

Chain Mail

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The views expressed in Chain Mail articles are those of the authors only and do not necessarily represent either the common views shared by a majority of Bike North members or Bike North policy as formulated by the Bike North Executive Committee.

Bike North is Named!

Keith Griffin

Following some work done by Wayne Spencer to have Bike North become incorporated, we have now been able to register our own internet domain name! So, we are now Bike North Inc. and our cyberspace identity is [bikenorth.org.au](http://www.bikenorth.org.au)

Apart from raising our profile in the community, the combination of incorporation and having a domain name lends weight to our advocacy efforts, has positive implications for all members but especially ride leaders and committee members, and gives us a certain legal status.

The most observant of you will already have noticed changes in our web and email addresses. All the old addresses will continue to work! Our new web address is <http://www.bikenorth.org.au/>

Because we now have our very own internet name it makes sense to have some specialised email addresses, so the following is a list of email addresses we operate for Bike North business of various types.

address

info@bikenorth.org.au
advocacy@bikenorth.org.au
chainmail@bikenorth.org.au
hhill@bikenorth.org.au
hornsby@bikenorth.org.au
ryde@bikenorth.org.au
kuringgai@bikenorth.org.au
membership@bikenorth.org.au
railtrail@bikenorth.org.au
rides@bikenorth.org.au

recipient(s), business use

some of the committee, general contact address for BN
advocacy officer, advocacy enquiries
editorial group, all articles for Chain Mail
hunters hill working group coordinator
hornsby working group coordinator
ryde working group coordinator
ku-ring-gai working group coordinator
membership officer, enquiries
railtrail coordinator
rides coordinator

In addition of course we have our email lists, members can join most of these

bn_exec@bikenorth.org.au (committee only)
bn_chat@bikenorth.org.au
bn_hornsby@bikenorth.org.au
bn_kuringgai@bikenorth.org.au
bn_hunters_hill@bikenorth.org.au
bn_ryde@bikenorth.org.au
bn_news@bikenorth.org.au
bn_rideleaders@bikenorth.org.au
rt_chat@bikenorth.org.au
rt_news@bikenorth.org.au



Nothing promotes cycling better than people out cycling on our roads and cycleways, but our internet presence provides us with a great support tool for advocacy, rides, and keeping members and the general public informed.

BNCC 2003

– One Challenge, Many Perspectives

The Organiser...

It was wet, it was windy, it was cold. With the hills the same as last year the Challenge presented a much more satisfying scenario for the sadistic course designers. But we still had 6 more riders than last year to make up the 64 starters. Congratulations to all who took part in another enjoyable event.



“Let us pray “– Doug gives his Sunday morning address

Thanks in particular to the volunteers – who did a great job of offering jelly beans, good humour, a touch of empathy and one even tried to offer tea and bikkies to all riders. Some of the locations were not the most pleasant of places to spend a few hours on a rainy Sunday unless it was to watch groups of helpless companions pass through in a much worse state. With Bobbin Head Road finally cleared of the landslide and open on the day the alternate route planning was ultimately not required.

Despite the extra difficulties most teams improved over last year with greater fitness adding to the experience in planning the pace and the stops. It was heartening to see those who really entered into the spirit of the event and chose to set themselves difficult personal challenges at all levels.

The start times are staggered ten minutes apart to bring people to the finish together. This year the seeding was fairly accurate with a definite bunching effect but still not enough to slow the fastest teams adequately.

This problem is demonstrated by the differences between the fastest and slowest 100km teams being 2hrs and 50 minutes.

For the 60km the difference was also over 2 hours. And for those who don't know, only one of the 160km teams did the full distance.

The Challenge is not just another ride but an event which can form the focus for months of training. It is not intended for friends of varying abilities to ride together and where this happened groups often broke up. The event suffered no accidents and only one puncture was reported in the 5,480 km cycled on the day, despite the wet conditions.

We expect the 3rd BNCC will be on again in May 2004, so your training program can start this weekend! As a final thought please

let me know if you have any suggestions to improve the event (apart from fine weather). Contact Doug Stewart (speedwell74@yahoo.com or 9887 1478).

Doug Stewart

A Volunteer...

Sixty four brave Bike North members met at their allocated group times at

Wahroongah Park to push themselves and their bikes to the limit in the Bike North Century Challenge.

The weather WAS kind for the starters.

Doug Stewart with the very able assistance of Ronnie and Peter Essam greeted each and everyone of us, riders and vollies alike, when we arrived.

There was much joshing and some conniving going on as each of the teams was allocated their departure times at each of the three briefings – (some just had to go early and were seen bargaining with other teams). However, they couldn't get past the second

time keeper who just happened to be wearing the guise of official team photographer!!!

The teams were many and varied – three teams were entered in the tough 160km challenge, nine teams in the testing 100km challenge (read Galston Gorge, Berowra Waters, Brooklyn and good old Bobbo) and last but not least, eight teams in the mind bending 60km challenge, requiring excellent navigational and mud map skills.

The Challenge (the brain child of Doug Stewart's) is designed to allow riders to test and stretch their riding abilities. The three different challenges cover a large area of Bike North territory and include sections of many of the regular Bike North rides. The 160km ride is actually made up of the 100km loop followed by the 60km loop. The routes include elements such as hills, two descents with hairpin bends, a ferry crossing, a wooden plank bridge and two nasty little surprises, which were deliberately included to push the rider that little bit extra. One of these was at Brooklyn and the other at St.Ives and the riders had to ascend them to reach the check points!!!! And, surprise, surprise most of them did it!!!

Each team and team member had to be self sufficient – none of the cocooning safety of the sweep on a normal Bike North ride, on this one! Riders not only had to be prepared physically and mentally and but also had to be sufficiently acquainted with their bikes to be able to make running repairs and fix flat tyres if needed- at least there was not a cat head to be seen on this ride (just ask the riders that did Tour De Cowra!!!). Food in



Ronny & Peter Essam – “Glad we're not riding in the rain”

various forms was seen to be secreted away in back pockets of bike jerseys, rack bags and panniers. Some seasoned Challenge riders



Richard & Fran were the only ones to finish the 160

(the ones who really knew what they were in for – or thought they did) were seen to stash “food drops” at Wahroongah and one of the check points for later consumption. Some couldn’t wait and were observed to be eating before they started (or was it a planned part of their strategy?) and some even had to be dragged back from the Coonabarra Café and their coffees for their briefing!! We do know that vast numbers of bananas, jelly beans, jelly babies, peanut butter sandwiches, other fresh and dried fruit, sports drinks and chocolate were consumed throughout the day not to mention the coffees and ??????? bought along the way.

