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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.

## Granny Smith Festival 2004



**The Granny Smith Festival was held on 16 October 2004 at Eastwood. Thanks to all those who participated in the parade and assisted with the stall.**



## Dairy Dates

19 - 27 February 2005 - RTA Big Ride

Sunday, 6 March 2005 - Annual Tour de Hills Bicycle Classic

25 - 28 March - Bike North Tour de Cowra

## Bike parking onto a bike frame.

*Maria Theoharous*

Bike parking is a constant topic of discussion amongst cyclists.

We've have news items about the types of bike parking that different councils have invested in over time. Do the bike parking solutions provide good support of the bike: will it bend the wheel frame; can lots of bike park on the frame or just one?

The photo below is of a bike parking solution in downtown Waikiki, Hawaii.

Cruisers are popular bikes that the locals love to use. Cruisers suit Hawaii's terrain and their hang loose lifestyle. You can see that there are lots of bikes attached. What you can't see is that the bikes are attached to a steel framed fixed bike. It's attractive to look at when there aren't any bikes locked to it.

The Waikiki council is currently funding lots of public works to keep Waikiki attractive to tourists and this steel bike frame is one of their initiatives.



## RTA Big Ride 2005 Kosciuszko to Kiama

*Yaffa Gould*

Next year's RTA Big Ride take place from 19 to 27 February 2005. Starting in Australia's Snowy Mountains region, within view of Mt Kosciuszko, and ending in Kiama on the blue Pacific.

The 2005 RTA Big Ride is a nine-day fully supported fun-filled cycling holiday in the great Australian outdoors. Each day you are provided a pleasant place to pitch your tent (with clean toilets and hot showers nearby), three hearty meals, a fully supported cycle route and transport for your luggage.

Come and experience good old fashioned Aussie country hospitality. Stopover towns are often small and always friendly. The RTA Big Ride is organised by Bicycle New South Wales Inc, the State's peak community cycling organisation, which works to secure better cycling conditions across NSW. Further info at [www.bigride.com.au](http://www.bigride.com.au)

## Join the Bike North Team for the RTA Big Ride 2005

If you are planning to do the RTA Big Ride next year and would like to have a bit of extra fun, please enter "Bike North" for your Team on the Registration form.

It would be great to get together a large Bike North Team, benefits include:

- Free team colour photo for each participant on Teams Day
- Reception on Day 2 in Café Big Ride
- Possible publicity for Bike North
- The option to camp around the Bike North flag

- Prizes each night at the Evening Briefing

Contact Yaffa Gould at [yaffagould@hotmail.com](mailto:yaffagould@hotmail.com) if you would like to be part of the Bike North Team. Yaffa will email you details of an evening get together before the ride and keep you updated on participants! Also think about buying a Bike North jersey for Teams Day!

## Message from the President

### CHAIN MAIL IS MOVING IN 2005

The start of the new year is traditionally the time for making changes for the better. The Bike North Executive recently made its new year's resolution - a decision to change the publication months for Chain Mail.

From 2005, Chain Mail will come out in January, March, May, July, September and November. That is, it will come out in the odd numbered months of the year instead of the even numbered.

The decision to make this change hasn't been taken lightly but it will bring benefits to all Bike North members. The change will mean that:

- we will be able to publish the Rides Calendar further in advance
- there will be no more bi-monthly sweating on the arrival of Chain Mail to find out the rides for the upcoming weekend
- members will find out about upcoming Bike North rides ahead of the calendar published in Push On
- the work of the Ride Co-ordinators and Chain Mail production team will be better integrated.

The transition will happen in January 2005 with the publication of a special four page edition of Chain Mail in mid-January. This edition will include the rides calendar for February and March 2005.

The next Chain Mail in March 2005 will be the standard twelve pages and include the rides calendar from April and May. From then on, each Chain Mail will include the rides calendar for the next two months following the publication month. Everything else about Chain Mail will stay the same.

The Bike North Executive believes that the changes to the publication schedule for Chain Mail will have many benefits for members. We look forward to your support during the transition period.

*Graeme Edwards*  
Bike North President

profile

# Member Profile

**DEBBIE EDWARDS,  
BIKE NORTH CLOTHING  
CO-ORDINATOR**

*How long have you been involved with Bike North?*

My first ride with Bike North was on April Fools Day 2001 and it was led by Pam and Col Kendrick. I had started riding in January that year after purchasing my trusty mountain bike, Diablo (it was red).

*Why did you get involved in cycling?*



I hadn't ridden a bike for about 20 years and decided to start riding again for fitness - I hate gyms and love skiing - so being fit was important. I also wanted a form of exercise that I could do out of doors, at any time, and through all the seasons.

*Why Bike North?*

I found Bike North through the Australian Cyclist Magazine Push On section. I found riding on my own a little lonely and wanted to ride with other people with similar interests.

What a revelation!!! Bike North provided me with an instant group of friendly people from all walks of life. Encouragement abounded for the novice and I was hooked despite the fact that on my very first ride I had an accident. What a beginning!!!! I came back for more, riding that is, the next weekend!!!!

*What are your main achievements since joining Bike North?*

Since my first easy rides, I have progressed through the easy/medium, then medium rides and can now ride the medium hard to hard rides due to increased fitness. I now ride a road bike known as Mephistopheles (he is black) so that I can go further, faster and with less effort than on a mountain bike!!!

