

Issue 141, February–March 2001

BISA's mission: To promote cycling for transport and to represent all cyclists at the local, state, and national levels by working collaboratively with other interest groups and governments.

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Pedal Update

Peter Carter, Editor

I have an advantage over Terry in that I'm writing after the Jacob's Creek Tour Down Under has come to 'another successful close: certainly Stuart O'Grady would call it that. Congratulations to all concerned, not least to the volunteers who helped make it all happen.

That success and publicity is something we ought to capitalise on, reminding the community that cycling is not just for winning trophies, it is also a legitimate form of transport, indeed, the appropriate form of transport for Adelaide.

In this issue Darren Mik reports on Ride to Work Day, a success despite the funding problems, Margaret Day has news of the Federation Ride, and Hans Penning reports on a seminar he attended. From the Minister we have the Media Release for the next stage of the Share the Road campaign, reminding heavy vehicle drivers and cyclists of their rights and responsibilities.

BUGs seem to have their ups and downs: one definitely on the up at the moment is the Unley BUG, as Neil Murray explains.

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President's Report

Terry Leach

Cycling is big news as I write, with the Tour Down Under appearing to be drawing to another successful close. But the excitement of the event has been clouded somewhat by the decision of a few European riders, unused to helmet wearing, to disobey mandatory helmet legislation.

During my involvement with BISA the issue of helmet legislation has not been debated. However, I am sure that I speak on behalf of BISA when I urge compliance with the law. Speaking for myself, my blood boils when I read about the AMA urging compulsory helmet legislation for skateboarders in a park. They point out that incidence of head injury decreased significantly when helmet legislation was introduced for cyclists. True, but then cycling activity also decreased dramatically. A similar result will follow in the skate park. We already have too high a proportion of fat and unfit children, and we don't want to add to that problem.

I am in favour of helmet wearing, having used them prior to the legislation. Initially it was only because my wife threatened to slash my tyres if I didn't. Extreme maybe, but then she did work with people with acquired brain injury, including a former cyclist. But I am in favour of voluntary, not mandatory, helmet wearing.

What the injury incidence studies of the AMA fail to show is the impact of such policies on physical activity, and therefore good health, in the general population. Mandatory helmet wearing prevents many bicycle promotion activities, such as free loan bike schemes that operate in parts of Europe. We need to balance safety initiatives with other issues such as pollution, greenhouse gases, noise, amenity and public health.

But we can have safe cycling without mandatory helmet legislation. We need to focus on preventing the collision as well as decreasing injury. Reduced speed limits and providing road space for cyclists are initiatives that encourage cycling and reduce injury.

The general introduction of 50 km/h in residential streets is gaining momentum with the three eastern mainland states all having moved to this standard. There is a view in the cycling lobby that supporting this reduction is inappropriate because this still too fast. The science to support such a view is strong. BISA is yet to form a position on this issue.

But my personal view is that any reduction in vehicle speeds is good. Incremental change is easier and more likely to be implemented than radical change. I look forward to the 50 km/h residential limit, and the battle to reduce it yet further.

Bicycle Institute, Bicycle SA and the Bicycle Federation

At BISA's last committee meeting we considered Bicycle SA's application to join the BFA. This application was received only in January, and will be decided at the BFA AGM on 3 February 2001. Therefore there has been no opportunity to seek the views of members prior to making a decision. Bicycle SA is applying on the basis that the Australian Cyclist magazine is a membership option. Previously, the BFA has decided that new members affiliating with the BFA must take the magazine for all members as part of the membership package. It is hoped that the magazine will eventually become a major fund raiser for the BFA. Currently Bicycle SA purchase and on-sell 95 copies of the magazine from BISA. If Bicycle SA is admitted to the BFA, then it will purchase the magazine directly from the BFA.

Each affiliate of the BFA needs to form a position on the application, and if two thirds support it, they are admitted. The view of the majority of the BISA committee was that the BFA should represent all cyclists, and that it is inappropriate to restrict entry to protect our 'turf'. Accordingly, BISA will vote to admit Bicycle SA to the BFA.

As with the speed limit issue, I believe that something is better than nothing. If Bicycle SA affiliates with the BFA, then it will be active in supporting the work of the BFA and pay affiliation fees. There is also the potential of further sales of Australian Cyclist due to subscription reductions, as Bicycle SA may pay the BFA less than what BISA has been charging. I argue that this is better than the current position.

Perhaps in twenty years time we will look back in disbelief that this issue caused such division. Perhaps by then all vehicles will be pollution free, while urban design, lower speeds and automatic safety over-rides will have largely eliminated the road toll. But by then we may be arguing over whether to merge the BFA and the Automobile Association of Australia, because of huge membership overlaps and similar policies! Who knows?

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Ride to Work Day 2000

Darren Mik

Ride to Work Day 2000 turned out to be quite well attended despite the lack of funds available to publicise. We had 120 persons register their ride on the day at the Victoria Square breakfast, which does not include the additional 100 who attended the suburban breakfasts, of which there were seven in total. These suburban events were held at the following locations: Noarlunga Hospital (Theatres), Solar Optical (Christies Beach), Flinders Medical Centre Haematology Dept, United Water (Parkside), Bresa Gen R & D (Thebarton), Penrice Soda Products (Osborne), Fauldings (Salisbury).

