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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.

## Announcing the 5<sup>th</sup> Bike North Century Challenge

*Doug Stewart: Event Organiser*

Since 2002 Bike Northerners have been lining up from 7am on the first Sunday in May to take the challenge to ride 100km or 100miles (=160km). Our approach of riding in small teams of 2, 3 or 4 people allows you to share your successes but also to receive support when times get tough. Not to mention sharing those precious spare tubes when you run out.

If you are wavering then now's the time to commit because it is likely that the BNCC will move to every second year, so you may have to wait until 2008 to have another crack at it. We had several suggestions to make the event bigger but this is difficult with our limited resources and our current preference is to keep it at the same scale.

We run the BNCC on 7 May, when there is just enough daylight to finish the event (the sun sets at 5:10pm) but it means cooler temperatures to avoid overheating. It is also at a good stage in the year to peak in your training, which probably started after those Christmas excesses. For those that are training for one of the big rides or the Tour de Young, it is the next logical step. Don't wait until the Gong ride, where you do a much less interesting ride with crowds of people, take the Challenge this May.

Most members of Bike North can find a challenge to suit. You can take on the 60km route (with two big hills) or 100km loop (with five big hills) or join them both together for the ultimate challenge of 160km. For the 160km you can assess how you feel after 100km before you take on the second loop, if you leave before the cut-off time.

The good news is that the route is unchanged from last year so all the hills and the coffee stops will be familiar to you. However to make the challenge less onerous there is no paperwork quizzes or 20 questions this year. You just cycle to the destination and return. It couldn't be simpler.

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

The BNCC requires self-sufficient riding and navigation as each team follows the published route guide. You must form the team yourself through chats on the email or on rides. If you don't know people then come along on some rides at your level of difficulty to meet people before the registration date.



Each group of 2, 3 or 4 (on at least two separate cycles) will start together but separate from all the other groups. You must attend the briefing at the times shown and you will be given your start time then. No briefing, no ride. Simple.

Your group must always stay together, within 20 metres or so. You will ride at the pace of the slowest rider on hills and all stop together when you stop. So, to avoid frustration groups should be made up of riders of similar ability.

Unlike most other BN rides there are no ride leaders or sweeps, no on-the-road support and you must fix any minor mechanical problems yourself. You have to consider the time and plan your progress to finish by 5pm. Groups should rest, refill bottles and eat as needed. Planning your food and drink stops is an essential part of riding the BNCC.

I recommended you take a significant quantity of food and drink with you in your pockets or bag when you start the ride. Items such as fruit, muesli bars, chocolates and sandwiches are good choices made by experienced challengers.



For those taking on the 160km challenge I strongly recommend you pre-prepare lunch and leave it at the start. When you swing by just grab it and eat it. Meals like hot soup in a thermos, cold pasta salad, sandwiches and cakes with hot coffee have been consumed by successful teams in the past. I recommend that you do not rely on buying lunch food at Wahroonga due to the lack of suitable shops and time delays involved.

If you withdraw from the event you will need to arrange your own transport. You also must phone and let us know you are out. No group of fewer than 2 cycles is allowed to continue in the Challenge.

Remember the BNCC is only for Bike North members, but you can join and then ride. Tell your friends about the great event. The BNCC is a FREE event presented as a service to Bike North Members. We've had suggestions that Bike North should charge an event fee and then provide a range of services, but we'd rather let you choose what you purchase wherever you want and pay for as much or as little as you wish. And we don't have to handle your money or devise a refund policy.

To participate in the BNCC you must pre-register by Monday April 24, using the form provided with this Chain Mail (also accessible from the web site). There will be no entries after this day and no on-the-day entries. For more information contact Doug Stewart (speedwell74@yahoo.com or phone 9874 5594).

## BNCC Summary

### **EASTERN LOOP – 60**

- Distance: 63km. Grade = Medium.
- Wahroonga, Akuna Bay, Church Point, Wawroonga
- Overall time: 4 to 5 hours (allows 1 hour stopping)
- Briefing 8:45. Start: 9am. Finish: 1pm to 3pm

### **WESTERN LOOP – 100**

- Distance: 103km. Grade = Hard.
- Wawroonga, Galston, Berowra, Mt White (part), Bobbin Head, Wawroonga
- Overall time: 6 to 7 hours (allows 2 hours stopping)
- Briefing 7:45. Start: 8am. Finish: 2pm to 5pm

### **FIGURE OF EIGHT – 160**

- Distance: 166km. Grade = Very Hard.
- Travels both loops described above.
- Overall time: 8 to 10 hours (allows 3 hours stopping)
- Briefing 6:45. Start: 7am. (2nd loop by 1:30pm.) Finish: 3pm to 5pm



## What to bring to the BNCC

You must comply with these instructions to participate in the event. These are your responsibilities!

EVERY rider MUST have these items otherwise you can't start:

- a bike suitable for the event and in TOP mechanical condition. We strongly advise a bike service prior to the BNCC.
- helmet, water bottle, wind/rain jacket & tail light;
- pump, 2 spare tubes, puncture repair kit & appropriate tools;
- cash (for food/drink, phone calls or train ticket);
- your own BNCC Ride Guide.

Additionally EVERY 160km rider MUST carry:

- headlight (at least for the second loop).

Finally EVERY Riding Group MUST carry at least one:

- bike computer, basic first aid kit & mobile phone

# The 2006 Audax Alpine Classic

Lindsay Harvey

The Alpine Classic is a 200km ride run by Audax (a non profit national cycling organisation specialising in on-road rides from 50 – 1200km and off-road rides from 35 – 200km) that travels through some of Victoria's most spectacular countryside. It is usually held on the Australia Day Long Weekend in January. The 2006 ride started at Bright and went to Falls Creek, returned to Bright and then went on to Mount Buffalo before returning to Bright. Bright altitude is 300m, Tawonga Gap 885m, Falls Creek 1560m and Mt Buffalo 1330m.

There are four demanding climbs

- Tawonga Gap en route to Falls Creek 10km
- Mt Beauty to Falls Creek 30km
- Tawonga Gap en route to Bright 10km (more difficult on return leg)
- Mt Buffalo 25km

It is not a race – the objective is to complete the course within the maximum time allowed, which for the 200km ride is 13 hours and 30 minutes.

The quick riders started at 0620 hours and arrived at Falls Creek at 0840 hours. Considering the climbing and the temperatures involved it was amazing how fast these riders completed the Bright Falls Creek section. At Bright the race started at a temperature of 30 degrees C. This fell to 27 degrees C at Falls Creek. However by the time the riders got back to Bright for the Mount Buffalo section, the temperatures had risen to 40 degrees C.