Two or so years ago I put up my hand to help Carolyn New to sort out a clothing

order and ended up the Clothing Co-ordinator! More recently I achieved my Ride Leader status with Bike North.

*What does being the Clothing Co-ordinator involve?*

It involves liaising between Bike North members, our ever helpful contact at a bike shop, the Bike North Treasurer and Exec and on some occasions, Cannibal who make our clothing. Assisting members to make the correct size choice is probably the biggest challenge with my thanks going especially to Ride Leaders and other members who regularly "fess up" their size to prospective orderers. As part of this job I also choose to attend the monthly Bike North Executive Meetings.

*How would you summarize your involvement with Bike North?*

What started off as a fitness strategy has ended up with me being actively involved in promoting cycling and all its benefits.

## AUSTRALIAN ROAD RULE 141

### No overtaking to the left of a vehicle

- 1 a driver (except the rider of a bicycle) must not overtake a vehicle to the left of the vehicle unless:
  - a the driver is driving on a multi-lane road and the vehicle can be safely overtaken in a marked lane to the left of the vehicle; or
  - b the vehicle is turning right, or making a U-turn from the centre of a road, and is giving a right change of direction signal.

Offence provision

- 2 The rider of a bicycle must not ride past, or overtake, to the left of a vehicle that is turning left and is giving a left change of direction signal.

Offence provision

- 3 In this rule:

**turning right** does not include a hook turn.

**vehicle** does not include a tram, a bus travelling along tram tracks, or any vehicle displaying a *do not overtake turning vehicle sign*.

# Cycling for Transport

## Choosing a commute route in 3 easy steps

Wayne Spencer

Over years of cycle commuting I have experienced the need to find a new commute route a number of times. This may arise through moving house, changing jobs or work location or an existing route may cease to be desirable. The following article describes my tips for finding a useful commuting route together with an example of a route I previously used, between my home at West Ryde and Strathfield train station, when I tried dual mode commuting for a while.

Usually the optimum commute route is the fastest route after taking into account your personal tolerance levels for hills and traffic. Every cyclist is different. Some commuters actively seek a hilly route for training purposes whilst commuting. Few cyclists actually seek out heavy traffic but some will tolerate it more than others if it provides for a faster more convenient route.

### STEP 1 - STREET DIRECTORY / MAPS

When looking for a new commute route, start with the street directory (or local bike map) to try to identify the optimum route between your departure point and destination.

Look at the map to identify barriers and potential route options. Initially look along the straight line path towards your destination ("desire line"). Start with a direct route but if you cannot find an option you are happy with you may need to depart from the straight line route.

One example of this was my cycling route to the city from my place in West Ryde. For a while I was cycling along or parallel to Victoria Rd, close to the most direct route. The route was however fairly hilly and heavily trafficked.

I have now found a twenty percent longer route, via Concord, which is flatter, quieter and more pleasant. The more circuitous route

only takes slightly longer as the reduction in traffic and hills means I can cycle at higher average speeds.

Also think about barriers along your "desire line". One type of barrier would be a river; others are hills, valleys, major roads/freeways or railway lines. If I wanted to cycle from the Ryde area to the Lower North Shore I know I have to cross the Lane Cove River. There are only three possible crossing points Fig Tree Bridge at Hunters Hill, Epping Road at North Ryde (including the adjacent footbridge) or Fullers Bridge on Delhi Road. In this instance you would think about two sections along the route. The first to the bridge you wish to use and the second to your destination on the other side of the barrier.

Examine the street directory or local cycling maps to identify:

1. Desirable streets for cycling.  
I rank them in the following order. (1) Wide streets that don't have marked lanes, particularly ones with few parked cars. (2) Quiet streets with little traffic. (3) Multi-lane roads - although these are heavily trafficked at least motorised traffic can pass you relatively easily. Try to avoid busy narrow roads as they can be unpleasant for commuting as motor vehicles are continually trying to pass.
2. Roads / bike paths that run along or parallel to railway lines or rivers. These routes are usually fairly flat and often have little traffic.
3. Key links that are open to cyclists but not motorists eg. shared paths through parks, pedestrian/cyclist bridges.

Another option is to make use of freeway shoulders. There are no intersections (apart from crossing the on and off ramps), they have good gradients and they facilitate a faster average speed. The M2 and F3 are the only remaining options for this in the Bike North area following the recent closure of the Gore Hill Freeway to cyclists.

After identifying potential roads / paths roughly along the line to your destination think about how to link them together. It

may be worth tolerating a short spell on a busy road if it is sandwiched between quiet sections and reduces your overall commute time.

It may also make sense to use different routes to and from your destination to avoid:

- a difficult right hand turn in one direction
- climbing a particular hill
- riding directly into the sun
- riding into a headwind

Think about bail out points along the route, for example, to accommodate multi-moding. These points could be train stations or ferry wharves.

### STEP 2 - TEST RIDE

Having identified what you think are potential options from the street directory it is worth doing a test ride of the route on a non-working day (Sunday morning is good). If the potential routes are not close together you might try one on the way to work and another on the way home.

The purpose of the test ride is to see if the route is feasible. For example, a road you thought looked good in the street directory may turn out to be busy, narrow or excessively hilly. Keep experimenting until you find a route you like, given the sometimes conflicting objectives of reducing travelling time, and finding a route with an acceptable level of traffic and hills.

