



The Sydney Cyclist



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Presidential Address

Hi all.

Hope you have the best and happiest of holidays. Thanks to all the members that made it to the Christmas Party and presentation. Ruth and her team (Kate, Des) once again organised some wonderful food, booze and a venue large enough to seat us but small enough to include everyone in the proceedings.

One thing that became very clear on the night is that The Big Unit (aka John Tsalos) has missed his calling. The man obviously loves the microphone and is never to shy to share the most amusing side to every story. Don't think it was a surprise to anybody he walked off with the prized Mongrel Award this year.

Early in the new year we will be holding a get together for the Open racing members of the club to discuss the coming race season. The plan is to convert all of our good work and placings in 2004 to a few more race wins in 2005. Team work planning and tactics will help us convert the obvious talent in the club to some podiums and hopefully some good wins.

I would also like you to consider coming down for the Snowy Tour in 2005. This would be the perfect opportunity to practice technique and tactics in a fantastic setting, almost like a proper training camp. And in the evenings you get to hang out with your SCC friends.

I usually go down a few days early to get a full week worth of training and cannot stress enough the benefit this has at the start of a season. So plenty of warning, more details in the New Year.

Don't forget to get your renewal in NOW!!! I know it sounds harsh but unless you renew before the end of the year You will not be riding in the bunches. The situation with insurance is such that none of the committee is willing to take the risk that someone is injured, or injures someone else whilst not insured. I know I'm beginning to sound like a broken record, but that is the 2005 that we live in.

On the subject of bunches I hope you are all becoming acquainted with our new Club Captain Barry Doosey. Barry has taken on one of the toughest jobs in the club and deserves your patience, respect and help as he strives to make things as safe as possible for everyone in the bunch.

Ok finished preaching for this month, so I'll let you get on with your holidays. And please remember to be careful in the Christmas traffic.

Jamie

Secretary's Report

Membership Renewals Due – A Courteous Reminder

Membership renewal forms are now available online at the SCC website. Those members without Internet access should have received their forms which were mailed out a couple of weeks ago. If you are having trouble downloading the forms please contact me on 9319 2899 before the holidays and I will post them out. Please be aware that I will be on holidays from 22nd December until 17th January and will only be contactable by email or at coffee- my longest in many years. With this in mind, it would be a good idea to complete your forms now, rather than complaining later when you need your licence for an event in January – **ACT NOW or you will not have your licence for January events.** Apart from my own holidays the Federation also closes for a time over Christmas so they will not be processing licenses during their break.

I would encourage all members to return the completed applications before 31st December 2004 because though under the Club's constitution you have 60 days grace before being considered a non-member, your Public Liability Insurance cover provided by Cycling Australia **lapses at 11:59pm 31st December with no period of grace.** It also means that unfinancial members may not be allowed to ride in the regular SCC bunches because information we have from the Federation indicates that our insurance cover may be void if we knowingly allow riders in the bunch who are not affiliated to Cycling Australia.

On a more positive note, I would like to congratulate Ruth Lax for the very enjoyable SCC Christmas party last weekend. A great effort Ruth!

Also a special thanks to David McHugh for his sponsorship of the club through Kinselas Hotel in 2004 and for looking after the clothing side of the club. Dave is the well deserved winner of the 2004 Clubman of the Year.

On behalf of Lea-Ellen and myself, I would like to wish everyone a happy, healthy and safe Christmas and New Year.

Be careful out there.
George

SCC Clothing Available

Clothing can be collected 7 days a week between the hours of 10am and 4pm from the Colombian Hotel, cnr Oxford & Crown Streets, Darlinghurst. Alternatively clothing can be mailed. Credit Cards accepted or payment can be made by cheque (SCC, 117 Oxford St, Darlinghurst NSW 2010).

SCODY SHORT SLEEVE JERSEY	\$80
XL & WOMENS L SHORT SLEEVE NETTI JERSEY	\$50
ANNIVERSARY JERSEY	\$90
LONG SLEEVE SCODY JERSEY	\$125
WIND VESTS	\$75
SECONDS NETTI LONG SLEEVE (LIMITED SIZES)	\$40
ARM WARMERS (BLACK SCC)	\$25
NETTI KNICKS (OLD STYLE; LIMITED SIZES)	\$50
BIB KNICKS	\$100

Contact: David McHugh; Mobile 0419-700-101;
Work 9360-2151; email: david@kinselas.com.au

Social Secretary's Report

Cycling stars come out

Forget about the Oscars, the Emmys, the Tonys and even the Logies, THE event to be at was the club's annual prize presentation and dinner at the Olympic Hotel, Paddington on Saturday 11th December.

