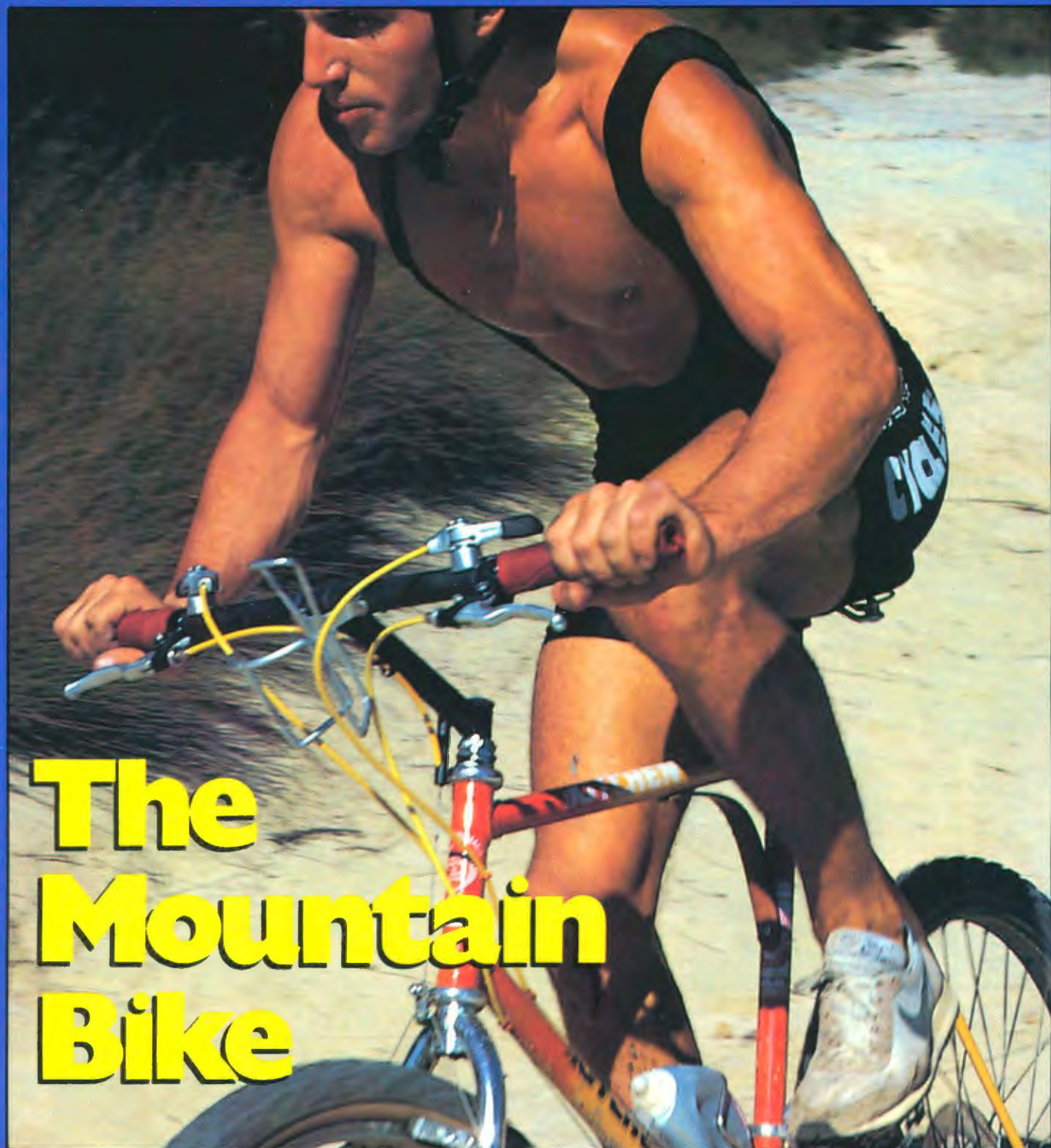


# BICYCLES

## *Freewheeling*

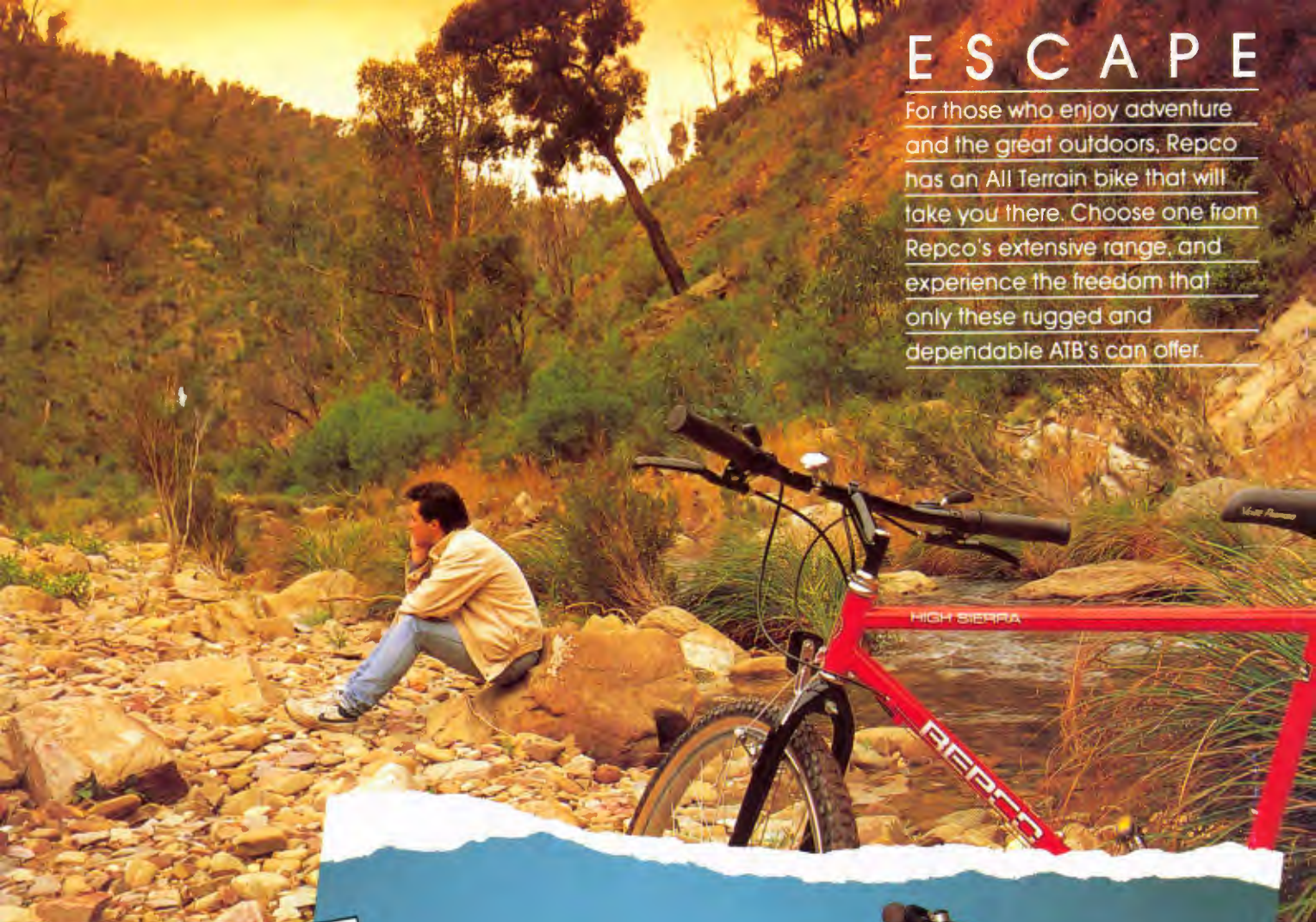
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# Freewheeling

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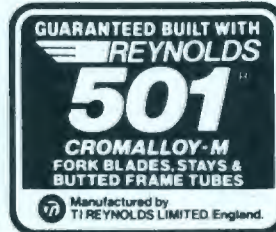
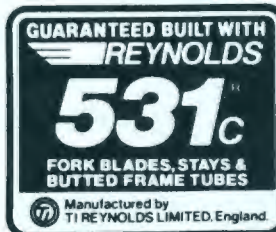
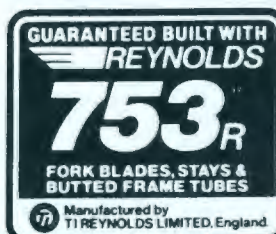


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## Reynolds - a race apart



# Warren Salomon



## Keeping ahead in a changing world

*The helmet Standard, Committees and a Sydney Bikeplan announced.*

**S**TUCK OUT here at the edge of the Pacific it is easy to pretend that the rest of the world doesn't exist. Its the old Australian problem.

But we are part of the world and we can't pretend that we can get by without playing our part. We have to be brave and embrace this reality not put our heads in the sand like a bunch of Ozzie ostriches. If we don't others will define our role for us.

The bicycle scene provides a good example. We are a small market with no manufacturing capacity so we rely entirely on imports. We have very little say in the direction of cycle equipment manufacture and mostly we are content to follow Europe, America or Asia.

However, we do make very good bicycle helmets so our manufacturers have an ideal opportunity to get involved in the huge international marketplace and not only influence future directions but make a lot of money in the process. If it only were that easy.

It's not easy. Take the world's largest bicycle helmet market: the United States. With more heads to fit helmets onto than anyone else there are only two local helmet manufacturers. There are more than that in Australia. There have been others in the past but they have been sued out of existence.

One of survivors is Bell the largest international helmet maker. This corporation earned its reputation making hel-

metts for motorcyclists. Now bicycling headgear makes up the major part of its sales. Bell has only managed to survive because it is large and persistent enough to withstand the onslaught of the litigation happy lawyers. The company has never lost a case but it still costs millions to mount a successful defence.

In the USA it is quite common for lawyers (on behalf of their clients) to sue product manufacturers for vast sums of money. In that country lawyers take a cut of the action so if a 4 million dollar suite is successful the attorney stands to make a cool million. Clients and potential clients are lured by the fact that lawyers do not charge a fixed fee and courts do not order the losers to pay costs.

I spoke to one of our local helmet manufacturers and asked him why his firm did not sell its helmets in the US market. The litigation problem was his short answer. I don't blame him but litigation has not stopped the multitude of European companies from plunging into the US marketplace with helmets of every shape and style.

Strangely enough one of the problems for our helmet manufacturers is our Australian helmet Standard AS2063.1. Because we have decided to develop our own standard we run the risk of erecting a barrier to the rest of the world. That is, if our standard is so different that it restricts the entry of helmets from other

countries our own makers are protected from competition from without.

The Japanese are masters at the game. They have erected a barrier of government regulation which effectively frustrates and prevents foreign companies gaining access to their market. They do it subtly; an Australian Standard is much more direct.

A strong case in point is the current generation of ultra lightweight "shell-less" helmets or, as the Americans call them, "beer-cooler" helmets currently the rage in North America. The Australian Standard (as it is currently worded) would not pass this type of helmet.

This is a worry because the information I am getting from the States is that in the sport (and to a lesser extent in recreation) this type of helmet is the one the riders prefer. In the US amateur race competitors as well as triathletes are required by race rules to wear helmets and the most recent magazine pictures tell the story: these helmets are very, very popular.

The ultra lightweight helmets do not pass the Australian Standard for two main reasons: because they do not have a hard outer shell they do not pass a penetration test (this is done by dropping a pointed plumb bob type instrument onto the test helmet from a pre determined height); and because some have ventilation holes larger than 20 mm dia permitted by the Oz Standard.



This last requirement is supposed to prevent handlebars from slipping through ventilation holes and is the only reason why the world's best selling helmet the Bell V1-Pro will not pass our Oz Standard. As it stands at present the 20 mm minimum hole requirement gives Australians some of the hottest helmets made. Some of the recent (Standards approved) offerings from Taiwan work like little pressure cookers on a sweaty skull.

A couple of our manufacturers have confided that they feel that the 25 mm hole rule is design restrictive; and the one thing that the Standards people will not be accused of is restricting the development of new designs.

Holes or no holes the problem of the ultra lightweights still remains. All of these helmets pass the US Standard the American National Standards Institute's Z90.4 and there is every indication that many would pass the Oz standard if the penetration test was removed.

While the debate rages here (the Australian helmet Standard is currently under review) the rest of the world could well opt for the ultra lightweight helmet.

There is no overwhelming evidence to suggest that the newer style of helmet does not provide adequate protection. So, when the dust finally settles in Oz, we might find ourselves just a little more isolated from the rest of the world and our marvelous Standard an antipodean irrelevancy.

## **How Government works.**

### **Part 1 - The Committee**

A CAMEL IS a horse designed by a committee. I'm still as amused by that modern proverb as I was when I first heard it. A month never passes without coming across some concrete example of the essential truth behind the statement. Nevertheless committees are a part of the way we do things. They are the way different interest groups can be brought together to discuss important matters. And as an administrative tool of government they rule our lives.

As much as the structure may be criticised there is a lot to be said in favour of committees. But they are not creative. They can analyse, criticise, review and co-ordinate because the committee is essentially an administrative tool. They review projects and programs; they seldom initiate them.

The NSW State Bicycle Committee brings together representatives of all areas of government with a contribution to make to the welfare of the state's cycling population. Because the cycling scene is broad and concerns such diverse government agencies such as Education, Main Roads, Traffic, Sport & Recreation, Planning & Environment the

committees natural home is under the umbrella of the Minister of Transport.

Often the Committee has to seek the co-operation of individual government departments so it is the job of the committee member representing the particular agency to see that his or her organisation responds to the wishes of the SBC and the program is implemented.

Of course the cyclists themselves are represented on the Committee. In New South Wales the two largest user groups, the Bicycle Institute and the Newcastle Cycleways Movement, have been active members since the SBC's inception.

I said that committees are not noted for their creativity; that's not entirely true. The programs they approve have to come from somewhere and often they are actually initiated by the committee itself. Of course there is always Government Policy. The SBC is a government agency so it has to implement policy. Once upon a time governments did not even have a bicycle policy but the Geelong Bikeplan changed all of that and today important issues such as safety education, traffic management, facility construction and design, bicycles as part of the transportation system, recreation and sport are all dealt with in some form of government policy.

If the Minister decides that bicycle safety education in the schools is to be a priority then the Committee has to formulate strategy, commission program development, approve and implement through its interdepartmental networks so that the Minister's policy directive is implemented.

Often it's not that simple. Up until recently the Department of Main Roads was controlled by a separate minister and was a law unto its self. The SBC found it very difficult to get its policies and initiatives implemented by the Department. Now that the DMR has been brought, logically, under the control of the Minister of Transport the organisation is being made more accountable to other areas of transport and there is new hope that the DMR will eventually become an active initiator of enlightened bicycle projects.

However, this has not stopped the DMR and the Traffic Authority from carelessly wiping out an inner city cycle route with one of their recent traffic reorganisations in the Ultimo/Chippen-dale area of central Sydney. Both agencies are represented on the SBC.

## **How Government works.**

### **Part 2 - The Business Plan**

IN SPITE this brutish disregard for the welfare of the urban cyclist there is hope that all this is about to change. The State Bicycle Committee, with the blessing of its Minister, put its self through the process of self examination to develop a set of goals and objectives which would give

it its direction into the 1990's. In the corporate sector this practise is quite common and it is only recently seen use in the Public Service.

To formulate its Business Plan the committee members met over a week-end and in an intense series of meetings looked in turn at all of the current areas of SBC involvement.

What they come up with is a brief manifesto of the Committee's mission, objectives and a set of goals. The document is brief. In fact it's refreshing to read a government document free of padding and wooly jargon. Here the words are meant to mean something and not fill up the space on a page to please the impatient glance of a political master.

The document has been approved by the Minister and is now Government policy so it is important to state it in full:

#### **Introduction**

The State Bicycle Committee is an advisory body of the NSW Government on all matters relating to bicycles.

#### **A. Mission**

To achieve safe and convenient cycling throughout NSW.

#### **B. Objectives**

1. Ensure provision of safe and convenient bicycle facilities.
2. Establish responsible attitudes and safe behaviour towards cycling.
3. Reduce rate of bicycle related trauma.
4. Maximise effective and efficient use of resources of government and other agencies in order to benefit cycling.

#### **C. Goals**

1. a. Implement bicycle safety education for all primary school children by 1990.  
b. Implement bicycle safety education for 60% of high school students by 1992.  
c. Increase community awareness of factors which impinge on safe cycling, to 80% by 1990. (Community includes cyclists, road users and parents).
2. Obtain full compliance with key road rules (riding on left, obeying intersection control, lighting laws, giving way - including entering road) by 100% of cyclists by December 1990.
3. All new planning instruments to incorporate provision to promote safe and convenient cycling bicycle infrastructure by 1991.
4. a. Ensure to the maximum extent that new and reconstructed roads and bikepaths are bicycle safe from the end of 1988.  
b. To upgrade all designated existing bicycle ways to conform with bicycle safe standards by 1991.  
c. Install bicycle parking and secure storage facilities at railway stations, bus terminals and ferry



wharves progressively, to meet demands by 1991.

5. Ensure safe bicycle access and secure storage facilities at schools by 1990.
6. Make bicycle use for all age groups as safe as that for motor vehicles by 1993.

### Encouraging news for Sydney cyclists

IN MY COLUMN as part of the November/December *Freewheeling* I fired a salvo at the NSW SBC for its inactivity in the Sydney region. To date there have been a number of small engineering oriented bikeplans carried out but most have ended up in filing cabinets unimplemented because of what I said was a lack of leadership from the SBC. Now the Committee with renewed vigour has grasped the nettle and has sought approval from the Minister for the funding of a Sydney Bike plan to be carried out in the 1988/89 financial year.

Tenders will be called for the necessary consultants work within the next few months so it is heartening to report, to Sydney readers at least, that some relief from the present appalling conditions is on the way.

Sydney's existing street network is a jungle. The major roads are so narrow and so overcrowded that the only future

for the city lies in encouraging more people from using them not making them wider and increasing their volume. In Europe the trend is to restrict vehicles from the central city precincts not provide for more like the builders of the Sydney Harbour Tunnel propose.

Given the intensely unattractive nature of Sydney's main road network I believe that the only possible way that cycling can survive and flourish in the older part of town is give the people a decent alternative network which uses existing back streets and is convenient, safe, properly signposted and maintained. It is fundamental for the success of the Sydney bikeplan that should attempt to create a network and most importantly encourage citizens to use it.

In Melbourne where a bikeplan is well into the implementation phase they produced a marvelous set of full coloured maps (about 5 double sided folded sheets) as a means of encouraging cyclists to select safe routes. The Melbourne maps (and others) as well researched as they might be do not offer the rider a usable network. It is that reason not the fact that they have been inadequately marketed to Melbournians which has attributed to their lack of use.

Just look at a Melways, Gregorys or a UBD directory and you will see all of

the main roads, through routes and shortcuts for motorists clearly marked. Motorists directories are intensely practical. Cyclists maps have so far been more useful to the planners, bureaucrats and bicycle campaigners than the ordinary cyclist.

I have a full set of Melbourne maps but when I am visiting that city I use a Melways to get around by bike (and so do the bicyclists I visit). Nevertheless the maps are well researched, can be used in any weather and are durable to the point of absurdity. This nonsense of printing separate maps on plastic paper so that they last forever is a huge waste of money and ignores the fundamental fact that the road system is not fixed, changes from year to year and belongs to everyone not just one type of user.

Maps are important but only if they are useful to the user. And the most useful thing a city cyclist can be told is how to get across town on a reasonably safe route. The routes must come first for the maps to follow otherwise a map is no more than a series of pretty coloured lines on paper.

The network must come first and once it is implemented and properly signposted separate maps for the cyclists are then a waste of money. Gregorys and UBD will include the network on theirs so why reinvent the wheel?

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# John Drummond

## Cycling needs its heroes

*Vinnecombe, Oz's unsung champion and the passing of one of cycling's great roadmen.*

**T**he people responsible for nominating and selecting the Australian Sports person of the year showed their "in-depth" knowledge of sport by choosing a motor cyclist as their first choice.

We don't know who the nominations were but we can be certain they would have been worthy representatives of all the best known sports. We don't knock other sports either, they all have their attractions and devotees. But when you compare the efforts of the aforementioned with the achievements of Martin Vinnicombe you wonder whether to laugh or cry.

However, the fact that 23 year old Vinnicombe, from Sydney, did not receive an invitation to the Sports Australia Awards held in Melbourne, despite being a finalist in two categories highlights the fact that cycling is still very much a minor sport with the Australian sports media, and underlines the power of television in projecting events and people into our homes and minds.

The new South Wales government got it right when the 23 year old cyclist was named the Sports Scholarship Achiever of the year.

At the grand ballroom of the Regent Hotel, Vinnicombe, the first Australian in seven years to win a world cycling title, the 1000 metre time trial, received his honours from the NSW Minister for Sport and Recreation, Michael Cleary.

Vinnicombe again received some limelight when he was interviewed on national television, along with other finalists, Wayne Gardner; boxer, Jeff Fenech; swimmer, Julie McDonald and canoeist, Ian Jacoby, on the prestigious ABC Sportsperson of the Year awards show.

Vinnicombe's world title win climaxed a sequential climb up the ladder of fame. He was third placed in the kilometre time trial at the world championships in Italy in 1985, second in Colorado Springs (USA) in 1986 and first in Austria last year. The Sydney star defeated Russia's Konstantine Khrabtsov and East Germany's Maich Malchow in record breaking time.

Vinnicombe's win ended European domination in this exacting discipline –

East Germany had won 8 times since 1973, Russia three times and West Germany twice.

It was the first Australian World Championship win in 7 years, and the first kilometre win since the late Russell Mockridge won the gold medal at the Helsinki Olympics in 1952. (The Olympic Games winners are considered the world champions.)

The Russians and East Germans are full-time amateurs and the greatest proponents of track cycling yet seen, as their Olympic record shows. Yet, Martin Vinnicombe, a part-time athlete, who refused an Australian Institute of Sport

**World Champ Martin Vinnicombe in action on the indoor rollers.**



Scholarship, because of isolation from his Sydney home, trained himself to defeat the cream of the world's second largest sport, (only soccer exceeds).

It was a remarkable demonstration of dedication by a talented Australian.

It would have taken a great deal of courage to do what Wayne Gardner did on his motor cycle. But that courage would have had the best possible back-up facilities. Not so Vinnicombe, who was his own man in defeating the best in modern technology and human technique that the world could offer.

No doubt the East Europeans will turn up the heat in Seoul later this year, but the personable Vinnicombe, should he win an Olympic medal, will most certainly be able to say, "I did it my way."

### FITNESS A MYTH

A recent survey had indicated fitness is a myth among the Nation's children. Too many children have high cholesterol levels, and too many were too fat.

This result comes as no surprise. Statistics as far back as 1979 indicated Australian kids were opting out of competitive sports. Now sports club membership statistics are proving the fact.

For every regular sports conscious child, there is at least another overweight boy or girl watching television screens in the nation's lounge rooms.

A key report by the National Health and Medical Research Council's Child Health Committee warns of the consequences of children viewing up to 5 hours of television a day, and it recommends that parents limit it to one or two hours.

For cycle sport in Australia the picture is rather bleak with depleted club memberships affecting open race entries. Only 90 odd professionals entered for the traditional Tasmanian Holiday Carnivals. This is a far cry from the 300 plus of several years ago. A dearth of entries is also noticeable in Amateur competition, particularly in the less populated States. But not only cycling is suffering, all sports are involved in one way or another.

It mostly relates to the destruction of competitiveness started in the 1970's by



education theorists contending that youngsters needed to be protected from competition, so that none would experience the disappointment of being losers.

The ideal of striving for excellence, for top performance, was deliberately pushed into the background. Australia's competitive spirit was stifled.

What a load of crap! Australia's most successful sporting years were in the great social depression of the 1930's, when almost everyone played sport.

There is nothing wrong with large scale sports participation – as long as it is not at the expense of helping the good to try to become great.

It is therefore most satisfying to note that over 12,000 students took part in the inaugural "new look" National School Student Cycling Championship. With over one million children riding bicycles to school the scope for expansion is enormous. The need to involve more children in fitness programmes is obvious, and there is no better way of doing it than cycling.

Congratulations to the Australian Cycling Federation on a successful revival of a key recruitment project.

#### WAR ON WHEELS

The Bicentennial "War on Wheels" between Australia and the rest of the world track cycling series ended on a

high note at Sydney's Canterbury Velodrome before a capacity crowd.

Australia finished strongly to defeat the rest of the world riders, representing ten countries, after a barnstorming tour of four states.

Our detailed coverage of the series will feature in our next issue.

#### THE PERFECTIONIST PASSES

As briefly reported in my last column French superstar Jacques Anquetil died at 53 three months after undergoing surgery for stomach cancer.

Anquetil passed away in his sleep whilst having treatment at St Hilaire Clinic in Rouer, France. A statement from the Clinic said that he had died in his sleep after showing great courage throughout his illness.

Anquetil was the outstanding French professional cyclist of the fifties and sixties, possibly of all time. He was one of a trio of immortals along with Eddy Merckx and Bernard Hinault who created history by winning the Tour de France five times. He also achieved fame by winning the Giro d'Italia twice, and won the Grand Prix des Nations — the unofficial World Time Trial Championship) nine times.

Born in 1934 at Mont Saint Aignan in Normandy, the son of a peasant farmer, Anquetil started bicycle racing in 1951

and the following year took the French amateur road title. But it was in 1953 that he grabbed the headlines for the first time when he won the Grand Prix des Nations as a lowly independent (semi-professional) beating all the professional stars.