### STEP 3 - THE LONG HAUL

Having tested a suitable route on the weekend it is time to do the real thing on a working day. Traffic may be heavier than you thought leading to unpleasant conditions or delays at traffic lights. Try the route for a while and then make changes to fine tune it if you need to. If you find more than one route you are happy with you may change from day to day to suit your mood. For example in riding from my work on the lower north shore to home at West Ryde I mostly ride down the Epping Road hill to the Lane Cove River. However if I am feeling tired or just want a quieter run I sometimes go via a back street route on the northern

side of Epping Road, it is slower but I am not always in a hurry.

As you ride your commute route regularly you will become very familiar with its details. You will know what to expect from other vehicles at certain points along the route. You will recognise other cyclists who ride at similar time to you.

Commuting by bike can be many things, challenging, rewarding, good exercise, it can provide a sense of camaraderie with other cyclists, it can be the most convenient transport option, but mostly it can be fun. Try not to lose sight of that.

## WAYNE'S ROUTE FROM WEST RYDE TO STRATHFIELD

Turn to the Casestudy on page 9 to read how Wayne has applied the principles discussed in this article to develop a cycling route from West Ryde to Strathfield. The photos below illustrate Wayne's casestudy.

### Key to Photos

- 1 Intersection of West parade and Victoria Rd, Cross onto footpath on far side and then proceed up the quiet back street heading south.
- 2 Roundabout on Constitution Rd Meadowbank. Proceed up the hill and across the railway line on the bridge. Use the full lane for safety.
- 3 Railway bridge. This excellent cycleway provides a key link across one of the major barriers in the area.
- 4 Quiet path parallel to the railway line at Rhodes.

- 5 This accessway used to lead into the Park mentioned in the text. This part of the route is not accessible at this time.
- 6 Remains of park.
- 7 Queen St Concord West. Wide, quiet and flat, parallel to the railway line provides an excellent cycling environment.
- 8 Queen St at North Strathfield provides good access under the M4.
- 9 Intersection of Queen St and Parramatta Rd. Cross directly into the right turn lane and then turn right at the traffic lights in the distance.

**NOTE: See Case study on Page 9**



# s p o k e - n Spoke-n

## THE OPINIONS OF BIKE NORTH MEMBERS

### Building the ultimate Audax bike.

Suzy Jackson

There's an adage that we all learned at our mothers knee; "If you want something done properly, do it yourself." I've found this to be true in many things, not least cycling.

I do a fair bit of riding, somewhere around 10-15,000km annually. Although, its been a while since I've raced, as I've become enamoured with the long, slow stuff. I find there's nothing better than spending eight or ten, or even more hours in the saddle, getting totally, thoroughly, knackered. The ultimate long stuff is Audax. Audax is a specific club for long distance cyclists, based in Paris, which runs rides, or "brevets" of 200 to 1200km distance, the pinnacle being the legendary Paris-Brest-Paris ride, which is held every four years.



Unfortunately, my expensive Italian racing bike just wasn't built for the sort of use and abuse that I've dished out over the last few years.

On those long Audax rides, one finds oneself thinking of what would be nice in a bike. Steel, of course, so it lasts forever, but it still has to be light, with a nice fast geometry so it handles well on descents and



tight corners. Plenty of braze-on's, for three water bottles, a rack, and a peg for the pump, so it doesn't scratch up the paint. And wouldn't it be neat if the braze-on's were done in stainless steel, so they wouldn't need to be painted, and thus wouldn't chip every time a rack or what-have-you was put on... Unfortunately I just haven't ever seen a bike for sale that exactly fits what I want an "Audax" bike to do.

Now at this stage a sensible person would go and find a frame-builder and explain their wants and desires. Not this black duck. Instead I find myself scouring the web, looking for the perfect bottom bracket shell, the optimum tube set, dropouts to die for, drawing my dream bike on the computer, puzzling over fork rakes, steering angles, chainstay lengths...



A couple of emails later I have a small, neat pile of bits of metal sitting on my desk. My partner looks a little frightened at this point, as he knows what's to come.

This is actually my second frame. I cut my teeth with a fixed gear frame, built in lugged steel, which was a wonderful learning experience. I made up a lot of the rules for myself as I went with that one. For example, I didn't use a jig, as most professional frame-builders would, because a jig costs several thousand dollars, and no matter how I flutter

my eyelashes at Perry, he'd freak if I bought one. However, there's always a way to accomplish something if you're patient and imaginative. Using a length of square aluminium tube, some clamps, and a little care with measuring, I built a perfectly straight frame with no jig.

The frame building process is actually fairly straight-forward. I use a method called silver soldering. It works much like soft-soldering (used to join components for electronics) but at a higher temperature. One cuts the tubes to length, files the ends so they fit neatly, then inserts them in a lug, which creates a nice large join area. Then you coat everything in flux, which keeps the area clean and removes oxides, and heat it up with a gas-torch. Once it's at just the right temperature, you melt some filler (containing 56% silver - expensive!) into the join, and capillary action does the rest.



Once the bits are joined together, a few enjoyable evenings are spent with needle files and emery cloth, removing excess filler and getting the lugs looking lovely and crisp. This process is repeated a few times before the collection of tubes really starts to look like a bike. Finally, the "braze-ons" are soldered to the frame, and after some further clean-up, it's time to paint.

## Making a contribution to Chain Mail

Chain Mail is a bi-monthly newsletter for Bike North members. The production team welcomes contributions from Bike North members on any cycling related subject, at any time. Suggestions about topics you would like to see covered in Chain Mail or feedback about articles you have read are also welcome at any time.