You could be forgiven for not recognising many of those in attendance, as there was not a sign of lycra or a helmet to be seen among the chic gear worn by some 60 club members and their guests.

The venue proved to be an ideal setting for SCC to recognise its star performers for 2004 in criterium, road race and time trial competitions, as well as a few other "non-competitive" and he, with the help of some other club members presented the various awards.

In particular I would like to mention Sam Reuben and nominate him for next year's Mongrel award for his presentation of this year's Mongrel award to John Tsalos. A complete list of 2004 winners is published separately from this article. However, it is rumoured that Amber Jenkins and Simon Vagg actually hired a van to transport their haul of awards and trophies from the hotel to their homes!

We had exclusive use of the hotel's bistro area, which had been attractively arranged with tables and a presentation "podium". The liquid refreshments flowed very freely throughout the night, serving as a fine accompaniment to the modern cuisine.

Many people contributed to the success of the evening. In particular thanks to Kate Roberts for finding us such a great venue. Thanks also to those members who very kindly donated the great lucky door prizes:

THANKS TO

Philip. D. Arndt
David Solomon
Sam Vella
Pieter van Rijn
Tanya Bosch
Stan Genkis & John Tsalos
Grant Hanson & Mark Stevens
Mark Melzer
Mark Melzer
Eric Waddell
David McHugh

PRIZE

Tooth Whitening Treatment (value \$500)
Racing Wheel
Massage Voucher
Dinner at Una's Restaurant Darlinghurst
Fitness Test
TDF Tipping competition first prize
Veuve Clicquot Champagne
Cycling Jersey & Matching Cap
Cycling Jersey
Framed Jersey (King of the Mountain)
5 Free Drinks at Kinselas

WINNER

Julie Avakian
Simon Parody
Kate Everett
Walter Rolli
Joe Mastrangelo
John Tsalos
Jonathan Warr
Tanya Bosch
Kevin Black
Simon Parody
Everyone!

For those who were not able to make it this year, you should be keeping your diary free for next year's event or you will miss another great SCC social night.

Des Sullivan & Ruth Lax

2004 SCC Race Awards

Point Score

A Grade Point Score Champion – Simon Vagg

A Grade Point Score Runner Up – Tim Rice

B Grade Point Score Champion – Pieter van Rijn

B Grade Point Score Runner Up – Geoffrey Kennett

C Grade Point Score Champion – Amber Jenkins

C Grade Point Score Runner Up – Gavin Russell

D Grade Point Score Champion – Steve Youngman

D Grade Point Score Runner Up – Marguerite Young

Road Race

A Grade Road Race Champion – Richard Scriven

A Grade Road Race Runner Up – David McHugh

B Grade Road race Champion – John Revesz

B Grade Road race Runner Up – Pieter van Rijn

C Grade Road Race Champion – Amber Jenkins

C Grade Road Race Runner Up – Yvoine McCort

D Grade Road Race Champion – Marguerite Young

D Grade Road Race Runner Up – No Winner

Time Trial

A Grade Time Trial Champion – Tim Rice

A Grade Time Trial Runner Up – Richard Dodds

B Grade Time Trail Champion – Pieter van Rijn

B Grade Time Trail Runner Up – Geoffrey Kennett

C Grade Time Trail Champion – Julie Howard

C Grade Time Trail Runner Up – Gregor Whiley

D Grade Time Trial Champion – Steve Youngman

D Grade Time Trial Runner Up – Marguerite Young

Special Events

Hilltop Champion – Simon Vagg

Hilltop Runner Up – Alessandro Garofalo

Criterium Champion – Hiroyuki Toyozumi

Criterium Runner Up – Adam Shepard

Hillclimb Champion – Simon Vagg

Hillclimb Runner Up – Alessandro Garofalo

Men's Kilo Champion – Tim Rice

Men's Kilo Runner Up – Kevin Black

Women's Kilo Champion - Amber Jenkins

2004 SCC Club Awards

Presidents Award - Lea-Ellen Schneller

As the Presidents award is discretionary it doesn't get awarded that often. I have known for a long time that my work on the SCC committee had been made much easier and more efficient because of the help from Lea-Ellen. Although not a rider and self described couch potato she never hesitates to help whenever she can. Be that research, writing, editing or opinions. Lea- Ellen sometimes says that because she doesn't ride her views may not be valid, but I say sometime you can be too close to a problem to see it clearly, so a new pair of eyes and ears are very valuable. **(Jamie)**

The Most Improved Rider - Simon Vagg

Simon Vagg is an extremely strong rider who has become very competitive in A grade. He has been known to be really difficult to drop and get away from and in the end out-sprints fellow rider to win!