Confirmation of his ability against the clock came in 1967 when he took the world hour record from another cycling legend, Fausto Coppi.

In a 15 year career he earned the sobriquet of "The Professional" by virtue of his attention to detail and fastidious nature. He did not possess a sprint but was capable of sustaining high speeds for long periods, consequently most of his victories were achieved by a calculating brain rather than by flamboyance. It was perhaps for this reason that Anquetil never won the heart of the French public, who warmed to his great rival Raymond Poulidor who seemed to always be the underdog.

But for all that the French were never reluctant to concede that Anquetil had "everything" when it came to assessing class.

The great Italian roadman Coppi being questioned by journalists as to his chances in the Giro once said, "Watch Anquetil, he is better than me." That would have the greatest tribute ever paid any professional cyclist, for Coppi was a Campionissimo.

# THE HEAT IS ON

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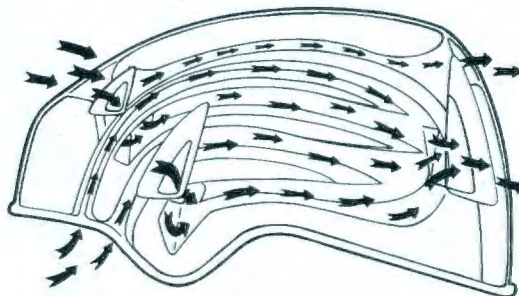


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The most significant thing about Anquetil is that he remained what he was throughout his cycling career. Success never changed his character although he was unable to get into the hearts of the French people. His reserve was often mistaken for snobbery. He would much prefer to escape the crowd after an outstanding victory, and was often accused of indifference. He found great difficulty in smiling into a TV camera.

Anquetil retained the characteristics he was endowed with, he accepted them as a birthright and was quite unable to change.

Perhaps this accounts for his greatness. While he never won a world championship, having finished in the first ten on six occasions, he was the most capable champion of all, both in victory and defeat.

Anquetil was unquestionably the most perfect pedaller of all time, possessing an unbelievably smooth action. The most significant moment of his brilliant career came in 1964 when he unleashed almost unbelievable power and energy to reach the level of Coppi. It was at this time Coppi paid him the ultimate compliment. At this time he was the most highly paid professional cyclist in the world.

Anquetil was a sporting phenomenon. From the day he learnt to think for himself he knew what he wanted, he programmed his every move toward the goal of a champion racing cyclist. This trait showed throughout his cycling career. In a race he spread his effort with extraordinary judgement, never forcing himself unnecessarily. He only used power as a selection and then in measured amounts.

Cycling to him was in a sense easy, he never regarded it as a pleasure but a means of making a living. He was a pro-

fessional through and through, he capitalised on the foundation he laid for this future as a youth and became a multi-millionaire.

He was cool and calculating, every race was important and every aspect considered in his disciplined mind, things like: which effort to make at which time, which gear to use, which tyres to ride. No mistakes were made and nothing was left to chance.

He most certainly rode with heart, but his greatest asset was his shrewd calculating brain, for this reason the French liked him but never loved him.

He was never mobbed by the crowd. There was about him some innate thing that singled him out from his opponents. It showed in his style of cycling, his demeanour and above all his immaculate appearance. No matter how hard the race he never had a runny nose, he carried a handkerchief and would use it.

He was supreme in time trialing and tour racing. His computer mind could programme itself to perfection and he could produce unbelievable power, which earned him millions and the distinction of being the greatest perfectionist in world cycling.

Anquetil retired in 1966 to his native Normandy where he became a gentleman farmer. He always professed that he wasn't a great lover of the sport, but after his retirement he maintained close links with the French professional scene as a journalist, race director of the Paris-Nice and manager of the French team in the world championships, a role he fulfilled in Austria last year against medical advice.

**Jaques Anquetil lines up to sign on for the start of the Tour de France. His bid for the Maillot Jaune is about to begin.**



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# The World Awheel

## New Minister downgrades committee

In a surprise move the new Victorian Minister of Transport, Jim Kennan, has downgraded the independent status of the State Bicycle Committee by moving it into the Road Traffic Authority.

The shift will place all cycling projects in jeopardy because the current system relies on the State Bicycle Committee's independence and oversight to see that large programs like the Melbourne Bikeplan is implemented by each of the different transport agencies.

By putting the SBC in with the Road Traffic Authority it is effectively shunting the committee into a bureaucratic backwater. In future the chairman will not have direct access to the Minister and will instead have to report to his or her bureaucratic superior.

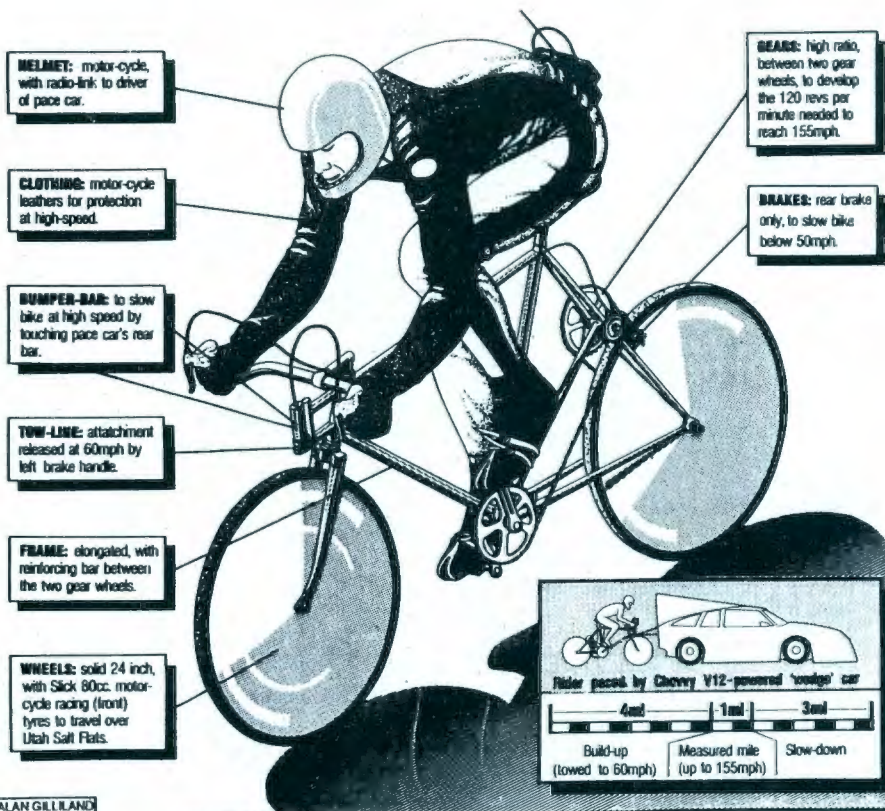
In a strongly worded press release the state's largest cyclist group, Bicycle Victoria (formerly the Bicycle Institute), criticised Kennan for his action and said that a ten-year improvement plan for cyclists in Victoria had been reversed and cyclists were now back in the dark ages.

The move was made without consultation with the cyclists.

Alan Parker a representative for WOMBAT, a cycling group and a former State Bicycle Committee member said, "Representatives of Bicycle Victoria and myself met with Jim Kennan and his new Director General, John King. We were told that the Minister had decided that the State Bicycle Committee would be removed from the Ministry to the Road Traffic Authority (RTA) and the Chairman would no longer report directly to the Minister.

Victorian cyclists, Parker claims, are upset because Kennan has given control of their committee to an agency with a ten year record of frustrating the implementation of bikeplans.

The new move is seen as a disaster for cycling in Victoria, the State with the longest and most impressive track record in cycle planning and safety. "There has been a long tradition of Ministers taking an interest in doing something for cyclists in this State", says Parker. Liberal minister Brian Dixon was the Bicycle Committee's first chairman and four Transport Ministers (two Liberal and two Labor) had the chairman reporting directly. Parker believes that this is why more has been done for cyclists in Victoria than anywhere else in Australia.



ALAN GILLILAND

Cyclists say that the downgrading of their committee is a blunder by the Minister and shows his lack of understanding of how an important element of his portfolio operated. According to Parker the Ministry is the only logical home for the SBC as it has to have a co-ordinating role with the other transport agencies and it can't possibly do that effectively from the bowels of the RTA.

"People should know about Jim Kennan's lack of interest in the welfare of the 900,000 cyclists in this State. Kennan has destroyed any chance of cyclists getting a fair go in transport planning and in making sensible provisions for cyclists."

## Project Scorch

249 KM/H (155 mph) on a bicycle! That's what professional cyclist David Le Grys is going for. Le Grys recently arrived from the UK and has come to Australia with the intention of going for the World Cycle Speed Record in this country.

The intrepid cyclist is not new to record breaking. He currently holds the British and Commonwealth Cycle Speed Record which was achieved on a British Freeway back in 1985. David is also a World Roller Record holder. The previous record stood at 165 km/h (102

mph). He appeared on an English television program called "Record Breakers" in 1986, and smashed the existing World Record by a staggering 38.6 km/h (24 mph) with a speed of 203.7 km/h (126.6 mph).

Dave has moved in with ex professional cyclist Derek Hunt of Enfield, Sydney. "I've known Derek for some time as we were International riders together when we were amateurs" said Le Grys, he added, "When Derek told me there is a possibility of doing the record attempt in Aussie, I was over like a shot." I was initially planning to go to the salt flats in America, but subject to obtaining permission and inspecting Australia's salt flats in South Australia, I would be delighted to promote companies over here instead and smash the World Record "down under".

A special bicycle is currently being constructed which David will use in his bid to become the fastest cyclist in the world. The main feature will be the wheels. Their secrets can only be revealed when they are ready together with his \$8,000 bicycle.

Even at the time of going to print, Dave is talking with Mr Wally Storey of Mawer Engineering, one of the most respected car builders in the car racing fraternity. To construct a pace car which



Dave will cycle behind, the car must be capable of 480 km/h (300 mph). The wind deflector shield fitted to the rear of the pace car will cut its top speed by some 112 km/h (70 mph). David feels that he wants the car to be able to cruise at 250 km/h (155 mph) in the case he feels he can go faster.

The five times British Professional champion is putting the attempt together under the name of Project Scorch and with one world record already broken, Project Scorch will not rest until the ultimate in speed cycling is broken and become the fastest cyclist in the world ever..... in Australia?

### New helmet rebate scheme for NSW

THE NEW South Wales Government has made available \$250,000 to enable children who ride a bicycle to school to rent or buy an approved safety helmet through school parent associations.

The Minister for Transport, Mr Terry Sheahan, announced the scheme recently during the launch of Children's Road Safety Month. Mr Sheahan said the funds were being made available to help school associations set up helmet rental schemes or to offer helmets for sale at a reduced price.

"Helmet schemes are seen as an ideal way of reducing risk of death and injury among child cyclists," Mr Sheahan said. "Hospital figures show that head injuries account for up to 85 per cent of cycling fatalities."

Mr Sheahan said the \$250,000 being made available by the Government would be used to give school associations a \$12 rebate on the cost of purchasing each safety helmet.

"When school groups throw their support behind this initiative almost 21,000 more helmets should be in use throughout New South Wales within the next four months," he said.

Mr Sheahan said it was hoped that local community groups and business houses would provide additional sponsorship to further increase the number of bicycle helmets in use by youngsters.

He said full details of the rebate offer and guidelines on how to operate a school helmet scheme and to encourage helmet usage would be sent to school associations throughout New South Wales this month. "The Government's \$12 rebate offer will run from February to May, 1988," Mr Sheahan said.

The Minister also launched a special guide aimed at improving the safety of school-age in New South Wales.

"The guide, produced by the Traffic Authority and endorsed by the Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia (CAPFA), explains how school parent groups can provide bicycle safety helmets for sale or rent to children," Mr Sheahan said.

The guide also lists: - Facts about cycle accidents, - How helmets can reduce the risk of brain damage, - How to select and fit a helmet, and - Suggestions on how to find a sponsor to further help with the purchase of helmets.

"Road toll figures show one out of every 11 children under the age of 15 killed on New South Wales roads is a cyclist," Mr Sheahan said.

"For every cyclist killed, a further 20 are admitted to hospital with injuries. "Unfortunately, these statistics are only the tip of the iceberg," he said. "Only about one in every 30 injury accidents involving cyclists are reported to the police. This new guide is a way of getting the community at large involved in efforts aimed at increasing the number of cyclists wearing safety helmets and reducing the risks associated with cycling," Mr Sheahan said.

The Traffic Authority guide was developed through the Advisory Committee on Road Safety Education (ACORSE) in conjunction with the State Bicycle Committee and the Department of Education.



### Sporting chance for companies to shape up

WELL-KNOWN FOR making waves with sporting challenges like the America's Cup, Australasian merchant bank Fay, Richwhite in now inviting Australian business community to meet the challenge of corporate fitness by staging Sydney's first corporate team triathlon at Narrabeen Lakes on April 10, 1988.

In partnership with Australia's leading business magazine Business Review Weekly, Fay, Richwhite have designed this new sporting event for corporations and their employees. The merchant bank's corporate team triathlon has already proved enormously successful in New Zealand. With over 1800 triathletes (or 600 teams) competing last year, it has become the largest triathlon series ever held in that country.

The Fay/Richwhite/Business Review Weekly Corporate Team Triathlon in-

volves three-person teams completing a short, achievable course around Sydney's Narrabeen Lakes. Designed to provide both an easy introduction for first timers or a more demanding sprint event for the experienced, the triathlon course includes a 500 metre swim, 15 kilometre cycle and 5 kilometre run.

Teams of three people compete. Each competitor will have the individual satisfaction of completing the course by himself or herself, with the added attraction of participating in a team effort on behalf of their company or organisation.

The fastest member from each of the winning teams in the current three-race series in New Zealand will form a corporate team, who will travel to Sydney to challenge the best Australian corporate triathletes and compete for the Fay, Richwhite/Business Review Weekly Corporate Cup.

The attraction of this corporate team event is that it provides an opportunity for all employees - the athletic and the not-so-athletic - to increase their fitness and have some fun while representing their company in a major sporting event.

The entry fee for a three-person team is \$85, and monies raised from the Sydney event will be donated to the NSW Society for Crippled Children.

Organisers of the corporate team triathlon are Nelson Associates, specialists in triathlon event development and organisation.

### Festival of Cycling, Oakbank South Australia 22-24 April 1988

ONE OF Australia's key bicentennial year cycling events will be held 35 km from Adelaide at Oakbank in the Adelaide Hills. This will be the three day Festival of Cycling, featuring a wide variety of activities associated with the bicycle.

It has been organised by the South Australian Touring Cyclists' Association, sponsored by the Commonwealth Bank and will be officially opened by SA Transport Minister, Gavin Keneally. Events will start on Friday April 22 with a cycle parade in Adelaide (with those taking part being expected then to ride to Oakbank).

On the following day organised bike rides from between 20 to 100 km will be organised. The Melbourne Bicycle Band will take part in a parade of bicycles at Oakbank.

A prize is being offered for the individual cycling the greatest distance to reach the Festival. (A quick look at the map suggests that a cyclist starting from Darwin and heading for Oakbank via National Highway 1 down the WA Coast would be hard to beat.)

April has been declared Bicycle Awareness month in South Australia.



The State division of the National Safety Council of Australia will provide a bicycle safety trail for children.

Entries for the event at the Festival close on April 4. They should go to organiser Evelyn Grey, PO Box 60, Echunga SA 5153.

### Cycling heroes attend centenary

AS PART of the Centenary of Cycling Celebrations, the Australian Cycling Federation held a dinner at the Sheraton Hotel in Brisbane towards the end of February this year. The dinner provided the formal and official focus of the five day calendar of events and according to ACF National Executive Director Martin Whiteley, it was a night to remember.

"It was a night for heroes of the past and present to catch up with each other, as well as helping to celebrate our centenary."

Among the guests at the dinner were past Olympic Champions Lionel Cox, Tony Marchant, Ian Brown, Michael Turtur, Kevin Nicholls, and Dean Woods, as well as past World champions Sid Patterson, Jack Hoobin, Graeme French, Gordon Johnson, Steele Bishop, and Gary Sutton. The champions of the past were joined by the current World Champion Martin Vinicombe, Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist Brett Dutton and many others.

### Safe-n-sound National Schools Cycling Championship announced

WITH THE launch this month of the second Safe-N-Sound National Schools Cycling Championship, the largest junior project undertaken by cycling for 10 years, school children aged 10-16 years are set to win exciting prizes including tee-shirts, Safe-n-sound Sprinter helmets, Puma tracksuits, and a trip to Melbourne for the National championship where they could win a Malvern Star bicycle.

The Championship was reintroduced in 1987 by the Australian Cycling Federation after a break of 8 years, with the aim of promoting the sport of cycling to all Australian school children between the ages of 10 and 16 years.

The Safe-N-Sound Championship, unlike a conventional race, will be conducted on revolutionary, custom-made Turbo Rollers, incorporating advanced digital equipment designed to test the speed and endurance of a cyclist, by simulating actual cycling conditions.

The use of this equipment will ensure that any child can enter the competition, regardless of cycling experience, by eliminating the need for bike handling and race strategy skills, and by testing his or her performance on pure athletic ability. Mr Don Millar, National Marketing Manager for Safe -N-Sound said, "We

are delighted to be sponsoring this event, as our involvement will help to educate school children on cycling safety, which is of utmost importance to Safe-n-Sound".

Contestants can choose from four categories including: boys under 14 years; girls under 14 years; boys under 16 years; and girls under 16 years.

The competition will start in May, 1988, in seven states around Australia. Each state will proceed through school heats, zone finals, and then state finals in 7 states, which will take place during the month of August at large shopping centres around Australia. The winners of the stage finals will be presented with a Safe-n-Sound Sprinter cycling helmet, and a Puma tracksuit.

The 28 state finalists of the Safe-n-Sound National Schools Cycling Championship will fly to Melbourne to take part in the National final. The four national champions will be presented with a Malvern Star bicycle and Safe-n-Sound medallions.

Safe-n-Sound, manufacturer of Australian Standard approved cycling helmets, the Guardian and the Sprinter, are the major sponsors of the Championship, and are assisted by co-sponsors Malvern Star, Puma, Westfield, Australian Airlines and the Australian Sports Commission.



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## Champs and former champs in women's centenary race

A NUMBER of former champion women cyclists will join the younger champions in celebrating the 100th anniversary of the first race in the world for women cyclists by competing in the Centenary (and Australian Bicentennial) race near Sydney on May 14.

Already, the former National all-round track champion of the early 1950's Iris Dixon (she was then Iris Bent) now 56, of Melbourne, and Nellie Tulczn (formerly Nellie Manshanden of Tasmania) now 38, a former road record breaker, are among the early entrants in the historic event. Both started their "comebacks" only a few months ago.

Another notable mature-age entrant is Geraldine Stieda, the former champion Vancouver, Canada rider, who since becoming an Australian and living at Lithgow, NSW has twice won her age division at the World Veteran Cycling Championships in Austria (women's 45-49 years event in 1985, and 50 and over in 1987).

Several top young women including Kathy Watt 20, Oceania Games pursuit Gold Medal winner and 2nd in National title, promising Jacki Barnett, 18 of Portland, Victoria, top Sydney all-rounder Caroline Chapman, 26, have all indicated they will enter for the race.

The Centenary race is actually two events. The first is over 33 kilometres from Camden, (starting at 12.15 p.m. from near Woolworth's Supermarket) to Liverpool, (finishing opposite Woodward Park in Memorial Ave) and the second, following a rest of nearly one hour, over 27 kilometres from Liverpool to Ashfield, (finishing on Hume Highway opposite Ashfield Shopping Mall).

The second race will be "under control" from Liverpool, until the riders regroup for the final Women's Cycling Centenary one kilometre dash to the line at Ashfield.

Most of the approximate \$1,500 cash prize money (minimum) will be allocated to the Camden to Liverpool race. There will also be trophies to the value of around \$800 allocated to the A and B grades in both events, in which prizes will be awarded down to 6th placing (in each grade, in each event.)

"Fancy Pants" of Melbourne, has given \$600 worth of skinsuits to the prize list.

Stars of the first race for women cyclists staged anywhere in the world (at Ashfield on February 25 and 26, 1888) were Dot Morrell (2 wins, 1 third) Ada Grahame, (1 win, 2 seconds, 1 third) and Louise Hardie (3 seconds and 1 third).

The seven-race women's programme of events had two top class professional

races in support, but the women's races were the feature attractions.

The Bicentennial Womens' Centenary races are open to any women riders possessing a licence issued by the Australian Cycling Federation, through the respective State amateur body. The event will be controlled by NSW Cycling Federation officials.

Application has been made to the NSWCF for sanction for a special one-day licence for triathlete women cyclists, but no decision has yet been advised regarding this possibility.

Entries (\$6.00) close with the organiser and race director, Cecil Cripps 19 Stayner Street, Chelsea, Vic 3196 (PH Melbourne 773 1808) on April 20, date of birth, plus details of recent performances (and licence no.) should accompany each entry.

## Adventure travel

BEAUTIFUL SCENERY, high mountain ranges, historic towns, wineries with world class wines, welcoming pubs and a stable climate are a few of the attractions of an area unknown to many.

Encompassing interesting and hospitable towns such as Beechworth, Bright, Mt Beauty, Rutherglen and Yackandandah, North-East Victoria is a very pleasant place to spend a few days. As the region is relatively compact, perhaps the best way to explore it is by bicycle.

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Bogong Jack Adventures, a small, family owned business, specialises in bike trips during autumn and spring. Perhaps best known for their winery weekends and five day "gourmet" Grand Tour of North-East Victoria, they have a full program with trips to suit most interests and fitness levels.

The Beechworth Escape Weekend visits Victoria's best preserved gold town, and in contrast to other weekend trips, there isn't a winery in sight. The five day cycling the Golden North-East sees the brilliant autumn colours at their best. It is better suited to keener bike riders, as is the seven day Cycle Ned Kelly Country. Named after the famous local identity, the trip takes a comprehensive 300 kilometre loop and features some exhilarating riding. For the less energetic, the Ovens Valley Meander takes a beautiful scenic route, which is complimented by its gently undulating nature.

All these trips feature a support vehicle which carries luggage, lunches and flagging cyclists. Nights are spent at historic hotels or occasionally motels. Picnic lunches are enjoyed en route and evening meals are pub style, although the Grand Tour of North-East Victoria features dining at the regions best restaurants.

Action Travel the Canberra based adventure travel agency have just released

their new 'Adventure Canberra' brochure which includes bicycling, ballooning and river rafting trips in and around the Capital.

The Adventure Canberra programme offers trips as short as half a day escorted bicycle tours around Canberra followed by a barbecue (complete with king prawns and fine wines) for \$45.00, to six day rafting trips.

For independent visitors a 24 hour complete bicycle hire package that includes a quality multi-speed bike, Devonshire tea, lunch and maps of the bicycle path network in Canberra costs \$35.00

Robert Fletcher, the manager of Action Travel (which also trades as Tailwinds Bicycle Travel) reckons that there is a whole world of the outdoors to be seen in and around the Nation's capital. "Mention Canberra and everyone thinks of Parliament House and Telecom Tower, but in the bush on Black Mountain with the Telecom Tower on top and vast views of Lake Burley Griffin below, there are miles of excellent trails winding through beautiful native forests just waiting for mountain bikes", he said.

For more sedate cycling the 'Bike to a Barbie' half day cycle tour utilising the extensive cycle path network is an excellent way to discover a different side of the National Capital. For \$45.00 Action Travel will provide a guide, quality

multi-speed bike and at the end of the day cook up an excellent meal accompanied by fine wines at a site beside Lake Burley Griffin.

A weekend of variety, excitement and diversity can be arranged through Action Travel. Take an early morning balloon flight on Saturday followed by champagne brunch. Then in the afternoon join a cycle tour of the city with an evening gourmet barbecue beside Lake Burley Griffin. On Sunday make the most of the Murrumbidgee on a day raft trip. "With accommodation at one of the better Canberra hotels, transfers, professional guides and most meals the cost per person is a surprisingly low \$345"

### **The Great Eastern Australian Rally 1988 or BINSW'S 2nd GEAR, Easter '88**

BICYCLE RALLIES have been held in overseas countries such as Britain (with its York Rally) and Canada (Great Canadian Rally) for some years but in Australia, at least in the modern era, they are unknown. That was until Easter 1987, when the Bicycle Institute of NSW's first Great Eastern Australian Rally was held at Bowral, NSW. Despite rain, several hundred cyclists participated, ensuring a bright future for the event.

The idea of a bicycle rally is simple. Get a whole lot of cyclists camping to-



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gether in an idyllic, scenic location without the need to pack up and move each day. Then give them a program of rides to suit all abilities, using quiet and interesting back roads. They can then ride unladen bicycles taking advantage of the whole day to explore the area and its attractions. A long weekend rally allows a relaxed program for those who desire it and friendships soon blossom in this environment, making it a great social event.

Second GEAR over Easter (1-4 April) at Bowral, will be bigger and better than the first. All entrants will receive a colourful souvenir booklet. There will be an expanded program of

rides from 15 km upwards, suitable for road and mountain bikes. There will be night rides (for those with lights) and entertainment at the campsite. Prizes will be awarded to those cyclists who have cycled the furthest to get to GEAR or who have travelled the furthest by any means. Commemorative cloth patches will also be distributed to entrants until stocks are exhausted.

