

Indoor ride helps foundation

By Lauren Wright

OFF the road and safe in the gym, the Tour de Bowral was a great success on Saturday, with Bowral Health Club wanting to make it an annual event.

With over 50 riders pedalling hard for the 12 hour event, over \$1000 was raised for the Ben Mikic Foundation.

Andrea Mikic, who jumped on a bike herself along with husband Darren, said it was an amazing day.

"We're just overwhelmed by what they've [Bowral Health Club] done for us," Mrs Mikic said.

"It's such an amazing success. Our complete thanks to the health club."

Mrs Mikic said the Highlands was an "amazing" community for giving up their time and was pleased the health club want to make the ride an annual event.

The funds raised will stay in the area and go directly towards local programs which educate cyclists and drivers about road safety.

"You've got to be seen. Be courteous, be considerate," Mrs Mikic said about cyclists on the road.

The Ben Mickic Foundation is putting \$14,000 towards the upgrade of the velodrome, with assistance from the Wingecaribee Council and the Southern Highlands Cycling Club.

Mrs Mikic said they are working hard to promote rider safety on the roads, and young cyclists of the Southern Highlands.

The Ben Mikic Foundation will use the funds to help with a several of their current programs, which include a cycle skills education program aimed at students which focuses on safe riding practices and bike equipment, mountain bike training with the aim of



RIDING HARD: Andrea Mikic is all smiles as she pedals for a good cause.

Photos by Roy Truscott

getting young cyclists off the roads and interaction with the bodies to increase road safety awareness campaigns.

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By Tahnae Goldworthy

A HOT humid day calls for a certain kind of outfit. Something cool, something light, something that will let your skin breathe.

Young Colo Vale mum Michelle Barden read the warm Highlands weather perfectly by stepping out in her short jumpsuit last week.

Every women's retail outlet has at least one version of this suit.

Whether it be the long pant design, short or mini shorts, designers are creating a comfortable yet stylish one piece perfect for the summer months.

Ms Barden's royal blue suit cinches in at the hips with a loose wide elastic gathering and connects to the singlet top that adds a feminine feel with the light lacework around the middle.

A pair of high strappy wedges lengthen her legs and add to the breezy summer feel while the black sunnies decorated with diamontes from Ally round it out.

A great casual but fashionable outfit perfect for combating the heat.



THE JUMPSUIT: Michelle Barden steps out in her royal blue jumpsuit on a hot Highlands day.

Photo by Tahnae Goldworthy

Vigilantes may be behind Exeter's felled trees

By Alison Balding

IT appears a vigilante environmental group may be responsible for the destruction of about 20 exotic trees in Cunningham Park, Exeter.

The mix of mature oaks, some believed to be almost 100 years old, and radiata pines were each poisoned, ring-barked or completely cut down on January 23.

Geoff MacBean used to own and operate Winter Hill Tree Farm.

He said he interrupted two women and one man in the act, who claimed to be from a well-regarded Southern Highlands environmental group.

"The week before, on January 12, I noticed a little plum tree had been illegally removed, which I reported to council, so when I was on my way to an Exeter Fire Brigade meeting this particular Sunday and I saw the three people clearing branches I decided to drive in," he said.

"I asked them if they had council permission and they told me they did because the trees were classified environment weeds, which as a professional tree grower of 30 years I knew wasn't true.

"The guy was wearing an orange vest like the ones council workers wear but I thought, 'it's a Sunday, do



BLATANT VANDALISM: Wingecaribee natural resources coordinator Greg Bray inspects the damage to trees in Cunningham Park, Exeter.

council work on a Sunday? No."

Mr MacBean took down the offending trio's number plates and reported the blatant destruction to police and the council.

"I can't believe they admitted it to me, they admitted they were responsible," he said.

"It is disgraceful, it is one of only a few spots where people can pull in and camp free for up to three nights and now it will have to be closed and the trees will have to come down."

Wingecaribee councillor

Duncan Gair commended Mr MacBean's actions.

"He did a terrific job in getting their registration numbers and passing that on to council and police," he said.

"I want to see that those responsible are made an example of and the full force of the law applied because we don't want to see this kind of thing happen again.

"There is a right and a wrong way to go about things.

"This, I believe, will cost council in excess of \$20,000 to remove the dead trees and replace them, and beyond

that the loss of the amenity will be noticeable for some time."

Cr Gair said the efforts of the callous vandals were likely to have been in vein.

"I will be pushing for the same exotic species to be planted to reflect the long history of exotics in that district, and in that park," Cr Gair said.

The Southern Highland News understands police have identified the offenders.

Story update: Wednesday's News

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