Clubman of the Year - David McHugh

David McHugh deserves an award for the contribution he has made to club racing over the last year. Not only has he ridden a huge number of races but by his sponsorship deal he has encouraged loads of club members to enter opens and give racing a go.

The Big Piston – Yvoine McCort

Once she allowed herself some decent equipment to work with, in next to no time she went from moseying along with the rest of us to taking on the elite women and giving a very good account of herself - if she wasn't (very sadly) leaving, it really would be a case of "watch this space" because she just doesn't know how to stop improving. Apart from all that improvement, you just have to admire her attitude (along with her bike skills). Remember her race report from the NSW Crit Champs - I forget how many times she was dropped and battled her way back on because she just refused to give up. Yup, I reckon she deserves an award.

The Big Piston – David McHugh

Grafton to Inverell Classic. 228km of hills and pain. After making the front group over the 15km climb of the Gibraltar Range thing were looking good. Puncture, wait for the spare replace the wheel now chase the break. After a long chase David catches the front group and still feels pretty good. On a down hill section the front tyre blows, no way to save it, hits the deck. David gets up frustrated he throws the bike in a ditch. As he inspects the damage to his body the spares arrive. "C'mon mate your've gone too far to give up now." The bikes wrecked says David. "No mate we put a new wheel in it ..its ok." So David remounts, bloody, sore and who know what injuries masked by adrenalin and fatigue, begins to chase the bunch again. He is making headway but still with over 100km to go fatigue and probably shock start to set in. The lovely Caroline (Dave's wife) Warren (father in law) in the support vehicle kept up the encouragement. "You'll never forgive yourself if you give up" they yelled. "You trained 12 months for this day". David battled to the finish. Before being taken off to hospital. David went to pick up his wheels "Mate you didn't finish did you?! When we gave you back your bike we never thought you would make it to the finish".

The Multi Tool Award – Maryanne Maher

When a fellow cyclist told that she had got some Aero bars, she asked if I had eaten them all! When asked to put on her back brake, as the brake lever wasn't on, she asked 'which one is that!' When she got a puncture outside Long Bay Jail, she cycled back to the park, stopping every 5 minutes to pump up the tyre, as she couldn't get the tyre off! Whilst waiting for the Saturday ride to roll out, she took a step backwards and stood on the valve on someone's tyre and it blew!

(cont'd over the page...)

2004 SCC Club Awards (cont'd)

The Horses Ass Award - Michael McCort

Backing his car into a pole, with Steve Hoggs' Baum strapped to the back of the car – oops!

The Horses Ass Award - Auriol Carruthers

Leaving for home after finishing a ride down in Dapto with the Big Unit and Debbie Pearce, Auriol proceeded to drive the car out of the station car park. Forgetting that the Big Unit's \$22k Colnago and her bike were on top of the car, Auriol proceeded to drive under a low ceiling barrier with such force that the BU's bike was knocked off the bike rack. BU was not feeling well all day (due to 12 hours of drinking the previous day) but went a whiter shade of pale when he saw his prized and much loved possession falling past his passenger window.

The Bent Spoke Award – Alex Simmons

As you know Alex has had a few accidents this year some more serious than others. The most amusing one which left the least amount of damage was at Friday Night Racing when he slid down the track after finding his front and rear wheels being rubbed by other wheels. Straight away he sprang to his feet looking like he was going to murder someone and promptly fell over. Most of his track mates decided to avoid him after that!

The Mongrel Award – John Tsalos

Ask Peter Bodor or John for the full story!

From the Editor's Desk

Thanks for all your positive feedback about my 1st edition - I was very flattered and got the job! This is the quickest newsletter I have ever produced, so apologies for any typos, grammar, etc that I have not picked up and the lack of photographs.