The editor reserves the right to edit articles for length, readability and accuracy. Depending on the amount of material available, articles may be held over for a later edition of Chain Mail even if they are received by the deadline.

If you are considering writing an article for publication in a specific edition of Chain Mail, you are encouraged to contact the editor in advance of the deadline to discuss your ideas.

Please try to meet the following standards when sending your contribution:

- Maximum article length of 500 — 700 words
- No photos or graphics embedded in the article's text

There's something deeply satisfying about making bikes like this. The heat of the torch, flowing silver through the join, filing steel until it's just so. It's incredibly satisfying. I even find myself using a hand-drill, for tasks that would be much more easily done with a power-drill, because using power tools



feels like cheating. Then when it's all done, you get to hop on and ride something you fashioned with your own hands.

Photo 1: Flux everywhere - the bottom bracket assembly immediately after brazing

Photo 2: The same bottom bracket, after removing the flux

Photo 3: The completed frame - sans paint

Photo 4: Detail of cast stainless dropouts, and beefy stainless rack mounts

Photo 5: Rear brake bridge, with more stainless rack mounts

Photo 6: The assembled bike

*Got something to say about cycling? Send a letter or article (500 - 700 words max) to [chainmail@bikenorth.org.au](mailto:chainmail@bikenorth.org.au).*

- Photos, graphics and accompanying captions emailed separately
- All photos taken or scanned at a high resolution (contact the production team for more info about this)

Chain Mail contributions, feedback and enquiries can be sent to the Chain Mail production team at [chainmail@bikenorth.org.au](mailto:chainmail@bikenorth.org.au) or c/- Bike North, PO Box 719, Gladesville NSW 1675.

Articles have an enhanced likelihood of publication if they are accompanied by photos or graphics.

### Chain Mail Deadlines for 2005

Chain Mail edition	Deadline
March	4 February 2005
May	8 April 2005
July	10 June 2005
September	5 August 2005
November	7 October 2005
January 06	9 December 2005

# Better Making Cycling Better

## Lane Cove Tunnel Project Update

*Carolyn New*

This project has the potential to vastly improve the cycling environment in Northern Sydney. The 8km off-road shared pathway will provide bicycle access between the Lower North Shore and the Macquarie Park areas.

We have learnt that the Gore Hill Freeway will have 1.2 metre wide shoulders except for the section through the Naremburn cutting. While the section through the cutting fails to meet an acceptable standard for a bike lane, we believe many experienced cyclists would prefer to use these shoulders where they are available, rather than ride down and up the gully. Consequently we have requested that continuous access be provided from the shared pathway to and from the freeway shoulders. So far, the response has not been positive.

A working party co-ordinated by Willoughby Council is examining alternative proposals for the cycleway along the Gore Hill Freeway near Naremburn Shops. This review of the original, poorly conceived, plan for the Naremburn area was forced

on the consortium after the local member made representations to the Minister for Roads. Unfortunately there is really only one alternative that could provide a facility of suitable quality - a high level cycleway over Flat Rock Gully - but so far, this option has failed to make the drawing board.

There is some local opposition to the shared path in the North Ryde area with some claims that bushland will be affected. While there are some trees that need to be removed, most of the work is on non-vegetated or poorly vegetated land created in the construction of the original M2 in the late 1990's. The main cause of the widening of the easement of Epping Road is down near the Lane Cove River where an additional two road traffic lanes will be built across a new bridge. The 4m cycleway is also carried on the new bridge.

We need your help to ensure this major facility has the best possible outcomes. If you can write letters, do saddle surveys or attend meetings please contact Carolyn on 9438 1903.

## What's Happening Locally

### MOSMAN

*Carolyn New*

Work on the Bike Plan is progressing well and the final version should be available for public comment soon.

The sad news is that Mosman's Transport Planner, Alan Stewart, who has been a wonderful driving force in the production of this plan has now left Council. It will now be more difficult to ensure implementation of the plan, particularly since council has amalgamated all its advisory committees at a high level and refuses to reinstate the Bicycle Advisory Group.

### NORTH SYDNEY

*Carolyn New*

North Sydney Council is attempting to gain improvements for cyclists and pedestrians in the Falcon Street On/Off Ramps works of the Lane Cove Tunnel Project. These ramps will create discontinuity along the footpaths above the Warringah Freeway, and will result in downgrading of access for pedestrians and cyclists.

Council is arguing for a new bridge over the Freeway between Wyagdon Street and St Leonards Park as well as grade separated crossings of Falcon Street itself alongside the freeway. So far the consortium and the RTA are not coming to the party, but Bike North and Council believe these crossings are essential to regain some East-West access for pedestrians and cyclists across the severance caused by the freeway.

Council has agreed to fund a North Sydney Bike Brochure which should help promote cycling.

### WILLOUGHBY

*Carolyn New*

The most exciting news is that the West Street steps have been upgraded to a smoothly graded and curved ramp. This will be familiar to all cyclists who have carried their bikes on the route between Chatswood and the City.

