



# All quiet as bikes take to V8 track

THERE was no burning rubber or revving engines when the first sets of wheels broke in the new V8 track.

Pedal power was the order of the day as people joined Rotary's Great Australian Bike Ride charity team in a tour of the new facility.

Five Rotarians are making a 17,800km trek around Australia to raise money and awareness for mental illness.

The group is joined by local Rotarians as they pass through communities.

Local rider and Townsville Daybreak Club Rotarian Marty Wilkinson said the V8 track was a highlight of the Proserpine to Charters Towers leg he was completing.

"I'm really excited to be one of the first to ride on the V8 track and I'm sure the other riders are too," Mr Wilkinson said.

"When I come to watch the V8s in July I will certainly take pleasure in knowing my wheels have been on the track before theirs – just maybe not going as fast."

Australian Rotary Health chair Terry Lees flew in from Mount Isa for the event.

"It's been really terrific. There has been lots of publicity about mental illness



**NOT SO NOISY . . . cyclists on the V8 track**

*Photo: TROY RODGERS*

and the funding just keeps coming and coming," he said. "There was also an entertainment night held in Ayr and the effort put in by the local Rotary clubs and business houses has been fantastic.

"On the way through

we stopped at the Caltex servo in Ayr and when the owner saw the vehicle was from the Rotary GABR he said to fill it up as much as we could with no charge."

The riders will be at Willows markets tomorrow collecting

donations before heading to Charters Towers on Monday.

Rotary will host a free mental health forum at Mary MacKillop Hall at Ryan Catholic College on Wednesday at 6.30pm.

— EMILY MACDONALD