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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.

ChainMail welcomes your contributions and feedback.  
Email us at [chainmail@bikenorth.org.au](mailto:chainmail@bikenorth.org.au).

## Before Spring arrives – Big Ride Day & AGM

Start looking ahead to the next big BN event - the Big Ride Day and AGM BBQ on Sunday, 21st August 2011. With lots of rides and a BBQ, this event celebrates the end of winter and looks forward to spring fairs and summer events.

There are rides to cater for all BN members so choose yours and come along.

Most rides will start from the same location at the Concord West Picnic Area Bicentennial Park. Use the entrance to Bicentennial Park off Victoria Avenue, Concord West with lots of parking in the park and nearby streets. This is also conveniently accessible by train from Concord West station via the same entrance.

There is one ride starting from St Leonards for those wishing to ride from the North Shore via a scenic route.

Rides start at different times but all aim to finish around 11:00am at the Hill Pavilion in Bicentennial Park for a BBQ lunch. And you don't need to bring anything! Just turn up after the rides and socialise.

The Bike North Annual General Meeting will take place at approx. 12 noon at this venue, so you also have the opportunity to provide input on how Bike North is run. All members are welcome to attend the BBQ and AGM (even if not able to participate in a ride).

Ride	Leader	Grade	Avg Pace	Dist.	Time	Start
Gorge and Berowra	Darryn Capes-Davis	Hard	Fast (>25 km/hr)	95km	6:30am	Concord West Picnic Area Bicentennial Park (see map)
Meadowbank to Bobbo	Phil Burge	Medium Hard	Moderate (19-22 km/hr)	60km	7:30am	""
Park to Park	Fran Griffin	Medium	Moderate (19-22 km/hr)	50km	7:30am	""
Botany Bay Bacon	Doug Stewart	Medium	Relaxed (17-19 km/hr)	55km	7:30am	""
Parramatta Park Parade	Carolyn New	Easy Medium	Relaxed (17-19 km/hr)	35km	8:00am	""
Looking for Lilies	Debbie Edwards	Easy	Gentle (15-17 km/hr)	25km	8:30am	""
Olympic Park Ride	Alister Sharp	Easy	Gentle (15-17 km/hr)	25km	9:00am	""
Spin to the Cauldron	Ian Meller	Easy Medium	Relaxed (17-19 km/hr)	35 km	7:30am	St Leonards Station, concourse



Why not improve your cycling style by purchasing a BN jersey on the day. Debbie Edwards will bring along a stock and you can try on for size. Jerseys are a very reasonable \$94.00 (short sleeve) and \$99.00 (long sleeve). [Correct cash or cheque as payment please.]

This is a great chance to catch up with other BN members so put Sunday August 21 in your diary!

Of course, we'll need some help to stage the day. If you are able to turn a sausage and would like to help please let us know. Contact Darryn Capes-Davis (rides@bikenorth.org.au or 0406 380 862).

## Sustainability Lane - Lane Cove

By James McDonnell

Lane Cove holds its annual Fair as the concluding event of its month-long Cameraygal Festival. This year's event is on Sunday October 9 and will be the 16th year of the Fair. It is increasingly popular, attracting thousands of visitors.

A section of the Fair is given over to "Sustainability Lane" which is a showcase of sustainable living featuring stalls, demonstrations and entertainment. Bike North has held a promotional stall in the Lane for a number of years.

Record numbers are expected this year as Lane Cove has a real "buzz" about it following recent "people friendly" developments and landscaping. Plus, there are now 10 Coffee Shops – a cyclist's dream!

In 2009, visitors to the BN stall were asked to add their name to an "I Like to Bike" statement of support for cycling in Lane Cove. 270 residents and visitors added their names and comments. The combined households contained a total of 780 bikes. The responses were forwarded to Council as evidence of the high level of community support.

In 2010 BN distributed over 1000 brochures and maps of different types!

Lane Cove has a wonderful new Bicycle Plan and progress is gradually being made. The first new sections of "green paint" appeared a month ago on Burns Bay Rd approaching the shopping village (where the BN stall will be located).

It is always a fun and stimulating day for those helping on the BN stall. It is reassuring to receive so much cycling-friendly feedback from both those who ride for fun/exercise and those who use their bikes for transport.

Encourage Council in its efforts to make safe cycling an integral part of a sustainable Lane Cove. Visit the BN stall on October 9, either as a visitor or a helper.