The most grueling event was the 160km Fran Griffin and Richard Vagg were the only ones to complete it – congratulations to them both. Fran holds a very special record being the ONLY BN member to complete this distance both years and on two different bikes (her trike last year and her trusty Trek road bike, Fabio, this year).

The groups doing the 100km event followed in the tyre tracks of the 160kers and we know that “The Slow Folks” certainly weren’t “The Houghtons”. The “Old Fartz” were seen chasing after “Matilda” or was it the “Gentlemen of Verona”? The “Late Team” were the “Rough Diamonds” and sent out for “Flat Whites”. Maybe this explains why they came in late in the afternoon. Too many coffees perhaps???

The 60kers were not a “Chaste” lot, “Plodalongs” or “Lost and Bewildered” but more like “The Challengers”. “The Psycho-Lists” were a little like “The Flat Outs” and rose like the “Phoenix” and had to watch out

for the “Sharpies”. This merry mob navigated their way around the ‘burbs’ and most were heard to be planning their lunch break at Hunters Hill and they hadn’t even gone half way!!! A little birdie later told us that one team had a secret stash of Cherry Ripes kept specially for the ride UP Kissing Point Road although one rider kept theirs for later!!!

The umbrella at Wahroongah Park was a welcoming sight for all the teams as they completed their events. A cheer went up as each group arrived to tell of their great feats, adventures and fun that they had along the way.



“Rain?, What rain?” – The Houghtons

Gatorade and cake was on hand to prop up flagging energy levels. Ronnie and Peter Essam made sure that everyone’s ride guides were stamped and Doug Stewart recorded times and took great pleasure in hearing about “all those nasty surprises”!!! When the vollies returned from their various check points, during the afternoon, there were MORE tales to tell. For example, the team that lost a member, the riders who arrived at the check point from a completely different direction to the one they should have come from and why all the time sheets (the vollie’s) were wet.

All in all, the teams and the volunteers had a great day despite the inclement weather that closed in just after lunch. A big thank you must be given to Doug and his committee

for organizing this event not only on the day but for all the hard work required behind the scenes and in the months prior to making this, the second Bike North Century Challenge the success it was.

Debbie Lillenthal

Participants...

Once again thanks to Doug, Peter and Ronny and all the other organisers and helpers for this years BNCC.

A special thanks to Col, Steve and Geoff from the “Old Fartz “ group, it was a pleasure once again to be with you all on the ride.

See you all on the next one.

Basil Smith

Just wanted to say thank you for once again organising the BNCC.

This was my first challenge and I would have to say that by the end, I felt that I had been challenged enough!

The whole ride was very enjoyable plus helping me gain confidence in riding in traffic. Thanks also for all the happy volunteers at the checkpoints and for the jelly beans (especially the black ones) which were much appreciated.

Thanks to all the other teams we passed along the way with their cheery waves and cries of “well done”.

Last but not least I’d like to thank Lorraine and Barbara who made up our team called The Flat Outs

(one flat and your out) for their company and for following the cue sheet perfectly. The most challenging thing we had to do was to decide when to eat our mini cherry ripers, before tackling the steep section up Kissing Point Rd or to wait until we had finished. I had mine before the climb, Lorraine had hers at the end and Barbara kept hers for another day.



Helen Middleton

Diary Dates

June 20

Bike North General Meeting

August 17

Bike North AGM and picnic.

Events

Treasure Hunt

Yaffa Gould

Thanks you to Ross and Dominique for organising a great morning's fun!

On Sunday 30th March, about 35 Bike North members went charging over the Olympic site looking for objects, plastic spoons, paper clips (some were even spied going through garbage bins) as well as the answer to many vexing question: who was Sarah and in which country did she win her event? On which of the 100's of poles listing volunteers did a name beginning with Br live? How many seats on top of Millennium Hill? I thought there were none! Which company supplied the Solar panels and what voltage were the overhead wires?

Later, we all met at Newington for the essential Morning Tea. Who won? It was too much fun to care, we all got a choccy frog anyway. (Well Pam and Col, led our team to victory, but we mustn't brag.)

Ross and Dominique did a fantastic job, Ross rode 40 km early in the morning to stick clues on seats etc. So again, thank you both for all the hard work. You can't use the new member arriving in September, as an excuse!

We want more Treasure Hunts!!

BNSW Ride Leader Training Weekend

Keith Griffin

One sunny weekend in early April many Bike North members would have been shocked to notice that there were no planned rides! This was because almost all our ride leaders were away at "training camp".

BNSW decided to introduce a ride leaders training and qualification scheme. Ride Leaders or potential leader from all the NSW BUGS were invited to attend and if successful, become BNSW qualified ride leaders by the end of the weekend.

We all attended this inaugural course with the feeling that having been in the ride leading game for a while we had a good idea about how it all works. Our own Doug Stewart was involved in providing some of the information to BNSW and in fact many of the ideas used in the training came from our Bike North Ride Leaders' Protocols.

At the beginning of day one we had a very useful set of discussions based around some fictitious case studies of problem rides. Everyone joined in and it was soon apparent that there was a great deal of experience, knowledge and common sense among the assembled leaders from the various BUGS.

Later we went out riding, making a cue sheet of our allotted ride.

The next day we each had to lead this ride (there were five different routes, each with interesting challenges). We all got to know the Olympic Park area very well during this weekend and being out riding in such glorious weather was wonderful.

Bike North was different from most of the other BUGS represented in two ways. Firstly, we already have both a comprehensive set of ride leader protocols and an apprenticeship scheme for new ride leaders. Secondly many of our rides attract large numbers of participants and this can add extra challenges to the task of leading a ride.

