

Freewheeling

Issue 52 Summer Special Edition December 1988 \$3.00

WOMEN ON WHEELS

A special
feature issue
for the new
woman cyclist

BIKES

A man's bike
won't do

TRAVEL

SUMMER READING

Tall and true
tales

BICYCLE RACING

A Freewheeling
guide

AND MORE...



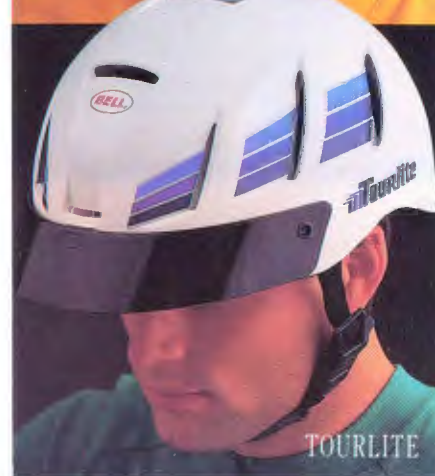
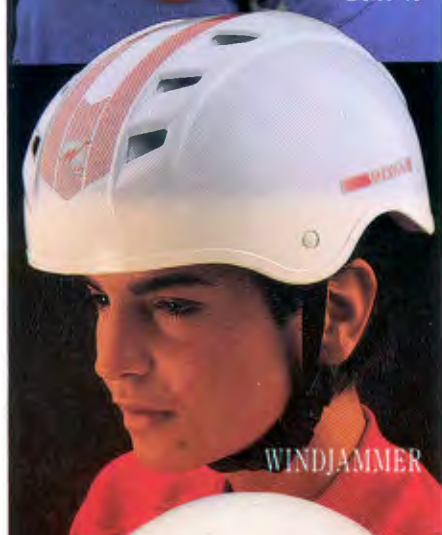
"Any colour you want as long as it's black!"

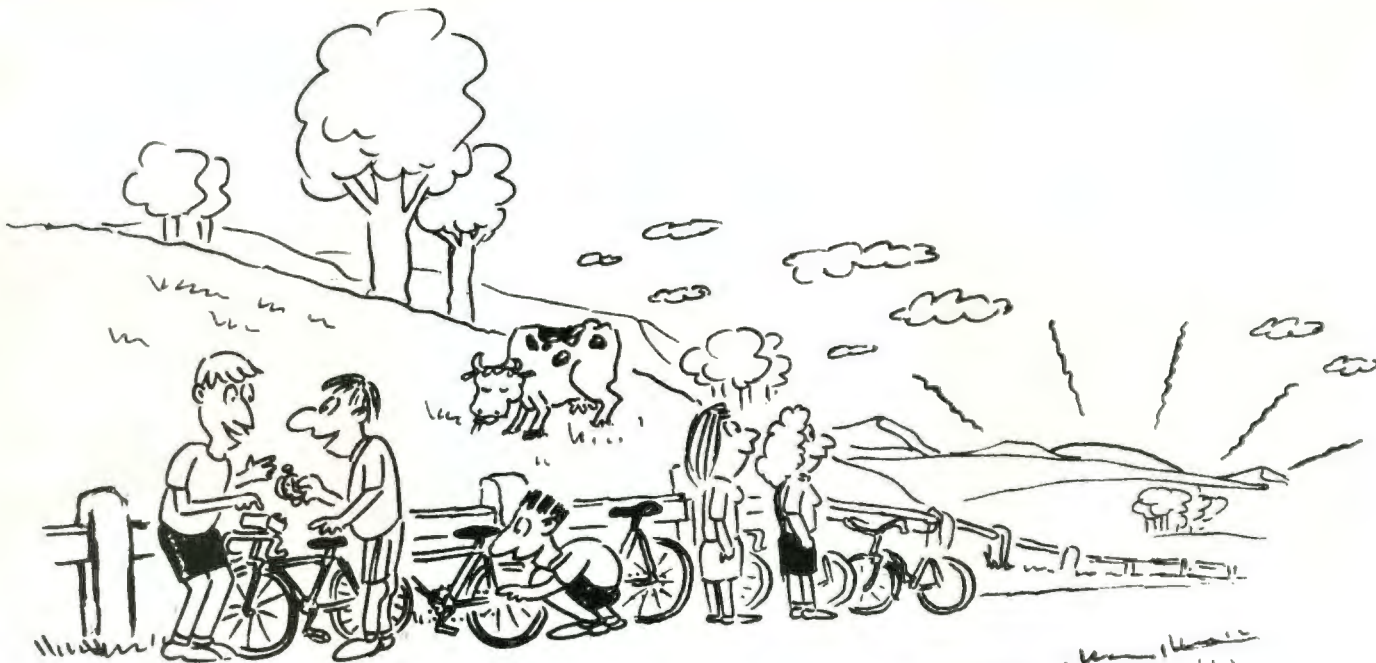
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Our regular features and columns will return next issue.

Freewheeling

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Freewheeling



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Warren Salomon

Which industry in Australia ignores the majority of its potential customers? The answer: the bicycle industry. Even though the numbers of women recreational cyclists has been growing in the last decade (some of the bicycle institutes report as many women members as men) the bicycle business continues to use the sport as its guide and cater almost exclusively for men. Well, only until recently. There are some good machines equipment and accessories now available and there are more on the way.

However, what is most needed is better education on the needs and requirements of women riders so I hope that this special issue on women's cycling will do just that.

For many years I have wanted to publish such an issue of *Freewheeling* but until the right bikes, the right writers and the right information were all available it couldn't be done properly. The tide seems to have turned for women in the Australian cycling scene in the last eighteen months so I hope that this issue will be regarded as an important milestone as it marks not only a point in time where the industry woke up to the fact

that women have different needs to men but it also demonstrates the fact that women themselves are competent and capable enough to make sure that their valid needs are properly heard and understood.

This special summer edition was almost entirely written by women and special credit must go to Julia Thorn who wrote many of the articles and supplied the technical knowledge that a male editor in such circumstances can not provide.

As well as Julia other women such as fitness writer and competitive rider Cyndi Holmes, solo tourers Kay Vockenson and Shelly Hormann have given much good advice and I hope will provide inspiration for both women and men who love the life a wheel.

Possibly one of the most enjoyable tasks I have undertaken in a long time was to put together the story of long-distance record holder Margaret McLachlan. Margaret's perseverance in face of the shoddy treatment dealt to her by the sporting bureaucrats in the sixties is a story which has to be told if only to prevent such treatment of women riders happening again now or in the future.

Margaret's achievement is an inspiration for us all and I believe it demonstrates that it doesn't matter how sophisticated your back up and support effort is it's the human spirit that is so important in our drive towards excellence.

I opened with a comment on our industry's attitude to women in general and so I will close on that too. One of the things I am continually amused by is the way companies still cling to those quaint Victorian terms "Ladies" and "Gents" – these days only seen used on the outsides of toilet blocks or to describe the different models of bicycle in the catalogues or showrooms across the country.

I think it's silly if some one refers to me as a gent (I think the railways still do it when you book sleepers but they will stick to their 19th Century ways resolutely) however, it seems out of place for our high-tech bike industry to be still using such out of date terminology. Maybe the delete key hasn't been located yet on the word processor.

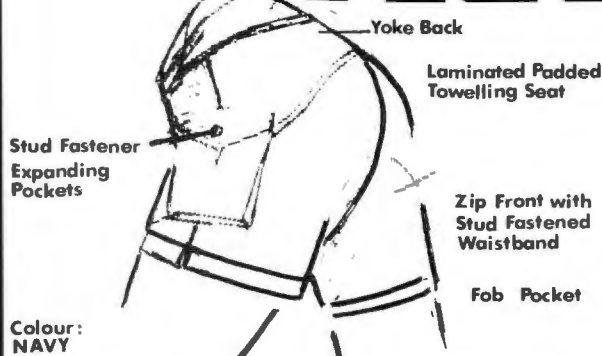
Women are women and they want bikes and equipment designed for them. My hope is that this issue of *Freewheeling* will help them fulfil their needs.

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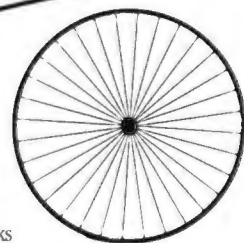
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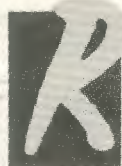
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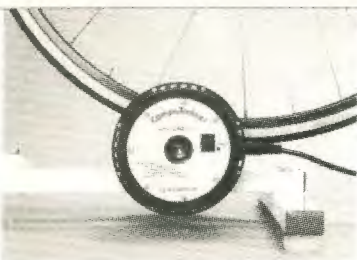
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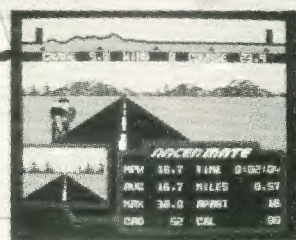
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Olympic Games aftermath

Aussie team does well

IF THERE'S A GREATER SHOW on earth then it's up to Barcelona to provide it in 1992. The Games of the 24th Olympiad showed that sport remains the most powerful world force for bringing people together.

That makes it all important that the reconciliations achieved in Seoul be maintained and expanded in the years ahead.

The 1988 Games of the 24th Olympiad were an outstanding success. Participating were almost 10,000 various athletes in 23 different sports. Not the least was cycling in which a total of 375 competed for 27 cycling medals from nine events on road and track.

Only five small nations failed to return the IOC's invitation to compete. A far cry from Munich in 1972 when top sporting nations like those from black Africa, the United States and Eastern Europe had boycotted the games at different times for various political reasons.

And aside from a few unsavoury events that occur anywhere when an "elite" gather the theme of a good sportsmanship reigned in all its glory.

Television gave the world a deeper and an immediate insight than ever before into what goes to organise and present an Olympic Games. And even if the South Koreans did not amass a great total of medals they revealed themselves as a deeply warm and intelligent people in the face of what many saw as a potentially hazardous situation.

Performances in the various stadiums were outstanding and will be talked about until others try to equal them four years hence.

It seems as though one of the enduring aspects of the Olympic Games is that the pursuit of excellence never ends. In some sports the ultimate remains unknown, in others, like gymnastics, we saw perfection that almost defied the imagination.

Every Olympic Games has its stories of courage balancing those of heartbreak. Nothing changed in that direction in Seoul as Australians Debbie Flintoff-King and lesser known canoeist Grant Davis can testify. Yet Davis proved a shining light for sport and thankfulness, as he clutched his silver medal and counted his blessings in place of the gold originally given to him.

Our cyclists shared in the Australian games successes. Finishing with two silver and two bronze medals a fourth and a fifth, from just six track events. Whilst in the two men's road races we finished sixth and ninth. The woman's 82 km individual road race was decided in a bunch finish in which Australia's three entrants all took part without any success.

That's an unheard of performance from any team.

The Australians were competitive in totality on both road and track. Clearly a credit to the dedication of the riders and their coaches, Charles Walsh (track) and Shayne Bannan (road).

In the qualifying opening round of the Teams Pursuit the young team of Dean Woods, 22, Scott McGrory, 19, Steve McGlede, 19, and Brett Dutton, 22, scorched around the track in 4 min 16.32 sec to shave 1.39 sec off the Olympic and World record of 4 min 17.71 sec set by Czechoslovakia in the United States during the 1986 World Championships. But their new World record lasted barely 40 minutes when the steely reds from the USSR covered the 4000 m distance .22 sec faster.

Thus the brave Aussies were relegated to being the second fastest qualifiers and the possible opponents of the East Germans in the semi finals.

A decision to ride soft against the East Germans was made by the riders, and not coach Walsh as reported, in order to ensure winning the bronze. It turned out a good decision when all five competitors were awarded bronze medallions.

There was perhaps the possibility of an improved showing had the Tony Davis issue been handled with a little more diplomacy by the Australia Cycling Federation. Woods is clearly among the best four pursuit riders in the world and there was little prospect of Tony Davis ousting him from that position on the strength of a one off ride in the 'at home' selection championships held last March.

The indomitable Woods and Tony Davis were ordered into a debilitating "ride off" to decide who would represent Australia in the individual pursuit. Of course, Woods won in near World record time of 4 min 31.34 sec.

The official world record is 4 min 31.16 sec. It is significant that Dean never repeated that ride, yet he won Silver. Not even Gold Medal winning Russian Umaras rode that time, his best being 4 min 32.83. Woods certainly blasted Tony Davis out of the contest

and perhaps himself out of Gold Medal contention.

The ineptitude of the ACF's handling of the issue was momentous because of the possible repercussions for Australian cycling had Davis won. Or was it to embarrass what some people saw as a "cosy club" within the Australian cycling team? If so, it was certainly not in the best Olympic tradition.

All concerned would have been aware of the FIAC rule with IOC agreement declaring Olympic gold medal winners as also the 1988 World Champions and the restriction limiting nation entries to one because of weight of numbers. Therefore there must have been sympathy for riders like ex-world sprint champion and 1987 Silver-Medallist Michael Huebner of East Germany, who was in Seoul but failed to get a ride in the sprint won by his countryman Lutz Heschlich.

Russia's ex-world individual pursuit champion Viatcheslav Ekimov was another sure-fire medallist on the sidelines, although he did get some consolation with a team pursuit Gold.

Tony Davis of Australia was similarly placed. The only question to be answered was what was best for Australian, the International experience of an in-form Dean Woods or the latest potential of Tony Davis.

There was only one possible answer to that question: there was clearly no need for the pursuit Time Trial and the Australian Cycling Federation would have known it. But perhaps the sweet tranquillity of the status-quo was more palatable.

But the bomb shell was yet to explode. Following the conclusion of the Games, Walsh revealed to the press that he had written to the ACF on May 17th requesting that Tony Davis be removed from the Olympic squad when the WA cyclist had indicated he did not wish to join the preparations for Seoul.

But Walsh got no support.

Walsh also indicated he would not continue as Australian Coach under the conditions of responsibility without authority.

It does not take a genius to imagine that the "Svengali" of the Australian bike world would have been opposed to the sudden-death ride off between Woods and Davis. Months of work put in place by Walsh under the jurisdiction and cost of the Australian Institute of Sport and supported by the Australian Sports Commission would have been jeopardised had Davis defeated Woods in the trial. Perhaps leading to the resignation of the most astute cycling coach in the land.

Success in the Olympic arena is important as a nation's worth is now judged on its international sporting success, and the Olympic games are the measuring stick. That is why nations like East and West Germany and the Eastern Bloc nations spend millions of dollars on their athletes. Besides, there is the added bonus of a better national health. This truth must never be forgotten as we move into a higher sports cost bracket.

The critics of our national coaching system should realise that any success is bought about by years of high level coaching and a discipline of mind and body, now beyond the means of parents to provide. The cost is vested in govern-

ment through the Australian Institute of Sport. An invitation to cycling to become a resident sport was only extended because of its international success, and that success is due mostly to Charles Walsh. We must never forget that. Walsh must not be sacrificed on the altar of state jealousy.

Finally, although the use of drugs dimmed the Olympic Fame and demeaned the fastest athlete on Earth the fireworks exploding over the stadiums during the closing ceremony heralded a new drug-free era. There seemed to be a genuine frustration among the celebrating athletes, an anger that some cheats were among them.

The Seoul Olympics will be remembered not only for championship performances. But as the Games where some of the World's best were shown to have honed their competitive edge with performance enhancing drugs.

I am not sure that is a bad thing – for if the drug menace is to be beaten, it must be by the athletes themselves.

What we can never reject is the incentive to make it all happen again in Barcelona in 1992.

Russians to join the pro cycling scene.

Remember my suggestion my column in the September/October issue last year, in which I mentioned a complete Red

Team would ride professionally in the 1989 European season under a Italian Sponsor?

Sounded a bit irrational didn't it? Well it has happened. Russia is to have a professional racing team based in Italy's San Marino and the team manager is to be Primo Frachini, assisted by former Olympic road race champion Sergei Soukhorenchenkov.

At the annual Federation International Cycling Professional (the professional governing body), held in conjunction with the Ghent (Belgian) World Championships, both Russia and Czechoslovakia affiliated with FICP clearly indicating their intention to field professional teams in next year's European Classics.

The Russians are likely to use Italian equipment and Team helpers, but it is expected the team director will be Russian. It was intimated at the conference that the minimum age of selected riders will be 23, and there will be up to 20 riders in the squad.

Already named in the team is the 1988 Milk Race Winner Vassily Zhadanov, Vjatch Vjatchelav Ekimov twice conqueror of Australia's Dean Woods in the World amateur individual pursuit championship, Ugrousov, and Koischev.

What a gain for the plan to completely internationalise the sport of cycling.



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The World Awheel

AMBA is now operational

The Australia Mountain Bike Association is the new national sporting association representing the interests of mountain bike racers in general, and its financial members in particular, within Australia. AMBA is run by an Executive Committee of four who are answerable to a Council made up of delegates from every club throughout Australia.

As of November 1, 1988, AMBA will be affiliated with the Australian Cycling Federation which is the controlling body for amateur cycling in Australia. Through this affiliation, AMBA, AMBA Clubs and all AMBA Members will be covered with an appropriate insurance cover. For Clubs that means a 5 million dollar public liability cover for all events. For members that means the same public liability cover as well as a comprehensive personal cover whilst training AND competing.

To become a member of AMBA simply join one of the many clubs forming. If you are unsure where your nearest club is simply contact AMBA at the address below.

You don't have to join in order to race. AMBA merely provides you with the opportunity to join. Of course there are number of benefits in joining. Firstly the insurance cover as mentioned above. Secondly, AMBA will begin publishing a newsletter in 1989 to be sent to all members with information on races, results, overseas news and other matters of interest. Thirdly, members will receive discounts on entry fees into AMBA conducted events. Fourthly, AMBA will issue you with a licence which directly affiliates you with the FIAC (International Federation of Amateur Cycling). This body will be setting up an international committee to run the affairs of international mountain bike racing. Your licence will allow you to compete in other countries should restrictions be placed on international

entries by FIAC in the months ahead.

Publications are now available from AMBA. Each club may request a copy of AMBA's Constitution as well as an Operator's Guide to Event Promotion. Soon to be completed are AMBA's Technical Regulations (rules) and a document called *How To Form A Club*.

In the year ahead, AMBA hopes to have a well formed club structure throughout Australia with a solid membership. To continue to negotiate and work with various authorities governing the lands and venues for event competition and training for the betterment of all. To continue in expanding the national events calendar for our members and the sport as well as continuing to encourage corporate and media support.

**Australian Mountain Bike
Association Inc
PO Box N25
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Retail group appoints new organiser

Australia's oldest bicycle retailer organisation, the Retail Cycle Traders Austral-

ia Inc based in Melbourne, has appointed a new executive officer. The position is now held by Michael Oxe, who is well known in bicycle advocacy circles but now takes on the big job of boosting the membership of the RCTA.

Besides campaigning to increase membership the RCTA is upgrading its services to the retail trade across the country through an expanded regular newsletter incorporating sales trends, wages government actions, local issues, and more. A bigger membership will mean better services.

Bicycle sales are running at an all-time high, and adult cycling is growing at about 8% per year. The mountain bike has brought new excitement into every day bike riding, while recent international racing success are stirring younger riders onto the track and road.

Michael says that RCTA members offer a superior cycle service to the public because of the personalised pre and post-sales support plus skilled repairs when something breaks. He adds that the RCTA is aiming at the highest possible standard of service and business ethics so that the public can be assured of high quality from retailer members.

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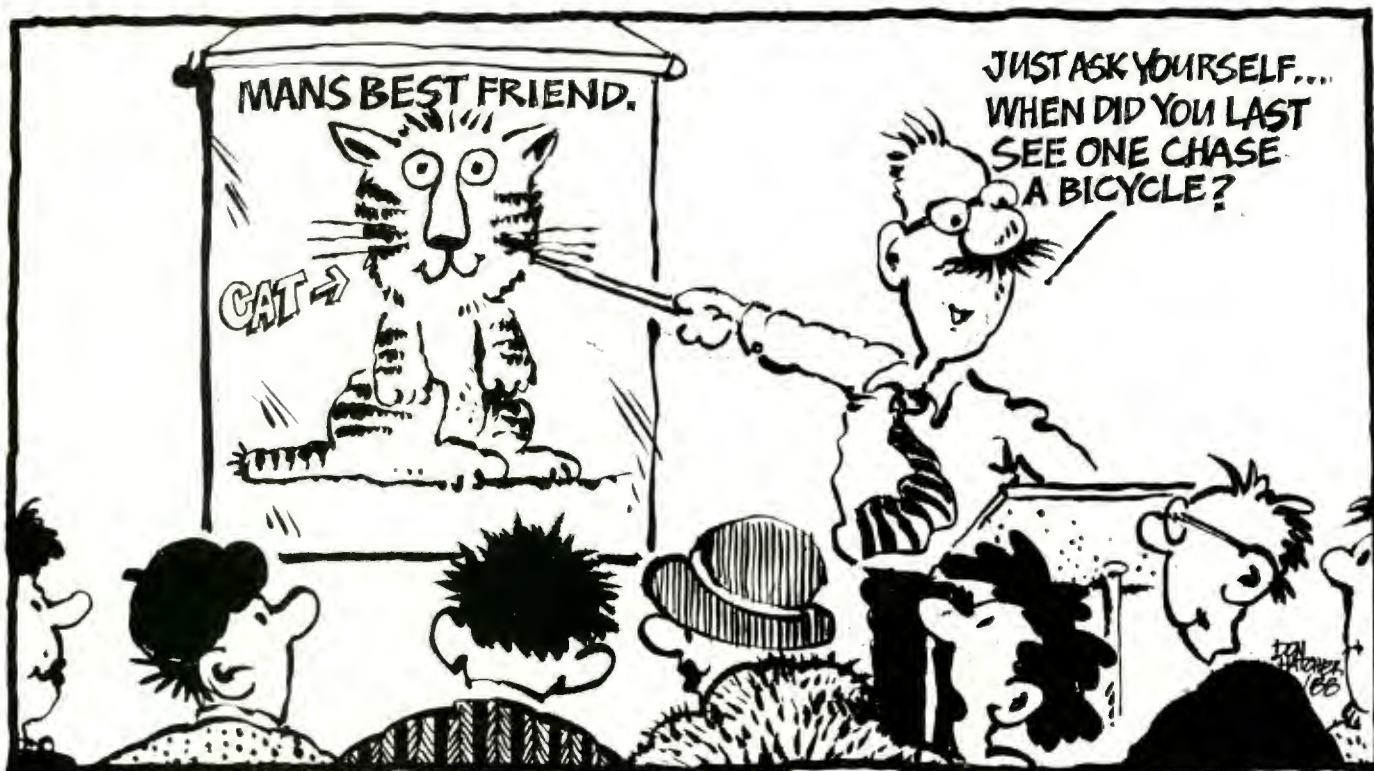
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WOMEN ON WHEELS

Introducing our feature on women and cycling

BY JULIA THORN

WOMEN AND BIKES. We've come a long way together. From the days in the 1880's when it was considered totally improper for a woman to ride a bicycle, to the 1980's when statistics show that in the United States more women are riding than men.

And we still have a long way to go. One day, hopefully, women cyclists will no longer have to worry about unattractive stereotyping, uncomfortable saddles and doubts that women know how to mend a puncture.

This issue of *Freewheeling* is devoted to the topic of the female and the bicycle. We've addressed all the major aspects of cycling, with a distinctly female slant because it seems that so often the important female sector of the cycling public has been ignored.