Set-up will be at 9am and pull-down by 4pm. Contact James McDonnell on 94282450 if you are able to add your name to the helper's roster for an hour or two.

## How Fair Epping?

By Alan Corvy

Bike North has participated in at least the last three years Epping Street Fairs, which are held in Rawson Street Epping - this year it's on Sunday 28th August.

The fair comprises many vendors selling their wares, some nice food stalls, and various community information stalls, like ours! They also run a youth talent contest, which brings about some interesting (and some embarrassing) moments.

Epping is now quite a multi-cultural area, so you can expect to see people of many races in attendance. As the Fair is held in quite a small area, there is plenty of interaction with attendees for our BN volunteers.

So, why come and check it out and while you're there donate an hour or two of your time to help share your interest in cycling and support BN. Our presence also helps remind the Council / Local members that there are lots of cyclists in the area.

Please contact Maria Devlin: m.devlin@bigpond.com or Alan Corvy: acorvy@hotmail.com by 13 August if you can lend a hand.

## Sustainability Centre opening

By Caroline Minogue

Bike North (North Sydney) ran a very successful stall at the official opening of the North Sydney Sustainability Centre at the Coal Loader, Waverton Peninsula on Sunday 10 July.

The very cold, windy conditions didn't seem to stop many from coming to this very enjoyable event which show-cased Council's extensive community garden, renovated historic buildings and the original coal-loader tunnel. The Coal Loader site itself is set in a stunning position right on Sydney Harbour, with fabulous views to the west and south.

There were eco-stalls, children's activities, workshops and site tours, as well as a free community BBQ. To promote cycling as sustainable transport, Council brought along its new electric bike and provided free bike tune-ups.

Bike North - North Sydney Advocacy Working Group Coordinator: Caroline Minogue and BN members: Maria Boros, Janet Eades, John Keegan, Carolyn New and Margaret and Cameron Wilkinson ran an information stall providing information on how to get back into cycling, gave lots of cycling tips and supplied bike maps. It was a great way to get to know the locals and spread the message about how much fun it is to ride a bike and how to ride safely.

## An Affair with Fairs

By Alan Corvy

Helping out at a Fair is a great way to show your interest in cycling and support for Bike North. Fairs allow us to share cycling information with many people in a short space of time, which is a very efficient use of our valuable time.

You DON'T need to be a cycling expert. You don't need any skills at all really, apart from your interest in cycling and willingness to help others find out / learn more about cycling.

Everyone can spare an hour or two once a year to help out, so why not DO YOUR BIT for cycling promotion and volunteer for a BN fair stall this Spring?

So, how do we go about organising a Bike North stall at a fair? Well I'm glad you asked, there are six simple steps:

**To attend or not to attend** - that is the question! This decision is usually taken by the local BN advocacy team (eg, Hornsby group for the Epping Fair). As there are many fairs on every year, we may decide we can't participate in all of them. BN is normally advised of upcoming fairs through Council liaison, so we have plenty of time to review the information and decide.

**Registration.** Someone from the advocacy team will fill in the registration form, liaise with the organisers and arrange BN payment of any fees.

**Volunteers.** No BN fair stall can run or be successful without many volunteers, and the more the merrier! Someone from the advocacy team will advertise for volunteers (see articles in this Chainmail), advocacy email lists and BN Chat, and will keep a list and contact details (in case plans change).

**Equipment.** A BN stall consists of a gazebo, flags, tables, maps, brochures, etc. All of these things need to be collected from our resident equipment librarian (Alf T) and taken to the fair. After the fair, they need to be returned to Alf. A station wagon, 4WD or trailer are recommended for this purpose.

**Setup and takedown.** Setting up the gazebo, tables etc is very simple, but does require 2 or more people/volunteers (see item 3 above).

**Knowledge sharing.** This is the main purpose of the fair, and requires volunteers (see item 3) to hand out maps and flyers and share their interest and knowledge of cycling with interested fair attendees. We always have plenty of interest in our BN stall, so we need at least 2 volunteers (yep! item 3 again) on the stall at all times.

So why not start your affair with a fair this year?