Mike Davies (one of the riders I knew) arrived at Falls Creek at 1015 hours after a starting at 0640 hours. He seemed in good condition and was riding a road bike with Campanolo Centaur Group set with a 13/29 rear cog. He said the gearing had been very suitable for the section of the ride he'd just completed. Most of the riders were using similar gearing ranging from 25 to 29 for the largest rear cog. Mike ended up taking 11 hours to complete the ride and

was completely exhausted. He found the climb up Mt Buffalo "unrelenting".

(A few days before I had ridden from Falls Creek down to Bogong Village, a distance of 16km. I had never cycled 16km uphill before and I wanted to give it a go and get a feel for what the cyclists on the Alpine Classic would encounter. It was great climb with Bogong Village at 1000m and Falls Creek at 1560m. My rear cog is 13/29 and I found that I was using the 26 for about 50% of the climb and the 29 for the other 50% keeping to a cadence of 70rpm and a heart rate no higher than 140bpm. It took me just over 1 hour. It is a magnificent ride through an Alpine area, very peaceful and I found that the Victorian drivers gave me plenty of space, even the four wheel drives.)

About 1100 hours while driving down from Falls Creek to go to Bright to see



Tawonga Gap

how the ride was progressing,

I picked up a cyclist on the down hill section about 5km out of Falls Creek who had taken a corner too fast and damaged the gearing on his bike. Tony was a Farmer from Wangaratta and a very keen cyclist, riding over 200km each week with the local cycling club. We also helped Russell who had come off at the same corner and destroyed his tyre. Fortunately I had my bike spares in the boot and was able to give him a tyre to get him underway.

The real carnage commenced about 1km up Tawonga Gap. Cyclists were stopped everywhere with the temperature at 40 degrees. I picked up a young cyclist called John who was completely exhausted. I Would have picked up a few more, but I only had two bicycle racks on the roof. There is a natural water spring about 3 km up the climb and the cyclists were making good use of the fresh cold water.

Tawaonga Gap is a steep climb which I would compare with the hill out of Akuna Bay going anti-clockwise. The main difference is that the steep part of the Akuna Bay Hill is about 500m and this climb lasted for 10km. Compact Cranks or a triple chain ring would be my recommendation.

I arrived at Bright about 1230 hours after passing what seemed like well over 1000 cyclists. During my drive I observed that all car drivers were aware of the cyclists and were very courteous. They had just completed the Mountain Bike Championships at Mt Beauty and all locals seem very bike aware. Of course Bright is at the end of a 100km rail trail and cycling is adding millions of dollars into the local community. This seems to make an enormous difference to the car driver's attitude to cyclists compared to riding in Sydney.

About 1400 hours the first of the cyclists that had climbed Mt Buffalo started to return. I could only be amazed at their endurance. Audax was recommending to cyclists returning from Falls Creek not to continue the ride due to the heat, but this did not deter some. On checking the website just over 40 percent of those that signed in for the 200km challenge completed the ride. A great result considering the very hot conditions.

I was very impressed by the organisation and I intend to give the ride a go next year. If you are interested in a challenge, check the website for more info: <http://www.audax.org.au/alpine.htm>

## Audax 2006

Audax debutante Craig McMurdo writes to say "thanks" to Suzy Jackson, Audax Veteran of various Alpine Classic distances.

Dear Suzy,

Great to see you at the start line of the Audax Event last weekend. I must admit, your over enthusiastic "Enjoy the 130kms", accompanied by your all too wide smile, did trouble me slightly. With the forecast top temperature of around 40 degrees, and your comment of "I'm just doing the 70" you had the air of someone who had sold Telstra shares for a profit (i.e. someone with the good fortune to have made an exceedingly wise decision)!

The ride from the Bright starting point was fine, the line of cyclists rolling up the tree lined avenues a real sight.

The first hill, where we climbed 400 metres in altitude over Tawonga gap, was fine on fresh legs and amongst the shade of the Gums. You have to hand it to the Victorians though. Who else would call a town "Mt Beauty", and then, just for added impact, put it in a valley!!! It was a picturesque sight from the top of Tawonga gap, and the 7 km descent was over in a flash. The tour around the farmlands was pleasant enough, and the rest stop was a short one, with just enough time to replenish water bottles, and have a snack, before heading uphill.

Thank you for the info you gave me on gearing; I just wish I'd been organised enough to adopt your suggestions. I recall you said the options were:

- Lower geared rear cassette from a MTB (i.e. giving 32 teeth versus the standard 25 tooth) which gives 18% lower gearing.
- Compact Double crankset (replacing the 53/39 Front chain-rings with smaller ones) giving about 15% lower ratio, or
- A triple front chain ring (Giving low, low Mountain Bike type gearing that could climb the A frame roof of a ski lodge!)

I had plenty of time to contemplate your advice, as the climb up from Mt Beauty to Falls Ck is about 36 km. At about 10 km/h this took around 3 hours, as we climbed from approx 400 metres above sea level to 1560 metres. I had convinced myself during the ascent that next time, I'd implement all 3 of your suggestions!

When you are plodding along at this pace, lambasting yourself for not heeding good advice, some interesting things happen. For instance, since I'd gotten into my lowest gear about 200 metres into the climb, I found my hands, almost involuntarily, banging the gear levers every kilometre, just checking I hadn't "forgotten" to grab the lowest gear. Its almost like my legs were saying "There has to be a lower gear" but the bike was saying "Sorry mate, this is it".

Another involuntary action, observed when I got off the bike at Falls Creek, related to my calves. As I sat there in the hall, drinking as much fluid as I could, and snacking on the fruits and muffins so generously provided by the Audax organisers, I noticed my calf muscles twitching and pulsing all by themselves. It was like someone had placed invisible electrodes there, and was busy conducting experiments in electric shock treatment. Fortunately for me, since the arguments my legs had been having with my brain about the gears had eventually caused estrangement, these two body parts were now living separate existences. Hence, I felt no pain!!!

The 30 odd km of downhill was a hoot, sweeping down that winding, well surfaced bitumen to the valley floor, where the midday temperature was hovering around 40 degrees. Refilling the water bottles and chomping on the power bars was a temporary respite – the return leg over Tawonga gap towards Bright and the finish is shorter, but steeper, but in full sun. Fortunately, the organisers had plenty of water for us. I think I stopped 3 times in the 7 km climb, and consumed about 2 litres of water. The comment of the day, made to me while I was slumped against the roadside embankment near the natural water spring about half way up was:

"Can you open your eyes Craig, so we know you haven't passed out"

After a 10 minute rest, and steeling myself for the last 2 kms of climb, I plodded over the top, and enjoyed the 15 km downhill run into Bright.

