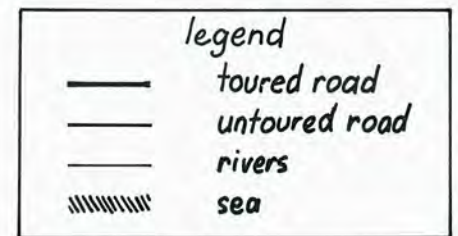
intake was up to 6 or 7 litres a day, and some sections have very few towns or farmhouses. It is critical to keep up an adequate food and liquid intake; on long rides always eat more than you really feel you want to, including plenty of protein. I supplemented the food I carried with one bought meal a day, and lots of milk and fruit juices.

### On The Road

I caught the overnight train from Adelaide to Mt Gambier (\$15, bike about \$3). You can connect with this train three nights a week from the "Overlander" from Melbourne — very handy. Mt Gambier through to Nelson is through open, dry, undulating country, good riding if you don't have a headwind as I did. Nelson is a very beautiful spot on the Glenelg River mouth. From here to Mount Richmond is again undulating, some hills, with good views of the frontal dunes from a lookout near Mt. Richmond. Much of this area is under pine plantations. From here to Portland, an untidy light industrial town, the pine forests

native route past Nirranda South, and came to spectacular views of the Bay of Islands and the Bay of Martyrs. A real joy to ride along this section, plenty of lookout points and magnificent scenery. The camping ground at Peterborough is rather uninteresting, but it is difficult and usually illegal to camp outside designated sites throughout this area.

The next day's ride, to Lavers Hill, was on a day so hot (44 degrees C)



give way to native bush and cleared areas. I rode on to Narrawong and camped there; an excellent little camping ground at the mouth of the Surrey River, with hot bore water to soothe aching muscles! There was a fair bit of traffic right through this day, cattle, timber and bulk fuel tankers, very fast but well behaved from the cyclist's point of view.

The ride from Narrawong to Peterborough again involves no major hill climbing. Port Fairy is a fascinating little town with magnificent beaches and a riverside wharf where I bought a freshly-caught and cooked crayfish for \$4 — superb! I took the alternative road out, past East Beach and the golf club, which avoids some of the Princes Highway. Between Port Fairy and Warrnambool lies the Tower Hill Reserve; no camping allowed but a unique area with an interesting history. Warrnambool has good but crowded beaches. I left the Princes Highway at Allansford, followed the signs to the Great Ocean Road, took the alter-

*The Twelve Apostles.*





that there was a continuous squelching noise as I rode along the bitumen and stripped most of the tread from my tyres. A magnificent ride, however, with constantly changing views of spectacular cliff formations and the ocean far below. Port Campbell is a pretty little town, with a good, if expensive, camping ground run by the National Parks service, who have an interesting information centre here. You need to book ahead in the tourist season however. A good beach for swimming, but the best swimming I had is a few kilometres further

on, in the magnificent Loch Ard Gorge, reached by steps down the cliff and offering in good weather safe swimming in superb scenery. A lovely ride from here on to Princetown, which is easy to miss (off the road, and the last store before Lavers Hill) and has good camping grounds on the Gellibrand River.

The ride from Princetown to Lavers Hill is pretty tough; a series of reasonable climbs for the first few kilometres, then a steep drop to the Gellibrand River. (An elderly couple waited for me with a cold

bottle of beer at the top of a long climb – he used to cycle in his young days. You meet some good people on the roads). From the Gellibrand River is a series of unbelievable never-ending climbs over 22km to Lavers Hill. Fine country, superb views of Cape Otway from the lookout, and further on, towards the coast and back to Port Campbell. I used my lowest gear for the first time up this section. After the heat, rain chased me all the way into Lavers Hill – it was exhilarating after the scorching heat of the day. I found it a real problem keeping up my fluid intake over the Princetown – Lavers Hill section, might not be too bad on a cool day. Lavers Hill has an associate youth hostel – you don't need to be a member to stay, just pay a little extra.

From Lavers Hill, the ride through Beech Forest to Turton's Pass is magnificent, along the crest of a ridge with marvellous views. There is an alternative route, through Glenaire; this involves a good climb across the Otway Peninsula and a fair bit of gravel road according to the map. Turton's Pass is a fairytale ride, a narrow gravel road winding through an exceedingly beautiful forest – tall mountain ash, giant tree ferns, the most beautiful part of the Otway Ranges. A bike rider's dream descent down to Skenes Creek follows, 15km and virtually all downhill. I ducked the 6km back to Apollo Bay, quite a pleasant town with good surfing. The road through from here to Lorne is again spectacular, running sometimes near sea level, rising up to near 100 metres at Cape Patton, most of the way cut through precipitous cliffs, with magnificent views. There are dozens of little beaches and camping areas along here. After Lorne the cliffs change gradually to high sand dunes, through Aireys Inlet and thence to Anglesea. From here the main road leaves the coast (unless you deviate to Torquay) and runs over undulating country to Geelong. A good tailwind over the latter part of the day (after rain through the Otways) gave fast travel, the final 37km into Geelong being covered in just over an hour, and a total of 170km covered in the day. It was to be the one exception to Martin's First Law of Bicycling: It's always a headwind.

From Geelong you could (if foolhardy) ride directly into Melbourne or, better, catch a train. I actually ended up riding to Queenscliff and taking the ferry across to Portsea; it is a little difficult to manoeuvre a bike onto the boat, but it only costs \$2 and you get good views of the heads and of Portsea – an interesting trip. From Portsea, home of the indolent rich, I rode in as far as Frankston, not a bad ride but one I would never do again in the holiday season over January – traffic is murderous, ill-mannered and fast. This is also a good description of the headwind that day.



Top: Turton's Pass.



The author on the Great Ocean Road.



# Newcastle Bikeplan: Just 'pieces of paper' if kids are forgotten



The Newcastle Bike Plan final draft is due to be released on July 1 in a splurge of publicity by the Wran Government as an example of the positive things it is doing for the people of NSW. Unfortunately the plan is highly unlikely to measure up to what needs to be done for cyclists, unless cycling organisations demand that certain recommendations be put in the Bikeplan before it is released.

by Alan Parker

There are many positive and useful measures in the Bikeplan and it is a pity the whole thing will be spoilt because certain important matters are wholly ignored. These could quite easily be put into the plan even at this late stage. An education program for six to nine year-olds is crucially important because last year 12 of the 30 cyclists killed on the

NSW road were aged nine years or less (see box).

The Newcastle Bikeplan was supposed to do for NSW what the Geelong Bikeplan did for Victoria, that is to provide planning guidelines for the rest of the State on the broader issues as well as provide for Newcastle's cycling population. The idea was to go beyond what was done in Geelong. This was understood by

## Accident Statistics

During 1980, there were 30 pedal cyclists and pedal cycle pillion passengers killed on New South Wales roads. Details of the ages of these people are given below.

0-9	12
10-19	7
20-29	3
30-39	4
40-49	0
50-59	1
60-69	2
70+	1
Total	30

Source: Traffic Accident Research Unit, 1981

all parties when the plan was first proposed and it is reasonable to expect Mr. Wran's bureaucrats to do a little better than was done in Victoria.

In Geelong they started from nothing and created something, surely it is reasonable to expect that the Newcastle Bikeplan can go one better when there is all that practical experience to draw upon in Geelong. There is no good reason why the Wran Government cannot deliver the goods in NSW if it can be done in Victoria. I am quite sure that if Mr. Wran and his Cabinet knew the facts about what cyclists need, some of the bureaucrats would get told what to do in no uncertain manner. For this reason I want to expand on why we need an education program for the six to nine year-olds and you, the reader can send a copy to Mr. Wran to ask him to make sure that recommendation for such an education program is in the Newcastle Bikeplan.

## Accidents don't lie

There has been a rapid but steady increase in the number of six to nine year-olds killed and injured on NSW roads, and 12 children aged nine and under were killed in 1980 as is shown in the box. In addition to the 200 recorded road accident injuries and deaths there are several thousand unrecorded injuries each year that require a visit to the doctor, or a casualty ward. The Health Commission of NSW in a report<sup>1</sup> states just how big this problem is:

*Victims of bicycle accidents comprise 10 percent of all children (0 to 14 years) attending hospital casualty departments with a traumatic injury. Clearly this is of concern to all parents.*

Most of the accidents children have are (from a purely technical and legal point of view) their own fault and very many of these accidents could be prevented if the parents or teachers or both instructed children how to ride their bicycles properly.

Experienced cyclists usually make a good job of teaching their own kids how



to ride safely, unfortunately there are so few parents who are experienced cyclists and so few teachers. So the only way round this catch 22 situation is to set up courses to train the teachers, and to make films, books, leaflets and posters for parents showing what needs to be done. The world's oldest and most respected cycling organisations have been saying this for 50 years.

The problem is that the so-called specialists in road safety don't have enough practical experience of the real world of cycling and their children are mostly just as badly trained as most of the other kids. There are lots of desk-bound research types who pontificate on what needs to be done, without any real knowledge at all, and this is what the cycling organisations are up against in the bureaucracy and among the planners and consultants.

The truth they will not accept is that bicycle safety education of school children if commenced early when the children gain access to bicycles at six or seven years old and culminating in an advanced on-road bicycle riding course at about 15 years is the most effective form of pre-driver education there is. If backed up by British style bicycle law enforcement, bicycle safety education could most effectively condition the behaviour of future car and motorcycle drivers.

This is saving the lives of young cyclists now, and other lives when they start to drive cars and motorcycles.

To be effective in reducing accidents, three age-related bicycle safety programs are needed during a child's school career. The minimum requirement is for instruction at the ages of 7, 10 and 14 years. Approximately 110,000 NSW children are in need of instruction in the 9 to 12 years age group each year.

### The need to educate the under nines

In the draft of the Newcastle Bikeplan I obtained from the consultants' office, all that is proposed is an education program that will reduce accidents for the 10 to 13 year-old age group, nothing is proposed for the ages below or above this. The key question is why do we need three bicycle education programs? The answer to that is simple, children forget and every couple of years what has been taught must be reinforced and expanded upon.

That sounds simple enough but you may then ask, "but what do the experts say?" The world's foremost experts on bicycle safety and education all agree that education is needed for all age groups, but most important of all the children must receive bicycle safety education when they first start to use a bicycle at six or seven. Safety instruction

of all kinds is essential for the very young in a world full of machines and devices that can hurt them. This is especially so with bicycles.

### Expert opinion

The most respected researcher and educationist, Ken Cross produced a book as a result of four years of interviewing all the cyclists and motorists involved in 1200 bicycle/motor accidents to find out exactly how bicycle accidents happen and how cyclists and motorists can be educated to avoid them. He also spent a year developing education programs to teach kids how to avoid the most common kinds of accidents.

Throughout the world there is a consensus of expert opinion about the priorities and the following statement of Ken Cross's would not be disputed by real experts with actual bicycle education experience.

*In the author's view, the education of each year's crop of first (6 year-olds) and fourth graders (9 year-olds) should*



*be considered first priority. If additional funds can be obtained, they should be spent on providing comprehensive education to as large a group of older bicyclists as is possible with the funds available, rather than providing limited education to every bicyclist older than the primary target group. A decision to exclude some bicyclists from a safety education program may seem callous, but it would be far worse to decide upon expending the limited educational resources on a program that would provide only superficial education to large numbers of bicyclists.<sup>2</sup>*

I agree with Ken Cross's assessment of priorities in the allocation of scarce educational resources to differing age groups. Incidentally, so does H. Ch. Heinrich, who prepared the position paper for the OECD Symposium on the Safety of Pedestrians and Cyclists. Heinrich also reaffirms the need to educate the very young.

*Most of the traffic safety education programs for young cyclists start at an early age at which children already are able to ride a bike and have gained on-the-road experience on their own. The bike is used for dual purposes: as a toy or plaything or a means of transportation; and the change from one mode of*

*usage to the other is often very dangerous. The accident frequency is highest for the age group from 10 to 14 (expressed in absolute figures). However, in relation to the time spent on the road, the accident risk for young children is nearly as high as that for older ones.<sup>3</sup>*

In Britain, a review of bicycle safety and education has been under way for several years and the National Working Party set up to perform the review published its results in February 1980. The principal conclusions reached by this working party tie in very closely with those of Heinrich and Cross, particularly on the need to educate the under nines. Concrete proposals advocated in the document entitled RoSPA Working Party on Cycle Training for the Young—Reports<sup>4</sup> will form the basis for future British bicycle safety and education policy. One of their main recommendations in extending the existing National Cycling Proficiency Scheme was to provide an additional bicycle education program for the under nines.