We hope this issue will be of interest to male readers too. Men may not be too aware of the discrimination in the cycling world against women. They may not be fully aware of the problems that women are encountering. And they may wonder why there are relatively few females out there riding. Give your female friends, wives and daughters some encouragement – they need it!

Take the machinery itself. It's hard to believe but true that until recently there were no specifically women's bikes on the market (other than the mixte frame, a version of the male bike without a crossbar). Nobody questioned this, they just took it for granted that women would ride men's bikes. And yet we've all known for quite a long time that women's bodies are a different shape from men's, haven't we?

So we've had a look around to see what bikes there are available in Australia that are designed for the females in the market, bearing in mind the specific needs and shape of the female cyclist. Disappointingly, there aren't many.

Then we've considered clothing. It has generally been hard to find cycle

clothing that is meant for women. Most of the time we females have to make do with extra small men's sizes and wear kit which looks ultra-masculine. But now in the current cycle craze the fashion designers seem to have got the message and clothing for females is appearing in the cycle shops.

We have examined various health related issues. In doing so, one inevitably comes upon myths and half-truths. There has been so much unfounded speculation about the deleterious effects of cycling on women's bodies (and minds?) that some basic questions have remained unanswered. Should you stop riding if you are pregnant? Does cycling increase the risk of osteoporosis? Is it possible for a woman to be comfortable on a bike seat?

We give advice on touring which is geared to the female audience, with the solo traveller especially in mind. Most of the hints that an experienced rider will give you about planning and preparing for a trip are relevant whether you are male or female. But if you are a female contemplating a solo tour you are moving several steps beyond the ordinary. You may already be used to people falling off their chairs in horror when they hear your plans. But it is often hard to find sources of useful information for this most elite of pursuits.

We hope to answer those questions you may always have wanted to ask but not found a women rider to ask them of. Like how do you get rid of males who hassle you? And where are the safest areas to go touring? Can you camp without fear?

And to encourage women to sample the delights of solo touring we include a description of what it is really like to travel alone on a bike as a woman. When you've done it once you realize what a wonderful experience it is.

For those of you who would like to take up racing, or are curious to know more about it we present some practical advice. Women's cycle racing is relatively new to Australia but there are

ample opportunities for you to get involved.

We've looked at a selection of women cyclists. Women who have made quite remarkable tours on their own in pretty rough places. And women who cycle competitively at all levels up to Olympic. This year women participated in two cycling track events at the Olympic Games, a 100% increase on the previous Games, but plenty of scope for improvement here.

Finally we have looked at the historical perspective. As I mentioned earlier, the idea of women riding was until this century not widely accepted.

There have been recent developments in other countries. In America women can now go on organised bike tours in which men do not participate, and there is a national organisation for female cyclists which has been set up to cater for their specific needs. And in England, there are bicycle workshops held just for women which men do not attend.

But what stands out so markedly when one considers this whole topic in the Aussie context is the relatively small proportion of female cyclists compared to male. I find that whether I am riding into the city, going for a day tour with a small group or trekking interstate, the majority of other riders I meet are male.

Why do so few women ride bikes? I think there are several reasons. Firstly women often shy away from activities that are strenuous or exhausting.

They need to be told that cycling does not have to mean taking your body beyond the limits of your endurance, through the pain barrier and into the realms of endorphin addiction; that it can actually be a relaxing recreation to any reasonably fit person.

There again some women don't like the idea of getting dirty and sweaty. But all I can say in response is that you don't have to ride through oceans of mud if you don't want to. Just because you go out on a bike doesn't mean you have to make an assault on all the cycling endurance records. And the exhilaration of pedalling along a country road in the sunshine amply compensates for the discomfort of a little sweat.

Secondly there are psychological factors. Your (fictitious) man in the street does not expect to see women out riding and your (fictitious) women in the street senses this so does not go out riding. Some women are afraid they may be laughed at for having a hobby which has traditionally been a male preserve. Or they are afraid of riding with men and not being able to keep up with them. Or they are afraid of being seen to be helpless in an emergency.

It is certainly true that one does not think of cycling as a particularly feminine sport. But could this be simply because sport itself is not regarded as feminine? Women have the capacity to

French women raced as early as 1868. This engraving shows a velocipede race at Bordeaux won by Mademoiselle Julie as featured in a newspaper of the day.

enjoy cycling as much as men do, and the more women that ride, the more socially acceptable it will become.

As yet there are very few role models for the aspiring woman cyclist to adopt. The women we hear about tend to be the few American women competing in the Race Across America ultramarathon or the riders in the female Tour de France which has only been in existence for five seasons.

Next there is the physical safety aspect. Of course it crosses the mind of anyone who goes on a cycle tour that they could have an accident. They might fall off their bike, or worse, be knocked off. But one just has to take reasonable precautions, most of which are common sense, and we all know that women have that commodity in plentiful supply! It's too easy, unfortunately, to be deterred by the stories people tell you.

Women may be put off riding because they feel they are not strong enough. Diet plays an important role here. Many women worry about putting on weight. Well here is an activity where you can combat all those extra calories by burning them off with exercise and the more you eat (provided it is the right type of food) the stronger you will become.

As to the matter of bike maintenance, it's an easy task to turn someone off cycling by showing them a fat maintenance manual. But while many men would be content to have a go at fixing things without reference to the manual, learning by trial and error, many women might not want to try. I think it's important to realize that at the start you only really need to know the basics, such as how to mend a puncture and where the nearest bike shop is located. Some bike shops run maintenance workshops where you can learn about this type of thing and it may be best to go along to one of these.

Last but not least is the question of comfort. An uncomfortable bike will put the keenest potential expeditionist off riding. You may successfully surmount all the psychological obstacles, convince your friends that you are not really crazy, but then find that your sore bum puts an end to your aspirations. So many women have said to me that they would be happy to ride a bike if only it didn't make them ache so much. It all comes back to being able to select a bike that is suited to your body.

The most important message I want to leave you with is that cycling is fun, whatever sex you are. As a variation on the old saying, try it – with the right help and equipment, you'll like it!



HOW IT ALL BEGAN

A short history of women and cycling

BY JULIA THORN

ANY ARDENT FEMINIST will tell you that women have always had it harder than men. Cycling has not been an exception to this. It took a good twenty years at the end of the last century for the concept of women riding bicycles to move from being a remote and unattractive idea to full acceptance. And even then this was only achieved because of a worldwide "craze" over cycling which saw in the new century.

You don't have to search far to find numerous reasons why the female of the species had a difficult entrance into the world of cycling. Consider the highly unsuitable clothes that women of the 19th century wore: suffocatingly tight bodices and long voluminous skirts. Then think how concerned they were with propriety and decorum: not for them the odours of sweat or the feel of a thumping heartbeat.

Until 1880 there wasn't really a bicycle model available that women could ride with ease.

But most of all it was a society where it mattered terribly what other people thought. It is probably fair to say that not only did men hold women back from riding but women held themselves back due to a profound fear of what their peers would think of them.

In the 1880's those women who were keen enough and brave enough to ride a bicycle were soundly condemned. All sorts of dire outcomes were prophesied. In the extreme this activity would lead to total anarchy due to an upsetting of the natural order of things. Less seriously it would bring about a decline in morals, encourage illicit sex and lead to miscarriages.

An account of a ride in 1893 by an English woman who rode from Brighton to London and back (190 kilometres) suggests that onlookers found her manner of dress offensive and did not like the sight of a woman engaged in a masculine and ungraceful act.

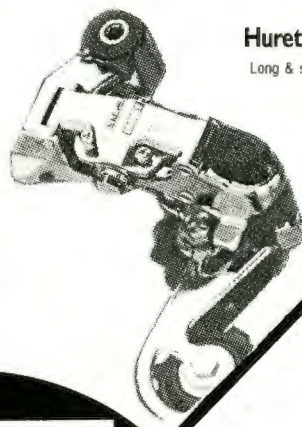
Some of the objections stemmed from downright ignorance. Doctors stated that the female body was not able to

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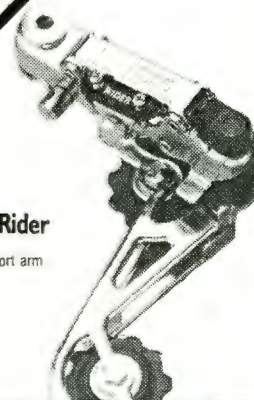
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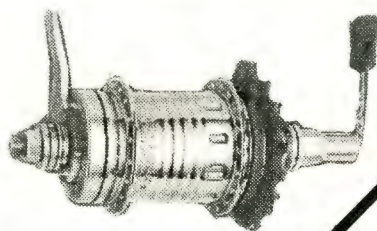
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Mlle Dutrieux one of the first professional women cyclists rode in the late nineties.

withstand the strains and stresses of prolonged riding. Not that they had any hard facts to go on – it was pure, and misguided, conjecture designed to support the opinions of the day. Only time could prove them wrong.

The objection which did have some basis in fact was the matter of clothing. The emergence and acceptance of so-called “rational dress”, or in other words practical attire that was suited to the wearer’s activity of the moment, probably played the greatest part in making it possible for women to ride bikes. In England the Rational Dress Society was very active between 1887 and 1895 with some impressive results. Once society allowed women to wear clothes that permitted them to move freely and exercise their limbs they suddenly found they could do all sorts of things.

The other major development which was to have far reaching effects on the possibility of women riding was the introduction of the “safety bicycle”. Previously the “ordinary bicycle”, known these days as the penny-farthing, was shunned by women because the rider could not wear a skirt and the bikes were hard to mount or dismount. Although the tricycle was developed prior to 1880 to overcome this problem it never became particularly popular, probably because they were so heavy and unmanageable.

The safeties emerged in the 1880’s and by the late 1890’s most cycle manufacturers had a ladies’ model in their repertoire which was lightweight and easy to manoeuvre.

When female cycling did finally become accepted it happened quite suddenly. Riding a bicycle became trendy in 1895 in Europe and social stigmas attached to women riders miraculously disappeared. Women of all social classes were to be seen on bicycles and it suddenly became the activity which would improve women’s health and increase their quality of life. Better a bicycle than the kitchen sink.

The bicycle craze was short lived but the good (or damage, depending on which side you were on) had been done. Women could ride bikes without fear of excessive criticism or abuse.

In Australia late last century women seem to have had some success in riding bikes. Several women rode between Sydney and Melbourne and in 1898 the female record already stood at just over 6 days. The European cycling craze had reached Australia in the mid 1890’s and the sight of female riders was not at all uncommon.

However this did not mean that the social implications of such behaviour



On the 4th of January 1896 Alice Leamar introduced Australia to the pantsuit for liberated women seeking freedom of movement but refrained from removing her corsets.

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Miss Reynolds of Brighton a pioneer of the 'rational' dress wearing the kind of costume which was considered by many people in 1893 to be quite scandalous. If only they could see us now!

were not questioned. For example the matter of chaperons on long distance rides was the subject of great concern to one Western Australian magazine

editor. But since those early days women have not only ridden bikes for recreation. For example, women cyclists acted as messengers during the Second World War in Australia, copying their English counterparts and freeing men for other duties. The efforts made by the few in the 1880's and 1890's were well rewarded.



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NEW WOMEN CYCLISTS

Fitness, health and the pursuit of athletic excellence are drawing more women to the sport.

BY CYNDI HOLMES

IT WAS THE beginning of a life long passion, that first club ride. It was a popular annual ride that started at 4 am on one end of the busiest street in my home town in Michigan.

We'd ride 11 miles to the Howard Johnsons motel on the other end, have breakfast, then head back.

The return ride signalled the end of my six-week touring "phase". John, the club's top racer, told me to get Campagnolo downtube shifters. "They're much more precise than those bar end shifters." He told me to trade-in my Avocet touring shoes for cleated shoes; "They're much more efficient," said he.

He told me I needed a Campagnolo crankset instead of my "go-up-any-wall" Sugino triple; "You really don't need all those gears."

This was tuning out to be an expensive ride!

Finally, he told me to come to the club's 10 mile time trial on Tuesday. Dutifully, I obeyed.

With just a few miles to go in that time trial, I saw John heading-out. He was standing, out of the saddle, on a slight hill. I was amazed! Was it legal? All the pictures only ever show time trialists in the saddle.

So began my first lesson in cycling. Next week, with a bit more aggression (and probably some out of the saddle efforts), I took five minutes off that first time.

The next lessons were quick to follow. As there was only a handful of women in the club, there was a lot I had to learn myself. So, here's a primer of new cyclist topics of particular interest to women:

BICYCLE FIT

WOMEN TYPICALLY HAVE shorter torsos in proportion to their height than men. This means that bicycles designed for men may not be comfortable to some women. Watch for the following:

FRAME SIZE:

To check for the right frame size, stand over the bicycle while wearing your riding shoes. You should have 2.5 cm to 5 cm clearance over the top tube. It can be a problem to find the correct frame size if you're shorter than 155 cm (5' 1").

Most manufacturers offer 48 cm (19") models. To get a smaller one you can order a custom frame or shop for one of the new 24" front wheel bikes. Both Atom and Shogun offer one. Atom's Women's Sprinter's smallest size is 44 cm.

TOP TUBE:

The usual problem for women is a bike that has top tube which is too long. If you feel so stretched out that you cannot comfortably reach the brake levers, then keep searching. If cycling looks like becoming a life sport for you, consider investing in a custom frame which will be designed to fit your body.

STEM LENGTH:

Sometimes exchanging a long stem for a shorter one will alleviate the problems associated with a long top tube. Most bike shops will gladly switch stems when you buy a bike from them. Or, you can buy a new stem for your existing bike.

BRAKE LEVERS:

Most brake levers were designed for a man's hand. Fortunately, Dia Compe now offer a smaller lever. Both of the small Atom and Shogun bicycles are equipped with these levers. And again, you can have these levers installed on your current bicycle.

SADDLE:

There's nothing worse for a cyclist or would-be cyclist than an uncomfortable saddle. It's a fact of life that women have a slightly wider pelvis than men. Saddle manufacturers have recognised this with wider models of their popular men's models, including the Womens Turbo, Avocet and Vetta. Some women sit okay on men's saddles, but if you feel that the pressure points on your bum are not quite on the saddle, rush down to the bike shop and try a wider model.



SADDLE POSITION:

A saddle adjusted so the nose points drastically up or down won't be a comfortable saddle. You want it level or pointing ever so slightly up. If it's pointing down, you'll find yourself sliding down the saddle and constantly pushing against the handlebars to push yourself back on the saddle.

SADDLE HEIGHT:

An incorrect saddle height can be uncomfortable and even cause damage to your knee and hips. To get it right, sit on your bicycle with your riding shoes and shorts on. With your heels on the pedals, pedal backwards until one foot is in the 6 o'clock position. Your knee should be straight or very slightly bent. Continuing to pedal backwards, your hips should not rock when the saddle height is adjusted properly. This adjustment method will give you the right amount of bend in your knee when in the normal cycling position, with the balls of your feet on the pedals.

COMFORT

NON-CYCLISTS OFTEN ASK why cyclists wear such funny looking shoes and clothes. The main reason is comfort. Women cyclists are no different from men in this regard.

Cycling is supposed to be fun, so careful consideration of comfort factors can only help to increase your enjoyment.

CLOTHING:

Yes, there really is a reason cycle clothing fits snugly. It's certainly more aerodynamic and therefore efficient. Cycle shorts in particular are snug to prevent chafing. Shorts feature a lined crotch that has no irritating seams.

Crotch linings can be of chamois or a synthetic. Synthetics are gaining in popularity because they are quick drying and they usually last longer than real chamois. Most women prefer synthetic liners as they are easier to launder and dry. Wearing underwear defeats the purpose of wearing bicycle shorts: that is the elimination of abrasive seams that will cut and chafe your skin.

Up until recently most cycle clothing was cut to fit men. Finding a pair of sorts with the right waist measurements was a real task. Brands like Netti, Mechanics and a few others now make a womens range. In the cycle clothing fashion area new women cyclists are the biggest buyers so it is any wonder that the major clothing makers like Arena and Speedo who have entered the field are catering for women as well as for men.

CYCLING SHOES:

Trying to cycle in joggers can be a painful experience. Your heel may hit the crank arm because some shoes are really wide. The pedal cage will dig into the soft sole of a jogger. Face it, they're made for running, not cycling. Cycling shoes have stiff soles which attach to the pedals with some sort of cleat. They are

efficient; allowing you to go further and/or faster on the same amount of energy.

SADDLE SORENESS:

There are a few simple things you can do to prevent saddle sores. One is to change hand positions frequently. Try riding on the drops, on the brake lever hoods and on the tops of the bars. This not only puts a different amount of pressure on your saddle, but it can help prevent your arms and shoulders from becoming sore. If the terrain is flat, make a point to stand up and pedal for a while. This will give your legs a stretch and your bum a rest.

You can also lubricate the liner in your shorts to reduce friction. Use a non-irritating skin cream. (Try it before you ride on it). Probably the best preventative is to keep clean and don't ride in yesterday's shorts.

STRETCHING

To prevent excessive muscle soreness, try stretching before and after rides or during a stop on longer rides.

WEIGHTS

New cyclists often experience sore shoulders and backs. A program of weight training to strengthen these areas can make your cycling more enjoyable.

BIKE HANDLING SKILLS

PROBABLY THE MOST mystifying area to new cyclists is how to handle the bike on corners, in a group and on hills. The best advice is to practice, practice, practice – and not always alone!

DRAFTING

Even if you don't plan to enter tours, races or triathlons, learning how to draft – follow closely behind another rider – is a valuable skill. When you're riding with others, drafting allows you to use 20% less energy than the leading rider. This translates in the ability to cover more distance at a quicker pace.

Although triathletes cannot legally draft in a triathlon, they do occasionally end-up in tight situations with cars and other cyclists. Possessing the confidence to ride close to others can save any cyclist from misfortune.

PRACTICE

There are skills you can practice that will give you the confidence to ride in traffic and with other cyclists. In an empty car park (avoid the speed humps) or on a lonely road, practice cornering, manoeuvring around obstacles and riding in a straight line while looking over your shoulder for "traffic".

PEDALLING

At the core of every proficient cyclist is a smooth, efficient pedalling style. It takes a bit of work to develop; even some of the great racers have had to consciously work on developing an efficient pedalling action.

Proper pedalling not only gets you places faster and with less energy ex-



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pended, but it can also prevent injuries. Here are some pedalling factors to consider:

Cadence:

Cycling coaches have said for years, and recent studies support them, that the optimum rate of pedalling is 90-100 revolutions per minute. "Spinning" 90-100 rpms is more efficient in that it allows you to go further than you would if you slogged along in a big gear, pedalling only 40-50 rpm. The key here again is practice. Practice pedalling 90 rpm on flat or slightly rolling terrain. Make use of your gears so you keep a constant cadence.

Pedal stroke:

A smooth pedaler uses as much of the pedal stroke as possible. Concentrate on making a full-circle motion; pushing down, pulling back, lightly pulling up and pushing the foot forward and down again. The pulling back motion is important and has been compared to scraping doggy doo of one's shoes.

Gears:

Learning how to properly use your gears may take a little practice, but it is essential. Ask a bike shop or a more experienced cyclist to explain and show you which of your gear combinations are the same and which of the extremes you shouldn't use (to prevent excessive equipment wear).

WHAT'S NEXT? Ride, ride, ride! Try to find a local touring, racing or triathlon club to join; you'll learn heaps in your first few rides. Look for someone near your own level to ride with more often. And, above all ask questions and practice.

Whether or not you have lofty goals to aspire to, you certainly can't do any worse than Brisbane Blasters racer Trish Maude. A year ago, Trish rode from Brisbane to Sydney in her little chain ring, not knowing a thing about gears.

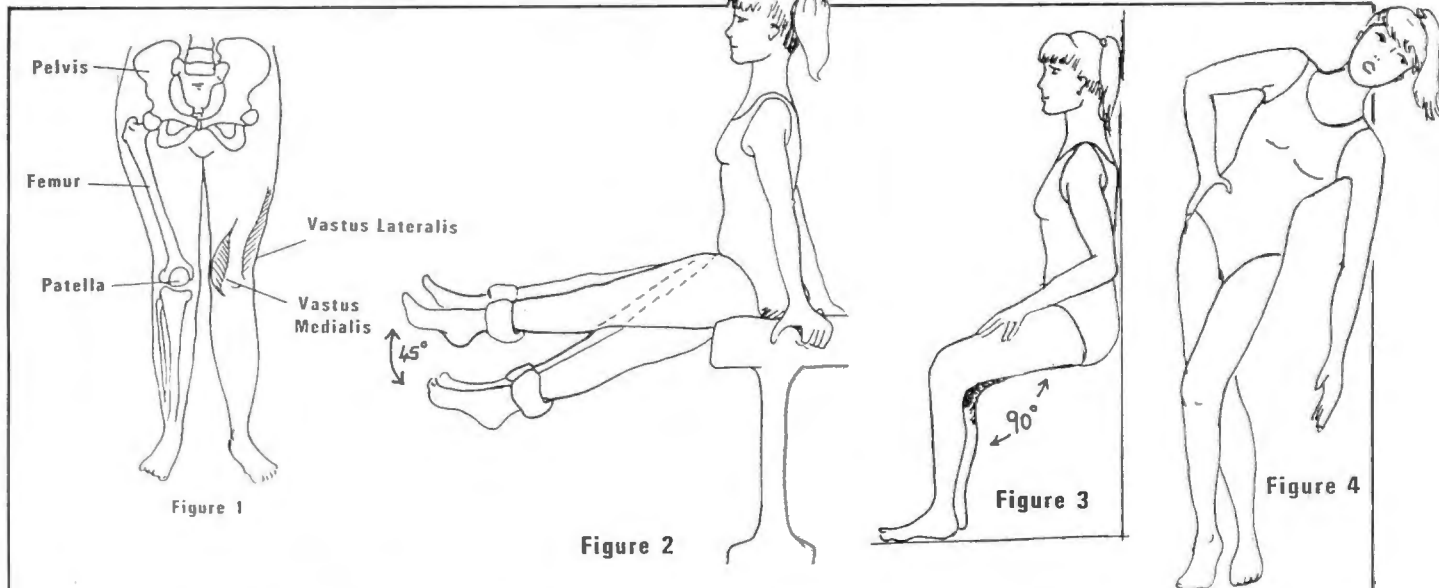
She must have found her big chainring since then, because two months ago, she placed 1st in the Queensland Team Time Trial Championships and 2nd in the Road Championships. However, she may still be trying to figure out how to clean her chain!

CYCLING AND PREGNANCY

WHEN CYCLING IS part of a woman's lifestyle, there is no reason why she should cease exercising once pregnant, provided there are no gynaecological complications. Cycling during pregnancy improves blood circulation, helps prevent varicose veins and relaxes the body. It also has the added advantage of being a smooth and rhythmical exercise that causes minimal disturbance to the foetus. During the later stages of pregnancy however, an enlarged abdomen may cause discomfort whilst cycling.

The major concern for women who cycle during pregnancy is overheating. It is known that developing foetal cells may be adversely affected if core body temperature rises. Pregnant women should take precautions against dehydration and avoid exercise during high ambient temperature and humidity. A woman's cycling program may continue as normal once pregnant but uncharacteristic exertion such as extended rides and competitions are out.

Kaye Vokenson



KNEE PROBLEMS

Knee pain can be a concern for female cyclists. Its source is commonly an over-use syndrome called Patellofemoral Stress Syndrome and the problem is made worse by disproportionate muscular conditioning. A woman's physiology makes her more susceptible to this syndrome than men. A broad pelvis encourages the femur (thigh bone) to deviate from the long axis of the leg which can cause the patella (kneecap) to move laterally. (See figure 1).