Am off to Scotland on Monday for a 3 week holiday - hope I don't lose much of my cycling fitness or my tan! See you mid January where I'll be in mad preparation for the Alpine Classic.

Would also like to thank all SCC members who have encouraged me in my cycling over the past year. Keep it going!

Hope Santa is good to you
Merry Christmas!
Auriol

Club Captain's Report

I really enjoyed the Christmas Party and Awards Night. Indeed I haven't heard any negative feedback, all positives, which is extraordinary considering the challenges involved in organising a successful event aiming to meet the varied expectations of 60-odd people. The night had all the right ingredients of a successful night – early start, handy location, great food, plenty of fine drinks, contented/smiley people and, importantly, toilets you could find half-tanked without a Gregorys. I guess it says a lot about the efforts and prowess of Ruth and team – nice job! Congratulations to all the award winners too – plenty of competition this year and not only in the racing categories.

If you missed an award, or want to go one better next year, you may wish to finish 2004/start 2005 with a bang by joining in the SCC Christmas / New Year 2004/05 Rides (see next page. This is always a great week or so of postcard rides and this year's program is a cracker covering around 800km over 10 days.

The pace of the rides will be steady, so that people of all grades can last the week and the long distances with shorter options on most days for those that don't wish to go all the way.

All rides start from the Cannons with the rides on weekends and Public Holidays roll out at 6:30 am and rides on other days start at 6:00 am.

Wherever you ride over the next few weeks please be extra careful. For it is the season to be jolly and this exuberance can lead to additional hazards on the road both from party-pooped motorists and other cyclists.

To all members, family and friends of SCC have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

Barry

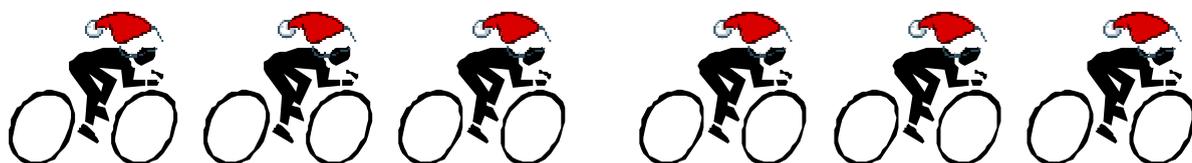
Bunch Riding - The Basics

- ◆ Be on time as we leave on time!
- ◆ Maintain your bike in good order!
- ◆ Poor maintenance not only leads to breakdowns but crashes too!
- ◆ Carry enough food, water and spares!
- ◆ Remember to call and signal all hazards!
- ◆ Don't half-wheel!
- ◆ Stay alert, and chat only when it's safe!

Christmas Rides 2004

All rides start from the Cannons with the rides on weekends and Public Holidays rolling out at 6:30 am and rides on other days start at 6:00 am.

Date	Ride Description
Saturday 25th December 2004	Christmas Cruise - reverse Watson's Bay ride with coffee at a beach side café. BYO fruit cake and tinsel. Very cruisey, popular ride. Time: 6.30am Distance: 40 km Ride Captain: Alan Lumb
Sunday 26th December 2004	Boxing Day Test - Stanwell Tops and back via Audley Time: 6:30am Distance: 140 km Ride Captain: Grant Chellew
Monday 27th December 2004	Cape Solander - nice flat recovery ride Time: 6:30am Distance: 95 km Ride Captain: Barry Doosey
Tuesday 28th December 2004	Palm Beach - bring your togs for a quick dip. Time: 6:30am Distance: 105 km Ride Captain: Meg Croft
Wednesday 29th December 2004	Watsons Bay Time: 6:00am Distance: 35 km Ride Captain: TBA
Thursday 30th December 2004	Akuna Bay - more hills Time: 6:00 Distance: 100 km Ride Captain: TBA
Friday 31st December 2004	La Perouse with option to come back via Bronte Time: 6.00am Distance: 35 km Ride Captain: Barry Doosey
Saturday 1st January 2005	Normal Saturday ride for those who can make it after a night of partying Time: 6:30am Distance: 60 km
Sunday 2nd January 2005	Sublime Point /service station before the drop down Bulli Pass. Option for people to turn early at Waterfall if they don't want to do a long ride. Time: 6:30am Distance: 130 km Ride Captain: Meg Croft
Monday 3rd January 2005	3 Gorges Time: 6.30am Distance 120km Ride Captain: Jamie Bedford



Snow in Summer

If you were looking to do some accelerated training somewhere challenging you could give that great host and long time club member Bruce Vote a call and think about a long weekend in the Snowys.

