



October 2003

Inside this Issue

- 1 BWW Christmas Ride
A Bike Ride in France
- 2 Canola Canter
- 3 Cycle Touring
Mont 24 Hour MTB Race
- 4 **RIDES**
Regular Sunday Ride
Coffee Grinds
MTB Night Rides
Great Victorian Bike Ride
Audax Alpine Classic
Great NZ Bike Ride
RTA Big Ride
BWW Easter Rides

BWW Christmas Ride 6/7 December 2003

The venue for the 2003 Christmas ride is Cabramurra with accommodation at the RSL Youth Hostel. There will be rides for both road cyclists and mountain bikes.

The draft program is:

FRIDAY

Gordon has expressed an interest in riding from Wagga to an overnight stop to meet with the group on Saturday morning. Contact **Gordon** on **6921 4444**.

SATURDAY

Due to road closures the riding programme is yet to be set.

However, dinner and a social evening at the Cabramurra Wet Canteen and Mess Dining Hall is definitely on the agenda.

SUNDAY

Self-Catered breakfast at the RSL Youth Hostel.

Ride options again are yet to be finalised but there will be plenty for both road and MTB for those that aren't too tired from the previous night's dancing.

Accommodation is \$22 per person twin share.

If you are interested in attending please contact **Greg Fell** on **6922 3474** ASAP

A Bike Ride In France by Peter Dixon

I had finally arrived in Paris. It was hot, very hot. The temps were around 40 degrees Celsius and the local news was being frequently updated with an ever-increasing number of deaths due to the heat wave.

I had a week to acclimatise from our winter to this newfound warmth. Luck was on my side as the temps dropped to normal by the end of the week, when I met up with Keith and Gillian.

As we gathered at the hotel we heard many tales of previous PBPs as riders

psyched themselves up for the ride. It was great to catch up with many of the Aussies that I had met on previous rides. Sunday 17th August: we all paraded our bikes before the scrutineers. They all got the OK (not a big surprise, as we knew the bikes would be fine. The question was, "would we?")

Monday 18th August was here, but the ride for us didn't start until 10pm. Gillian, Keith and I had an easy day doing not much more than eating and resting. All three of us were surprisingly calm and after an organised meal for "final fuelling" we returned to our hotel to pick up our bikes and head to the 10pm start. The fast riders had left at 8pm and would be well on their way. Organisers let about 500 riders leave at a time, at 15-minute intervals. The three of us were in the last wave of 10pm starters, leaving at 10.45pm.

The atmosphere was electric as we went along the streets. People were clapping and cheering everywhere. There was an endless stream of red taillights in front of us. This red dotted snake wound its way up over hills and around corners and into the darkness.

I rode at my own pace, careful not to let the excitement push me beyond my ability. Riders from all different countries rode individually and in groups. Some of them I could talk to, others had trouble with English or my version of their language. But we were all happy to be there, to do the same thing.

I saw Keith and Gillian at the first checkpoint. Food was plentiful, even if the lines were a little long. Scanning of our swipe cards and signing of brevets was quick and efficient throughout the ride.

At the end of the first day, I found myself at Loudeac where I had a sleep for a few hours. This "gym" come "dorm" was a real experience. After paying 3 Euros, you were lead by a man with a torch to a camp stretcher, and deposited amongst the top snorers from all over the world. Some picked for their pitch, others for their sheer volume.

Three hours passed quickly, and I was on the road again. It was the middle of

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the night but the locals were still out there in support, clapping and cheering as we made our way through their villages, ever keen to give guidance and make sure you didn't miss a corner and go "off course".

It was great to reach Brest. I was halfway there now! I only had to do it all again.

About an hour out of Brest on the return journey I saw Gillian and Keith heading towards Brest. I turned around and we spent a few minutes together. They were both travelling well and in good spirits.

Wednesday night I thought I might try the accommodation at Titeniac. I had heard it was great, but so had everyone else. I was unable to get a camp stretcher but was informed that the shared accommodation on the restaurant floor still had a few vacancies. After manoeuvring a few chairs and tables I laid claim to my patch on the floor. Another three hours had passed and it was time to ride. It was very cold at this stage.

During Thursday the support of the locals continued. They offered water, tea, coffee, cakes and even tomatoes. Many of the French are on holidays in August.

Riding into Villaines La Juhel, Phil Bellette spotted my Bicycle Wagga Wagga jersey and called me over supplying words of encouragement and a cup of tea.

