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BNCC 2011 - "The Wrap"

By Doug Stewart, Event Organiser

Sunday the 1st of May dawned clear and bright on 61 Bike North members as they rose to make final preparations for "the challenge". The sunshine was unexpected, given the weather of the previous week, but very welcome, given that almost everyone was about to take on their most difficult ride of the year.

Appropriately as this was the 10th running of the BNCC, ten riders were about to take on the first "Mike Bate Imperial Century", the hardest challenge since the event started. The new course included the four gorges that are regularly ridden by Bike North, but in both directions to give 8 distinct climbs within the imperial 100miles (160km). Along with the new course, the 160km challenge was given a new name in memory of Mike Bate, a Bike North member who was tragically involved in a fatal accident while riding his bicycle at the start of 2010. Mike enjoyed long and difficult rides and would certainly have taken on this new route with gusto.

All ten "Imperial Century" riders finished in good time, well before the sunset cutoff time, and in good condition (physically and in good humour). This was a testament to the fitness and preparation put in by all riders, whose next challenge is to maintain or improve their performance for next year. Congratulations to you all.

This event was not only about those taking on 160km, as the other two distances were worthy challenges as well. Indeed it would be hard to find more difficult 60km or 100km rides. Any rider taking on any of the challenges should be proud of their achievements. Those who chose this event to ride 60km or 100km for the first time certainly have my admiration and this is the essence of the challenge.

Eleven teams consisting of 34 riders took on the five hills of the 100km challenge returning between 5 hours and 8 hours after setting out.



still smiling near Pie in the Sky

For the 60km challenge we had 17 riders making up five teams, some stepping up to this difficulty. Special congratulations to young Kimberley Spencer on the back of the tandem who finished her longest ride yet; with many years of riding ahead. Also to the sons in the "Fathers and Sons" team who were extremely keen on the day. Congratulations to Richard and Damon.

The team aspect is always an important part of the day. As in previous years some new friendships were formed while old ones were reinforced. Team names are always well-considered by the groups and I give particular credit to the thinking of the teams "10 years of suffering" and "Proper Planning Prevents Piss Poor Performance" both of which turned out to be quite accurate. The "Beasts" unfortunately turned up without their beauty this year and the "One Hill Wonders" really turned out to be "Five Hill Wonders". The "Flat Whites" were so comfortable that they took nearly as much time stopped as they did cycling, surely sampling the wares of many coffee shops.



Doug presents Fran with her 10 years of suffering medal



Ronda made this amazing tyre cake for Graig



... and eat it too!

At the same time as the new riders were gaining their first completion, Fran Griffin was doing the 160km challenge for the tenth year in a row, which was celebrated by receiving a commemorative medal. Other interesting snippets were that Craig Nicholson chose to celebrate his 50th birthday on the bike, completing the 160km challenge for the first time and finishing off with a fantastic cake made by Ronda. In a final piece of trivia, Wayne Spencer has now completed the three different distances of the BNCC on three different bikes (mountain bike, road bike and now tandem).

A huge thank you to the volunteers who may the day possible: taking photos, helping with the catering, running check points and importantly handing out red frogs to all. Stephen's sausages and onions off the barbie were very popular, as were Simon's cold cans of coke at Mt White.

So we all have a year to regroup and reflect. Start training early so you can step up to the higher level, and we'll see you all again on the first Sunday in May in 2012 for the next great event.

[Many More Photos can be seen here](#)

Winter Training

Have you ever wondered how European cyclists continue with their commuting to work and training throughout winter? My wonderful Dutch friends, Toos and Theo from the Paris to Dakar ride, shared their winter cycling secret with me. I'm just not certain about the lycra bike knicks ...



Bill Tomlin

How to Position a Light Pole

This wonderfully positioned light pole provides cyclists with a chance to practice slalom skills on the way to or from work, the shops, etc.



Traffic light pole in Vic Rd SUP, Rozelle

This photo shows the equivalent treatment for motor vehicles



Photo: the Sharp family

Mudgee Cycling – 18-25 May 2011

by Phil Burge

For the past couple of months BN News has been advertising this event which will be upon us by the time Chain Mail is published this month. All is not lost though if you haven't seen the advertisements before as riders are welcome for the full week, the weekend in between, or any part thereof.

Why not join the 25 riders registered to date and enjoy riding the quiet country roads around Mudgee, and embellish the experience by visiting some of the 23 or so wineries located in the surrounding district?

Rides are listed in the Cycle Mudgee Region booklet available on the Mudgee Visitor Information website www.visitmudgeeregion.com.au/pdfs/RideMudgeeLR2.pdf. I did these rides a couple of years ago, extending and/or combining some to create appropriate riding distances. Generally, I would describe the terrain as rolling hills, similar to the Cowra experience for those that have done the Tour de Cowra in the past.



