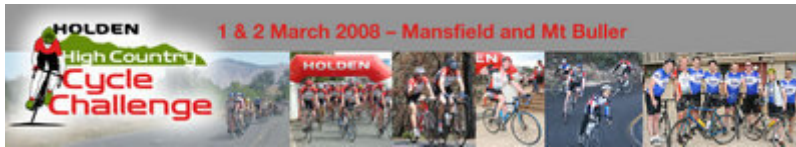


High Country Heaven in the Victorian Alps

Last weekend, I travelled to Mt Buller in Victoria, to participate in the Holden High Country Cycle Challenge. This event is in its third year, with over 650 cyclists from around Australia testing themselves against the elevation and gradient of the road to Mt Buller.



Participants arrive in the scenic town of Mansfield on the Friday night, and prepare themselves for Saturday, which involves a 56 kilometre ride around Mansfield in the morning, then a 47 kilometre ride to the summit of Mt Buller in the afternoon. Riders stay over in the ski village overnight, then descend with frightening speed the next morning to complete either a return trip to Mansfield or a 100 kilometre loop through Jamieson.

In the inaugural year, 2006, it was 35 degrees celsius in the shade, and about 50 degrees on the road, and the climb to the ski village of Mt Buller was brutal, with about 50% of the riders failing to complete the challenge. The hot weather caught organisers unawares and no water stations were available on the final 16 kilometre climb to the summit!

Happily, this year they got it all right. The organisation was faultless, the weather was perfect (about 24 degrees), and Mt Buller and Mansfield put on a superb welcome, including entertainment, hospitality and a genuine desire to enjoy the patronage of the hundreds of bike riders, and their families who had come to enjoy the weekend.

I can personally testify to the dollars spent on the weekend;

- two nights accommodation
- 6 meals and drinks
- extra supplies from the supermarket
- massage from the local sports therapist
- phone charger from Dick Smith
- fuel for the Tarago
- sunscreen from the chemist
- new bike pump and riding gloves from the bike shop

All this goes to show that events like these are good for local businesses. Strong businesses contribute to a healthy, vibrant community.

Your Kalamunda Chamber is proudly supporting the Tour de Perth cycling event on the 5-6 April. Hundreds of riders will ascend to Kalamunda on the Sunday, as will their families and spectators.

If you want your business to benefit from the Tour de Perth, contact Ande at the Chamber to express your interest in developing a creative offer that we can promote on your behalf.

Regards,

Robert Bentley
President