By Thursday night we could all sense that the finish was coming, and the two Aussies that I had been riding with for the last 24 hours and I were getting quite excited. The adrenalin started to kick in, and on the last few hours of the ride the pace quickened.

Chris Powell (Adelaide), Sean Hardy (Sydney) and I arrived at 3.36am on Friday morning. We had a meal and a few beers before I had a couple of hours sleep and a shower.

I was able to get some photos of Keith and Gillian crossing the finish line. We had all finished and sat around eating and drinking as we swapped tales of our various experiences.

Highlight of the ride: The generosity of the French people in the villages as we passed through, and those that lined the roads day and night to make sure you didn't take a wrong turn.

Canola Canter 12 Oct 2003

The sun was shining, the sky was blue, and a slight breeze was gently moving the leaves in the trees. It was coolish but not cold, fantastic conditions for cycling. But how could this be? It was October 12th, and the Canola Canter was on. It wasn't the day before, it wasn't the day after, it was the day of the ride. With the 100 and 200km riders departing at 7:30am and the 50km people leaving at 8:30am the day had started perfectly.

Five cyclists had entered the 200km event. There were two locals, two riders from Cooma, and one from Umina. All five were using the ride as preparation for the Opperman. Three of these are in one team, while the two others are in separate teams.

There were 17 starters in the 100km event. The majority were locals with a couple making the trip across from Leeton. There was a mixture of Audax veterans and novices amongst the group. After the equipment inspection and the briefing the 22 cyclists departed the Wagga Beach.

This year's 100km route was the reverse of that used in the previous two years. Marrar was the first control, after which the cyclist travelled to Coolamon, then down to Millwood and back to Wagga Wagga. After crossing the Gobbagumbalin bridge the group splintered into several smaller bunches as the riders settled down to a speed they were happy with. The conditions were ideal and the groups worked well to the start of the Marrar hills where again some fragmentation occurred as people rode the hills at their own pace.

The Marrar control at the 36km mark, as in previous years, was well stocked with cycling fare. Joanne Cheshire had bought out the Coolamon Country Bakehouse or so it seemed. After refuelling the thoughts of a tailwind

across to Coolamon had the cyclists mounted and headed west. The wind wasn't huge but the assistance it supplied made this 16km section very enjoyable.

From Coolamon the route turned south to Millwood. There are some ups and downs in this section but it is generally down hill to the Old Narrandera Road. The Millwood control, just after the turn onto the Old Narrandera Road, also served as the 50km turnaround. Here the riders were disappointed to discover that the standard set at Marrar was not repeated. It was a hard ask but at least the 50km riders got some treats.

Into the breeze the riders pedalled past Euberta. There is a slight rise to the top of Malebo Hill with a good descent down for the final run back into Wagga Wagga. The riders crossed the Gobba bridge once again headed back to the beach to finish the 100. The time limit wasn't a problem with the last of the riders back in 5 hours.

The 200km participants then remounted their trusty cycles and headed east towards Wantabadgery where they had their progress ratified by Jane and Roger Waters. From there they travelled across to meet the Gundagai-Junee Road which was followed into Junee. The Locomotive Hotel served as the control at Junee, which did provide a few temptations of its own, and then the return to Wagga Wagga was made along the Bomen Road beside the Main Southern Railway. All were very happy to finish well within the time limit.

The 50km ride, which is an out and back route to Millwood, was undertaken by 11 riders. This ride saw some experienced Audax riders return after several years off the bike, and at least one person rode their first 50km. Some of the junior racing cyclists coaxed dad and mum to take them on the ride. The slight breeze assisted them to Millwood with the return being a little bit harder due to this. All in all though, the ride was enjoyed by all.

Audax rides, like any organised ride, don't just happen. Many people volunteered their time and efforts to make this year's ride a success. Mal Rogers and Geoff Bray did all the Audax regional stuff. Locally Leila Fell,

Carol Raadgever, Geoff Marks, Joanne Cheshire, Steve Brown and his mate, Jane and Roger Waters, and the people at the Locomotive Hotel all provided assistance in one form or another. Without this assistance the event wouldn't have happened and the riders are all thankful and appreciative of the volunteers' efforts.

Next year the Canola Canter is set for October 10. While we cannot promise a repeat of this year's conditions we can promise you an enjoyable experience on the quiet country roads around the Riverina.

Cycle Touring by Gordon Moore

Any cyclist who has not yet been introduced to the wonderful world of cycle touring could not possibly imagine the sheer delights to be gleaned from this rewarding pursuit. Words could not even come close to adequately describing the experience and emotion and on occasions ecstasy experienced by the touring cyclist.

