



Major bicycle tour comes to the Clarence

The Great Australian Bike Ride (GABR) will be spending several days in the Clarence Valley this week on its way around Australia.

Local bicycle riders are invited to join the ride during two local day tours, on April 30 and May 2. The event is organised by Australian Rotary Health, to raise funds to support research into mental illness, according to Denis Green, treasurer of the Rotary Club of Grafton and organiser of the Sydney to Brisbane stage of the GABR.

"It is a nine-stage ride around the country that began in Melbourne on March 21 and will finish back there on October 10th after pedalling about 17,800km," he said.

Funds generated by the event will go to Australian Rotary Health and contributions above \$2 are tax deductible. ARH is the largest non-government funder of mental illness research in Australia.

Mr Green emphasised the GABR was not a race.

"Clearly, if you're interested in participating in the Grafton day tours you'll need to be a competent cyclist and physically fit but you definitely don't need to be an elite cyclist to join in and have some fun," he said.

The first day tour, on Thursday 30th April, starts in Jacaranda Park at the northern end of Prince Street and goes out to Minnie Waters for lunch before returning to Grafton.

The second day tour, on Saturday, May 2, also starts at Jacaranda Park and heads north to Lawrence before crossing to Woodford Island for lunch in Brushgrove and then returning to Grafton.

The Minnie Waters ride is described as undulating while the Woodford Island ride is generally flat. Both rides are a little over 100km in length.

Riders receive lunch and refreshments, and are accompanied by a support vehicle that can assist with mechanical problems or give tired legs a break.

There is no need to carry food, water, tools or other equipment, and no need to worry about whether you'll be able to complete the distance.

Participants are asked to make a contribution of at least \$25 to cover lunch and other expenses but any additional contributions will be aiding what organisers say is an extremely worthy cause - see australianrotary-health.org.au for details. Riders are encouraged to seek sponsorship from friends and colleagues but this is not essential.

Entry forms are available at Grafton City Cycles, the Goodies (both in Pound Street) and Valley Country (in Prince Street).



The Clarence Coast copped a pounding from swells generated by a deep low in the Tasman Sea last week. Local surfer, Keaton Rheinberger, is pictured at Pippi Beach, Yamba contemplating the best way to get back to the car park. Pic: Geoff Helisma