Bit of a drive to Bruce's place, but in summer you have got the roads pretty much to yourself and the good quality accommodation (esp if shared in a bunch) will cost you less than an average Sydney lunch.

Went down to Jindabyne with Jamie, Deb, Jeff Sofair and that Rodeo Drive on Wheels (John Tsalos) a few weekends ago and thought I might pass on the good and bad points.

The ride up to Thredbo from Jindabyne is a beauty – great scenery after some rain and with the summer snow melt in the river it's a stunner - patches of snow still on the main range.

There is an ok bakery above the village at Thredbo for sustenance open all year (unlike Perisher in summer, which is a cemetery with the lights off) – and if you are sensible and treating the increased altitude with the respect it deserves on your first day you do what Jeff and Deb did - ride with style back to the pub on what would have to be one of the best road surfaces and series of perfect cambers in Australia.

(The odd landslide and a whole bunch of lawyers will tend to focus the authorities' minds on what's a safe alpine road).

Or, you can keep to the red wine induced madness from the night before, and actually keep going over the back of Thredbo towards Khancoban and do a cheerful little climb called Dead Horse Gap.

Jamie, who had done it before, looked at the Big Unit and said he would probably die so that was all the encouragement he needed.

Jamie also mentioned the girls from Randwick Botany did it on their sojourns in the Snowy so I thought I had to give it a go, in the best, not to be outdone, slow old fat bastard tradition.

The top of the gap is about 10km up the hill from Thredbo at 5100 ft (sounds better than in meters) and there is a fairly steep descent to a fast flowing snow stream beside a pleasant picnic area – on reaching which the Unit remarked that descent wasn't too bad, only to be told he was only half way down the hill!

The second half does get a bit steep and we met Jamie coming back from Tom Groggin (the bottom) looking like the ex Euro rider he is with his helmet on the bars to ameliorate what was then over 35 degree heat.

Jamie, who had done it before, looked at the Big Unit and said he would probably die

He issued another warning that we were mad to attempt it and that settled any doubt - we just had to do it.

It is 2 climbs of a little over 6km each but the first is mostly at 12 to 14% and you get no relief at all until you get back to the stream at the half way point, into which the Unit dropped himself to deal with lost hydration issues and to spend a little time waiting for me – I was experiencing some new and interesting cramps (first time for everything) which tend to slow you down some.

So it was a bit later when I got back to the half way point accompanied by a highway patrol car on my wheel from which the nice policeman asked why I was carrying my helmet rather than wearing it. After that first climb you can either breathe or talk, but not both, so the Unit (looking resplendent after his dip with only a touch of pond slime visible) sprung to my defence and pointed out that TdeF riders had an exemption on hors category climbs and, baby, this was one of those.

(cont'd over the page....)

Snow in Summer (cont'd)

Whether down to the Unit's silver tongued advocacy, or the fact that the nice policeman could not figure out how to book someone doing less than 5 kmh (no box to tick, damn it) I got off with a caution and we did the second half, on which the grades are better but your legs are jelly by then.

Towards the top we came upon the nice policemen again who had set up a radar trap presumably to catch speeding wild brumbies or drug crazed wombats – there is about 1 car every 2 hours but boy can you smell their brakes and rubber needed to handle the descent.

At the very top I may have used some colourful language to celebrate the return to that side of the Great Divide where the rivers flow east rather than west and the Japanese tourists will probably recover, after time, with therapy. By the way, its now know as Dead Greek's Creek by the way, in honour of Tsalos who did the whole thing like a champ. Jamie by that stage had whilst waiting for us completed a 3 course lunch and had a long sleep in the village so we did the descent down from Thredbo seriously thinking about calling up the cavalry and on the border of the park had the others collect Unit and I in cars as we were rather tired little teddy bears and the rest of the ride was going to be ugly.

In a selfless gesture earlier that morning the Big Unit had offered Jamie his 4 bladed carbon front wheel which does have the unfortunate attribute of getting sucked into the draft of cars going a bit too close to you and despite some worthwhile sunburn we found back at the ranch Jamie still white and shivering from a near miss at 90kph on the ski tube descent – so we all had the need for copious quantities of the local anaesthetic applied internally (is there any place in Australia not currently producing wine??).