These conditions may induce pain behind the patella after prolonged periods of rhythmical exercise such as cycling.

The good news is that this syndrome can be corrected with an appropriate conditioning program, unlike Chondromalacia (softening of a cartilage), which produces similar symptoms.

The following exercises are designed to improve strength and flexibility of the quadricep muscles, balancing the forces that caused pain by pulling the patella off centre. I and others have followed this program with success and maintain the exercises to prevent the problem from recurring.

1. Short leg extensions (see figure 2)

Use minimal weights and maximum repetitions, limit leg extension to no more than 45 degrees from the horizontal position.

2. Skier's exercise - strengthens inner thigh muscle (vastus medialis) (Figure 3) Stand with back to a wall, feet shoulder width apart and 20-30 cm from wall. Bend knees to 90 degrees angle supporting back against wall and hold this position for as long as possible.

3. Outer thigh (vastus lateralis) stretch (See figure 4) Move left leg behind right leg until left foot is placed beside right side of foot. Lean body towards the right, bending the right knee but keeping left leg straight. Repeat on opposite legs.

Avoid deep weighted squats as this exercise will only aggravate knee pain.

Kaye Vokenson

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SAINTROPEZ

THE ATHLETE'S CHOICE

THE RIGHT BIKE

A guide to women's bicycles

BY WARREN SALOMON

LETS START WITH a few important facts. A woman and a man of equal height differ fundamentally in their body dimensions. Most (every person has their own shape and body size it's up to you to find out yours) women have longer legs, shorter torsos, shorter

arms, smaller hands and feet, narrower shoulders and a wider pelvis.

As bicycles are sized on a person's leg length this should be put another way: for men and women with the same leg length the woman will have the shorter torso, smaller arms, wider pelvis shorter overall height, narrower shoulders and

smaller hands and feet. Get the picture?

Translated to the bicycle frame women who have been sold men's bikes in the last one hundred years have probably been putting up with a lot of discomfort and pain while their men friends have all the cycling fun. A woman on a man's bike will find that: the top tube is too long (a bit like being stretched on a medieval torture rack over long distance rides); the handlebars too wide and possibly too greater drop (if they are the dropped racing type); the saddle too narrow and too long; and the brake levers too big.

Put another way: if you go shopping for clothing you make sure that it is the correct fit before you buy. The American advertisement of current world champ Jeannie Longo in a man's suit says it all. Women are different. And thank God that the bicycle industry is finally getting the message.

In the USA there are more women riding bikes than men. Sure those women are not racing cyclists but then again competitive cyclists are only a small minority anyway. Recreational cycling is where the numbers are and that's the way the situation is developing here in Australia as more people of both sexes take up cycling.

For anyone looking for a reason why women have up until only recently been the minority group in the cycling world one only has to look at the bicycles women have been sold. A bicycle which does not fit one's body is uncomfortable to ride not at all like the ideal of a good machine: that it should disappear under you. A properly sized and fitted bike is only the vehicle to a pleasurable experience. You shouldn't have to put up with pain; the bicycle *should* be comfortable.

Maybe it's all because of a lack of proper marketing. Marketing is not about forcing products down the throats of the customers but responding to their valid needs and finding the right product to aid their cycling enjoyment. Sure the industry has its problems supplying all the mens sizes with out adding women's bikes to their inventories but in a field where fit is all important the additional sizes *have* to be stocked if the industry is to progress flourish. To hell with colours — the right size is the most important factor in the successful bicycle purchase.

Because of the small size of the Australian bike industry very little real marketing can be done. All of our products come from USA, Asia or Europe and what happens in those markets is sooner or later picked up by the local importers. Luckily for the growing group of women cyclists a couple of the smaller entrepreneurial wholesalers have picked up on the trend started in the USA by an east coast frame builder Georgina Terry.

Terry is an interesting person with a passion for cycling and a degree in mechanical engineering to boot. She

began building frames for women because she could not buy a correctly fitted frame for herself. Her back yard business has grown and has become so successful that the major companies are now following her lead and are actively promoting their own women's bikes.

It could be said that the mountain bike and BMX had their beginnings in much the same way. An enthusiast saw a genuine need and went all out to translate that need into a valuable product that people would want to buy. We are all conditioned into thinking that only big companies with large research and development departments are the ones who generate and market all the new, innovative and useful products that fill our retail stores. In the bicycle business there are a couple (Avocet, Specialized, Campagnolo, Jim Blackburn, Racermate to name a few) but the rest are just copy cats ready to snap up ideas from the entrepreneurs to keep their offshore factories turning over.

THE BIKES

In Australia at the moment there are two companies offering bikes in women's sizes. Atom and Shogun. Some of the other brands are now, at last, offering smaller frame sizes which will

satisfy many women but often a bike with a smaller frame (shorter seat tube) is still not a good women's bike - its top tube is still too long etc.

The Atom Womens Sprinter

THIS BIKE COMES IN FIVE SIZES (44.5, 48, 52, 54.5 and 57 cm). The bike is based on the original Georgina Terry frame geometry and so women will find all the frame sizes built for them.

The three smaller sizes have a 24" front wheel and 700c rear to maintain a

horizontal top tube a good size head tube and adequate wheel clearance on the toe clip. The Sprinter's frames are made from Tange 900 chrome moly tubing and are fitted with Shimano indexed gears.

The bikes come with other features such as wider saddle, narrower handlebars and short reach brake levers.

Some riders may balk at the idea of having two tyre and tube sizes to con-

The Atom Womens Sprinter



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tend with but for smaller riders (shorter than 162 cm – 5' 4") there is really no other practical alternative. A sloping top tube is one way round the problem of the short headtube but doesn't fix the pedal clearance. As the gearing is exactly the same as any 700c bike there is equally no reason why the front wheel should not be smaller.

With the popularity of this style of bike growing in the States the range of 24" tyres is improving all the time.

Atom were the first onto the market with a true women's bike and they should be congratulated for doing it so well. Top marks.

Shogun

TO THIS COMPANY AND THEIR Australian distributors Bikecorp goes the honour for having not just one model of womens bike but a complete range. Almost all models in the Shogun range have frame sizes as small as 43 cm so women are not limited to a particular quality/price category.

Of particular interest are the Shogun mountain bikes. Both the two top of the range Prairie Breakers and the three Trail Breakers have 6x4 microframe models. The six stands for 26" and four is the smaller 24" front wheel.

All Shogun bikes comply to that company's FIT system which attempts to match all componentry to the size of the

The 43 cm microframe model of the Shogun Selectra.



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rider. Because the manufacturer is attempting to be all things to all sexes the larger frames still favour the "boys". Tall girls may still find the frames a bit long in the top tube. In spite of these compromises the Shogun FIT system has to be applauded for at least recognising that smaller riders (mostly women) have to be considered in all areas of bicycle and component assembly.

CUSTOM FRAMES

Frame builders are like exclusive fashion designers, dressmakers and tailors. They should be able to build a frame to fit you like a smart fitting jacket, skirt or full length dress.

Most frame builders these days work in with bicycle retailers so start your search by checking what the dealers have to offer. Ask them if their frame builder has built frames for women before. If they have then it's a reasonable indication that they will do a thorough job and you will get the right size frame. Frame builders need to take measurements to determine inside leg, torso arm lengths etc to size the frame. This is usually done by your dealer so wear your cycling clothes (shoes too) when you turn up to get measured.

CLOTHING

Much of the cycle clothing sold at present is cut for the male body so always make sure you try before you buy. All the major cycle shops have clean change rooms (or should have). Avoid buying cycle clothing from department stores as this type of clothing is cut for ordinary street wear and is often not suitable for cycling.

EQUIPMENT

The biggest breakthrough for women came about ten years ago when the US Avocet company released its popular range of women's anatomic saddles. The latest and greatest in this range is the women's Gelflex saddle. This superbly comfortable bike seat is shaped for the female pelvic anatomy and is topped with inserts made of Spenco Gel a type of synthetic body fat which absorbs most of the road shock that would ordinarily reach your posterior.

The women's saddle apart from being wider than the men's type is also shorter and has a smaller snout. If you don't like the saddle on your bike it only takes 5 minutes to fit a new one unlike the handlebars which take ages (you have to remove the brake levers) and should match your shoulder width. Brake levers with a shorter reach are made by Dia Compe.



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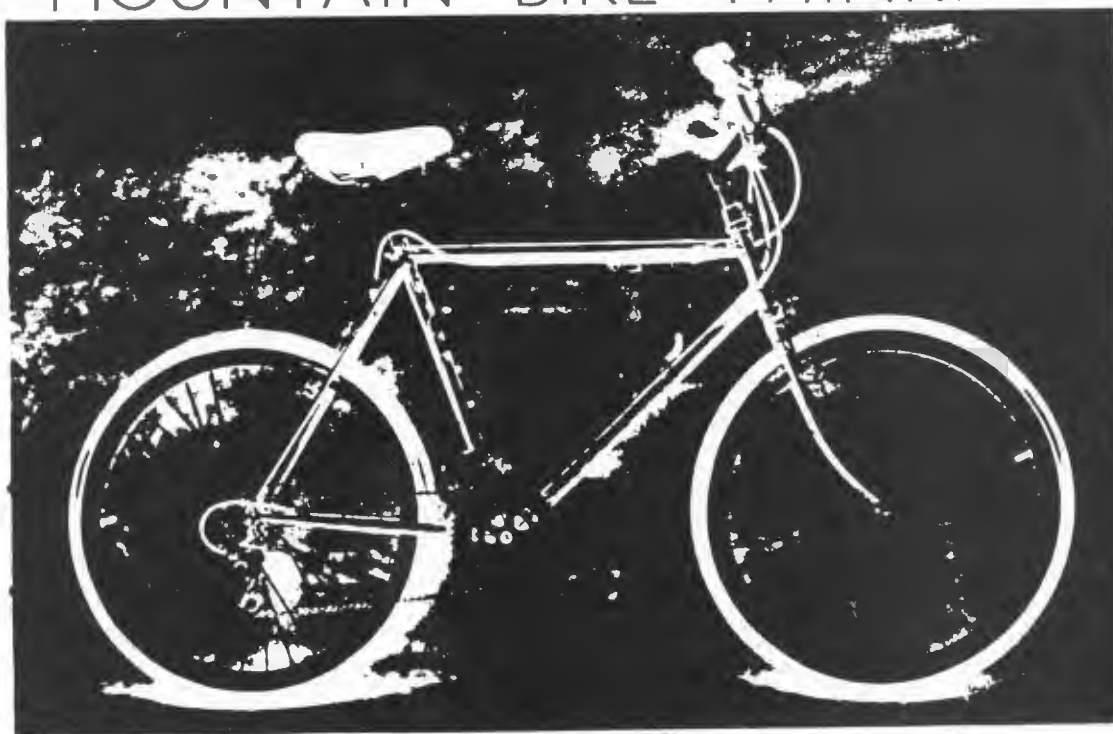
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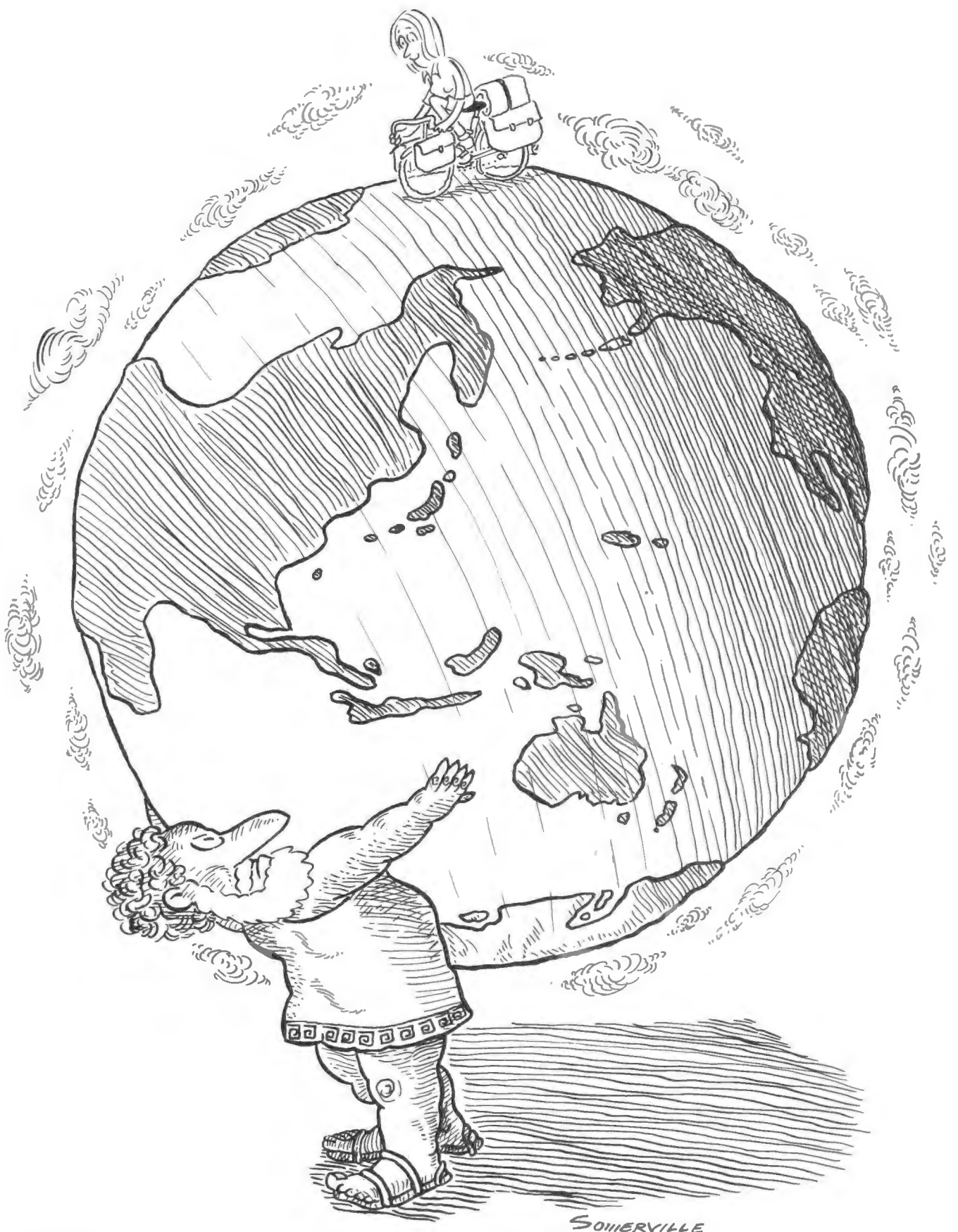


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SOMERVILLE

BICYCLE TRAVEL FOR THE WORLDLY WOMAN

A world of advice from an experienced solo woman traveller

BY JULIA THORN

THE WORLD MAY be your oyster but that doesn't mean that it's easy to decide where to go. If you are female and contemplating a cycling trip, maybe even alone, here are a few suggestions.

Australia and New Zealand are reasonably safe for touring. If you don't like the idea of official campsites and prefer to free camp you shouldn't run into too many problems so long as you are discreet. It's a good idea to keep away from roadsides, rest areas and well illuminated spots where you may be noticed and disturbed.

At official campsites, as a solo traveller, you may find yourself receiving a lot of attention. I get a bit sick of the 'aren't you afraid' type comments after a few days. But people are usually very friendly and like to know what you've been up to. They find it easy to strike up

a conversation with a single person.

Going overseas the situation is a little different. Northern Europe, particularly Scandinavia, is very safe. The people there are quite used to women asserting their independence and going it alone. You can free camp legally without any qualms and in fact this is a bit of an institution in all the Nordic countries bar Denmark.

In southern Europe you may find a few more hassles. Basically the farther south you travel, the more interested the local men become in your activities. You just have to be careful not to be provocative and don't let comments disturb you. Nick Crane's book *Cycling in Europe* has useful hints for the intending cycle camper in this part of the world.

Britain ranks between these two areas in terms of safety. Plenty of women ride about alone there but the country is far

more urbanised than, say, Scandinavia with the corresponding problems. One of the particular advantages of cycling alone in Britain is the extensive network of youth hostels where you have a good chance of meeting other cyclists. Even the warden is likely to be a keen rider.

You would want to be wary of travelling in Muslim countries around the Middle East. It certainly pays to understand about the culture so you know what problems may arise. Attitudes towards women are rather different from what we are used to. In those places which have had some contact with Western culture the male population has accumulated some weird notions about how Western women should be treated. I've travelled through the area and found that one cop quite a bit of abuse, and even some stone throwing.

Curiously, one is often treated a lot better in the less touristy places, where you would be treated as a person rather than as a woman (and consequently second rate).

In the Indian subcontinent and Asia the main problems are poor quality roads and theft rather than personal safety. Western goods are very much in demand, and bicycles are no exception. But cheap accommodation and fewer cars lend these countries to touring. You just have to remember that you are someone fairly unusual, and you will be constantly surrounded by people staring at you. The braver ones ask a lot of questions and can become quite tiresome.

The Lonely Planet series of guidebooks have brief comments on travelling by bike in Asia in the introductory sections. For example some countries have restrictions on importing bikes even for your own personal use.

Across the Pacific, America is another place where it is fairly acceptable for women to bike alone, down the east and west coasts in particular. The Bikecentennial organisation has a number of trail guides which can suggest routes for you to follow (write to PO Box 8308, Missoula, Montana 59802 USA for a mail order catalogue) and on these trails you will probably meet other like-minded riders. Women do free camp in this country but where you can find state campgrounds these are very cheap and much safer. You can obtain a list of sites from state tourist offices in America.

You don't hear about many women touring alone by bike in South America, other than Louise Sutherland. Again in less developed countries there are increased dangers of theft and personal violence, but if you use common sense you will emerge unscathed. The same is true of Africa, where there are extremes of poverty. But at least travelling by bike you have a wonderful opportunity to get close to people and the society they live in.



ALONE ON THE ROAD

Solo touring for women

BY SHELLEY HORMANN

TRAVELLING THE WORLD – just you, your bike, and the road. The best form of freedom... Long distance cyclists are a strange breed. It takes a special sort of masochism to put up with the daily horrors of the road and still come up laughing. Dogs, drongos, your daily dose of pasta, and yet another broken spoke (freewheel side of course).

On a day to day basis long distance cycling can really be a pain. Yet you keep going. The overall concept is a fine one and you know that somewhere out there, maybe just over the horizon, exists the perfect sunset.

A more perverse form of long distance touring is going solo. Solo cyclists are, almost by definition, a little looper than the rest of us. Perhaps it comes from eating one too many a bowl of pasta, I don't know, but you can almost guess the length of time one has been on the road by the degree of eccentricity displayed.

Talk to a few solo cyclists and you'll find a whole host of reasons why they are "out there". Some want to see the world, some want to convert the world, change the world or save the world. Some are there to satisfy their egos or find a little self-imagined glory.

Talk to a few solo cyclists and you'll realise they are all men. Perhaps I'm wrong to say *all*, but in three and a half years of cycling in different parts of the world, I've met a lot of other cyclists and have yet to meet a woman on a long trip by herself. For that matter you meet very few women even on short trips alone.

I must admit; in my more paranoid moments there are times I feel as though the world at large is involved in a giant conspiracy to keep me off the road. While I wish that it were not the case, the world out there is a different place for the woman that wants to go it alone. As a cyclist, you're even more at the mercy of the elements, both physical and social. On a bicycle you're more unusual, therefore more conspicuous. Just when you wish you could fade into the woodwork, you instead find yourself the centre of attention in a crowd of on-lookers.

Unlike other modes of transport, you cannot always predict where you will be at the end of the day and it becomes more difficult to plug into the travellers support system of youth hostels and other such hang outs. Unfortunately, many of what may seem to be the most interesting countries to travel in, are dominated by a culture or religion – in some places the two are practically synonymous – that make the hassle factor seem too high a price.

Remember, it's only by example that you are going to change the world's attitudes. The effort you make will make it easier for the next woman. You mightn't feel any inclination to be a trail-blazer. I feel, however, that it's important for all travellers to feel that they have the ability to survive alone, if only to boost their self confidence, sense of independence, or satisfy their own ego.

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You may not choose to travel alone, but knowing you can let you enter any travelling partnership on an equal footing.

Despite being essentially a solo cyclist, I am quite happy to join up with other cyclists on occasion. The longest trip I've made with someone was a four month odyssey from London to Israel through the middle of winter. We met on the road in Europe and found we shared a common destination, a similar travel/bike/life philosophy, and the same taste in music. Sharing a campfire and a viewpoint made a long, cold, hard trip a lot more endurable. Our private joke was telling people that my friend was my "guide" to Israel. We both knew that, being equally experienced and self-sufficient, should we go our separate ways, not only could I make it alone, but I would be busting to get there first!

While there's a huge quantity of information published each year on every facet of bike touring imaginable – from how often to change your cycle shorts, or how to respoke a wheel using number eight fencing wire – very little is written for the woman cyclist. By ignoring this aspect, the assumption seems to be that women shouldn't even consider travelling alone. Maybe I'm jumping to conclusions...

At any rate, there's no need for me to mention such things as what to take, or where to put it, as it's been said fairly comprehensively before. One thing you realise after spending some time on the road; it's all very well having faith in money and equipment, but having faith in yourself will get you a lot further. It doesn't depreciate as fast either!

Personally, I feel that 50% of surviving on the road is attitude: the other 50% is knowing your capabilities, mechanical and physical.

Being a good "bike doctor" is a big boost to your confidence, and lets you answer all those 'but what do you do when you get a flat tyre?' type questions with a nonchalant shrug or cynical sneer. If you've ever tried to work on your bike while surrounded by people saying 'are you sure you know what you're doing?' or 'how are you going to get it all back together?' you will know what I mean.

One of my funnier mechanical exploits occurred in Syria. While trying to replace three broken spokes in my back wheel, I was surrounded by half a dozen men, all determined to do their bit to "help".

Some tried to hold my wheel for me, others proposed lunch, or merely proposed... I was forced to keep moving in a circle around my prone bicycle, defending it from prying fingers, all the while fending off the efforts to help, with my elbow.

In the middle of this circus the head man of the village appeared. Taking him

to be another "helper" I managed to elbow him in the ribs too, before realising who he was. I rode off on a half-inflated tyre in my eagerness to extract myself from the situation.

It's not necessary to be a mechanical expert to set off on a trip alone – just pick somewhere where the natives are friendly! When I set off on my first solo tour, I had never ridden a ten-speed before, having grown up with horses and motorbikes. Needless to say, I survived and left on my second trip at least knowing how to change gears, if not how to fix a flat. Happily I never had one, the mechanical highlight of that particular trip being the day I stopped and changed a wheel for a woman who knew about as much about cars as I did about bicycles!

That was the day I knew I was hooked. It started to rain as I was tightening the wheel nuts, and in her gratitude the woman offered me a lift. I refused, I preferred to ride.

One way to work out the supposed complexities of a bicycle is to take one completely apart – preferably your brother's and preferably not in the middle of your first tour. When you realise how simple it all is, you'll realise that you've been "had" all the time. If this is not the case, don't panic, I can recommend a good bikeshop.