Those who did the training are now able to 'recognise' other riders who wish to become leaders. So there are two ways to become a leader now; you can do the BNSW training, which will possibly be run again later this year, or you can be 'anointed' (recognised) by one of our BN qualified leaders. If you become a leader by this latter method you are not able to 'anoint' any other leaders.

Bike North is in the process of deciding exactly how to implement the process of recognising other ride leaders.

If you would like to become a ride leader contact the rides coordinator(s) Pam & Col Kendrick (rides@bikenorth.org.au). Bike North needs more leaders!

The Bike North Members Survey

It has been some time since Bike North did a survey of its members to find out what they think about the things Bike North does.

We have included a members survey with this Chain Mail mail-out to help us determine if we are satisfying your needs. Also included is a return address stamped envelope to make it easy for you to return the form. If you reading this online can go to the members only area of the Bike North web site <http://www.bikenorth.org.au/members/> and fill in the survey form online.

The survey is anonymous but to encourage you to fill in the form and send it back we do have some great prizes to give away. If you want to be in the running for one of these great prizes then just add your name to the form.

The first two surveys opened, where we can identify the sender, will receive the prizes. For those that fill in the form online there is a place for you to enter your name if you so desire. In addition, the 18th online entry received will win a prize. Don't submit the survey more than once (we will know who you are).

So before you finish your coffee fill in the form and get it back into us. It will help us to help you.

The BN Survey Team

June General Meeting

Debbie Lillenthal, Bike North member and dietician extraordinaire will be entertaining and educating us on the very important subject of "Eating and Cycling" at the upcoming June General Meeting.

The meeting will be held on Friday 20 June in the John Witton Room at the Macquarie University Sports Centre. The meeting starts at 7:30pm. All Bike North members are welcome. Please come along and help make it a memorable night.

MAKING CYCLING BETTER Advocacy

Ku-ring-gai Council Bicycle Committee Update

The creation of the Ku-ring-gai Council Bicycle Committee moves another step forward now council has adopted a charter. The charter spells out the objectives of the committee as follows:

1. To create a safe and comfortable environment for people who ride bicycles in Ku-ring-gai.
2. To promote Council's existing bikeway network so as to raise the awareness of the services already provided and to gain support for planned network improvements.
3. To champion the needs of all cycling in Ku-ring-gai with regard to the provision of services and infrastructure. Include adults and children who cycle for transport and recreation.
4. To achieve the integration of Council's bicycle program across Council's operational areas.

Membership of the committee includes two representatives from Bike North and one from Bicycle NSW. There will also be two positions for residents.

Nominations for the residents' positions will be advertised in the North Shore Times. We encourage Ku-ring-gai residents to consider nominating.

Cyclist's split second decision was reasonable

An experienced cyclist's split second decision, when sensing a fast approaching car from behind, to swerve between parked cars (but which ended in a collision) was not negligence, the NSW Full Supreme Court has found.

The cyclist, Judith Rowland-Smith, had a history of outstanding sporting achievements. In about 1992, she became interested in triathlons and subsequently competed in international triathlons and in "Masters" competitions. She rode about 300kms per week.

On a Monday in January 1997, she set out at 7am on her regular 30km training ride along

Pittwater Rd, Collaroy. It was a sunny day, the road was dry and the traffic conditions light. She wore bright clothing.

Judith was riding at 30kph along the 70kph road when she saw two parked cars ahead, about 22m apart. When she was about 10-20m from the first car, she moved out from the kerbside lane to the middle lane, indicating with her right hand and looking behind. She rode to the left of the middle lane but with enough clearance for opening car doors, and intended to pass both cars and return into the kerbside lane. However, having passed the first car, she heard a fast approaching car from behind. She said she could hear it accelerating and sensed it was getting too close and so, she swerved in between the parked cars. She hoped to get back out when the fast car had passed but ended up colliding face first with the second parked car.

As a result, Judith suffered facial and spinal damage, and was told that she would not be able to walk again but she didn't accept this and became consumed with her rehabilitation, and walking again.

Judith still suffers ongoing disabilities – she said that she has to "talk to her legs to make them move", she has pains in her hand and leg, her sleep is constantly interrupted by spasms, and she suffers episodes of depression.

In court proceedings against the Nominal Defendant for negligence (because the fast car/driver could not be identified), the trial judge assessed the evidence of Judith herself, the police, ambulance officers, an NRMA repairman who had stopped to help, and a cyclist that Judith had passed. The judge accepted Judith's credibility as a witness and concluded that the driver had been negligent, and awarded damages in Judith's favour.

On appeal to the Full Supreme Court, the three appeal judges agreed that there was no error in the trial judge's decision. In particular, they found that Judith's failure to properly execute the difficult swerving manoeuvre required, in a split second emergency, to avoid the approaching car, did not amount to negligence on her part that contributed to the accident.

The Full Court said that in evaluating the

reasonableness of Judith's actions, it was appropriate to apply the "agony of the moment" rule, ie to consider the person's actions in the particular circumstances.

The Court said that this was not the case of a beginner cyclist who wobbled, lost control or suffered a lapse of concentration at the sound of some traffic; she was an expert who took a deliberate, reasonable measure in reaction to a reasonably perceived risk of a fast moving car.

Court citation: *The Nominal Defendant v Rowland-Smith [2003] NSWCA 65*.

Dear Bike North members,

As there are now a few recumbent riders in Bike North now, as a gesture of support to Bike North members and also to their bike promotion achievements, I would like to offer a 3% discount off retail prices for a number of the recumbents available through Flying Furniture cycles. Flying Furniture cycles has the widest range of recumbent BIKES and TRIKES available in Australia!

The 3% discount offer applies to all purchases of new recumbent trikes from GREENSPEED, TRI-SLED and the MR Components' SWIFTS. This offer is valid, initially at least, for orders and purchases before July 2003!

Sincerely,

Ian Humphries

ian@flyingfurniture.com.au

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Entertainment Books 2003 – 2004

Bike North is again raising funds by offering discount entertainment books. There are two books available, one covering the City area and the other focusing on Northern Sydney.