A walk up to Kosi from Charlottes on Sunday (blowy - moving the furniture around on the deck, not good day for a carbon bladed front wheel, now firmly back on the Unit's bike) – nice view, if you like Victoria.

Then the club ride up to Charlotte Pass from Jindabyne (a good steady climb) on Monday rounded out the weekend.

So, why not save \$12, don't go and see the movie Somersault (it didn't deserve all those awards) – go try the real thing at Jindabyne and let Bruce tell you all the local scandal instead.

Andrew Price

The Wattyl Lake Taupo Cycle Challenge or

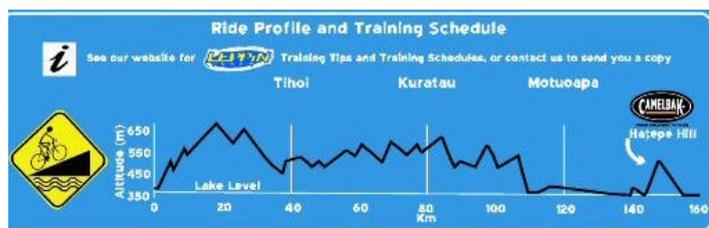
Turning fifty is milestone, which should be recognised. This year Sydney Cycling Club member Neil Williams decided to celebrate his by organising with a number of mates to do the Wattyl Lake Taupo Cycle Challenge on Saturday November 27th.

It was long, hard, cold and windy and that was only the training. As a result Neil surpassed his target of 7 hours with 28 seconds to spare.

The Lake Taupo Cycle Challenge began in 1977 and it is now one of New Zealand's most popular sporting events. It is a fun, non-competitive bike ride around New Zealand's largest freshwater lake, Lake Taupo, a distance of some 160 km – likely story. Funds raised go to local charities including the Salvation Army.

Lake Taupo is some three and a half hours south of Auckland. For the vulcanologists, the lake is the remains of caldera and is in a direct line between the active volcano Mt Ruapehu and Roturua. When Lake Taupo last erupted it was the largest volcanic eruption in the last 5,000 years.

The route is anti-clockwise and commences with a solid climb of some 15kms to the highest point in the ride. For added difficulty one is stone cold. This is followed by many kilometres of undulating road with a several significant climbs. The good news is that there is some 40 kilometres of flat beside the lake for the last 50kms, plus one last solid climb – the infamous Hatepe Hill. The final flat section also traditionally enjoys a tailwind from the South-West.



(Source: www.cyclechallenge.org.nz)

The added challenge of the last 50 odd kilometres is that it is along National Highway One, the major north-south trunk route between Auckland and Wellington.

The weather was however a biggest challenge than the terrain. A solid headwind blew from the South-West from the first 100kms, and there were scudding showers. When the ride started at 7:30am the temperature was barely above freezing. The author completed the ride in arm warmers, leg warmers and vest, and foolishly did not use booties. The weather either side of the Saturday was even more appalling. On the Sunday the wind blew so strong that a tree reportedly blew over killing two motorists. There was enough sun for at least one SCC member to get a sunburnt scalp.



Lake Taupo, looking South-West – note wind blown white caps and freezing Neil Williams

The other major risk was the other 4,700 cyclists. Bunch riding skills were at best mixed. Half wheeling and passing on the left were the norm. By the way Avanti has successfully convinced New Zealand cyclists that it's their patriotic duty to support the manufacturer who supports gold medalist Sarah Ulmer.

..... Turning Fifty with Pain

The highlight was the overall organisation and the very high levels of community support. The event was run on open public roads and at every farm gate and village the community turned out to cheer, and ring their cow bells in support of all the riders. Each rider had an individual electronic timer, which in turn triggered the photographic equipment.

Armon Hicks – 5:53:57 or 2,241st place.
Owen Williams in background.



The author did not witness any accidents, though he did hear rumours of various stacks. Motorists were on the whole considerate. Nor did the author see the uni-cyclist who was attempting to finish for the second year and better his time of eight hours from 2003.