Mudgee camping ground

Riverside Caravan and Tourist Park (www.mudgeeriverside.com.au) has been selected as our base, this park being located on the banks of the Cudgegong River, close to the edge of the Mudgee CBD, providing a walk to all parts of the town. The park has a well setup Camp Kitchen in the middle of the camping area providing an ideal meeting venue and a fire place for those chilly nights likely at this time of the year.

Mention that you are with the BN group when booking accommodation at the Park for any discounts available. Of course there are many other accommodation units in town from which to choose should you want a bit more comfort.

Rides planned for the week are:

- Thurs 19th - Bocoble Rd (route 9 and part route 3) 62km or short course (route 8) 34km
- Friday 20th - Windeyer Hotel and return (part route 14) 82km; short course returning via Old Grattai Rd, 38km
- Saturday 21st - Gulgong (route 12 via Henry Lawson Drive and part route 17) 86km; short course via Henry Lawson Drive (routes 4 reverse and 1) plus the wineries 27km
- Sunday 22nd - Old Cooyal Pub (route 11 and 7 reverse) 70km; short course (route 7 reverse) 38km
- Monday 23rd - Lue and return (part routes 10 and 3) 66km Tuesday 24th - Hargraves and return (part route 14) 74km

Generally, all long course rides go out and return on the same road as there are few sealed roads linking between the main arterial roads. Short course rides start on the long course routes but take advantage of the across country unsealed roads to loop back to Mudgee. Check the ride details in the booklet for road conditions and bike recommendations.

The format of the tour will be similar to the Cowra event in that participants will be responsible for their own transport to and from Mudgee, accommodation and food. Rides will be conducted without a leader or sweep, allowing riders to ride at their own pace (riding with a partner), and signing on and off for each ride. The event is open to both members and their guests.

Register your interest by sending a reply e-mail to phil.burge@optusnet.com.au and indicate your intended length of stay (week or weekend) or ring me on 0402 918775 for further information.

Tour de Cowra 2011 : Report

By Keith Griffin

There was an excellent roll up of just over 80 people for 2011 Tour de Cowra (TdC).

The first 4 days had large turnouts for the rides with numbers dropping off over the next 3 days. That said, a group of keen riders even rode on the rest day!

The Wyangala Dam ride (day 2) attracted a small group of riders from Parkes to join us, and on the following 3 days several Cowra locals joined various of our rides.

After all the continuous rain, we were blessed with fine weather every day - cool starts and sunny days. Some wind on the final three days made the going tough at times, and peloton riding with changing leaders was common.

Riders enjoyed the variety of terrain from very hilly to almost dead flat. I heard not one complaint about the rides. Despite having such a large number of riders on the roads during the Easter period, there were no serious accidents or injuries.

The Cowra-Van Park was the accommodation of choice, where BN erected the gazebo and supplied hot water, light, tea, coffee and biscuits to all participants. This provided a focal point for people to come and relax and chat after rides, dinner etc.

Anna Lane organised evening meals at local pub bistros on Easter Sat and Sun nights with some 60 people taking advantage of these arrangements.

TdC11 was a perfect mixture of cycling to suit people's desires and social activity both on and off rides.

You may have seen many emails in 'BNChat' singing the praises of TdC. Below is an example of that feedback (which we hope will encourage more out next year).

2012 will see new organisers – thanks to Suzy Jackson and daughter Krystyn for stepping up. Donna Carey and Anna Lane have agreed to stay on in their roles organising dinners, caravan park and campsite supplies.

Dear TdC Organising Team

Thank you for a wonderful 5 days of riding around Cowra. The organisation was superb from the info/maps on the web page, to the course selection, pre ride briefings, snacks and the great weather.

All the BN members made me feel very welcome and I felt very safe and comfortable riding in the group.

My special thanks goes to Doug, who I'm sure was the tour winner (if you had one) for helping with my flat tyre on my final day. I don't expect I would have continued to re-join the ride if Doug had not stopped.

I'll be sure to keep a eye out for you all on the road, especially when I head North and I hope to either see you all at next year's Tour or to join you for a weekend ride sometime in the future.

Thanks again for a lovely memorable Easter in Cowra.

All the best

Kylie (not a BN member and from outside BN area)



The Catch

By Bill Tomlin a.k.a "Dak"

Photos by Bill Tomlin, additional photos by Phil Burge

Tour de Cowra stage 3 and the parcours was a loop from Cowra through Gooloogong and Billimari. The morning was perfect with crisp, sunny, blue skies. There was an air of anticipation in the camp; today's ride would be special, perhaps even heroic. The riders signed-on in front of the milling crowd, then the briefing provided the usual important directions, caution of the catheads, the pick-a-plank bridge and traffic until the turn off to Gooloogong.