Luckily for the event and many thanks to our sponsors, Apple and Pear Growers Association, Australian Bananas, Crusta Fruit Juices, Sanitarium and Life. Be in It, we were able to provide all the usual yummy food including muffins, fruitcake, assorted cereals, and fruit juices, along with coffee and tea making facilities. Most importantly the event and BISA received good media coverage with Terry doing four live radio interviews and myself also doing one. We were successful in getting some good points across, like high fuel prices as an opportunity not just a problem, end of trip facilities, greenhouse gases and health benefits of cycling.

Those who chose to attend were treated to a scrumptious and healthy free breakfast so although we did not have much in the way of publicity the breakfast was very successful in reaching a similar number of cyclists as the previous year. This was very pleasing, as things were looking rather bleak at one stage several weeks prior to the day.

Finally, I would like to thank Tony Hay, Rod Munro and Peter Sampson for all their work with organising the event. Without the help of volunteers like them this sort of advocacy work could not take place. I would also like to thank those persons who helped by way of encouragement and with offers to help out on the day.

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Links in the Chain Federation Ride

Margaret Day

The Links in the Chain are already being forged with a number of BISA members either on the road now or planning to be there soon.

Among those who will be pedalling in the Federation Ride are Allan Dickson who rode to Bright to do the Audax Alpine Classic as part of his training recently. He will set off from Adelaide again early in April with his camping gear in his BOB trailer, travelling via Loxton, Mildura and along the Murray to Albury before turning towards Canberra. If you want to wish him well, phone Allan on 8379 3440.



Mike Brisco plans to set off on 14 April, partly on the Mawson Trail, to link with Luke and Marie Wensing and others at Peterborough. Luke and Marie will be starting earlier in Alice Springs with other riders so they should have some interesting stories to tell when Mike meets them. His contact is <mike.brisco@flinders.edu.au>

Kathy and David Zilm will leave with a couple of friends on 22 April, planning to reach Yass on 7 May. They will have a support vehicle to help with luggage, and can assist others who are tempted to ride too. Their route will be via the Riverland and Hay Plain which they rode once before with a howling tail wind. They will be stopping in caravan parks overnight along the way. If anybody wants to join their ride, contact them on 8266 0160 or <dkzilm@senet.com.au>.

Some other South Australians are hoping to ride a few Links but their plans are not yet finalised. May they all have tail winds too.

Andrew Southcott MP, Member for Boothby and BISA member, is planning to be among the Federal politicians who will assemble in Orange to ride the final four days with the huge group to reach Old Parliament House on 8 May. Andrew is an experienced cyclist who supported the 1996 Nullarbor Ride by pedalling the first day from Adelaide to Gawler. He has also done many other long rides both in Australia and in other countries.

Democrat Leader Meg Lees, is another South Australian politician who is planning to ride some of the distance, having given the concept her full support at the launch in Canberra in November. She urges as many people as possible to participate even for a short distance, perhaps accompanying some of the riders as they leave Adelaide.

If there are any questions, please ask the Zilms, or look at the [Web site](#).

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Big rigs targeted in bike safety campaign

Media Release, December 2000

Drivers of trucks and buses are being urged to watch out for cyclists in the latest phase of the South Australian Government's Share the Road cycle safety campaign.

Minister for Transport and Urban Planning, Diana Laidlaw, says the campaign is targeted to heavy vehicle drivers and aims to increase awareness of the potential dangers when trucks, buses and bicycles combine in traffic.

‘Easily Missed aims to increase awareness among drivers and cyclists of the size and speed differences between trucks, buses and bikes and the need to make safety a shared responsibility,’ Ms Laidlaw says.

‘Feedback from cyclists indicates that the space bus and truck drivers leave for cyclists when overtaking is a critical safety factor.

‘The research indicates cyclists need at least one metre clearance on city roads and two metres on country roads when trucks and buses overtake.

‘The number of incidents involving cyclists and heavy vehicles is relatively low, however, in South Australia two fatalities have been recorded in recent years. In both cases the tragic consequence for the cyclists was at least partly a result of the size and speed of the vehicle.

Ms Laidlaw says truck and bus drivers have provided important input to the safety campaign and the strong message from drivers is that cyclists must ensure they’re visible by using lights and wearing lighter coloured clothing when visibility is poor.

‘Cyclists also need to use caution to avoid riding in heavy vehicle blindspots, where they can’t be seen.

As part of the campaign, hundreds of posters and leaflets will be distributed to major transport employers, heavy vehicle driving instructors, industry association members, truck stops in country SA and to cycling organisations.

Share the Road is a long term safety campaign initiated by the State Government in 1997.

Cyclists

Be visible

Being visible is very important for cyclists. The Australian Road Rules require cyclists to use a white front light and a red tail light at night or when visibility is poor due to hazardous weather. Lighter coloured clothing will also help you stand out.

Ride predictably

In city traffic avoid weaving in and out of parked vehicles or across lanes. And on country roads where speed differences are greatest, stay to the left, look ahead and focus on keeping a straight course when being overtaken.