Sorry I didn't see you at the tent at the end – I'm sure you'd finished, and were either enjoying a nice Chardonnay from the local wineries or replenishing tired muscles in the Spa. Being the cheapskate that I am, and not having the energy to go anywhere else, I took off the cycling shoes and jersey, and fell in a shady part of the river behind the tent. Thank goodness I didn't land face down – I might not have had the energy to turn over!

The stories from those mad enough (or fit enough) to tackle the 200 km event (which added the Mt Buffalo climb to our leg) were amazing. The road was so hot that the bitumen started to melt, and some guys were saying their tyres had a bitumen film that made small gravel and stones stick. One of our group had a computer that measured temperature, and he had a reading of 48 degrees (which must have been the ambient temperature plus some extra degrees radiated from the black heat absorbing road surface). Some riders took around 11 hours, which must have meant either a very slow ride, lots of stops, or both. Considering the heat, thats understandable.

But as you know, the Audax credo is the "Spirit of Achievement" – its not a race.

And unlike the "Mum and Dad" investors in our national Telco, whose value has ebbed away, my investment in training and perseverance didn't evaporate in the Victorian Alps heat, but was rewarded by a little Audax badge that says "130 km – 2400 metres of climbing".

And if I go next year, the 70 km route and an early Spa sound fantastic!

Yours in Cycling,

Craig

# Working Group Reports

## RYDE

The most important goal for 2006 in Ryde is to assist Council with the completion of the revision of their Bikeplan. We need to comprehensively revise the Plan and achieve much more than simple adoption of the new bikeroutes map. The RTA have advised us that if a project isn't listed in the Plan, then it won't be eligible for 50:50 funding. Revising the Bike Plan is a big task – and it will impact cycling in Ryde for the next 5-10 years!

The Laneways Initiative: One of the wonderful advantages of travelling by bike (or foot) is taking low-stress shortcuts not available to cars. We are surveying all suitable laneways and similar shortcuts, and working with council to have these upgraded and legalised for bicycle use. This will become part of the revised BikePlan. This is a great incentive to enlighten more people to the advantages of cycling for transport. We are keen to hear about everyone's favourite short-cuts to add to the list.

While we are still lobbying for the RailTail from Meadowbank through Eastwood, this issue is fraught with political and bureaucratic hurdles. Our emphasis this year is to get momentum on prioritising the regional route connecting Macquarie Park – along Waterloo Rd, and vital to connect the Epping Rd/Lane Cove cycleway, the new train stations, Macquarie university and other major destinations throughout North Ryde.

There are numerous redevelopments and changes to keep a diligent eye on, and we need to be involved in the consultation process as much as possible. These include the Lane Cove Tunnel project, the Epping-Chatswood rail link and associated stations and Beecroft Rd overpass, Eastwood brick pit, M2 changes and maintenance issues, etc. An overwhelming number of opportunities for eager scribes – many hands make light work!

A new Macquarie University sub-group has been launched. Emphasis will be on linkages to the campus, and end-of trip facilities.

## HORNSBY

We have received a positive letter from Hornsby Council regarding Pennant Hills – Beecroft – Epping route and M2 access at Somerset St, Epping.

Hopefully we will see some action from the council on this route shortly.

The group plans to investigate the possibility of a route from the M2 to Carlingford Court (Carlingford Rd) via a shared pathway along Pennant Hills Rd.

We are still waiting for an update from the council on the Hornsby Cycle Routes map. This has been

stalled in council for 6 months, since the previous Pedestrian & Cyclist Safely Officer left.

## KU-RING-GAI

The Ku-ring-gai group met in January to gather and consider input for changes to the local bike plan. A report was finalised and presented to the Director of Technical Services, Greg Piconi at Ku-ring-gai Council.

## WILLOUGHBY

Willoughby Council engaged consultants PBAI to produce a new bike plan for the area. A draft of this plan is expected to go on exhibition in March or April. We ask Willoughby residents to watch for notification and make supportive comments (and any suggestions warranted).

Thanks go to Neil Glick who kick-started a Bike North Workgroup with a meeting in February. This group will complement and add value to the existing council bicycle committee in promoting cycling and improving conditions for cycling in Willoughby area.

## MOSMAN

Mosman is proposing to install green bike lanes beside the main road on Spit Road between the southern side of Spit Bridge and the service road. While this would provide safer access for southbound road cyclists to Parrawi Road, during construction of the Spit Bridge widening, all cyclists will need two-way access along the east of Spit Road. We are proposing that the RTA provide an upgraded two-way facility as a necessary adjunct to the widening project.

Mosman Council's long standing funded proposal for a Taronga Zoo to Balmoral Beach route passing through Rawson Park has fallen through. The very expensive ramp that was to be built shortly has now been

### LOCAL WORKING GROUPS

Council	Email Address	Contact name	Phone No
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		Graeme Woodward	9617 0772
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North Sydney	north_sydney@bikenorth.org.au	Carolyn New	9438 1903
Mosman	mosman@bikenorth.org.au	Alan Phillips	9969-4209
		Carolyn New	9438 1903
Lane Cove	lane_cove@bikenorth.org.au	Suzy Jackson	0407 122 262

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](mailto: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 9438 1903 or email [carolynn@inet.net.au](mailto:carolynn@inet.net.au)

## A short story by Helmut

Red currants. Large, juicy and tart. Helmut had always wanted to begin a story with a non-sentence, but two was even better. This morning he would have to be content with beginning the day with the currants, and perhaps some yoghurt. The story could wait.

As the clouds and mist lifted he and Sophie ascended through the town and onto the main climb. Leaving all the verbs out of breakfast had been a good idea, this was a long hard climb and getting steeper.

The run through the next town was quick even on these narrow roads, and almost made up for the last 7kms of self-flagellation. They turned left onto the cycleway, passing a few locals out for some early exercise on their trusty heavy metal steeds. Every few kilometres a stranger or two on foot or bike would greet them as they zipped past. Helmut and Sophie always responded with a greeting and a smile, even at 35km/hr. This was even easier when they noted the beer garden immediately adjacent to the bike track! The route was amazingly flat given the somewhat rolling nature of the surrounding farm land, pocked with small friendly villages.

Road crossings were infrequent, but provided a short respite from the cracking pace they were setting. As often as not the crossing was over in a flash as these small roads were all local routes anyway: the major roads all flowed under the bike route. The sun shone at times, the nearly ripe wheat gleaming brilliantly through the gaps in the trackside trees.