Mainland European opinion was recorded in the summary record of the consensus reaching gathering from all OECD nations. Some firm conclusions are quoted in full below.

a) *The Symposium discussed in detail the value of educational schemes, and there was consensus that education aimed at improving pedestrians and cyclist safety should be directed at motorists as well as pedestrian and cyclists. In particular, methods are needed to inform drivers about the importance of low speeds and the behaviour of young children.*

b) *Educational schemes should be initiated at a very early stage, continue through school education and be adapted to the capabilities of the particular age group. To be successful, these schemes should always include practical on-the-road training.*

c) *Children's traffic clubs seem to be useful when they motivate parents to teach children correct traffic behaviour on the road—as pedestrians as well as cyclists. Instruction programs for cyclists might be included in school traffic education courses.*

d) *Graduated programs of instruction for riders of bicycles, mopeds and motorcycle riders could be considered, where not already required.<sup>5</sup>*

There are many ways of educating young children and the traffic safety club referred to above is one way that has much to recommend it, however at this stage the Traffic Authority refuses to accept that there is a need and this must be attended to.

The quotations above are part of a report<sup>6</sup> submitted to the consultants



by me. I pulled out of the project, because it was obvious the facts in my draft report were going to be ignored. In my letter to the Traffic Authority I stated that I would not prepare my final report or continue to work with the principal consultant because important safety and education issues were being totally ignored.

## Support the Newcastle Cycleways Movement

The Bicycle Institute of NSW should be leading the fight to put into the Newcastle Bikeplan what has been left out of it, but at the time of writing, their executive committee still has not seen any of the drafts of the Bikeplan and can't tell you what is in it and they supposedly represent the interests of NSW cyclists. The Newcastle Cycleways movement on the other hand, has prepared a well-written and researched submission to Mr. Wran setting out clearly and concisely what needs to be done for cyclists and they are gearing themselves up to take political action. Meanwhile BINSW members are having internal squabbles and like Emperor Nero are playing fiddles while Rome burns.

The Newcastle Bikeplan could have been as big a success in the long term as the new underground railway in Sydney and it still could be if enough cycling groups kick up a fuss and write to their members of Parliament. If enough political pressure can be generated so that education programs for six to nine year-olds is put into the Bikeplan then the Bikeplan will be well worth supporting.

The person for other cycling groups to contact in the Newcastle Cycleways Movement is:

Dr. John Mathieson,  
4 Hollywood Parade,  
New Lambton Heights 2305  
Phone: Home- (049) 575 108  
Work- (049) 690 411 Ext 299

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# Sydney cyclist

by Warren Salomon



With the Newcastle Bikeplan about to be released, NSW cyclists are concerned that the Wran Government will allow its bureaucrats to bury the bikeplan's recommendations for the rest of the state.

Members of the inner Sydney cycling group, Reclaim the Road, say that the \$3 million plan will be seen as too much of a commitment by a cost-conscious Cabinet. The very thought of spending more money on cyclists will ensure the bureaucrats get their way and the important parts of the plan will be shelved. The plan was initiated by the local cyclists (Newcastle Cycleways Movement) and it is unlikely that the local aspects of the plan will be ignored.

Under the present arrangement of state/local government funding on a dollar for dollar basis, the local councils could not possibly afford to pay half the expected cost. And why should they? The project was initiated as a pilot scheme to show NSW cyclists that something could and would be done by the Wran Labor Government to alleviate the monstrous inequalities that prevent millions from cycling on the public roads.

Governments should be concerned with the future security of the people they supposedly represent. The Newcastle bikeplan is concerned with the future of all the people in NSW for it provides an alternative to some current and future transport/energy problems. A firm commitment to and support for the plan by the NSW Cabinet at

this stage will ensure the safety and lives of many future citizens of the state.

Anyway, it's an election year and any government eager to please the voter will realize the publicity potential offered by the plan's release. The more astute cyclist voter will take note of statements made at this time and what is being said about implementation, funding and what is to be done with the recommendations for the rest of the state contained in the plan.

The most probable scenario is that the Minister for Transport, Peter Cox, (who is also patron of the Bicycle Institute of NSW), will repeat the litany of his bureaucrats and say, "Yes, we will continue to support it on the good old dollar for dollar basis". There the matter will have to rest, in the too-hard basket until after the election when the real dismantling will take place.

Bicycle planning in Sydney these days is a disgrace. Local governments have demonstrated that they are unable to co-ordinate bicycle route programs in the complex urban environment. The state government runs the main roads system through the Department of Main Roads and the Traffic Authority and local government traffic committees. The Newcastle Bikeplan places the government in a leading position. If the Wran Government does not provide the necessary funding and support for the plan, it will find it has lost what little support the state's 750,000 plus cyclists still give it.





**WEST  
AUSTRALIA**

Much attention will be drawn to the need for cycling projects in Perth and the rest of the state by a planning conference being held in Perth in June. The conference is sponsored by the State Bicycle Policy Committee (SBPC), which comes under the control of the Minister for Local Government, June Craig (who rides a bicycle).

As with other states, bicycle planning is considered a local government affair with funding through the SBPC on a dollar for dollar basis. So far this has failed to stifle some good initiatives by the Fremantle and Stirling councils who have placed imaginative proposals before the committee.

Apart from a still-problematic cycleway on a major city squeeze point, the Causeway Bridge, the Perth Council has balked at any further action on its consultants' proposals for a Perth bike plan. The local urban cyclist group, the Cyclist Action Group of WA (CA-GWA), says that the parallels between WA and the eastern states' approaches to bicycle planning are becoming obvious. In areas where the state governments should be leading the way (planning facilities in the central business districts of the capitals) they are hiding behind the excuse of doing something through dollar for dollar funding.

To add to the difficulties facing the

WA biker, the Court government has given \$1.6 million to greyhound racing in the state for this financial year while the SBPC has only \$100,000 to offer cyclists. Any wonder the state is going to the dogs!

#### **A.C.T.**

Ask anyone from one of the big coastal cities who has cycled in the ACT what it is like to use the network provided there and they will probably give an enthusiastic response. Sure the National Capital Development Commission has provided Canberra's large (proportionally) cycling population with some excellent alternatives to the freeway-type roads available for motorists. A lot of these alternatives are primarily recreational routes and in some cases they incorporate design problems which even put the users in dangerous situations. The older paths and some newer ones are not lit at night and are usually of sub-standard width.

As a means of rectifying some of these problems, the local cycling group, Pedal Power ACT, approached the NCDC to get it to paint a reflective white line down the centre of all existing paths. This would help riders at night and settle difference of positioning when riders approach each other on narrow sections.

The suggestions fell on deaf ears at the NCDC and a long and mostly one-sided correspondence between the cyclists and the bureaucrats ensued. Pedal Power even did some calculations and suggested that the line painting be done instead of an equivalent amount being spent on new, less important paths.

The NCDC pushed ahead with its construction program seemingly more concerned with getting lines on their very impressive network maps than down the centre of some of the existing paths.

These days in Canberra with the Fraser macho image being put around, cyclists are numbered among the recent and not so recent casualties of penny pinching and politicking.

Now it seems the NCDC itself is to be axed. It would be a pity to see such a network of cycle paths without a body to claim credit for them and occasionally chat to itself about maybe one day building a few more. Perhaps the federal government could form its own bicycle committee or carry its New Federalism policies to the point where planning for cyclists was entirely a state affair. Just imagine it: the NSW State Bicycle Advisory Committee's Queanbeyan (Canberra) sub-branch. And dollar for dollar funding too.



**QUEENSLAND, TASMANIA and  
NORTHERN TERRITORY**

Activity in these areas has ceased to be noticeable outside their borders, but this doesn't mean nothing is happening. *Freewheeling* is looking for cyclists in these states who are trying to get their fellow cyclists and governments moving in the right direction. If you know someone or if you are personally involved, drop us a line.

#### **LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS**

In order to widen the scope of *Freewheeling*, we are looking for local cor-



respondents who will file short reports for inclusion in various sections of the magazine. Interested cyclists should be close to the centre of what is happening in their area. Payment will be made for all items published. If you are interested, write to:

*Freewheeling*  
P.O. Box 57  
Broadway 2007

Please include your phone number and perhaps a short piece to demonstrate that you mean business and give us some idea of your capabilities.



## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

A state bicycle committee will be announced later this year and an Adelaide bike plan in stages (as in Melbourne) is also scheduled. Active cyclists will need to note how much money will come for all of this and what its source is. If the dreaded dollar for dollar funding crops up as the government's method of pushing its responsibility onto local government it will be another obvious case of window dressing. Oh well, the federal government kicks the can on to the states and they in turn kick it on to local government which through lack of real funds, resources and knowledge leaves it on the road where one night a cyclist runs into it and is killed. It's time the South Australian government was genuinely concerned about the lives of cyclists and not just votes.



## NEW SOUTH WALES

In Sydney, Swiftly Grand has announced that his government has decided to replace the pedestrian way, cycle way and two railway lines across the Sydney Harbour Bridge with four more motor traffic lanes.

In a masterful political stroke, the Premier announced that he had decided to please cyclists, pedestrians, rail users and North Shore motorists/voters by setting the train tracks in a new road surface and opening up the cycle way and footpath to car traffic. Pedestrians will be given a new alternative harbour crossing out at Parramatta. Electric trains and cyclists will have to join the traffic mix. The Premier hastened to add that they would be treated like any other road user and would be booked if found exceeding the speed limit.

Mr. Grand also said that his plan provided for ramps to be built at each end

of the bridge to allow cars to use the car/train shared lanes and to do this Milsons Point station would need to be removed and Wynard station modified.

Premier Grand also said that as a special concession to cyclists using the modified cycleway/traffic lane, his government would operate the bridge toll on a dollar for dollar basis through the State Bicycle Advisory Committee.

The chairman of the SBAC, Roland Whatamess, agrees with his government's decision and says that the processing of cyclist bridge toll tickets will give the committee something useful to do with their hands during the long uneventful meetings which have been occurring lately.

Footnote: The Bicycle Institute of NSW reports that nothing much is happening at the SBAC these days. That is OK according to one member of BINSW executive, "It gives us more time to get into our own faction fighting."

## TASMANIA AND NSW

Political bicycle rides are with us once again. Fifty or so riders pushed their way around Tasmania last summer. They rode in support of the Wilderness Society's call to save the remaining wild rivers from Hydro Electric Commission exploitation.

The ride was a success especially (as always) for its participants and there is even talk of instituting the ride as a regular event.

Active and violent opposition to the presence of the cyclists was experienced in the hydro town of Tullah on Tasmania's remote west coast area. Most of the violence occurred after the pubs had closed when male hydro workers visited the bike riders' camp. Any attempt to talk over matters was met with violence by the drunken, and not so drunken hydro workers.

The ride which began in the south of Hobart travelled north to St. Helens on the east coast then changed direction and proceeded northwest to Burnie via Launceston and the midlands. From the northwest the cyclists travelled south to finish at a rally held in the westcoast town of Strachan.

In the autumn of 1975 a group of environmentalists really got bicycle rides and touring going in this country by hopping on their ill-prepared machines and cycling off to Canberra to protest the then Labor government over their policies on nuclear energy. This then, became a highly successful annual event culminating in the 1977 ride where a thousand bicycle riders from Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra, rode into Canberra to carry their message home to the parliament.

Unfortunately, because of a referendum held at the time no body (that is to say the politicians) was home. The

huge amount of energy created by such an event was then dissipated on the lawns of the empty parliament house. Next year the month of May passed without its customary bike ride.

Four years after the last event a Sydney group of old hands here got together and organised another ride. They have conceived this year's ride more along the lines of the early uranium bike rides, relying more on the spirit of the riders rather than on numbers. About 40 riders left Sydney in early May on their way to Canberra. This time the riders took a new route via Katoomba, Oberon, Goulburn, Bundenore and Queanbeyan.



## VICTORIA

In September, 1976 the Victorian State Cabinet approved the conduct of the Geelong Bike Plan Study.

At the time the plan was praised for its innovative and cyclist oriented approach to large scale urban planning.

The scheme was conceived and promoted along the lines of four separate and inter-locking programs (the 4 E's of Engineering, Education, Encouragement and Enforcement). Once in action the bike plan has achieved its own momentum. Initially the bike plans' main achievement was that it actively involved cyclists in the planning process. This idea seems not to apply within the realms of public relations or the *encouragement* program as it is called.

The bike plan administrators recently put cyclists on the outer by appointing a PR person with little knowledge and experience of cycling and the existing cycling world to head the major encouragement programs.

It is hoped that this action will not in any way revive the idea to establish a national cycling organisation that completely ignores and duplicates the efforts of existing cycling organisations. This will be hard to ignore as the Bikeplan has already spent thousands of dollars on commissioning a PR firm to research the idea. This money could have been better spent in supporting the efforts of thousands of people who are working through local bicycle groups to achieve similar aims. The crunch for these groups could come if such an organisation gets going with government or quasi-governmental support in two or more of the larger states. The final death knell for the various Bike Institutes and Pedal Power groups will be heard when with insurance company backing, the new *national* body could offer bicycle insurance to its members at low cost. Watch this space folks, the matter is not yet finished.