Riding two abreast

Two abreast is legal but don’t be a road hog to passing trucks and buses. They’ll appreciate it when you make it easier for them to overtake.

(From the *easily missed* brochure)

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Traffic Matters

Hans Penning

On 25 October I attended a joint seminar of the Australian Institute of Traffic Planning and Management (AITPM) and Transport SA (TSA). Its purpose was to get feedback from traffic practitioners on the operation of the Road Traffic Act and the Australian Road Rules. One important aspect is the delegation of the Minister's powers to councils in relation to the installation of traffic control devices such as road closures, driveway entries, driveway links, road humps, roundabouts, and slowpoints subject to the certification by a chartered professional engineer that such devices are in accordance with the relevant Code: Part Two, Code of Technical Requirements for the Legal Use of Traffic Control Devices, December 1999, Transport SA.

This does not automatically ensure that bicycle access will be provided through the device under consideration. The Code is very vague on this issue despite our efforts over the years. Until such time as the Code is updated to make bicycle access mandatory and clearly details how this can be achieved; access will only be provided at the council's discretion and that means presently mostly not.

In the meantime local cyclists through their BUGs should monitor council works programs and ensure cyclist access is provided on a case by case basis.

If all these efforts are not carried out or fail, we'll end up with situations like Edgeworth Street Prospect, a Bike Direct route where a full and a half road closure have been installed within 100 m of each other, both without cyclist access. Ironically at both closures a Bike Direct sign is displayed.

There was some indication at the meeting that TSA might look more favourably upon revising the Code in the future.

Footpath Riding

A show of hands by the meeting indicated that no problems have been experienced since the introduction of footpath riding for certain groups under the new Australian Road Rules, in force since December 1999. I asked for the over 60s also to be included.

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Rail customers denied access

Media Release: The Friends of the Belair Line

A recent neighbourhood survey by the Friends of the Belair Line has shown that as many as 3667 passenger trips per month are being missed due to the closure of Millswood Station.

The Passenger Transport Board is desperately trying to attract more customers. Well, here they are eagerly waiting for the chance to use the rail service that runs right through their neighbourhood, but which has ignored them for five and a half years.

‘We knew there was strong community support for re-opening Millswood, but we did not expect the figures to be as high. We were astonished by the enthusiasm for rail travel, and the gratitude shown by the respondents for our efforts’ said Jane Brooks, spokesperson for the Friends of the Belair Line.

Millswood Station’s potential passengers indicated they would make a total of:
1860 trips per month during peak period
1016 trips per month during interpeak
297 trips per month at night
494 trips per month on weekends and public holidays

Survey respondents suggested that they would use the train for commuting, shopping, visiting Belair National Park, the theatre, friends and relatives, and attending special events.

These results will form the basis of a formal request to consider re-opening the station. Included with factors such as high petrol prices, local traffic congestion, improved marketing of public transport, and security guards on trains at night, the results of this survey suggest it is time to look at re-opening not only Millswood but Hawthorn and Clapham Stations as well.

TransAdelaide could gain up to 10 000 extra passenger trips per month by opening all three.

It takes an average of only 20 seconds per station to allow passengers to board or alight. The major alteration of timetables being considered for the entire rail system in 2001 will provide an opportunity to resume servicing the three stations.

It would cost little to re-open them because the infrastructure is still there; platforms, shelters, and lighting.

Contact: Jane Brooks phone/fax 8271 4168 Mobile 0417 805 719

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Unley BUG

Neil Murray

In my opinion Unley City Council has done a pretty good job over the years with the way they look after cyclists and promote cycling as a safe, attractive and viable form of transport. They have recently embarked on a five year program to further increase the profile of cycling within Unley, and make further improvements to cycling conditions for both recreational and commuting cyclists.

On the improvements front, this year they’ll be signposting a number of new bike routes and installing bike rails at 20 sites across Unley. Longer term, they’ve committed \$24,000 a year over the next five years to improve cycling infrastructure and safety. To promote cycling, they’re sponsoring the current ‘Ride to Win’ campaign, hosting Stage 4 of the Jacob’s Creek Tour Down Under, and they are supporting and encouraging the development of an active

BUG within Unley.

The ‘new’ Unley BUG has met twice in recent months, and by the time you read this the ‘Tour Down Under’ breakfast will have been and gone. Peter Watts from BikeSouth also gave a talk at the first meeting on current statewide cycling initiatives. Both meetings have provided a good forum for cyclists to ask questions and raise concerns about various problem areas (Goodwood tram crossing, King William Road/Greenhill Road intersection, etc). The likely role and activities of the BUG have also been discussed, but it’s still early days yet so...

Future meetings are likely to be held bi-monthly (next one’s in March), and will be publicised in the local Messenger Press. Recreational rides (possibly with other BUGS) and rides to look at some of the problem areas in the city are also possible future activities, and we’d certainly appreciate suggestions for other activities.

If you live in the area or just commute through (as I do), come along to the next meeting and share your views and suggest ways to encourage cycling in Unley. Unley Council is committed to improving conditions for cyclists — now we need your involvement to make it work!

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