At the turn around point morning tea became top priority. Cold vanilla ice-cream perversely extruded into spaghetti shapes and flooded with strawberry sauce as bright as the local poppies. It seemed this meal was also to be a non-sentence.

By the time they started back the day had begun for almost everyone else and the strangers on the bike path were now more numerous. Despite this the return trip was just as quick and soon Helmut could see the land capping the far bank of the river.

Sophie prepared herself for the descent, glanced again across the river valley and was thankful they did not have to descend all the way. That would have meant a very long climb back up. Helmut turned the cranks hard a few times, tucked down and projected his cornering line onto the road ahead, following it assiduously, confident that Sophie was a great bike with a great set of wheels. The speed was exhilarating. Helmut enjoyed it too.

Lunch was taken down by the river, at a small café, and consisted of local meat dishes, vegetables, bread and beer. Helmut knew now his article would end with a full sentence.

### COMPREHENSION QUIZ:

Why could this story not have been set in Northern Sydney? Be brief if possible.

*About the author: Helmut is a fictitious character in stories he writes about himself, or will be when he gets around to it.*

## Does letter writing make any difference?

*Scott Ratcliff (Publicity Officer)*

Did you read the Michael Duffy diatribe denouncing cyclists as a pollution causing nuisance (SMH 3/12/05) and think, "People are going to believe this rubbish" or, "Someone needs to tell people about the wonders of cycling."

Perhaps you even sat down to write that letter to the editor but thought: "What good would it do?" The answer is A LOT.

Letters to the editor have the potential to influence public perception in favour of (or if we're not careful, against) cycling. I know I am not alone in scanning the papers in the days following Mr Duffy's invective to see if the letters were with us, or against us. To my relief, the letters were overwhelmingly pro-cycling. More importantly, Joe & Jane Public must have seen the support out there for cycling – they might even begin to consider cycling whereas before it had never crossed their motorized minds.

Now, imagine you're a member of parliament or a local councillor. You want to be seen to be doing popular, positive things. What is a simple, easy way to gauge public opinion? Scan the letters page.

The publication of several pro-cycling letters will grab any politician's attention.

Still need convincing? Look no further than the Mosman Daily (17/11/05) and the letters campaign that it sparked. Over half of the letters page was devoted to the bicycle lockers at North Sydney station, all of them supporting cyclists. Could these letters grab the attention of the policy makers? You bet!

Councillor Nick Ritten of North Sydney told Chainmail:

Letters to the editor promoting the use of the bicycle as a mode of transport can greatly "encourage decision makers who already support this notion as well as those who were unaware of the amount of sense it really makes."

Cr Ritten also contended that letters to the editor help "educate" decision makers on "how things can be improved". Importantly he acknowledged that while not all letters can be published you should never feel as though you've not helped to achieve your goal:-

"it helps add to the critical mass of letters on a particular issue."

Bike North President, Graeme Edwards agrees that it is vital that our voices be heard,

"Even if we don't get the lockers this time, we have caused people to consider the possibilities. There are thousands of people out there who would never have known that bicycle lockers exist."

So, what's the secret to good letter writing? Timing. Pick a current issue that relates to cycling and promote cycling as the key solution. Obesity, pollution, traffic jams and road rage are just a few recurring issues that will interest an editor, especially if it is a current 'hot topic'.

So, sharpen those pencils and fire away. Promote our cause while demanding the facilities we deserve.

Happy writing!

*For more information on bicycle advocacy visit: [www.bikenorth.org.au/advocacy/action.html](http://www.bikenorth.org.au/advocacy/action.html)*

# Riding alone – making it interesting

Frances Griffin

Have you ever noticed how much better you ride when you have company? You put in more effort up the hills, descend more fearlessly and keep up the pace on the flat. On solitary rides however, it's so easy to just tootle along, but there is often that feeling of guilt in the back of your mind that you really could do better.

So, how do you convince yourself to try hard when there is no encouragement from a group? The best thing of all is seeing another rider up ahead and realising that you might just be able to make up ground, or even catch him! Plan your strategy carefully, don't go out too hard or you will have to give up the chase too soon.

Look at the rider and try to guess his/her strengths or weaknesses. For example, someone on a roadbike with aero bars is possibly going to climb badly, so leave the main part of your attack until a decent uphill (unless you too have aerobars). A rider on an upright bike is not going to descend as fast as a more aerodynamically seated rider and will struggle into a headwind.

Once you have caught up, when do you pass? If you pass gradually, the rider may be woken from his/her state of slackness and pass you again! So you really need to overtake with style – fast! Sit behind as quietly as you can, note when the rider changes down gears, this can indicate that the hill is starting to bite and your chance is here. Once you have bolted past, saying "hello" of course (it really annoys the guys if a girl does this!) then keep it going until you have several hundred metres gap, but remember it's bad form to look back.

Now you enter a state of paranoia, since you really don't want to get caught again. This makes you pedal like crazy for the rest of your ride, even if you have built up a good lead. But what if you do get caught napping by another rider? Then get on his wheel and apply the above strategy!

There is also another situation which makes you ride harder – PRS (Phantom Rider Syndrome). This is the belief that another rider has caught up, you can hear something behind you, but don't want to look around. You put in more and more effort, then just as you think the rider will attack, you realise there was nobody there after

all! First you feel silly, then you are pleased that the false incentive has improved your fitness and determination.

If you are entirely alone, the rider ahead is far too fast or so slow he's no challenge at all, you need a few mind games. Pick a couple of Bike North riders whom you would really like to outride one day. Place them in a peloton and imagine you are keeping up.

Since they are stronger riders, a small change in slope will not affect them – so don't let it affect you either. If there is a head wind you have to work to hang on to the back of the pack, otherwise the wind will get you and you'll never get back on. Up the hill, get ready for the attack where the gradient increases, and don't take too much rest on the reprieve sections.

If you prefer to ride without pretending to compete (or feel that the above mind games could compromise your sanity)

it is still worth your while trying to improve your speed, strength and fitness. Think about your technique as you ride, are you moving and sitting symmetrically, pedalling smoothly, riding a straight path, minimizing body movement, not hunching your shoulders or gripping too tight, are your elbows slightly bent, not sticking out... do you look like a Tour de France rider?

You can also find other small challenges on your way, such as manoeuvring through something complicated without putting your foot down, or taking your favourite scary corner as fast as you dare, concentrating on getting your weight back, bending your elbows, looking around the corner and not at the road, and oh yes, remember to have the inside pedal up so it doesn't scrape the road!