As in previous years, the entertainment books offer discounts and special offers for some excellent restaurants including Banc, bel mondo, Wagamama, Yoshii, Prime, Aqua Luna, Watermark, Café Sydney, Beppis, Arena, Salt, Mezzaluna, The Abbey and Cuneo. There are also discounts and special offers for a range of smaller cafes, pubs, bistros, chain restaurants and other amusements and attractions. The entertainment books cost \$60 including GST, postage and handling. (Or \$55 if you are willing to collect the book from Ryde).

For more information, or to buy a book, please email Brian at honey_honeybun@yahoo.com.au or phone him on 9879 7270.

WANTED

Does anybody have some Shimano 105 gear that they no longer have any requirement for. Was specifically seeking a set of handle bar levers. Maybe there is somebody with a disused/unwanted set even if still intact. Please contact Publican at wheelietonz@hotmail.com. Need to repair/replace down levers so we can start a recruit out cycling again.

Touring

RTA Big Ride 2003 March 15 -23

Yaffa Gould

We rode some 600kms over 9 days from Warragamba to Cootamundra. 24 Bike Northers were involved, as riders, volunteers and organisers.

Each year the Big Ride gives people the opportunity to experience supported touring. If you are able to ride Bike North medium rides then Big Ride is achievable. The day's riding is spaced by water stops, morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

On this year's Big Ride, the cycling varied from a 34km day through to a 101km day on well planned, guided, routes marshalled by volunteers. A police and VRA presence



ensured minimum traffic on the route and guidance through intersections. There is also mechanical support and a sweep bus if you've had enough.

Geoff and I left camp between 7:30 and 8 arriving between 1:30pm and 3pm most days, leaving ample time to explore each

town and partake of the variety of activities on offer. On my first ride trip I was amazed that it was possible to get back on your bike the next day, though the rest day is always very welcome!

Bicycle New South Wales, along with the MS Society and the RTA crew have developed the right formula for an amazing holiday. From the moment you pick up that calico bag of tricks you are aware of the organisation and the number of volunteers whose efforts make it such a success.

Each day you bike into a virtual city. Food marquees, coffee and tea available all night, MS information, Hot Shot photos, the bike crews, Pegasus and Renegade. Games tent, BNSW headquarters, Mouse toilet and shower trucks, and most important of all, the Brasserie. The city becomes home for the

duration of the ride. The routine of packing up, then loading luggage onto the truck, then out onto the road for a day's cycle (rain, hail or shine) sounds more like army drill than a holiday. So why do we come back time after time? Simply because it's a brilliant holiday, time to clear one's head, find companionship and camaraderie and to feel that sense of achievement.

Some 2003 Highlights – the day we rode from Bowral to Bundanoon through Robinson with the gentle mist breaking out into a gorgeous day. An exquisite day of cycling. Balloons over head in Camden, being Piped into camp at Bundanoon, the Police and witches hats on the 5km stretch of hwy at Marulan, that freezing cold morning in Bungendore, the wind and all them hills, well some were mountains!

Meeting friends on the road, the stillness, the sound of Bell birds, sharing a jelly bean and a beer, or that bottle of wine. Galahs overhead in Yass. The changing landscape, the lush green of the Highlands to the open rolling countryside from Goulburn to Harden, amazing boulders everywhere. Scone buttering and hurling competitions, yoga and circus classes, tours to wineries, waterfalls and glow worm tunnels by torchlight, music wafting through the campsite from the Brasserie – My Brown Eyed Girl or a Double Bass jazz band.

Lilac and St Patrick's day green theme parties were held, the pubs were drunk dry! Towns welcomed us with banners, street parties and bands. The CWA, Rotary, Scouts and Volunteer Fire brigades worked all night to supply morning or afternoon teas to 1044 hungry cyclists.

We worked hard, met lots of people and had lots of fun along the way.

Tour de Cowra 2003

Keith Griffin

Question 1: what is round, black and flat on the bottom?

Question 2: what is the next number in the sequence 17, 37, >70, ... ?

If you were not in Cowra for this Bike North event then you missed one of the best cycling events of the year, and you may struggle to answer question one. The effects of so many cyclists descending on Cowra were many; the



The local store in Woodstock

total quantity of lycra in town increased at least ten-fold, the cafes and hasty-tasties had to cope with longer queues, the pub sold four or five times its normal amount of Guinness, the caravan park became a cycle parking area, and the quiet roads remained quiet, though busy.

The effects of Cowra on us were greater though. Everyone relaxed, talked, helped, offered late night cups of tea, had fun, and did lots of cycling. Some riders found personal challenges with longer distances or hilly terrain or just riding day after day. At least two riders achieved a longest ever day ride with ease! Others found the continuity of cycling afforded by country roads challenging, not least due to the dearth of en-route coffee stops.



Graeme shows how to drink iced chocolate

For me the cycling highlights were the 138km trip to Goolooging, Eugowra and Canowindra on Day 2 and the hilly but scenic ride to Wyangala Dam on day 7. The first of these saw a few groups travel at different rates, but the group I was with stayed together in a well organised peleton for the entire ride. This was particularly helpful on the homeward leg, battling a headwind which caused the lead riders to work hard even on this flat terrain. The Wyangala ride is certainly the most scenic in the district



Chasing cows – The road to Greenethorpe

and for those who are prepared to do some climbing the rewards are great!

The rides we do in Cowra are varied in difficulty and we always run alternatives to the very long and very hilly rides. This way anyone who is comfortable on Bike North medium rides (or harder) gets a ride every day of the tour.

As with last year a number of local cyclists joined in our rides. Though Cowra does not have a cycling club or BUG it does have an active triathlon club. One of the local girls, Emma aged 16, joined in our Wyangala ride. She

had never ridden up to the dam before and in fact because the bike leg in triathlon is usually flat, hills were not her favourite thing. Despite this (and having a road bike with a 42-19 as the lowest gear!) she managed the long hills of this ride and came back for more on the final day.



Rest day – BBQ on the farm

By the final day many of the mob had left, some were tired and preferred to expend energy packing up rather than riding, but six of us went out for a short (48km) flat ride before breaking camp and heading home. Of the more than seventy riders who enjoyed the tour, only three rode every day.

Next year Bike North will run Tour de Cowra, back to its usual four day format and with a few improvements including a complete ride guide for all those who register.