Compiled By Warren Salomon





# Your head deserves the best

The choice of a cycle helmet has, until recently, been a difficult one with the best imported helmets prohibitively priced and cheaper helmets being of questionable head-saving value. No helmet on the market had passed all the test requirements of the rigorous Australian standard. A Victorian company, GUARDIAN, run by cyclists, started a two-year research program to design the perfect helmet. At the end of that time the sample helmets they submitted to Technisearch Ltd. for technical analysis passed every test equivalent to the Australian cycle helmet standard relating to design and performance requirements.

Because of these excellent test results, the helmet is currently being submitted to the Australian Standards Association for evaluation. It features a harder outer shell

for impact dissipation, an impact absorbing liner, an efficient strap retention system and well-designed venting. The Guardian helmet costs only \$42.00\*, despite having a superior technical specification to helmets costing half as much again.

Guardian also researched safety vests, and naturally enough came up recently with a superior product. It is more reflective than the Taft, which Pedal Power recommended in 1978. The reflective strips are heat welded for durability, not painted on, and plastic coated so the vest is still effective in rain. The vest is cut long at the back for maximum reflective surface area, it is designed not to bunch on the shoulders and the strap retention system is very secure. The Guardian Vest costs \$11.95.\*

Trade Distribution in NSW, ACT, QLD: The Pedlar, P.O. Box 930 Canberra City 2601. Ph: (062) 48 8464

Distributed in VIC by Richard Bailey Pty Ltd, 1830 Malvern Rd, East Malvern. Ph: (03) 25 7114



PART ONE of

# TEN-SPEED

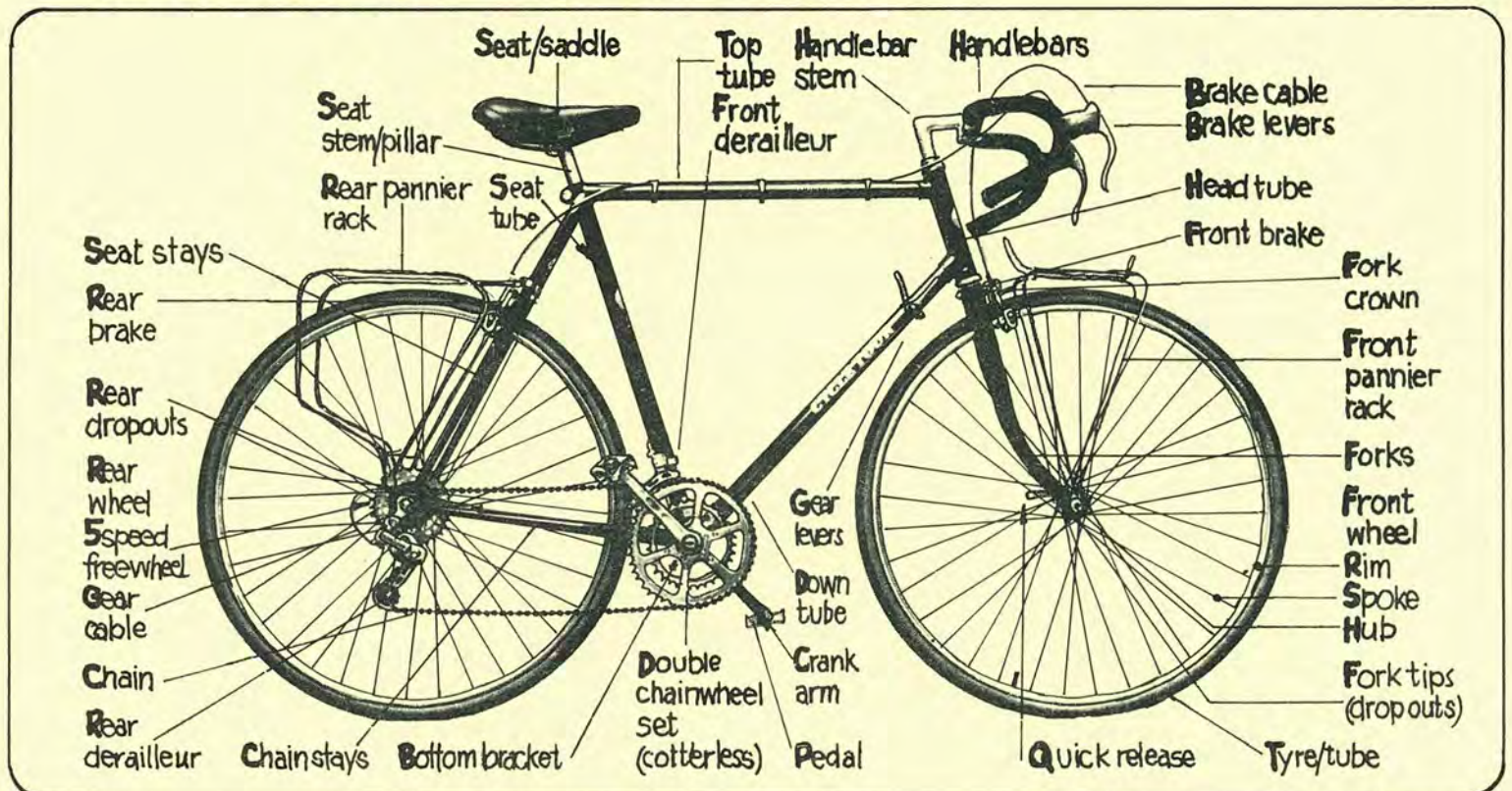
# MAINTENANCE

*A pictorial guide*

TEXT AND DRAWINGS BY WARREN SALOMON

## PARTS OF A 10 SPEED BICYCLE

1







Your ten-speed bicycle is...

A simple machine relatively speaking. All of the tools you will need for most repair work can be carried with you.

For the following repairs you will need these tools:

**Screwdrivers.** There are two kinds, one for each type of screw head.

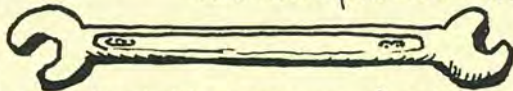


Slotted head screw driver



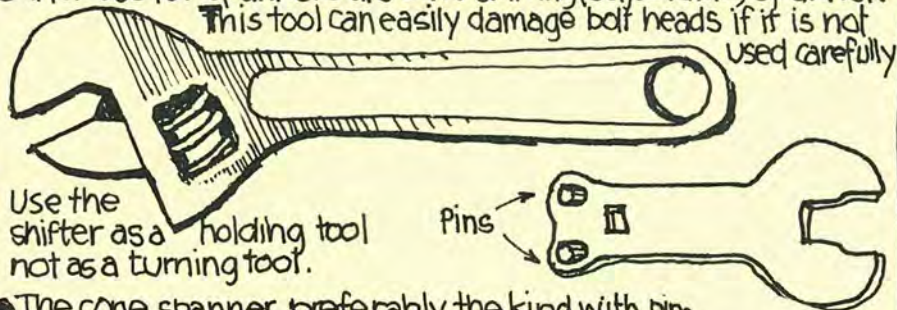
Recessed head (Phillips head) screwdriver

**Spanners.** Open-ended spanners are more precise than



an adjustable spanner. A set of metric spanners will fit bolt heads on most Japanese and European-made parts. There are usually two sizes for each spanner so you will need 4 spanners 8, 9 - 10, 11 - 12, 13 and 14, 15

Other useful spanners are • The shifting (adjustable) spanner. This tool can easily damage bolt heads if it is not used carefully

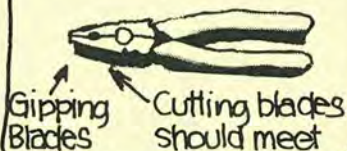


Use the shifter as a holding tool not as a turning tool.

• The cone spanner, preferably the kind with pins.

## TOOLS B

**Pliers.** A small pair will come in handy for holding and bending, and cutting metal. Definitely not a turning tool for tightening bolts



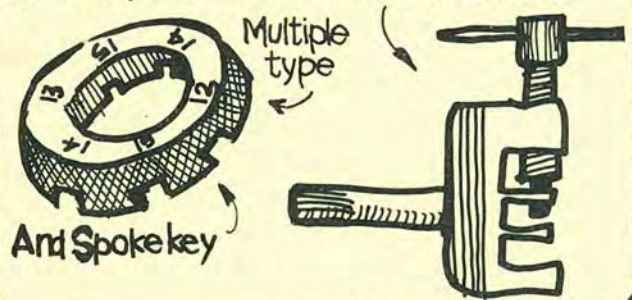
Gripping Blades Cutting blades should meet

As the most common kind of breakdown is a flat tyre, you will certainly need **Tyre Levers** and a **Puncture Repair Kit**.



Glue Patches Sandpaper

Other, more specialized tools commonly needed are: **Chain rivet extractor**



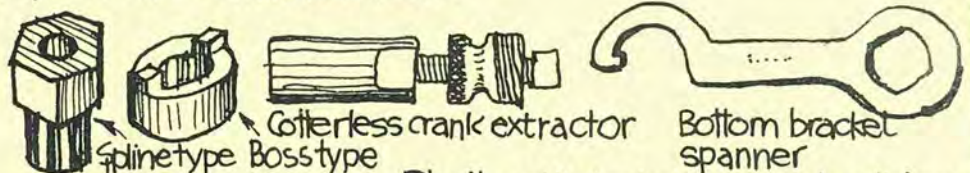
And Spoke key

**Hex key (Allen key)** for recessed head bolts



The most common use for this kind of bolt is on the head stem (6mm) Other sizes you will come across are 5mm, 4mm and occasionally 3mm

**Miscellaneous Tools:** There are many types used occasionally for a specific purpose. These are good tools to share ownership with a like minded friend.



Finally, with tools there are two things to remember • Good tools are money well spent • There's a right tool for the job



Your bicycle is really held together by nuts and bolts. Care should be taken not to damage their hexagon heads. The correct fit spanner should be used. If you are unsure which way to turn to loosen or to tighten, use the left or right hand rule as follows.



**Right hand threads** (All bolts + nuts except RH pedal and RH Bottom bracket cup use RH thread) use right hand. . .

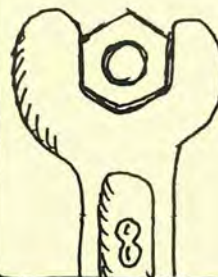


**Left hand threads** (on RH pedal and RH bottom bracket fixed cup) can be 'worked out' by using the left hand thumb

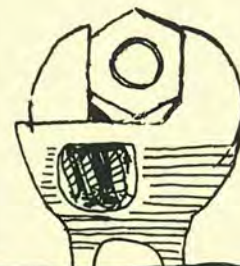


When moving tight or frozen nuts and bolts extreme care must be taken not to round the hexagon head of the nut or bolt. It is best to use the correct size open ended spanner rather than a shifting spanner. If there is no other tool available make sure the jaws of the shifter are tight on the nut first.

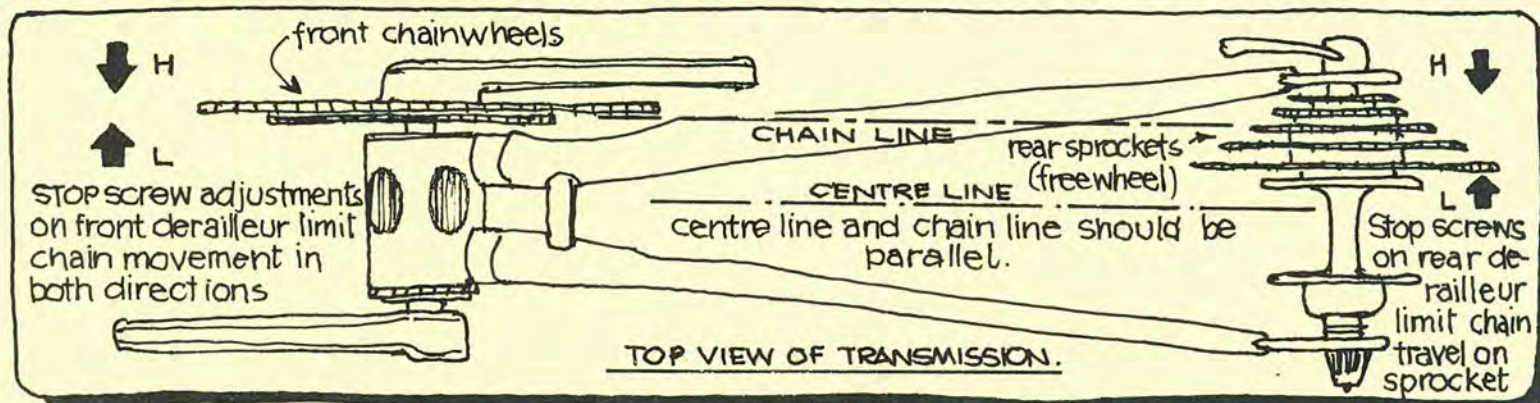
**RIGHT**



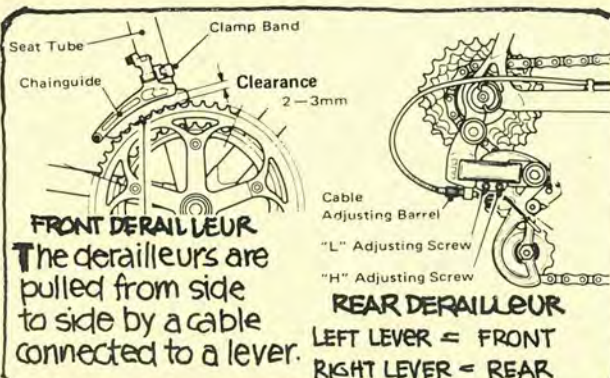
**WRONG**



## GEAR ADJUSTMENT A



Gears are changed by moving the chain to select one of the five different size sprockets on the rear freewheel or one of two front chainwheels. The mechanism which moves the chain is called a derailleur.