Time challenges on a regular ride, such as a commute, can help as well. Keep a record of

your average speed, this is a good way to measure your improvement over time, but remember that one stop at lights, or having to dither in the traffic can make a big difference to your average. Give yourself minimum speed limits for certain sections, such as the M2 tunnel, or the hill you normally dread. Don't forget to increase the speed limits when you improve of course!

Whatever your reason for riding, to keep it interesting you need constant challenges, either real or imagined. Be creative, let your imagination take over; you could even daydream your way through a stage of the Tour! After a ride like this, you arrive home exhausted and bordering on schizophrenia, but you've earned your beer!



# Our Favourite Rides: The Great North Road

In this new series, we aim to show you some great bike rides which are close by, and why the ride is loved by Bike Northerners.

## FACT FILE

Ride: Great North Road  
Location: Starts from and returns to Wisemans Ferry  
Distance: 30km  
Bike: Mountain bike required  
Fitness: Good fitness  
Skills: Some technical sections and steep climbs, would appeal to more experienced mountain bikers

*Chain Mail (CM): What is so special about the Great North Road ride?*

*Kin-Yat Lo (KL):* The ride is great because it does not take long and yet feels like you have gone to another world – Wisemans Ferry is just under an hour's drive for most Bike Northerners.

Once you've made the climb from the river and entered the national park you truly feel you are in the middle of nowhere. There are a few lookouts along the ride where you can see quite a long way and you can only see the bush.

*CM: What's your highlight of this ride?*

*KL:* I'd say the whole trail is a highlight. Start off with a beautiful ferry ride – especially early mornings – then marvel at the convict engineering, and some great mountain biking terrain follows.

It's a ride that has a bit of everything in terms of terrain – fire trail climbs, open fast sections, steep rocky ascents and drop-offs.

You can't beat the views from the ridge-top and the fast descent to finish the ride.

*CM: What's the recommended route for this ride?*

*KL:* Usually I park at Wisemans Ferry Park near the kiosk, and cross the Hawkesbury River ferry by bike. Turning left towards St Albans at the other side, climb for about 500m and the Great North Road is on your right. The sign is so big you won't miss

it. Carry your bike over the gate and start riding up the hill.

There's only one way and none of the side tracks really go anywhere. In about 13km you will get to the Western Commission trail junction. Turn right here and ride along the ridge-top returning to Wisemans Ferry. Be aware! Sometimes cars use this trail so watch out for cars coming up the hill, especially on the fast descent! When you get to the gate, turn right onto the road and a few km's later you'll find yourself back at Wisemans Ferry. Cross the ferry and have a good snack or lunch at the park before going home! There's also a pub just a bit further up the road.

*CM: I have heard some people 4WD on this road, isn't it dangerous to be sharing the trail with 4WDs?*

*KL:* No the Great North Road was closed to vehicle traffic from 1992, because of the poor road conditions and the rapid deterioration of the road resulting from 4WD use. Looking at the trail today, there is no way any vehicle can get along it any more, so much has it deteriorated. Yet it's made it such a challenging ride.

*CM: There's also a bit of history in the road itself, isn't there?*

*KL:* That's right. The Great North Road was built as part of a 265km link between Sydney and the Hunter Valley. It was built completely by convict labour and was finished in 1836. There were 700 convicts who worked on this road.

But as soon as it was completed it was abandoned, as it didn't pass by any significant settlements and had no water available along the route. This section, north of Wiseman's Ferry, remains completely undeveloped since then.

The first part of the trail up Devine's Hill has been beautifully restored and is fascinating to stop by each of the informative signs and understand how the road was built and marvel at the engineering features. These signs also give you a good excuse to stop and take a breather!

*CM: How hard is the ride?*

*KL:* The ride itself doesn't require too high a level of fitness. The first section up Devine's Hill by far the longest hill and once you get over that you've climbed most of the hills.

The trail though has plenty of large rock platforms and some tricky climbs, and some very narrow rocky sections and drop-offs at speed if you move off-line. In particular there are some fast sections that rapidly turn into drops, rocks and narrows, or there's a patch of sand.

It certainly isn't for someone new to mountain biking, no matter how much cycling you have done before. You definitely need good bike handling skills.

Having said all that, I have to say I can't ride the whole trail without getting off several times – there are some drop-offs I don't want to attempt and there are climbs where I couldn't get to the top.

*CM: What is the best time to do this ride?*

*KL:* I've found that winter mornings are freezing at Wisemans Ferry, and summers on the ridge-tops are just too hot. Best time is definitely spring and autumn, if you don't start too early and do the ride in 2-3 hours, you won't get too cold or too hot.

No matter when you do the ride you'll still need to be well prepared. There are simply no facilities once you leave Wisemans Ferry, carry plenty of water, some snacks, tools, tubes etc for your bike – remembering you won't have any mobile phone contact once you head up the ridge.

*CM: If you have a favourite ride you'd like to tell us about contact: [chainmail@bikenorth.org.au](mailto:chainmail@bikenorth.org.au)*

# Cycling from A to C via B

Doug Stewart

When I recently moved house I moved further away from work, but not by much. Transport is an important factor in home location choice and I wanted to “keep local”. Even so, I needed to choose a number of new commute routes, each one for a different type of ride. I think that cycling strategies start at the route choice and well before you hit the road. Here’s what I did:

First I needed my “everyday” route from home to work. This needs to be a pleasant and relatively easy route because I ride to work in my office clothes and don’t want to be too offensive on arrival. On this route I prefer back roads and gentle hills so I’ve ended up with a back lane, a pedestrian path joining two cul-de-sacs, a few quiet back streets and a larger, but wide and flat road. There are two hills where I use my lowest gear if I am riding easily. One other thing I looked for was a Red Post Box, so I can post letters on the way to work. Luckily there are lots of these.

Then I need my “late for work” route, which has few turns and where I don’t mind mixing with traffic and keeping the speed up. This route makes a turn the wrong-way through a street closure (but the visibility is good), then after a couple of quiet streets I take a medium-sized road with buses, roundabouts a couple of hills and more than a few cars. I take the entire traffic lane when I travel through the roundabouts, and silly squeeze points. On the down-hill section I take the left lane of a two lane road in the traffic, partly because I am going pretty fast but mostly because it is safer: It’s a little shorter than route 1, and because I’m travelling faster through fewer turns I arrive some minutes earlier.



Coming home I often drop by the post office to clear my mail box and mostly I’m not in a hurry, so my first route home is a bit longer. I take a traffic-calming lane (marked on the main road) for some of the route which is quite nice. There is a left turn off the main road into the side streets which can’t easily be reversed, so this is not a good route in the morning.

My commute is only a few kilometres, therefore as often as possible I try to use a longer hillier route on the way home, so I can work on my fitness. There are an infinite number of possible routes, but I often do one which is about twice the direct distance and also passes by the P.O.

