



Cycle Aware Wellington (CAW)

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Windy Wheels newsletter

March 2003

Safe Routes to Schools adopted by WCC

WCC is taking up the idea of SRTS, and will employ a co-ordinator. SRTS will include Walking School Buses, engineering works if needed, and education. This is something CAW has been asking for ages. Well done CAW.

WCC staff get on their bikes

Wellington City Council staff are leading by example and trading four-wheeled travel for the two-wheeled variety.

WCC bought three Giant Sedona bikes for staff in the Council's Roothing and Traffic unit to use for trips around town. Infrastructure Manager Stavros Michael says staff are enthusiastic about using the bikes.

"The nature of our work means staff often need to go out to site visits and inspections around the city centre – travelling by bike has a lot of pluses we're keen to take advantage of. Biking around the city is cheap, healthy, good for the environment and saves the hassle of finding a park, says Mr Michael.

"Safety is an important issue for cyclists, particularly here in Wellington where cyclists make up a high proportion of road accidents. Naturally we want to make sure staff who perhaps haven't cycled for a while have a thorough understanding of cycle safety before they get out on the road."

Wellington is bucking national trends that show a decline in the number of people cycling. Figures from the latest census show that two percent of work journeys in the city are made by bicycle, an increase of 19 percent over the 1996 census.

Source: www.wcc.govt.nz/news/press/2003/nr1045534965.html, 18 February 2003

Wellington bus lanes confuse cyclists

CAW members recently met with WCC staff and pointed out the confusing markings on Wellington's new bus lanes. Some are marked "Buses only", some "Bus lane", and some are also signed "No entry except buses." Some have bike symbols painted on the lane. I've had the differences explained to me several times but I still can't work it out. I think we're allowed to cycle on all of them except the south-bound lanes on Lambton Quay and Willis St. Anyway, WCC and LTSA are going to have another look at it.

Other topics under discussion include cycle parking; the Manners/Dixon St redevelopment; Bike to Work Day funding for 2004; a proposed cycle route map; and the council's new cycling strategy.

Book Review: The Rider

Written by Tim Krabbé, published by Bloomsbury, \$24.95
by *Simon Kennett*

This gem of a book covers Tim Krabbé's cycling career and his progress through a fictional road classic in Europe. His blow-by-blow account of the race provides an excellent insight into the world of road racing, with many wry observations and witty anecdotes from the sport in general.

At just 148 pages, 'The Rider' is a quick read, not just because of its length, but because it is so damn hard to put down. Krabbé, who also wrote 'The Vanishing' clearly understands the art of pacing, in both racing and writing. Early in the first chapter he draws the reader into the drama of the event and keeps us riveted with frequent updates throughout. Along the way he outlines how he has come to be riding so competitively in this particular event.

I highly recommend this book to any cyclist. In particular, it is essential reading for cycle racing fans. Any rider who has ever experienced the highs and lows of a bike race will recognise countless home truths. For riders of a strictly recreational bent, 'The Rider' provides an entertaining and remarkably illuminating account of the competitive side of cycling. Definitely a classic.

Bike parking at Parliament

During Bike Week, Trevor Mallard, Minister of Sport and Recreation wrote to the Speaker of the House, Jonathan Hunt on cycle parking at Parliament. He wrote:

"In launching this resource [the SPARC Cycle-Friendly Employer Resource], I was conscious of the lack of public parking for cyclists at Parliament. In an effort to encourage people to bike to work, I believe it would be advantageous for Parliament to be able to offer cycle parking to visitors."

Enquiries to Parliamentary Services reveal they are "looking into the matter."

The perceptions of weather and its influence on biking comfort

by Paul Bruce (Bruce@met.co.nz)

Does bad weather deter you from biking? CAW member and weather forecaster Paul Bruce had a look at the data and gives us the good news: that the chances of getting wet are small.