Maintaining a good attitude can be a little more difficult. The "people factor" becomes a major influence when constantly faced with negative thinking. 'Aren't you lonely?' and 'aren't you scared?' are two questions that you should be prepared to answer twenty times a day or more. That's on top of the usual questions such as 'how many punctures do you get?' (and what do you do when you get one... but I've been through that). If you're the type of person who resents this type of questioning or regards it as unfair – men never get asked if they're scared – mental burnout becomes a danger. I often get asked to recount my "worst experience" on the road. The temptation to invent lurid tales of rape, robbery and attempted murder is only offset by the realisation that it would only reinforce their view that I was either crazy, or a "loose" woman, to be out there, on a bike, alone.

Another major irritation is having to compromise in your chosen style of travel. As a long-term traveller and self – confessed "road bum" trying to live as cheaply as possible, I resent losing the freedom of free camping where and when I like. Personal security is a personal matter – how close you want to stand to the edge is up to you. Personally I dislike being hassled euphemistically speaking.

In more westernized countries, approaching a farmer can be a good way to safely free camp, and is often the source

of a shower and hot dinner as well (you can momentarily stop pretending that you like pasta).

In the more "difficult" countries this course of action is even more likely to produce unwanted midnight visits than if you were to hide in the bush. Approaching the women of the house is a good alternative. They may not understand your concept of free will any more than their husbands, but a little bit of sisterly protection will usually be provided, once you can convince them that you're "normal". Having pictures of your family, or husband and kids (real or imagined) can be a good aid in accomplishing this.

A common suggestion made to me is that I should carry some form of protection. A gun is the most popular choice. Well, they say that attack is the best form of defence, but personally, as a pacifist and environmentalist, I feel that shooting someone is in not on. Depending on where you are at the time, it can also have nasty repercussions. Try talking your way out of this one!

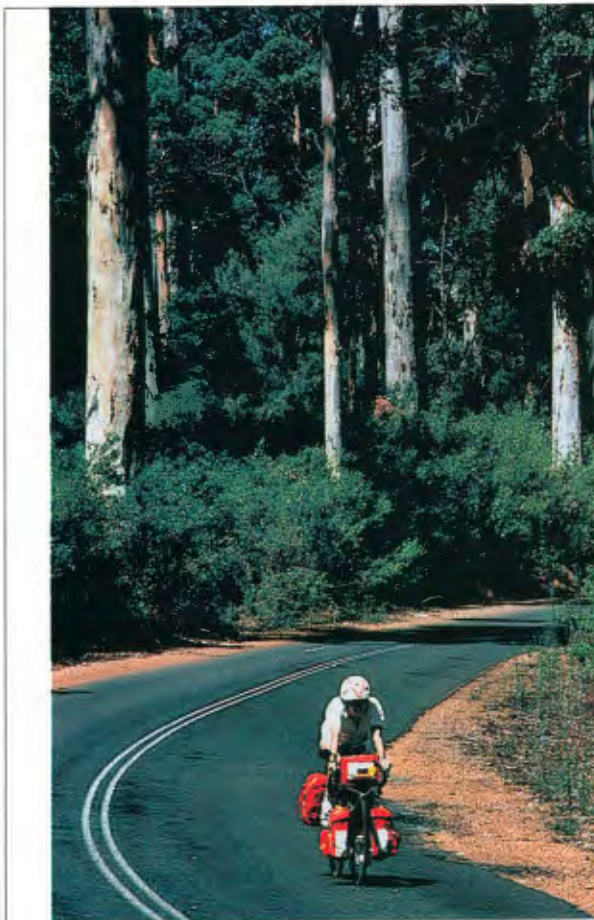
Somehow it doesn't seem a very positive attitude to regard the world as a hostile and dangerous place. Still, people compete constantly in their efforts to let me know that this is the case, and convince me that I should go home while I'm still capable. My attempts to tell people that it's safe to travel on a bike alone, as it is to walk the streets at home, normally fall on deaf ears.

Happily not all the response is negative. There are people out there who will support what you are doing. Having a good reason for being on the road helps this attitude along. Telling people that you're writing a book, or doing post-graduate research worked well in the more career-oriented countries. Not being able to afford the bus fare is more readily acceptable in poorer countries. God may not have wanted you to lie, but you needn't be disillusioned either.

You may feel that I'm being overly cynical, and wonder why travel at all, if the picture is so murky. In truth, each day on the road brings its good and bad moments. You can rest assured that just when you're about ready to pack it in, something nice will happen to you. It's one of the Laws of the Road. Don't believe them when people try and dissuade you with tales of all the crazies out there. For each crazy in the world, there's an awful lot of fairly normal, fairly nice people.

At the end of the day, it's the little things that ultimately make a trip worth while, the challenge of a mountain pass, the rush of a downhill, the feeling of being in touch with the world. The old man who gives you a cold beer when you ask for water, and the little boy who smiles and says 'Bonjour' as you pass.

Who knows, you may even find the perfect sunset.



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Kay Vokenson leaves Salzburg in Austria during one of her solo journeys. Solo riders need cameras with self timers.

GOING SOLO

A womens' cycle touring guide

BY KAYE VOCKENSON

THERE ARE TWO types of touring cyclists – those who travel in groups and those who go solo. While it is still unusual for a woman to travel alone, a woman cycle touring on her own must be a member of the smallest minority group of all travellers. Common perceptions of women who venture off alone include parallels of headstrong Dervia Murphy who cycled from Ireland to India or Louise Sutherland's across the Amazon. Impressive journeys though these may have been, women I have met on the road displayed similar self-assuredness whether they were cycling from home for the weekend or across a continent.

Lois, a 62 year old grandmother from Canada, finding herself with no-one left to keep house for, decided to indulge her whims and cycle through Europe. Erika, a French speaking Swiss girl on a working holiday in New Zealand discovered that her lifestyle was having an adverse effect on her waistline. She bought a bike and panniers for the first time in her life and pedalled her way through the rest of her travels.

Solo touring is something you can do for yourself while making minimal demands of the usual resources necessary to more conventional travel styles.

Apart from the pleasures of choosing daily mileage, when and where to stop and which route to take, cycling alone will compel you to extend yourself socially and mentally. You should however, be the sort of person who savours the unknown, keeps an open mind and draws on her own resources in times of discomfort. If not, anxiety may defeat the purpose of your trip.

For most women, personal security is the first concern after deciding to branch out alone on a bicycle touring holiday. Common sense and prudent precautions prevail here. Don't attract unnecessary attention. A loose cotton shirt will be of greater value keeping you cool under the blazing sun than a spaghetti-string suntop. When arriving in town, don't announce your solo status to strangers and be sure to find a safe campsite or accommodation before nightfall. Subtle pest deterrents employed by some women range from false wedding rings to stormy scowls of disinterest. The use of more animated methods of defense depends on your personality and confidence.

Security for our bike and belongings begins with comprehensive insurance cover, particularly if travelling overseas. Just as important are a quality lock and chain or cable long enough to secure both wheels, the bike frame and some solidly earthed object. Large railway stations have left-luggage facilities

where you can leave your bike and/or panniers whilst reconnoitering. One cardinal rule for overseas travellers – at all times carry your passport, cash, travellers cheques and other documents with you, either in a handlebar bag or in a money belt.

When choosing your bicycle and touring equipment, consider ease of handling whilst dismounted. Anyone can cycle with loaded front and rear panniers, handlebar bag and more gear strapped to the pannier racks. However, try manoeuvring that lot up a set of stairs in a railway station or across a plank onto a ferry. Not easy by yourself. Keep your equipment to a minimum without forgoing reasonable comfort. If your tour involves some rail, bus, ferry or air travel, strap pairs of panniers together to form single pieces of luggage and carry a handlebar bag with a shoulder strap. Avoid carrying items such as tent and sleeping mat separately from the rest of your luggage, as they tend to be left behind in travel depots or disappear in transit.

As luggage on public transport, your bike will have to be prepared, usually by removing the pedals, covering the chain and turning the handlebars to the frame. Airlines often request that the bike be boxed. A used bicycle manufacturer's carton is suitable and spare spaces inside can be filled with additional gear to protect the bike. Strong string tied around the outside not only secures the carton but acts as a handle enabling you to carry the awkward package by yourself. Only a basic selection of tools is necessary unless you're heading for a third world country or wilderness. If you don't know how to carry out basic bicycle repairs and maintenance then learn.

If cycling in cold weather, invest in a quality set of thermal underwear. Its chlorofiber/polyester combination dries quickly and folds into a small lightweight bundle that substitutes for another layer of bulky clothes. A light coloured, long length, windproof raincoat made of porous material such as dry japara or Goretex is another clothing essential. Two changes of cycling clothes are sufficient when sets can be washed on alternate days. If you plan to take smart clothes for restaurant or theatre visits, you can't go wrong with a black knit garment of simple design. Along with one bold accessory (scarf or belt) and a pair of lightweight, open-style shoes, this combination adds little weight to your panniers.

Nothing spurs on pre-trip excitement and anticipation more than the planning you carry out at home. Travel brochures and maps can be obtained free from travel bureau and auto clubs. Reading up on the places you'll be visiting will enrich your enjoyment and save you time.

If you plan to travel without camping gear, your independence will be compromised and itinerary modified to ensure nightly accommodation. Camping affords greater route flexibility as even the tiniest towns have camping grounds, primitive though they may be.

If not, a site on private property can usually be found for you if you ask – it's most unlikely you'll be turned away.

Official campground fees vary depending on the facilities and charging system. If charged per site, you may be able to share a site with another small tent. In Europe, be prepared to pay for your bike and hot showers as well. Don't hesitate to complain to management if

coin-operated facilities malfunction – there are better ways to waste your hard earned travel dollars.

No matter how much time you spend pouring over maps on the dining-room table, once on the road day to day planning will be necessary, especially since there will be nobody to plan ahead for you. A myriad of factors could influence changes of your master plan – inclement weather, hospitality, exploration, exhaustion, heavy traffic. Set conservative daily distances and carry enough water for the distance unless you are sure you can replenish with fresh clean water or buy drinks along the way. This is especially important during the Australian summer.

Finally, tires good enough to buy before your old ones wear out.

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Prior to weekends and public holidays be aware of how much cash you are carrying and whether it is enough to cover the period. If you won't be in larger towns, don't rely on alternative sources (credit cards, cheques and autoteller cards).

Finding your way should not be a difficult task if you are armed with recently published detailed maps. Ask locals for directions and advice on the state of the road ahead. More often than not, they are delighted to assist you and friendly conversation ensues; an easy way to immerse yourself in the social environment.

Sometimes your route may pass through a city that appears as a dot on

your map. Unless you have a detailed map of the street system, you could find yourself riding in concentric circles and still not find your way out the other side. If you are overseas, the problem could be compounded by someone giving you street directions in a foreign language and gesturing north, south, east and west.

If available, collect street maps beforehand, free from tourist bureau. Make use of city maps often posted on boards by the main road entrances and sketching a mud map to get you through as quickly as possible. In most countries, a sign with a white letter "i" on a blue background denotes a tourist information centre.

Youth hostels are the places to meet other cyclists who are vital sources of valuable information for you. Hitch hikers and rail travellers would never be able to tell you about distressing headwinds, stretches of bicycle paths that wind through fields or the fresh water tank hidden behind a country church.

For the peace of mind for those you left behind, maintain contact with family and friends. Any contact, no matter how brief will ensure someone knows where you are and in what direction you're going. Receiving mail whilst on the road can be tremendously uplifting, especially if you've just spent days unable to communicate in a common language. Be sure that you do receive your letters by using known contacts' addresses or the poste restante facility employed by post offices worldwide.

Being alone, you are more approachable and hence likely to meet more people than you would in company, although, being female necessitates a sharper degree of caution and judgement when accepting the hospitality of strangers. Anywhere in Australia, when touring cyclists meet on the road there is a spontaneous friendly exchange but between solo women there is an especially warm bond.

Becoming ill during your holiday of the year must be one of the greatest injustices ever bestowed on travellers but to be alone and ill is the absolute pits of misery. You can make life a little more comfortable by being prepared with a selection of pharmacies' best sellers – tablets for headache, upset stomach and sore throat. To see yourself through such mid-tour crises without ditching your bike and heading home, dwell on the point of the whole trip which is being where you are. Other useful items are antiseptic solution, adhesive plaster, sun protection cream (essential no matter where you are travelling), toilet paper and rubber thongs to wear in shower blocks.

Stoke up well for breakfast, even if you can't face it and drink plentifully during the day. If you'll be travelling through towns frequently, there'll be little need to carry food apart from your favourite anti-bonk formula – perhaps bananas and barley sugar. When cooking meals for yourself, avoid complicated dishes that require a host of boiling billies. One pot meals of high carbohydrate foods will leave you with more time to explore, write letters, update your diary and sleep. Shop for your ingredients late in the afternoon and don't be reluctant to ask for small portions – buy only one zucchini if that's all you require.

Finally, remember to be good to yourself, have fun and explore as curiosity directs. You won't upset someone else's plans so take time to stop and smell the daisies.



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Dave Scott, triathlon ace and five time U.S. Ironman, needs to maintain his competitive edge. That's why he wears an Avenir helmet.

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PRAIRIE BREAKER 12 Speed

Frame: T.I.G. welded Dynaloy with brazed on fittings
Fork: Unicrown hi-tensile steel
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Handlebar Stem: Alloy/Steel
Crankset: Sugino DZFA-1A chainwheel with alloy cotterless cranks
Pedals: Moulded

Seat Pillar: Alloy
Rear Sprockets: Shimano 14/28T, 6 speed
Derailleurs/Gears: Shimano Tournéy with thumb control
Brakes: Alloy cantilever with alloy levers
Hubs: Steel C.P. sealed
Rims & Tyres: Araya 7x alloy rims, 26" x 1.75", 26" x 2" tyres

Frame Sizes: 53cm, 58cm
Colours: Pearl Black/Pearl White fade, Bright Red/Pearl White fade

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For those just getting into A.T.Bs., the Prairie Breaker is a top quality machine offering great value for money, whilst for the serious off-roader, the truly exhilarating Bushranger is one of the finest A.T.Bs. available in the world today.

The Bushranger and the Prairie Breaker, together with the balance of Malvern Star's brilliant new 1988 range are on display at the Malvern Star dealers listed overleaf right now. See them soon.



BUSHRANGER 18 Speed

Frame: Triple butted chromoly, forged dropouts, brazed on fittings
Fork: Unicrown chromoly
Handlebar: Chromoly
Handlebar Stem: Chromoly
Crankset: 28/38/48T Shimano Exage Mountain Biopace-alloy
Pedals: Shimano Exage Mountain
Seat Pillar: Alloy

Rear Sprockets: Shimano 14/32T, 6 speed
Derailleurs/Gears: Shimano Exage Mountain S.I.S. with S.I.S. thumb control
Brakes: Shimano Exage Mountain front alloy cantilevers, rear 'U' brake
Hubs: Alloy Shimano Exage mountain hubs with quick release
Rims & Tyres: Araya RM20 light alloy rims, 26" x 2" MTB tyres

Frame Sizes: 53cm, 58cm
Colours: Light Pearl Blue with White stays and fork

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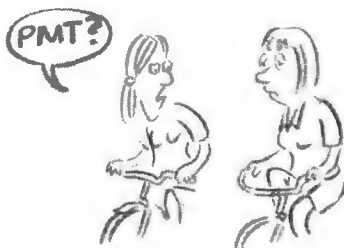
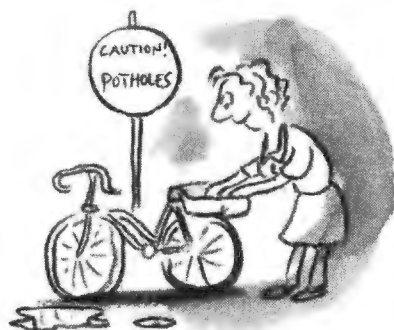
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THAT GIRL

The life and times of Margaret McLachlan

BY WARREN SALOMON

ON THURSDAY 16TH June 1966 a crowd of 600 well wishers and supporters gathered outside the Sydney General Post Office to watch a young Sydney woman set out on an epic ride to Melbourne. Fifty hours and ten minutes later 21 year old Margaret McLachlan was in Melbourne suffering from the effects of the 925 km (575 mile) journey but elated at having set a new women's long distance record only 18 and a half hours short of the men's record set by the legendary Sir Hubert Opperman.

Beating the boys is something Margaret McLachlan has always had to contend with. When she joined the Dulwich Hill club in Sydney she became known as "that girl" because of the common remark among the boys following club races: "Did *that girl* beat me?" Four years earlier she had scored another first in the man's-world of cycle racing when she became the first woman in New South Wales to be issued with a full racing licence.

In those days there were no women's races so Margaret had to race the boys and she did so well that in 1966 the NSW Amateur Cyclists' Union would only issue her with a restricted licence which limited her to club competition only. Evidently the old boys who ran the Cyclists' Union felt threatened.

Margaret's strongest supporters turned out to be the male members of her club. They were furious about the restrictions placed on her ability to compete as a club member in open competition and protested to the Union. The club pointed out that there was no Union rule which prohibited men and women from competing.

But the Union's officials had the upper hand citing another rule which enabled them to refuse a licence to anyone they considered unsuitable. Margaret McLachlan was obviously considered unsuitable to the NSWCU so the Dulwich Hill club withdrew from the competition and went public.

The story made page two in the country's largest selling magazine, *The Australian Women's Weekly*. In a story also published at the time in *The Australian* a club official was quoted as saying: "This seems to be a dictatorial attitude which demonstrates, in some quarters at least,

there still exists male objection to full emancipation for women.

"We have conducted a survey among our own riders and among members of other clubs and have come to the conclusion that the only objection to women riding against and with men comes from fuddy-duddy officials".

In the end the male guardians of the rule book won out and the following year the restricted-licence impasse was resolved by refusing McLachlan a licence altogether.

Battling amateur sport bureaucrats was not what Margaret McLachlan wanted from cycling so for the next few years until her retirement from competition to have her first child she continued to race unofficially and managed to add three more long distance records to her tally - Canberra/Sydney, Sydney/Newcastle and Sydney/Wollongong. Her Canberra Sydney womens record fell only half an hour short of the existing men's record.

Eight years ago she returned to competition and found no resistance to her obtaining a licence.

In spite of her problems with officials she thinks that women's events are important and only wishes that there weren't more women racing when she was at her athletic peak. During a state championships in the Sixties she had to ride the Senior Womens 20 mile road race as a time trial because there was no one to oppose her.

Margaret and her husband John are still active members of the Dulwich Hill club (Margaret is currently Secretary) and her training schedule often involves early morning rides involving a 5:30 am start. During the day she works with bikes as proprietor of Stanmore Cycles in Sydney's Inner West.

To date no one has attempted to topple any of Margaret McLachlan's long-distance records. Even the Sydney/Melbourne ride, which was put together on a shoestring budget in poor weather conditions with minimal back-up support she feels could easily be bettered with a well planned campaign.

She feels that given the current standard of women's racing (citing Liz Hopley's third in the Tour de France Feminin this year as an example) combined with modern knowledge on diet and athletic performance it is only a matter of time before someone dramatically slashes her records. She looks forward to seeing it happen.

Margaret McLachlan prepares to leave the Sydney GPO on her record breaking ride to Melbourne.

COURAGE AND DETERMINATION ON THE HUME HIGHWAY

Margaret McLachlan's record breaking Sydney to Melbourne ride

BY SONIA HEATHCOTE

Sonia Heathcote along with John McLachlan were Margaret McLachlan's time keepers and support crew for the record breaking ride.

EARLY IN JANUARY 1966 a Sydney newspaper ran a story accompanied by a photograph showing two Melbourne lads who had cycled to Sydney on a tandem they had built from scrap.

Margaret saw this and commented to workmates that here were two people getting all this publicity by cycling from Melbourne over quite a number of days while every week Sydney racing riders were lucky to even get their names published if they happened to win their races. Her workmates then challenged her to do something about it and try to bring bicycle racing to the attention of the apathetic Sydney public.

The result of this was her decision to attack the women's Sydney to Melbourne record with the aim of gaining much needed publicity for the sport of cycling. She had only married last August but husband John was a fellow club



member and fully supported her stiff training program in preparation for the ride.

At the beginning she would rise at 5 am three mornings a week and go for a 65 km ride returning home for breakfast and a shower before heading off to her work as a cosmetician for a large city pharmacy. On Sundays she would set out at the same time for a 100 workout. With the approach of winter and the shortening day she switched her main daily training ride from mornings to evenings after dinner. Her daily ride to work added another 32 km to her daily schedule. Saturdays were usually spent racing competitively over distances up to 60 km. There were no other special preparations or training; no exercises or fad diets; only a daily intake of vitamin capsules to build up resistance to winter colds.

Towards the end of her training she rode to Goulburn one Sunday to see if she was able to climb the hills along that section of her route.

After a full week of cold and continuous rain (which upset her daily training program) Thursday 16th June 1966 dawned fine and clear for her first day on the road. She was farewelled from the GPO by a large group of well wishers and was accompanied out along the Parramatta Road by a television crew.

Near Ashfield, only 10 km from the start, her ride was almost brought to an early end when a truck failed to pull up in time at a pedestrian crossing. The driver broadsided his truck in an attempt to miss the pedestrian and fortunately enough room was left on the roadway for Margaret to safely bypass the stricken vehicle. At Warwick Farm on Sydney's outskirts the wind from a passing truck blew off her hat. Not a comforting beginning.

This lone girl riding along the Hume Highway created much interest and from the tooting of car horns it was obvious that many people had read the newspaper report of the attempt. At Camden her mother and sister were alongside the road to cheer her along.

After Camden came the long grind up Razorback which she rode without any apparent effort. Approaching Alpine we were followed by a car load of girls who drove along side and asked all about Margaret's riding and whether she raced in NSW. It turned out that the girl driving had raced with the women's organisation in Queensland and was a keen follower of cycling – so much so that she followed the rider into Mittagong.

By Mittagong it was beginning to get cold so a stop was made to put on more clothes. Margaret's only comment on the ride so far was that her legs were dirty! She had put training oil on them before leaving Sydney which had attracted road grime. This seemed to be

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her only impression of the ride so far – it was just another training run.

After a snack of rissoles and coffee she was on her way to Goulburn. Nearing the town she seemed to weaken but the sight of the city lights seemed to give her new courage and she rode strongly to our motel.

Once off the bike she admitted that the last hills into Goulburn were tiring and she had felt she was getting slower and slower riding over each of them. Perhaps this was an effect of the darkness as we had clocked her at a consistent climbing speed of 24 km/h.

After a general clean up we trooped off to a cafe for a meal, then back to the motel for a bath and a rest. The bath or lack of one proved to be a disappointment to Margaret. The motel had muddled the bookings and the bath turned out to be a shower depriving her of her much needed soaking so necessary she thought after her long ride.

We know now that we stayed too long in Goulburn and didn't leave until 5:45 am the next morning. After a light breakfast we were on the road once again and still in darkness and cold conditions. It was a case of two of everything – two jumpers, two sets of tights and two pairs of socks – as Margaret rode into the misty dawn lit only by the lights of our following vehicle. John and I watched anxiously for the sun but after an hour the day had arrived with out it and all we got was a fine mist which became progressively heavier through Yass and beyond.

At Colac Creek Margaret had to stop again to take off her soaked woollen jumper and changed into a rain jacket which she wore for the rest of the day. The rough sealed surface was an additional difficulty and at one stage the vibration had loosened her head light bracket and front wheel nuts almost to the point where a bad fall may have occurred had the problem not been noticed and promptly fixed.

A short stop was made at Yass and Margaret, although making no complaints and not feeling sick, felt that the weather conditions were holding her back. Breathing does not come easily in thick fog and light rain. Such conditions also dampen ones morale.