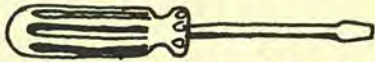
As there are no click stops in the control of the derailleurs, adjustment usually consists of two things

- ① Making sure the travel stop screws are properly adjusted and
- ② That the cables have no slackness in them.

One thing that the gear adjustment procedure shown here won't fix is a bad chain line. The middle sprocket on the rear should line up with the gap between the two front chainwheels.



You will need the following tools:



a slot head screwdriver or...

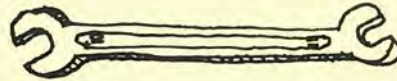


a Phillips head screwdriver

Check the two small stop screws on your derailleurs to see which one you will need.

As well you will need a tool to loosen the cable fixing bolt

Most derailleurs need a spanner (the correct size open ended spanner is better than a shifter)

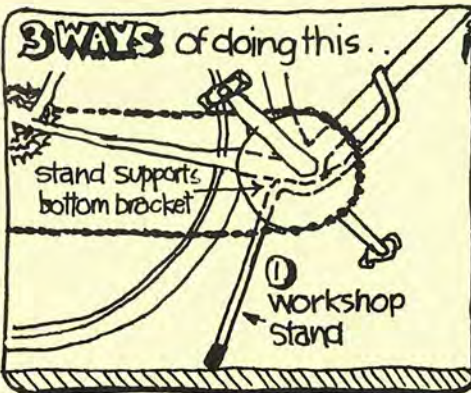
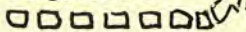


Some derailleurs use a 6mm hexagon key (Allen key) in place of a wrench and even use 3mm key bolts for stop screws.

Hex key



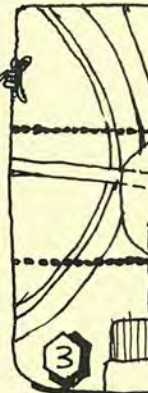
To make your work easier you will need to set your bicycle up so that the rear wheel is off the ground and the pedals can be freely rotated.



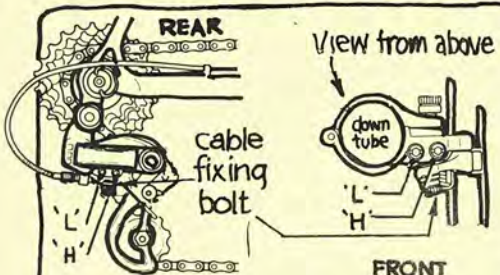
Suspend bicycle by means of ropes and hooks.



Lift rear wheel and bottom bracket by using bricks and/or blocks of wood. You may need a friend to help you by steadying the bike while you work.



## GEAR ADJUSTMENT C



Begin by locating the 'L' and 'H' stop screws on both derailleurs

As well locate the cable fixing bolt which clamps the cable

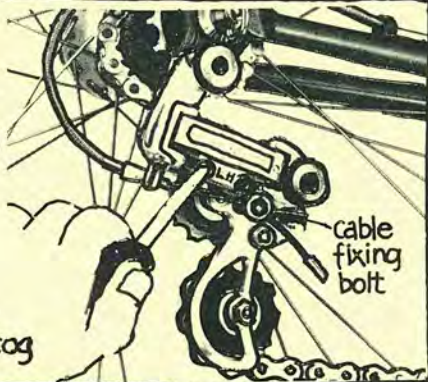


**Step 1** Move both levers so that your bike is in top gear. i.e. so that chain is on LARGE front cog and SMALL rear cog.

**Step 2** Adjust 'H' stop screws so that the chain is centred in front derailer cage and that chain is running noiselessly on rear cog and derailer  
\* (Make sure the outside edge of cage clears crank)

**Step 3** Move both levers so that your bike is now in bottom gear i.e. so that chain is on SMALL front cog and LARGE rear cog.

**Step 4** Adjust 'L' stop screws so that chain is centred in front derailer cage and that chain is running noiselessly on large rear cog



**NOTE!** Steps 2 & 4 are carried out on both Front and rear derailleurs.

**Step 5** Move levers to 'up' position and check tension on cables. If cables are not taut, loosen cable fixing bolt and pull cable tight with your fingers. (Using pliers to pull cables through only frays them) Retighten cable fixing bolts.

This adjustment will need to be done often on new cables as they stretch at first.



# the good gear for the touring cyclist from your bike shop



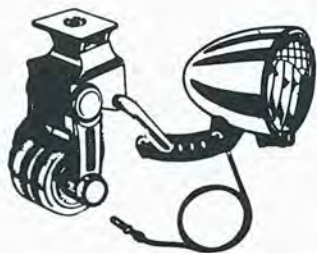
## Bell Helmet

America's premier bicycle helmet: over one million in use. Tough lexan shell with ventilation scoops. Additional sizing pads also available. Complete range of sizes.



## Anatomic Saddle

A new design with padded *bumps* to provide support. Designed to fit the human anatomy. Two models to suit the individual pelvic structure of men and women bicyclists. Choice of suede or vinyl coverings.



## Sanyo Dynapower

Bottom bracket mounting. Works directly off tread and it has less drag than conventional generators.



## Phil Wood Bottom Bracket

Fully sealed bearings by well known american manufacturer. Maintenance free . . . fit and forget.



## Bata Bikers

The american cycling shoe with stiffened sole. The ideal touring shoe. Available all sizes. Colours: black, blue.



## Berc Tail-light

Sensible quality. Cheaper to operate than most battery lights. Uses two D cells. Light body screw fixes to bicycle and reduces risk of theft.



## Berc Headlight

The brightest battery operated head light. Cheap to operate: uses D cells. Handy mounting, can be used as a torch.



## Handy Tour Tyre

Flexible nylon beading allows folding of tyre into small bundle (the size of a tube). The only way to carry a spare tyre.



## Mighty Tour Cranks

Sugino cranks in alloy. One-piece forged spider will accept rings 34 to 54 teeth.



## Sun Tour Ultra 6 Clutch

These 6 and seven speed clutches provide *ten-speed* simplicity with *fifteen-speed* gear range. When used with the Ultra 6 chain these clutches make for reliable high performance touring.



## Kangaroo Bike Beak

The bicycle carrier that's engineered by bike riders to transport up to 3 bicycles on any car tow bar. Simple to install.



## Hantrade Rear Panniers

420 denier nylon. Capacity 40 litres/pair. Clip fastening to rack for easy removal.



## Jecovitol

A medicated ointment for saddle sores. From Holland — the land of cycling.



## Safeguards

Bluemels white plastic mudguards with reflective stripe.



# Climbing the crooked mountains

by Wayne Kotzur

For many years I lived within a day's bike ride of the Warrumbungle Ranges. However, it was only on moving to Sydney that I had the chance to explore those aged monoliths by bicycle.

The Dubbo mail train deposited us, cold and tired, on the platform early on a chilly July morning. It had been a cramped and debilitating train ride — on a service whose slogan “Arrive fresh and relaxed” has never rung true in a cyclist's ear. Phillip and I had decided to travel north via mostly untrafficked and unsealed roads to explore an area which was totally unfamiliar to us.

Dubbo is a large town, possibly a city, with a large commercial centre and a bike shop which has a reasonable supply of basic ten-speed bicycle equipment. Our first 15 minutes were spent wandering about on the bikes looking for this centre, which was difficult to find till we woke up fully. We stocked up on food and sunburn lotions and set off into a gusty easterly wind.

The scenery came as a bit of a shock after the lushness of the coast. A grey dust had spread itself around the edges, to be lifted into our eyes as cars roared past. Our efforts to cycle into the wind seemed as wasted as the vegetation. Slowly the cropland was replaced by a sparse forest; a remnant of a forest that must have covered the slopes of eastern Australia at least until we chopped and washed it away. One has lots of time to think about ages gone by when pushing slowly into the wind.

Progress was laboured until the gravel surface was tarred; after that it was damn' near impossible. Designed to impede cyclists, the sharp coarse stones made it mandatory to pedal even down moderate slopes. After several stops we found a suitable campsite on the edge of a flowing sandy creek. Cloaked with weeds, the site was a trifle uneven, but nothing could dim the memories of that warm meal on a cold night . . . with the river sliding below the stars. Sleep was immediate.

The going eased slightly the second day. The greening of the countryside became apparent as we treadled into a sheep-wheat belt of undulating stump-pocked hills. Rough and smooth tarred sections alternated, the pace slowing excruciatingly with the rough stone embedded in the bitumen.

Over a rise we came upon what seemed to be America's most prestigious object.



Skylab had fallen, not in desolate Western Australia, but in sunny Dunedoo! Our posturings around the object delighted the local farmer who leaned sunburnt and amused against the boundary post. Glad to see a novelty after the discouraged pace forced on us by the headwind, we replaced cameras and remounted.

We counted every mile post to the Mendooran turnoff. It arrived with agonising slowness in the late afternoon. Two days of touring had taken us only 71km closer to home.

Out of water, but at last free of the headwind, we tore along the smooth dirt road. We had left the alienating strip of bitumen and easement for the immediacy of the gravel road. At last we felt a legitimate part of the landscape. We refilled our two waterbottles each at the next, slightly salty artesian bore and resumed a fast pace. Traffic was very slight, thought a trifle fast for our liking. We watched the sun set from a ridge and set off into the twilight. The crimson slowly black-inked in until only the stars and the road in the beams remained. The taillights were disconnected to increase the penetration of the headlights into the dust and dark. The pace seemed frenetic, as the world flashed out of the darkness and into it again, with barely time to respond to loose patches or exposed rocks.

Elated by these conditions, and able to exert ourselves more fully in the cool night air, we covered the 30km of unsealed road in half the time it had taken to do the equivalent sealed section.

Anxious that the world should know the delights of night touring, we set up many photographs. Understandably, our photos left us rather in the dark.

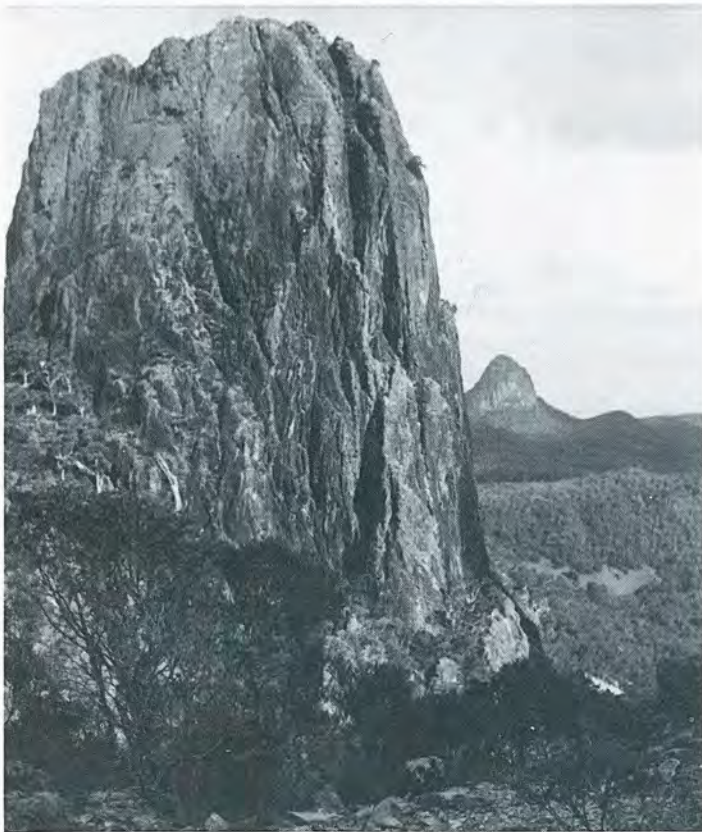
We selected our campsite by zigzagging across the last sealed section of the turnoff and letting the beams swim out into the darkness. Putting up the tent in the dark was a fairly random affair in the tall dew-moistened mitchell grass.

Not so bright and early the next morning we discovered our campsite to be practically on a farmer's front doorstep. At about 8.30 a station wagon loaded with sullen kids snaked past our paraphernalia to return in ten minutes empty. We retrieved our lost bits and pieces from the grass and turned left to Mendooran.