Abstract

New Zealand has an unsettled maritime climate, with some rain falling every second or third day. When cyclists look out the window in the morning, notices some cloud, and then hears rain mentioned in a weather forecast, they are likely to adjust their behaviour in a number of ways. Some will be discouraged from cycling, believing bad weather is on the way. However, a well-seasoned cyclist will probably respond in a more objective manner, checking for a shower proof jacket in the backpack, and then setting off in a normal manner. **Indeed, this analysis shows that for most times, a cyclist can make a short to medium trip in dry conditions, in spite of a forecast of rain.**

Data

Weather data from Wellington airport for the four year period from 1 January 1996 to 31 December 1999 was sorted to determine expected hourly values of light rain (0.1mm to 0.4mm), light or moderate rain (less than 4.5mm), and heavy rain (above 4.5mm), and gusts of 45 knots and above. Both yearly and seasonal values were obtained. Average and maximum persistence of rain from one hour to the next with a maximum gap of one hour, was calculated.

For the purposes of this study, a working year is taken to be 200 days, implying about 400 commuter trips, and the time of travel to be 15 to 20 minutes.

Table 1 Raindays per year (%)

	Mean	Winter
AUCKLAND	36	46
WELLINGTON	32	53
CHRISTCHURCH	24	30

Table 2: Hourly rain expectancy (%) 1996 to 2000

	Fine weather	Any rain	Trace rain	0.5mm +	>4.5mm
AUCKLAND	89.2	10.8	5.4	5.4	0.5
WELLINGTON	90.0	10.0	4.7	5.3	0.4
CHRISTCHURCH	91.9	8.1	4.3	3.9	0.1

Table 3: Winter rain expectancy (%) 1996 to 2000

	Fine weather	Any rain	Trace rain	0.5mm +	>4.5mm
AUCKLAND	84.2	15.8	8.0	7.8	0.6
WELLINGTON	86.5	13.5	6.3	7.3	0.5
CHRISTCHURCH	88.7	11.3	5.7	5.5	0.1

Table 4: Days with occurrence of gales (%)

AUCKLAND WELLINGTON CHRISTCHURCH

Gale days	1	13	2
Peak month	2	20	3

Analysis

Rain also occurs on average in one out of every three days (32%) in Wellington (Table 1), increasing to half (53%) the days in July. Hourly figures show wetness for 10% of the time (Table 2) with a winter peak of 14% (Table 3). Rain was slightly more likely to occur during the period 5 to 7pm, though in winter this changed to late morning. The frequency reduces to 5 % (7% during winter) if we take significant rain over 0.5mm. Heavy rain over 4.5mm occurs for only 0.4% of hours (0.5% for winter months).

The average length of the rain event is 4 hours with a maximum persistence of 40 hours.

Wellington has wind on most days, with gales occurring on 47 (13%) days a year at the Airport, peaking in October with 6 (20%) days. This windiness also drops dramatically in the Hutt Valley and in the northern suburbs.

Conclusions

Wetting rain is likely to occur during the hour of travel about once every fortnight, but on shorter rides of say 15 minutes, a cyclist may only get wet about half a dozen times, with a slightly higher chance in winter.

Pedaling onto the Information Superhighway – Laos villagers to get online with bike-powered PCs

BAN PHON KHAM, Laos – Villagers in this remote jungle hamlet have lived for years without electricity or telephones, relying on occasional visitors and a sluggish postal system for news of the outside world.

But soon many of its residents will be jumping on stationary bikes to pedal their way onto the Information Superhighway. Custom-built computers – running on bicycle-powered generators – will transport villagers from rice fields to chat rooms and Web sites worldwide. They'll be able to monitor rice and vegetable prices, sell handicrafts and e-mail relatives.

The project, expected to launch as early as this spring, gets around the lack of phone lines through a clever application of WiFi technology. The ingenious system – not much different from a school science project – comprises five computers built with discarded microchips. They connect to the Internet with a radio network and are powered by hulking batteries attached to stationary bicycles imported from India. One minute of pedaling yields five minutes of power.

Source: www.cnn.com/2003/TECH/internet/02/18/laos.onlinebybicycle.ap/index.html

Membership Renewals

Thanks to everyone who has sent in their renewal form. We have had a steady response so far with 30 renewals to hand. We usually give everyone a grace period of three months, however since I have not put in a reminder for the last couple of months I shall extend this year's grace period by one month. Sooooo, you have **until the end of April** to get your renewal in to the Membership Secretary. After that date your membership will expire and you will no longer receive Windy Wheels, Chainlinks and all the other benefits of belonging to CAW.