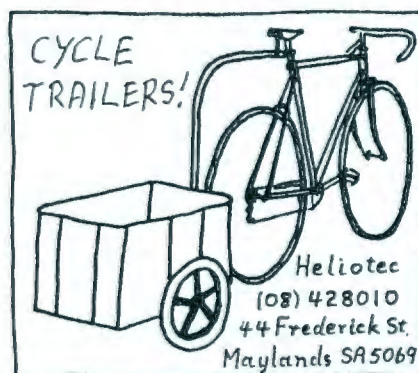
GEAR takes place amid some of the most attractive rural countryside in New South Wales – the Southern Highlands – with a good network of quiet roads and many quaint townships and tourist attractions within an easy pedal. Good public transport serves the area, making

it easily accessible from NSW's major population centres as well as from Canberra and Melbourne.

Entry forms and more information can be obtained from the Bicycle Institute of NSW (02) 212 5628, or in *Push On*, the Institute's journal. Postal entries for the event close on March 18 but, because numbers must be limited, early entry is recommended.

### History rewritten

THEY SAY that history is written by the victor and in this age of the motor vehicle, it is easy to overlook the place of the bicycle in history, particularly Australian history. If you were brought up on a cultural diet of Ronald Reagan B grade movies of covered wagons advancing



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across the prairies, it's easy to slip onto the belief that covered wagons were an important factor in Australia's development. That is development as seen by the European settlers.

Alas, this is not the case, the only wagons were uncovered and driven by huge, hairy, cursing bullockys. For the ordinary people, it was shank's pony, or walking, until the arrival of the bicycle. The bicycle quickly became a major factor in that crucial element of development; the availability of labour.

If Australia grew up upon the sheep's back, its boom years were made possible by the hordes of shearers crossing the country upon bicycles, bringing their blades to the sheds where they

were needed. If you were one of many families offered a selection in the new Riverina area, what better way to go ahead and explore the country than by bicycle. The bicycle was a fast, cheap means of transport for the average Australian. So common and taken for granted that often a couple of words, "by bicycle", are left out as the older generation passes on the family's history.

**BICYCLE AUSTRALIA IN 88** is an event to celebrate the role of the bicycle in the everyday history of Australia. It will bring groups of riders back into the countryside of Australia right around the continent, including Tasmania. Bicycle riders will once again explore the

countryside that their early forbears helped to mould into what it is today.

It will be a clear reminder that the bicycle has been everywhere before, not just along the rural back roads through the sheep country, but up Cape York and across the Nullarbor Plains as well.

If you would like to join in, why not organise a group of friends or members of your club, to make a major bicycle ride during the second half of 1988. The event is being coordinated by Bicycle Australia, the national bicycle touring association, who also offer some organised groups for self contained and vehicle supported riders. Contact details can be found in the events calendar.

Cape York in June 88 is the first route to be explored, then it is southward in July, along the Barrier Reef and down the Capricornia Trail. The organised rides will continue around the country to finish with a crossing of the Nullarbor in November, followed by an exploration of the south west of Western Australia to finish in Perth.

Of course, you are welcome to make up your own ride to where ever you wish to go, but registering with Bicycle Australia, by membership, will ensure you obtain discounts on travel and accommodation. Plus, the expert tourers there will be able to assist you in planning your route and itinerary.

Will you be part of the re-writing of the bicycle history of Australia?

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# THE BIKE

*Fat tyre feature*

*The mountain bike comes of age*

Illustration by Andrew Benth



**T**HIS SUMMER the mountain bike outsold all other types of bicycles in Australia. What's more it seems that the advent of this amazing machine has altered the cycling scene in Oz forever. Once cycling was considered to be seasonal now riders are jumping onto their machines and heading bush all through the year.

It is now six years since the first prototypes started appearing in the country imported from Japan and designed by Americans. The Americans still design the best bikes but the Taiwanese are challenging the Japanese for bike building supremacy. The Taiwanese build the most bikes but the best bikes and almost all the componentry is still Japanese.

The mountain bike of 1988 is a lot different to the machine of 1982. Gone are the ultra laid-back frame angles (68 and 69 degrees), absurdly long chain stays, make shift gear changers and BMX cast offs. The mature mountain bike design of today favours more upright angles for the seat tube (73 or 72 degrees) and a 71 degree head tube.

Almost all the new bikes brought into the country are fitted with indexed gear shifting mechanisms. Even the cheaper models have to have index gears to stay in the market and thankfully steel rims have all but disappeared from the scene.

Those dreadful extra long reach caliper brakes are still being fitted to some of the cheapies but these are becoming a rarity too because buyers are becoming aware that for fat-tyred bikes only proper frame mounting cantilever brakes will do.

This year there are a couple of new additions to the growing list of technological improvements: the Browning electric front shifting system and Shimano's front SIS changer and

lever. The Browning is a new approach to front shifting and has been in use in the USA for almost a year now. It uses its own triple chainwheel set with round rings that split and shift sideways to pick up the chain smoothly and efficiently. The device is powered by batteries and will make its first Australian appearance fitted to Diamond Back's top of the line model the Axis (selling at around the three grand mark). Shimano Exage front SIS shifters are also fitted to Diamond Back's Ascent EX model.

Aluminum frames should make a modest appearance this year. A few Canondales have already been imported by enthusiasts and manufacturers like Diamond Back plan to bring in a few of this type of bike later in the season. Their Arrival model is heliarc-welded and made of 7000 series aluminum alloy.

As far as the season goes the advent of the mountain bike has shaken things up so much in Oz that it is hard to say where our season starts and where it now begins. Mountain bikes have become popular in winter. In fact some enthusiasts prefer to ride in winter. Retailers dealing mainly in mountain bikes say that their busiest season is after Christmas and not before.

There is now a strong body of opinion which suggests that the mountain bike season starts on January 1. If that's the case then it probably ends on the December 31 following. Maybe some of the distributors will wake up to this fact and release their mountain bike ranges in late summer instead of late winter as is the present custom.

In six short years the mountain bike has changed the Aussie cycling scene so much that we may never be the same again. So if it hasn't hit you yet; isn't it time you got that fat-tyred feeling?



# WHAT MAKES A MOUNTAIN BIKE

by WARREN SALOMON

*Fat-tyre feature*

*Almost every thing you ever wanted to know about  
fat-tyred bikes.*

Handlebars now have high riser stems to compensate for the smaller and more rigid frame. Make sure that you adjust the bars them selves for the most comfortable riding position.





# What's a mountain bike?

**T**HE IDEAL bike for Australian conditions. It's comfortable to ride, easy to operate and will go just about anywhere you care to ride it. At the moment it's the most popular type of bike in the shops and has a bright future in this country.

**Okay then, how is a mountain bike different from say a ten-speed?**

The most obvious difference is the fat tyres but there are others. Mountain bikes use 26 inch rims and tyres of differing widths depending on the type of terrain the bike owner is prepared for. The bikes usually have more laid back frame angles to give a comfortable ride. Typically skinny tyred road bikes have frame angles around 73 degrees whereas the MTB's use 71 or less. The larger the frame angles the more upright the frame and this gives a bike which takes corners very tightly. Racing bikes are built this way and these machines also have much shorter wheelbases than their fat-tyred counterparts.

In the early days (like the computer world the old days of mountain biking are barely eight years ago) frame angles were as soft as 68 degrees and bikes had enormous wheel bases with gigantic rear chainstays. This type of frame design favoured downhill racing. So, when the bikes started to be raced on cross-country trails and by non-competitors on suburban streets, the newer users found the ultra stretched MTB's too sluggish to ride with any precision.

The most favoured design today is only a step removed from the long distance touring bike designs favoured in Europe. However the equipment available to mountain bike users is much better than tourers ever had in the past.

**What about the equipment? What sets a mountain bike apart from other machines?**

Lets look at each area in turn:

## Handlebars

**CURRENT DESIGNS** favour separate stem and bars. This arrangement allows maximum flexibility with the riding position. It is important to be able to adjust the bars to give the best riding position. Smaller size bikes should have stems with a shorter reach and rise. Often the front brake cable stop is built into the

**This participant in last years National Titles, held near Brisbane, is powering uphill on a custom built bike built by the Kitchen brothers of St Ives, Sydney. Note the extra long seat pillar and the forward crouching position of the rider. This bike also has a long reach chrome moly handlebar stem**







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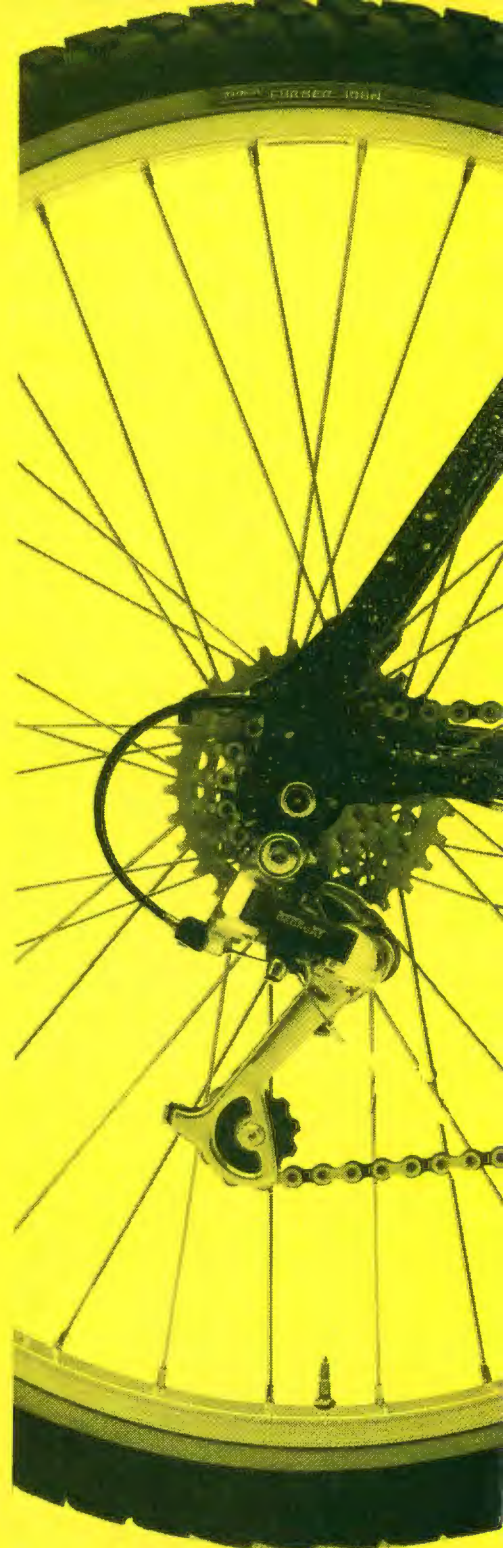


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Indexed gears are all the rage these days. Just flick the lever and derailleurs like this Shimano Deore combo 'click' quickly into position. The shark fin is to keep the chain from jamming in between the tyre and the stay.

stem and on the new Californian designs a small nylon wheel acts as a pivot point for the cable directly over the front brake assembly.

Handlebars come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. It is reasonably simple to change over your handlebars if you find that they are the wrong shape. In city conditions wide bars can be a hindrance in traffic. Alloy or steel bars can be eas-





Strong alloy rims are the only type to consider. Steel is for toddlers. Tyres – the mind boggles. There is a huge variety of tyres for just about any kind of surface condition. The experts try 'em all and the shops don't know what to stock and which to sell. Rule of thumb: the chunkiness of the tread should match the aggregate size of the road/trail surface; bitumen – bald; stones and rock – coarse knobby; sand herring bone. Experiment!

Shimano Biopace chainrings are common on most mountain bikes. The computer designed shape smooths out the piston action surges of your leg movement. A crank set with removable rings allows you to experiment with different ratios – if you can buy spare rings. Check first.

## Gears

MOUNTAIN BIKES true their name are geared for hilly territory. But that doesn't mean you have to live on top of a mountain to appreciate wide-range smooth shifting gears. The world is not flat and even in places like Melbourne and Adelaide there are a few short steep mountain-ettes to test your leg muscle power. Hop off the bitumen and you will need low, low gears to get through rough and sandy patches and in the wet low gears can be essential if you want to maintain a steady forward momentum.

Most MTB's are equipped with eighteen speed gearing (six speed rear freewheel/triple front chainwheels) controlled from shifting levers located conveniently on the handlebars close to your normal hand position. No other bike has this superior arrangement.

This season's mountain bikes are fitted with indexed 'click' stop shifting mechanisms. Now, for once, you can shift into gear with some degree of certainty. The secret of indexed gearing is in the shifting lever. Inside is a little mechanism that allows the lever arm to move only between six preset positions. Each position corresponds with a cog on the rear freewheel. When the lever is moved and 'clicks' into the next indexed gear position it shifts the rear derailleur and chain over to line up with the next cog.

With indexed gears shifting becomes easy. It all clicks.

## Brakes

THE COMBINATION of bigger tyres and cantilever brakes gives the mountain bike the best, most efficient stop-

ping system of all the pedal-powered two-wheelers. Cantilever brakes are mounted onto pivots welded directly to the frame for extra strength and rigidity. They use heavy duty cables and strong comfortable brake levers. In the early days, before the Japanese component makers began to manufacture brake levers especially for the MTB, bike builders would often use motorbike lever parts. The names to look for in high quality brakes are: Shimano, SunTour and Dia Compe.

The latest and most expensive models have their rear brakes fitted under the chain stays. The chain stays offer rigidity but there is also an aesthetic reason for the recent preference for this type of brake: because the cable is routed via the down tube the top tube is kept clean and clear of any lugs and guides. However, there is a body of opinion in mountain bike circles which believes that the rear brake mounted in this position offers no great advantage and that eventually this 'fad' will disappear.

Mountain bikes have brake pads which are generally longer and wider than road bikes and give superior braking capacity in both wet and dry conditions.



# SHOGUN Prairie Breaker TEAM ISSUE

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ily shortened 'in situ' with the help of a trusty hack saw.

**Grips:** Shimano, who also make fishing rods, are now finding in the US MTB scene that there is a market for their rod grips. Grips should be firm but not so they do not absorb the road shock. Gloves are recommended for use in the wilds as they not only absorb shock but protect the knuckles and fingers from abrasions.

## Wheels

Though most mountain bike rims are 26x1.75 inches (26" diameter x 1.75" width) tyres can vary according to use. For instance for city riding many riders prefer 1.9" slicks (smooth tread) for better grip and cornering performance. This type of tyre has slightly more drag than a conventional road tread tyre so for fast use on bitumen roads and general touring use a raised centre tread street tyre 1.5, 1.75 or 1.9 might be preferred. Off road tyres are available in a bewildering range of sizes and tread patterns. Study the advertising pages of this magazine and you will see but a few.

Bulky tyres (2.125 or 2.2) are still preferred for off road riding though the cross country competitors often prefer the lighter and narrower for all out speed. Knobby treads are essential for good grip in rocky conditions while a flatter profile tyre is more useful on sand, smooth sandstone and granite.

Enthusiasts often have a second set of wheels fitted with different tyres for differing conditions. For competitors this is a must.

## Saddles

MTB's have a more upright seating position and that means that more weight is placed on the saddle. Under these circumstances a poor or misshapen saddle can cause much pain and suffering. The latest generation of saddles with shock absorbing gel inserts (like the Avocet Gelflex) are just the thing for fat tyred fanatics; casual or committed. Women generally need wider saddles and the top manufacturers have versions made to fit the female anatomy.





# BUYING A MOUNTAIN BIKE: SOME GOOD ADVICE

*Fat tyre feature*

by WARREN SALOMON

We've been riding mountain bikes and talking to the riders since the first set of fat wheels went on sale here in Oz. Over the years we've offered sound advice to mountain bike buyers. Here's the latest version:

## FRAME SIZE

MOUNTAIN BIKE frames are smaller than road bikes. A lot of people and some bicycle industry personnel still can't get this vital fact through their thick skulls. With the biggest sales of any type of bike it is still very difficult to buy small-framed MTBs. If you are shorter than the average you may even need a 24 inch wheeled bike. Bikes like this

fitted out with decent equipment are like hens teeth at present.

Any one who tries to put you onto a MTB with a similar frame size to your road bike (which probably has a frame size that's too large anyway) is trying to con you. Don't despair there are lots and lots of good dealers out there who know their stuff. If you hit a lemon take your custom elsewhere. Oh yes, stay well clear of supermarkets and department stores. Their bikes are low quality and they don't have the knowledgeable staff to handle your enquiries.

To correctly size your mountain bike you should straddle the frame in your normal riding shoes. You should have **at least** 40 mm clearance between the top tube and your crotch. A distance of between 4 and 7 centimetres is advisable. If in doubt go for a smaller frame size — this is the general trend nowadays for all classes of bike.

When buying a new bike the frame is the most important component to consider. It's easy to upgrade to say, better quality pedals, but not as simple to swap a frame. A good lightweight frame can also dramatically improve the overall feel and performance of the machine.

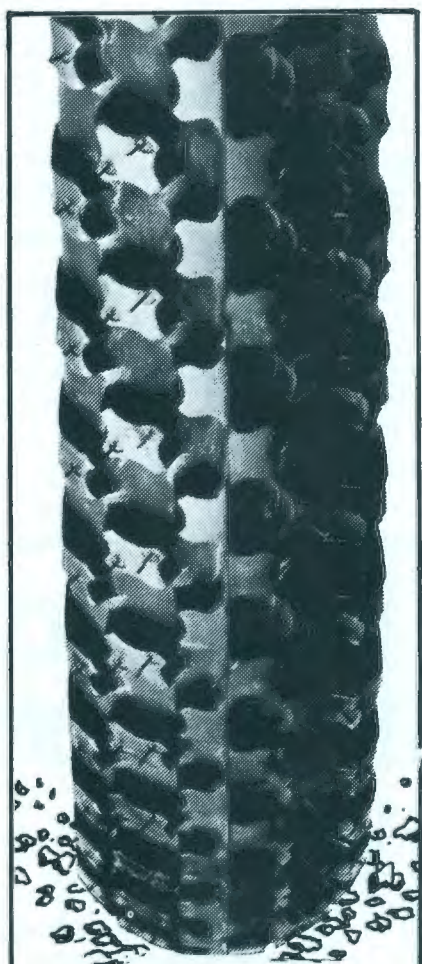
All mountain bike frames use oversize tubing and are either lugless or use a lugged construction. With modern Tungsten Inert Gas (TIG) welding techniques lugless frames can now be made very strong. The larger tube diameter adds to the rigidity of all frame types.

Chrome molybdenum steel is the favoured tubing type used on most medium to top-quality machines. Chrome moly as it is often called is an alloy of steel and is much lighter and stronger than equivalent thickness plain steel tubing. Often only the main tubes will be chrome moly with the chain and seat stays high tensile steel. This adds slightly to the weight.

Aluminum mountain bike frames are now making their appearance in the USA and Europe and will probably be available here in small numbers this season. This type of frame material uses an even larger oversize diameter tubing for greater strength. They are generally much stiffer than steel or steel alloy frames and the metal tends to absorb more of the road shock. Aluminum frames are not made in this country so you can expect to pay the proverbial 'arm and a leg' if you want to be one of the few people in the country to own and ride one this year.

## COMPONENTRY

THE MOST popular chainwheel set used is the alloy triple type with removable rings. Standard crank lengths (170mm) are preferred as there is no proven advantage from using longer length cranks except in the case of very long-legged riders.



## THE STRONG SILENT TYPE

Off the mountainside and onto the asphalt. Other off-road tyres have isolated lugs positioned in the centre of the tread at any speed you can feel the tyres rumble. The Richley Quad 1.9 doesn't rumble because the lugs are offset — not in the centre. The crown of the Quad is an endlessly quiet plateau. The lug pattern offers better grip in loose dirt but for the first time trips to and from the wilderness are quiet and smooth.

Avocet Richley Quad 1.9's are available through specialist bicycle dealers across the country.



Engineering for Cyclists



photography by Emilio Pannaci



Some the top-of-the-range bikes are fitted with Shimano Biopace chainrings. This type chainring is computer designed to allow for a smoother pedaling action. They are very good for long distance rides and on long hill climbs. The ring shape is neither oval nor round and is close to egg-shaped. The shape of the smaller rings is slightly different to that of the larger sizes.

Bikes in the lower price bracket often use cheaper cotterless cranks with steel rings. Replacement rings for alloy removable types are generally available through the specialist dealer network either off the shelf or on order.

The most important development in mountain bike componentry is the posi-

tive shifting (indexed) gear systems. Both Shimano and SunTour have their own versions.

Every rider has his or her unique reaction to bike saddles and often a specialist dealer will gladly substitute different types within a given price range. As your seating position for mountain bike riding is more upright it is essential that you try before you buy. Some saddles are decidedly more comfortable than others. The upright riding position of a mountain bike often requires a wider and softer saddle both for women and men. On long trips a saddle pad such as the Spenco type is recommended. Avocet now have a range of saddles with Spenco gel inserted into the

padding and this type of saddle would be good for general purpose riding.

Bikes in the mid to higher-price categories have alloy seat pillars and quick release seat post clamps. Due to the shorter frame size a mountain bike will need a much longer seat pillar than a road bike. Regardless of whether a steel or alloy pillar is used make sure that it is long enough to allow you to sit squarely on the saddle with your heel on the pedal at the bottom of its stroke.

## WHEELS

THE TYPE of wheel used on a bike can greatly effect its overall weight and performance. Chrome plated steel wheels found on the lower-priced models are the heaviest and perform poorly in wet weather compared to alloy wheels. They do have the advantage of being more resistant to damage and can often be easily beashed back into shape. Wet weather braking performance can be improved by fitting brake pads with leather inserts.

Mountain bikes are all fitted with 26 inch diameter rims. Rim width can vary from between 18 and 32 mm though all types and sizes of 26" tyre can be fitted with ease. Tyre width varies from the relatively skinny 1.4 racing type to the big beefy 2.125 knobby. Narrower tyres usually require greater tyre pressures and give a harder ride.

Quick release hubs are now making their appearance on the front wheels of some MTBs but oversized bolt-up types are still the most common and preferred. Stiffer wheels with three cross spoke-pattern and high flange hubs are preferred.

## HOW MUCH DO THEY COST?

THERE ARE now four broad categories which generally represent a different level of quality and class of componentry used. They are as follows:

**Up to \$400** – a basic beginners bike. Usually steel components are used throughout and though the finish is generally good these bikes are the heavyweights;

**\$400 to \$600** – there is fierce competition in this price range. This category offers good quality (mostly alloy) equipment and a basic lightweight frame. Nothing real fancy though;

**\$600 to \$1000** – bikes in this high quality range offer the lightweight frames and high quality alloy componentry (positive shifting gears are a must for these bikes).

**Over \$1000** – so far there are only a few models competing for top of the range honours. You expect to get the best in this category and prices can go as high as \$3000. Be careful. With high quality componentry you pay a lot more to get the best.

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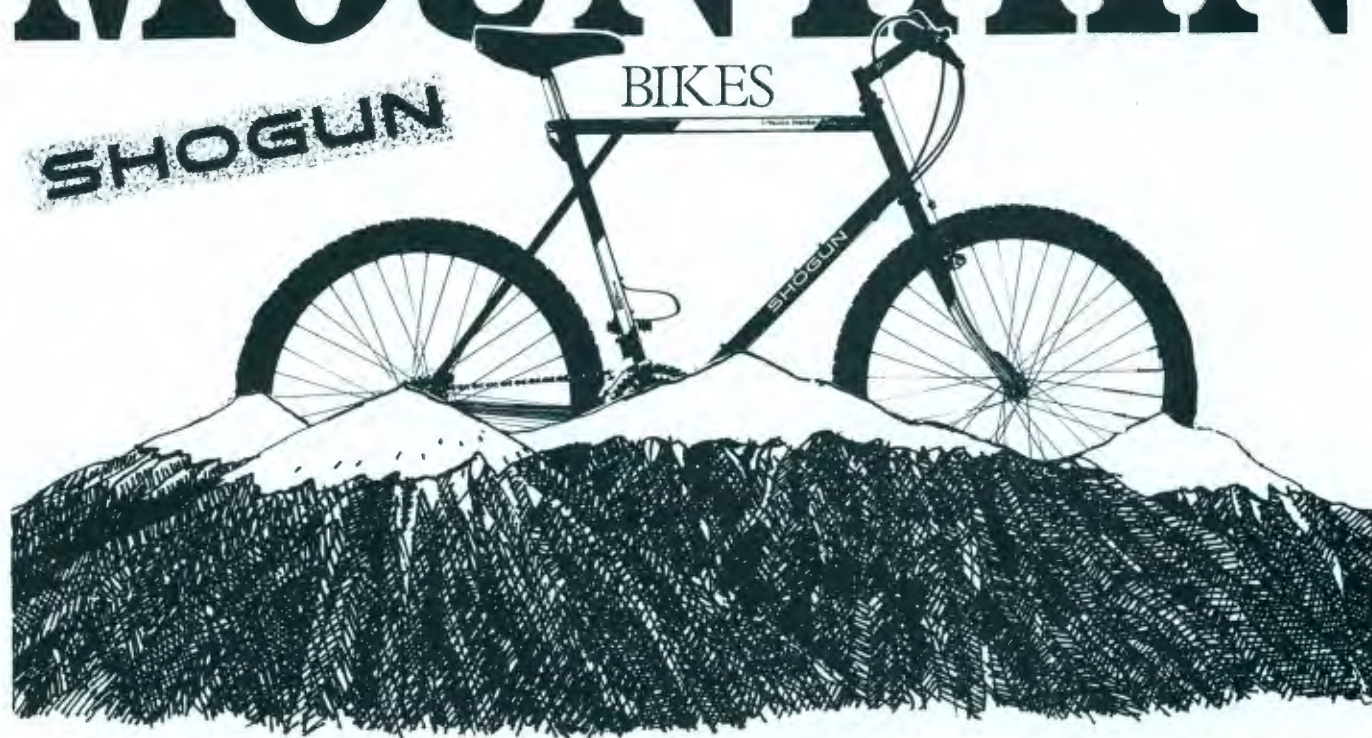
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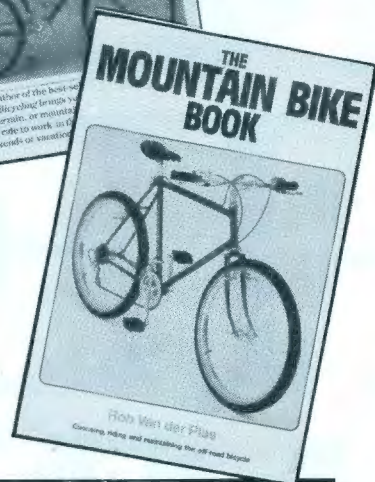
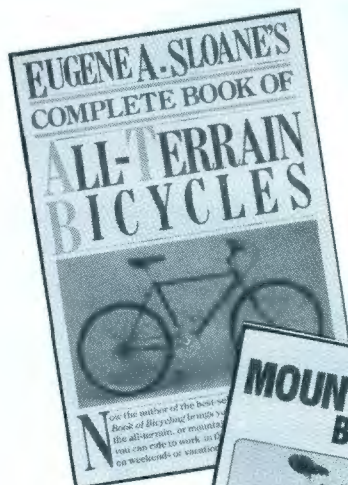
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### Book reviews

by Warren Salomon

Two new books for mountain bikers are now available in Oz. Eugene Sloane's *Complete Book of All-Terrain Bicycles* is a new book from an American author and covers the bike and its use from maintenance through to riding technique. It follows the same compendium format as his previous books on ten-speed type bikes.