On to Gundagai where a lunch stop was scheduled. By this time the mist had lifted but it was a raw, cold winter's afternoon with no sunshine. The only good thing was the lack of a headwind. There had been practically no wind at all since we left Sydney which was probably the reason why the mist and fog had not lifted until late morning.

After riding all morning in the miserable cold and a lot of the way worrying about the "big hill" which she had been warned of at Jugiong (and which caused her not one scrap of trouble to ride over) for about an hour after Gundagai

she felt on top of the world telling us that lunch had bucked her up no end.

Then 17 kilometres from Tarcutta trouble struck: a puncture. By now she had begun to feel really tired and the riding conditions had got her in such a state that the puncture was really the last straw. She refused to ride on the spare bike carried on the car for such emergencies so it was a case of changing the single then persuading her to get back on the bike.

While John changed the tyre she took black coffee and a Bex powder to try to give her a lift but even so, she had to be urged to get back onto the bike and eventually rode off into the dusk crying – not from anything really but nerves and the thought that she just couldn't face up to any more hills.

This brought about the decision by John and myself that the day's ride would have to be shortened. The original aim had been Albury. Then we had thought, maybe Holbrook; but now it was obvious that in order to get her through to Melbourne we would have to pull into a motel at Tarcutta, let her rest for a few hours, then continue on.

When we told her of this she seemed willing to the change of plan so we found a motel in town. As we booked in she made the remark that after a couple of hours here she would ride to Albury and maybe we could stay at a motel there for a few more hours. John and I did not respond to this as we both knew that if she was to make Melbourne on Saturday once we left Tarcutta there would be no more stopping at motels.

AFTER A SOAKING bath Margaret refused dinner and instead sucked on oranges and drank only milk. We had arrived in Tarcutta at 5:45 and by 7 pm she was in bed trying to sleep. At 11:45 pm she was up again having had no sleep whatsoever but feeling rested and anxious to get on with those 434 kilometres still to be ridden.

To the utter amazement of the motel keeper we left for Holbrook where Margaret stopped for a short coffee break. Here she admitted that she had been scared stiff speeding down the hills in the dark. Our car headlights were hardly adequate to light the way ahead.

She rode straight through Albury and across the Murray River bridge into Victoria. Here trouble struck in the form of a cantankerous Agriculture Department inspector who confiscated all the fruit from our vehicle. He was a real grump.

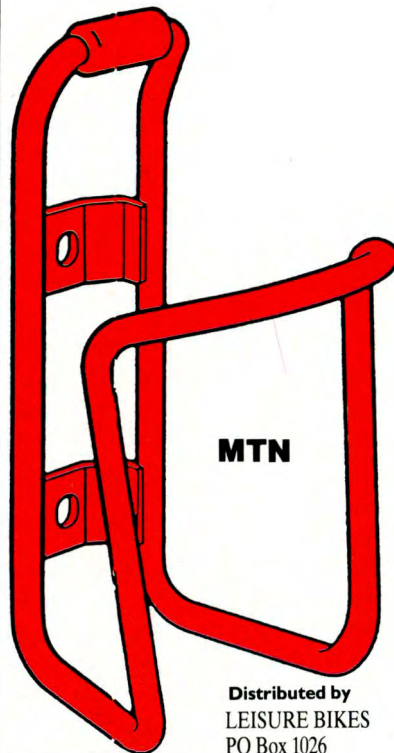
Margaret was furious and sorry that she had not insisted that he search her pockets where he would have found the most amazing collection of broken pieces of rissole and sausage all covered in biscuit crumbs.

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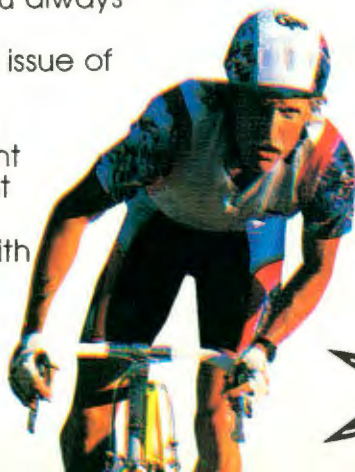
And triathlete extraordinaire Scott Tinley has taken a load off his shoulders with the Giro Prolight, too.

All of which means if you take cycling seriously, you should lighten up. With the Giro Prolight. Available in four sizes for a custom fit. And more wild colours than you can imagine.



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After this we pulled over in the main street of Wodonga while Margaret rested and John, who had been fighting off sleep all the way from Holbrook, had a short nap. I prepared breakfast. The journey from Holbrook had been bitterly cold even in the vehicle and at one stage John had taken to heating up the car's cigarette lighter and holding it in his pocket just to warm his hands.

Margaret was now craving for sweet things and would only nibble at a piece of steak. Her tongue was sore and we thought this was the result of chewing Glucodin tablets which are rather chalky things. Her feet were frozen and had to be rubbed to boost the circula-

tion before she could start off again. Once again she wore two of everything as she set off into the dark early morning.

Despite the cold she was feeling well but developing signs of an acute acid stomach. By Wangaratta she had to stop for Alka Seltzer and Dexam to help ease her stomach complaint.

Our scheduled lunch stop was Benalla and as she rode through the Victorian countryside the sun shone – it was really a great day to be out on a bike. As the morning progressed Margaret seemed to show new signs of energy.

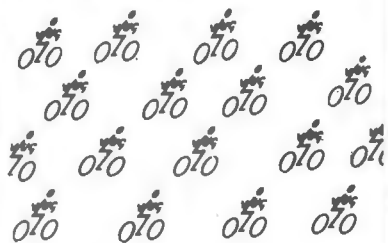
At Benalla John gave her legs a light rub to ease some soreness and she proudly spoke of the onset of saddle

soreness – something up until now in her cycling career she had never experienced.

The hour in Benalla was to be the last long break before reaching Melbourne. After leaving Euroa she seemed to dance on the pedals climbing over the hills at 32 km/h and it was apparent that she was going all out to get as much distance behind her before darkness fell. She had done so much riding in the dark and did not look forward to any more on this ride.

Just stop to think now. This girl had been on her bike since 11:45 pm the night before with only short periods of rest (the longest being the hour at Benalla) and yet here she was making the

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mileposts fly by as though it was the start of the journey instead of the last lap. As a matter of fact the kilometres were flying by so quickly that it looked like we would arrive in Melbourne earlier than our estimated time of 9 pm.

At Kilmore she insisted on pulling into a garage and changing into her Dulwich Hill jersey. She had started in this at the Sydney GPO and she was determined to finish in it.

So we set off on what we all thought was the last leg – no more stops before until GPO. Along we went merrily then suddenly we could see that she seemed to be not riding as well, not holding the handlebars properly. Once she veered onto the wrong side of the road into on-

coming traffic – panic for us! Then, at the last moment, she came back onto her own side of the road.

This all happened about 32 kilometres from the end on a hill called (we were told later) Pretty Sally – well known to Melbourne's cyclists as a stiff uphill in the opposite direction.

As Margaret started down this hill a tailwind sprang up and we were horrified to see her again holding the handlebars wrongly and loosely, then she was tearing away down hill and wobbling all over the road at speeds of up to 65 km/h.

We sped alongside and here is where we really needed a megaphone as to do this we had to leave her unsheltered from the traffic coming up from behind.

We called out to her to brake and ease speed. To our concern she called back that her handlebars were broken!

John did not know what was best to do and everything possible flashed through his mind. Could he drive alongside and grab the bike? Could he catch her if she fell? Or would she fall under the car?

All the time he was looking hard at her handlebars and came to the conclusion that they were not in fact broken. He began to talk her into breaking gently and slowly easing to a stop. I was petrified and never felt so useless. There was nothing else I could do to prevent a shocking crash other than to add my voice to John's. "Brake Margaret – brake slowly and pull up".

To our joy the message got through and she eventually slowed speed and came to a halt – not without giving us further fright by not pulling her foot out of the toe strap. She had forgotten to do so.

We got to her and learned that the trouble was loss of concentration and that she was going to sleep on the bike. She asked us to keep shouting at her to wake her up.

Back on the bike with strict instructions to go down all hills much slower than she normally would she started to again lose control after only one and a half kilometres. This time we decided that best thing to do was to get her off the bike and wake her up with hot coffee. This we did and it was sufficient to keep her alert for the ride in to Melbourne.

On the final leg into the city Margaret's legs kept the pedals turning by habit. She was not conscious of what was going on around her except that her target was the GPO. After Pretty Sally we noticed a black car which appeared to be following us. At one of our last stops we found out that the driver was John Donnelly from the local Coburg club and he agreed to drive in front and lead the way through the Saturday night traffic.

On the way in to town it seemed that every second traffic light was against us. At each of these she was very weak and after restarting she did not ride a straight course. We felt that her strength was almost gone. Later she admitted that she was not concentrating very well and at one point had thought that the white painted road markings were tram tracks and was riding diagonally across them to avoid a fall.

10:12 pm, 18th June 1966 – success! Margaret achieved her desire and rode to a standstill outside the Melbourne GPO. Her target had been reached with an elapsed time of 58 hours 10 minutes. Her actual riding time of 36 hours and 33 minutes was well ahead of the record previously set by Joyce Barry.

Margaret's record still stands.

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MORE WOMEN RIDERS IN THE NINETIES

Recent research predicts more Australian women cyclists than men in the 1990's. Furthermore, women are safer riders according to Australia's foremost bicycle researcher.

BY ALAN A PARKER

IN THE USA THERE ARE FIVE million more adult women cyclists than men. There are approximately 25 million adult female cyclists, most of whom are health conscious and are seeking fitness and companionship through recreational cycling.

More Australian women are now buying bikes for the same reasons as American women but it is not known how strong this trend is because there is no accurate sales data collected by the bicycle trade associations here like there is in the USA.

What we do know from the limited

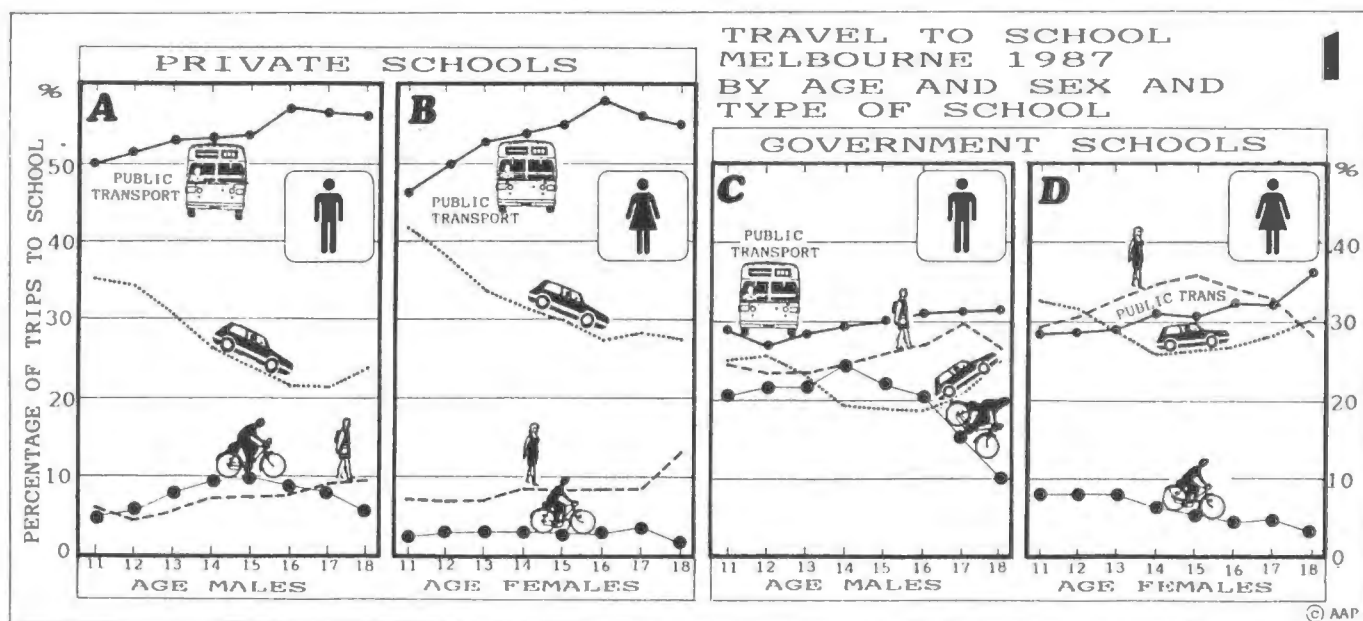
information available is that Australia is following American life style trends the more physically active forms of recreation are now very popular. Following past trends in USA the insignificant proportion of women commuter cyclists will increase but still be insignificant compared to commuting by car or to the very large increase in cycling for fitness and recreation. Indeed when it comes to commuting we have accurate census data showing that women are using cars more and choosing to walk or use trains and buses less.

The majority of adult women cyclists also drive and are choosing the car for their commuting trips. Less than 5,000 of the 150,000 to 200,000 women who bought bicycles last year will commute by bicycle.

Another source of accurate information about women cyclists is bicycle accident data which leads me to the conclusion that the great increase in leisure cycling will not increase the proportion of bicycle accidents and its likely the number of bicycle accidents will reduce precisely because there will be so many more women choosing to cycle in less hazardous areas.

The most comprehensive survey on destinations of womens bicycle trips is the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 1984 Adelaide study. Melbourne now has accurate data about women's bike/rail trips to work and school and female students trips to school by bicycle. If this data is added to the accident and census data a picture begins to emerge of new cycling trends in our capital cities.

Today's secondary school students will be adult women in the early nineteen nineties so the bicycle riding skills and the experience of cycling gained today will to some extent condition tomorrow's women and their willingness to cycle in traffic.

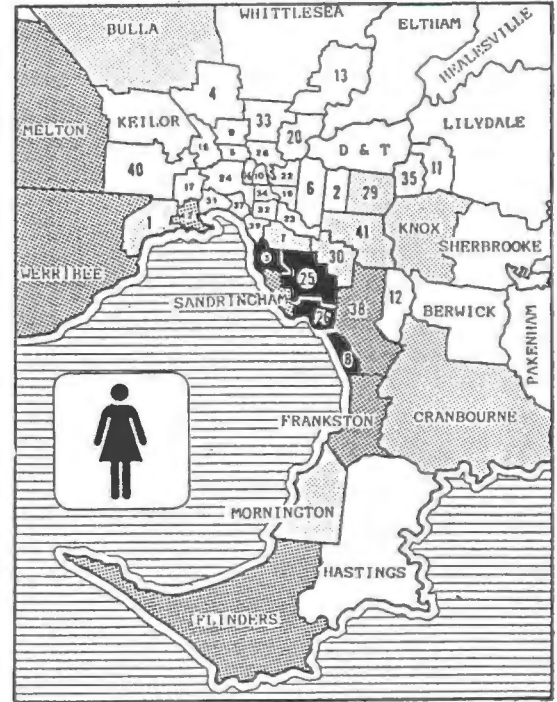
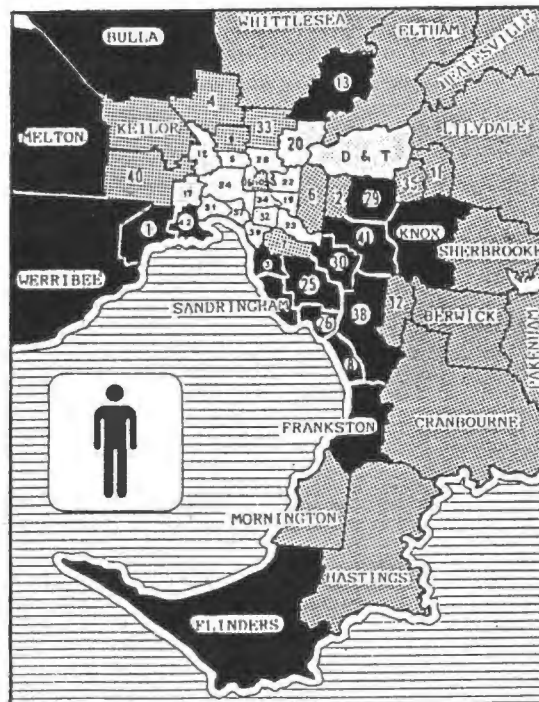


Municipalities

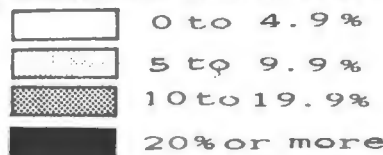
- 1 ALTONA
- 2 BOX HILL
- 3 BRIGHTON
- 4 BROADMEADOWS
- 5 BRUNSWICK
- 6 CAMBERWELL
- 7 CAULFIELD
- 8 CHELSEA
- 9 COBURG
- 10 COLLINGWOOD
- 11 CROYDON
- 12 DANDENONG
- 13 DIAM VALLEY
- 15 ESSENDON
- 16 FITZROY
- 17 FOOTSCRAY
- 19 HAWTHORN
- 20 HEIDELBERG
- 22 KEW
- 23 MALVERN
- 24 MELBOURNE
- 25 MOORABBIN
- 26 MORDIALLOC
- 28 NORTHCOTE
- 29 NUNAWADING
- 30 OAKLEIGH
- 31 PORT MELB
- 32 PRAHRAN
- 33 PRESTON
- 34 RICHMOND
- 35 RINGWOOD
- 37 STH MELB
- 38 SPRINGVALE
- 39 ST. KILDA
- 40 SUNSHINE
- 41 WAVERLEY
- 42 WILLIAMSTOWN

MALE AND FEMALE BICYCLE TRIPS TO SECONDARY SCHOOL MELBOURNE 1987

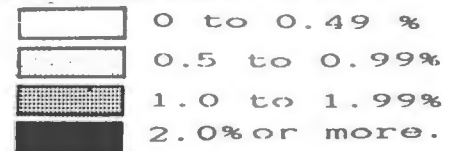
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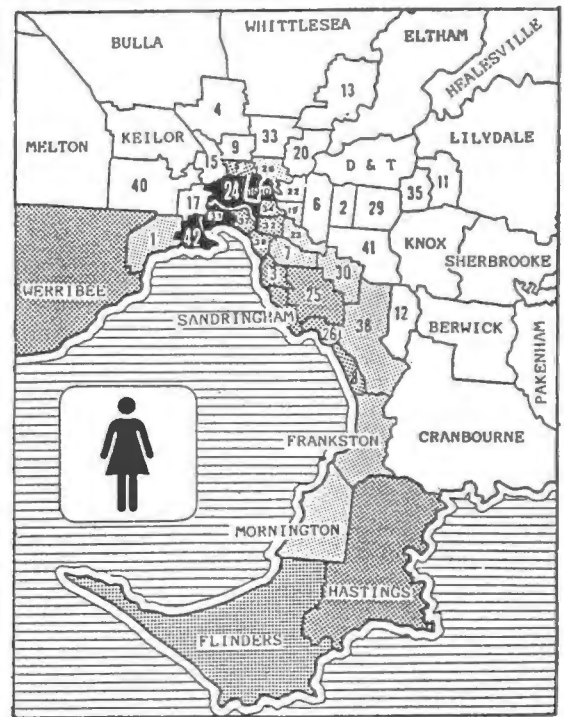
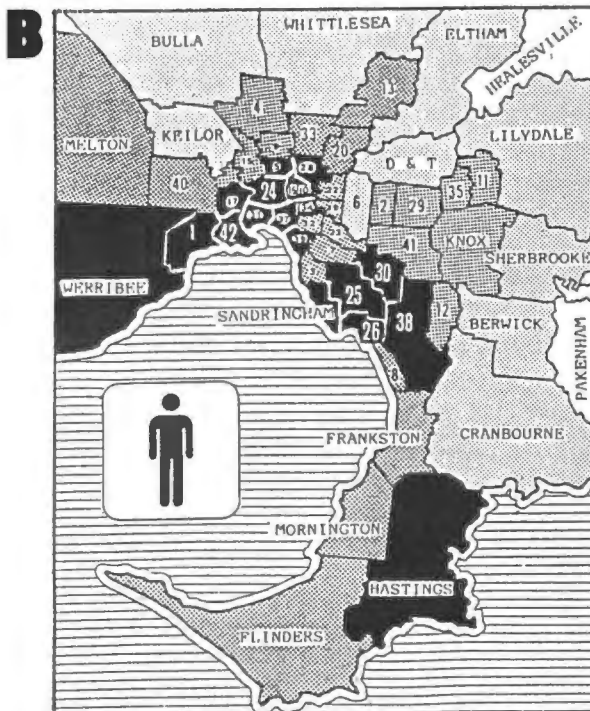
BICYCLE TRIPS AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL MALE AND ALL FEMALE TRIPS TO SECONDARY SCHOOL 1987



BICYCLE TRIPS AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL MALE OR ALL FEMALE TRIPS TO WORK 1986



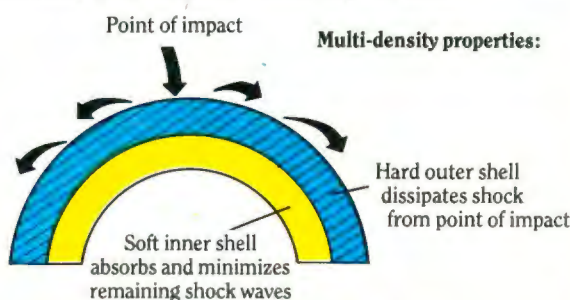
MALE AND FEMALE BICYCLE TRIPS TO WORK



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LT 700	SNELL	131

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300 G - 400 G	= Possible brain damage
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The movement of secondary school students to school is a mass movement in any city and Melbourne is typical capital city in this regard. There is a higher percentage of girls cycling to secondary schools in Adelaide and Perth and a lower proportion in Sydney.

A recent survey by the Metropolitan Transit Authority in Melbourne found that of the 130,000 female secondary school students surveyed only 7000 girls cycled to school (see map A).

In Map A we can see the percentage of bicycle trips to school by both boys and girls. There is a great difference between the sexes and between municipalities. The largest proportion of female bike riders go to school in the City of Chelsea which has 33% with one in five of these using both bike and train to get to school. Mordialloc has 23% and Moorabbin 22%, Brighton 21% of female students riding to school and there is a gradual reduction suburb by suburb with less than 1% in some suburbs.

Note the concentration of high levels of bicycle use in the bayside suburbs shown in black and the very low level in the northern and eastern suburbs away from the bay. A typical working class suburb with an average level of female bicycle use is Oakleigh with 5% of all trips to school.

As only 7000 girls ride to school com-

pared with 23,000 boys it indicates the low level of exposure that girls have to heavy traffic and suggests that the adult female lack of confidence in traffic may be due to the reduced level of early exposure to traffic and the skills learnt as a consequence. It poses the interesting question of how much is the feeling of greater vulnerability that women have in traffic due to lack of experience and how much is due to genetically determined feminine behavioural responses due to hormonal differences.

Fortunately some girls have come to grips with the problem of riding our heavily trafficked streets. Traffic researcher, Barry Elliot, makes the relevant comment that: 'Girls find bikes a good form of transport, when mum and dad can't take you.' He adds that they ride a great deal on the roads, although rarely at night. They do not feel as safe as boys, and are more timid on busy or cluttered roads than boys. They positively hate buses and trucks. Whilst feeling confident in their skills as competent riders, they do feel more vulnerable on the roads.