The answer to question two depends on how many people join in the Tour de Cowra 2004.



Carolyn arrives at the rest stop on Pine Mount Road

Fran and I thank all those who came along and made the event what it is.

Tour de Cowra or “Tyre/Puncture Workshop 101”

Maria Theophanous

Packing is still my biggest downfall when preparing for a few days riding. I still haven't learnt after 4 Big rides.

On Friday we left Sydney's rain for Cowra's sunny quiet country roads. Dropped in at Fran's parents' place for the official Good Friday BBQ. Caught up with those who braved the headwinds during the day's ride and we had a good chat about the Saturday's choice of rides.

On Saturday we rode the modified 95km route to Canowindra. Our 80km ride began with a delightful tailwind and we met up with the official 95 km peleton for lunch Canowindra. Annie and Alana were great touring partners.

Saturday was also the day for tyre/puncture workshop 101. Ross had two consecutive punctures. Country thorns are tough

like the Australian outback. At dinner we found out that the tyre puncture record was 6 punctures.

The return headwinds didn't dampen the spirits of the 50 plus cyclists at dinner. The Town House Hotel was especially good for those who were happy to party on.

The next day was our recovery day. Sleeping in was a good option. The

wineries and the Cowra Races made for a lovely afternoon. Race 5 was the highlight – one horse bolted from the barriers back to the stables before the start of the race. The race also included horses called Little Willy, Little Bow Tie, Wally and Managed Funds. You can imagine how the crowd sounded during the race. By the way, Wally won.

We “hot rocked” it for dinner that night at the Lachlan Hotel – thanks to Annie and Laurie's pleading to get a table for eight hungry cyclists.

Tyre/puncture workshop 102 happened on Monday. I had the first one for the day within the first 4 kms of the ride's start. Jim and Tony stopped to help and showed us how to change an inner tube without tyre levers. Thanks guys.

The day then got a whole lot better when we caught up to the fun end of the pack at Woodstock. The rest of the ride was a breeze as we cruised on back to Cowra.



Greg fixes another puncture over lunch

There were a lot of farewells at the Information Centre as many riders left after Monday's ride.

Thanks again to Keith and Fran as well as Bike North for organising a great Easter getaway for us all. Cowra's a lovely part of NSW and a great place to enjoy safe cycling.



Zen and the Art of Puncture Repair

Frances Griffin

Blue sky, no wind, feeling good, zipping along with the group, then “what’s that rough feeling and that floppy noise?” The group stops and collectively stifles expletives whilst putting on a cheery visage and engaging in unconvincingly lighthearted banter. The puncture bearer feels guilty holding up the ride, and has momentary seizures at the possibility of having either an incomplete tool kit, the wrong spare, or a faulty or absent pump. Relief at finding the appropriate array of equipment stashed in the tool pouch is then allowed to give way to that sense of disappointment that surfaces when a ride unexpectedly stops.

Several rituals now follow. At least four other riders observe and give advice to the puncture victim, who first searches the tyre for the offending pointy thing. If found and easily removed, it may be possible to patch the tube without taking the tyre off the rim completely, and so not taking the wheel off the bike (it always seems to be the rear wheel, and it is always impossible to avoid touching the chain, and there is never any grass on which to deposit the grease).

Otherwise it is off with the wheel, and get settled in a comfy spot (not above a drain – something vital might fall in) to take the tyre off. Now which helper moved the tyre levers? Getting started is the hardest part. A spot near the end of a spoke is chosen and the lever used to grab the hidden part of the tyre. The tyre is pulled out and the notch hooked in the lever around the spoke. Depending on hand strength and the toughness of the tyre, it may be possible to get another lever in a few spokes away. Otherwise the second lever goes in next to the first and slowly slid between the tyre and the rim to extend the length of tyre that is off the rim. This can take some effort, but once it gets going it is easy.

There is no need to take both sides of the tyre off, just reach in and grab the tube. Starting opposite the valve is easiest, then when only the valve is left holding the tube in, it can be carefully pushed through the hole so as not to bend it (tubes often have more

than nine lives, so they need a good valve). Oops, forgot to take the valve cap off first.

First instincts suggest that hurling the tube into the bushes is a good move, but this should not be done with an audience. At this stage the hole finding ritual is entered into by the “let’s be helpful” crowd. This is futile of course, since this tube is to be folded up and shoved back in the pouch until the rest stop or home.

Those with clean hands seldom offer to do the inside of tyre check, to make sure there is no other puncture potential present.

Now for the spare. With luck, one of the “let’s actually try to be helpful” crowd has partially inflated it. This has two purposes, firstly to make sure you remembered to fix it after the last puncture episode, and secondly to help get it into the tyre. Pushing the valve through the hole is the best start, (yes, remembered the valve cap this time) then work around the wheel tucking the tube inside the tyre. Too much inflation will make it pop out, no inflation just makes it awkward.

Now comes the tricky part – getting the tyre back on properly. It will start easily, just put the edge of the tyre back inside the rim, making sure the tube is not pinched in between. At about three quarters the way around, things get tight. Letting out some air, reaching with both hands to the opposite side of the wheel and will make to stretch the tyre towards the part which is still off the rim.

Sore thumbs often result as the ever tightening rubber is gradually worked back inside rim. Suddenly, by magic the last bit pops in – it must have been the intense concentration of the spectators providing virtual lubrication.

If patching is required, all thoughts of haste must be banished. This is the puncture bearer’s opportunity to impress the “patching is a pain and never works when you’re on the road” crowd. The puncturee enters a state of Zen calmness and will not be hurried in this ritual. The location of the hole is noted and the mind is cleared of irrelevant

considerations (otherwise the hole has to be found again).

The glue tube is examined for age, and gently massaged to recombine the runny stuff and the sticky stuff. It is lovingly applied to the tube in an even disc, roughly patch sized, and not too thick.

As the aroma of curing glue fills the nostrils, the patcher meditates on, well, not very much at all, so long as it takes a while, oblivious to the stop watches of the watchers. Finally, when the glue has gone dull and tacky, the silver backing is ceremoniously ripped from the patch, and the patch is pressed to the tube. A meditative interlude follows. At this stage, some like to leave in place the paper stuff, others like to peel it off. Removing it facilitates inspection of the patch, although there is the risk of raising the edges. This can be avoided by carefully pulling the patch down again with the fingernail.