Rob Van der Plas in his *Mountain Bike Book* is a little closer to the scene of the action and his chapter on the history and development of the MTB is pleasant and romantic.

The authors attempt to cover bike equipment and maintenance but are hampered by the recent rapid developments in MTB technology. Eugene Sloane persists with his tedious habit of reviewing a host of American machines (at least two years out of date by now) and slips in a few old piccies with his other books. All the same the Sloane book is stronger on maintenance but Van der Plas is better stocked with useful and relevant information.

Both books are dated and that makes me think that MTB's are a lot like computers. Last years model looks like a relic from the past. If I were writing the Ultimate Mountain Bike Book I'd still wait a few years as the dust doesn't look like settling until then.

The Ultimate Mountain Bike Book (it has to have a BIG title) would need to have lots of big colour pics (neither of these do) and would be almost entirely pictures and captions. Mountain bikers don't want to read about their sport; they want quick access info so they can get out and do their sport. Oh yes the pages would have to be wipe-clean plastic so the grease and dirt would come off easy.

Both books are distributed through out the bicycle industry by Outdoor Agencies, Sydney.

# The mountain bike scene in Oz

## Fat tyre feature

Organised events are still thin on the ground

**A**FTER FOUR YEARS and three National Championships the sport of mountain biking is still starved for events. There are now a number of clubs around the country organising regular rides and races for their members but apart from the odd public race (usually once a year for each club) the sport is still struggling to give its supporters and participants regular competition.

The sport is in desperate need of a promoter who will organise a series of events based on the three eastern capital cities and Canberra which would provide a proper build up for a National Title event.

In January a group of mountain bike enthusiasts from all over Australia met in Sydney and formed a steering committee which will eventually become the race sanctioning mountain bike body: the Australian Mountain Bike Association - AMBA.

The committee's founding members are Martin Whiteley (President), Dean Gibson (Vice President/Treasurer and Mike Roberts (Secretary). The group has agreed to a constitution modelled on the Australian Amateur Cycling Federation's and is seeking incorporation under the ACT Associations Incorporation Act.

The inaugural meeting discussed many issues pertinent to mountain bikers and resolved that AMBA would, among other things: arrange insurance for competitors, race organisers/promoters and affiliated clubs; provide guidelines to its members regarding the usage of the various parks and land whether it be for training, recreation or competition; establish and maintain good relations with the various authorities controlling the usage of these lands.

Unlike NORBA the national mountain bike body in the USA AMBA will not be enforcing compulsory membership for race entries. Whiteley feels that the services AMBA will offer to mountain bikers will in the long term provide sufficient incentive for membership.

The inaugural AMBA annual general meeting is expected to take place within the next few months. For information contact the Secretary: Mike Roberts, AMBA, PO Box 325, Chermide QLD 4032. (07) 359 1244.

## Club contacts

THIS LIST is growing all the time. If you are starting a club please write to us so we can put yours on it. If you publish a newsletter we would like to swap copies for *Freewheeling* on a regular basis. Please get your secretary to drop our Publisher a line so we can enter you on our mailing list.

**Victoria** The Fat-Tyre Flyers club operates out of Melbourne. The club organises its own calendar of events covering the complete spectrum of fat-tyre riding from touring to racing. Their big annual event is the Fat-Tyre Classic (see Calendar in back of this issue for dates) which includes a trials course plus a race. You can contact the club at PO Box 137 Carlton Nth VIC 3054 or by phoning (03) 560 0969 AH.

The Essendon Mountain Bicycle Touring Club aims to cater to the non-competitive side of the sport. They offer members rides off-road around Melbourne as well as the mountains country further afield. You can contact them by phoning Vince Atkin on (03) 337 1379 or Bill McHardy on (03) 375 1861. Both are home numbers.

**New South Wales** The Hunter Valley Mountain Bike Club is based in the Newcastle region. The club's big annual event is the Winter Classic held at Pater-son in late winter. Contact: Bob Jones (049) 38 5380 or Ken Wells (049) 43 1271 or Bruce Richards (049) 32 7820.

The North Shore Knobbys is a club catering for off-road racing, trials and touring enthusiasts on Sydney's north side. John Kitchen is the club contact and you can reach him on (02) 449 8289 or (02) 451 6350.

The Bicycle Institute of NSW has a section within its organisation called the Back Road Cyclists which organises rides and activities for its fat-tyre enthusiasts. The group's contact is Russell Moore and you can contact him on (02) 608 1125.

**Queensland** A Brisbane mountain bike club is currently being formed. For details contact Mike Roberts (07) 359 1244.

**South Australia** A special interest group attached to the rapidly expanding South Australian Touring Cyclist's Association has been formed in Adelaide. Interested bikers should contact Peter Heal on (08) 263 3605 or John Hocking (08) 344 7025. The club's address is GPO Box 1508, Adelaide SA 5001.

**West Australia** The Cycle Touring Association of West Australia is your best contact point for mountain biking in the West. They organise all sorts of events and can be contacted on (09) 330 3659.

If you live outside one of these areas you could consider contacting AMBA for information on how to set up a club and tie in with other groups.





## Werner's Winning Way

### *Fat tyre feature*

*Australia's current mountain bike race champ Werner Wholrab's pre race training program.*

WHEN PREPARING for a race I use this training program for four weeks prior to the event. A week runs like this:

**Monday:** Rest

**Tuesday:** Half an hour on my road bike (skinny tyres) with 3 sprints.

**Wednesday:** One hour on the road bike at a medium pace with no sprints.

**Thursday:** Ride the mountain bike today with half an hour on the road (sealed surface) and one hour off-road (dirt).

**Friday:** Half an hour on the road bike medium pace.

**Saturday:** Rollers or exercise bike for half an hour total: during this time I keep changing my pace between hard effort and easy.

**Sunday:** Ride the mountain bike today for two 2 hours mostly off-road.

Two days before the event I have a complete rest. The day before I prefer to have a light warm up ride (on the course if possible).

I prefer to treat mountain bike racing similar to a time trial event. I try to ignore riders near me because their speed in different sections will not be the same as mine eg another rider may be faster than me on the down hill but I may be stronger up hill – therefore it should even out.

I am always prepared to work hard from start to finish.

### Suggested riding tips for beginners

Mountain bike riding and racing is not a kamikaze style sport. The most successful riders are the cautious riders. You should always slow down before you enter the corner. Plan ahead on downhills and frequently look at the track up ahead not just directly in front of the bike.

When you are climbing a hill you should start easy and increase your effort toward the top of the hill.

Wear a good hard shell helmet not a hair net type.

Drink lots of plain water.

Mountain bike racing speeds are possibly slower than you think. Come out and give it a try and remember the top rides are not unbeatable.



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Engineering for Cyclists



# WHAT'S HOT

## *Fat-tyre feature*

by WARREN SALOMON

### *Mountain bike equipment for 1988*

#### Shimano's Exage componentry

IS BICYCLE touring dead? Shimano doesn't think so; it simply recognises that the mountain bike has come on so strongly that it has swamped the whole recreational scene and changed it forever. Nowadays most touring is done on fat wheels but there are still the discriminating users who know that on sealed roads the standard touring bike is still supreme.

To cater to the changed post-MTB world Shimano has developed its Exage system of components in three distinctive ranges. Exage Sport is designed for "sports-touring" for people who like to stretch their legs on sealed roads with a faster machine beneath them.

Exage Mountain and Exage Trail are the off-road grupos and are priced under the prestige Deore XT group so they are bound to be popular sellers.

The Exage Mountain and Trail gear levers bolt onto the brake levers. The brake lever arms are made of a resin compound. Like the cantilever brake arms a lot of the Exage components use a mixture of steel and resin (injection moulded plastic) to combine strength and good looks.

Exage gears have SIS on both rear and front derailleurs. Front indexed gears are a first for Shimano and with the Exage SIS you will not even have to readjust the front changer every time you shift the rear gears. The three grupos all have steel Biopace chainrings



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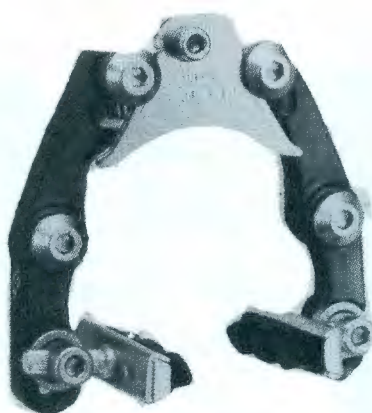
finished with metallic grey paint work.

One of Shimano's major Australian distributors the Sydney based company, Bicycles Incorporated, is looking forward to the new generation of mountain bike and recreational components. Their manager Mr John Bazzano believes that the Exage and Shimano's other new ranges, Sante and 600 Ultegra for sports machines will revolutionise the bicycle equipment scene. Already his company is hard pressed keeping up with the demand for Shimano's high quality Deore mountain bike componentry and expects that the Exage range will be even more popular.

#### SunTour XCD 6000

SUNTOUR'S LATEST offering to the fat-tyre gear freaks is their up-market addition to the XC range of mountain bike componentry. The XCD ensemble consists of cranks, pedals, brakes, levers, derailleurs and a long seat post. The chain wheel set has round outer chain rings for smoother spinning at higher speeds and out- of-round inner ring for power climbing.

The rear derailleur has improved geometry designed to deprive the Shimano supporters of their superior demeanour. The front derailleur has a specially shaped inner cage plate to shift the chain smoothly no matter what ring it is on.



SunTour's famous Power Cam brakes now have an external tension spring which provides hassle free brake centering. The spring is contained in a rubber accordion type cover to keep out dirt and grit. Especially useful when mounting this brake under the chainstays. The 1988 Power Cam has a larger cam plate with a shorter travel distance for use on short chainstays.

The XCD levers combine the braking and gear shifting functions into one neat unit. The lever arms have a reach adjustment (good for people with smaller hands) and the gear shift levers also have an adjustment for hand size and operating position preference.

#### Scarpa boots

ITALY'S BEST footwear manufacturer, long renowned for its top- notch walking



boots has entered the mountain bike market with a leather/nylon boot designed especially for the sport. The 24603 Pat Morrow (who is he/she?) boot comes in two colour schemes (red/yellow, magenta/blue) and has a rubber sole designed for mountain bike type pedals. The rugged boot has a full lace up front with Scarpa's metal eyelets for quick and easy tightening. So far we have only seen the coloured piccies but as soon as we can get hold of a pair we will let our fat-tyre fanatics know how they perform. Scarpa is distributed in Oz by Outdoor Agencies a member of the Paddy Pallin group of companies.

# family head gear



Bike riding is great family fun ... and you will look smart and be smart if you wear a Rosebank Stackhat\* Bicycle Safety Helmet. It's the best head protection you can buy and many Australians testify they owe their lives to their Stackhat.

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Rosebank Stackhat, the Aussie Life Preserver, available in a full range of sizes, Junior and Senior Models, for both Children and Adults. It is now available in a Snazzy Pink, a Reflective Black for your safety, in addition to the ever popular Brilliant White and Safety Yellow.

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(MANAGER)

A BICYCLE IS ONLY AS GOOD AS IT IS ASSEMBLED



The hinged section of the electronically controlled chain wheels are the key to the Browning's effortless shifting.

### Up-market sell out

WITH VERY little competition for the top end of the market the bike that graced the cover of our last mountain bike feature issue (May/June 87), the Shogun Prairie Breaker Team Issue has been a sell out even before it arrived in the country. Shogun's Oz distributors have reported that their February shipment was pre sold before it reached the docks in Japan.

Since then they have re-ordered but other dealers have rushed to become involved and at last report the new shipment too was selling fast. One Sydney shop has taken firm orders on all its or-

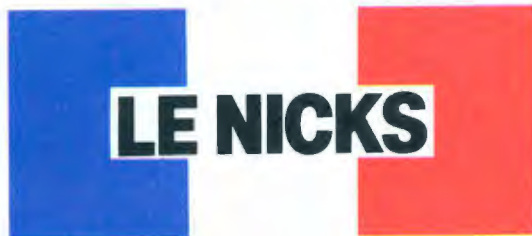
dered stock and additional potential purchasers will have to scour the town for dealers with unsold stock.

The Prairie Breaker Team Issue sells for around the \$1300 mark (its cousin the Prairie Breaker Pro is a bit cheaper at around \$1000).

The only other makers with bikes in this section of the market is Repco (which brought in a limited number of the Fisher Procaliber last year) and Apollo with its Cougar selling for around the \$1170 mark.

All of these bikes are fully Japanese equipped and sport the very best componentry. We have just seen Fisher USA's latest catalogue and looks like Repco can't go wrong if it brings in the 88 Procaliber. It's got Tange Prestige tubing, Deore XT brakes and gears and the famous Araya RM20 hard anodised rims. Neat.

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GOLD COAST, Miami Cycles  
IPSWICH, Johnsons Cycles  
MAROOCHYDORE, Cycle World  
TOOWOOMBA, Olsens Cycles

#### Victoria

DANDENONG, Bicycle Superstore  
FRANKSTON, Frankston Cycles  
GEELONG, De Grandi Cycles  
WARNAMBOOL, De Grandi Cycles

#### ACT

BELCONNEN, Big B Bicycles  
PHILLIP, Big B Bicycles

#### New South Wales

GOSFORD, Rod Martin Cycles  
MAITLAND, Hadley Cycles  
NEWCASTLE, Hadley Cycles  
PORT MACQUARIE, Port Push Bikes  
SYDNEY, Blacktown Cycles  
Chatswood Cycles  
Albion Cycles  
Ron Bates Cycles  
TAMWORTH, Southside Cycles  
TAREE, Manning Valley Cycles  
WOLLONGONG, Discount Bikes

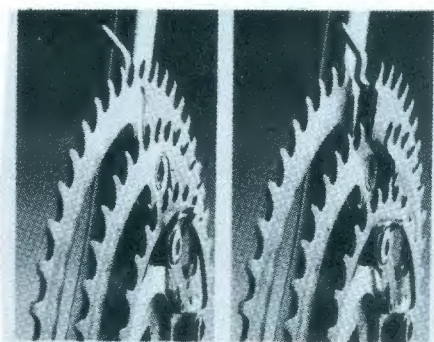
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For the fat-tyre fanatic with a fistful of hundred dollar bills and a yearning to be the *only* one on the block with the *latest* machine Diamond Back is importing the machine for you.

Their top of the range bike is the Ascent equipped with a Browning electric front gear changer system, Tange Prestige tubing, a stunning smoke/lilac paint job and all the usual top of the range bells and whistles. This cool mover sells for around the \$3000 mark and at that price you won't expect to run into someone else on *your* bike at your local bike shop.

Stunning paint work is also a feature of the aluminum tubed Arrival which has Shimano Deore XT everything and presta valves on the tyres for extra snob appeal. The black and yellow speckled paint scheme will be the envy of the MTB scene and will drive many local frame painters to suicide as they try to copy the mass of runs and dribbles.

#### Custom built

BEFORE LEAVING the world of the *new* and the *latest* we thought we should have a chat to a couple of Australia's top custom builders. As in the home of Mountain biking, the USA, it's the custom builder who is the innovator and sparks off the important trends.

Melbourne's biggest custom builder is Hillman Cycles a family business which prefers to sell its custom made bikes than mass produced factory machines. Their bikes are made from frames built by their own frame builder or those imported from Japan or Taiwan.

According to Alan Hill their biggest seller is their machine in the \$1100 price bracket. Custom building, according to Alan offers the buyer a lot of flexibility as the equipment can often be varied in the construction stage to suit personal needs.

Alan Hill also takes a personal interest in mountain biking and is insistent that it's always been the custom builders who have provided much of the innovation that powers the sport. In Alan's current view he sees the fashion of mounting the rear brake under the chain stays as being more of a fad than an improvement. He says that his favourite

brake set, the Deore XT cantilever, works best in the usual position above the wheel on the seat stays and that the current generation of U type brakes give a less-positive, even spongy response.

When Alan selects equipment for his bikes he always considers back up spares. He believes that one of the reasons for Hillman's success as a custom builder is the spare parts back up they are able to provide. He also believes that the current trend of changing not only bike models but whole component ranges every year backfires on the industry because customers expect to be able to get spare parts for things mechanical when equipment wears out or is broken.

Sydney's busiest mountain bike custom builder, St Ives Bicycle Centre, is run by the Kitchen brothers John and David. Their business has already established a sound reputation in Australia's largest city and specialise in everything to do with mountain bikes.

John Kitchen builds high quality frames to order and most of their custom building business is built upon this service. John's frames have been ridden to victory by Australia's top rider, Werner Wohlrab, on several occasions. Most of John's frames are specified by the customer but his Fatraker designs are his own and are the cutting edge in Australian mountain bike world.



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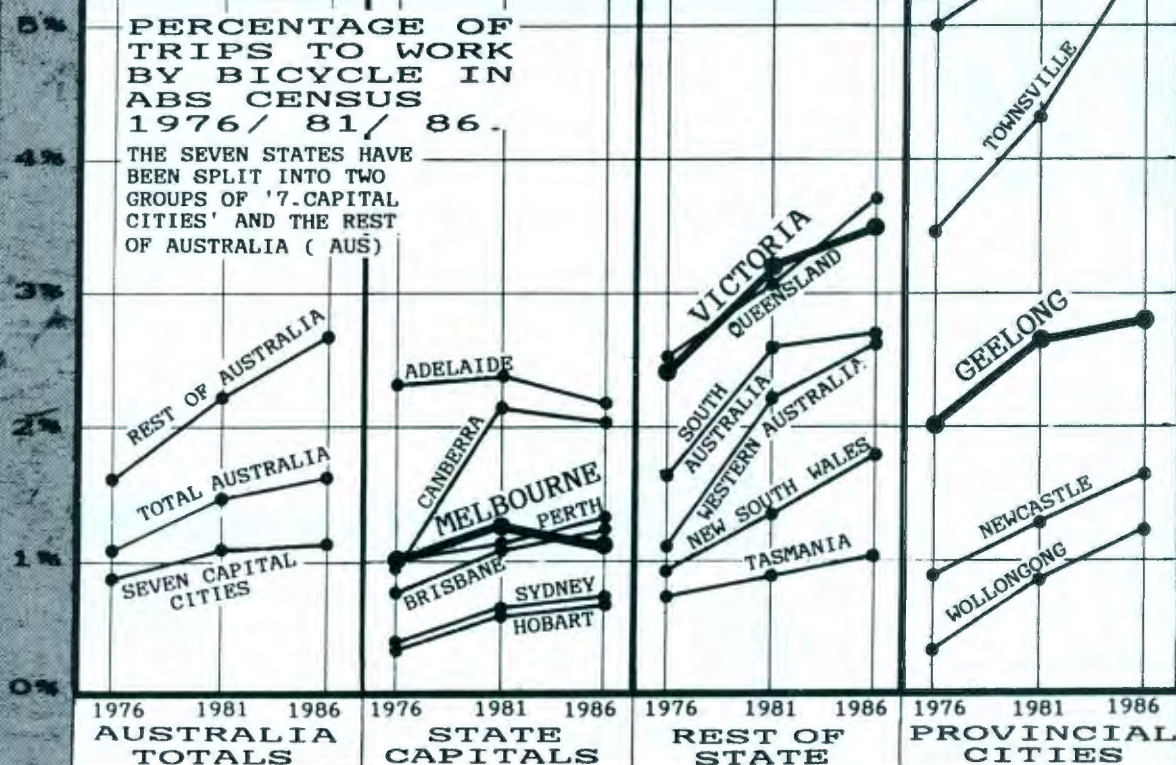
A Registered Bicentennial Activity  
 Organised by South Australian Touring Cyclists' Association.



# BICYCLE TRIPS TO WORK

PERCENTAGE OF TRIPS TO WORK BY BICYCLE IN ABS CENSUS 1976/81/86.

THE SEVEN STATES HAVE BEEN SPLIT INTO TWO GROUPS OF '7. CAPITAL CITIES' AND THE REST OF AUSTRALIA (AUS)



## Census shows fall in Melbourne cycle commuter numbers

*Bicycle safety*

by ALAN PARKER

THE YEAR 1987 ended well with the Great Victorian Bike Ride becoming the longest mass bike ride in the world and boosting the membership of the Bicycle Institute of Victoria by 3,000. Meanwhile a similar number of people stopped cycling because around 24,000 bicycles had been stolen during 1986 and 1987.

The recently released Australian Bureau of Statistics 1986 population census shows that fewer Melbourne cyclists are now cycling to work than in 1981. Out of the 440,000 cyclists over 17 years of age in Melbourne only 13,000 or 2.9% ride their bikes to work most working days. This is a very low figure even though a much larger number ride to work occasionally.

There are about 70,000 occasional bicycle commuters who do not show up on the census because bicycling is not their main means of getting to work. It appears that these cyclists ride anywhere from twice a week to less than once a month and while we don't know exactly how often they ride they show the potential for regular commuting.

The interesting feature of the charts is that there is no obvious connection between the provision of bicycle facilities and the increased percentage of trips to work by bicycle. It is curious but there has been a drop in bicycle commuting in both Melbourne and Canberra despite the provision of many kilometers off-road bikeways in both these cities.

Very little has been done for cyclists on the main roads in both these cities and 2000 bike/rail users have been lost in Melbourne due to uncontrolled bicycle theft on the railways.

In contrast in Townsville the main commuter routes have been greatly improved and just over 5 1/2% of all trips to work are by bicycle.

### Theft discourages bike rail users

DURING 1986 760 bicycles were stolen from stations. A report was prepared for

In terms of numbers, this chart shows that number of bike trips to work in Melbourne dropped from 13,770 in 1981 to 13,060 in 1986. There may be a few hundred more bicycle commuters in the trendy inner suburbs but the figures for the metropolitan area clearly show a reduction. The bike/rail trend is taken from the MTA census data and the drop in the number of bike rail users is of the same magnitude as the overall drop in bike trips to work between 1981 and 1987. However as 9% of the bike rail trips are occasional and 25% are school children then the number of bike rail trips to work would be about two thirds of that shown.

the Metropolitan Transit Authority because of a ministerial initiative showing what needs to be done to combat theft and vandalism of bicycles at stations. This report was received by the MTA in November 1986 and one of its recommendations was that \$60,000 be spent on 60 bicycle lockers. Every other recommendation in the report has either been ignored or incompetently implemented and about 600 bicycles were stolen during 1987.

500 bolt cutter proof locking devices were fixed to platform fence posts but prototypes were not made and tested with users and as a consequence are very difficult to use. No leaflets were produced showing cyclists how to use



them and most of them are not being properly used.

The high security lock up cages designed by this writer to store 10 bicycles and protect them from both theft and vandalism have not been trialled. Not one detail drawing has been prepared of lock-up cage parts, 14 months after the concept design was approved by the MTA. I doubt if a lock-up cage will be available for use before 1989.

Even the proposal to install at no cost to the MTA bicycle lockers by Biklock (NSW) has been ignored. Meanwhile over one million dollars was spent on building car parks for motorists half of whom drive less than 2 km to park their cars at stations.

The incompetent purchasing policies of the MTA are the reason bike lockers cost \$1,000 to make and install. They buy them just a few at a time instead of buying all they need for five years at half the price. The cyclist is in a "Catch 22" situation. They spend \$1200 per car parking space for one passenger and won't even throw in the design effort to quickly improve upon thief proof locking devices for bikes which, even if redesigned, would only cost \$70 per passenger. Since 1981 nearly 5,000 bicycles have been stolen from stations.