## Moocooboola Festival

Date: Sunday 7 August 2011

Venue: Boronia Park (Cnr of Ryde Road and Park Roads Hunters Hill)

The Ryde/Hunters Hill BN committee is calling for volunteers to man the tent at the Moocooboola Festival. It is a good event; about 20,000 people attend. Please see Moocooboolah website for more information about the event. As usual, we are asking people to assist for periods of 2 hour blocks. Currently, we have vacancies in all 4 time blocks. The blocks are as follows:

9.15am to 11.15am - 11.15am to 1.15pm - 1.15pm to 3.15pm - 3.15pm to 5pm



We need people, at least 3, for each time slot. So if you can assist, please email Maria, with your preferred times and contact numbers. There is also a Grand Parade at 9:30, if we can gather a big enough group of riders in BN jerseys – ideally with purple & orange decorated bikes!

## Willoughby Spring Fair

*By Carolyn New*

For many years on the first Saturday of September, very early spring, the Chatswood shopping precinct closes to traffic, and is covered by market stalls, stages, performers, a great parade and a huge crush of people drawn from the regional area and beyond. For the last ten years of so, the Bike North distinctive purple and orange has been part of this Fair taking advantage of the wonderful opportunity to promote Bike North and cycling.

Location is everything when it comes to stalls at a fair, and we'll do anything to ensure a good location in Chatswood. Victoria Ave on the main drag is where we want to be so we maximise our presence! That crowd can keep lots of helpers busy, handing out free maps, talking about Bike North, our rides, about bikes, anything cycling. The more people crowd around our stall, the more others are attracted to the positive vibe.

Helping on a Bike North stall is a marvellously positive and affirming experience that I would recommend to anyone. Some love to chat, others prefer to silently collect the local map, and there are those who profusely thank us for all we have on offer. Of course there is always the occasional 'showbag shopper' – anything for free is all they want and we have plenty of old maps to keep them happy. The majority are very interested in learning more about getting started in riding, coming on our rides or using the map, others have come from more 'cycling friendly' places and are fearful of getting on a bike in Sydney. There are so many stories you hear, the time flies by and the stocks of maps and brochures dwindle away.

Bike North collects lots of material which is available on the stall to hand out, so there is always something to offer. In Willoughby there is plenty of experience and helper 'cheat sheets' to ease in the novice helper. Once you dive in its really easy. All you have to do is talk about a favourite subject – bike riding.

To be part of the BN presence at this Fair, please contact Carolyn New: carolynn@inet.net.au by 20 August.

## What are the chances?

By Keith Griffin

On 15 April, I decided to ride Bobbo, but from Sth Turrumurra rather than home, for various reasons. Parked the car in a back street, cycled up "that hill" in Kissing Pnt Rd and then down and back up Bobbo.

On the way back I was just about to turn into Bannockburn Rd and BANG. Back tyre down. It and the tube were sliced open with a diagonal cut of 4 cm in length. Not possible to sleeve or repair. I phoned my father who lives in Sth T'murra, not home.

So, I prepared to walk - removed cycling shoes and socks and was about to embark on the long walk back to my car, or at least the bike shop where I could get a new tyre, when a BN member, in his van, pulled up and offered me a lift. Evan Hawthorne just happened to be passing by. What are the chances? Evan dropped me back to my vehicle within a few minutes.

It really is the people of BN who make it a great organisation - Thanks Evan!

# Park'n'ride

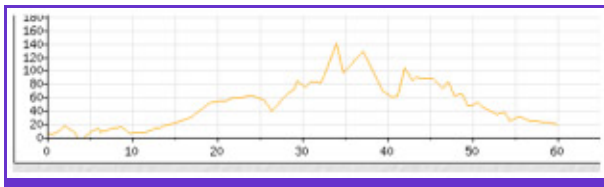
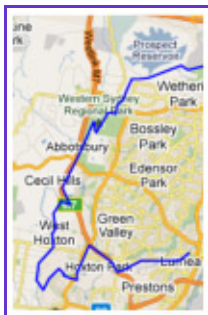


Part of what the BN Ryde workgroup has been advocating for is, cycle parking at transport and shopping areas. This a photo of cycle parking at West Ryde station – a the tale of ‘build it and they will come’ – the rack went in about 18months ago and it

doesn't even meet Australian design standards (I did have a chat with the station master about that, and what might be better next time) – I took this photo to show that it is getting used. The close and visual location near the station entrance is what makes it work. There is a message that cycling is an acceptable, even encouraged way of getting the station. It is still slow progress at other sites - we are advocating for bike parking rails at Midway shops and Pittwater road shops, and the eastern side of West Ryde station.