The cycle tour, which has changed my whole perspective on cycling, started on a wet Wagga Wagga Monday in August and finished six weeks later on a fine Wagga Wagga Monday. During this time 3,226 kilometres of mostly bitumen with about one hundred and fifty kilometres of gravel road thrown in was traversed on a leisurely ride to Gympie Queensland and return. The trip birthed itself from an idle boast that I was capable of riding to the 'Cycle Queensland' start at Warwick. I really had no idea as to whether I was confusing ambition with ability but there was only one way to find out. And what about coming home? Why not ride home?

The first 8 days of the 3,226-kilometre journey saw me complete the first stage of 840 kilometres to Armidale, with the added challenge of the first 7 days being into a fair dinkum full-on head wind. The sheer delight of riding up Moonbi, which consists of not one but two rather long steep climbs, was the first of many vertical challenges. On the New England Highway, Devils Pinch, out of Armidale and Bolivia Hill near Tenterfield presented this wobbling

touring cyclist with yet more challenges of the vertical kind.

The joy of riding over the Queensland Border at Wallangarra in excess of a thousand kilometres from home on the morning of the 11th day of riding was another landmark moment as was riding into Warwick on the 12th day with the sense of satisfaction from knowing I had arrived at the start of the 'Cycle Queensland' Ride and I had done it under my own pedal power.

The total experience of having arrived at the start in Warwick under my own effort and the trials and tribulations of the successes and challenges I had encountered on the journey from Wagga Wagga tended to make the experience of the 'Cycle Queensland' event pale into relative insignificance in terms of fulfilment.

I am not suggesting that 'Cycle Queensland' was not a class event because it was all of that, and some. What I am saying is that after the sheer delight of cycle touring for over a thousand kilometres nothing in my view can top that experience.

At the culmination of 'Cycle Queensland' at Gympie, rest was not a high priority for me so I put 46 kilometres under my belt that afternoon and 141 kilometres to Brisbane the next day.

Touring cyclists have to carry all their own gear and learn to expect the unexpected. Unexpected happenings like the Highway Patrol using their siren to convince me to abort my assault on the rather steep climb up the Gateway Bridge in Brisbane. Then having to produce my driver's licence to the same officers as proof of identity.

The challenge of conquering the steep climb from Rathdowney to the Queensland - New South Wales border along the Mount Lindsay Highway through the Border Ranges National Park, the strange irony of riding close to bushfires near the border and having the proverbials almost frozen off 2 days later in the bitter New England and having to enjoy the additional challenges of headwinds, sunburn and freezing cold hands all on the same day make cycle touring a truly unique

experience. And one I hope to repeat real soon.

The benefits of cycle touring are numerous. Each day is a training day so one just becomes stronger as each day goes by. Just being out there being part of our wonderful Australian Landscape doing another hundred kilometres each day is rewarding in itself.

People often say to me "Why?" to which I reply, "Because I can". Would I ride 3,226 kilometres again? No, because it is not far enough, but I am planning to ride around Australia. Do you want to accompany me? Smelling the roses, the scent of rain and freshly mown hay, tipping sand out of my shoe as I simultaneously scrap black clay from its sole, sleeping in a pub room one night and under the stars the next, why would one not want to cycle tour? You should try it one day.

Mont 24 MTB Race 11th/12th Oct 2003

The fifth running of the Mont 24Hour MTB race was held in Kowen Forest in Canberra from midday on the Saturday to midday on the Sunday.

This event is the largest MTB event in the southern hemisphere and anyone who saw the campsite on the weekend would believe it.

Some interesting statistics about the race.

1,795 Riders Registered
1,544 Men
251 Women

Completed 7717 Laps = 135,000 km
which is 3.5 times around the world.

Solo Men - 57
Solo Women - 9
Corporate Teams - 12

Team	M	F	Mixed
2	28	2	7
3	21	2	6
4	119	6	30
6	76	11	49

The outstanding feature of the weekend was the weather with hail and snow on Friday afternoon, a pleasant spring day

on the Saturday with minus 6 degrees early Sunday morning and rain just after the race finished. Much fun was had with the two teams and planning is underway to do another 24 Hr in 2004.

RIDE CALENDAR

Regular Sunday Ride

These will continue to be held each Sunday commencing at 2:00pm from Wagga Beach. The route and difficulty is decided on by the riders who turn up, but are generally about 1.5-2 hours in duration with a coffee shop finish.