An MTA discussion document was released in November 1987 showing three possible future options for the metropolitan public transport service. It seems likely that the government will go for the options that will reduce the level of service and the extent of the rail system, so that by the year 2000 it will be a lot more difficult to use bikes and trains together.

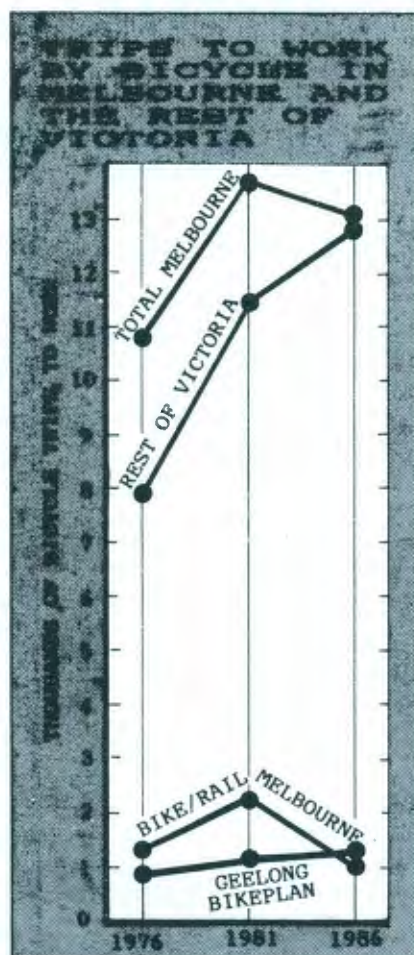
The MTA document has only one option which is acceptable to cyclists: to increase patronage by 50%. However, if the existing emphasis on providing increased car parking access at the expense of bicycle locking and storage facilities continues, this option could prove to be extremely costly.

Meanwhile the battle for equitable access to main roads and freeways continues. The Road Construction Authority is lobbying behind the scenes to make sure that cyclists can't use the freeway breakdown lanes even though their most senior technical people presented a map to SBC members at a meeting in July showing that over 80% of the urban freeways breakdown lanes could be safely opened to cyclists and that most of the safety problems on the other 20% of the urban freeways could be overcome. It is incredible that a motorist lobby group, The Royal Automobile Club of Victoria, has a seat on the State Bicycle Committee and they too have been lobbying against bicycle access to the breakdown lanes.

In Holland and Japan bicycles are used instead of cars for many trips and, as a low-cost means of transport, make a major contribution to the efficient operation of each country's economy. This could also happen here as the trends between 1976 and 1981 clearly show. The 10.5% annual growth rate in bike rail is particularly encouraging. It is a pity a few bike thieves were allowed to do so much damage between 1981 and 1986 and turn growth into a 6.5% decline.

If the SBC can do something about MTA incompetence, get the RCA to open some freeway breakdown lanes, do a decent job of selling alternative route selection as a safety measure and actually market its excellent bicycle route maps then who knows how many more people will ride to work.

This graph shows that the percentage of trips to work has increased in Melbourne from 1.13% in 1986 to 1.23% in 1981, and then declined to 1.13% in 1986. It also shows how Melbourne, Geelong and the rest of Victoria compare with other cities and the other States as well as showing the national trends. Bicycle commuting in the rest of Victoria outside Melbourne has increased between 1981 and 1986 and this trend is likely to continue, probably because of the easygoing traffic and the short trip length in the provincial cities.



# LOOK for the LOGO

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# Compulsory helmet push runs into trouble

*Bicycle safety*

by ALAN PARKER

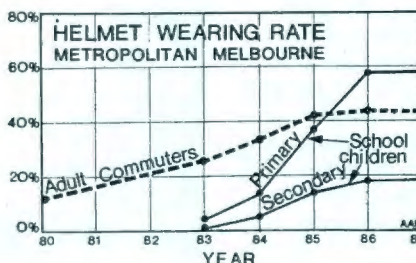
**I**N 1985 I represented the Bicycle Federation of Australia at the special meeting of the Standards Association of Australia (SAA) that considered changes to the Helmet Standard. This meeting had been set up following criticisms of the Standard in the media by the Bicycle Institutes in Victoria and New South Wales, the Bicycle Federation of Australia, cyclist groups in SA and WA and this writer.

Many people will not remember these criticisms of SAA approved helmets. The helmets in question would fall over the eyes of the wearer whenever the bike hit a bump in the road. The media coverage clearly demonstrated how they would come off the heads of most people if they had an accident. Indeed this media incident was the only reason the SAA made a commitment to completely revise the Helmet Standard at the 1985 Meeting.

The SAA issued a media release the next day promising to produce a new

standard that would provide for cooler helmets, ensure that helmets stayed on heads and could be used by government as the basis of compulsory helmet legislation.

After three years its obvious that the SAA is not going to do anything about helmet ventilation and is going to produce a new standard. The SAA is going to ignore the research reported in *Freewheeling* 46 that shows a completely separate standard is needed for 5 to 12 year olds.





The Victorian State Government and the Federal Government are now committed to making an obsolete helmet standard the basis of compulsory helmet wearing legislation.

This is what government intends even if it means forcing many of the best bicycle helmets (such as the Bell V1-Pro and other high quality helmets preferred by racing cyclists, tourists and triathletes) out of the market place. After July 1st 1989, Australian retailers who sell helmets that do not comply with the energy attenuation test of the Helmet Standard will be fined as much as \$100,000.

This sorry state of affairs has come about because of the misinformed manipulation of the SAA and State Bicycle Committees by the road safety agencies

of the State and Federal governments. These agencies are and have been a totally negative influence except when they have been dragged squealing and protesting into the real world by bicycle activists.

For example, in 1986 at this writer's request the Victorian Minister for Transport, Tom Roper set aside \$60,000 for applied research into helmet ventilation and other research. Tom Roper instructed the Road Traffic Authority (RTA) to liaise with the Federal Office of Road Safety and the SAA to ensure that the funds were spent but the RTA deliberately sabotaged the initiative. The other bodies excused themselves. One of the reasons given was that the Queensland Institute of Technology (QIT) was doing research on helmets and that more research was not necessary.

The QIT research had a totally different objective to what the Minister wanted. When the QIT research results finally surfaced in 1987 they produced more evidence that the standard was in need of a major revision but for totally different reasons.

### The myth of self enforcement

The chart showing the performance of Bicycle Offence report system shows clearly that despite the commitment made in the Melbourne Bikeplan to the enforcement of existing bike laws, they are **not** being enforced.

Why then is a new law being created when a bicycle law enforcement capability does not exist? The answer is that, it will enforce itself, according to the experts who sabotaged the Minister's proposed research project at the RTA.

Unfortunately, there is a dangerously misleading element of truth in the idea of self enforcement because the initial reaction from parents will be to compel their children to wear helmets. However given a couple of years, most of them will ignore the laws as they do the bicycle lighting laws.

## VICTORIAN BICYCLE OFFENCE REPORTS

ANNUAL BOR ISSUING RATE 1986/87 YEAR ENDING JUNE 30

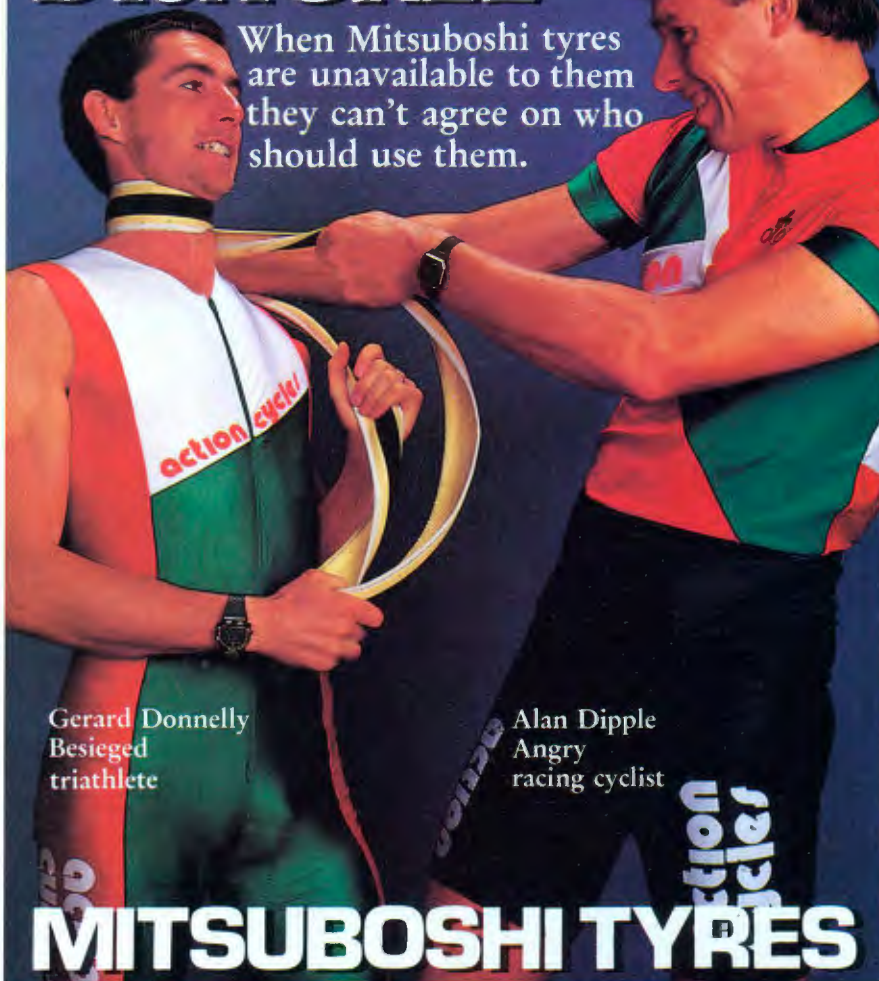
SOURCE: Victorian Police Department.

REGION	POLICE DISTRICT	OFFENCES REPORTED PER: 1,000 POPULATION										KM <sup>2</sup> AREA	POP 1,000s
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
INNER METROPOLITAN POPULATION 940,000	B) Flemington											68	221
	H) Caulfield											97	269
	I) Prahran											38	152
	U) Highett											117	227
	A) Russel Street											35	72
OUTER METROPOLITAN POPULATION 2,000,000	Q) Heidelberg											1137	419
	P) Dandenong											1959	361
	Y) Nunawading											3168	461
	V) Avondale Heights											1718	276
	M) Altona North											922	236
	Z) Frankston											855	235
COUNTRY POPULATION 1,150,000	D) Lowest Rate										19	11,594	144
	L) Highest Rate											17,488	101
	AVERAGE RATE:											215,000	1,147

Target for Cautions(BORs)

## GERARD AND ALAN DISAGREE

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Besieged  
triathlete

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Greg LeMond (La Vie Claire - LOOK - Radar) using an Avocet during his historic victory in the 1986 Tour de France



Right hand button advances the Avocet through its functions

Speed



Trip distance  
... from 0 to 999 . Reset to 0 by pressing both buttons simultaneously



Total distance  
... permanent record of distance travelled up to 9999



Timing  
... can also be used as a watch

Chronometer operated by left hand button and reset by pressing both buttons simultaneously

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Spare Avocet Battery

Spare Avocet Transmitter

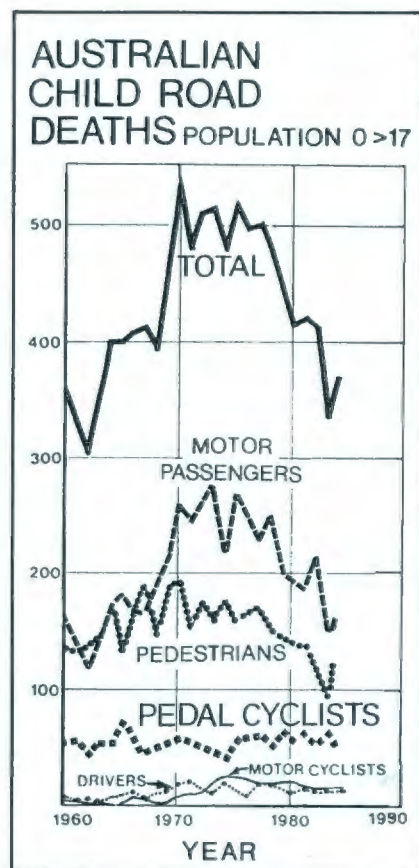
If self enforcement which is really "parental-enforcement" does not work with lighting laws how will it possibly work on a permanent basis with a helmet law?

The answer is simply that it will not work unless the police are seen to enforce the law often enough, which they are not going to do because they don't have the time nor the inclination.

Some people make the emotional plea that children must be made to wear helmets but forget that laws have to be enforced. Under the existing laws, the police have only the option of taking a child to the children's court which takes up a whole morning. In that time a score of motorists could be given "on the spot" fines. In the old days the policemen could have walloped the kid with parental approval, but that kind of disciplinary action is not acceptable anymore.

Today the police understandably attend to major crimes and ignore minor offences such as riding a bike without lights at night. They will not enforce any new helmet law for the same reasons. Clearly the government has been badly

In spite of the fact that politicians, bureaucrats and the surgeons are outraged by the high deathrate of under 16 year old cyclists this chart clearly shows that child car passengers and pedestrians have a far greater chance of being killed. All the more reason to make vehicle passengers and drivers wear helmets.





advised by the RTA feasibly report which states the "the existing methods of enforcement provide adequate tools for enforcement." This is utter nonsense for five reasons.

1. There is no police time saving system of on-the-spot-fines for 12 to 17 year olds as there are for adult traffic offences, only the children's court which is so wasteful of police time that it is considered an obsolete enforcement tool.

2. There is no back up system of bicycle registration to prevent cyclists giving false names and addresses and the busy patrolman is not going to get that kind of hassle.

3. A large minority of Australian parents would actively resent and oppose, sometimes by legal means, any attempt by the police to enforce a helmet law. The police do not want to get involved in disputes with parents.

4. It is unlikely that police resources will be devoted to minor offences in the future because they will be too busy trying to control the increase in drug related crime. Indeed the traffic in illegal drugs is the most profitable business on earth and the demands this could place on the police may result in minor offences receiving less attention than they do today.

5. According to an ABS crime survey in Victoria the public have an expectation that there should be more police and that there should be more police visibility, especially police patrols. As the crime rate increases especially for drug related crime, the public's expectation will continue to be frustrated. The issue of helmet wearing will become less important to the public who will no longer see it as having any real priority.

There is an embarrassing silence from the Police and the police unions about their willingness to enforce bicycle helmet laws but in the closing days of 1987 they went public with the proposal that motorist should wear helmets which they regard as a worthwhile change in the law that they are prepared to enforce.

#### Existing helmet standard ideal for use in cars

WHAT THE general public is not aware of is that the existing helmet standard is designed to cover the use of helmets by ordinary motorists. You don't have to physically exert yourself in the modern car so the problem cyclists have with sweat and heat on hot days is no problem.

The preface to AS 2063 1973 states quite clearly that it is suitable for use in cars not used for racing. This is covered by a separate standard AS 1698.

Approximately 7,500 motorists receive head injuries in accidents each year in Australia. Apart from those who

die from head injuries about 250 are turned into living vegetables and another 1,000 are so permanently disabled that they will never return to work. As only 100 cyclists die from all kinds of injuries each year in Australia it makes a lot more sense to make motorists wear helmets because that will save ten times as many lives and ten times as many people would be saved from permanently disabling injuries.

Making children wear their bike helmets in cars makes good sense as the graph shows that many more are killed as passengers in cars than on their bikes.

The design rules for all new cars should be changed so that all new cars come with a complement of bicycle hel-

metts with built in clips to conveniently store them on the back of seats or under the dash board so as to minimise the inconvenience to motor vehicle users. It is very difficult to take politicians and the car driving experts seriously when they know so little about head injuries that they don't wear a bicycle helmet in their own cars.

I have been wearing a bicycle helmet for ten years because it protects me yet, I have never seen any of the hundred or so big mouthed helmet advocates, who don't ride bicycles, wear a helmet in their car. I wonder why?

Perhaps the Cain government should set an example and have all MPs and government drivers wear helmets?

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# Kuchen and pine trees

*Bicycle touring*

*A short 'cake shop' tour in the Black Forest*

by IAIN LANGUSCH

OUR STORY begins at the Basel Railway Station on the Swiss French German border. It just so happens that each country has decided to have a railway station in Basel, the French even call theirs Bale. As it turns out, I am at the Swiss station, my bike is at the French station and my friend and her bike are at the German

station. Without going into too much detail on the complexities of the bureaucracy involved, by the time we both slip our feet into the toe clips and start our journey, it is quite late.

Those first five kilometres through the traffic of Basel with the initial awkwardness of a heavily loaded touring bike are quite unnerving. Not wanting

to write Day 1 off to international bureaucracy, we manage to at least cross into Germany and find a campsite near Lörrach.

Our second day, a Sunday, starts with the patter of rain on the tent and the ringing of church bells. Only the church is allowed to make that sort of noise on a Sunday morning.



For me a relaxing cycle tour is a chance to wind down after four months of hard work so breaking camp and setting off in the rain does not fit in with my definition of relaxation! My policy is: if it starts to rain when you are travelling, you just have to make the best of it; however, if it starts to rain during the night you stay put in your sleeping bag till it stops.

It did stop raining about 11 o'clock. In the meantime, we had a good chance to study some maps and do some serious route planning. Ahead of us to the north lies the famous Black Forest, with all its beauty, gastronomic treats and its fair share of steep climbs and mountain passes. Also, to the north, it is possible to follow the Rhine river with its famous wine areas, castles and almost flat terrain.

The maps we have are excellent "Rad-tourenkarten" (cycle touring maps) put out by the "Allgemeinen Deutschen Fahrrad Club". All roads are classified and colour coded for difficulty, grade, scenic beauty and traffic density. For example, purple roads are quiet country lanes from which vehicles are banned, whereas light yellow roads are not suitable for cycling due to over 10,000 cars a day and almost certain death.

We decide on a route which will take us north to Freiburg along the Rhine, followed by a climb east from Freiburg into the Black Forest.

Heading out into the German countryside, one of the things that strikes you most about Germany is how ordered everything is. The total absence of litter, the neat and tidy villages with traditional Bauernhauser (farmhouses) and the polite and helpful locals make touring in this area a delight.

On our way north along the valley of the Rhine, we pass through Bad Beligen with its therapeutic thermal baths, to which thousands of wealthy, and mostly old, Germans flock every year to seek some miracle cure or longevity. One particular treatment involves walking round and round in a cold, knee deep circular pool. Every step you take, you must lift your feet right out of the water. For your trouble you are promised beneficial effects for everything from varicose veins to poverty. The important part is that you must remember to dip your arms in a special cold arm bath before you start your circular water walk.

Our tent is still wet from the night before and when heavy rain starts to fall we decide to "wimp out" on the camping and to spend the night in a Gasthof (guesthouse). These reasonably priced guest houses are very common and offer hot showers and warm beds for wet and cold cyclists. The drying room is also a big plus and a chance to get our clothes and tents completely dry.

The next day dawns fine and sunny and the countryside to the north is lovely and flat. This gives us a good chance to properly get the feel of our bikes before the long uphill hauls and exhilarating downhill sections of the Black Forest. We are riding past vineyards and maize fields with a liberal sprinkling of fruit trees. It is September and the apple and plum trees provide a useful supplement to the "on road" diet. After a couple of kuchen (cake) stops, we reach Freiburg where we spend two days exploring this beautiful old German city with its famous "Münster" Cathedral. The locals are very much aware of the threat to the Black Forest from acid rain and signs at traffic lights ask motorists to turn off their engines at red lights.

Looking at our maps, we decide to head southeast into the heart of the Black Forest at Titisee. The road to Titisee is coded as having extremely heavy traffic, continuous climbing and, that horror of all cyclists, tunnels. Having experienced riding through tunnels in the Alps, we decide that a train journey might be in the best interests of safety.

German railways cater extremely well for cyclists and the thirty minute journey takes in some spectacular scenery. It is described in the tourist pamphlets (true for once) as being the most scenic train trip in Germany. Looking from the train window at the large trucks, juggernauts struggling their exhaust belching way up the road, we decide that we had made the right choice to take the train.

Titisee is very much the tourist town on the shores of the largest natural lake in the Black Forest. Cuckoo clock shops abound, but we manage to find a delightful camping area on the far side of the lake away from the crowds. For the first time, we are camped in the real Black Forest.

As usual, the camping site is excellent and offers a wide range of facilities at a reasonable cost. Dense stands of pine trees border the lake and travelling one of the many paths around the edge of the lake in the late afternoon, it is not difficult to guess how the Black Forest got its name. The closed canopy of pine trees blocks out much of the light and the forest floor is a fairy tale environment with a mystique that has one immediately thinking of goblins, fairies and the supernatural.

Using Titisee as a base, we do a day trip into the surrounding area. A strenuous climb takes us up 1400 metres for the Feldberg, the highest point in the Black Forest. From the Feldberg we travel to the picturesque Schluchsee, an artificial lake with abundant walking and cycling paths around its perimeter.

This day trip, without the encumbrance of our heavy panniers, is still tackled at a leisurely "relaxing" pace with ample time for stops at some of the many Gasthöfe in the area.

Apart from warm beds and drying rooms, Gasthöfe also cater for other "on road" necessities like Schwarzwald Himbeergeist (schnapps - for the cold) and delicious cakes (for the hills). We develop a policy that if we have a climb ahead of us over 200 metres, we stop for some cake before attempting such an energy draining exercise. Remember, this is a relaxing tour.

Leaving Titisee behind us, we head north on a dull and overcast morning. A couple of climbs to over 1,000 metres reveals that dull and overcast in the valleys becomes wet, misty and freezing on the hills. We keep ourselves well fueled with schnapps and cakes and eventually stop for the night north of Triberg, a city once again dominated by cuckoo clocks.

In the absence of a camping area we spend the night in a delightful 200 year old Bauernhaus (farmhouse) where we wake up to a breakfast of homemade breads, butter, wursts and eggs. Germans take breakfast very seriously.

The next day takes us on a 40 kilometre climb up to Freudenstadt, one of the prettiest cities in the Black Forest. It takes a lot of cake to climb for 40 kilometres and a couple of beers are also required on a warm and sunny day.

It is only one kilometre from yet another delightful camping area that I suffer the only mechanical trouble of the trip. A three inch nail through my rear tyre on a fast downhill section tends to make my heavily loaded bike want to dive under a passing truck.

Continuing north from Freudenstadt, we return to agricultural land and leave the Black Forest behind. Cake shops become a rarity and by the time we reach Calw, just west of Stuttgart, their numbers have dwindled to an unacceptable level. It is time to catch a train at Calw, thus ending what has been an extremely enjoyable and relaxing tour.

Sitting in the train, we have a chance to reflect on a cycle tour through the magnificent Black Forest. If, as the conservationists tell us, the forest is 40% dead, then I am grateful to have seen it before the damage becomes too obvious. It was refreshing to ride a bicycle in a country where cyclists are not targets. All the cities have bike paths and the motorists even stop for you, unlike their Australian counterparts. It is, without doubt, a wonderful area with fantastic scenery. Despite the hills, if one adopts the "cake shop" approach, touring in the Schwarzwald becomes a relaxing and nutritionally sound experience.