The final ritual is one which explains the existence of certain strange objects in the puncture kit – the chalk and sandpaper. One is rubbed against the other, letting the residue fall on the new patch, then spread with a finger, so that the patch and glue will not stick to the tyre, or other parts of the tube if it is rolled up.

Wheel back on, off we go, Zen forgotten in favour of adrenalin, then from one of the “glad it wasn’t me” crowd, “hold on, got a flat!”

*Road
Rule 251*
**Riding to the left of
oncoming bicycle
riders on a path**

The rider of a bicycle riding on a bicycle path, footpath, separated footpath or shared path must keep to the left of any oncoming bicycle rider on the path.

Cycling as Transport: My Commute

Caroline Houghton

I live in St Ives, and for the last 6 months have worked in North Sydney. During my first week at work there, I noticed that on the Thursday a number of my fellow engineers had cycled in, training for the Gong ride. I asked two where they had cycled from and was told Pymble – on route from my home at St Ives. They had worked out a quiet route through the backstreets with hardly any traffic past million dollar houses with lovely gardens all the way and only one set of traffic lights between Pymble and North Sydney. It sounded too good to be true. I organised to join them the following Thursday.

The first 5km route from my house to the beginning of their route in Pymble along Mona Vale Road has quite a few sets of lights and is the only section where I get into my big ring.

From this point on, I joined them, and what an unusual route it is. Their 17km route avoids the Pacific Highway completely, and has very little traffic. It has lots of turns and ups and downs, a few sections on cycleways, but hardly any stops for traffic. There are only a few busy roads to be crossed. It seems astonishing that one can ride from Pymble to North Sydney and only pass one set of lights. Coming home is a little harder and slower as there are more up-hills.

I wouldn't have found this 22km (each way) pleasant route on my own, which for me is greatly preferable to the Pacific Highway, even though it is not as direct, has more hills and turns so one can't go as fast. I'm now riding it 2 or 3 times a week, both ways.

My routine on a riding day is:

The previous night I check the weather forecast to see if it's going to rain the following day. If the forecast looks reasonable, I ride.

Departure time 6:50 am, arrival 8:00 am, shower and enter office by 8:25am.

I park my bike in the underground security car park – there are usually 6 – 12 other commuter's bikes in the 7 storey building in which I work (which contains mainly consulting engineering companies).

There is not often a queue for the 2 showers, though once the queue was 4 deep.

When I get to work and put my helmet on my shelf, it is like a trophy; I feel proud of myself for having ridden in. If the bosses see me in the lift they always offer encouraging comments.

Depart office 5:15pm, arrive home 6:35pm

My fitness seems to have made considerable progress since I started. I feel so much better now. At the beginning, I used to get home exhausted, glazed eyes, and collapse in a chair. Now my husband Ian says I bounce in all cheerful. The hills have got smaller since I started. They used to be – oh, dreadful!

I still worry about getting a puncture – I've never repaired one. In theory I know how to, but I haven't actually practiced it. It's these good tyres you see!

Oh yes, my new clip shoes are great, it's been almost a month since my last fall. The scabs have all healed. The scar looks quite neat, just a

pink circle the size of a 5 cent piece. And now I can pull on the cranks on those hills. I'd never ridden out of the saddle before, but now I find myself riding out of the saddle up some of the hills.

The next phase is when daylight saving ends – I'll soon have to start thinking about lights.

Interested in contributing to

Chain Mail?

Chain Mail, the Bike North newsletter, is published bi-monthly in February, April, June, August, October and December of each year.

Contributions from Bike North members on any cycling related subjects are always welcome. Please email articles, photos or enquiries about contributing to the Chain Mail editors at chainmail@bikenorth.org.au

BIKE NORTH CLOTHING

We are once again seeking expressions of interest for Bike North clothing.

Jerseys in the following styles:

Sleeveless \$75.00

Short Sleeve \$80.00

Long Sleeve \$90.00

Ladies Sizes XS, S, M, L, XL

Mens Sizes XS, S, M, L, XL, XXL

Knicks \$60.00

Ladies Sizes XS, S, M, L, XL

Mens Sizes XS, S, M, L, XL

Once we have enough expressions of interest an order will be placed for the clothing. Once the order is received you will be able to collect it at Turramurra Cyclery. Payment will be required when you collect your clothing. If you cannot pick up your clothing from Turramurra, you can pay by credit card over the phone and your order will be posted to you. Please add \$7.00 to your order for Postage & Handling.

Place an expression of interest On-Line at:

<http://www.bikenorth.org.au/members/exclusive/clothing.html>

or Contact: Debbie Lilienthal, Clothing Co-Ordinator Tel: 9476 3624 email: dlilient@tpg.com.au

JUNE**Date: Sun 01/06/2003**

Ride: Exploring Eastwood
 Grade: Easy, BNSW Grade: EST Distance: 17.5
 Group: Bike North
 Contact: Keith and Fran Griffin, 9614 0777
 Starts at: 08:00. Start at Eastwood Station. A gentle meander through the back streets of Eastwood and Marsfield, passing through Macquarie Uni, returning to Eastwood for coffee and cakes. Develop your hill skills on the rolling terrain with this leisurely paced ride.

Date: Sun 01/06/2003

Ride: St Leonards to North Head
 Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OHT Distance: 45
 Group: Bike North
 Contact: Joan Kerridge, 9909 8925
 Starts at: 08:00. St Leonards station concourse. Stretch those muscles on some north side hills – mostly on quiet roads and cycle paths through Beauty Point, over Spit bridge to Balgowlah and Manly. Admire the view from the coffee shop at North Head then return on a similar route.

Date: Sat 07/06/2003

Ride: Pie in the Sky
 Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OTW Distance: 38
 Group: Bike North
 Contact: Graeme Edwards, 9476 3624
 Starts at: 08:00. Hornsby Station west side ride along the old Pacific Highway to the café overlooking Brooklyn for morning tea and great views. Back track to Hornsby. Some moderate hills.