There are five different Challenges; the solo rider's 160km challenge, a 160km relay (2,3 or 4 riders), a 320km twice round the lake "Enduro" and a 500km "Super Enduro". There is also a Classic Race component for elite riders, won this year by banned drug cheat Jeremy Yates in just under three hours and fifty seven minutes.

The fastest solo rider completed the course in four hours and twenty two minutes, forty nine seconds.

The fastest Australian for the solo challenge in 39th place was Daniele Vanolini of STEAM - within four hours and twenty nine minutes. SCC Member Geoffrey Kennett, despite being 15 minutes slower this year, was the 20th fastest Australian at fifty eight seconds over five hours. Eighty nine Australians finished.

This year some 10,000 riders registered including a number from the Sydney Cycling Club who competed in the solo rider 160km Challenge or once around the lake.

Neil Williams	Owen Williams	Geoffrey Kennett
Yvoine McCort	Michael McCort	Breeda Kelly
Julie Avakian	Michael Avakian	Kate Everret
Kate Roberts	Armon Hicks	
Robert Chapman – mate of Owen Williams and ring in		



(Source: www.cyclechallenge.org.nz)

Note that only 4,711 finished with the last rider taking twelve hours and twelve minutes to complete the race. "Next years Cycle Challenge will be held on November 25, 2005. For more information and to register see "www.cyclechallenge.org.nz"

Armon Hicks

Bunch Riding - en masse

"This certainly is not for the faint hearted," quipped my cycling buddy, Judith - with silent agreement from my sister, Connie - as the three of us commenced the second day of the Great Victorian Bike Ride, late in November.

Some 24 hours later, Judith was describing the experience as "a matter of survival!"

However, survive we did and like the experience of child birth (so I am told), the bad parts fade with time and you remember only the joy of what you achieved.

In what is being hailed as an event record, Bicycle Victoria encouraged 8,154 people to take part in the 2004 Great Victorian Bike Ride – a nine-day odyssey on wheels over 591 kms from Port Fairy, on the coast in south-western Victoria, to the state's second largest city, Geelong.

Having already experienced two Big Rides in NSW, I was somewhat prepared for the challenges of mass cycling along country roads; sleeping on football ovals or showgrounds and putting up and taking down your own tent every 24 hours.

What I did not totally anticipate was the added stimulus provided by sharing these challenges with 8,154 other cyclists and some 400 volunteers!

Let me state clearly that the event was very well organised and every effort had been made to handle the logistics of the large crowds. However, size created many situations that could not be avoided and were difficult to enjoy.

For instance: Take queuing up to use the toilet first thing in the morning and finding a long line already established – at 5.30 am! Or, finishing a day's riding searching for your own kit bag with the camping gear - deposited at various locations over a few kilometre area – and then lugging it (while still wearing cleated cycling shoes) to find a spare bit of land in the fastly-emerging tent city!

In the NSW rides I did – both limited to roughly 1,500 people – we all managed to camp within one defined area, giving a real sense of community. The Victorian ride utilised 12 high-backed, fully laden semi trailers, just to carry the participant's bags from one town to the next. In most of the overnight stops, there were four – often very separate – camping areas (or farm paddocks).

The quality and quantity of food provided could not be criticised – but the long lines that quickly formed for breakfast, lunch and dinner – proved daunting. Happily, in the evening there was a well stock bar in which we sat until we joined the queue just before 8pm when the serving of meals was to cease.

Bicycle Victoria gave a free, mass-produced in China, hybrid bike to every entrant who paid by the end of July – and I believe some 7,000 of these were distributed. Many novice cyclists used these bikes on the ride, apparently managing to handle the hills and the relatively long distance on several days.

Participants on road bikes comprised probably less than one quarter to one third of the total population and these were the kindred souls with whom Judith, Connie and I found our nirvana.



When you are traversing a country road among fertile farming land or hugging the coast above the Southern Ocean, there is a magic moment when a bunch voluntarily forms and you find yourself in a steady pace line.

Bunch Riding - en masse (cont'd)

The adrenaline rises as you glide past a continuous line of slower and more inexperienced riders and you shout "passing on your right". You actually being to feel like a Tour de France competitor and you can understand the Lance Armstrong sensation of "no chain today, George!"

Even among 8,154 people, each day we were able to search out several riders whom we had met or previously noticed on the road, and form a line. On occasions I would find myself electing to let one bunch go past me because they were younger and faster, and then to quickly find another group that tested me without spitting me out the back!