I asked two 16 year old high school girls from schools in the bayside region, which has a very high percentage of girls riding to school, to tell me why girls do not ride to school. In considering their response it must be noted that relatively safe routes are available to them via

traffic-managed local streets. Both of these young women talked to their girlfriends to find out why, "more boys that girls ride bikes to school".

Kris Roomer

I think that boys tend to be more active than girls, therefore they want to get out of the house and burn up energy. We find that boys seem to be more independent, they would just like to get on their bikes and go somewhere, like going to school if that is the case. Although girls would rather go by train to socialise with each other.

Girls often don't want to ruin their appearance such as messing up their hair because of wind or helmets when riding their bikes, whereas boys usually don't care too much about what they look like.

Nina Kristenson

I think girl's don't consider riding a bike a very cool or trendy thing to do. Guys on the other hand think it's sort of tough. Guys in general are more active physically than girls in general, therefore having the extra energy needed to ride a bike to school each day.

IN MOST SUBURBS HAZARDOUS road conditions are the principal deterrent to cycling to school and some schools have a ban on cycling to school.



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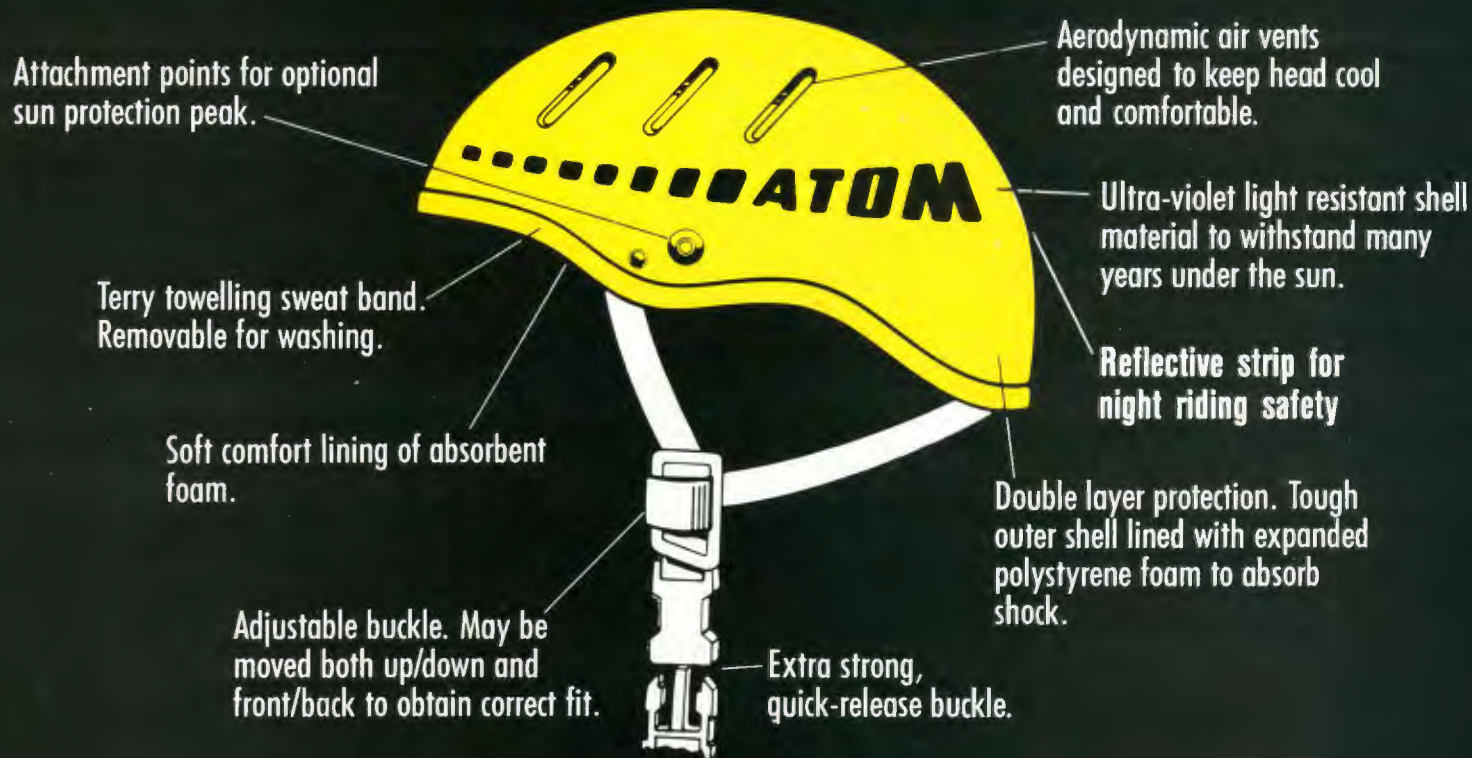
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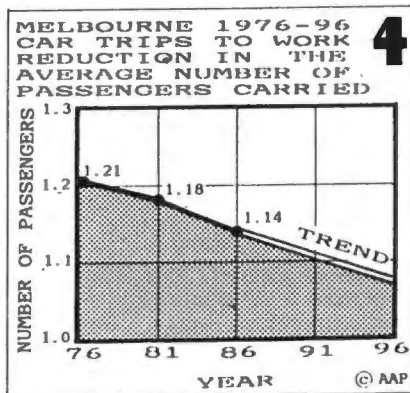


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Even in those areas with relatively safe routes to school there are other legitimate feminine reasons for not cycling however, the most important long term trend is the increase in the percentage of girls going to private schools. The four graphs showing the level of cycling to both public and private schools in Melbourne clearly shows that a very small percentage of girls cycle to private schools.

Fitness is less of a problem with the boys as Miss Roomer and Miss Kristenson have clearly stated. It is obvious if boys don't cycle to school they still burn off a lot of energy. It seems reasonable to assume that cycling to school would make a bigger contribution to the fitness of most female students than the male students.



Clearly the trend towards private education is counter productive in terms of increased sedentary travel, as a burden on the public transport system and a future constraint on the use of bicycles for transportation.

The working woman's trip to work

AUSTRALIAN CENSUS DATA (1976/86) shows that proportionally fewer women are choosing to cycle to work than men and that women are choosing to drive cars to work to a much greater extent then ever before. If we break out figures for Australian females who cycle to work as percentage of all employed females it is only 0.9% while the number of Australian female bicycle trips to work has increased by nearly 10,000 since 1976. This is not a big rise at all when we consider that up to 200,000 bicycles were sold to females last year.

Since 1976 three quarters of the additional drivers on the road have been women males driving to work had only increased by 165,000 but the

number of female drivers has increased by 481,000.

While overall number of female bicycle commuters has increased since 1976 the ratio of female car drivers to bike riders has also increased indicating that even more women will be choosing to drive to work in the future. Outside the capital cities more women cycle to work. The percentage of women cyclists commuting to work in Melbourne (0.55%) is below the national average but looking at the pattern of female bicycle trips to work will give an indication of what is happening in other cities. The pattern of trip distribution will have some similarities even though there are only 0.23% of all female trips to work in Sydney, 2.0% in Adelaide, 0.43% in Brisbane and 0.68% in Perth.

On Census day in Melbourne there were only 2,600 female bicycle commuters and Map B shows the suburbs where they live. The percentages on the black to white map shading are one tenth of those on Map A showing the distribution of secondary school bicycle trips. There is a considerable difference between both sexes and the suburbs in the percentage of trips.

There seems to be a general correlation between the low levels of female bicycle trips on both maps A and B.

The consequences of growing preference of women for car commuting is seen in the reduction in the proportion of women carried as passengers in cars.

In 1976 Australian cars had on average 1.21 passengers but by 1986 cars had only 1.14 passengers and this trend is likely to continue as is shown on Chart 4. What this means is that more cars are needed now to carry the same number of people.

The only conclusion that is possible from the data presented (knowing also that urban sprawl has lengthened the average trip) is that the growth in female car commuting will create problems of noise and air pollution, traffic congestion and no reduction in road accidents.

It's probable that the urban situation will continue to degenerate unless some way is found of stabilizing the number of cars on the road or ensuring they carry more passengers. These trends indicate that the use of bicycles for recreation and fitness will continue but the perceived and mostly very real traffic hazards in our capital cities will restrict the growth of cycling as a means of transport particularly for women.

I would expect that Australia will follow another trend in which increasing numbers of women cyclists drive out of town or to recreational bike paths with bikes mounted on car racks. This type of bike/car dual mode trip will really take off in a few years but bike/rail dual mode travel is unlikely to take off because of the lack of secure bicycle parking facilities at railway stations.



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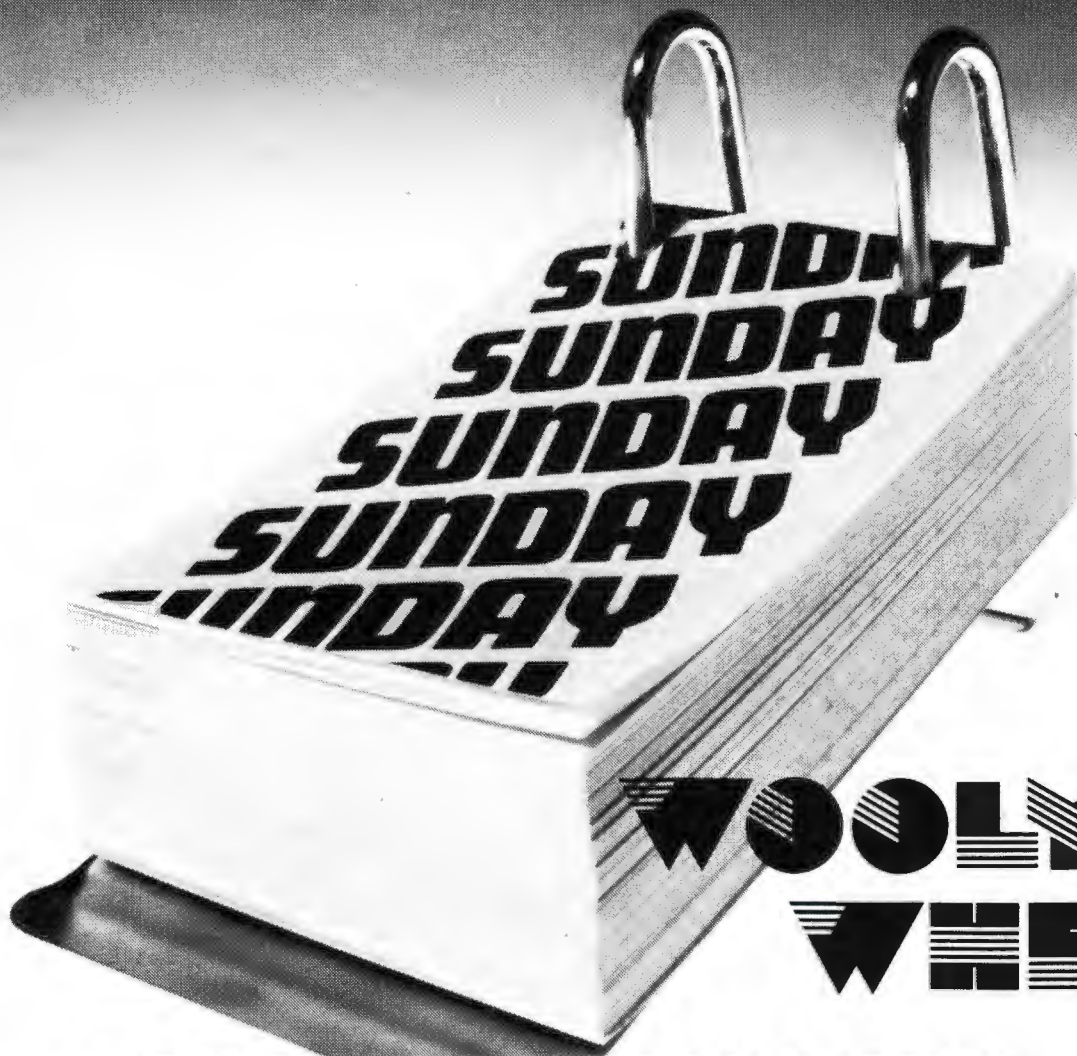
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In 1986 there were only 150 regular bike/rail users on the Met and about 100 of these were secondary school students.

Womens opinions on why they commute less than men

NOT MUCH HAS BEEN written in bicycle plans on attitudes of women cyclists so I made up a file of all the written opinions of women cyclists I could find and talked to women cyclists I know. The following list of womens opinions of why they don't commute as much as men gives an indication of both current attitudes and some practical problems that are capable of solution. These are listed in order of importance as constraints to cycling in our capital cities.

Safety and security

- Women are on average more traffic sensitive and safety conscious than men and are not as likely to mix on the main roads with cars, trucks and buses.
- Men are naturally more aggressive and prepared to take more risks which makes them feel more comfortable in traffic.
- Married women also worry about what would happen to the kids if there was an accident and perceive that driving a car is much safer and public transport to be safest of all.
- Physical harassment is much more of a problem for women and the fear of having to fix a tyre alone in some suburbs is rather frightening. Some women prefer to cycle in groups and avoid cycling alone which is why they will not commute.

Trip length and self image

- The average trip to work is quite long in our capital and getting longer as they grow larger. Women are less inclined to commute longer distances than men for two important reasons. Firstly women are very sensitive about smelling good at work and sweating is a major problem especially in the summer. Secondly that the longer urban cycling trip requires cycling attire. Women also like to look good at work so that changing clothes making up the face and hair is perceived as a major problem or at least an additional hassle.

- Working class women often feel that riding a bike is demeaning giving people the impression that they can't afford to travel any other way. It is often impossible to get children to childcare with a bike. For some there is the fear of being discriminated against at work by males who see bicycles as being very low status.

Uncomfortable bicycles that don't fit

- Up until very recently the bicycle industry displayed an incredible ignorance of women's basic anatomy and failed to produce a range of bicycles to properly fit smaller women or those with short torsos and arms. Good quality brake levers that fitted small hands and wider saddles were not available.

- Many women find the upright style bike more comfortable for commuting for the following reasons: 1. You don't get the embarrassing irritation from the saddle that comes with a bent over position on a typical ten speed. 2. Its easier to control the bike and relate to other road users especially if you learnt to ride on that type of bicycle. 3. The upright bicycle usually comes equipped with more effective chain covers that keeps the dirt and oil off the legs.

Many of the women taking up recreational cycling did not do a lot of cycling at school and take a bit more time to acquire traffic sense and that feeling of being safely in control. Being sold bicycles that don't fit them properly makes this learning process so much more difficult and many just give up.

Lack of maintenance skills

- The lack of personal confidence in basic mechanical skills required to keep a bicycle on the road often puts an end to the practice of cycling. Some women are embarrassed by the need to seek help from male in the family who usually fixes things. There is a need for more trouble free quality bicycles that women can afford to take to a bike shop on the rare occasion that they break

down and for some the need for bicycle maintenance classes is often expressed.

Fear of theft and lack of secure storage

- This problem is the same for men and women except that the usually inferior status of women in the work place hierarchy means that they have less success in getting employers to provide facilities.

Women are safer cyclists

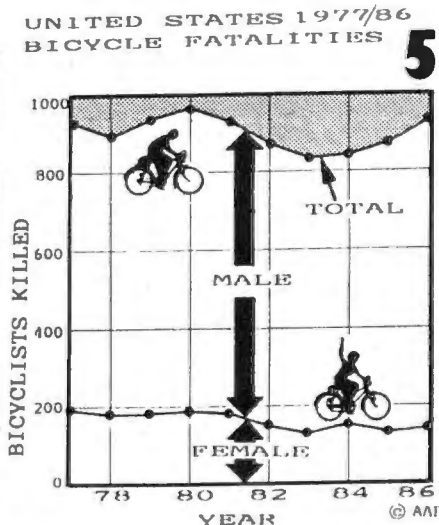
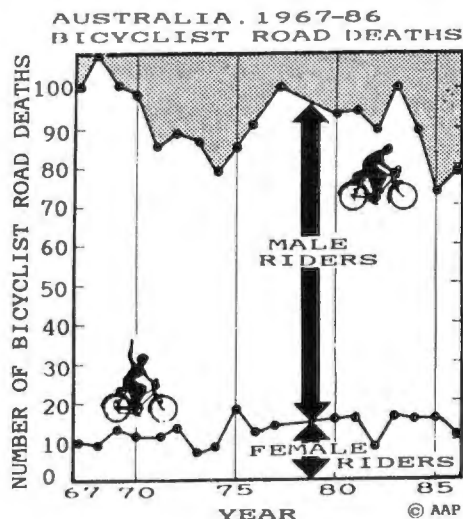
THE GREAT INCREASE IN leisure cycling will not increase the proportion of bicycle accidents and it is likely the number of bicycle accidents will reduce precisely because there are so many more women cycling.

Chart 5 shows that in the USA female cyclists have less fatal accidents than men even though there are more women than men. This difference cannot be explained away by saying male cyclists do a lot more cycling and therefore, are more exposed to risk of an accident. Nor can it be explained away by saying that off-road cycling for physical fitness is more popular with women cyclists and that reduces their risk of being killed on the roads because women choose to cycle away from traffic because they are more traffic wary.

The cautious and defensive approach to driving vehicles that women have particularly the younger women in comparison to young males must be responsible for much of the lower female accident rate.

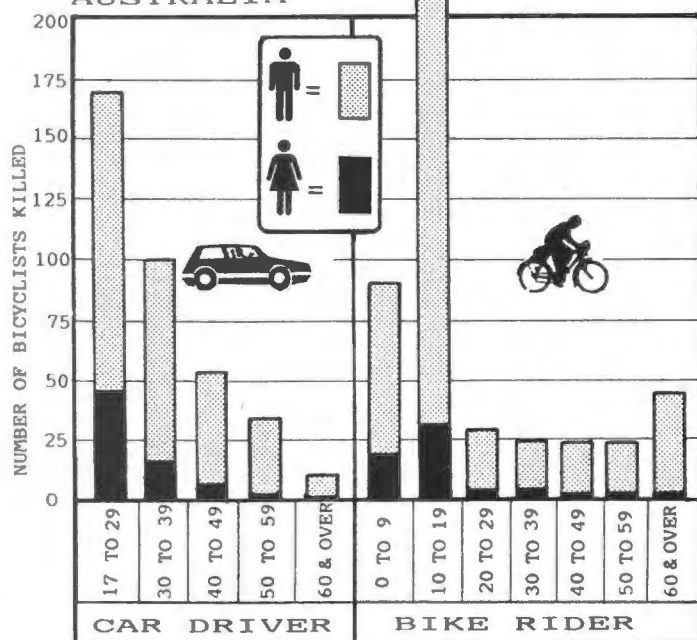
Women cyclists are mostly self taught and start off well by being safer cyclists at school.

The old adage that the safe cyclist of today is the safe motorist of tomorrow is true when we consider the appalling accident figures for both male child cyclists and young adult male drivers shown on Chart 6.



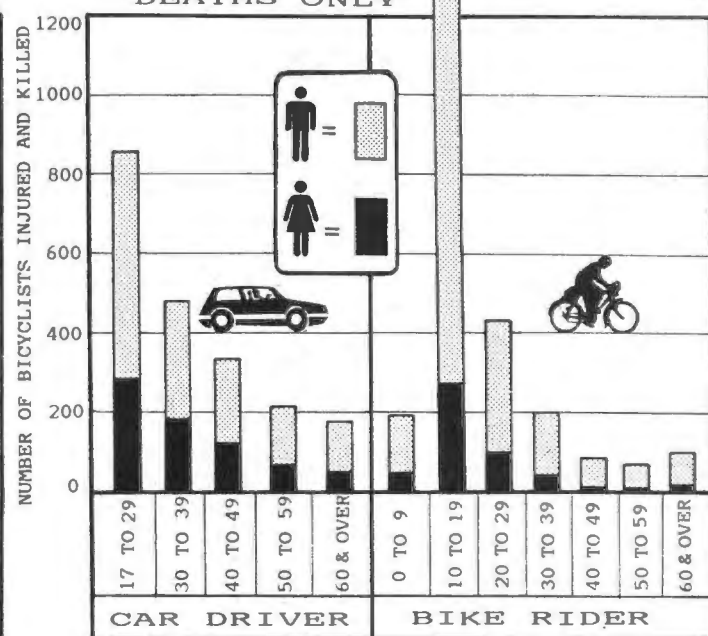
DEATHS

AGE AND SEX OF CAR DRIVERS AND BIKE RIDERS INVOLVED IN FATAL BICYCLE ACCIDENTS OVER FIVE YEARS 1981-85 AUSTRALIA



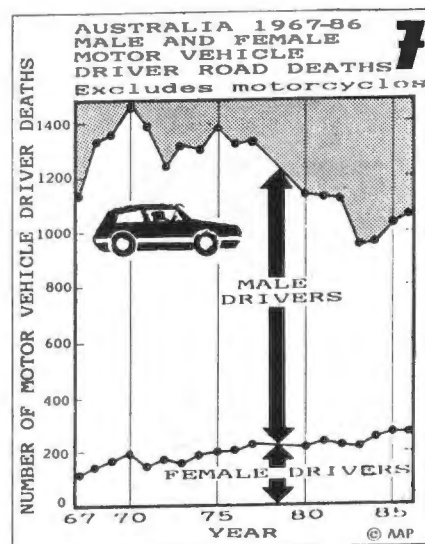
INJURIES

AGE AND SEX OF CAR DRIVERS AND BIKE RIDERS INVOLVED IN BICYCLE ACCIDENTS VICTORIA 1986 & 1987. INJURIES AND DEATHS ONLY



Australian data for male and female accidents shows that women have a better safety record than men as drivers of cars (Chart 7) as bicycle riders (Chart 5) and by their low level of involvement in bicycle accidents as motorists as shown on Chart 6. This applies for both bicyclist injuries and fatalities in accidents involving motor vehicles. The proportion of females killed as drivers is higher than for cycling and that is probably due to so many women being innocent victims of male recklessness on the roads. Chart 6 indicates that the typical killer motorist is under 30, is male and its common knowledge that he is likely to be in the fastest ten percent of drivers in any stream of traffic aggressively trying to overtake or close up on other drivers to make them go faster.

The good overall safety record of women in accidents involving other road vehicles is less pronounced in bicycle accidents that don't involve motor vehicles. The only state in Australia that collects bicycle accident data for bicycle-only accidents is Western Australia and the graph showing the ratio of male



to female accidents shows female involvement in bicycle-only accidents is much higher. There is a 5.5 to 1 ratio for accidents involving other vehicles but a 2 to 1 ratio for bicycle only accidents over a ten year period.

Women cycle for recreation

THE FEDERAL DEPARTMENT responsible for sport and recreation conducts surveys every year of the 'Physical Activities of Australians'.

This survey monitors the kinds of exercises people take to keep fit and the

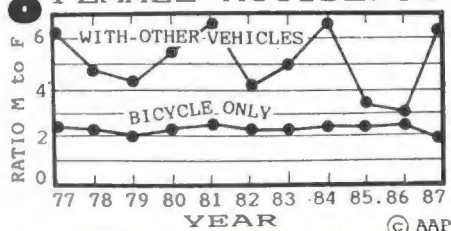
summer 1987 survey states that 49% of Australians did regular exercise to keep fit which compares with only 38% exercising ten years ago so it does seem that Australians are becoming more active.

The survey states that both walking and swimming continued to be the most popular form of exercise for both men and women but that cycling was the fourth most popular form of exercise for women. It appears that nearly as many women (48%) as men (50%) exercise but cycling is not in the top five activities preferred by men. In this sense we follow trends in America. 18% of the women said they exercised daily, 5% 5-6 days a week, 22% 1-4 days a week.