Date: Sun 08/06/2003

Ride: North Shore Olympic Grand Tour
 Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OT Distance: 60-70
 Group: Bike North
 Contact: Carolyn New, 9438 1903
 Starts at: 07:30. Chatswood station west side An easy paced ride via Lane Cove NP and M2 to Eastwood, Meadowbank then cross the river to Olympic Park. After a welcome coffee break, return to Chatswood via ANZAC and Harbour bridges.

Date: Sun 08/06/2003

Ride: Duffy's Forest Loop
 Grade: Easy Medium, BNSW Grade: OTW Distance: 35
 Group: Bike North
 Contact: Ian and Caroline Houghton, 9440 0467
 Starts at: 08:00. Starts at St Ives Car Park Mona Vale Rd opposite Stanley St. Ride out to Waratah Park, home of Skippy the bush roo. Passes through gently undulating horse country roads of Terry Hills and Duffy's Forest.

Date: Mon 09/06/2003

Ride: Olympic Park Ride
 Grade: Easy, BNSW Grade: CPS Distance: 25
 Group: Bike North
 Contact: Col Lambert, 9637 0746
 Starts at: 08:00. Meadowbank Wharf. Loop around Homebush Bay with a coffee stop. Suitable for beginners and children over 10 accompanied by an adult carer.

Date: Sat 14/06/2003

Ride: Olympic Park Ride
 Grade: Easy, BNSW Grade: CPS Distance: 25
 Group: Bike North
 Contact: Doug Stewart, 9887 1478
 Starts at: 08:30. Meadowbank Wharf. Loop around Homebush Bay with a coffee stop. Suitable for beginners and children over 10 accompanied by an adult carer.

Date: Sun 15/06/2003

Ride: Botany Bay Bacon
 Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OP Distance: 65
 Group: Bike North

Contact: Eric Middleton, 9958 2546
 Starts at: 07:30. Meadowbank wharf. Ride via Homebush and the Cooks River cycleway to Botany Bay. A refuel at our favourite cafe at Brighton, then we retrace our tracks to the start.

Date: Sun 15/06/2003

Ride: West to Windsor
 Grade: Medium Hard, BNSW Grade: FTX Distance: 90
 Group: Bike North
 Contact: Keith and Fran Griffin, 9614 0777
 Starts at: 07:30. Starts at Cnr Pennant Hills Rd and M2: Visit the the Wild West via the M2, Old Windsor Rd and some quiet back roads to Quakers Hill and beyond, exploring new suburbs and rural remnants. Coffee at Windsor, then return to start using a different route. Brisk pace, some traffic.

Date: Sun 22/06/2003

Ride: Cowan Galga
 Grade: Medium Hard, BNSW Grade: FHX Distance: 58
 Group: Bike North
 Contact: Graeme Edwards, 9476 3624
 Starts at: 07:40. Cowan Stn. Fast paced ride through magnificent Hawkesbury River valley on quiet roads. Return via Brooklyn with a stop for coffee and cakes.

Date: Sun 22/06/2003

Ride: Little Italy
 Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OT Distance: 40
 Group: Bike North
 Contact: Ross Thomas, 9481 0724
 Starts at: 08:30. Meadowbank Wharf Cycle over Gladesville and Iron Cove bridges to a caf in Norton St Leichhardt. Return via Five Dock.

Date: Sat 28/06/2003

Ride: Concord for Cake
 Grade: Easy, BNSW Grade: PST Distance: 26
 Group: Bike North
 Contact: Michael Chow, 9874 1461
 Starts at: 08:00. Meadowbank wharf. Ride along the PVC over Silverwater bridge to Olympic Park, then on to Concord for Gelato / coffee / cake. Ride back to Meadowbank a different way. Don t forget your Le Palme cap if you have one!

Date: Sat 28/06/2003

Ride: Meadowbank to Bobbin Head
 Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OHT Distance: 49
 Group: Bike North
 Contact: Doug Stewart, 9887 1478
 Starts at: 07:30. Meadowbank wharf, Eastwood stn and Browns Waterhole starts by arrangement. A hilly ride from the busy waters of Meadowbank up to Eastwood and Browns Waterhole, then to Turramurra, and on to the peaceful waters of Bobbin Head for coffee and return.

Date: Sun 29/06/2003

Ride: Yarramalong Manor for lunch – Wyong Iron Horse
 Grade: Hard, BNSW Grade: FHX Distance: 93
 Group: Bike North
 Contact: Phil Johnston, 9312 3319
 Starts at: 08:30. Starts at Hornsby Stn west side, Jersey St Nosh Stops at Mt White, Peat's Ridge & Yarramalong Manor (lunch) onto Wyong for train home. – ETR 2:10pm

JULY**Date: Sat 05/07/2003**

Ride: A to Z and Beyond
 Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OT Distance: 30
 Group: Bike North
 Contact: Rick Mockridge, 0418 284 052
 Starts at: 07:30. Artarmon Station East side. A pleasant morning ride through parts of Artarmon and Willoughby for magnificent coastal views at Balmoral. After coffee climb to Middle Head for a fast coast to the Zoo Wharf, hop on a ferry to the Quay then ride back via the Bridge, North Sydney and Willoughby on designated cycle routes.

Date: Sat 05/07/2003
Ride: Olympic Park Ride
Grade: Easy, BNSW Grade: CPS Distance: 25
Group: Bike North
Contact: Doug Stewart, 9887 1478
Starts at: 08:30. Meadowbank Wharf. Loop around Homebush Bay with a coffee stop. Suitable for beginners and children over 10 accompanied by an adult carer.

Date: Sun 06/07/2003
Ride: Pie in the Sky
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OTW Distance: 38
Group: Bike North
Contact: Graeme Edwards, 9476 3624
Starts at: 08:00. Hornsby Station west side ride along the old Pacific Highway to the caf overlooking Brooklyn for morning tea and great views. Back track to Hornsby. Some moderate hills.

Date: Sat 12/07/2003
Ride: Reverse Bobbin Head
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OHT Distance: 25
Group: Bike North
Contact: Graeme Edwards, 9476 3624
Starts at: 08:00. Hornsby stn west side Ride via Wahroonga and Turramurra to Bobbin Head for coffee, returning up the steep way to Mt Colah and back to Hornsby.