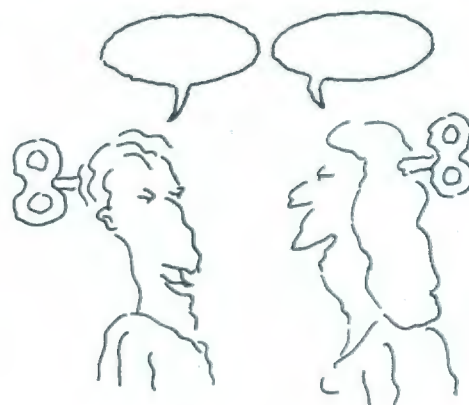


# BICENTENNIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS



Most Popular Fetish:

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Most Ongoing Buzzword:

**"ONGOING"**



Most Relaxed City:

**SYDNEY**



Most Despised New Ethnic Group:

**YUPPIES**



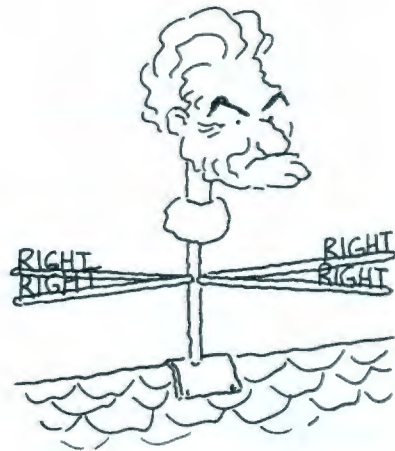
Most Organised Terrorist Group:

**NSW STATE RAILWAYS**





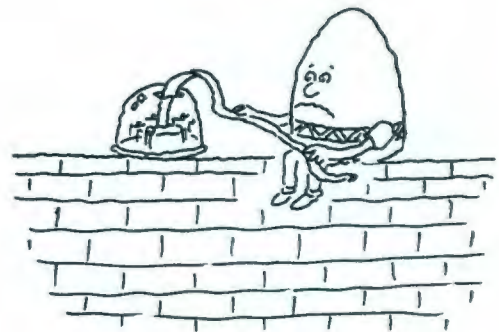
Least Promising Triathlete:  
**AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR**



Most Popular Liberal Party Leader:  
**BOB HAWKE**



Thinnest New Fashion Garment:  
**NATIONALISM**



Most Dangerous New Toy:  
**STOCK MARKET**



Greatest Fossil Find:  
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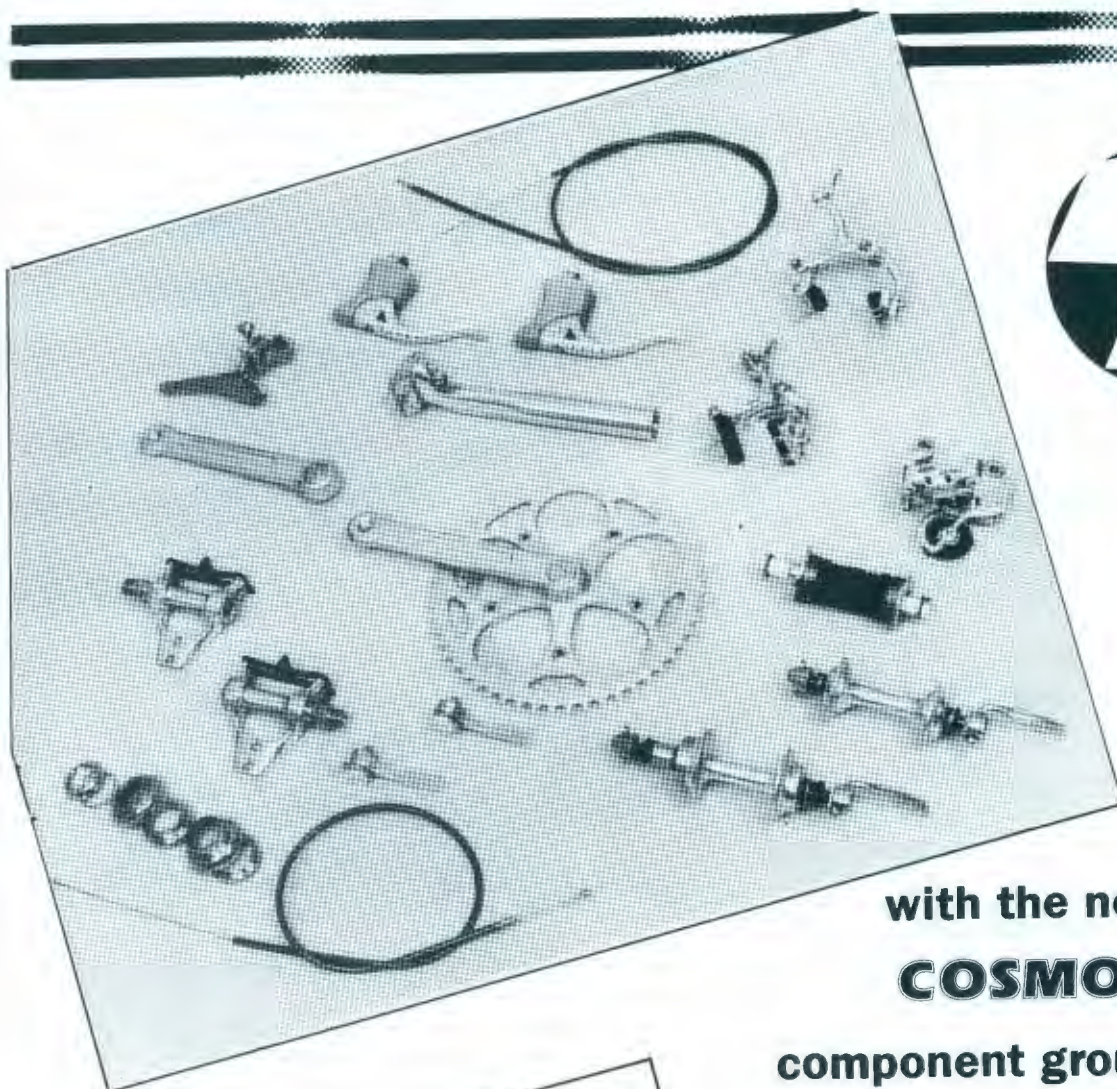


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# The big rides for 1988

## *Bicycle events*

### *A sneak preview of this year's big rides*

**A**USTRALIANS in 1988 will be able to participate in some of the biggest and best run bicycle events ever staged in the country. Starting in April there will be big rides in every state right through to a terrific climax when 3000 riders enter Sydney at the completion of an epic two-week ride up from Melbourne. The Australian Bicentennial Caltex Bike Ride is also expected to attract a large contingent of Americans.

In winter small groups sponsored by the touring association, Bicycle Austral-

ia, will set out from the top of Cape York on a ride around the coast that will finally land the lucky few, who do the full distance, in Perth, West Australia.

Here's a summary of the major events around the country. If we've missed any let us know and we will try to bring readers an update in our next issue.

#### **APRIL**

APRIL IS shaping up to become the month of the bicycle rally. There are three major rallies in: Victoria; New South Wales; and in South Australia. The Bicycle Institute of NSW will host its second GEAR (Great Eastern Australian Rally) during the Easter long weekend in beautiful Bowral on the Southern Highlands south west of Syd-

ney and within easy reach of Canberra. The major Victorian cyclist group, Bicycle Victoria, is also holding a big rally on Easter also in the highlands only in the town of Castlemaine north of Melbourne.

Bike rallies are popular in England and the USA. The organisers generally provide a central camping area (some off-site fixed accommodation can usually be arranged too), meals, night-time activities and lots of day rides.

In South Australia the Touring Cyclists Association has been planning its big event, The Commonwealth Bank Festival of Cycling for at least two years. The rally will be centred on the village of Oakbank in the Adelaide Hills. The Festival will provide a wide variety of

**Benita Green, Susan Bevin and Kathy Harvey from Sassafra, Victoria enjoy a breather on last year's Caltex Bike Ride. Photo: Dale Adams.**



small group rides all lead by an experienced club member.

The organisers have arranged entertainment including the famous Melbourne Bicycle Band with their amazing pedal powered machine, displays of clothing and equipment, a bush dance, BMX freestyle demos and veteran and vintage bicycles.

**Easterbike 88 - Friday 1 to Monday 4. Castlemaine VIC.** Day rides (bicycle orienteering, treasure hunts, time trials, Audax, mountain bikes), antique cycles display, indoor activities at night. Costs include all meals, guide map, camping fees, entertainment, ride support, cloth patch. \$135 adults, Under 13 \$63. Bicycle Victoria adult members get a \$20.00 discount. Hotel option, Train travel option (ex Melbourne), travel insurance option. Entry forms contact: Bicycle Victoria (03) 650 2550.

**Great Eastern Australian Rally - Friday 1 to Monday 4. Bowral NSW.** Day rides (mountain bikes, scavenger hunt, bicycle soccer, tourists trial), mystery night ride, slide night. Costs include camping fees, entertainment, guide book, cloth patch, tour leaders. \$34 Adults (\$28 BINSW members), Children \$17 (BINSW member \$14). Non camping option. Self catering only on-site. Contact: the Bicycle Institute of NSW (02) 212 5628.

**3KZ Bicentennial Bikeathon - Sunday 17. Melbourne.** A big 30 km family ride from Mordialloc to Batman Park, Melbourne. Starts 9 am Beach Rd near Mordialloc station. Adults \$5.00 Children \$3.00 Family \$10.00. For forms and entry details contact: 3KZ Bicentennial Bikeathon, 24 Victoria St, Carlton VIC 3053.

## OCTOBER

ON THE other side of winter the four month lead-up to Christmas will see the biggest events taking place in the south

**The pedalling pinkies riding their machine "Fourplay" were the crowd pleasers on last years Sydney to the 'Gong Ride. Photo: Robert Boulger.**



and east and starting with Bicycle Australia's Four Rivers Ride on the NSW October long weekend.

New South Wales Bicycle Week will provide a focus for two rides organised by the Bicycle Institute the Green Valley Twin Century and the Spring Cycle.

Late in October a group of about 100 riders on pre 1915 vintage and veteran cycles will set out from Melbourne to retrace the route of the famous George Burston and H R Stokes who rode between the two cities one hundred years ago. The route via Gundagai, Bathurst and Katoomba will be much easier for the modern-day riders as in 1888 sealed roads were non existent.

**The fifth Four Rivers Ride - Saturday 1 to Monday 3. Hunter Valley NSW** Bicycle Australia's tour of the Hunter Valley region. Sag wagon for luggage, evening meals and breakfast provided and hall accommodation. Contact (046) 27 2186 for details.

**Green Valley Twin Century - Sunday 16. Sydney region.** Sydney's longest running bicycle fitness event. Test your endurance or basic level of fitness on 50, 100, 160 and 200 km courses over mostly level terrain in the western suburbs. Contact the Bicycle Institute of NSW (02) 212 5628.

**Sydney Spring Cycle - 23 October. Sydney** The Bicycle Institute's annual bicycle bash starts in the city and takes riders on a splendid run out to Parramatta Park via the Harbour Bridge and Lane Cove National Park. Entry fee. Services and full back up provided. Contact the Bicycle Institute (02) 212 5628.

**Burston & Stokes Centenary Penny Farthing Ride - Saturday 29 to Saturday November 12.** Melbourne to Sydney. 100 riders on vintage and veteran cycles will commemorate the epic ride via Gundagai, Bathurst and Katoomba. Entry is opened to riders with pre 1915 cycles or later special interest bikes. Organised by Bicycle Victoria and the Vintage Cycle Club of Victoria. Contact (03) 650 2334.

## NOVEMBER

On November 20 our own Sydney to the 'Gong Ride will be beefed up to cater for in excess of 5000 and will provide extra support and entertainment both at Wollongong and along the route. The latest 'Gong Ride info follows this article.

A week after Sydney cyclists ride to the 'Gong about 3000 people will set out from Melbourne on a two week Caltex Bicentennial Bike Ride to Sydney. The 15 day journey will be fully supported in the style of previous successful Caltex Rides and will pass through Orbost, Cooma, Canberra, Goulburn, Wollongong and arrive in Sydney on Saturday the 10th of December.

**The seventh annual Sydney to the 'Gong Bicycle Ride - Sunday 20. Sydney to Wollongong.** Australia's big one-day fun and fitness ride between Sydney's Belmore Park and Belmore Basin in the city of Wollongong. 87 kilometres of well supported fun complete with entertainment. Entry forms from bike shops during September. See details following this listing.

**The Australian Bicentennial Caltex Bike Ride - Saturday 26 to Saturday 10 December.** This year to celebrate the Bicentenary cyclists will ride en mass from Melbourne to Sydney. Full support. Organised by the people who bring you the Caltex Bike Ride. Enquiries: (059) 78 6000.

## DECEMBER

MEANWHILE BACK in the Garden State Bicycle Victoria will be hosting a Great Victorian Bike Ride between Swan Hill and Melbourne from the 3rd of December to the 11th. As usual all meals and a baggage shuttle will be provided and school groups catered for.

**The Great Victorian Bike Ride - Saturday 3 to Sunday 11** A nine day cycling extravaganza from Swan Hill to Melbourne. Organisers take care of everything from entertainment to vehicles for your luggage. Camping, meals and full medical and mechanical support provided. Organised by Bicycle Victoria (Bicycle Institute of Vic.) Contact (03) 650 2334 for entry forms and prices.

# Sydney to the 'Gong in 1988

Sunday November 20

## Bicycle events

THIS YEAR we want to attract a lot of newcomers to the ride. Over the past five years thousands have taken up cycling so it is only fitting that these people



be encouraged to come along on what has become Australia's most popular one-day cycling event. We value the participation and support given to the Ride during the last six years by experienced cyclists. Your involvement has contributed to our excellent road safety record which can only continue if more people like you participate.

To encourage you and others like you to become involved and continue to cycle the 'Gong Ride we are creating a Ride membership. Anyone entering the Ride will be automatically become a member and will be sent a mid-year magazine with full details of the coming Ride plus a priority entry card to speed up processing. Membership is a good idea for you and it's also a good idea for the Ride organisation. This is how it has come about.

### Improving the Ride without re-inventing the wheel

A lot of the organisation that goes into a 'Gong Ride involves doing the same things over year in, year out. However, it is vitally important that we only duplicate essential tasks.

With the introduction of ride membership your name and address will only need to be entered once. If you registered for the 1986 Ride your name is already on our computer and you will be sent your free

copy of the new Ride Magazine, *Bike Rider*, during winter along with a priority entry form for the Ride its self. If you entered for the first time in 1987 or are unsure if your name is on the list you can apply for membership by filling out the form that accompanies this article.

Additional membership benefits will be announced in the first issue of *Bike Rider* due out this winter.

### Improvements and changes

After six years we finally believe that we have sorted out the problems of the past and can offer riders an efficient and convenient way of getting to the start of the Ride from Wollongong in the morning or back to Sydney in the afternoon. This year the bike-lift trucks will load at Flagstaff Point for the Sydney riders and at Wollongong station in the early morning for the Wollongong entrants. Bike-lift tickets must be bought in advance and the entry form will contain full details.

A continuous shuttle bus will operate throughout the afternoon to carry riders to Wollongong station from the Point and a security holding area will be set up in Belmore Park, Sydney for your convenience.

We also plan to eliminate the queues at Flagstaff Point for riders waiting to claim their certificates and patches. Official Ride tee-shirts can be ordered for

*Sydney to the 'Gong*

**BICYCLE RIDE**

Authorized by the Sydney to the 'Gong Race Committee

Please enrol me as a member of the Sydney to the 'Gong Ride and send me my free premier edition of *Bike Rider* when it is published.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Business hours phone contact. \_\_\_\_\_

Post to:

Sydney to the 'Gong Bicycle Ride  
PO Box K26 Haymarket NSW 2000

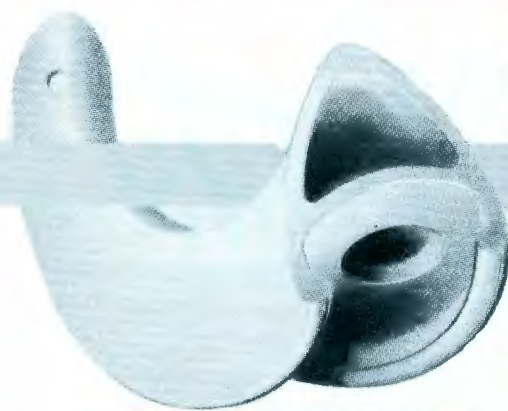
postal delivery up to three weeks prior to the ride. After that time you may buy shirts on the day while stocks last. For those who miss out orders will be taken for postal delivery after the event.

Entertainment will be provided once again at Flagstaff Point and your Riders Guide Book will list all the events and people who will be taking part. Food and drink stalls will also add to the carnival atmosphere in Wollongong.

# WOLBER




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### Help a well known charity

IN LINE with other major bicycle events (such as the London to Brighton Ride) riders this year will have the option of supporting the work of a major national charity organisation.

Details will be published during winter and riders wanting to raise funds for the charity will be provided with full details on the entry form to be published in winter.

### Business Opportunity

THIS YEAR *Freewheeling* is expanding its event promotions department (the 'Gong Ride is taking off and other rides are being planned). Our publisher, Warren Salomon, is looking for a partner to edit and administer the production of our two magazines. (We also publish a trade journal). If you are a self motivated business oriented person, a good organiser with writing skills and capital who would like to run his or her own business and not work for a robber baron, this may be the opportunity of a lifetime.

Please apply in writing to:

The Publisher  
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Haymarket NSW 2000

### Private support vehicles

THE LAST few years has seen a huge increase in the number of private support vehicles using the Ride route. Our official support vehicle crews, motorcycle marshals, and the Police have all expressed concern that an increase in this trend may lead to a serious accident.

This year we will be positively discouraging private support vehicles from using the route. We would prefer that you encouraged your family or friends to drive down the freeway to meet you in Wollongong and not at points along the route. All entrants will be issued with a vehicle pass to the parking areas at the Flagstaff Point carnival where the ride concludes. Car parking will not be available at Red Cedar Flat (lunch) and some other congested areas along the route.

Help make the ride safer for the riders; ask your family or friends to cheer you across the finish line at Flagstaff Point.

### Volunteer assistants wanted

THE ONE thing we care about most when we plan the big Ride is the safety of our Riders. Over one hundred people give their day to see that the ride is a safe success but it's not enough. We need

many more concerned citizens to help us marshal the route and look out for the welfare of the riders.

If you have a friend or relative who is planning to come down to Wollongong to collect you late in the day ask them if they would consider joining the Ride team and help us on the day. Mostly we need static marshals: people who will remain stationed at difficult or congested intersections along the route to direct riders and crews and summon help in the event of an emergency.

As the Ride is a mobile event it won't take up the whole day and the efforts of volunteers will be well appreciated by both the organisers and the riders. All volunteer marshals are given free entry to the ride, a staff tee shirt and cap, a lunch pack, detailed briefing and written instructions and a full set of Ride souvenirs.

So how about it? To become a 'Gong Ride Volunteer Crew Member please phone Warren Salomon during business hours on (02) 264 8544 or drop him a line at PO Box K26 Haymarket NSW 2000.

**A** TERRIFIC year lies ahead for Aussies and the many overseas visitors. We'll keep you posted in our next four issues on the big events to come. So get you bike overhauled you're going to need it in 1988.



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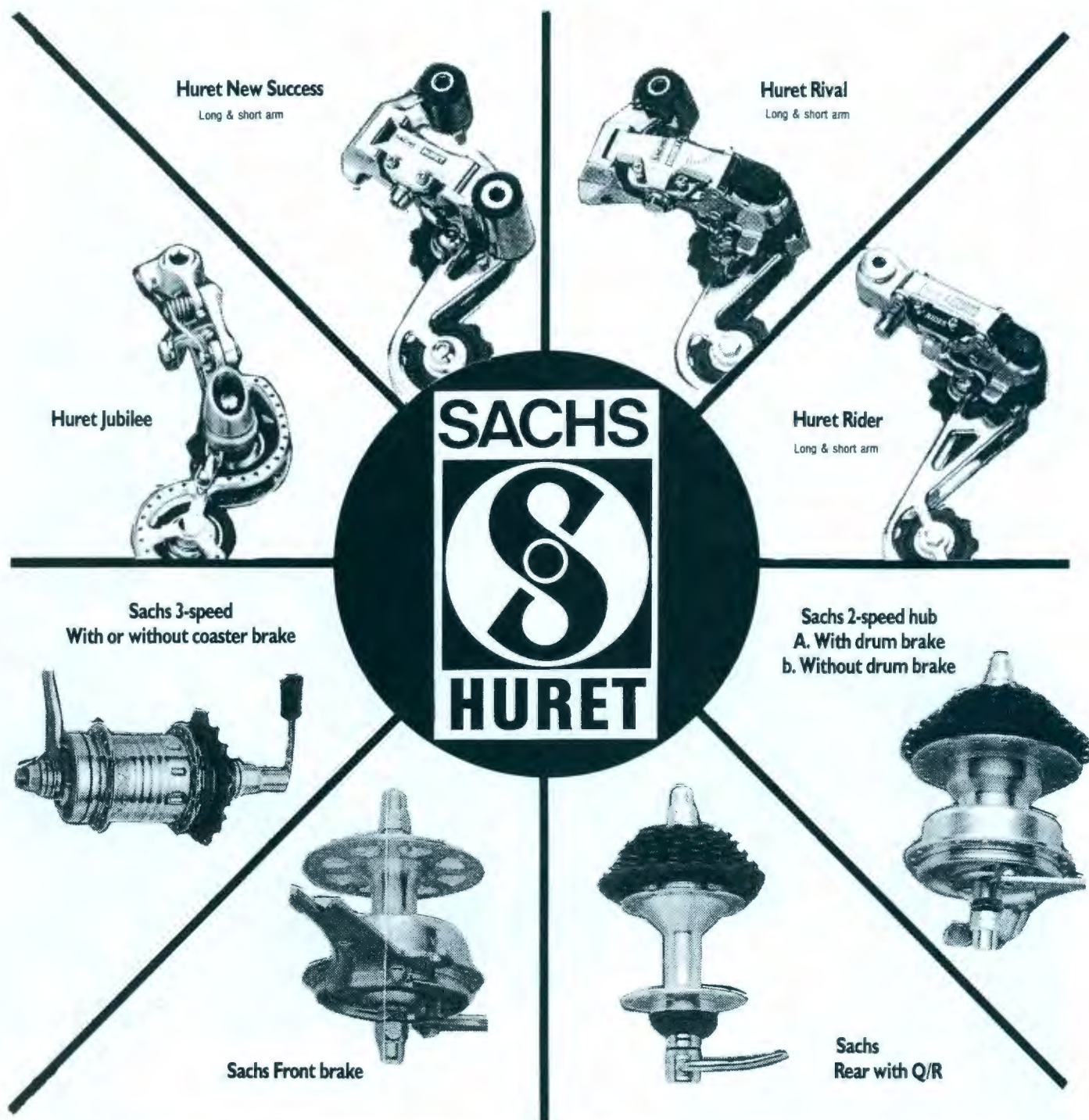
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# OPPY CAPTURES PARIS

*Bicycle sport*

*A tribute to a great Australian cycling hero*

by John Drummond

From its earliest days the sport of bicycle racing has produced champions who have blazoned the name of Australia across the pages of the World's sporting press for almost a century, from Alfred Goulet of earlier times to Martin Vinnecombe of last year. But none more so than the doyen of all Australian cyclists, that great Australian Sir Hubert Opperman OBE, KSCJ, successful racing cyclist, RAAF officer, politician and diplomat.

In the year 1891 the French newspapers became obsessed with bicycle racing as a sales boosting medium. The longer the race the better. With a long competition pre-race interest could be built up over a wide area of circulation and special editions brought out during the event. Early in 1891 one paper had the idea of running a Bordeaux-Paris race and was under the impression that the riders would take two days for the 580 odd kilometres. They had a shock when the Englishman GP Mills came in first with 26 hours! The race created enormous interest. Rival papers thought up fresh ideas. Then one announced the promotion of an endurance test that would make Bordeaux-Paris seem like a sprint race. Paris-Brest-Paris over 1,200 km (750 miles).

The papers of the time wrote in terms of "all in one go" as stage races had not yet been thought of. The racing control authorities determined it be held every ten years. Perhaps they thought it would take that long for the contestants to regain interest.

The first Paris-Brest-Paris was a fantastic success. The winner Charles Terrot took 71 hours 22 mins to complete the 1200 kilometre journey and finished nine hours ahead of the next man.

The race was the idea of Pierre Giffard who later became the great newspaper rival of Henri Desgrange, the father of the Tour de France. It was through searching for something bigger and better than Paris-Brest-Paris that Desgrange stumbled across the idea of a Tour de France in several stages. The first Tour was organised in 1903. It was won by Maurice Garin who two years later won the second Paris-Brest-Paris.

Paris-Brest-Paris was then organised every 10 years and attracted first class entries until a 17 year break caused riders to lose interest. By then the top cyclists preferred to ride the big stage races.

In the year 1931 Hubert Opperman captured the race riding the distance of 1,186 km in a time of 49 hours, 23 minutes and 30 seconds. This is his story.

Paris-Brest-Paris meant much to young Opperman in the 1920's. Just as it's the dream of many young European schoolboys today to win the Tour de France.

Oppy first set Paris-Brest-Paris as his priority after competing in the Tour de France of 1928, the format was a team trial of up to 15 riders. Australia was represented by a team of four led by Opperman and supported by Bainbridge, Watson and Osborne. Of course, they were swamped by the full and well supported European teams. The Australian riders managed to finish, albeit in a lowly place. But it was sufficient for Oppy to realise with specific training that he rated a chance in the world's longest single stage race, the Paris-Brest-Paris.

Although he was offered contracts to ride in European teams, Oppy returned to Australia and immediately began what must rank as the most intensive training programme ever planned to win a specific race.