At several places I need to turn a dog-leg into and then out of traffic. Where I have a choice, which I almost always do, I choose a route which turns right onto the main road and then left into the side street. Choosing the left-right option means that I may need to wait in the centre of the road, with cars whizzing by, which is not the most enjoyable scenario. This is the sort of decision that makes all the difference.

Another consideration is traffic lights. I don’t have any problems most of the time but there are plenty of places where it is frustrating to wait for the lights to change to green. The strategies are (A) avoid that set of traffic lights or (B) go up on the kerb and press the pedestrian button or (C) wait for a large mass of metal to

drive up behind. None of my regular commutes use problem lights and I know where they are if I stray for some reason.

I very often work late and ride home any time between 8pm to midnight. This is almost always a most enjoyable experience. The peace and quiet of the mostly local streets is almost compensation for working late, so don’t be put off by evening commutes – I prefer them.

## Advocacy Update

### KU-RING-GAI (JOHN WATTS)

#### Projects

The main project over Dec / Jan was the review and update of the Ku-ring-gai Bike Plan, which was delivered to Council on 31 January.

Current status – the Council officers seemed a little overwhelmed with the submission and the amount of detail they had to read.

It may take a while to ascertain what they will do next.

### HORNSBY (STEVE HILLIER)

#### Projects

- 1) Continue to push for Pennant Hills – Beecroft – Epping route.
- 2) Investigate possibility of route from M2 to Carlingford Rd along Pennant Hills Rd.

- 3) Maintain pressure on Hornsby Council to complete cycling route map.

### MAJOR ADVOCACY PROJECTS – LANE COVE TUNNEL PROJECT

Following discussions about the Pedestrian and Cycleway Plan during January, our submission was sent on 31 January.

## Diary Dates

### **BIKE NORTH EXECUTIVE MEETINGS:**

7 March (Tuesday), 4 April (Tuesday), 2 May (Tuesday)

Executive meetings are held at St. John's Church Library, Cox's Rd, North Ryde and start at 7:30pm. All members are welcome.

### **WORKING GROUP MEETINGS:**

Ryde, Eastwood Womens Rest Centre 7:30pm

14 March, 11 April, 9 May

Hornsby, Willow Park Centre, Hornsby 7pm

10 April, 19 June

Willoughby, Craft Room, Dougherty Centre, Chatswood 7:30pm

22 March, 26 April

North Sydney, Geddes Room, North Sydney Council

27 March, 8 May

For other working groups please contact the Convener for dates.

## Spit Bridge Widening

The long standing and controversial project to widen the Spit Bridge by two lanes is proposed to go ahead late this year. Consultants Connell Wagner, the designers of the project, invited Bike North along for a discussion on the proposal as it impacts on cyclists.

The good news is that a 3.25 metre shared pathway will be built alongside the new lanes on the western side of the bridge. There are also proposals to upgrade the existing narrow pathway under the southern (Mosman) side of the bridge to provide much better grade separated access to the eastern side of Spit Road. The outside lanes will also be slightly wider to cater for buses, which will also be a small improvement for on-road cycling.

The bad news is that access across the bridge will be more difficult during construction, a period of 18 months to 2 years. As construction is on the western side of the bridge, pedestrians and cyclists will be directed to the eastern footpath by looping under the northern (Seaforth) end of the bridge. Due to constraints of heritage items encroachment on residential property, the consultants had planned this access be steps. We have requested that all opportunities for providing a ramp access be investigated and that at a minimum, a wheeling ramp be provided.

The eastern side of Spit Road is also unsuitable for two-way cycling and we are requesting that upgrade of the link to Parrawi Road by the RTA is a necessary pre-condition to redirection to eastern side of the bridge.

## Choice in Bike Tyres for Road and Hybrid bikes

*Ian Houghton*

There have been some recent articles on road bike tyres, written by keen club cyclists, which describe what I consider to be a very high puncture frequency, in terms that suggest it is inevitable.

For those less experienced riders, I thought I should write a short article to achieve a bit of balance – there is a choice in puncture rates – it depends on the tyres you choose to ride.

The writers of recent articles choose to use narrow, light road tyres. There are many great reasons to do so – such tyres feel great on smooth surfaces, where they go fast with less effort, and feel really “lively”, as you can accelerate quickly due to their low mass.

However, there is an alternative in some of the touring / commuting tyres. Essentially, you go a bit slower with these, and accelerate more slowly, as they weigh more, but you hardly ever get punctures.

I'm referring here to a tyre in the range 28 to 32mm width, if on a 700C rim – as used for road bike and hybrids (or a 1??” or 1??” tyre on an older style 27” rim). I happen to like Continental “contact”, “City contact”, and “top touring” tyres. My experience with such tyres is a puncture is only likely after about 7000km, as they start to wear out or crack with age.

If I'd let my punctured tubes mount up until I had half-a dozen to repair, as Suzy suggested, they'd have perished long before I got to patch them.

The tyres I choose to ride for commuting and day-rides are still narrow enough in their contact on the road to have low rolling resistance; they glide along nicely. They are usually deeper, which means more impact absorbing on bumpier surfaces (comfort) and typically lets you ride off kerbs without risking getting a pinch-flat (where the tyre flattens enough to nip the inner tube against the metal rims, putting 2 neat slits in the tube, one on either side). If you ride on a loose surface (gravel, sand) occasionally, they don't sink in so much, so you don't have to get off. They don't wear out fast – often the sun gets to them after a couple of years, before the tread goes.

Would I race with them? Not if I wanted to stand any chance of winning. However, if I want to just have a reliable bike where I don't have to fret when there's glass on the road, and want to have a very low chance of a puncture on my ride to work, and still go at a good pace, these tyre types are the way to go.

So there you go – there are choices out there.

**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.**

## APRIL

**Date:** Sat 01/04/2006  
**Ride:** Ride Ryde Heritage  
**Grade:** Easy Medium, BNSW Grade: ETHS Distance: 30  
**Contact:** Brian Willis, 9807 6439  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Meadowbank wharf. Easy / med ride at a slow pace around the historical sites of Ryde City with commentary. Some hills.

**Date:** Sat 01/04/2006  
**Ride:** Akuna Bay and Church Point  
**Grade:** Hard, BNSW Grade: FHX Distance: 80  
**Contact:** Doug Stewart, 9874 5594  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Eastwood Stn east. Hard, hilly ride via de Burghs Br, Pymble, Terrey Hills, Akuna Bay, Church Pt (coffee). Return via Turramurra. Brisk pace.