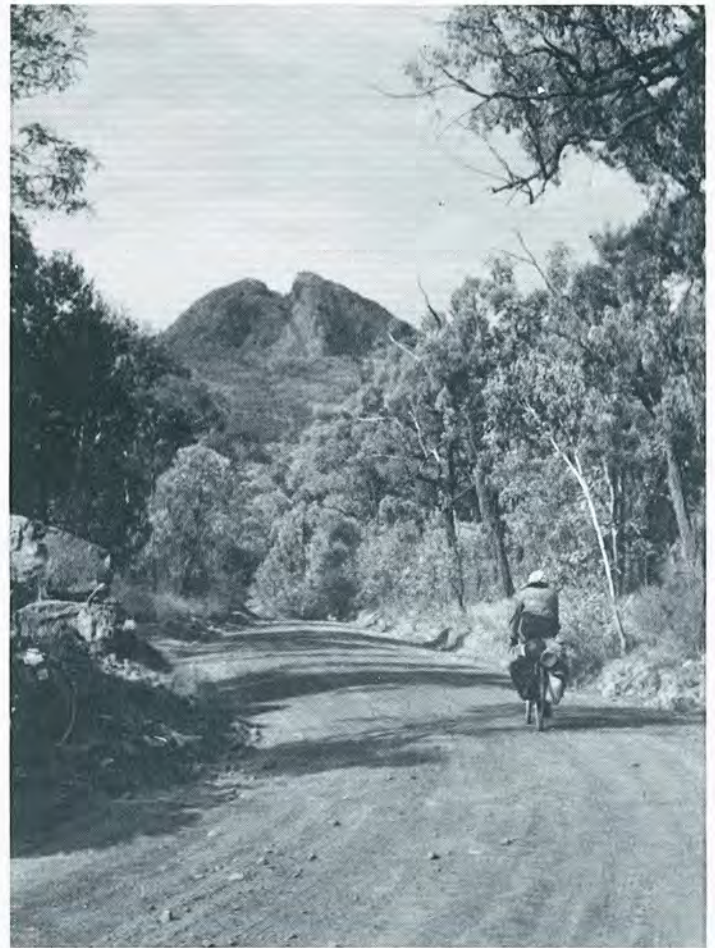
The road turned out to be excellent, it was flat and well worn (and repaired a little too often). The road winds beside the upper reaches of the Castlereagh River which originally flowed northwest, but the growing volcanic peaks of the Warrumbungles forced the river eons ago to make a broad southerly swing. The vacant stares of the cattle along the gum-lined road reminded me of the difficulty of comprehending the magnitudes involved in the natural order. We were travelling to see the remains of a volcanic intrusion into much older rock that occurred 13 - 17 million years ago. The river, over 100km from the range, once lay at the base of the volcano, and probably received dust and rock from explosions that shattered the cooling plugs again and again. Our arrival in Mendooran was uneventful;

A single, wide street greeted us, lined





**Opposite:** Hillclimbing practice. **Above:** Split Rock looking northwest to another lava plug. They were once joined by a vast lava dome. **Right:** The sandy trail punctuated at last with a decent descent, Split rock in the background.



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- Half the volume when packed of most down bags.
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with station wagons and lazy dogs seeking shade. (It was so hot that even the flies were walking.) From quite a large general store we bought food for another three days and what we didn't consume immediately was reluctantly packed away.

The road surface had been good . . . well, at least firm . . . until then. From Mendooran till the ranges we were forced to ride a very well frequented gravel disaster area. The finer material had been removed, leaving a very unsmooth surface of jutting rocks, backed by 5 - 10cm of loose conglomerate and sand. Now, at least, we were heading directly for the Warrumbungles climbing over a series of low ridges that lie northeast across the road. To frustrate the frequent long downhill coastings, the local council had recently graded much of the road.

By mid-afternoon the blue silhouette of the mountains sat on the horizon like a low cloud bank, spurring us on. The sound of stones shooting from underneath the tyre edges was replaced by the whirring of gears as the road surface improved. We paused only for a photograph at the junction with the Newell Highway. The sight and sound of the big transports careering along felt vaguely threatening to two cyclists who had spent too much time on untravelled back roads. I seemed a ghost from a more pleasant

past, thrust into an Orwellian future of Big Brother transports.

Unexpectedly the Tooraweenah road was sealed and we sped, no hands, into the general store, the orange and lilac sunset over our shoulders. Into the night we rode, to come racing back, wide-eyed in half an hour. The shoulder of the road that we had chosen as a camp had come ablaze with spotlights and rifle shots within minutes of stopping. They were after kangaroos I s'pose, but I didn't feel very secure in my reflective vest behind a wire fence. The Tooraweenah sporting oval, with barbecue and water laid on, felt infinitely better. Tiredness and lack of wood made life a bit difficult at night, but at least we were alive.

The worst section had arrived. The craggy cliffs and mesas taunted and teased us as we rode the circuitous path into the park. The surface deteriorated into sharp rocks. This was replaced by a long red sandy section which caused a few falls at low speed. Our pace quickened past the Gulargambone turnoff as much as the red clay road would allow. We delighted in the sort of undulating country which enables the rider to accumulate enough momentum to sail over the next hill.

Into the foothills we wove, climbing along a very sandy meandering route that

unfortunately we had to share with massive tourist buses full of cramped and sweaty travellers. Their eyes were the only contact with the landscape, and their sullen gazes reflected this. Outside, we embraced the landscape with our senses and appreciated the hills for what they were.

The road climbed parallel to a rocky creek, the water gurgling and jumping through tight bends. The valley opened up and, through a pebble ford to the left, we turned into Camp Canyon. We stood on what seemed to be the only ten hectares of flat ground in 50km. Craggy mountains of weathered trachyte loomed all around, dominating our efforts.

We booked a tent site and left the magpies and kookaburras to entertain us with their antics at taking food from our table. We sat there content just to watch and relax. The closest tent camping is Camp Blackman, a short uphill and then downhill run from Camp Canyon. It is a huge camp with a very new amenity block. It must be really crowded at times . . . it took half an hour on bicycles to gather sufficient wood for one fire.

The next day we reserved for walking. We rode to the base of a day walk, where we met a 70-year-old couple who are spending their retirement cycling around Australia's national parks (with ancient

# Freewheeling

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Therefore it is an express provision of *Freewheeling Australia* Publications accepting any advertisement that the advertiser and the advertiser's agent warrant that the advertisement complies with all State and Commonwealth laws.



single-speeds strapped to their car). The Warrumbungles offer an enormous variety of terrain and wildlife. We were stunned into silence by the gigantic vertical plugs and dykes, and they seemingly swayed beneath shunting storm clouds. The trees grew small, isolated and stunted, or as thick stands on the saddles between peaks. Unexpected hail forced us to shelter beneath the only small tree, (on an exposed southern slope) that we could find. The air cooled rapidly, and so did we. We beat a hasty retreat, sliding over wet and slippery trails to camp. We passed herds of wallaroos on the river banks, grazing nonchalantly beneath the brewing storm clouds.

Well aware of what hail could do to our tent and fascinated by the converted Sydney trams, we decided to rent one until it seemed safe. I never rode a Sydney tram and I would like to see them re-introduced; but they do make great cabins (for four) also. Well recommended.

It drizzled all night.

Previously, the ranger had warned that the road could become impassable after heavy rain. Unsure, but worried by the still-growing cloud cover, we left the park on our second day. We could have spent

a week there. The continuous rainfall had made the road very sticky . . . the tyres seemed glued to the clay at times. Compounded by a very steep climb to the tar road, our progress was tediously slow. We stopped on top of the last crest for a breather, and a look back along the road we had sweated up. Hopefully that section is now sealed. Into Coonabarabran the road afforded long fast downhill well suited to hands-off riding and with little motor traffic. The mountain range dropped into low foothills and craggy peaks were replaced by rolling forest and farm.

A wide-streeted, tree-lined Coonabarabran greeted us midmorn. We stopped to collect a paper to verify that the outside world still existed, and to provision for the hop to Gunnedah. The Oxley Highway commences as a very undulated straight road of rough bitumen and not insignificant uphill sections. Both sides are heavily forested. You are looking at the Pilliga scrub, a vast area of dry forest that sits on the 200 million-year-old Pilliga series sandstones. The area serves as the major feeder of rainfall to the Great Artesian Basin. The sandstone exposed here slowly drops below the Warrumbungles to travel between impervious igneous rocks into the deserts of Central Australia.

About 25km later the hills flatten and the road snakes around steep-edged rock mesas. The road soon straightens almost to a ruler edge, and only occasional plugs break into the flood-prone Breeza Plains. One last isolated hill and we coasted into Gunnedah.

## What we learnt . . .

### History

The Warrumbungle National Park was declared only in 1952. This followed 20 years of exploration and popularisation by bushwalkers, involving the formulation of a tourist map and concrete proposals by Milo Dunphy in 1937. It has grown from an initial trust of 3 759ha to 18 174ha by acquisition of surrounding properties. Most of the park is natural area on the margins of the semi-arid interior of NSW, but accessible to all walkers. Some areas (outstanding natural areas) have been set aside and access is limited by a permit system. Warrumbungle means crooked mountains.

### Camping

There are five camping/picnic areas, plus a number of rough huts on the walking tracks, all have water, but booking is essential for the huts. All visitors are requested to register with the ranger (after you recover from the roads) when

you arrive. There is no kiosk. All food must be lugged in by bicycle. Holidays, especially Easter, are very busy. Try to avoid holidays as this means crowded campgrounds and walks. Fees are typical of national parks. For information, charges and bookings: Ranger in charge, Warrumbungle National Park, PO Box 55, Coonabarabran 2857. Phone (068) 25 4364.

### Precautions

The northwest is a very thorny area. We would advise you to fit thornproof tubes or carry a few puncture repair kits. Have new heavy-duty tyres put on to stand up to the rough unsealed roads.

Take a collapsible water carrier. In dry times you may need to refill towards evening as there is no guarantee that creeks etc will have water in them.

A good repair kit is essential. While most farms are well equipped with tools, one of the attractions of bicycling is the independent attitude it fosters. Try to carry sufficient supplies to cover a few bolts working loose, broken spokes and maybe a split tyre. Some stretches are long and lonely. Travel together and carry a good first aid kit which you know how to use.

### Routes

The route choice will depend on how much time you have and whether you feel the dirt sections are worth the extra effort. The quickest route would be via Narrabri along the Newell Highway and return via Gunnedah along the Oxley Highway or vice versa. Both are sealed with mostly fast flat gradients and perhaps 20km of undulating country. The Newell Highway is much more trafficked, especially with semi-trailers from Brisbane route to Melbourne.

Alternative routes are: Quirindi – Premer – Coonabarabran (180km) which is mostly sealed along the Breeza Plain and then climbs into the range on unsealed roads. Merriwa – Cassillis – Coolah – Binnaway – Coonabarabran (260km) is a route which I haven't tried but I expect it would be very undulating as it meanders along the foothills of both the Liverpool and Warrumbungle Ranges. Parts that I have ridden combined some very steep exhausting hills and exposure to wind and sun. From the south, the Dubbo – Mendooran – Coonabarabran route (180km) is fairly direct and for this reason is used heavily by transports and locals. The highway via Gilgandra (200km) is like the Hume Horrorway – narrow and with heavy traffic, but fast and okay if you don't mind looking behind you continuously. Some heavy climbing involved.

The "famous" Breadknife, a vertical volcanic dike





# Another view of the Warrumbungles

by Jim Scarsbrook

In late November 1980, fate left me with a week off work, and I decided to fulfil a long dream. That was, an extended cycle trip, camping along the way and achieving something. My final selection was from Wellington, NSW, via Gilgandra to the Warrumbungles and back through Coonabarabran to Mendooran and finally Wellington. Because of the short notice, I went alone.

I drove to Wellington and stayed at the Caves Caravan Park, where I packed my gear into two rear panniers and a handlebar bag. With a drought on, I left the sleeping bag on the rear rack. Early next morning I parked my car near the police station, and mounting my cycle, pushed off. The first stretch was 200 metres. Then came the realisation that a lot of gear needed to be up on the handlebars, and not in the rear. Finally I was off. The route was to Dubbo via Mt. Arthur and Ponto, a pleasant alternative to the Mitchell Highway, and except for the climb over Mt. Arthur, dead flat and mostly sealed. By lunch, I was at the Western Plains Zoo, Dubbo, and spent the afternoon lazily cycling around the complex, enjoying the wildlife and the facilities. The evening was spent in the Dubbo caravan park, dining out. Day One: 77 km.

After getting lost trying to leave Dubbo, and still fuming over the camel who tried to devour my safety flag yesterday, I battled a head wind and visited Mogriguy, Eumungerie and Balladran with Gilgandra for lunch, washed down with a cold Tooheys. The weather was hot and the country bone dry. Up to now, I had avoided where possible the main highway but a sandy stretch past Balladran prompted me to try the Oxley Highway to Tooraweenah. Along this road one gets the first view of the Warrumbungles rising out of the plains and raising one's spirits. The temperature was in the 40s, the dry heat telling and the bus driver who stopped and offered me cold water, a lifesaver. Seven pm saw me at Tooraweenah and under a good cold shower in the camping area. Day Two: 122km.