*By Alison Pryor*

# Cycling to new places



*By Alison Pryor*

This was a medium ride from Meadowbank and coincided to meet the

Liverpool BUG group at the coffee stop area at Carnes Hill. A number of keen riders (skipped the train option) and rode back form Liverpool as well making a big day on the bike.



Happy BN riders at Sugarloaf Ridge on the Western Sydney Parklands in January this year

Perhaps you are one of the people who has been enjoying the new rides Phil Griffiths and others have been running in Hills and Norwest districts in the past few months? If so, stay tuned for some more new rides in the easier range in Ku-ring-gai and Hornsby areas. I am currently taste testing coffee shops in Lindfield / Roseville to make sure they will live up to BN exacting standards!



even after living a lifetime in Sydney there are new places to explore by bike and the profile looks impressive – sugarloaf ridge is the highest point

## Geared up and going nowhere

By Wendy Jannings

On Wednesday a girl at work offered me her entry ticket to Gear Up Girl bike event, as she had to attend a function. I had nothing planned on Sunday so gladly took up the offer.

I was going to ride with Alison on Saturday to Wharfs and Providores, as I enjoy the Gourmet market and environs, but thinking that two consecutive cycling days was stretching it a bit with the non-cycling husband, I sacrificed the ride for housework. Saturday afternoon, I spent a good time preparing the bike, getting clothes ready, preparing on-the-road refreshments and checking the train timetables to ensure good connections from Chatswood to Cronulla. The alarm clock was set for 4.30am.

That evening, I chose to miss Midsummer Murders on TV to go to bed early, to ensure a good night's sleep. I watched the clock instead; I was worried that I would miss the alarm. When the alarm finally did go off, I was exhausted; but with the promise of good weather and a 55 klms ride from beach to the Inner West I set off to catch the pre dawn 5.25am train.

I had colourful entertainment on the train as Mardi gras parties were winding up and people were finding their ways home. I also saw the sun rise.

The train finally pulled into Cronulla station at 6.45am. Where was the Razzamatazz, where were the Event posters, where were the girls on bikes? There was nix, nada, nothing!

The station master told me that as early as it was in the morning, I was already late, as the event had been held the day before! I was not happy.

I cycled down to the beach for good measure and a sulk, then waited for a return train; not confident enough to cycle back on my own. The train trip back was uneventful; I got off at Town Hall and cycled home from there. I was showered, dressed, having coffee with husband and reading the Sunday papers by 9.30am.

The moral of this story... being prepared means nothing if you don't read the fine print!

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## Iron-Maiden - my New Zealand Ironman story

By Deb Shapira

Until 5th March 2011 I was an Ironman virgin.

An Ironman event consists of a 3.8km swim followed by a 180km bike ride and a 42.2km (marathon) run. You have 17 hours to complete it with cut-off times for swim and bike legs. You do not have to be a super-athlete to take part but you do need to put in long hours of preparation (especially if, like me, you are not particularly gifted).

My lead up program was built on creating endurance rather than strength and speed as my goal was to finish; and eventually about 3 weeks before the event on a hot and steamy Saturday after a long 7 hour "superset" training session (2 hours bike/30 mins run/2 hours bike/30 mins run/90 mins bike/30mins run) I finally reached that Aha!! moment when I realized that it might actually be possible.

The other trick was to have an achievable race plan and stick to it. Therefore I planned a 1h 40 min swim, a 7h 30 min ride, 20 mins in transitions, leaving plenty of time for the marathon, a large part of which I knew I would have to be walking due to my chronic knee problems. Also planned was regular nutrition – gels/vegemite sandwiches/electrolyte drinks/nutrition bars, most of which I carried because the nutrition supplied at aid stations did not necessarily agree with me or were things I had never tried before.

I arrived in Lake Taupo several days before. There was a slight glitch in plans as I had accidentally put my multi-tool in my hand luggage, which the ever-vigilant Sydney Airport authorities, after some consultation, decided to confiscate. So on the first afternoon I sought and found a bike shop to sell me a replacement. The next day, after assembling the bike, I drove out to the turnaround point at Reporoa and rode 30mins each way to test the strength of the famed head winds – 5-10kph difference in speed. The next day I rode the hilly sections nearer town and discovered that they weren't too bad. Actually, after having spent 5 days in Thredbo in January at boot camp I find that most hills are not too hard.