AUSTRALIAN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS 1987

Activity Type	Women (%)	Men (%)	Total (%)
Walking	67	48	58
Swimming	23	23	23
Calisthenics/Aerobics	21	20	21
Jogging/Running	10	22	16
Bicycling	14	18	16
Cricket/Football	6	22	14
Tennis	11	10	11
Golf	4	15	10
Squash	4	9	7
Sailing/Boating	4	8	6
Table Tennis	3	6	5
Netball/Basketball	6	3	4
Lawnbowls	3	3	3
Athletics	2	3	2

WESTERN AUSTRALIA RATIO OF MALE TO FEMALE ACCIDENTS



The participation rates for men and women are shown in Chart 9.

According to the Survey report there are policy implications for fitness programs run by state agencies which are quoted as follows:

There is a need to increase the overall participation rates amongst women. Seventy-three percent of men and 69% of women were active. There were no noticeable sex differences in the frequency of activity, but fewer men than women tended to exercise at sufficient levels of energy expenditure to obtain fitness benefits. It is clear from these surveys that the next step for the active woman is to spend more time on exercise that is vigorous enough to increase and maintain fitness.

While active women exercise as often as men, they are not exercising at sufficient levels of energy expenditure to gain fitness benefits. The challenge for fitness programmers is to achieve this, given that women and men prefer different types of activities and programs. Programs should be developed to cater for the needs and interests of women and encourage them to exercise at levels which will allow them to achieve and maintain higher levels of fitness.

To achieve these goals the following broad objective has been set by the department:

● By the year 2000, 60% of the adult population should participate in sufficient activity to achieve and maintain physical fitness and health.

If the state agencies successfully implement these programs it will result in more women participating in regular exercise and many women transferring their physical effort from walking to the more strenuous forms of exercise including cycling. These state fitness programs will reinforce the general trend for more women to ride bicycles.

The only large scale recent survey that provides accurate data on female bicycle use is the ABS Survey of Bicycle Use and Safety in Adelaide (Oct 84) which studied those cyclists who cycled more than once a week.

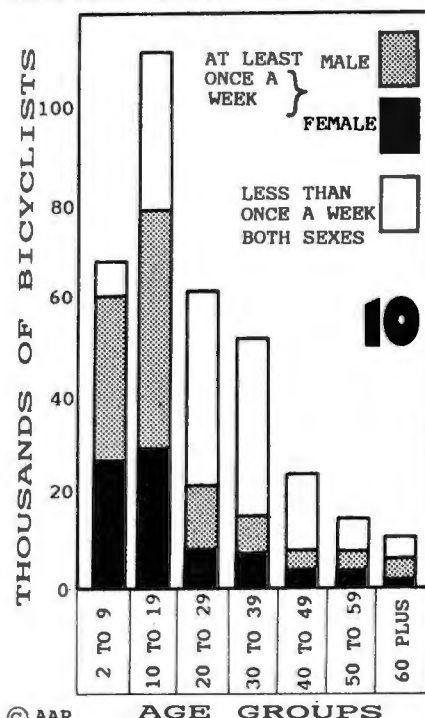
As only 1.2% of all female trips to work were by bicycle in Adelaide (Census 1986) most of the bicycling was done for other purposes. Of the 80,700 female cyclists who cycled at least once a week less than 2500 cycled to work regularly because in the census on trips to work two years later there were only 2,281 female bike commuters.

Chart 10 shows that in all age groups that cycled at least once a week there were about four women for every five men and dispels the myth that men cycle a lot more than women.

Chart 11 shows the different destinations that cyclists ride to and it can be clearly seen that there is around seven female trips for every ten male trips in all categories except trips to work, college or university.

Cycling is more popular in Adelaide than Melbourne or Sydney and 36.5% of all persons who usually reside in Adelaide rode a bicycle in 1984, and 48% of all households had at least one bicycle in working order.

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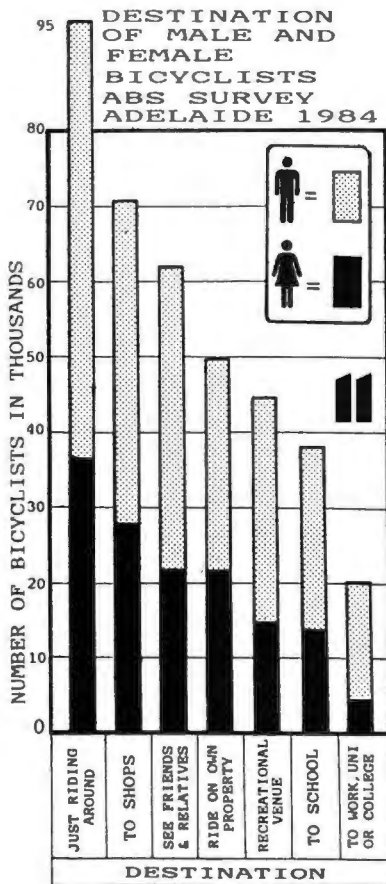
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The potential for women cyclists to share cars

AS THE NUMBER OF women recreational cyclists with car mounted bicycle racks increases it then becomes possible to conceive other ways of using the bike and car together for transportation.

For most women in the outer suburbs of the capital cities and the middle suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne, who do not work in the central business district, public transport is not an alternative to car travel because there are very few cross suburban services. For many women the option of riding a bike to another woman's home to share her car would be a lot more convenient than trying to use public transport.

Most women don't cycle to work because it's too far or there are hazardous road conditions and surveys show that women make shorter trips and are more traffic wary than men with a greater preference for back road and off-road routes. Gaining access to shared cars is therefore ideally suited for women cyclists because most of the potential driv-

ers will be in the middle and outer suburbs in quiet residential areas that can be reached by residential street back routes.

Married women sharing a car in this way would enable their family to avoid the purchase of a second or third family car and would be a major cost saving. For the single working woman sharing a car means making better use of their own car with reduced parking repair and maintenance costs and for some being able to avoid having to pay for a car and being able to afford a taxi. For women with unemployed or disabled husbands or trying to bring up the kids on their own, being able to avoid the purchase of a car would be a major family cost saving.

The decline in the percentage of car passengers over the last ten years shows that the present informal system of sharing cars is contributing to an overloaded road system because the great potential to make better use of cars is being ignored by government. The government's policy of doing nothing is obviously not working. A way must be found of enabling workers to reduce their transport costs by sharing their cars. Furthermore adult cyclists most of whom drive to work need to be encouraged to ride to fellow workers homes and then be driven the rest of the way to work.

Government needs to develop this concept further because bicycles have great potential as feeders to shared cars. Relative to walking, cycling increases the catchment area around the shared car drivers home by 9 to 14 times dependent on the type of bicycle and local terrain.

What is needed is a computer based community service that will match drivers to passengers much as computer dat-

ing services match people. Such a service would not only tell drivers or passengers who one might share with, but short lists them in terms of compatibility to special needs such as work hours and domestic timetables. Surely then it would be possible for hundreds of thousands of women nationwide to be able to come together to share cars.

More women riding but fewer commuters

IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT the women cyclists will outnumber men by the early nineties and the main use of the bicycle will be for fitness and recreation in off-road areas or on back roads. The decline in cycling to school will continue and bicycle commuting will not significantly increase because of the totally inadequate provisions of the government. The only form of bicycle dual mode travel that will significantly increase will be for recreational purposes in the form bikes carried by the cars of women drivers.

There is potential for introducing innovative forms of car sharing for commuter cyclists. If this included accessing shared cars on relatively safe back routes, car sharing would be very attractive to women cyclists.

There is considerable potential for promoting bike-rail trips to women cyclists however it is unlikely to happen because it demands initiatives by the rail authorities.

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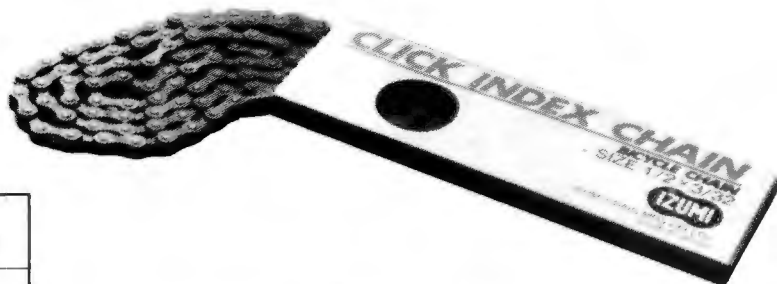
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1400	Hard coating	N	Narrow type (pin length 7.3mm)	S	Lightweight type

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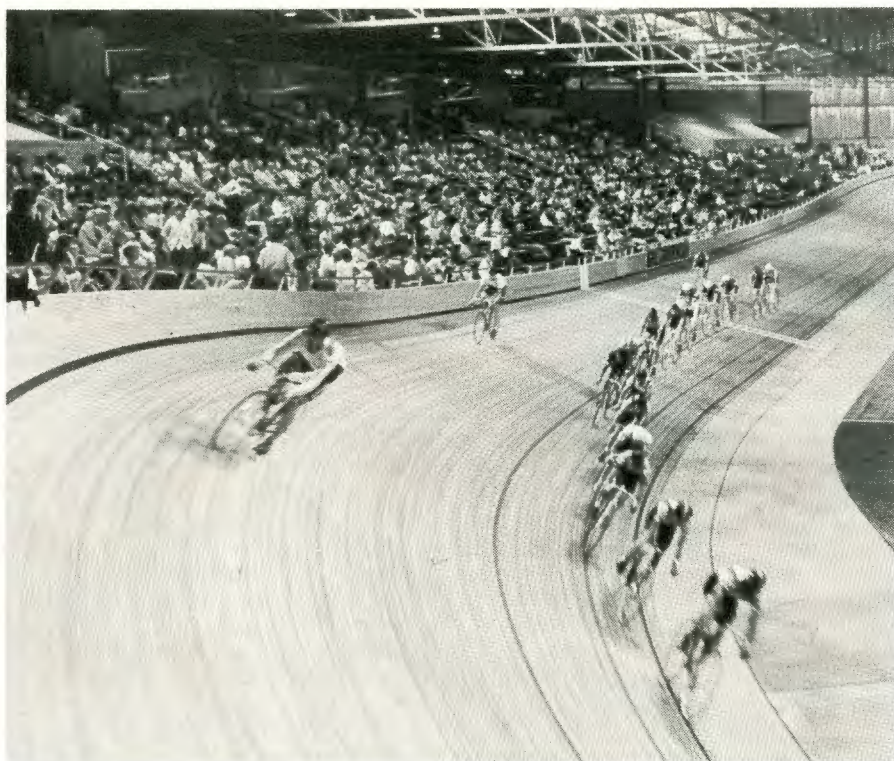


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BICYCLE SPORT

Everything you wanted to know about cycling

BY JOHN DRUMMOND

CONSIDER THE ADVANTAGES of cycle racing: you can take it up just as soon as you like; you can stay in it racing until you, and you alone, decide you have had enough. No one can say you are too old, or too slow, to race irrespective of the fact that you may finish after the timekeeper and judge have gone home. The sport welcomes you, and provides competition for you, for just as long as feel the urge.

And should you be made of champion material, and many are, than you can go the very highest level of world or Olympic competition.

Having been involved for a lifetime in every phase of the sport as racer, administrator, promoter and writer, I have discovered so much good in cycling that I want to shout the message from the roof tops.

This guide to our sport aims to do just that.

THIS YEAR AUSTRALIA celebrates 100 years of cycling as a national sport. Richard "Dick" Davis became the first Australian cycling champion in Adelaide in the year 1888 on a "high wheel" bicycle. Early in 1885, Dick Davis joined the fledgling Norwood Cycle Club and during a brilliant cycling career, which ended in 1896, Davis was undisputedly the best racing cyclist of the period.

His greatest moment came in the year 1888 when he won the most prestigious double of the times, the first National Championship and the Austral Wheel Race all in the same year.

That championship win commenced a glorious century of competitiveness in a world wide sport that has seen Australians winners of 19 World Championships, 32 Commonwealth Games and five Olympic Titles.

Bicycle racing is often labelled a "Cin-

Launceston's \$6 million multi sports cycling velodrome. There is little hope of a tack revival in Australia until the mainland states have all weather facilities like this one. In the Eastern Bloc countries stadiums like this dot the landscape.

derella" sport in Australia. In some respects that label may be right, particularly when top rated exponents like Phil Anderson have to live and race in Europe to make a living. But isn't it about time the media and sporting fans got things into the right perspective, and saw the sport of cycling for what it really is, the finest non violent sport for people of all ages. And I say that with the backing of a long experience.

From my club days as a rider, or a cycling scribe travelling around the major events in all States, I know participants, administrators and onlookers enjoy not only a supremely healthy outdoor activity, but share a friendship that makes a keen cyclist a member of a most 'exclusive' club.

Entry to this 'club' is not easy. It is not simply a case of being 'in' when you have a bicycle. It is rather a question of all the ramifications that make up the sport of cycling.

When I started it was the helpfulness of the older club members that guided me along a trial and error path to achieve my aim of being an all-round cyclist.

Had I been French, Belgium or Italian the way would have been easier. For when I started there were no coaching schemes in Australia; no text books on cycle sport, or any other sport for that matter. Just plenty of good advice from the men of the wheel who had succeeded through sheer guts and determination.

They were never reluctant to give advice off the road or track. But they were as mean as hell in a race. Yes, it was all trial and error.

However, a newcomer may still feel neglected in the club, and be forced to struggle along, picking up the rudiments of bicycle racing as they go. The difficulty is that he or she encounters a fragmented sport with so many facets and with pastime and hobby aspects inseparably attached.

There are many types of road racing – massed start, handicap, criterium and tour racing while on the track the competition is even more varying in organization, regulation, technique and equipment so specialised as to be a world apart.

Cycle racing may seem to be not one sport, but a multi-sport genuine athletic activity, with only two real links – obviously the means to the end in each case, the bicycle. Each form of cycle racing demands, to meet the rules and their conditions, partly or wholly specialized equipment. Expensive? At first, yes, but



A close formation in a criterium

it is possible, and indeed general practice, to modify a basically suitable machine to suit the circumstances.

The second thing all phases of cycle sport have in common is the most important aspect of this activity, its spirit and code; it might be better termed fun, fitness and fellowship.

It matters little if you are slow or fast on a bicycle. All the sport can offer is yours for a season or a lifetime. For in cycling the backward rider gets just as much pleasure as the champion in improving performance. Each gets exactly the same amount of fitness and entertainment from racing and training. Each gets exactly the amount back from the sport as they contribute, and each gets an equal amount of respect in the Club room.

It is a fact that in no other sport can you remain an active participant for so long, you are catered for whether you be 8 years of age or 80, and that could be a good slogan for cycling to adopt.

How the sport is run


THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN cycling club was the Boneshakers formed back in 1896. Ever since the club concept has been retained and is now the first tier in the hierarchy of the Australian cycle racing structure.

Today there are about 150 racing clubs throughout the nation with over 8000 members of both sexes. The clubs are

autonomous and operate under the guidance and rules of separate state federations, which in turn are guided by state councils which are comprised of delegates appointed by the affiliated clubs. The councils meet once a month and either endorse or reject the actions taken by the various state federation executives.

State federations are the second link in the cycling administrative chain and each is affiliated with the Australian Cycling Federation Inc which promotes the interests of cycle sport on a national level. It also controls and conducts national cycling championships and endorses the selections of an independent selection committee for overseas competition, including Olympic and Commonwealth Games.

The Council of the Australian Cycling Federation consists of the office bearers of the Federation and two delegates from each state federation. It has wide powers which it operates through its Executive Director, Martin Whiteley. Generally, the National Executive is responsible for the decisions taken to promote Australian cycle racing and interprets the rules of the Federation International Amateur Cyclists (FIAC), which is affiliated along with the Federation International Cyclists Professional to the Union Cycliste Internationale (the world controlling body).

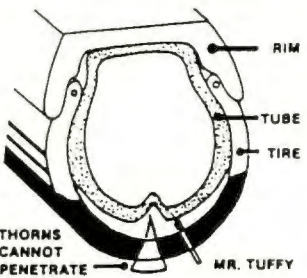


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Competition and rules

THE COMPETITOR IN cycling is protected by classification rules that are laid down by the UCI and administered by affiliates further down the administrative chain.

In Europe, where professionalism is jealously guarded, the various Federations observe a category registration system under either a single (the preferred system of the UCI) or a dual (amateur/professional) control system. Under either control system only No 1 Category Licence holders are permitted to ride as professionals. In some countries outside of Europe exceptions are allowed so professionalism may survive. But it often disadvantages the sport. This is evident in Australia where often dissention replaces co-operation under a dual control system.

Competitors are classified and listed in the manner of the following table, based upon the commencement of the calendar year of birth:—

Seniors — 19 years

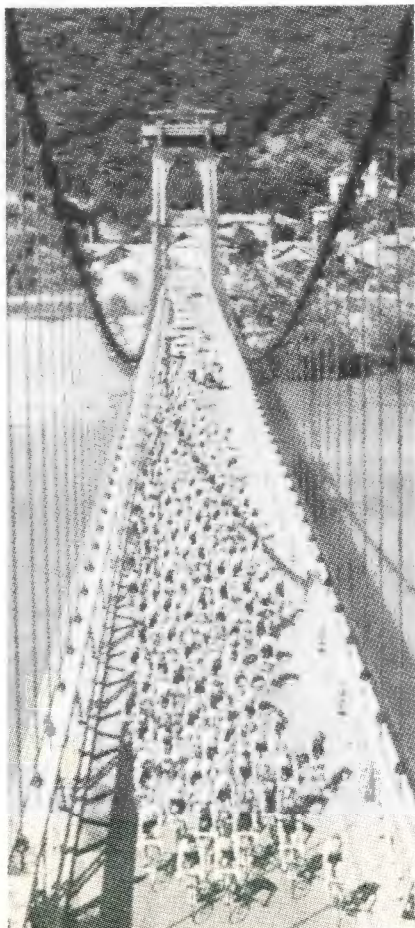
Juniors — 17 years

Juveniles

Division 1 — 15 years

Division 2 — 13 years

Riders in the greatest stage race of all, the Tour de France cross a bridge in the Pyrenees. Photo Cycling.



Division 3 — 11 years
Division 4 — Up to the completion of the calendar year in which the participant reaches 10 years.

Veterans

Division 1 — 40th year

Division 2 — 50th year

Division 3 — 60th year and over

(Vets may join ACF affiliated clubs or their own Veterans Organisation).

Women

All women are eligible for membership and are categorised as amateur.

The State Federations hold various championships for all categories and the Australian Cycling Federation conducts the National Championships (other

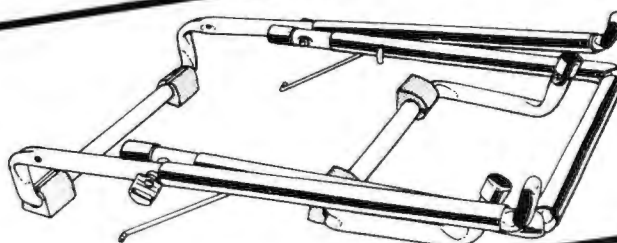
than Vets). National championships are conducted in various states on both road and track usually in rotation.

Cycling is a residential sporting programme at the Australian Institute of Sport and because of that we have now closed the gap in track disciplines with competitor nations and an elite class is slowly developing.

ROAD RACING

Owing to Australia's more amiable weather, unlike the European continent, cycle racing is an all the year round activity, the road season here is run in winter and track cycling in summer.

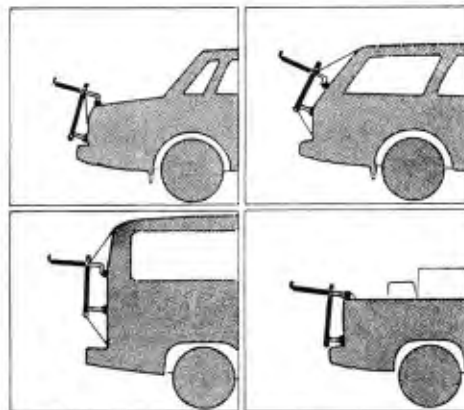
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Road cycling's greatest asset is that, unlike the vast majority of sports, it requires no special facilities, all you need is a road, and there are plenty to choose from in both city and country Australia.

Like our political emancipation, we have been slow to free cycling from its legacies of the past. We are still persist in some of our traditional wheel races and cling to useless habits. By handicapping our best talent we continue to damage our sport and force our best professionals to race in Europe. But, now fortunately the real values of the massed start are beginning to force out the discredited handicap and open the way for a

greater public awareness and consequently greater sponsorship.

A massed start is any race in which the competitors start together, with the first man over the line the winner. In other words, the massed start is the basic conception of competition – a rider to rider contest.

If it takes place on a public highway it is known as a road race. On roads closed to other traffic – for example a shopping centre parking area or a park perimeter – it is called a circuit race.

On a small closed inner city circuit it is known as a criterium. The criterium is fast and exciting with the better rider setting the pace which the rest much match or fade away.

Whatever the form, massed start racing is the accepted style of racing in Europe and meets the demands of the fans and sponsors alike. Consequently variations of the massed start have evolved, the most popular with the general public being the stage race known the world over as tours. Tours have been enormously popular and successful in Europe and have lifted the sport of cycle racing to the world's second largest sport (only Soccer exceeds).

At the top of the pile is, of course, Tour de France, perhaps the one sporting event of which all the world has heard, and which is undoubtably unique, both in demands it places on contestants and in the organisation that makes it possible. In the whole world there is nothing like it and there never will be.

Massed start events in Australia for the less talented are conducted in grades.

TRACK RACING

Track racing does not fit the road pattern. It is essentially a sport in its own right, requiring specialisation in effort, approach, technique, training and equipment.

But for all its differences it is possible for adherents to participate with moderate success on both road and track. Some even excel at championship level, those who do are referred to as all rounders.

Whilst the road and track are linked in the one season on the Continent the road riders choose to ignore track cycling preferring not to mix the two disciplines.

Unlike road racing track cycling depends, first and foremost, on people coming to watch it. Considerable capital expenditure is necessary to maintain facilities to sustain it. Hence almost every promotion needs to be a commercially viable proposition as well as being a sporting success.

At the turn of the century track cycling was all the rage with betting the trigger for enormous crowds of up to 60,000 fans thronging the nation's sports grounds to punt on the professional cyclists (both from home and abroad) who dominated the scene. As is usual with gambling, collusion added by the handicap system was rife and unfortunately left a legacy which is still effecting our sport to this day.

Gradually with the internationalisation of cycle racing, aided by the changing conditions within sport, the legacies of the past are being eroded. Track cycling in Europe is now based on an omnium and teams race structure. In Aus-

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tralia we have been much slower to react to change and are still pre-occupied with the anachronistic handicap, particularly in League and club cycling arenas. At higher amateur levels there is greater emphasis on Olympic and Commonwealth Games disciplines. But there is still too much so called "open" racing indulged in with varied and boring handicap racing to bewilder the newcomer and spectator alike.

From a position of great strength at the turn of the century and into the early 1940's track cycling has been steadily losing ground since the second World War. Faced with tremendous competition from other sports and entertainment, and by the apathy of the general public (engendered by television) the situation has now become critical.

Crowds at open track meetings are counted in the hundreds, not in the thousands necessary to make the meeting pay. Even the otherwise keen cyclists are missing from all but the big meetings.

Why is this ?