After a friendly cup of tea from one of the locals, I started out on the desolate stretch to Gummin and on to the park headquarters. The road was rocky and the country dry, except for some inquisitive emus. As the park got closer, it involved

some walking sections because of sand. Just before the visitors' centre I saw my first surface water in Wombelong Creek, cool and clear and fed by a spring obviously. It took 28 seconds to shed bike and clothes and soak myself. I camped in the main camp area for 70c a day. Day three: 42km.

Two nights were spent here, the day between was spent walking the high tops around the Breadknife and up to the top of Exmouth. Again it was over 40 degrees. The kangaroos and other wildlife were abundant and the other campers friendly, with plenty of cuppas and fresh bread. Starting my fifth day, I left the park and climbed steadily eastwards to the Siding Spring turnoff. Hiding my panniers and other gear in a drain under the road, I climbed the few kilometres to the observatory and lost myself in a world of galaxies and super novae. Well worth the \$1. Flying down, I collected my gear and eventually made Coonabarabran. A visit to the rock museum, food shop, and bike shop and then it was on south, through New Mollyan to arrive at Mendooran about 8pm. Over a middy, the publican allowed me to camp behind the hotel and use the shower etc for a couple of dollars. The temperature didn't drop below 20 all night, I'm sure. Day five:

120km.

Last day and I was on the road by 7am. It was a long and lonely outback road that finally arrived at Cobbora, and I refilled my waterbottles (they held half a litre each) at a farmhouse. By 1pm it had become too hot to continue, and sighting a willow tree way off in a gully, I parked the bike under a gum, and headed towards it. A small waterhole that was reasonably clean and cool greeted me. I was carrying an emergency 2 litres of water and necessity brought it out. About 3, I pushed on, following the gravel towards Wellington. At Comabella, I climbed a water tank behind a deserted building and lowered my bottles on a string into the water tank. The water was clean and cold. Wellington was finally reached about 8.30pm and after a well-earned schooner and a couple of hamburgers, I packed the bike and gear into the car and headed towards home. Day six: 118km and total: 479km. The trip was well worth it. I learned to appreciate the country; conserve water; acquired a better understanding of pedalling cadence and gear ratios, and plan for another trip sometime. One secret was to take it steady and take it as it came. My only fear was that the pub might shut before I made it!



*Rising like the backbone of a dinosaur, a low series of volcanic intrusions runs north-south over the grand high tops. Picture by Wayne Kotzur.*



# Bicycle trails

# ACTION



## MELBOURNE-SYDNEY TRAIL: NOW A REALITY

The next stage in Australia's rural cycle trail network was settled over Easter at Beechworth. The leg from Epping (Melbourne) to Beechworth in northern Victoria via Seymour outskirts, Nagambie, Murchison, Shepparton, Glenrowan and Wangaratta is likely to be the next one mapped and published. It is a flat and fairly direct route, paralleling the Hume Highway for some of the way but travelling on backroads and in a few places quiet highways.

There were many options within Victoria and as a result there will be many trails linking Melbourne and NSW eventually. In NSW and the Australian Capital Territory it was a different story.

No single trail was without problems and the one which was tentatively selected at ACT one in Sydney in December 1980 has since proved to be unsuitable. As a result, ACT Two chose a trail which is suitable in the warmer months with a diversion for the colder ones. As such, it is an all-weather route, which none of the other options were, except for a flat route which avoided the spectacular scenery and magnificent cycling of the Snowy Mountains.

The route is (tentatively again) Marulan, Bungonia, Tarago, Queanbeyan, Canberra outskirts, Tharwa, Gudgenby, Adaminaby, Kiandra, Corryong, Tallangatta, Kiewa, Yackandandah, Beechworth.

In the colder months and particularly when the road from Cabramurra to near Khancoban is closed, the trail swings north 4km before Cabramurra and passes through Tooma and Tintaldra to rejoin the main trail at Cudgewa.

Also settled at ACT Two was the location for ACT Three in the spring school holidays this year. ACT Three will be held on the cycle trail again, this time at Tallangatta in Victoria. Access is easy — train to Albury or Wodonga, gentle cycling to Tallangatta.

It is hoped that many of the participants will cycle greater distances along the cycle trails from Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney. Most of the participants at ACT Two had ridden to Beechworth along the cycle trails and this sets the scene for much of the discussion.

ACT Two saw a large increase in the number of participants and a great broadening in the areas of origin of the cyclists. If this is maintained it will make one of the aims of ACT much easier to achieve: the locating of a representative of ACT in every important town on each trail. This representative could research the trail in that area, examine facilities, points of scenic and tourist interest and in some cases be a contact and supply accommodation. Where possible the representatives would lobby local politicians, community groups and businesses for support.

As indicated in the NSW route for the Melbourne-Sydney trail earlier in this article, Goulburn is no longer necessarily on the route. Road improvements have made the Bungonia route more appealing for many cyclists, with Bungonia state recreation area (a similar set-up to a national park) as a very pleasant diversion and camping spot. Further towards Sydney, the extension of the Hume Freeway and the resultant drop in traffic on the Hume Highway has made the highway more attractive, but it carries a lot of traffic still. Most of the trucks have gone, but the car numbers are much higher than on the Hilltop-Thirlmere route. It is a pleasant change, particularly going towards Sydney. Going away from Sydney and climbing from Picton or Thirlmere makes it less pleasant. The Hilltop route is far preferable on grounds of peace, safety and scenery, but if your cycling taste is a little jaded the Hume might add some spice.

To join in the work/fun of getting rural cycle trails on the ground, contact your local group:

Melbourne: Anna Erben, 83/163 Flemington Road, North Melbourne 3051, (03) 329-6672.

Shepparton: Neil Watt, 20 Collet Street, Shepparton 3630, (058) 21-5512.

Canberra: John Rae and Sue Warth, 12 Eildon Place, Duffy 2601, (062) 48-8464.

Sydney: Warren Salomon, P.O. Box 57, Broadway 2007, (02) 660-6605(w).



# Touring by bicycle in NEW ZEALAND

## South Island



Does standing on a windswept bridge in torrential rain, trying to attach a singles tyre to a rim that doesn't use one sound like your idea of fun? How about pedalling pleasantly through a coastal landscape drenched with sun-filled sky and snow-capped mountains? Such contrasting scenes are in-built with any tour of New Zealand's beautiful South Island.

During the Christmas holidays of '78-'79, six of us plucked up the courage to do a tour. After flying separately from Sydney, we met for the first time at Christchurch, camping at the Yaldhurst Road Motor Camp, the nearest to the airport. We were a mixed group with ages, experience and personalities ranging as wide as our gears and bicycles. Four people were from Sydney and two from Canberra. Our ages varied from 24 years to 70 years and our bikes from custom-made Abenis, Viscount Aerospace, Raleigh, and a home-made mixture to a hired bike of unknown New Zealand quality.

Three of us had flown our bikes over by jet-cargo a few days previously and collected them at Christchurch airport. This however, resulted in one broken derailleur and a bent water bottle holder. Two of the other people had simply wheeled their bikes onto their flight with no problems. We'd been warned against doing this in case there was no room in baggage. This suggests no consistent policy from Qantas. Try Air New Zealand.

The tour itself can be divided into three sections: 1. from Christchurch via the east coast to Nelson; 2. Nelson via the west coast to Queenstown; 3. Queenstown via the south and east back to Christchurch.

And so, tuned up, with hired bike from Christchurch, at \$2 a day, and legs at the ready, we began. Fine weather and farming country were ours on the first day, a gentle ride of 35 km to Waikuku Beach, where we camped in a pleasant but popular camping ground.

It didn't take long to discover that we each had different riding patterns and to take the pressure of pace off individuals we tended to ride in pairs of similar abilities and then all meet at an appointed township for morning tea or lunch.

It didn't take long either to replace real names with nicknames. The two least experienced and slowest members of the group became known as Dawdling



Daphne Derailleur, a man of rich eccentricity, whose bike had been stolen from outside his flat in Sydney, and who had prepared for the trip by camping out in Centennial Park. The only problem on this trip was that he forgot to bring his tent. His companion was Kick-along Kate, a gutsy American woman, whose great loves in life were to eat peanut butter with her spanner, test her expensive, mummy-like sleeping bag in the pouring rain and to identify the stars for us on a clear night.

I became known as Cotterless Crank, probably due to my instinctive weariness of group riding, consequent grumpiness and a strange desire to drop my bike over cliffs — of which more later. My team mate was Chainwheel Charlie, a 70-year-old sprightly extrovert, whose huge sense of the ridiculous kept the group's sanity.

The two fastest riders were the Abeni Duo, better known as Perfect Pete, owing to his possession of 15 gears, a Gore-Tex jacket and waterproof shoe covers. He also had an amazing ability to climb hills without feeling a thing. His counterpart was Jack the Leader, a man of broad humour, infinite patience and as the name implies, the organiser of our folly.

Thus, in our pairs we headed north along Highway 1 to Nelson. The road was in excellent condition, with a one-metre bitumen shoulder which allowed for safe riding. Generally, the cars were courteous, leaving us plenty of leg room. It took seven days to reach Nelson. Long days of riding were possible due to daylight saving, darkness descending after 9pm and dawn breaking around 5.30am. Every day on this section we had warm days and scenic variety.

We left the flatness of the Canterbury Plains behind us on the third day, pedalling over a tough range of hills before dropping down to the coast at Oaru and getting our first view of snow-capped mountains — the Kaikoura Range. Entering the town of Kaikoura on New Year's Eve we envisioned a sit-down meal with sumptuous steaks. Everything, apart from a take-away food bar was closed. Hamburgers all round. Pedalling into the late evening we camped at a scenic reserve, 8 km out of town.

Most of our camping, throughout the trip, was a combination of free camping wherever attractive spots arose and camping at motor camps whenever the need for comforts arose. There is generally a motor camp at every reasonable-sized town (see Appendix) at reasonable rates, about \$1.50–\$2 per person.

The coastal area is famous for crayfish and so at the first opportunity, at Kakerengu, we descended like locusts on a seafood restaurant, demolishing the local industry and restocking our supplies for future indulgences. Food in fact,



*Top: Typical South Island river-mountain scene in summer. Gravel dominates the river. Bottom: Between Cromwell and Queenstown.*

becomes very important, possibly more from a psychological need than a physical one. The desire to break the routine, relax, chat and review what you have observed, is an important element in the success of any tour. Luckily, on the east coast in particular, there is no shortage of tea rooms. Devonshire teas were the group favourite.

As we travelled toward Blenheim the scenery changed from lush, coastal slopes of flax and fern to treeless sheep paddocks and turnip fields. Human presence very evident. Rivers were unusually small, being dominated by a grey gravel washed down in the spring thaws. Two major climbs on this stretch, the Dashwood Pass and Welds Pass, not high in



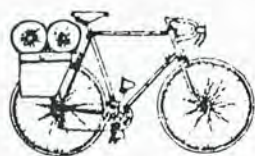
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statistics, 163m and 193m, but high in energy. At one stage on a downhill run a pannier bounced off my bike, ripping the material and rendering useless my pump. A dangerous affair with others streaming behind you. Rope connecting the pannier handles prevented repeats.

Picton, the terminal for ferry passage between North and South Island, proved to be an attractive town. Here we watched the boats, bought supplies and began a stiff climb out toward Nelson. Some of the best scenery of the trip was viewed on this section. The road that we took, between Picton and Havelock offers magnificent panoramas of Queen Charlotte Sound, a densely wooded, steeply sloped harbour, dotted with myriad bays and inlets. Peter and Jack got through a roll of film each.

Before arriving at Nelson we had to cross both the Rai Saddle and the Whangamoa Saddle and we did so with our first taste of rain. We made our camp in Nelson at the Tahunai Motor Camp, a vast camping and caravanning sprawl of 7000 inmates.

The second stage of the tour took us firstly through market gardening country where we discovered boysenberry ice cream; the Spooner Range, 464m; and the insecurity of garbage cans. Arriving at the crest of the Spooner Range, I leant my bike against the nearest object in order to photograph the panorama.

Suddenly there was a scraping and slithering sound. I turned to see my bike sliding down the side of the hill, the garbage can had given way. Luckily there was a bush track 7 metres down and the bike was also cushioned by the panniers. The only damage was in the handle bars. I had a slight lean to the left for the rest of the trip.

If you should travel on the west coast, beware the sandfly. This tiny creature pounces the moment you stop pedalling. Our form of protection was long-sleeved shirts, long trousers and an NZ commercial product called Dimp, which was inevitably wiped on and in everything.

Wet is the only word that can adequately describe the west coast. The annual rainfall is 4000 mm. We had rain for ten days straight on this section. Thus, wet weather gear is essential. Japara jackets, Gore-Tex or oilskins are the only viable waterproofs, and spare clothes wrapped in plastic bags are also recommended.