The remainder of the time was spent in the rather lengthy registration process which included a compulsory bike check, having my wetsuit "decontaminated", packing gear for the various legs of the event and attending the inspiring opening function. This was very emotional as it was in the aftermath of the Christchurch earthquake. There were 22 athletes from Christchurch, some of whom required donations of equipment due to their properties being destroyed.

By Friday afternoon rain had set in and it was soon apparent that the predicted "frequent showers" were going to be more frequent than not, so that by 5 am the next morning it was constant. Nevertheless, I pumped up the tyres, tried to put the nutrition where it could stay dry, changed into my wetsuit and went down ready for the swim. The cannon was fired and off we went. I couldn't see anything at all (as it was not yet quite light) for the first 5 minutes or so, so I swam in what I thought was the right direction by keeping the bank on my left until I could see the marker buoys. After that I kept to a fairly constant but unpanicked rhythm and was pleased to complete the swim in 1hr 26mins.

I then made my way to the change tent and found that, unlike other events, you get assistants who pull your wettie off you, bring you your stuff and help you dress. Then it was off for a 180km ride in the pouring rain. I wore several layers of clothing and put my sunglasses in my back pocket, thinking that I would divest myself off the excess clothes at one of the designated drop-off stations and put my glasses on when the weather cleared. By the end of the ride none of these things happened and I arrived in transition exactly how I left except I was completely wet through. All those debates we had had about toilet stops were rather irrelevant. Sometimes during the ride it rained steadily, sometimes it bucketed down and at other times it did all of this with strong gusts of wind. On top of this my computer drowned after 30km. I decided not to battle the elements but keep to a steady pace to ensure that I made the cut-off at 5:30pm.

I managed to have a small, undignified fall at an aid station slipping on wetness and banana gunk (a banana company was one of the sponsors) and then finding a TV camera planted on me! However, I was encouraged by the "You are on Target" signs posted at the aid stations so I figured I was going to make it which I did with an hour to spare after 8 hours in the saddle. However, it was clear that the transition area had suffered from the weather with huge puddles of water and mud everywhere.

With the help of the volunteers I changed into dry running gear (goodness knows why) and set off on my first ever marathon dodging mud and greeting the ducks which had assembled around the parked bikes. The "run" went better than I could imagine as I believe I was powered by adrenalin and the caffeine in my gels. It was great to catch up with fellow warriors (as it was a 2 lap course and I was able to meet and greet most participants - except for the super-fast who had already finished). I managed short conversations with my 2 training buddies and even met a mate with whom I used to race in Melbourne 15 years ago. I had to get some medical assistance on my feet at the 12 km mark as I had developed huge blisters on the balls of my feet where the carbon soles of my bike shoes have holes. The second lap was in the dark and I mainly had to walk because I couldn't see the puddles and mud properly and I didn't want to end up on the ground again. Although there were few of us left at the end there were still lots of supporters in the form of town locals who waited in the rain by the side of the road all day and night giving encouragement to everyone, and for this I was really grateful. I eventually came down that finishing chute after 16 hours and 13 mins to the memorable words of Mike Reilly - "Deborah Shapira - You are an Ironman!"

After the event, it took me a month to come down from the 'high' I had after this memorable day and every time I am out and about in the triathlon world wearing my finisher T-shirt there is a special nod of recognition when I see fellow warriors from that event because we know we shared something extraordinary that day. Apart from the support of the local townsfolk who came to cheer us on, the work of the volunteers was unbelievable and they too deserve an equal share of acclaim for making the Ironman dream happen.

Now it is all over, I am supposed to tick it off my bucket list... but am thinking Challenge Wanaka January 2013... perhaps????

## Fudge Factor Follow-up



This photograph appeared in [September 2010 ChainMail](#) together with a question for observant members to spot the obvious fudge factor in the 2010 Big Ride Day and AGM article.

Well, we know you haven't been able to sleep since trying to work it out so, by popular demand, here is the answer.

The Fudge Factor identified by all observant readers is of course that the photograph pilfered from the [Sept 2008 edition](#) as we didn't have a photograph of the 2010 BN Big Ride Day. 2010 was not blessed with the same brilliant sunshine as was 2008, with the heavens opening up before the festivities ended. But the photo looked good, sunshine beats rain most of the time, and why spoil a good story with the truth.