A few times we did have to speak soundly to some cheeky younger folk – on mountain bikes or hybrids - who somehow managed to grab our wheel and stay there!

On the 64-km section of The Great Ocean Road between Apollo Bay and Aireys Inlet, the organisers closed the entire road to all but local traffic for most of the day.

I will long savour the memory of being part of a bunch clocking speed up and down this craggy route that is recognised as one of the most picturesque coastal roads in the world. Would we do it again? There was a unanimous response from each of us: "No, not with so many people!"

Did we regret doing it? "No at all, now that the "child" is growing!"

Note: Some SCC members are doing the 2005 Great Tasmanian Bike Ride in the west coast wilderness from 5 February to 13 February, with a much more manageable crowd (reported to be well under 1,000).

Check out the details at www.bv.com.au

Written by
Des Sullivan

MATCHES

Vikki Bishop & Richard Dodds
Recently engaged in
Melbourne
Congratulations!

DESPATCHES

Mark Melzer
Moving to South Africa
Bon Voyage!

Scott Chapman
Moving to Queensland



2005 Newsletters

Closing Date for Articles
- 3rd Friday of each month

February 2005 Newsletter
Closing Date for Articles
- Friday 21st January 2005

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Regular Rides

Day	Time	Meet	Ride Description
Tuesday	06.00	Cannons	Watsons Bay Hill Ride. Approximately 25km. Eastern Suburbs hills and in-between flat bits. Faster riders wait at the top of Military Road for new kids/the hill-challenged. Back at approximately 7.00am Bondi Junction
Wednesday	06.00	Cannons	Very fluid. Depends on who turns up - maybe brisk laps of the park, or a 35km circuit round the Eastern Suburbs.
Thursday	06.00	Cannons	La Perouse via Anzac Parade and Malabar. Approximately 35km. Fast clip (35-40ish km/h) with three even faster (40-55km/h) intervals. Back at approximately 7.00am. Bunch waits for training enthusiasts but not quite as religiously as Tuesday.
Friday	06.00	Cannons	Invariable some SCC riders in the park doing easy recovery laps before the harder weekend rides.
Saturday	06.30	Cannons	La Perouse Ride. Approximately 45km. Three varied pace bunches, A, B and C, leave the park rolling easily until Foreshore Rd where the first "A" bunch picks up the pace and develops a paceline. The second, "B" bunch, typically do a Foreshore paceline but will split and have an optional non-paceline bunch particularly if group is too large. The lead, paceline "B" bunch will wait for split non-paceline bunch after right turn into Port Botany. The third "C" bunch maintains a slightly lower pace throughout with an emphasis on bunch riding, skipping Foreshore but adding a Malabar loop. After Port Botany, the ride takes in La Perouse bay, along Anzac Parade and then the run home via Maroubra Beach. Bunches will wait for stragglers, with catch up points at the top of the Torrington Rd and Mons Ave climbs. Back in the park for coffee at 8.30am."
Sunday	06.30	Cannons	Waterfall Ride. Approximately 90km. Medium to hard ride, out at 28-35km/h with some riders turning round at Sutherland (60km). At Waterfall smaller groups sometimes go on to Stanwell Tops (120km) or back through the Royal National Park (110km). The main bunch U-turns at Waterfall, pacelines back to Sutherland, collects the stragglers, then a fast ride back to the park for breakfast - or a more medium paced ride, medium/average fitness level. Route options include Short or Long Cronulla (60-70km), Kurnell or Cape Solander (80-90km) or maybe Sutherland then back via Como and Hurstville (70km). All rides finish back in the park for breakfast (approximately 9.30am)
1st Sunday of the month	06.30	Cannons	Club Jersey Ride 100km+. 2-3 different paced bunches head north to Akuna Bay via Wakehurst Parkway and Church Point. Keener riders can opt to take the turn off to West Head. Those wanting to miss the hills and take it a bit easier skip the Akuna Bay turn off and regroup at the top of McCarrs Creek Road. The ride returns to the Park via Forrest Way and the Spit. Coffee options are decided on the day.



THE SYDNEY CYCLING CLUB DOES NOT TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONDUCT OR SAFETY OF THE TRAINING RIDES DETAILED ON THIS PROGRAM. TRAINING CAN BE DANGEROUS AND YOU DO SO AT YOUR OWN RISK.