The design for Victoria Ave bicycle treatment for the Hercules to

### LOCAL WORKING GROUPS

Council	Convenor	Email Address	Phone No
Ryde	Doug Stewart Graeme Woodward	ryde@bikenorth.org.au	9887 1478 9617 0772
Ku-ring-ai	John Watts	kuringgai@bikenorth.org.au	9144 7656
Hornsby	Kevin Mason	hornsby@bikenorth.org.au	9868 2904
Hunters Hill	Alister Sharp	hhill@bikenorth.org.au	9879 3664
Willoughby	Carolyn New	willoughby@bikenorth.org.au	9438 1903
North Sydney	Carolyn New	north_sydney@bikenorth.org.au	9438 1903
Mosman	Alan Phillips	mosman@bikenorth.org.au	9969-4209

Contact the convenor for the workgroup in your area to find out when the next meeting is. You can also subscribe to your local workgroup email list. You do this by sending an email to membership@bikenorth.org.au. The email should include your full name as shown on your membership, your current email address, the workgroup list eg the Hornsby list, Hunters Hill list etc. For enquiries about working groups for other areas in Northern Sydney contact Carolyn New (ph) 9438-1903 or email carolynn@ihug.com.au

Havilah link has been approved by the Traffic Committee. The Bicycle Committee has requested an extension of the 40kph speed zone to Havilah to encompass this bike route.

### RYDE

*Graeme Woodward & Doug Stewart*

The big event in Ryde since the last Chain Mail was the Granny Smith Festival. Bike North participated in the parade, displaying a variety of bikes from mud encrusted MTBs to commuters and recumbents. Our stall did a brisk trade handing out brochures and maps while being serenaded by the Eastwood Uniting Church Musical Society from the stall next door!

We talked to hundreds of people throughout the day as they stopped by at the Bike North stall to find out what we do. The new RTA bike maps were popular, and there was strong interest in the soon-to-be-released Ryde area map (unfortunately not back from the printer in time). We also gained a photo in the local paper, so thanks to all those who participated in the parade and assisted with the stall.

We encourage all Ryde residents to raise cycling issues with Ryde Councillors at the weekly interviews. Interviews are held each Saturday morning at various locations. All items are logged and this is an important way to put cycling on the agenda of your local representative. The future program is:

#### 27 November

T P McCosker, Gladesville Library

#### 4 December

N B Campbell, North Ryde Library

#### 11 December

T W Perram, Eastwood Women's Rest Centre

#### January

no interviews programmed

#### 5 February

V J Tagg, Gladesville Library

Full list of interviews can be found at:

[www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/council/interviews.htm](http://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/council/interviews.htm)

The Ryde Group is currently working on the new regional cycleway to be built as part of the Lane Cove Tunnel, from Wicks Rd North Ryde all the way through to Naremburn.

We have a busy schedule of advocacy activities over the next few months, and always welcome fresh faces and ideas. Our working group meetings are held at 7:30pm on the 2nd Tuesday of each month (14 December, 11 January) at the Eastwood Womens Rest Centre (rear of the library building, opposite the railway station). Everyone is welcome and we hope to see you there.

### NEWS FROM OTHER AREAS

*Maria Theoharous*

Cyclists in the Sutherland Shire have recently formed SharkBike ([www.sharkbike.org.au](http://www.sharkbike.org.au)) to promote cycling in Sutherland and to work with Council, RTA and others to bring about the necessary conditions for a greatly increased take-up of cycling across the Shire.

SharkBike is a Bicycle User Group (BUG) affiliated with Bicycle New South Wales and has a social ride every month, usually on the third Sunday.

Sharkbike can be contacted on 9762 8362 or by email to [Sharkbike@Sharkbike.org.au](mailto:Sharkbike@Sharkbike.org.au).



## Casestudy

### WAYNE'S ROUTE FROM WEST RYDE TO STRATHFIELD

My home at West Ryde is on the Eastern side of the Main Northern railway line. I want to commute to Strathfield railway station. Basically the straight line path between the two points follows the main Northern railway line. Barriers to consider include Victoria Rd, the Parramatta River, Homebush Bay Drive, M4 and Parramatta Rd.

The obvious crossing point of the Parramatta River is the Meadowbank - Rhodes railway bridge which has been converted to a cycleway. So I consider how to get there first.

I know a fairly convenient crossing point on Victoria Rd at the intersection with West Parade. So I use secondary roads to get from my house to this intersection. I normally jump up onto the footpath on the south side of Victoria Rd where after 10 metres I can access a quiet back street running south parallel to the railway line. This street and other similar ones take me to the Western side of Meadowbank Station.

At Meadowbank I need to cross the railway line to access the cycleway across the river. I use the road bridge on Constitution Rd. This is sometimes busy but I safely use the full lane. The objective here is to get to my destination quickly and safely.

At Rhodes I exit the cycleway and loop back under the railway line onto Walker Street heading south. This wide reasonably flat road is the type of road that is ideal for cycle commuting. I go onto the cycleway at the end of Walker St and under Homebush Bay Drive. At the end of the tunnel I use the ramp up onto the southern footpath of Homebush Bay Drive. I cross over back onto the Eastern side of the railway line where I cross through a small park onto the Northern end of Queen St. This street is another flat, wide lightly trafficked road that runs parallel to the railway line eventually going under the M4 and onto Parramatta Road.

At Parramatta Road I apply the principle that I would rather tolerate a little traffic in order to get to my destination sooner on my commute route. I wait for a break in the traffic and then turn left onto Parramatta Road. I immediately move across into the right turn lane to access Leicester Avenue which runs down to the train station. This street is also reasonably busy but it is downhill and I occupy the left lane riding right up to the ticket office.

By linking cycling facilities, good cycling streets, applying cycling skills and riding in traffic for short stretches I was able to put together an enjoyable commute route, crossing many barriers and providing for a fairly fast trip.