Our route took us along the Buller Gorge, via Murchison to Westport. This section is short on food and camping facilities, so carry supplies. Westport is the main town before Greymouth. Reaching the west coast was a bit of an anti-climax, we didn't realise we were there because of the mist but we could hear the roaring of the sea. We spent the



night in a cabin at Punakaiki.

Many of the small towns that we passed through on our trip had Maori names like Punakaiki. Chainwheel Charlie had great difficulties with them and so he created a general name to cover them all. This he pronounced, Why kick a moo cow, which when translated into Maori became the cunning concoction, Whaikik-amukow.

As we travelled along the west coast section the two riders using singles tyres had numerous problems with them rolling off the rim. Heavy duty tyres are recommended. Charlie had tyres that virtually ripped up the bitumen. Only after two blowouts on thin Canberra tyres did I see the error of my ways. But beware, make sure you carry spares as they are virtually impossible to get on the west coast, except for a 24-hour wait for a bus delivery from Greymouth. I had an experience that illustrated the uselessness of thin tyres, the miserable weather and the hospitality of New Zealanders. As I was riding slowly across a bridge in a rain-filled cross wind south of Hokitika, I had a blowout. I had no spares. An old tyre was slit and glued to the inside of the tyre but would not hold due to the wet conditions. A singles tyre was put on.

Surprisingly, this worked long enough to ride into the nearest town, Whataroa. No spares available for 24 hours. Retire to the pub in sorrow. At the bar a local farmer, hearing of the situation, pops me into his car, out to a shearing shed, pulls down an old bike and strips both tyre and tube off and presents me with them. Saved. They survived the rest of the trip.

From Whataroa we continued south, reaching the popular tourist areas of Franz Josef and Fox Glacier. The roads between the two townships was gruelling, hilly and wet. We camped at Fox Motor Camp and spent the following day exploring the glacier on foot with a guide. We were also blessed with a glimpse of Mt Cook at sunset.

The terrain became flatter for a while after Fox. We crossed the longest bridge on the island at Haast, 737 metres, with crevices situated at intervals to allow traffic extra room. Strong head winds. After refreshments at the Haast pub we faced the notorious Haast Pass. The ascent began, squeezed between huge bluffs with water cascading through pipes passing under the road. One and a half hours later we reached the summit at 563 metres. The worst was yet to come.

After Haast Pass the road becomes gravel at Makaroa for 65 km, winding between Lakes Wanaka and Hawea, 65 km of twisting, sodden, slippery riding. Deep sandy shoulders made stability impossible. We were glad to reach Wanaka where we dried and defrosted with the aid of innumerable pots of tea and meat pies. Dawdling Daphne even had trouble with his peculiar habit

of eating sandwiches with a knife and fork, due to cold hands.

The weather improved and we rode to Cromwell with a strong tail wind. Cromwell is a doomed town. Soon it will be flooded for a hydro-electric scheme, by the Clutha and Kawarau rivers. The local information centre is worth a visit for details. Another town of interest is Arrowtown. This is a restored, redecorated and revived gold mining town. Gold prices being what they are it is worth a visit.

From Arrowtown we pedalled on to Queenstown. Traffic increased dramatically, but this was compensated for by the views of the Remarkables and the beauty of Lake Wakatipu, both of which dominate the landscape. It was here that we had been aiming for, our major destination and recuperation point. It was here also that we decided to divide and meet again in Christchurch, with the exception of Kate.

Kate, homesick for comforts and her electric organ, bused to Christchurch then flew to Sydney. Jack and Peter, being wealthy, hired a car to go to Milford Sound, Mt Cook and back to Christchurch. Charlie, Daphne and I, being broke, kept riding.

We rode south from Queenstown, along the lake to reach Kingston, where amid pouring rain we caught the Kingston Flyer, a refurbished steam train which took us to Lumsden. We remounted, riding till we found a good camping spot by the river at the tiny town of Dipton. After our west coast experience we found the riding easy. We

were in good physical condition and the weather was improving. Invercargill was reached in no time. Here we cheated, catching a train to Dunedin in order to gain a couple of rest days in Christchurch.

Arriving late in Dunedin made it difficult to find a camping spot, but Chainwheel Charlie, as always, had the solution — a deserted car park. And so with little padding, much gravel and a sense of reckless freedom we spent a cold and starry night in the big city. Whilst in Dunedin we made a detour to an unusual place, Lanarch's Castle. This is a modern castle built by a wealthy banker and politician and is endowed with unique wood carvings, hand-crafted ceilings and period furniture. It's a tough ride with splendid views of Otago Harbour.

The final stretch of the road north began with a stiff climb out of Dunedin and one member less, Daphne having stayed with friends. That night was spent in a haystack just out of Palmerston, very comfortable. We continued without incident to Oamaru, where we stayed with friends and fattened up, preparing for the tedium of the Canterbury Plains. The only way to keep one's sanity on the plains is to continually change leaders and to stop at every tea house and pub you find.

After spending a night in a friend's shed at Geraldine, and another in a rest area out of Ashburton, we began to enter the suburbs of Christchurch and to finish a journey that proved to be one of physical variety and physical challenge. Once reunited in Christchurch we began thinking about the North Island and . . .

## Overnight stops

- 1 Yaldhurst motor camp, Christchurch.
  - 2 Waikuku Beach camping and caravan park.
  - 3 Hurunui Point, free camping by the river.
  - 4 Kaikoura, free camping in scenic reserve north of town.
  - 5 Wharanui, free camping near railway line.
  - 6 Blenheim motor camp.
  - 7 Havelock motor camp.
  - 8 Tahunai motor camp, western side of Nelson.
  - 9 Owen River, free camping near Kawatiri Junction.
  - 10 Buller River, free camping near Berlins.
  - 11 Punakaiki motor camp.
  - 12 Kaniere, free camping off-road.
  - 13 Fox Glacier motor camp.
  - 14 Haast, free camping near road just out of town.
  - 15 Lake Wanaka, free camping near Makaroa South.
  - 16 Cromwell motor camp.
  - 17 Queenstown motor camp.
  - 18 Dipton, free camping by Oreti River.
  - 19 Dunedin, free camping — not recommended, try motor camp.
  - 20 Palmerston, free camping in vacant haystacks on side road just north.
  - 21 Oamaru, try a motor camp or free camp out of town.
  - 22 Ashburton, free camping in rest area, north of town.
- N B If in difficulty for camping spot, just ask the locals.



# The leather fetishist's guide to cycle touring - part 3

DOUG THOMPSON continues his tale of how to give your bicycle a hiding. Two issues ago we looked at rear panniers and seats, this time we moved forward. Now read on . .

## Part three: Handlebar bag

Rather than showing you how to make an uninspired copy of the existing bags on the market, this article looks at a frameless method of slinging the handlebar bag from the brake handles and the gooseneck while still leaving the whole length of the bars accessible for the various hand steering grip positions. The philosophy of this bag is that it acts as a counter to heavily-laden rear panniers unweighting the steering wheel and provides ready access to items used during the day while touring, for example, food and camera equipment. It is quickly removable and the addition of a long strap converts it to a shoulder bag.

The traditional bag uses a steel frame which hangs over the bars, then drops down to support the bottom of the bag (see illustration). This not only adds weight to the bike, it causes chafing between the bag and the frame which will eventually wear through the material.

More modern bags use a side support frame combined with long shock cord attachments to the front fork. If desired, the rear strap on the plan given here could be deleted and the shock cord system used by adding two extra D-rings to the bag bottom sides.

## Ingredients:

Code: B=Bushwalking or mountaineering shop, T=Tentmaking business, H=Hardware store, CR=Craft shop.

33cm Superdux or similar (6ft width) - B or T; two 15 x 4mm three-ply (exterior grade is good) - H or timberyard; two 18 x 24.5cm 2mm thick leather pieces, other large leather scraps between 1.5 and 2mm thick (see plan) - CR; three toeclip straps - bicycle shop; heavy cardboard baseboard 16 x 21cm; one metre heavy-duty nylon coil zipper and two zips (slides) - B; 21.5 x 15.5cm piece of ultraviolet - resistant clear plastic - T; one D-ring (optional) - CR; 70cm of 5cm wide seat belt webbing - B; four 10mm hobby rivets - CR; 24cm of 2cm diameter dowel - H; about 150 metres of heavy duty braided nylon throat (eg Guter-mann Polytwist) - sewing shop.

If your bicycle frame is smaller than 53cm, you will have to modify this plan by using deeper ply panels and moving the side mounting holes downwards by

2.5 to 5cm (51 to 48cm frames with 27-inch wheels).

First cut out all pattern pieces, then treat all leather with SnoSeal or a similar waterproofing and preserving agent. If the bag is to sit on or above a front rack, cut out in addition the 14cm square piece of leather to prevent the bag bottom chafing.

After hemming the main compartment, sew two 2.5 x 21cm leather strips to the reverse side of it. Sew the small 3 x 5cm piece on the reverse side too, after cutting the slot in it. Turn the material over and sew on one 2.5 x 21cm strip as shown on the plan, directly over the one on the reverse side. If the optional patch on the bottom is required, sew it on then the long vertical strip which also has a slot in its top section to match the smaller piece on the reverse side. Sew the tab with D-ring attached under the lower edge of this piece of leather as you attach it. This D-ring is optional because the bag rides fairly stably without a bottom mounting point, but to be rock solid requires either a piece of string tied through the ring and around the fork crown or a metal reflector bracket mounted as shown in Diagram D. The latter allows the delation of the rear dowel piece and the top rear strap. But to bypass these options, if continuing the standard model, next slit the material to make the slot through which the rear mounting strap will pass.

Cut out the leather surrounds for the map compartment, or perhaps you may prefer to have another type of outer pocket on the top (see photo). Using a stitch line along the inside of the leather, attach the plastic window to its leather "frame". Sew the window to the main compartment lid using the outside stitch line, but first ensure that you have cut the slit in the material which allows insertion of the maps from underneath. Cut a T at each end of this slit and hem the material back on both sides. After the window is on, fold the material outwards on the line shown on the plan. Sew two darts as shown, tapering the sewing lines slightly outwards. Now hem the edge right around.

Construct the two front pocket pieces, hemming where shown and sewing in the zipper. Sew the four darts, then zip the two halves of the zipper together. It may take a little practice to get the zip onto the two coils, but persevere patiently. Sew the finished pocket onto the main compartment piece, so that it is in the position shown in Diagram C. The lower pocket edge should be approx-

imately half way over the piece of leather sewn on the underside of the main compartment piece, so start by sewing the lower edge first, tucking the edge underneath as you sew to create a hidden hem. Tucking under is not necessary on the other three sides.

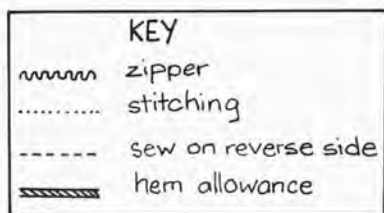
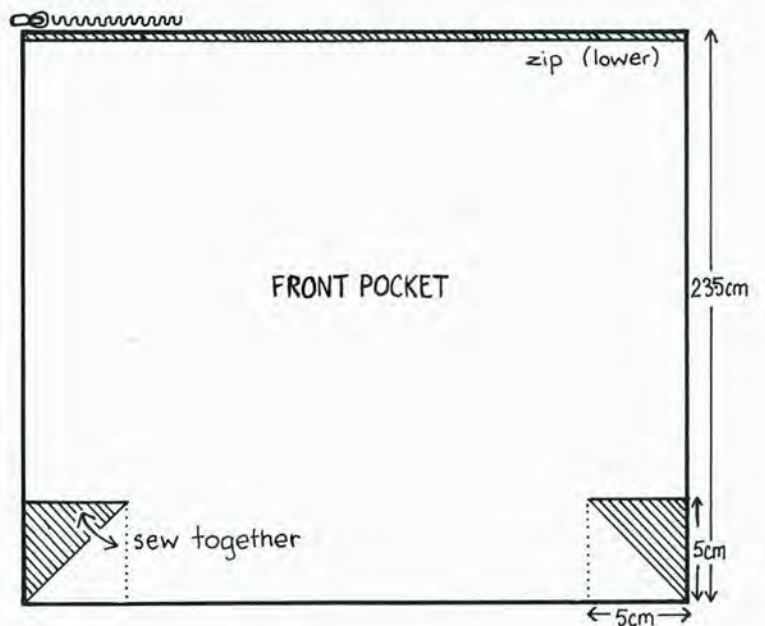
With the bag inside out, sew the two leather sides (with their slot pieces sewn in) on at the rear and bottom only (Diagram E), then stitch along the line a second time for strength. Turn the bag right side out so that the seam edges are now to the inside, and then sew the bottom half of the coil zipper around the three sides of the top. The top half of the coil zipper is sewn inside the main lid and the two halves are joined together with a zip or slide. (Does a zip zip a zipper, or a zipper zip up a zip?). Invert the whole creation and sew the rear section completely into place (Diagram F) then sew over it a second time. It is suggested that the zip be left slightly open or you may have trouble opening it out to turn the bag right way out again.