Team P6 was ready. Martha stepped up to the challenge of both riding and filling the role of directeur sportif ... although, I guess that made her directrice sportive. Martha was organising the team, ensuring that Killer, Chucky, Floss, Flash and me, Dak, knew the game plan.



Tactical Discussions

The ride from le départ fictif to the turn off to Gooloogong (le départ réel) was calm, and one-by-one Killer, Floss, Flash, Chucky and Dak joined Martha into a small peloton. Les Fast Guys had taken on their usual role and led the peloton to the Gooloogong road, where they increased their tempo to make a breakaway that would be difficult to contain.



At the Briefing

Due to Bike North's insistence that all events must comply with the UCI's regulation of no race radio, the Team P6 peloton had to rely on its combined strength, commitment and knowledge that it was racing on the side of good to go anywhere near reining in the breakaway of Les Fast Guys.

Killer and Chucky led the group into their third kilometre breaking the wind before peeling off to Martha and Dak. "Two kilometre turns" was the call as Team P6 caught sight of Perch and Guppy up ahead. In short time they were caught. "Hop on the back" came the call, knowing that another two riders would both lighten the load for everyone and strengthen the group.

"PEEL" ... Martha and Dak moved left and right respectively to allow the flying Floss and Flash to follow through. Once at the back, Martha the DS, was monitoring the rising speed. "We need to increase the tempo a bit" was the instruction and Floss and Flash responded as the call went up through the peloton.

"PEEL" and Perch and Guppy moved into the front position. Perch's experience told her that increasingly shorter turns at the front would be the key to success, and coupled with Guppy's status as neo-pro in her first big event in a strong peloton, a kilometre at the front was enough – "PEEL".

Chucky and Killer came through and lifted the speed to 34 kph. Would that be enough?

"Up ahead ..." Chucky yelled – and Les Fast Guys were spotted. Two motorcyclists sped past, clearly getting into position to capture the images that would rock Bike North and its followers and place this day into the annals of Bike North history. "The catch is on" Perch yelled from the back.

"PEEL" and then Martha and Dak moved to the front. As Killer slowed to get on the back, the call for short 500 metre turns at the front and an increase in speed was passed to each pair of Team P6. When the team rounded the next bend, Les Fast Guys came back into view – their lead was reduced to about 500 metres.

"PEEL" and Martha and Dak, having increased the speed to 36 kph moved out to allow Floss and Flash to the front. Team P6 was moving as one; a well-drilled team, pedalling in unison. The words of Phil Liggett could be imagined: "You know Paul, I think they are going to do it."

Floss and Flash were anxious and impatient to close the gap. They increased the speed to 40 kph until they heard the call from the back "Ralentissez, trop vite." Martha had taken on the role of DS seriously and was now calling instructions in French! "PEEL."

Guppy was struggling, Perch was hurting but they led bravely, intent on being part of this historic day. Three hundred metres became two hundred as the gap between the two pelotons narrowed. "PEEL."

Killer and Chucky were back to the front as the gap narrowed further. At fifty metres Chucky called out: "Will we pass?" Mindful of the narrow road, and not wanting to damage the reputations of Les Fast Guys even more, Team P6 decided as one to sit on the back.

"And they've done it," came Phil Liggett's signature call, "Paul, this is an historic day."

The ensuing chaos was amusing, as a vastly superior, well-drilled peloton caught and sat on the back of an increasingly disorganised bunch. Graeme tried in vain to organise Les Fast Guys, and Keith becoming frustrated at the disorganisation, broke away from the expanded group on a lone sprint to Gooloogong.

However, not to be outdone, Floss worked her way through to the front, and after a couple of turns at the front of the large group, had the honour of leading the expanded peloton to the feeding station at Gooloogong, where Keith was waiting.

Egos were bruised, recrimination and blame filled the air, but Les Fast Guys knew that they had been outdone. They had been caught by a superior group on the day.



Some of Team P6 walking the long pick-a-plank bridge at Gooloogong

For the remaining ride to Cowra, Team P6 gave Les Fast Guys a five-minute start from Gooloogong, as the combined group was too big. Macca and The Chairman added their strength, experience and commitment to the team; and effortlessly, Team P6 maintained its discipline to Cowra.

Ok, Les Fast Guys did beat us into Cowra by 9 minutes ... but hey, we've got much better names. And we will all remember the catch on stage 3.

On return to Sydney, I rang SBS and spoke with Mike Tomalaris. Unfortunately due to the coverage of the Giro d'Italia, he couldn't guarantee that The Catch would be shown on Cycling Central. Oh well, I guess you just had to be there.

More Tdc Photos

A couple of photos from Phil Burge show how the "circle of truth" grows during the afternoon ride recovery period



it starts small



... and grows quite big