The Sunday Ride does go into recess after the ride on the 30th November 2003 and recommences on the 1st February 2004.

Coffee Grinds

Coffee Grinds is a series of social Wednesday morning rides of about 30km.

The rides commence fortnightly at **9:00am** and depart from **Barefoot on Norman**, on the corner of Coleman and Norman Streets. You can contact **David and Lisa** on **02 6926 2354**.

MTB Night Rides

With the arrival of daylight saving the MTB Night Rides on Willans Hill begin again.

The rides commence at 7.00pm on the second and last Wednesday of the month from the Museum Carpark, Baden Powell Drive. The ride is normally a couple of loops of the Willans Hill single track followed by a run along the River single track finishing at the Hampden Bridge about 9.30pm.

You can contact **Neil** on **0418 972 373**.

BWW Christmas Ride

This is to be held 6 and 7 December 2003. This is a weekend not to be missed, the culmination of a great year

of recreational cycling and wonderful fellowship. Details are on the front page.

Great Victorian Bike Ride

The Great Victorian Bike Ride will be held from 29th November to 7th December and is from Mount Hotham to Mornington, 'From The Summit to the Sea', a distance of 580 km. For further details and an entry form contact **Bicycle Victoria** on phone **(03) 9328 3000**.

Audax Alpine Classic

The Audax Alpine Classic attracts hundreds of riders each year to Bright. It is to be held 26th January 2004. Cyclists come in all shapes and sizes, ages and abilities to pit themselves against the clock in one of the four events on the day. The most popular, believe it or not, is the 200km event. More than half the total entrants line up for this. The route for this challenge leaves Bright and passes over Tawonga Gap, and from there, down to Mount Beauty. The next control is at Falls Creek. The cyclists then descend to Mount Beauty and go up and over Tawonga Gap back to Bright. Just to finish off, the route then travels to the Mount Buffalo Chalet and returns to Bright. The 130km challenge takes in the same route that the 200km riders take but finishes when the cyclists return to Bright the first time. The 100km route rolls out to Wandiligong before returning to Bright and then the cyclists head up to the Mount Buffalo to Cresta before racing back down to Bright to finish. This is an event that is exciting to be a part of no matter which distance you attempt. The challenge is in pacing yourself so that you finish within the time limit. Quite often the most successful riders at this event aren't the strong, fast riders. It is the slow, patient ones that will often conquer while the hares lie by the roadside exhausted. Last year's event was cancelled because of the bushfires so get your entries in early because this year's event is certain to be a sell-out. For any information about the Audax Alpine Classic please contact **Ray Stenhouse** on **(02) 6921 4552** ah.

Great New Zealand Bike Ride

The 2004 Great New Zealand Bike Ride to be held from the 7th to 19th February 2004 starts on the shores of Lake Tekapo after flying to Christchurch. The route includes riding to the base of Mount Cook, on to Queenstown for rest day, over the ridge at Cardrona, drop in on Lake Wanaka, view Mt Aspiring from Makarora, go over Haast Pass, take an optional second rest day to visit the glaciers or ride 120 km up the West Coast via the glaciers to Hokitika, a total distance of 810 or 930 km depending on the second rest day. Further information from **Bicycle Victoria** on **(03) 9328 3000**.

2004 RTA Big Ride

Gloucester to Sydney

The 2004 RTA Big Ride will be held from 20th - 28th March from Gloucester to Sydney; a distance of around 580km over 9 days. For further details phone **1800 686 854** or check out Bicycle NSW's web page at <http://www.bicyclensw.org.au/>. This annual event is one that should not be missed and was enjoyed by 21 Bicycle Wagga Wagga riders in 2003. Bicycle Wagga Wagga have for the past 2 years ran a bus and a trailer for bicycles and luggage to the event at nominal cost. If you are interested in booking a seat on the bus for 2004 contact **Ray Stenhouse** on **(02) 6921 4552** ah.

2004 Easter Weekend Rides

To be held at Easter 2004 (9th to 12th April 2004). Day rides based in Wagga Wagga - based in Wagga Wagga - gentle to medium plus social activities.

This weekend is in the early stages of preparation however the principal organisers, Ben and Barb, want to build on the success of last year's weekend.

Further details of this will be published on the web site www.bww.org.au and in the next newsletter. **Barb and Ben** can be contacted on **6971 1109**. They cannot do it alone and would appreciate any help at all. Don't be shy. They don't bite, but watch out for Nicolas, he might!