Date: Sun 13/07/2003
Ride: Two National Parks
Grade: Medium Hard, BNSW Grade: FHX Distance: 55
Group: Bike North
Contact: Keith and Fran Griffin, 9614 0777
Starts at: 07:30. Beecroft Station (western side) Ride to Hornsby and then to Bobbin Head, up the other side to Turramurra and then onto the Pacific Hwy. Down the hill in Grosvenor Rd to Lane Cove River park, then return to Beecroft via the M2 and Beecroft Rd. Pace will be brisk. Option to join the ride at Hornsby and get a train back from the end of the ride.

Date: Sun 13/07/2003
Ride: Rail Trails and All That
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OPT Distance: 64
Group: Bike North
Contact: Col Lambert, 9637 0746
Starts at: 08:00. Eastwood stn west side! Ride the Rail Trail and the PVC to Liverpool and return with the all important coffee stop included.

Date: Sun 13/07/2003
Ride: Go Wollongong Wandering
Grade: Easy Medium, BNSW Grade: OP Distance: 50
Group: Bike North
Contact: John Williams, 9988 4478
Starts at: Travel by train to Wombarra for a fairly flat, very scenic coastal ride to Oak Flats, mostly on cycle ways. Lunch at historic Windang Bowling Club. Phone for details.

Date: Sat 19/07/2003
Ride: Akuna Bay and Church Point (hare)
Grade: Hard, BNSW Grade: FHX Distance: 77
Group: Bike North
Contact: Doug Stewart, 9887 1478
Starts at: 07:30. East side Eastwood Stn. Ride via de Burgh s bridge to Pymble, St Ives, then to Terrey Hills, Akuna Bay and Church Point. Refuel with coffee and cake for the return ascent via Terrey Hills and Turramurra. A hilly ride at a brisk pace.

Date: Sat 19/07/2003
Ride: Akuna Bay and Church Point Tortoise
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OH Distance: 50
Group: Bike North
Contact: Carolyn New, 9438 1903
Starts at: 07:30. Car park on Mona Vale Rd opp Stanley Street St Ives to Terrey Hills, Akuna Bay and Church Point. Refuel with coffee and cake for the return ascent via Terrey Hills.

Date: Sun 20/07/2003
Ride: ww.4coffee.u.come.2

Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OT Distance: 46
Group: Bike North
Contact: Ross Thomas, 9481 0724
Starts at: 08:30. Manly ferry wharf Ride up the Wakehurst Parkway to Narrabeen, then Warriewood and return via the beaches. Some cycle ways and main roads with some hills.

Date: Sat 26/07/2003
Ride: Cowan Calga
Grade: Medium Hard, BNSW Grade: FHX Distance: 58
Group: Bike North
Contact: Graeme Edwards, 9476 3624
Starts at: 07:40. Cowan Stn. Fast paced ride through magnificent Hawkesbury River valley on quiet roads. Return via Brooklyn with a stop for coffee and cakes.

Date: Sat 26/07/2003
Ride: Concord for Cake
Grade: Easy, BNSW Grade: PST Distance: 26
Group: Bike North
Contact: Michael Chow, 9874 1461
Starts at: 08:00. Meadowbank wharf. Ride along the PVC over Silverwater bridge to Olympic Park, then on to Concord for Gelato / coffee / cake. Ride back to Meadowbank a different way. Don't forget your Le Palme cap if you have one!

Date: Sun 27/07/2003
Ride: Botany Bay Bacon
Grade: Medium, BNSW Grade: OP Distance: 65
Group: Bike North
Contact: Eric Middleton, 9958 2546
Starts at: 07:30. Meadowbank wharf. Ride via Homebush and the Cooks River cycleway to Botany Bay. A refuel at our favourite cafe at Brighton, then we retrace our tracks to the start.

Date: Sun 27/07/2003
Ride: Tour de Windsor/Sackville
Grade: Hard, BNSW Grade: FHX Distance: 120
Group: Bike North
Contact: Phil Johnston, 9312 3319
Starts at: 08:20. Turramurra stn N/E side. Via Browns Water Hole, M2, Marayong, Windsor and Sackville loop. Train from East Richmond to Marayong, M2. Or start at Dural via Kenthurst, Maraylya, Windsor, Maraylya, Glenorie, Dural – 102km

Date: Sun 27/07/2003
Ride: Planet Ark
Grade: Easy, BNSW Grade: PST Distance: 25
Group: Bike North
Contact: Joan Kerridge, 9909 8925
Starts at: 08:00. Starts at Chatswood stn west side, riding to The Rocks via cycle paths, quiet roads and the Bridge. After a coffee break, return to Willoughby Leisure Centre for tree planting. Bring gardening gloves and trowel if possible.

WHAT TO BRING ON RIDES:

- your bike should be in good working order
- water – 1 litre per hour
- Puncture repair kit, spare tube, and pump
- for night rides have lights fitted and batteries charged
- snacks, money

RISK WARNING

As a participant in this recreational activity, you may be exposing yourself to a risk of harm. Bike North, the ride organisers and leaders wish to warn you that there are risks and hazards inherent in cycling activities. You are responsible to take care to prevent putting yourself, your fellow participants and/or others into danger. By signing this form, you accept the warning as to risk, you agree to ride in a safe and responsible manner and to obey all Australian Road Rules.

RIDE CONDITIONS

All persons joining our rides do so as volunteers in all respects and as such accept sole responsibility for any injury howsoever incurred and Bike North and the appointed ride contacts cannot be held liable in respect of any injury or damage resulting from participants engaging in any such ride activity. Riders under 16 should be accompanied by a cycling adult. A Standards Association of Australia approved helmet is legally required, under state law, by all participants on all rides. Essential equipment also includes a bicycle in good working order, water bottle, snacks, tire pump, tube repair kit and appropriate tool kit. For Night Rides you must also have a HEADlight and tail light that will work for at least 4 hours. In the rides program the rides are graded Easy, Medium or Hard depending on the terrain and speed. Please choose a ride that is suitable to your own fitness and experience. If in doubt please check with the ride leader.