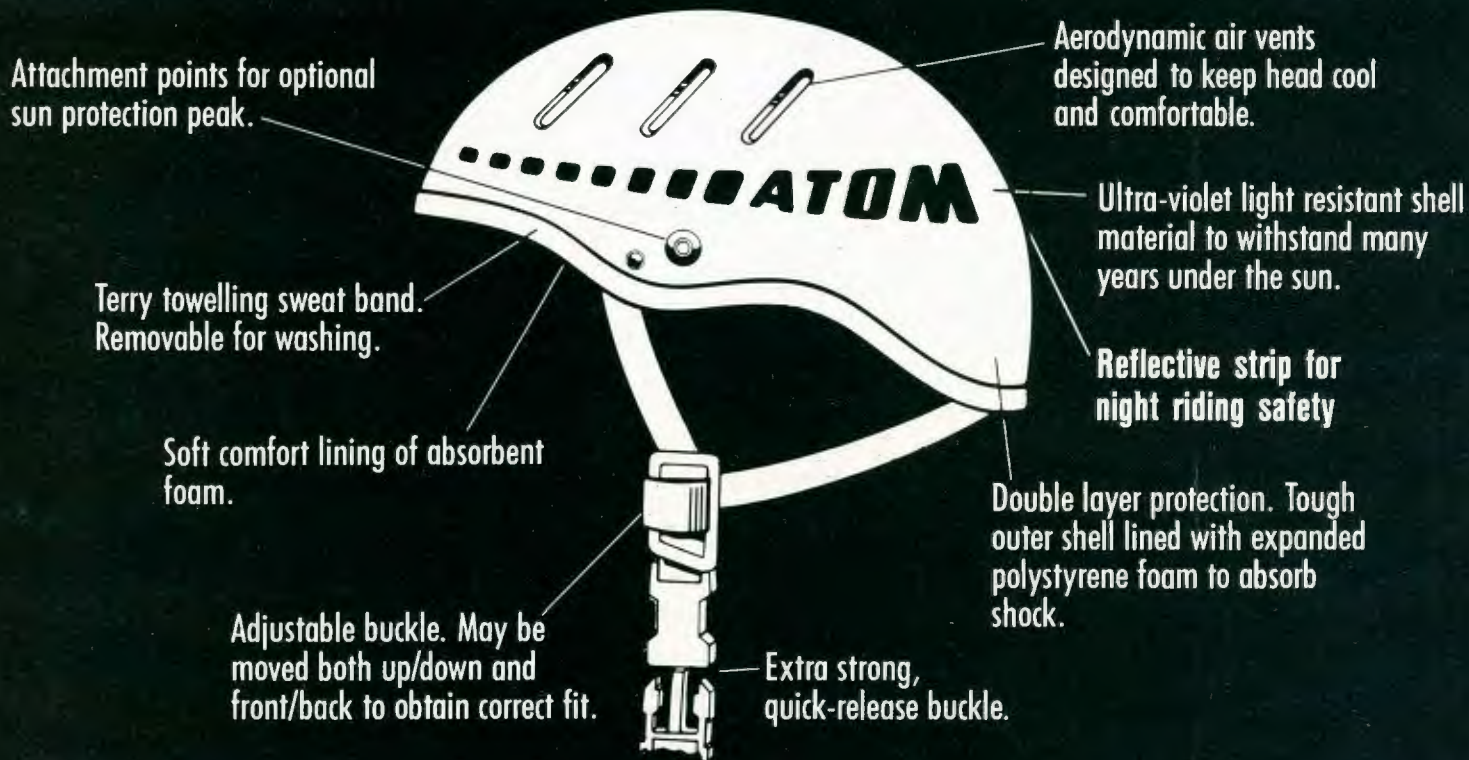
Paris-Brest-Paris was three years away but Oppy got to work right away just to get the feel of what it's like to be in the saddle for more than two days and two nights without rest. Manager Bruce Small planned long rides to "test the water". The most notable being a ride from Sydney to Melbourne which established a new record for cycling of 39 hours, 42 minutes. That ride alone gave the intrepid Opperman the knowledge he sought.

He now knew of the fluctuations of energy, the variations of body temperature and the tricks of a tired and ill trained mind such as: imagining one was in a competitive bicycle race, that the others had ridden away in the never ending chase; the lights of passing cars blur-

The first wet night is over and the rain has eased. But the riders still retain their wet weather clothing as they approach the 600 km turn at Brest.



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**The French cheer for brave Oppy as the Australian hero breaks away with only 48 km to the finish. It was destined not to fully succeed. He was caught just 5 km from the finish. But there was still one chance – the historic five-up sprint at Parc des Princes.**

ring tired eyes which see curious shadows transformed into animals and humans that suddenly spring out of the darkness to cause horrible suspense only to disappear just before the moment of collision; the pleading with a compassionate manager for just a quick spell – a lie-down, say, for just ten minutes – or a quick “keep pedalling” knowing that to stop in a flat spell would be fatal and that resistance would return in the morning.

So Oppy pedalled on with his head in the clouds and legs as long as beanstalks. But repeating the phrase over and over again - this is for Paris-Brest-Paris.

It was also for Paris-Brest-Paris that Opperman turned down a string of lucrative contracts when he returned to Europe in 1931 and finished 12th in the Tour de France. Instead of racing after the Tour he kept on training. To the modern day racer Oppy's plan of 1931 will sound ludicrous. He trained from Paris to Brest and back again.

When he lined up with the other hopefuls for the historic Paris-Brest-Paris, Opperman was probably the most confident rider in the field. He certainly had many reasons for confidence having finished 12th in the Tour de France, and knowing he had prepared well. But he also was the only one who had no team-

mates to shield him when he was tired, water him when he was thirsty, or help him to retrieve the peloton of riders should he puncture or break some vital piece of equipment.

The race start was at the Pont Noir, in the beautiful, leaf-sheltered road near St Cloud on the outskirts of Paris. The crowds would have done any Tour de France start justice. Not even the chill of rain clouds seemed to disturb them. Team managers bustled about their charges whispering last minute instructions like racecourse touts, as the rain began to fall.

Opperman calmly appraised his opponents, “What a prospect,” shrugged Oppy to Manager Bruce Small. Beside him stood the powerful Belgian Demuyssere, munching a bar of chocolate; Nicholas Franz was fussing over his toe straps and Maurice De Waele unconcernedly spoke to a friend. As Oppy looked further over the field of known distance riders his courage melted away and he whispered to a compatriot, “What fools those journalists were to make me favourite against these fellows.” His friend's reply was never heard. Maurice Garin, the race winner 30 years previously, fired the starters gun amidst a farewell cheer.

The early kilometres were fast and it became evident that the experienced riders wished to be thoroughly warmed up before they became too wet. Soon they reached Versailles, St Cyr and Trappes. By the time they reached Roudan wind and rain were lashing their faces

and the 28 riders settled down to a steady pace, each eager to gain as much shelter as possible. It seemed the riders were destined to suffer so they conserved energy for whatever lay ahead.

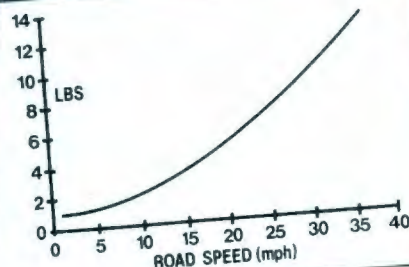
The hours and the kilometres slipped by, thrashed by constant rain the riders had to wear wet weather clothing to protect them from the elements and the water thrown up from the wheels. Dark clouds brought on darkness at an early hour and soon the following cars played tricks on the wet road. As the peloton went into dips on undulating road, or negotiated sharp turns the riders would encounter complete darkness which brought frantic brake grabbing and shouting until the illumination reappeared. Managers would hurriedly check the peloton to see if any rider had slipped away in the darkness. As the intensity of the wind and rain increased so did the silence of the riders. Very few spoke, content to pedal against the elements like animals in search of shelter from the howling wind.

The riders bumped along the cobblestones eager for the sight and cheers of villagers, who with lanterns in hand would shout encouragement to the riders then quickly merge with the darkness.

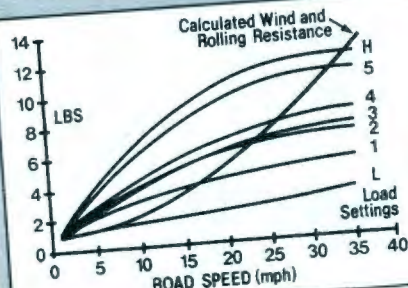
There was only one fugitive on the first night. Dutch rider Van Rysselborghe had slipped away in the darkness and before the bunch had realised it he was gone and established a long lead. When morning came the teams sprung into action and the escapee was quickly retrieved.



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\*\* Load curve testing verified by Joseph L. Garbini, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of Washington.

At the first control check Oppy heard that Mazeyrat and the Belgian "powerhouse" Demuyssere were to quit the race. Mazeyrat had punctured three times and had "blown" in the fight to regain position against the wind. But he could not believe that Belgain Demuyssere was to give up for he feared him more than any other rider. He checked again and again when the field left control but he was not to be seen.

As the peloton of riders approached Brest the field became restless. It was now after dawn and the wind blew with cyclonic force from the sea. It became obvious that someone was to be unloaded before reaching Brest. Fifty kilometres from the port, Nik Frantz from Luxembourg attacked, but every rider was on alert and he failed to achieve any objective, on reaching Brest the riders were bunched and had two minutes to sign the register, procure a food bag and prepare for the return to Paris.

In two minutes it seemed confusion reigned supreme. Managers were demanding, officials were screaming and the cyclists flapped their arms like Dutch windmills. Soon the riders were on their way. The sea was behind them and so was the gale. Taking encouragement from the tail wind, they began to test the field and some would string the riders out into a mile long snake.

After what seemed like an eternity the wind dropped, the rain clouds melted away and for the first time in 34 hours the riders took off their waterproof gear. With the sunshine Oppy came to life and he began to assess the remaining strength of the peloton and concluded to would take the second night to sort the weak from the strong. Reasoning on this basis he was content to roll along throughout the day and keep the favourite under surveillance.

It was midnight on the second dreadful night and Oppy along with the others were fighting not only the road but sleep. Riders were staring fixedly ahead, silent figures rolling from right to left in monotonous fashion, occasionally one would be overcome by sleep and riding off the road would crash in the grass verge. Oppy strived to remain awake by finding something to occupy his mind. He shouted to the others to wake up in an attempt to stop the swaying figures, he whistled and thought of his friends back home in Australia and somehow survived through the most difficult night of his life.

With dawn the sleep fell away from his eyes and resisting body. The light revealed that fifteen men had endured the dreadful ordeal and remained together with Paris only 200 kilometres away.

It was just before the control at Rennes that the Australian received information that made his mind react in fear of defeat. Flamand Bonduel rode up

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beside him and started speaking, Oppy could not understand him and he indicated he should talk to a man who understood language in his car.

Oppy approached the man at Rennes. He said Bonduel indicated he intended to withdraw but before he did he wished Opperman to know that the Alycon and Louvet teams intended to amalgamate against him. Oppy's mind was in turmoil, this after a thousand kilometres of sheer agony. Encouraged by Bruce Small he decided to attack himself. He went to the front and stamped hard on the pedals but every time he opened a gap it was closed and then he would repeat the effort.

When the riders reached the last control, 100 kilometres from Paris, Opperman's tactics appeared to be paying off. The quickened pace had postponed the combine plans for the time being at least.

While the remaining riders took off extra clothing and prepared for the confrontation Oppy noticed that only one looked fresh and that was the big French cyclist Marcel Bidot. Shortly resuming after the compulsory stop, Oppy noticed the Acyon manager speak to Bidot and he prepared to move up to a position closer to his back wheel. It was too late. He jammed and a 100 metre gap to the peloton opened up. Opperman was trapped. With three teams on

his wheel it would be madness to chase yet if he did not Bidot must surely win. Opperman decided to chase until he dropped content with the knowledge that he would retire having given of his best.

He took off. When he next saw Bidot he was beside the roadside changing a tyre. This was his big chance. He jammed again but the field followed his wheel. He eased up and then jammed again and this time he was on his own. Soon he was three minutes ahead. The big combine of Louet, Bidot, Frantz, Pancera, DeWaele and Decroix was quickly organised and sent in pursuit. At fifteen miles to the finish they were one minute behind. At 12 miles to go four of the combine were 30 seconds in arrears.

Opperman was now racing like one possessed but soon heard the noise of car horns and voices. It could only mean one thing. He was caught. In that moment he was overwhelmed with bitterness and almost sobbing in disappointment then his feelings changed to rage and he tried to break away again, just three miles away was the finish and the four gallant retrieving riders stuck to the plucky Australian like glue.

Into the big cement bowl known as Parc-des-Princes, that had been the scene of a thousand fiery finishes, sped five riders led by Decroix, Louyet was next, followed by Bidot, Pancera and

Opperman in the rear. Suddenly Bidot weakened and Pancera made his bid. Oppy followed the wheel and just before the final bank moved around Pancera to hit the front. He had wheels all around him and as a non-sprinter felt he must be beaten. But no it was his wheel that reached the line first. After riding a 1,200 kilometres single stage race he had won in a sprint. It was unbelievable.

For Hubert Opperman, from Melbourne, Australia, a dream had come true. He had beaten the most powerful teams of European endurance racing single handed.

Next day he was the hero of the French and cables were pouring in from all over Europe, Brussels, Amsterdam, Paris, Milan – the whole world wanted to see this remarkable athlete.

A total of seven races from Paris to Brest and return were held:

1891 Charles Terront (France) rode the 1,200 kilometres in 71 hours 22 min. Other placings: 2 Jiel Laval 79:27, 3 Coullibert, 4 Marti and 5 Corre.

1901 Maurice Garin (France) in 52 hours 11 min followed by G Rivere, 3 Aucouturier.

1911 Emile Georget (France) in 50 hours 13 min 24 secs, 2 E Lapize, 3 E Paul.

1921 Louis Mottiat (Belgium) in 55 hours 7 min 8 secs, 2 Christophe, 3 Masson.

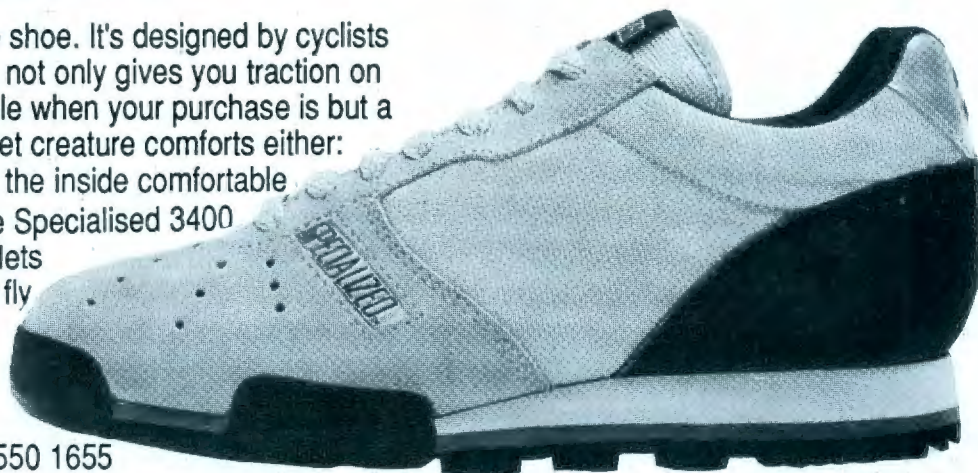
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1931 Hubert Opperman (Australia) in 49 hours 23 min 30 secs, 2 Louyet, 3 De-croix.

1948 Albert Hendrickx (Belgium) in 41 hours 36 min 42 secs, 2 Neuville, 3. Fazio.

1951 Maurice Diot (France) in 38 hours 55 mins 45 secs, 2 Muller, 3 M Hendricks.

Even though the last race was held in 1951 the spirit of this great event is not dead. The Audax Club Parisien, of which Sir Hubert Opperman is the head patron, still carries on the tradition of Paris-Brest-Paris as a touring ride in which cyclists from across the world, including Australians take part.

Forty years later, he returned to Paris-Brest-Paris as Sir Hubert Opperman, OBE, MBE Australian Ambassador to Malta and at La Celle-Saint-Cloud, gave the signal for the start of the cycle ride to an impressive field of cycle tourists.

All the riders of different age were told that they had to try and cover the distance in less than ninety hours, which was within reach of everyone's possibilities, but irrespective of how long the tourers took to cover the distance it proved that Paris-Brest-Paris is alive and flourishing.

Sir Hubert was the guest of honour of the organisers and prior to the start he



Oppy, 27 years, at the zenith of his racing career.

recalled memories of the past and looked forward to the professionals again taking an interest in long distance road races.

The former favourite with the French public was at his nostalgic best and his

reappearance was taken up by the French press. The following extract is a translation from the French paper *Le Telegramme* of September, 1971:

*Oppy, as he was known to the French sporting public in the thirties, was full of excitement, but this did not prevent him from making comparisons between the different eras. "France then," he recalled, "was in full deflation. Unemployment was widespread. Fortunately things have now changed".*

Oppy regretfully noted that professional cyclists now ignore such races as Paris-Brest-Paris where a cyclist could show their worth and real ability in stamina, courage and training.

"I do not mean to say that today's champions are less worthy than those of former days, for Merckx in 1931 would have still been Merckx and most probably the best of them all. Nevertheless, many things have changed. Distance has been sacrificed for speed. I recollect that as far back as our days, with the advent of the derailleur (gear changer), an incredible improvement had been done in the domain of speed. One cannot ignore speed but I feel positive that cycling needs important events such as Paris-Brest-Paris to maintain its standing. I do wish the young generation make an effort to organise high endurance tests, for, in cycling as well as life, progress is not achieved without toil."

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# REPCO



# CYCLES



## What makes a good bicycle transportation programme?

It's grim humour to read Alan Parker's complaints (in his article *Speed for some or safety for all?* **Freewheeling** Jan/Feb 1988) that the NAASRA bikeway design manual doesn't give cyclists a fair share of the road space. For years he has demanded that the motoring establishment divide the road space between cyclists and motorists; now he has discovered how little road space the motorists will give him. Therefore he's publishing pseudo-scientific arguments for cyclists to try to win more road space from motorists. Are his arguments reasonable?

He claims that narrower motor lanes will make motoring safer because a 10% reduction in motorist speed causes a 40% reduction in fatal accidents. Contrary to his argument, such evidence as exists supports the principle that motoring is safer on wide lanes than on narrow ones. The argument is politically foolish as well because motorists won't believe it. They will say, "You say you want to delay us by making motoring more dangerous with narrow lanes, and your explanations are foolish. Now you're telling us that it's all for our own good? Go to Hell!" Scientific considerations are as important as political ones. Parker argues for bikeways and specially for bike paths. He has to; to do otherwise would contradict his logic, emotions and constituency. However, the scientific evidence is that bike lanes probably cause more accidents than they prevent and that bike paths are much more dangerous than normal roadways, producing higher accident rates and requiring lower speeds. There is no reasonable scientific division of opinion on these questions; the division is between those who evaluate the evidence and those, like Parker, who have an emotional commitment to bikeways that transcends reality. Parker has felt the sting of this unanswerable criticism; he now argues that most cyclists like bike paths.

As Parker phrased it: "Should we listen to the outspoken individual or listen to more people's opinions by using sophisticated interviewing methods and group discussion techniques?... (the latter) is one way of overcoming individual bias and providing cycling groups with a better idea of what cyclists' needs are." (**Freewheeling**, March-April 1987). The errors in Parker's argument show that he doesn't understand the issues. There has been no controversy about public opinion; both sides agree

that the general public while needs must be measured by objective criteria, such as safety and speed. Public opinion, especially misguided public opinion, is not the proper judge of scientific matters. For all his pretense of scientific practice, Parker is adamantly anti-scientific; he bases his programme on public opinion rather than on the known facts and principles.

The discussion is whether bikeways better supply safe, fast, inexpensive and convenient urban transportation than do roads. That is a scientific question that must be judged by scientific criteria, and the answer is that they don't. No amount of public opinion will change that; Nature doesn't give a damn about popular opinion. As Francis Bacon wrote at the dawn of the modern age, "Nature, to be commanded, must first be obeyed."

The study of cyclists' opinions that Parker praises so highly (The Melbourne-based Spectrum Research Report) proves one thing with acceptable scientific accuracy. It proves that most cyclists are wimps. That is, they are so frightened of cars that they would rather be killed or paralysed on the bike path than safe on the road. They would be far better off if they had the courage to be safe. However, since Parker can't tolerate that admission he has to tell us fairy stories about his opponents who would rather use the roads.

Parker tells us two fairy stories to avoid the admission that his constituents are wimps. The first fairy story elevates his opponents to superhuman status, making them people who can handle the dangers of motor traffic with skills unattainable by normal humans. That is, by breeding me with Margaret Thatcher to make a race of superhuman cyclists. Look at **Freewheeling's** cartoon of that hermaphroditic monster causing a traffic jam. Of course it's a fairy story. When the road is overloaded and is too narrow for motorists to overtake cyclists, any cyclist can cause a traffic jam. A fool can do it just as well as a genius can, and an ignorant fat person from Parker's constituency will do it better than a racing cyclist from among his opponents.

Parker's second fairy story describes his opponents who want to protect their rights to use the road as ideological fanatics, as "an ideologically-motivated cadre of traffic-happy, muscle-bound touring freaks who are contemptuous of those new to cycling." For those who don't understand Parker's phrases, he is saying, in contemptuous tones, that those who want to protect their right to use the roads are obeying false ideas

rather than acting in their own best interests and in the best interests of beginning cyclists. They ought, according to Parker, be advocating cycling on bikeways instead of on roads because that is best for them. Unfortunately, Parker's argument turns against himself. Since cycling on roadways provides a better combination of speed, safety, cost and convenience than cycling on bikeways, his opponents are exercising their best judgement in protecting their right to use the roads, while Parker and his constituents, who advocate the worse choice largely because they fear and hate motor traffic, are the ideological fanatics.

Of course, Parker cries out that he is a staunch defender of cyclists' right to use the roads, but his claim is controverted by his own words. The person who says that cyclists should ride on bike paths rather than on roads is telling the world that cyclists' right to use the roads is important only where bike paths are not provided. Parker even explicitly admits the point by quoting a prediction that bike-path cyclists will support the right to use the roads because they "would still have to use the roads to some extent." In other words, only where they have to use the roads is it important to have the right to use them.

Parker's programme has no scientific validity, but that doesn't mean that we shouldn't have a cycling programme. Rather than a programme that contradicts the known facts, we need one that fits them. Since cycling on roads is better than cycling on bike paths, we need to teach people how to cycle safely on roads. Rather than wasting money on bike paths we need to concentrate that which is available for cycling purposes on correcting the deficiencies of the present roadway system. We now possess all the scientific knowledge needed to do both of these; it's just a question of implementation.

John Forester  
Sunnyvale California USA

Two of my recent articles have argued that cyclists should be able to use freeways, a cyclists right Forester enjoys in California. Other articles have argued for better conditions in the kerb lane we all **share with cars**. I have never advocated the exclusive bike lanes, hated by Forester, except for school children. However, I do object to the term wimp for traffic shy cyclists. If my wife says she does not like heavy traffic on a route I don't call her a wimp but help her find another route. I accept that other





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people's tolerance of heavy traffic may be different from mine.

Forester intolerantly states "most cyclists are wimps. That is they are so frightened by cars they would rather be killed or paralysed on a bikepath than safe on a road." What nonsense bikepaths go along seashores, rivers, through forests and parks away from noise and petrol fumes. My wife and I have barbecues or sit and watch the sun go down near the paths we use. What makes bikepaths popular is that they are different to roads. So what is he grizzling about?

What he does not understand is that we are different, some cyclists are traffic happy, some traffic wary, some traffic shy and each person can be traffic safe in their own way if they are careful. Forester's adult cycling course is great but it's a pity he can't get somebody to take it up in Australia. It would be more constructive if he and his supporters would promote that course and get off my back.

Alan Parker  
Footscray, VIC, 3011

### Gravity powered

It is not 100 percent clear to me just what Mr Cripps (*Parts and Accessories*, issue 47) calls downhill racers, however if you grab the latest copy of an American BMX mag, you are sure to find a snippet on this type of racing. The biggest news of late came in October, where not only was an official race given coverage, the mag advised of the founding of the "Gravity Powered Vehicle Association", to organise and govern this (very) exciting sport.

Full fairings on the bikes, cable TV coverage, sponsors, prize money and speeds of 85 mph were the order of the day, down the 4 mile road.

Now come on! If they can do that, so can we, yes? Well, I mean, there's me, and Cec, so that's two interested already. How about YOU? Let's get something going!

Tavis Campbell  
6 Albany Crt  
Wantirna, VIC 3152

### Help!

I am writing to you in the hope that you may be able to help me find out more about my father's attempts and wins in the 1930's.

His name is Graham Nitschke. He was born in South Australia in 1916.

In November, 1935 he set a new world record on 2,000 miles in 11 day's daily rides. I'd like to find out if this record has been broken. My father was a keen and well achieved cyclist in his younger days and kept up his interest. On his death by cancer in October this year he still had a ten speed cycle on his back porch.

Can any reader trace some more facts for me? I'd appreciate hearing from you.

June Roll  
5 Patrick Street  
Lowood, QLD 4311

### Helmet Standards

Alan Parker's article in the Nov/Dec issue was a fair report of the Queensland Institute of Technology findings on bicycle helmets. However, I would like to make the following points in relation to the article:

1. The QIT report recommends changes to bicycle helmet standards but the report also says that:

*A significant finding of the post crash work undertaken was the protective effect of bicycle hel-*

*met, particularly where the crash involved another vehicle."*  
(p. vii)

2. The study was conducted between June 1985 and June 1986. The children's helmet market has changed considerably since then - helmets are much smaller and lighter. The report describes the differences between adults' and children's heads and the theoretical implications for helmet standards. It does **not** show that current Standards Mark helmets provide inadequate protection.

3. The statement that SAA has had its funding cut is incorrect. Last year the Association received a Commonwealth government grant of \$3.1 million representing 22% of our income. The grant for the 1987/88 financial year is \$3.3 million. Other sources of income include publication sales, membership subscriptions, and Quality Assurance and Certification schemes. A review of past annual reports reveals steady increases in these areas also.

Janet Leslie  
Executive Officer  
Committee CS/14 Lightweight Protective Helmets

I am glad the SAA has not had a funding cut and received more funds. Perhaps now we may get a suitable standard for small children's helmets. It is sad to see little kids wearing helmets that are much too big or will fall off the head in an accident. A good helmet for 1 to 4 year olds carried on child seats is the Li'l Bell Shell and any new standard should allow helmets of this type onto the market and similar helmets for 5 to 9 year olds. Such helmets would both be lighter in weight and provide better protection over the vulnerable temple area.

Alan Parker  
Footscray VIC 3011

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## International travel

I have recently returned from a cycling tour of Europe and would like to pass on a few candid observations of our time there. Both of us, in our early 30's, freighted our entire gear, which included hand built custom touring bikes made in Perth, and good Aussie touring/camping gear to London, where we trained and ferried it to our starting point in Norway. Apart from an encounter with disgruntled railway porters at Gatwick, our machines and sundry equipment arrived intact and unblemished, thanks to two fully enclosed bike boxes we bought in Sydney.