## The Pie Experiment: Hydration, what again???

Debbie Edwards

Summer is upon us now and it is essential that we pay attention to our hydration when out and about on our rides.

As an exercise to show riders how easy it is to become less hydrated than expected I carried out an experiment where I weighed Bike North riders pre and post ride. This test is often carried out in training with elite athletes/cyclists as a guide to hydration status and to help in ensuring adequate hydration. Weight loss = fluid loss. Fluid loss = decreased performance and endurance.

The first time I carried out this experiment was on a Pie in the Sky ride in March. The morning was cool when we started, and the temperature was in the low twenties when we arrived back. It was sunny with virtually no wind and the humidity was average.

Armed with a brand new set of bathroom scales twenty-four brave Bike North souls allowed me to weigh them before the ride and then we repeated the process when we arrived back at Hornsby.

Seventy five percent (18) of the riders were lighter and had therefore lost fluid, the remaining twenty five percent had actually gained weight. The explanation for the weight gain could include inaccurate weighing, weighing in with a full bladder or just plain drinking plenty of fluid. The amount of weight loss varied from 0.1Kg - 1.3Kg. The average weight loss was 0.4 Kg, which equates to 400mls of water loss.

Most riders were surprised at their weight loss, particularly those who had paid more attention to their drinking as they knew they were part of the experiment on that ride.

The second time we carried out this experiment was in May for the BN Century Challenge. This pits riders against rides that are much more arduous than they may be used to (60km, 100km, 160km) and requires they pay attention to hydration and food consumption. Nine of the teams participated in the hydration weigh in. In all of the teams bar one, all of the riders lost weight. This was despite them drinking and drinking on the ride. The average weight loss was 0.8 kg which equates to 800mls of fluid loss.

So what can we learn from this? Although our "experiment" was not all that scientific it is a salutary lesson on hydration. For the best outcomes on rides, and for us to really enjoy our cycling, we need to ensure that we are well hydrated BEFORE we start a ride and aim to drink 1 litre of fluid every hour that we are riding.

What to drink? Water. On longer rides - sports drinks - as they will provide additional energy and electrolytes. This is particularly important in the summer. Maintaining hydration will improve your cycling, will prevent heat stroke (extreme result of dehydration), will prevent some muscle cramps and post ride headaches.

## Crank Rites

What are those funny things on the end of your handlebars?

Some time ago Crank Rites noticed an increase in the number of flat-bar bikes on longer rides. We took the opportunity to interview one of the Flat Bar Riders (RIDER) about his bike.

CRANK RITES: Hi. I was wondering about those funny things on the end of your handlebars?

RIDER: My hands?

CRANK RITES: No, I mean the curved metal pieces attached to the very end.

RIDER: They are called "bar-ends". I've got medium length ones with a little curve which is handy to slip my thumb under.

CRANK RITES: What are they for?

RIDER: On this flat-bar bike, they provide another place to put your hands for variation in position. On a "drop bar" bike there are 5 different ways to hold the bars: the tops, the bend, the hoods, in the drops, and right on the ends. These provide lots of opportunities to adjust position for cruising, climbing, getting out of the wind or just to give your hands a break.

By contrast the standard flat-bar bike only has one real place to hang on and this can get uncomfortable over time.

With the bar-ends you can hold the middle or the end so there are actually two extra positions. Bar-ends are also very handy when riding out-of-the-saddle because, with a loose grip, the bike can easily rock from side to side without twisting my wrists. It is more comfortable.

CRANK RITES: When do you use them?

RIDER: There are two main times. Most commonly when riding along on the flat and I want a lower position to improve efficiency I reach forward to the end of the bar-ends. I will ride long distances like this.

The other time is when climbing, both in and out of the saddle. Again using the bar-ends provides efficiencies.

CRANK RITES: Would you recommend bar ends to other flat bar riders?

RIDER: Absolutely! I would put medium or long bar-ends on any flat bar bike. The important part is to use them.

CRANK RITES: Are there any disadvantages?

RIDER: Well they obviously weigh something, but the weight of good quality alloy bar-ends is very low. Also your hands are moved away from the brakes but this is easy to adjust to, and if you think you may need to stop you should always "cover" your brakes. I guess it is possible to catch objects like branches or other rider's handlebars if I am riding really close, but this just means being careful. Most riders don't ride that close to anything. Oh, and of course they cost something as well.

CRANK RITES: Can any bike fit bar-ends?

RIDER: Mostly bar-ends can be installed easily, but some handlebars are not suitable. Carbon fibre bars and some light alloy bars are not suitable so it is important to check with the bike shop, rather than just putting them on yourself.

CRANK RITES: I notice you have put a soft grip on your bar ends.

RIDER: Yes, even though I mostly wear gloves, I still like the softer feel of the grips. They are very cheap and weigh almost nothing. They also protect the bar ends when I park my bike up against a wall.

CRANK RITES: Thanks for your time.

*This month's Crank Rites was written by Doug Stewart*

**Note: All ride participants are asked to arrive ten minutes before the designated ride start time to get ready (bikes out of cars, get dressed, check tyres etc, etc.) and to allow time to sign on.**

### DECEMBER 2004

**Date:** Sat 04/12/2004  
**Ride:** Exploring Eastwood  
**Grade:** Easy, BNSW Grade: EST Distance: 17  
**Contact:** Keith and Fran Griffin, 9614 0777  
**Starts at:** 07:30. Ride around Eastwood and environs visiting Macquarie University, Shrimpton's creek bike track and Ryde Hospital. Look out over Denistone and circle around the south east and south west of Eastwood with an enjoyable coffee at the end.