We look forward to your continuing membership. We need you!

Teresa Maguire, Membership Secretary,

Cycle Aware Wellington, Box 11-964, Wellington

Ara Harakeke Cycleway Path

The Porirua City Council has developed a cycleway alongside State Highway One. It runs from the weigh station north of Plimmerton, to the railway line at the south end of Pukerua Bay.

The next planned stage was an underpass under the road bridge to Muri Road. As part of the investigation into this route a geotechnical assessment determined that the escarpment either side of the railway line does not meet the required engineering standards. As a result, we have determined that it is more feasible to build a bridge across the railway line.

The bridge option has the advantages that:

- The path will remain relatively level rather than the height changes associated with the

underpass.

- A bridge is relatively unaffected by the geotechnical issues.
- The pathway will be more visible, increasing overall safety for pathway users.
- It is a more direct route to the north.
- It links the pathway to the Pukerua Bay shops and proposed toilets.
- It links to the overpass for connections to the railway station

As a consequence there will be further design works and consultation, that will delay the start of this project, but overall we consider that when completed it will provide a superior route.

Contact: Andrew Gray, Porirua City Council, AGray@pcc.govt.nz

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I would like to support Paul, Simon and Jonathan Kennett's letter regarding cycle helmets (*Windy Wheels* Feb 2003).

From feedback in my office there was general humor and disbelief that people were against the helmet laws for cycles! I also believe for most young people out there that helmet wearing is a

Non-issue and is not the reason why the under 20 year old is not cycling. There are a whole pile of other factors that need to be addressed.

You seem in you reply to be suggesting that all protective measures are all lies. It has been found that wrist guards are essential for roller bladers and now snow boarders. I think it's great that people are protecting themselves against possible broken wrists etc. I also know what it's like to see your friend with a bloody head after coming over the handlebars without a helmet. If all helmets stop is multiple stitches in the head I think they are worth wearing.

Yours, Yvonne Weeber

Reducing Danger on Our Roads

Over the last 40-50 years our roads have become very dangerous, noisy places, presenting an impression of aggression to children and other users.

Our children's future looks bleak as health and climate statistics show. The road is a dangerous place for them. They have been driven indoors and become reliant on TV and videos for entertainment, and they lack exercise and independence in their travel choices. The effects are apparent in our crime, suicide and obesity stats.

All CBD, suburban centre, and residential streets (especially around schools) must be reduced to 20kph to permit them to once again fulfill their purpose of a communal multi-purpose space safe for all ages especially children, to reverse the trends in their behaviour.

Land use planning can also make our streets less dangerous by permitting higher densities which will encourage use of the safer travel modes. Suburban sprawl based on the private car tends to promote lack of facilities for, and boredom within, children and young adults. Boredom can produce problems. Suburban areas must be permitted to become urban by permitting the traditional narrow privately developed three-four storey house similar to those by developers of multi-unit housing.

Housing without off-street parking must once again be permitted.

Daryl Cockburn
Architects & Planners, Vivian Street, Wellington

Events calendar

Please come to a meeting of "Living Streets" "Cycle Aware" "Green Bikes" "Transport 2000+" in Petone at 7.30 pm (to 9.30pm) at Screaming Turtle Café, 274 Jackson Street, opp Elizabeth Street. Meet Celia Wade-Brown, Hon Trevor Mallard (a commuter cyclist), John Poppleton and Brent Efford. CAW's activities have largely been focused on Wellington, so here's a chance to get things moving in the Hutt.

Contact: Neil Newman, tel 939 1133

2003 Cycling Conference dates confirmed

The fourth NZ cycling conference will be held in the Bruce Mason Centre, Takapuna on 10–11 October 2003. It will be followed, as usual, by the CAN Do, the annual get-together for all CAN members.

The conference is being hosted by North Shore City. The keynote speaker is Steven Norris, Chair of the UK National Cycling Strategy Board, and former UK Minister for Local Transport and Road Safety. The key focus of the conference will be on strategies and how to implement them.

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