There are a number of reasons. First, there is a lack of professional presentation in many open track meetings with programmes being run on a voluntary basis by honorary officials. Now, this may suit club racing functions and generate a fine spirit, but it cannot reach the standard necessary to compete with commercially-organised sport, where every official is paid and well disciplined. Hence, the standard of organisation and presentation, while being the best available in the situation just is not good enough to satisfy the fan only satisfied by slick and speedy showmanship.

Second, track cycling in Australia is a paradox. Generally run on a shoestring, on tracks with inadequate spectator facilities in the major cycling states of Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia. Yet its adherents excel and have always been to the top of the world championship ladder.

There is rarely enough money available to make any waves by bringing the great names of the sport to open meetings, or even advertising the show. Nor is there money for improvements to spectator facilities, badly needed in the major centres of Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide; nothing with which to provide the ultra-modern facilities and comforts provided by the nation's football fields, cricket grounds and horse racing tracks, and which the spectator has come to expect.

Third, the remoteness of one track from the other results in split promotion.

Fourth, the sport is without a true professional class.

Fifth, too much open racing is billed as worthwhile public spectacle when it has no more than local or even club interest.

Sixth, no regard is paid to the changing structure of Australia's sporting society and track cycling is far too complex to draw and hold people without a basic feeling for it, or a willingness to understand it.

Thus it appears there are many reforms to be addressed by the Australian Cycling Federation before track cycling can again prosper as a spectator sport.

The answer is of course to be found in professional promotion similar to that presented by Ozwide Sports Promotions, in its great promotion of last track seasons World Cup series. The same company is also revolutionising road racing in Australia with their brilliant

presentation of the international Commonwealth Bank Cycle Classic, which has captured the imagination of a whole new generation of fans.

Realistically, we fear that there is still some revision needed in our track racing system, and a reduction in the low-level so-called open competition. Unless our major promotions are under professional control in modern comfortable sporting stadiums, there is little hope that the present withering away of the sport will be stopped.

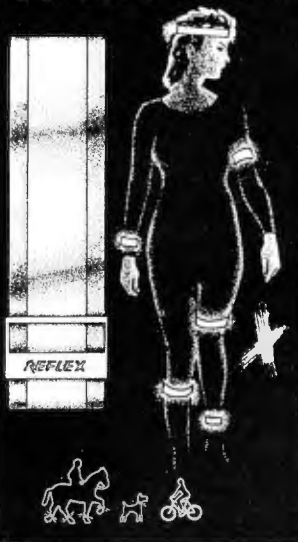
Change and television have decreed that the alternative — the excitement of the inner city criterium, free to the public — can only be matched by comfort equalling the nation's lounge rooms.

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THE TRACK EVENTS

Scratch Race

This event combines endurance, speed, tactics and team work. With 20 odd riders on the track together, it is truly a spectacular event. The stronger riders may attempt to break away from the main bunch at any point of the race. When a break away is successful in opening a significant gap over the bunch, team tactics become paramount.

Riders in the bunch who have a team mate have a great advantage. Those who have a team-mate in the break-away will

try to slow the pace in the main bunch to capitalise on their advantage. Riders who do not have a team-mate in the breakaway will be forced to do most of the work in the front of the bunch to chase down the leaders.

When the end of the race draws near, team work takes control as riders try to lead out and shelter finishing teams to get them in the best possible position for the final sprint, often the race winner owes much of his success to his team-mates.

Distances vary from between five and twenty kilometres. There are variations of the scratch race such as a Miss and Out, where the last rider over the finish

line drops out, or a secret distance may be determined.

The scratch race is a Commonwealth Games but not an Olympic event.

Point Score

The points score is similar to the scratch race in that a large number of cyclists compete together over a long distance. The main difference is that instead of the placings being decided on one final sprint, there are many sprints throughout the race at designated laps, for which the riders sprint for points. The rider with the most points at the conclusion will be the winner. However, anyone who laps the field is automatically ahead even if they have fewer points.

Points are allocated for the first four placings in each sprint, 5,3,2,1 with double points being designated for the middle and last sprint.

The points score is not a Commonwealth Games but is an Olympic championship.

1000m Time Trial

The 1000m time trial usually referred to as the 'Kilo' requires a supreme effort by the cyclist. From a standing start each cyclist must reach top speed as soon as possible and then maintain that speed for the remainder of the distance without yielding to fatigue that usually occurs in the first 200 metres. With only one rider on the track at a time it is a race against the clock.

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It is both a Commonwealth Games and Olympic event.

Sprint

This event is a battle of wits, nerve, power and speed, and is recognised as the most glamorous event in cycling. Contested against a single opponent a race consists of the best of three heats. Each heat is 1000 metres but quite often the contenders are only at full pace over the final 200 metres or less. If a cyclist were to sprint for the entire 1000 metres they would tire and be beaten over the finish line by their opponent who had sheltered in their slipstream.

Instead riders attempt to gain an advantage by tactics with either rider waiting to take advantage. The final burst of speed over 200 metres could see riders reach speeds in excess of 60 km/h. Times are recorded over the final 200 metres only.

The sprint is both a Commonwealth Games and Olympic championship.

4000m Individual Pursuit

In the individual pursuit two riders start on the opposite sides of the track and race each other over a determined distance. In championship racing the distance is 4000 metres in amateur category and 6000 metres in professional competition. From the quarter finals on, should a rider catch their opponent, they win and the race is over. However, this rarely occurs at the top level of racing.

The individual pursuit is both a Commonwealth and Olympic championship.

Teams Pursuit

As the name suggests the pursuit is adaptable to teams and is usually contested by a squad of four. The event is less tactical than the individual contest as each team works in turn of pace flat out for the entire distance. It does, however, require a great deal of skill to change the position of the rider at the front of the team.

Three riders must finish and the time is taken on the third rider to cross the line.

In championship racing qualifying rounds are held to determine seedings with the slowest seeded to race the fastest.

The teams pursuit is a popular event, often exciting outbursts of nationalism in both Commonwealth and Olympic cycling.

The Omnium

In the 1950's Europe was faced with a decline in track cycling in favour of the Continental glamour of the professional road race. Promoters intent on preserving their incomes developed a new event – the omnium – with accent on the top roadmen.

The Omnium is a mixture of events

suitable to both track and road disciplines such as sprints, Italian and double harness pursuit, miss and out, scratch races and the likes. The series was conducted between national teams and involved such stars as Australians Russell Mockridge, Sid Patterson, and the great Italians Fausto Coppi and Sprinter Enzo Sacchi. The series also combined the roadmen in special track events.

Great Britain took part in the series which packed the Herne Hill track to capacity.

With the wealth of talent we have in track cycling in Australia at the present time similar arrangements on a competitive State basis involving both amateurs and professionals could be the saviour of our track competition.

Teams racing

Teams racing always proved a popular form of bicycle racing by cyclists and the public alike as demonstrated by the prolific amount of six-day racing throughout cycling history. Promoters were quick to cash in on its public pulling power at the turn of the century, especially in the United States of America.

Under the impact of more speed a reduced form of endurance racing was devised adaptable to the mood of the times and this became a madison event, called after Madison Square Gardens in New York today the Madison is an Australian Title event.

The madison is a miniature teams race decided on sprint points alone or may be punctuated with other madison



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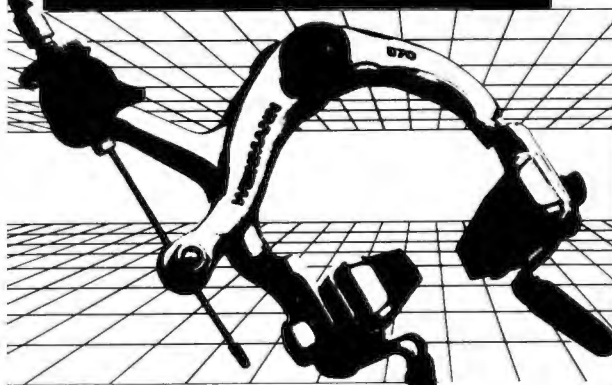
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segments such as the elimination event, a time trial or perhaps a motor paced event.

Generally teams races are exciting providing there is adequate liaison between the commentator and the fans, for it is essential to have an understanding of the spectacle for the madison to be a success.

The greatest bicycle races

Australia conducts its biggest bicycle races annually on both road and track. Naturally most are traditional professional handicaps such as the century old Austral Wheelrace which is still the most popular track race.

It started back in 1886 over a distance of 3 miles at the Melbourne Cricket Ground and was won by C Dwyer.

The Austral has a colourful and illustrious history with many famous names appearing on the honour roll, including American Bill "Plugger" Martin, who won from scratch in 1901. World champion Gordon Johnson (1973), Steele Bishop (1982), "Tassie" Johnson (1944), Chas Kellow (1896), current Olympic coach Charlie Walsh (1969) and long distance record breaker Vic Browne (1967) are but a few of the notables who have won the Austral. The race however, belongs to three riders, the legendary Sid Patterson (1962-64), Mel-

bourne's Laurie Venn (1979-81), and present day six day star Danny Clark (1977-86) all of whom won the Austral from scratch twice.

The annual Warrnambool to Melbourne is another traditional professional road race which started in 1985 on penny farthings and has continued to the present time.

Like the Austral, it too has seen some of the greatest names in Australian cycle racing take part. Hubert Opperman gained the blue riband of fastest time from scratch three times (1924-26-29). R W "Fatty" Lamb achieved the honour twice (1930-32) and the immortal Russell Mockridge did likewise (1956-57).

The amateur Grafton to Inverell has become Australia's biggest one day cycle classic in the comparatively short period of 28 years. Commenced in September of 1961 and won by the Brunswick Club's (Vic) Olympian Alan Grindall, from a field of 40 over partly unfinished roads, the race has grown in status to an international classic boasting a field in excess of 200 for its 25th anniversary.

Organised by the Inverell Citizens Committee under leadership of the race director, Jack Griffin, the atmosphere enveloping the race is overwhelming, with crowds packing vantage points on the Gibraltar Range whilst media helicopters hover overhead. Meanwhile a crowd of 6000 odd gathers in Inverell's main street to witness the finish of an event that combines all the elements of a continental classic.

A massed start now in its 28th year it bids to hold its high rating.

But for outright brilliance of organisation and racing splendour nothing can match the magnitude of the Commonwealth Bank Classic. A stage race event rated the longest amateur bicycle race in the world. This year given the status of an endorsed Bicentennial event it rates as one of the largest, if not the largest, event on the 1988 sporting programme.

School cycling championship

If your kids feel the urge to try their latent skills at cycling, then you should ensure they take part in the Safe-N-Sound National Schools Cycling Championship.

It may be too late to enter this year for the finals were run October, but you could check and secure their spot for next year.

The championships are open to contestants aged 10-16 years and are being conducted by the ACF through its State organisations. The titles are just like the sponsors helmets - Safe-N-Sound on secured rollers.

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1988 WORLDS

Danny Clark and Stephen Pate wave flag for Australia

BY JOHN DRUMMOND

In an events restricted World Championship series in Ghent, Belgium (because in an Olympic year the Olympic Champions are also considered the World Champions by U.C.I.) Australian professional Danny Clark and Victoria's Stephen Pate won the motor paced championship and the sprint championship respectively. And in a controversial conclusion to the glamour professional road race championship on the Ronse circuit, Italy's Maurizio Frondiast took the world title from Martial Gayant of France and Juan Fernandez of Spain.

Not that any of the medallists had anything to do with the controversy, for second across the finish line but disqualified was Canada's European success story, Steve Bauer, accused of pushing Belgium's Claude Criquelion who crashed into the crowd protection barriers.

Bauer put up a phenomenal effort to bridge a wide gap to catch Frondiast and Criquelion on the final climb of the Kruisbeg to the finish, led out the sprint, only to weaken and drift under pressure from his line as Criquelion tried to squeeze through on the inside.

Bauer put his elbow out, Criquelion crashed to the ground, and Frondiast – unable to believe his good fortune – raised another effort and sprinted for victory.

Never have I felt more concern for a rider as I watched a video of the finish. A top domestique, Criquelion has a respected name in the business of being a professional cyclist, and just as he was to get his just reward his hopes were dashed in an unfortunate accident.

Criquelion was a sorry sight as he picked himself up and walked across the finish line for the 11th place with the crowd cheering him and still crying out for the blood of the Canadian.

Stephen Pate is no cream puff, but his former buffetings were a Sunday school picnic compared to the disaster that he suffered after the top professionals decided to eject him from the favoured position behind the pacing Derney in the final of the Keirin championship.



Stephen Pate who ended an eleven year grip on the professional sprint title by the Japanese.

Elbows suddenly flew in all directions, mostly directed at Pate.

The Aussie fought back, then like a rubber ball, he was bounced from one rider to another until his opponents succeeded in getting him on the back. Of course, that was after everyone present saw him break an 11 year old grip on the sprint title by the Japanese in straight heats from the front.

Third placed deposed champion, Nabuyuki Tawara, bowed to Pate and mumbled something about next year.

Claudio Gollinelli of Italy, was second.

Pate was disappointed after his poor performance in the Keirin, but was blaming no one for his rough passage to the rear. Just saying he had ridden a bad one. But compatriot Danny Clark, champion Keirin rider in 1980 and 1981, put it into perspective when he said it was lack of experience.

But that is exactly what Danny used to gain his stayer title win. The term stayer, to describe the men who follow the back wheels of high speed motorbikes, means just that, and experienced riders like fishermen content to bide their time before hauling in their catch.

The 37 year old Tasmanian proved too shrewd and strong for Belgium's Stan Tourne. Italy's Walter Brugna took the bronze, lap down on Clark and Tourne.

Clark was in no hurry to catch G. Renosto (Italy) as Tourne tried to work his way to the front by stealth. After 20 minutes of action Tourne had caught third-placed Peter Steiger of Switzerland, the pace now hooted up as Tourne turned up the throttle to go after Clarke, while Brugna, in turn, chased after Steiger, and hopefully Tourne as well.

It was the sign for action from Clark. He passed Renosto, then caught tailen-

der Beat Breu (Switzerland). Like a wily old fox leading the hounds a merry dance, Clark was always one move ahead of Tourne. Whenever he made a move to catch a rider, it was always when someone else was being caught.

It seemed that Tourne had to pick his way through the confusion that Clark had caused, so losing any advantage that he had gained.

Clark lapped rider after rider and Tourne followed. Brugna was last to fall, then it was Clark and Tourne out on their own, one lap ahead of Brugna, and the rest trailing. Tourne tried everything he knew to pass Clark, but the old fox knew more than the hound; Clark anticipated his every move and with the crowd roaring their acclaim, Bruno Walrave, Clark's pacer turned up the throttle and headed for that elusive Gold Medal.

The wily old fox Tasmanian Danny Clark who won his "stayer" title by strength and cunning.



THE INCONSPICUOUS BIKE

BY LIAM DAVISON



MY FATHER'S uncle loved bikes. From what we can tell he must have ridden practically every make available in Australia during the time we know he was alive. That was the period between 14th May 1886

when he was born in Nhill, and 21st January 1932, when the last clear photograph we have of him shows him standing astride a Southern Cross next to a railway track.

There are other photographs of course which may have been taken at a

later date, but we can't be sure. And there's one dated February 1934 but it's hardly clear and we can't be certain it's him. We don't know when he died. That's why the photos are important.

There's no record of his death in the Public Records Office and I hardly think he would have left the country. Our family are not the travelling kind. Only wars have taken us unwillingly away from home. The photographs then are the only key to what happened to Uncle Jack; the only key to a loose end we have in our genealogical research. Everyone else in the family is fully documented.

Dry-plate photography was introduced to Australia in the same year that Uncle Jack was born, and it was only two years later that George Eastman invented the Kodak. It's only natural then that a photographic record of his life was kept. His was a photographic age.

The unusual thing is the quality of the photographs in his later life. One would expect that the quality of film would improve; that the pictures would be clearer. By the 1930's the Leica camera was widely used in Australia and there was of course no messing about with collodion plates or silver salts. But in uncle Jack's case the photographs got worse.

The ones taken of him as an older man are faded and washed out, and in many cases the subject can hardly be seen. Uncle Jack and his bikes become less and less noticeable in a changing series of landscapes until eventually they disappear altogether. In the last photograph, the one from 1934, we are left with a picture of a flat landscape with windmills and no sign of my father's uncle or his bike. I put this gradual disappearance down to the nature of bikes.

Perhaps some explanation is needed. But before that it's important to understand how much of uncle Jack's time was actually spent with bikes. His first job was with the post office in Nhill. Rumour has it that it was the red, fixed-wheel bikes of the Post Master General's Department which lured him away from school. Even at that early stage the Post Office recognised the superiority of the bicycle over the horse for travelling long distances in country areas. Twice he turned down the chance of promotion in favour of staying with the bikes and it wasn't till the rabbit-fence called for extra patrols that he left then and travelled west.

Again it was the bikes which lured him. Each day it was his job to ride along the length of the Number One fence checking for breaks and illegal traffic. They used Davies Franklin bikes and there's a photo of uncle Jack standing next to his with the long line of the fence behind him. Despite the problem of punctures, the Davies Franklins were

better than the camels which had been used before as camels refused to drop to the height of the fence or else they ate the poisonous plants and died, leaving the fence inspector stranded in the middle of nowhere.

A bike is more reliable, although even with them there were occasional disappearances with some inspectors and their bikes simply failing to return. They were replaced as a matter of course but perhaps this is a clue to what happened to uncle Jack. Over the years he must have ridden the full length of the Number One fence from Mt Blaze in the north to the Starvation Boat Harbour in the south, and back again. Not that this explains his disappearance (there was always the fence to follow), but it shows how close he was to bikes, and it's a well documented fact that a man on a bicycle is less noticeable than a man on foot.

They stopped using bikes on the fence in 1910 (possibly because of the cost of replacing them), so we can assume that Uncle Jack left around that time. But even this isn't certain. A length-runner on the Kalgoorlie pipeline (who also made use of bikes) reported seeing a fence inspector on a bike as late as 1912. Whether this was our uncle or one of the missing rabbit men from earlier years, we can't tell.

What we do know is that uncle Jack took a number of jobs, all involving the use of bikes, between leaving the fence and the time he left for France. There's a photo of him as an insurance agent working for a Clarke and Sons. He's riding a Columbia with steel rims. There's a leather bag hanging from the cross-bar and a hat hiding most of his face from view. Still, I can tell it's him. The photo's dated 1913, the year before the war, and from the landscape it looks like he's still out west.

From there he joined the unions as a rep, not because the work was any better but because they used Invincibles bikes, and Invincibles I know for a fact were his favourite. Even after riding a Jimmy, as a shingling contractor, and a Prinetti Stucchi with the railways, he still wrote (in one of the few letters we have in his hand) that Invincibles were always the best.

Not that this has much to do with his disappearance either but it shows how he loved his bikes. It's after this that the photographs begin to get less clear and his movements become less certain. He was accepted into the army in August 1915 and left for France – the home of cycling – in March of the following year. Whether it was Billy Hughes' call for able bodied men or the opportunity to actually cycle in France which caused him to go, I'm not sure, but it's hardly surprising that he joined as a despatch rider and was issued with a Peugeot bike on arrival.

There are no photos of him in France,

which supports my theory that his disappearance is somehow related to the nature of bikes. They could have quite easily used horses or even men on foot for the issuing of despatches, but they chose to use bikes instead bringing me back to my point that a man on a bike is less noticeable than a man on foot and close to invisible when compared with a man on horse-back.

While this can be a problem in normal times (witness the number of drivers involved in accidents with bikes who say, 'I didn't even see them', in war time it can be a positive advantage. A bike has a tendency to fade into the landscape, allowing the rider to pass deep behind enemy lines without drawing attention to himself. Even in those photos used by the military, despatch riders will rarely be seen.

A bike, you see, doesn't have an imposing physical presence and, like lamp-posts, traffic lights and other commonplace things, it can obtain a certain ubiquity. In Europe there have been cases where thieves riding bikes have carried stolen goods through road blocks without being stopped or questioned. And here, kangaroo shooters have long been aware of the advantages of the inconspicuous bike. Far from being alarmed, the animals have allowed cyclists to ride straight up to them, almost as if they hadn't noticed they were there.

So, in those later photographs of Uncle Jack, it may not have been the photographic equipment at fault at all. Even in a flat landscape, a bike leaning against a tree or even being ridden in open ground isn't always immediately apparent and we need to look closer for signs of what might be there.

After the war we have photographs of bike shops where he may have worked and one of a velodrome where, from what we can tell, he served as an official for professional races. But there are no clear photos of the man himself.

The last direct reference we have to him is the photo taken in 1934 – a flat landscape with windmills. My father recalls that it was the lure of the Invincibles which drew him away from the city again and that he'd taken a government job as a checker of windmills. Each day he cycled from one of the huge windmills which drew water up from the artesian basin, to another to check that everything was in working order. No doubt he would have returned to following the camel pads which he'd found so useful in his insurance days to find an easy, well worn path through the spinifex and at each windmill he'd stop, lean his Invincible against the iron stand and listen to the whirring of the machinery high above his head.

In our photograph I search for him or his bike, small and insignificant beneath one of the giant wheels, but there's no sign of either one. I think perhaps he's there in the middle of the photograph riding from one windmill to the next, only I can't see him against the background of low salt-bush and sky. Sometimes, in the triangulations of the windmill stands, I think I can see the frame of a bike but then it's gone and all I'm left with is a photograph of windmills.

I'll keep coming back to the photograph because it's all we have. And who knows, one day when I least expect to see him, I might catch a glimpse of our Uncle Jack pedalling his Invincible out of the past.



HELIOTEC...

BICYCLE TRAILERS

44 FREDERICK ST.
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Product review

HELIOTECH TRAILER

REVIEWED BY WARREN SALOMON

IN A LIFETIME of cycling I must confess that I have experimented with trailers and have not found them habit forming. I still own a rather large steel framed trailer with wheel brakes and a wire caged side in which I once towed my son (he was about seven at the time) and a pile of gear over the Gibraltar Ranges on a touring holiday. Now I own two because I was so delighted by the little Heliotech that I have kept it for the office.

It's everything the big trailer isn't; light; manoeuvrable and simple to attach to the bike. The Heliotech is basically a large plastic box with wheels attached. The wheels are plastic scooter type with inflatable tyres and are good quality. They are fixed to a steel axle which forms a kind of frame with the tubular towing beam.

The box has a close fitting lid and is narrow enough to allow the trailer easily through doors and into lifts, something my wide old trailer can't do. On the road this is an advantage too as you don't

have to worry about being squeezed into a tight situation.

The trailer comes with a close fitting lid and a stretch strap to keep it secure.

Attachment to the bike is made by buckling two heavy leather straps to the seat post and saddle rails. The hitch is a little sloppy when the trailer jumps around on the road but seems to work efficiently.

One thing my old trailer does have over the new is brakes. You have to be very careful when towing the Heliotech under certain conditions. When you are towing it unladen you have to keep your speed down on bumpy roads or the trailer will develop a spectacular side to side motion that is more danger to passing pedestrians and motorists than the rider. Secondly, and this applies to all trailers not fitted with brakes, when carrying heavy loads be very careful when coming to a sudden stop. The normal stopping motion of the bike shifts the weight onto the front wheel and as the trailer tends to lift the back wheel you may find your rear end without traction and heading off on its own course if you are not aware of what is going on. Towing a trailer is another skill to be learned. Don't let it put you off enjoying the benefits of owning and using the little Heliotech.

Heliotech trailers are made and distributed by Stephen James 44 Frederick St Maylands SA (08) 362 8010. The cost is \$150 and freight can be arranged anywhere in Australia.

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