Cut out two ply boards and drill and cut them as the plan specifies, then mount them on the insides of the leather side panels using two rivets per board, at each corner of the top. Insert the dowel into the two 2mm holes - it will be a tight squeeze and should protrude a few millimetres through the boards. From the outside of the leather panels find the two toeclip strap slots in the ply by finger pressure, draw pencil lines to mark them and slit the leather with a sharp blade. Insert the side straps, the buckle protruding through the lower slot (see photos). The rear strap is passed through its leather-reinforced slot from outside, around the dowel and back out again. To mount the bag, pass the side straps over the lower part of the brake handles and clip in place - strap buckles should sit as close to the bag as possible and excess strap should be passed through the slot provided on the buckle to prevent it flopping around loose near the brake handle. The two sections of the rear strap are passed under the handlebars and clipped together on top of the gooseneck (handlebar stem). Enough tension should be applied to the straps when the bag is loaded to hold it well forward of the frame and brake cables. Sit the cardboard baseboard in place at the bottom of the bag.

Construct a carry strap using the seat belt webbing and two lengths of scrap leather cut to the same dimensions as the toeclip straps. Sew the lengths to the ends.

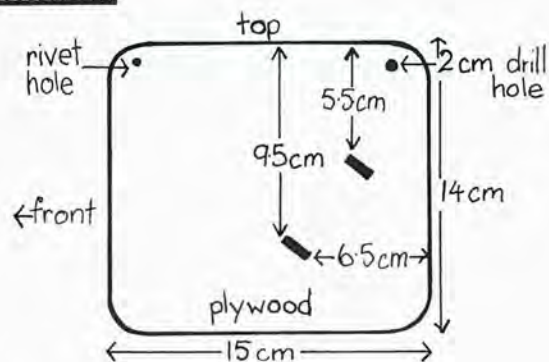
Cost: around \$15 to \$20.



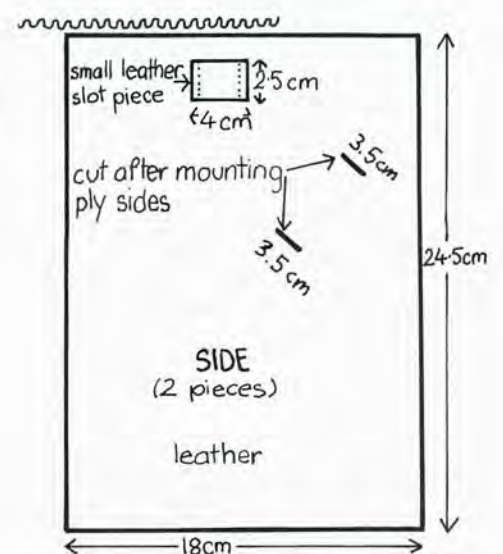


All pieces are Superdux or similar material unless otherwise indicated.

**Note:** Plan suits 53 cm or larger bike frame and brake levers without extensions.



SIDE TENSION BOARDS (2 pieces)





toeclip straps. Sew the lengths to the ends of the webbing, folding the ends of the webbing at an angle for neatness (see photo. Note: other details of strap in the photo are different from those described here as the model pictured is an earlier prototype). When the bag is to be carried over the shoulder, slide the two leather ends through the small leather slot pieces and into the toeclip buckles which provide a convenient length adjustment for optimum carrying height.

Total construction time: seven hours.  
Cost: around \$15.20.

Diagram E

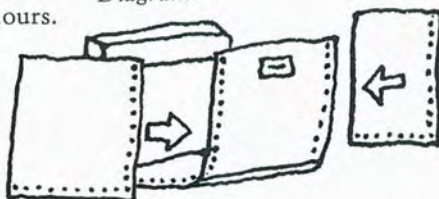


Diagram C

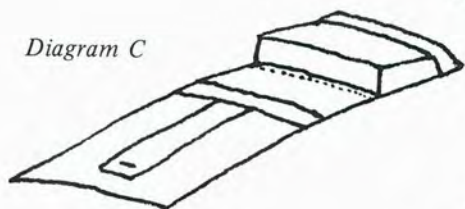


Diagram D

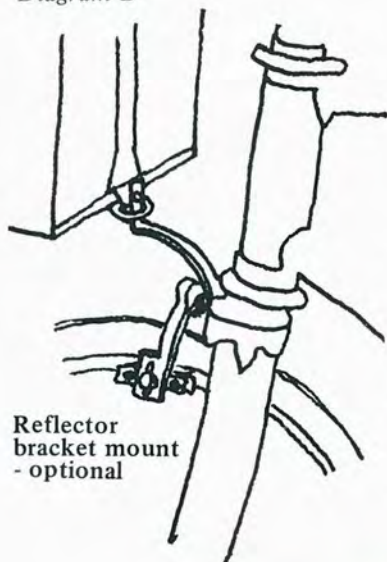
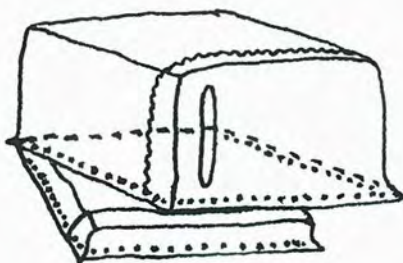


Diagram F



- A. Top view shows all round hand clearance - side straps don't obstruct hand positions on brake levers either. Note positions of front and map packets.
- B. One variation has extra compartment on top.
- C. Inside view, note plywood in place. Lid opens forward for access on the move.
- D. Bag in shoulder mode, as they say over in the USA. Note strap attachment in photo differs from that in plan and text.

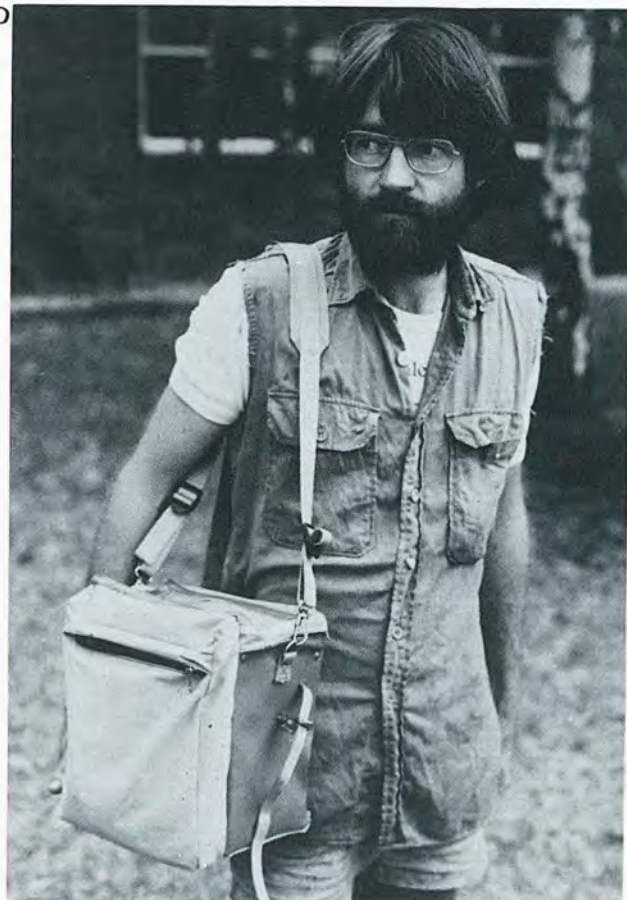
B



C



D



A











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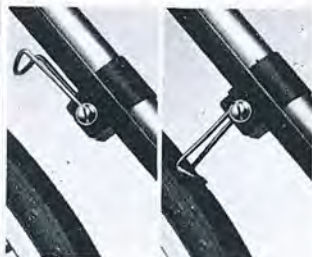
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# RAMBLING

Many people take off for their first tour or other camping trip with special "camping" cutlery and crockery, usually bought at great expense compared to just taking some from home. A small vegetable knife does well as a camping knife for food preparation and eating. A dessert spoon or teaspoon does well for most people as the only other item of cutlery. For crockery a plastic or laminated wood or bamboo bowl is light and serves well. A plastic mug completes the eating utensils. For food preparation a small piece of three-ply timber about 20 by 25cm makes an excellent cutting and serving board. For salads, take a strong plastic bag, put lettuce, tomatoes, mushrooms etc in, add dressing, seal the top and shake. A perfectly tossed salad is the result.

Tendinitis is something which can affect any cyclist who overdoes it. The symptoms are intense pain in the morning and decreasing soreness throughout the day as the cyclist warms up and a grating feeling in the area as the tendon moves through its sheath. The tendon can be scarred or bound to its sheath. Treatment often involves cortisone-type drugs, but apart

from other less advantageous aspects of these substances, it is now thought that they delay healing and actually weaken the tendon for some months. This can leave the tendon more likely to tear during cycling or other exercise. Immobilisation of the tendon by using an elastic bandage or similar is effective, but slow. The cause of the injury can be over-exertion, or incorrect relationship between the body and the cycle. A seat which is too high can bring on the problem in the achilles tendon, for example.

Shimano seems to be heading towards the bicycle which needs no special tools on the road for major repairs and good on them. The allen-keyed cranksets, toolless means of breaking the new Uniglide chain and various other components have led to a lighter tool kit. How long before some one replaces the trickier adjustments and fittings with simpler or lighter tool I don't know, but I'm waiting for the allen-keyed adjuster for seat leather tension. The nuts which are usually supplied are difficult to get at with the saddle off the bike, let alone in place. Even a hexagonal nut on the outside

of the front of the saddle would improve things. There are various ways to get your rear cluster off in the field if you have the tool but is there some way to build a free-wheel without the need for a special tool? We're waiting, Shimano and others.

This has to be one of the tallest stories to come out of the Australia's bicycling past, but the person who told it swears that it is true and from a reliable source, so here it is: There were three brothers who lived at Springwood, near Sydney. Every week they rode to the produce store to collect a three-bushel bag of feed for the chooks. The bag weighed in at about 80kg, the weight of the brothers was not specified. They then rode home, with the bag on the bicycle. Just one bicycle carried the brothers in and them and the bag home and did so faithfully for some time until it collapsed under the weight. They returned it to the Malvern Star agent, disappointed in it. The Sydney factory apparently replaced it.

A customer who bought a "touring" bicycle from a well-known shop took it back after being told that a triple chain-wheel with cogs of 52, 48 and 28 was not all that suitable when combined with a 14-28 cluster for riding the east coast. The proprietor, more involved in racing than touring, told him: "Touring, if I

TOW A...

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was going touring, I'd take that bike there (the lightest and fastest he had to offer) and go straight down the highway and stop in the first motel I came to!" Regardless of his sentiments he did exchange the triple for a more suitable one.

A bicycle shop is one of the hottest, most profitable opportunities according to *Making Money* newsletter, and it says you only need \$5,000 to be in action, selling, renting and repairing bikes. Try that on your local shop and see what they say. The bicycle boom arrived some time last year, but it's not exactly the sort of thing you could say is one of the "83 of the hottest and most profitable business opportunities". Well, I couldn't from discussions with various bike shop operators and staff.

Michael Burlace

## RIDE THE BIKE TRAIL THIS SPRING

People interested and willing to see the bicycle trails become a reality can help...

Australian Cycle Trails will be conducting a two week ride from Sydney to Brisbane in October this year. The main aim of the ride will be to build on existing research and establish (contacts) friendships with people along the trail. All riders wishing to join the ride should contact Warren Salomon At Sydney 660 6605. A pre ride meeting will be held. Riders will need to be self reliant in equipment.

Bicycle Trail can be ridden. Parts or all of the Pacific on the Saturday of the long weekend in October. Sydney riders are invited to ride out with the others. Sydney will arrive in Brisbane on Friday 16th Oct. Organised by ACT Sydney.



Taking a few years to pedal around the world is a dream cherished by many but realised by few. Two people who are achieving it are Francoise and Patrice Ryder from near Marseille in France. When they left nearly three years ago they were almost novices, but that has been changed by many thousands of kilometres and dozens of countries. They expect to spend two more years on the road and have attracted a small sponsor — a French mineral water company. However, the antics they have had to go through and the corny press treatment as a result makes one wonder whether the few hundred dollars are worth it. One newspaper put them in berets, had them clutching a French loaf and a bottle of mineral water and spouting clichés. They are raising money for refugees in a Kampuchean camp in Thailand where they worked for five months. Australia was a land of contrasts, from the outback — very special, particularly the Kimberlys — to the manic traffic of Sydney where they didn't like riding. Francoise said that after a few days off the tandem in the cities and other stopping places, all they wanted to do was get back on and head off.



"Heading up north on the east coast bike route, ten days on the road so far . . . tomorrow we'll be in south-east Queensland, Brisbane the day after . . . maybe . . . Mt Lindesay is up ahead of us snagging the cloud . . . the weather is clearing and the sun is getting warmer, though we'll be needing warm clothes tonight still . . . We're carrying a lot of gear but every bit of it gets used . . . those panniers are great!"

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