**Date:** Sat 04/12/2004  
**Ride:** Meadowbank to Bobbo  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OHT Distance: 50  
**Contact:** Doug Stewart, 9887 1478  
**Starts at:** 07:00. Begin at Meadowbank Wharf. Travel from the busy waters of Meadowbank up to Eastwood and Brown's Waterhole, then to Turramurra, then the peaceful waters of Bobbin Head for coffee and return.

**Date:** Sun 05/12/2004  
**Ride:** The Big Loop  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OTP Distance: 45  
**Contact:** Malcolm Hart, 9713 1994  
**Starts at:** 07:30. Start at Eastwood station. Ride up to the M2 to Winston Hills, then down the cycle route to Parramatta for refreshments. Return via M4 to Meadowbank then up the hill to Eastwood.

#### WHAT TO BRING ON RIDES:

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

**Date:** Sat 11/12/2004  
**Ride:** Olympic Park Ride  
**Grade:** Easy, BNSW Grade: CPS Distance: 25  
**Contact:** Col Lambert, 9637 0746  
**Starts at:** 07:30. Starts at Meadowbank Wharf. Ride to Olympic Park (via Parramatta Valley Cycleway and Silverwater bridge), explore some of the features, out to Newington for coffee and return a different route using the John Whitton Bridge.

**Date:** Sat 11/12/2004  
**Ride:** Akuna Bay and Church Point  
**Grade:** Hard, BNSW Grade: FHX Distance: 75  
**Contact:** Doug Stewart, 9887 1478  
**Starts at:** 06:00. Eastwood Station west side. Ride up through St Ives and Terrey Hills, loop through Akuna Bay before a coffee stop at Church Point. Grind up to Terrey Hills and return to Eastwood.

**Date:** Sat 11/12/2004  
**Ride:** Go Wollongong Wandering  
**Grade:** Easy Medium, BNSW Grade: OP Distance: 50  
**Contact:** John Williams, 9988 4478  
**Starts at:** We'll travel by train to Thirroul, the start of this very scenic and fairly flat ride. Mostly on dedicated cycleways. Lunch at Windang Bowling Club. Then we ride around the shores of Lake Illawarra on cycle paths to end our day at Oak Flats for the return train trip.

**Date:** Sun 12/12/2004  
**Ride:** Ride Leaders Meeting  
**Grade:** none, BNSW Grade: 0 Distance: 0  
**Contact:** Pam and Col Kendrick, 9872 2583  
**Starts at:** 09:00.

**Date:** Sat 18/12/2004  
**Ride:** Pie in the Sky  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OTW Distance: 40  
**Contact:** Graeme Edwards, 9436 0969  
**Starts at:** 08:00. Ride from Hornsby up the Old Pacific Highway to Pie in the Sky for some grand views. Enjoy some delicious pie and conversation before returning to Hornsby.

**Date:** Sat 18/12/2004  
**Ride:** Bays & Foreshores  
**Grade:** Easy Medium, BNSW Grade: PST Distance: 35  
**Contact:** Pam and Col Kendrick, 9872 2583  
**Starts at:** 07:30. Begin at Meadowbank Wharf. Ride to Gladesville Bridge, then follow the bays and foreshores around to Concord for a coffee stop. Back to Meadowbank via John Whitton bridge or Ryde road bridge

**Date:** Sat 18/12/2004  
**Ride:** North Ryde Christmas Lights  
**Grade:** E, BNSW Grade: ET Distance: 20  
**Contact:** Kevin Mason, 9868 2904  
**Starts at:** 19:00. Eastwood stn east. Easy night ride to Cutler Pde, Nth Ryde to view the spectacular Christmas display. BIKE LIGHTS ESSENTIAL.

**Date:** Sun 19/12/2004  
**Ride:** Christmas Lights by Bike Lights  
**Grade:** Easy, BNSW Grade: EST Distance: 30  
**Contact:** Kevin Mason, 9868 2904  
**Starts at:** 18:00. This ride begins at Meadowbank Wharf and travels through Concord via John Whitton bridge to Halliday Park Five Dock where we will have a byo picnic dinner in the park at dusk. From there you can marvel at the array of lights in the immediate vicinity before regrouping to return to Meadowbank a similar way. Bike Lights are essential.

**Date:** Sun 19/12/2004  
**Ride:** Western Express  
**Grade:** Medium Hard, BNSW Grade: FPW Distance: 70  
**Contact:** Steve Hillier, 9899 5432  
**Starts at:** 07:30. Starts at Meadowbank wharf. Head west via the M4 cycleway, then on to Orphan School creek and a break at Abbotsbury. Continue along the Prospect Reservoir canal routes to complete the circuit.

**Date:** Sun 19/12/2004  
**Ride:** Western Wander  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OPW Distance: 70  
**Contact:** Eric Middleton, 9958 2546  
**Starts at:** 07:30. Meadowbank wharf. A relaxed paced ride using the M4 cyclepath and Liverpool Rail Trail to explore Prospect's canal routes and Orphan School creek cyclepath, enjoying a break at Abbotsbury.