**Date:** Sat 01/04/2006  
**Ride:** Akuna Bay Tortoise  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OTH Distance: 55  
**Contact:** Robyn Tuft, 9144 1325  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Turramurra stn east. Med loop to Akuna Bay for coffee, then tackle the two big hills to work off morning tea.

**Date:** Sun 02/04/2006  
**Ride:** Fitness ride medium  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: O Distance: 1  
**Contact:** Keith Griffin, 0414 187 427  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Call for all details including distance and pace.

**Date:** Sun 02/04/2006  
**Ride:** Parramatta Park Parade  
**Grade:** Easy Medium, BNSW Grade: PST Distance: 35  
**Contact:** Col Lambert, 9637 0746  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Meadowbank Wharf. Easy/med ride along the PVC to Parramatta Park. Do a lap or two of the park before coffee, then return via M4 c/p.

**Date:** Tue 04/04/2006  
**Ride:** Exec Meeting  
**Starts at:** 19:30:00. St Johns Anglican Church Hall, Coxs Road, Ryde

**Date:** Sat 08/04/2006  
**Ride:** Three Gorges Pies  
**Grade:** Hard, BNSW Grade: FXHT Distance: 75  
**Contact:** Doug Stewart, 9874 5594  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Hornsby stn west. Hard, hilly ride through Bobbin Head, Galston Gorge, rural Arcadia and Berowra Waters to Pie in The Sky for refreshments. Return to Hornsby via Berowra and Pacific Hwy.

**Date:** Sat 08/04/2006  
**Ride:** Concord for Cake  
**Grade:** Easy, BNSW Grade: PST Distance: 25  
**Contact:** Debbie Edwards, 9436 0969  
**Starts at:** 08:00:00. Meadowbank wharf. Easy ride along the PVC over Silverwater bridge to Olympic Park, then on to Concord for coffee. Return a different way.

**Date:** Sat 08/04/2006  
**Ride:** Macdonald River Meander  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OU Distance: 45  
**Contact:** Steve Hillier, 9899 5432  
**Starts at:** 08:00:00. Wisemans Ferry Kiosk. Medium ride via Webbs Ck ferry to St Albans for coffee. Return on other side of river to ferry. 50% dirt road, hybrid & MTB only.

**Date:** Sun 09/04/2006  
**Ride:** Fitness ride hard  
**Grade:** Hard, BNSW Grade: FX Distance: 1  
**Contact:** Keith Griffin, 0414 187 427  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Call for all details including distance and pace.

**Date:** Sun 09/04/2006  
**Ride:** Bays & Foreshores  
**Grade:** Easy Medium, BNSW Grade: PST Distance: 35  
**Contact:** Trevor Roberts, 9481 0846  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Meadowbank Wharf. Easy/medium ride to Gladesville Bridge, then follow the bays & foreshores around to Concord for coffee.

**Date:** Sun 09/04/2006  
**Ride:** Pie in the Sky  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OTW Distance: 40

**Contact:** Graeme Edwards, 9436 0969  
**Starts at:** 08:00:00. Hornsby Station west. Medium ride along Old Pacific Hwy to café overlooking Brooklyn with great views. Back track to Hornsby. Moderate hills.

**Date:** Tue 11/04/2006  
**Ride:** Ryde Area Meeting  
**Contact:** Bike North Special event,  
**Starts at:** 19:30:00. Ryde Working Group meeting.  
**Venue :** Eastwood Women's Rest Centre, Hillview Rd Eastwood. (Near the station and just behind the Library.) Contact: ryde@bikenorth.org.au

**Date:** Fri-Mon 14-17/04/2006  
**Ride:** Tour de Young  
**Contact:** Keith Griffin, 0414 187 427 Registration essential!

**Date:** Fri 14/04/2006  
**Ride:** St Leonards to Historic La Perouse  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OT Distance: 60  
**Contact:** Joan Kerridge, 9909 8925  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. St Leonards stn concourse. Medium ride over Harbour Br, through CBD to Oxford St, Centennial Pk & Eastern Suburbs to La Perouse. Ret via Botany, Kensington & Quay. Coffee break enroute. Pace moderate.

**Date:** Sun 16/04/2006  
**Ride:** Western Wander  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OPW Distance: 70  
**Contact:** Eric Middleton, 9958 2546  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Meadowbank wharf. Medium but relaxed paced ride via M4 c/p & Rail Trail to explore Prospect's canal routes. Coffee at Abbotsbury.

**Date:** Sat 22/04/2006  
**Ride:** Beyond Barrenjoey  
**Grade:** Medium Hard, BNSW Grade: OTXH Distance: 60  
**Contact:** Robyn Tuft, 9144 1325  
**Starts at:** Medium hard ride from Turramurra via back roads to Palm Beach, ferry across Broken Bay, superb scenery around Kilcare. Train from Woy Woy. Short gravel sections. Some hills, relaxed pace. CroC.

### WHAT TO BRING ON RIDES:

- your bike should be in good working order
- SAA approved cycle helmet
- 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 22/04/2006  
**Ride:** Meadowbank to Bobbo  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OHT Distance: 50  
**Contact:** Doug Stewart, 9874 5594  
**Starts at:** 08:00:00. Meadowbank Wharf. Medium, hilly ride via Eastwood, Browns Waterhole, Turramurra, & Bobbin Head. Coffee and return. Long climbs and descents.

**Date:** Sat 22/04/2006  
**Ride:** Olympic Park Ride  
**Grade:** Easy, BNSW Grade: CPS Distance: 25  
**Contact:** Scott Ratcliff, 0425 349 104  
**Starts at:** 09:00:00. Meadowbank Wharf. Easy loop around Homebush Bay with a coffee stop. Suitable for beginners and children OVER 12 accompanied by an adult carer.

**Date:** Sat 22/04/2006  
**Ride:** Western Explorer  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OP Distance: 70  
**Contact:** Steve Hillier, 9899 5432  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Meadowbank wharf. Medium ride via Parramatta & Canley Vale to Abbotsbury for coffee. Return via Prospect & canal routes.

**Date:** Sun 23/04/2006  
**Ride:** Ride Leaders Meeting No organised rides this day.

**Date:** Sat 29/04/2006  
**Ride:** Oaks Fire Trail MTB  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OMHU Distance: 35  
**Contact:** Kin-Yat Lo, 9980 7143

Starts at: Woodford station. Pedal along the popular Oaks Fire Trail including the singletrack. Bring water and snacks. MTB only. CtoC.