## Bike Helmet Fit

*Guide Notes by Alister Sharp*

### Why wear a helmet?

It's more than just a legal requirement! A helmet also:

- Makes you more visible to other road users (especially if a plain, light colour, preferably white or yellow)
- Helps keep the sun out of your eyes (especially if fitted with a visor)
- Prevents or lessens injury should your head hit something
  - the helmet spreads the load over a larger part of your head, and
  - the inner part of the helmet absorbs energy as it crushes; that is better than the energy being absorbed by crushing tissue and breaking bone!

### Parts of a Helmet

- Liner: Generally made of expanded polystyrene foam (not an elastic material).
- Shell: a plastic shell holds the helmet together in a crash, provides puncture-resistance and allows the helmet to slide on impact (to protect your head and neck).
- Ventilation: Helmet vents enhance wind-flow over your head, keeping you cooler and more comfortable as you ride.
- Straps: The strap system should feel comfortable and be easy to fasten and unfasten.
- Visor: Many helmets come with visors to shield your eyes from the sun. The visor is usually detachable.

### The Law

Under the current Road Rules 2008 a rider of a bicycle on roads and road-related areas must wear an approved bicycle helmet securely fitted and fastened on their head. This applies to all cyclists, regardless of age, including children on bicycles with training wheels and any child being carried as a passenger on a bike or in a bicycle trailer.

Look on the bicycle helmet for the sticker or label certifying that the helmet meets the Australian and New Zealand standard (AS/NZS 2063) and has passed stringent safety tests.

**Note:** Helmets bought on the Internet from overseas generally are not certified to the Australian/NZ standard.

As of October 2010, there are three JAS-ANZ accredited bodies that can certify bicycle helmets to comply with AS/NZS 2063. These are:



**BSI**



**SAI Global**



**Global-Mark**

## Fitting the Helmet to Your Head

Some helmets come in only one size, some in several sizes, but all have means of adjusting to the size and shape of your particular head.

Most helmets now are fitted with a 'sizing ring', adjusted from the back of the head, though some still adjust using pads of various thickness; all have adjustable straps.

To adjust the fit, first expand the sizing ring before you place a helmet on your head. Once the helmet is in place, reach behind your head and tighten the ring (by pushing a slider or twisting a dial) until you achieve a snug fit.

A good-fitting helmet should be snug but not annoyingly tight. It should sit level on your head (not tilted back) with the front edge no more than 2-3cm (two fingers) above your eyebrows. Your forehead should be protected. Push the helmet from side to side and back to front. If the helmet shifts noticeably, adjust the sizing ring (or pads) to snug the fit.

Next, buckle and tighten the chinstrap to place the V just below your ears. Ask someone to help you do this. Then push up on the front edge of the helmet, then up on the back edge. If the helmet moves significantly in either direction, tighten the chinstrap and try again. Adjust the straps around both ears to achieve a comfortable fit. Finally, with the chinstrap buckled, open your mouth. If the helmet doesn't press against your forehead as you do so, tighten further and repeat. Just don't tighten the strap excessively and create discomfort.

The RTA website shows correct helmet fit below:



Can you place just two fingers between your eyebrows and your helmet?



Do the straps join in a 'V' just below your ears?



Can you fit just two fingers between the helmet strap and your chin?

## A warning about wearing caps

It's not uncommon to see people, especially children, wearing a baseball-style cap underneath their helmet. Don't! Not only does it interfere with the fit, and obstruct the ventilation openings, in the event of a fall, it's possible for the plastic stiffener inside the peak to be pushed back, separating the scalp from the skull! Instead, choose a helmet with a visor; when properly adjusted, as in the RTA photos, the visor will shade your eyes and face.

## When to replace a helmet

After an accident - Part of the way the helmet works is to absorb energy by crushing; it can do this only once. So always replace it after any time your helmet is involved in an accident. Since damage isn't always easy to spot visually, replace the helmet after any significant impact, even if everything "looks" OK.

If it shows any damage - Straps wear and fray, buckles sometimes crack. When it gets old - Even if not used, pollution, UV light and weathering weaken a helmet's components over time; it's generally recommended that a helmet be replaced after 5 years, even if it has remained crash-free.

## Sources

In preparing these notes I have used my own experience, and also material from the websites of: [the NSW RTA](#): (accessed 10-3-2011), and [REI](#): (accessed 10-3-2011)