**Date:** Tue 28/12/2004  
**Ride:** Parramatta Park Parade  
**Grade:** Easy Medium, BNSW Grade: CPS Distance: 35  
**Contact:** Col Lambert, 9637 0746  
**Starts at:** 07:30. Meadowbank Wharf. Follow the Parramatta Valley cycleway to Parramatta Park. Once in the park you can do a lap or two. After coffee in Parramatta, return via the M4 Cycleway to Meadowbank.

JANUARY 2005

**Date:** Sun 02/01/2005  
**Ride:** Summer Hill Circle  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OPT Distance: 35  
**Contact:** Kevin Mason, 9868 2904  
**Starts at:** 07:30. Head through Concord and Five Dock before joining the Hawthorne Canal cyclepath. After morning tea at Summer Hill we complete the loop via the Cooks River cycleway. Some busy roads to cross, however the heritage architecture is well worth the effort.

**Date:** Sat 08/01/2004  
**Ride:** Twilight on the Harbour  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OTH Distance: 35  
**Contact:** Joan Kerridge, 9909 8925  
**Starts at:** 17:00. Ride the back roads and cycle ways to The Spit, Seaforth and Queenscliff, Manly then North Head for a BYO picnic dinner while watching the sunset. From there you head back to Manly wharf for a sparkling harbour ferry crossing to the Quay. Then it is back to St Leonards via the Bridge. The route mostly follows marked bike routes, with a mix of cycle paths and back roads. Bike lights are essential for this ride.

**Date:** Sun 09/01/2005  
**Ride:** Hills and Surfside  
**Grade:** Hard, BNSW Grade: FTH Distance: 80  
**Contact:** Malcolm Hart, 9713 1994  
**Starts at:** 07:00. A great ride with some challenging hills and scenic countryside. The route is designed as a figure-8 with a common section at the start and end. The best time to commence this ride is early morning because the first section can become heavily trafficked later in the day. The ride is a long half day with a generous coffee break at Narrabeen. The ride cuts through a large part of northern Sydney using routes which are interesting and generally cycle friendly. However sections of this ride are along main roads, some of which have no cycle facilities. This ride should only be attempted by fit and experienced cyclists. Short sections of the route can be attempted separately.

**Date:** Sat 15/01/2005  
**Ride:** Olympic Park Ride  
**Grade:** Easy, BNSW Grade: CPS Distance: 25  
**Contact:** Doug Stewart, 9887 1478  
**Starts at:** 07:00. Starts at Meadowbank Wharf. Ride to Olympic Park (via Parramatta Valley Cycleway and Silverwater bridge), explore some of the features, out to Newington for coffee and return a different route using the John Whitton Bridge.

**Date:** Sun 16/01/2005  
**Ride:** Botany Bay Bacon  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OP Distance: 65  
**Contact:** Eric Middleton, 9958 2546  
**Starts at:** 07:30. Ride from Meadowbank across Sydney past the airport to Botany Bay using the Cooks River cycle path. Enjoy bacon and egg rolls in the food hall of the Novatel before returning to Meadowbank via the same route.

**Date:** Sun 16/01/2005  
**Ride:** Meadowbank to Bobbo  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OHT Distance: 50  
**Contact:** Doug Stewart, 9887 1478  
**Starts at:** 07:00. Begin at Meadowbank Wharf. Travel from the busy waters of Meadowbank up to Eastwood and Brown's Waterhole, then to Turramurra, then the peaceful waters of Bobbin Head for coffee and return.

**Date:** Sat 22/01/2005  
**Ride:** Concord for Cake  
**Grade:** Easy, BNSW Grade: PST Distance: 25  
**Contact:** Debbie Edwards, 9436 0969  
**Starts at:** 07:30. Starts at Meadowbank Wharf. Ride to Olympic Park and then to Concord for coffee and cake, returning a different way. BR

**Date:** Sat 22/01/2005  
**Ride:** City Sunset  
**Grade:** EM, BNSW Grade: STH Distance: 30  
**Contact:** Joan Kerridge, 9909 8925  
**Starts at:** 17:00.

**Date:** Sun 23/01/2005  
**Ride:** Western Explorer  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OP Distance: 70  
**Contact:** Steve Hillier, 9899 5432  
**Starts at:** 07:30. This ride starts at Meadowbank wharf and heads west via the M4 cycleway (under the M4 Motorway) to explore Prospect Reservoir's canal routes and Orphan School Creek cycle ways, with a stop at Abbotsbury for coffee. Return via the Rail Trail and the M4 cycle way once again. Brisk pace.

**Date:** Wed 26/01/2005  
**Ride:** Fun Ton  
**Grade:** M, BNSW Grade: OTPW Distance: 100  
**Contact:** Kevin Mason, 9868 2904  
**Starts at:** 07:00 Meadowbank wharf. Long medium paced ride to Guildford and Summer Hill, involving two 50km loops and three coffee stops.

**Date:** Sat 29/01/2005  
**Ride:** Olympic Park Ride  
**Grade:** Easy, BNSW Grade: CPS Distance: 25  
**Contact:** Col Lambert, 9637 0746  
**Starts at:** 07:30. Starts at Meadowbank Wharf. Ride to Olympic Park (via Parramatta Valley Cycleway and Silverwater bridge), explore some of the features, out to Newington for coffee and return a different route using the John Whitton Bridge.

**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 the registration, 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**

Riders under 16 should be accompanied by a cycling adult. A Standards Association of Australia approved helmet is legally required by all participants on all rides. Essential equipment also includes a bicycle in good working order, water bottle, snacks, tyre 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. 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.