**Date:** Sat 29/04/2006  
**Ride:** Moore Park Meander  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OPT Distance: 65  
**Contact:** Scott Ratcliff, 0425 349 104  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Meadowbank Wharf. Medium, flat ride via Cooks R C/P. Sail past the airport & cruise backstreets of Mascot, Kensington before coffee at Fox Studios. Opt.lap Centennial Pk, ret same way

**Date:** Sat 29/04/2006  
**Ride:** Brooklyn Brunch  
**Grade:** Hard, BNSW Grade: OTHX Distance: 90  
**Contact:** Doug Stewart, 9874 5594  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Eastwood stn east. Hard ride at a Medium pace to Bobbin Head, then Brooklyn for brunch. Return via Hornsby & Turramurra. Fit, experienced riders only.

**Date:** Sun 30/04/2006  
**Ride:** Royal Cricketers Arms  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OPT Distance: 60  
**Contact:** Col Lambert, 9637 0746  
**Starts at:** 09:45:00. Meadowbank wharf. Medium ride via M4 & lower canal c/ps to the pub for lunch. Return the same way.

**M A Y**

**Ride:** Exec Meeting  
**Starts at:** 19:30:00. St Johns Anglican Church Hall, Coxs Road, Ryde

**Date:** Sat 06/05/2006  
**Ride:** Hawkesbury Ferry Cruise  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OHU Distance: 40  
**Contact:** Peter Tuft, 9144 1325  
**Starts at:** 08:00:00. Lower Portland ferry (east). A medium riverbank ride with 2 ferry crossings & 1 walk-up hill. Dirt roads, hybrid & MTB only.

**Date:** Sat 06/05/2006  
**Ride:** Olympic Park Ride  
**Grade:** Easy, BNSW Grade: CPS Distance: 25  
**Contact:** Steve Hillier, 9899 5432  
**Starts at:** 08:00:00. Meadowbank Wharf. Easy loop around Homebush Bay with a coffee stop. Suitable for beginners and children OVER 12 accompanied by an adult carer.

**Date:** Sun 07/05/2006  
**Ride:** BIKE NORTH CENTURY CHALLENGE  
**Grade:** Medium to Very Hard Distance: 60 -160  
**Contact:** Doug Stewart, 9874 5594

**Date:** Tue 09/05/2006  
**Ride:** Ryde Area Meeting  
**Starts at:** 19:30:00. Ryde Working Group meeting.  
**Venue:** Eastwood Women's Rest Centre, Hillview Rd Eastwood. (Near the station and just behind the Library.) **Contact:** ryde@bikenorth.org.au

**Date:** Sat 13/05/2006  
**Ride:** Meadowbank to Bobbo  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OHT Distance: 50  
**Contact:** Doug Stewart, 9874 5594  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Meadowbank Wharf. Medium, hilly ride via Eastwood, Browns Waterhole, Turramurra, & Bobbin Head. Coffee and return. Long climbs and descents.

**Date:** Sat 13/05/2006  
**Ride:** Olympic Park Ride  
**Grade:** Easy, BNSW Grade: CPS Distance: 25  
**Contact:** Col Lambert, 9637 0746  
**Starts at:** 08:00:00. Meadowbank Wharf. Easy loop around Homebush Bay with a coffee stop. Suitable for beginners and children OVER 12 accompanied by an adult carer.

**Date:** Sat 13/05/2006  
**Ride:** Western Explorer  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OP Distance: 70  
**Contact:** Steve Hillier, 9899 5432  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Meadowbank wharf. Medium ride via Parramatta & Canley Vale to Abbotsbury for coffee. Return via Prospect & canal routes.

**Date:** Sun 14/05/2006  
**Ride:** Summer Hill Circle  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OPT Distance: 35  
**Contact:** Judy Engall, 0413 043 169  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Meadowbank wharf. Med ride via Concord, Five Dock, Hawthorne Canal c/p. Coffee at Summer Hill then complete the loop via

Cooks R c/w.

**Date:** Sat 20/05/2006  
**Ride:** Great North Road MTB  
**Grade:** Medium Hard, BNSW Grade: OXMU Distance: 35  
**Contact:** Kin-Yat Lo, 9980 7143  
**Starts at:** Wisemans Ferry kiosk. Med/hard, challenging MTB ride up the historic Great North Rd, returning via Western Commission Trail. Some technical sections. CtoC

**Date:** Sat 20/05/2006  
**Ride:** Concord for Cake  
**Grade:** Easy, BNSW Grade: PST Distance: 25  
**Contact:** Debbie Edwards, 9436 0969  
**Starts at:** 08:00:00. Meadowbank wharf. Easy ride along the PVC over Silverwater bridge to Olympic Park, then on to Concord for coffee. Return a different way.

**Date:** Sun 21/05/2006  
**Ride:** Pie in the Sky  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OTW Distance: 40  
**Contact:** Graeme Edwards, 9436 0969  
**Starts at:** 08:00:00. Hornsby Station west. Medium ride along Old Pacific Hwy to cafe overlooking Brooklyn with great views. Back track to Hornsby. Moderate hills.

**Date:** Sat 27/05/2006  
**Ride:** Botany Bay Bacon  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OP Distance: 65  
**Contact:** Eric Middleton, 9958 2546  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Meadowbank wharf. Medium ride via the Cooks River c/w to Botany Bay. A refuel at our favourite cafe at Brighton, then return.

**Date:** Sat 27/05/2006  
**Ride:** A to Z and Beyond  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OTH Distance: 30  
**Contact:** Scott Ratcliff, 0425 349 104  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Artarmon Stn east. Med, hilly ride to Balmoral. After coffee climb to Middle Hd then to Zoo Wharf, ferry to Quay, ret. via Bridge & Nth Sydney.

**Date:** Sat 27/05/2006  
**Ride:** Akuna Bay and Church Point  
**Grade:** Hard, BNSW Grade: FHX Distance: 80  
**Contact:** Doug Stewart, 9874 5594  
**Starts at:** 07:30:00. Eastwood Stn east. Hard, hilly ride via de Burghs Br, Pymble, Terrey Hills, Akuna Bay, Church Pt (coffee). Return via T'murra. Brisk pace.

**Date:** Sun 28/05/2006  
**Ride:** Royal Cricketers Arms  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OPT Distance: 60  
**Contact:** Col Lambert, 9637 0746  
**Starts at:** 09:45:00. Meadowbank wharf. Medium ride via M4 & lower canal c/ps to the pub for lunch. Return the same way.

**Date:** Sun 28/05/2006  
**Ride:** St Leonards to North Head  
**Grade:** Medium, BNSW Grade: OHT Distance: 45  
**Contact:** Joan Kerridge, 9909 8925  
**Starts at:** 10:00:00. 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.

**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.