From Bergen we rode East to Voss and occasionally took trains on our way to Oslo. A vertical descent through Denmark, Belgium, France and Italy and thence to Austria completed the 4 month trip, with a few side trips to include the Loire valley of France on the way. By and large, the majority of serious touring cyclists that we met were

Australian or New Zealanders and some were veterans of 6-7,000 km and 6 months on the road. They turned up in Norway, France and Italy and seemed to be doing it the way we were – by camping. Some of the highlights were:

- Attending the Europe's first International Bike Expo in Paris (we are certain we were the only Aussie's there!) and being given very royal treatment because of it (we have several items from the Salon International du Cycle).

- Having an Italian policeman stop 4 directions of traffic at an intersection while he "chatted" to us about our trip and casually showed us his weekend racing photo's.

- Riding specifically to Nevers, France to purchase a new pedal and shoe system from TIME, which had been on show in Paris for the first time at the Expo, and being given special treatment because it was the first Australian purchase of such a system.

- Dealing direct with Klein Bicycle Corp in USA and being given incredible

service from the manager, whom after several phone calls from Europe, still maintained his cordial manner. Hence, a new Klein Quantum frame set waiting at Vienna airport ready to ship home. (Also an Australian first according to Klein.)

- The wonderful generosity of Italian people generally and their intuitive appreciation of the distance and topography we had traversed.

- And finally, a truly incredible couple in Belgium, who spied us outside in the rain, opposite their house, fixing a puncture, and asked us in for coffee, cakes, more coffee and our life story. It turned out the husband was president of the local cycle club and much as clubs do in Australia; had regular rides every Sunday morning.

They were so endearing and we were so appreciative!

We are already planning a return journey for '89 and want to make one observation – Don't wait until you think you have enough money saved up – you probably never will and you'll never get there – just go with what you've got and make the most of it.

Ian Hill & Donna Buckley  
Mt Hawthorn 6016 WA

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## SUPPORT FOR THE LONG WHEELBASE BIKE

I saw Ian Grayson's Ho Chi Minh bike at the Glenlyon contest in January this year after they had been ridden from Adelaide. I was most impressed with their stability under load and the way the luggage tray eliminates the hassles associated with loading panniers. Using tandem and mountain bike parts they could be the next generation of touring bikes (the forks in particular need to be extra strong).

Alan Parker's comments (Issue 41) were too harsh – on a bad unsealed road a two-wheeler is more stable than a three wheeler. Finally, the Ho Chi Minh bike has the appropriate technology virtue that it can be created out of two wrecked bikes which could otherwise yield one conventional bike.

Finally, something I would like to see in future *Freewheelings* is an article on the new retention system for panniers. I've heard of Christie's Superlock (?) system, and (US) *Bicycling* had a recent pannier survey which mentioned other systems on new panniers; but what I, and many others, would like is to see how they work and how to, if possible, upgrade our existing panniers. (Obviously I'm not ready yet to get a Ho Chi Minh bike of my own!)

Alan Sargent  
Warragul VIC 3820



# Classifieds

## TOUR MATES

**T**OUR MATES is a FREE service for readers wishing to find companions for bicycle trips and holidays. Entries are limited to thirty words and there is a charge of thirty cents per word for any long entries exceeding the limit. Payment (if applicable) must accompany your listing. Name, address and phone number should be attached for verification purposes.

**VICTORIA - CAPE YORK** Companions wanted for all or part of a mountain bike traverse of the entire Great Dividing Range. Depart early April, arrive Cape York early July. Contact Russell Moore (02) 608 1125.

**NTH QUEENSLAND.** Companion(s) wanted for leisurely tour starting July 1988, Cooktown to Lune River. Please write to Rob Wadsworth, Margate TAS, 7153 or phone (002) 672 443

**CAIRNS TO PERTH.** Wanted companion for possible independent ride in the Bicentennial tour Cairns to Perth starting June 1988. I am 60, single and a fairly experienced rider. Contact Ken Everett, PO Box 16 Shannon, New Zealand.

**PERTH TO SYDNEY** (Return possible). Wanted, companion for trip to Sydney (at least as far as Port Augusta). Contact Mike Madlener, 13 Hawter Rd, Glen Forrest 6071 WA. Phone (09) 298 8922.

**THE WORLD** We are a family of three seeking the company of a couple prepared to join us on a world cycle tour with no time limit. As we are Australian and experienced cyclists with half of Australia to our credit including the Nullarbor, it is preferable that the couple be experienced cyclists as well. Our anticipated departure date is October 1988. If you are sincerely interested please write to us including a photograph: Mr & Mrs J Green c/- Post Office, Emerald QLD 4720.

## ACCOMMODATION

**WOULD YOU** like to meet other bicycle tourists when you tour? If so, join the Cyclists' Accommodation Directory. This is a list of cyclists who are prepared to exchange simple hospitality in their home for similar hospitality in other cyclists' homes. Write to Bicycle Australia, PO Box K499 Haymarket 2000 giving your name, address phone and your location, eg 10 km NE Ballarat PO. A donation to cover postage and photocopying would also be appreciated.

## HIRE

**RENT-A-CYCLE TASMANIA** 10-speed low gearing, all frame sizes, ladies and gents. Completely equipped for touring. Postal bookings accepted. Seven years hiring experience. Brochure, rates, your questions. 36 Thistle St Launceston, Tasmania Phone (003) 44 9779

**BICYCLE HIRE SYDNEY.** Inner City Cycles hires ten-speed touring bikes, mountain bikes, racks pannier bags, high security locks and lights. Contact ICC 31 Glebe Pt Rd Glebe NSW 2037 (02) 660 6605.

## TRAVEL & TOURS

**BICYCLE AUSTRALIA IN '88** The national bicycle tour celebrating the first century of bicycle touring in Australia. 10,838 kilometres from Cape York to Perth along the Around Australia Bicycle Route. Join in for all or part of the ride. Write to Bicycle Australia PO Box K499 Haymarket NSW 2000

**TOUR NORTH AMERICA!** Bikecentennial, America's bicycle travel association, offers the greatest selection available. Choose from Rocky Mountain off-road adventures or country inn tours in Vermont. Camp along the West Coast or join an expedition to Alaska. Our 14th year of 90-day Trans America tours; we still feature small groups and carefully researched routes. FREE CATALOGUE. Bikecentennial, PO Box 8308-V2, Missoula, MT 59807, USA. Phone (406) 721 1776.

**CHINA - CYCLING TOURS** From 5 to 15 days. Departing regularly from Hong Kong. Generous group discounts. For brochure write to: BikeChina Tours 14 Hyde Hill Rd, Harkaway VIC 3806.

## CYCLING HOLIDAYS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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**AUSTRALIA'S BEST** bicycle rides. Australia's national bicycle touring association provides rides from three days to a week or longer. Vehicle supported and self contained tours. Small groups, experienced support crew. Send for your brochure. Bicycle Australia PO Box K499 Haymarket NSW 2000 (046)27 2186.

**SA Cycle Route Maps** Barossa Valley, Fleurieu Peninsula, South East, Riverland, Yorke Peninsula, Lower Mid-Jorth and Kangaroo Island. \$8.35 each including postage. Cyclists handbook of South Australia - everything the visiting cycle tourist needs to know - \$5.85 each including postage. SA Touring Cyclists Association Inc PO Box 1508 Adelaide SA 5001.

## MAIL ORDER

**SEND FOR** your mail order catalogue now! Bicycle Australia stocks a wide range of bicycle books from Australia and overseas and an ever increasing range of touring guides of Australia and New Zealand. Write to Bicycle Australia PO Box K499 Haymarket NSW 2000 for your catalogue enclosing \$2.00 which will be refunded on your first order.

## WANTED

**ANCIENT BICYCLES**, parts and memorabilia for restoration and preservation. Contact Paul Farren (03) 241 4453.

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# National Calendar

Club secretaries, race directors and event organisers help us to publicise your event by sending details to us early. If you are planning a ride in the coming twelve month period you should send your notice to **Freewheeling National Bike Events Calendar** now. We publish advance notice of all bicycle events both competitive and non competitive but because of our publication lead-times we need your copy at least two months in advance. Send your copy to PO Box K26 Haymarket NSW 2000 or phone it through on (02) 264 8544.

## COMPETITIVE EVENTS

### MARCH

**Saturday 19 to Saturday 27 Australian Track Championships** Shepparton Vic.

**Saturday 26 Great Lakes Triathlon** Forster NSW The full bit! Swim 3.8 km, cycle 180 km, run 42.2 km. Contact: (065) 45 5488.

**Sunday 27 Bicentennial Veterans Tour de Canobolas A \$4000** race for veterans aged over 35 years. To be held near Orange NSW over a fairly tough 50 km course. This event will be part of the Apple Country Fair. For details contact Cec Cripps, 19 Stayner Street, Chelsea 3196 Victoria, enclosing address, number of accompanying persons, and their own birth date.

**Sunday 27 World Pennyfarthing Championships.** The annual Evandale (TAS) Country Fair this year will host riders from the USA, UK and NZ as well as local champs who will ride their high wheelers in an exciting program of races held throughout the day. For details contact Penny Tuck (003) 91 8178.

### APRIL

**Monday 4 to Friday 8 Simpson Desert Challenge.** Run for the first time in 1987 this event is a gruelling 380 km race across the Simpson Desert in central Australia.

Entries close 1 March. Forms and details from Energy Promotions PO Box 20 Mona Vale NSW 2103. Phone (02) 997 8011.

**Sunday 10 1988 Corporate Team Triathlon.** The Fay, Richwhite/Business Review Weekly challenge to the business community. 500 metre swim, 15 km cycle and 5 km run. Contact: (02) 232 1255.

**Sunday 10 Bio Organics Great Race.** Gold Coast Q. Swim 2 km, cycle 75 km, run 20 km. Contact (075) 52 0027. **Sunday 17 1988 Fat Tyre Classic** Australia's premier mountain bike event organised by the Fat Tyre Flyers club. To be held in the Melbourne area. Race and Trails events for Expert, novice, womens, under 16 and over 16 classes. Contact Glen Roche (03) 560 0969, Mick Jamison (03) 763 2162.

**Monday 18 to Saturday 23 Beneficial Finance Ultra Tri 6.** Organised by the Stirling Apex club in South Australia. Program: Day 1 - 154 km cycle; Day 2 - 217 km cycle; Day 3 - 39 km canoe paddle; Day 4 - 44 km paddle; Day 5 - 63 km run; Day 6 - 42 km run. Contact:



Brian Scarborough on (08) 212 1166 or (08) 388 5425.  
**Saturday 23 – Monday 25 Mildura District Cycling Centenary.** A weekend of competitive and non-competitive events featuring a three-stage road race, penny farthing race, street parade and club reunions. For full details contact Mike Irwin (050) 22 2670.

## OCTOBER

**16 – 29. Commonwealth Bank Bicentennial Cycle Classic** One hundred and twenty cyclists will ride between Brisbane and Melbourne via Sydney and Canberra on the world's biggest amateur cycling race. Watch this magazine for details, preview and colour coverage. Promoted by Ozwide Sports Promotions (02) 570 3855.

## CLUB CONTACTS

The Australian Cycling Federation and the state cycling federations will direct you to a club in your area if you want to get involved in bicycle road or track racing. Phone numbers and contacts for each state are: **NSW** Margaret Balmer (02) 27 2977; **VIC** George Nelson (03) 328 4391; **QLD** Mike Victor (07) 390 1489; **WA** Mike Poyner (09) 384 4130; **SA** Jean Cook (08) 255 1639; **TAS** Joy Bestwick (003) 31 2712; **NT** Shirley Davis (089) 208 798.

Riders wishing to take out a professional licence should contact the National Secretary of the Australian Professional Cycling Council, Reg Marriner, PO Box 120 North Geelong VIC 3215.



## NON COMPETITIVE EVENTS

### MARCH

**Sunday 20 Pedal for Heart** Starting and finishing at Sydney's Centennial Park this 30 km ride will take participants out to La Perouse and back. Prizes for sponsored riders plus refreshments and entertainment during the morning. For details contact the National Heart Foundation (02) 211 5188.

**Saturday 26. KBTC's Summer Century.** Metric or Imperial century rides organised by the Knox Bicycle Touring Club (Melbourne) starting (and finishing) at Bayswater from 8:00 am. Entry fee \$5.00. Contact Ian (03) 728 3180 or John (03) 729 6405.

**Sunday 27. Mulga Bill's Walaroo and Wombat's Bike Centenary.** A day ride around the Hawkesbury NSW area. 70 or 100 km courses. Part of the Bicentennial Bicycling Program. Contact Paul Hulbert (02) 212 5628 or (045) 76 1396.

### APRIL

**Friday 1 to Monday 4. Easterbike 88.** A four-day rally held over Easter in central Victorian town of Castlemaine and organised by Bicycle Victoria (formerly known as the Bicycle Insitute). Lots of day rides, a display of antique cycles and indoor activities are planned. For details contact Bicycle Victoria (03) 650 2550.

**Friday 1 to Monday 4. Great Eastern Australian Bike Rally.** A four-day cycle rally to be held over Easter in the beautiful Southern Highlands of NSW. One central campsite will be used at Bowral. Day rides to suit all cyclists will explore the area's scenic delights. Other events include a slide night and a tourists trial. For information contact the Bicycle Institute of NSW (02) 212 5628.

**Friday 1 to Monday 4. The Second Canberra Monaro Explorer.** A 256 km vehicle supported loop ride from Goulburn NSW through Canberra and the Monaro region. Contact Bicycle Australia (046) 27 2186.

**Friday 1 to Monday 4. Tour of the Southern Highlands.** The classic Bicycle Australia ride for self sufficient riders. Leader supplied and group catering organised. Penrith NSW to Bundanoon via the Southern Cross Trail and return to Campbelltown via Robertson. Local hall accommodation. Contact Bicycle Australia (046) 27 2186.

**Saturday 9 to Sunday 17. Victoria's Bicentennial Bike Week** Big events planned include: **Sunday 10 Melbourne Autumn Daytour (the MAD ride).** Organised by the Melbourne Bicycle Touring Club. 100 km and 45 km courses; **Saturday 16 Melbourne City Bicycle Parade.** Come and join in. Criterium race and a high-tech show are also included in the Bike Week activities which will run throughout the week in the City Square; **Sunday 17 3KZ Bike-a-thon.** A 25 km morning fun ride along Port Phillip Bay to end on the banks of the Yarra near the city. For full details and entry forms for all events contact Bicycle Victoria (the new name for the Bicycle Institute) (03) 650 2550.

**Sunday 10 Melbourne Autumn Daytour** Organised by the Melbourne Bicycle Touring Club this 100 km or 45 km event is an annual fun ride through the NE outskirts of Melbourne. For details contact (03) 818 4011. Entries in advance or on the day at Hurstbridge railway station from 8 am.

**Saturday 9 to Sunday 17 Melbourne to Daylesford** This ride will be held in conjunction with the Daylesford Spa Festival. Contact the Festival Director: (053) 48 3606 or PO Box 123, Daylesford Victoria 3460.

**Sunday 17 3KZ Bicentennial Bikeathon** A 30 km leisurely family ride from Mordialloc to Batman Park, Melbourne. Starts 9 am Beach Rd near Mordialloc station. Adults \$5.00 Children \$3.00 Family \$10.00. For forms and entry details contact: 3KZ Bicentennial Bikeathon, 24 Victoria St, Carlton VIC 3053.

**Friday 22 to Sunday 24. Commonwealth Bank Festival of Cycling.** A bicycle rally to be held in the beautiful Adelaide hills. Three days of activities centred on a good camping ground with alternate accommodation also available. Day rides, displays, exhibitions and nightly entertainment provided for riders of all ages. Bring the kids and your friends. Watch *Freewheeling* for details or contact (08) 388 8331.

**Saturday 23 to Sunday May 1. The Southern Cross Trail in Victoria.** A three-day or nine-day ride along Bicycle Australia's Southern Cross Trail northwards from Melbourne. Contact (046) 27 2186 for details.

**Saturday 23 – Monday 25 Mildura District Cycling Centenary.** A weekend of competitive and non-competitive events featuring a three-stage road race, penny farthing race, street parade and club reunions. For full details contact Mike Irwin (050) 22 2670.

### MAY

**Saturday 21 200 km Audax Randonnee** Flat terrain through interesting country. Considered an easy ride. Start and finish at Swan Hill PO. Contact Ian Murphy (050) 32 2528.

### JUNE

**Wednesday 1. Bicycle Australia in '88.** This date marks the commencement of Bicycle Australia's major rides programme for the Bicentennial year to celebrate the first century of cycling in this country. Riders may ride all or part of the 10,400 km route around the coast from Cape York to Perth. Contact Bicycle Australia for details on (046) 27 2186.

**Sunday 26. Michelin Century Ride.** A 100 km ride among the Hawkesbury hills north of Hornsby. Prizes and surprises galore. Entry forms and info from the Bicycle Institute of NSW (02) 212 5628.

## OCTOBER

**Saturday 1 to Monday 3. The fifth Four Rivers Ride.** Bicycle Australia's tour of the Hunter Valley region. Sag wagon for luggage, evening meals and breakfast provided and hall accommodation. Contact (046) 27 2186 for details.

**Sunday 16 to Sunday 23. NSW bicycle Week.** Full details from the Bicycle Institute: (02) 212 5628.

**Sunday 16 Green Valley Twin Century.** Sydney's longest running bicycle fitness event. Test your endurance or basic level of fitness on 50, 100, 160 and 200 km courses over mostly level terrain in the western suburbs. Contact the Bicycle Institute of NSW (02) 212 5628.

**23 October. Sydney Spring Cycle.** The Bicycle Institute's annual bicycle bash starts in the city and takes riders on a splendid run out to Parramatta Park via the Harbour Bridge and Lane Cove National Park. Entry fee. Services and full back up provided. Contact the Bicycle Institute (02) 212 5628.

**Saturday 29 to Saturday November 12 Burston & Stokes Centenary Penny Farthing Ride Melbourne to Sydney.** This ride of approximately 100 riders on vintage and veteran cycles will commemorate the epic ride via Gundagai, Bathurst and Katoomba. Entry is opened to riders with pre 1915 cycles or later special interest bikes. Organised by Bicycle Victoria and the Vintage Cycle Club of Victoria. Contact (03) 650 2334.

## NOVEMBER

**Sunday 20. The seventh annual Sydney to the 'Gong Bicycle Ride.** Australia's big one-day fun and fitness ride between Sydney's Belmore Park and Belmore Basin in the City of Wollongong. 87 kilometres of well supported fun complete with entertainment. Entry forms from bike shops during September. See details elsewhere in this magazine.

**Saturday 26 to Saturday 10 December. The Australian Bicentennial Caltex Bike Ride.** This year to celebrate the Bicentenary cyclists will ride en masse from Melbourne to Sydney. Full support. Organised by the people who bring you the Caltex Bike Ride. Enquiries: (059) 78 6000.

## DECEMBER

**Saturday 3 to Sunday 11 Great Victorian Bike Ride** A nine day cycling extravaganza from Swan Hill to Melbourne. Organisers take care of everything from entertainment to vehicles for your luggage. Camping, meals and full medical and mechanical support provided. Organised by Bicycle Victoria (Bicycle Institute of Vic.) Contact (03) 650 2334 for entry forms and prices.

## CLUB CONTACTS

**These clubs regularly run rides in their cities and welcome new comers. Some even publish touring calendars listing forthcoming rides. Contact them for details.**

**Armistide Community Cyclists** (067) 72 8951. **Audax Australia** (03) 435 4437 (02) 608 1125. **Bathurst Bicycle Touring Group** (063) 31 9459. **Bicycle Australia** (046) 27 2186 (after 9pm). **Brisbane Bicycle Touring Association** (07) 369 9326. **Brisbane Mountain Bike** riders interested in forming a club should contact Mike or Kelli on (07) 359 1244. **Canberra Pedal Power ACT** (062) 49 7167. **Geelong Bicycle Touring Club** (052) 96 234. **Illawarra Touring Cyclists' Club** (042) 83 6524. **Melbourne Bicycle Touring Club** (03) 818 4011. **Melbourne eastern suburbs - Knox Bicycle Touring Club** (03) 754 4069. **Eastern Bicycle Touring Club** (03) 762 7928. **Victorian Pedal Clubs** provide fun and training in bike handling skills for children of bicycle riding age. Call for information on a club near you: (03) 337 6399. **Newcastle Cycleways Movement** (049) 46 8298. **Bicycle Institute of New South Wales** (02) 212 5628. **South Australian Touring Cyclists Association** (08) 272 6406 (08) 388 8331. **Sydney region bicycling clubs** can be contacted through the Bicycle Institute of NSW (02) 212 5628. **Tandem Club of Australia** (03) 241 4453. **Cycle Touring Association of West Australia** (09) 330 3659. **Darwin Huffers & Puffers** (089) 81 2141. **Wagga Bicycle Touring Group** (069) 21 6787. **Vintage Cycle clubs** Vintage Cycle Club of Victoria (03) 527 5759. **Southern Veterans (Sydney Vintage Cycle Club)** (02) 587 8017.





## The great challenge – Perth to Sydney by tandem

*Endurance rides*

by BRIAN S CRONIN

VETERAN AGE cyclists recently shattered the Perth to Sydney tandem cycling time, reducing the 22 days 18 hours 30 minutes established by W F (Bill) Read and G Jones of Western Australia in 1933 to an incredible 11 days 6 hours 42 minutes.

The new record makers were Bryan Scott, 54, and John O'Keefe, 47. Incredibly they did it with a support crew of only three (Brian Cronin, Les Willoughby and Bill Mantova. Add the fact that John O'Keefe is totally blind and the feat achieves *Mission Impossible* proportions.

They riders left Perth at 7 am on Monday 16th November and got to Sydney GPO at 4.42 pm on Friday 27th November, travelling via Koolgardie, Norseman, Ceduna, Port Augusta, Clare, Kapunda, Nurioopta, Renmark, Mildura, Balranald, Hay, Narrandera, Wagga Wagga, Gundagai and Goulburn.

It was a venture that took a lot of putting together and hard training over 18 months. Since January of 1987 their

training had been devoted exclusively to endurance riding and they developed a regime of one full hours riding followed by a short break of four minutes maximum until five hours riding had been completed when a full hour break was taken for feeding and rest. Soon they were riding 340-360 kilometres each training day, using a cadence of 80 to 95 revolutions per minute as a guide to gear selection.

Both are cyclists with some achievement, having represented Australia abroad in tandem championships in Europe and Canada, but not as a crew.

Together they are the reigning Australian tandem time trail champions for Australian Blind Sports Federation.

Bryan Scott is a senior lecturer in outdoor activities at Melbourne College and has been involved with teaching blind people to bush walk, canoe and snow ski as well as ride tandems. John O'Keefe lost his sight through an industrial accident about 7 or 8 years ago and has been competing on tandems for around four years.

In 1958 he won the Australian Professional Junior Road Championship, but retired soon after. He made his comeback some years ago after his family had grown. He lives at Traralgon and Bryan Scott has a property at Kalorama both in Victoria.

They attempted the 54 year old record simply because it was there and was a challenge. They also wanted to demonstrate that a blind person was capable of equalling the achievements of a sighted person and to develop the tandem as a legitimate form of cycling.

Keeping the cyclists together was not easy. Common understanding was that a tandem crew would start to fray after eight hours on the bike. As one riders endurance started to wane the other would be using his resources of energy

too quickly, and would also become exhausted with every possibility of a friction developing.

The constant training and truthful communication between the two helped overcome that problem and during the ride they were able to amend the regime if necessary without hassles.

AMI-Toyota, Esso Petroleum, the National Safety Council and Low-Line Caravans co-operated with Guide Dogs For The Blind to be major sponsors. A number of other business people helped out with minor sponsorship. Two worthy of special mention to cyclists were Keywin Pedals (which both riders swear gave them an extra two revs cadence) and Spenco products (for the Spenco Ultra-Lite seat pad and the Spenco Second Skin applied to chafing in the latter stages).

It is significant that John O'Keefe had no difficulty locking into or coming out of the blocks on the Keywin pedals. The only difficulty experienced was early in the ride with small stones in the shoe blocks but that was soon overcome by keeping the surface clean. Both riders believe that the light weight and the freedom of the strapless pedal added miles each day and kept their feet in good shape right through the journey.

They consumed enormous quantities of food and kept their performance within safe riding boundaries at all times despite being on the road for up to nineteen hours each day. It took five hours break each night to get a minimum three hours sleep.

Position on the bike proved to be of paramount importance. In the early stages the sway of the tandem was scrubbing rubber off tyres extremely fast and altogether they used 26 singles on the ride. Adjusting the seat height and tilt gave them better control of the bike and that control allowed a truer line to be followed. This, plus using tyres with a thicker strip, resulted in much less wear and only 6 were used over the latter stages.

Singles were preferred to light weights as it was felt the quicker and easier change was important and extra speed was offered by 250 to 280 gram singles compared to the same weight high pressures.

November was also deliberately chosen. Research into weather patterns indicated more favourable winds, more constant temperatures (especially at night) and there were more daylight hours without extreme heat. This 'home-work' proved invaluable; the results are on the board after a majority of 'experts' sought to change the attempt to earlier months.

Altogether an incredible feat by two real achievers, who have laid down the challenge and hope some other crew take it up.



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