
MEDIA RELEASE

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Cycle the Bobbo - March 26 Ultramarathon runner and mountain biker to ride The Bobbo

Men might have more strength and speed, but mountain biker Meredith's got stamina and a stubborn streak to match any male cyclist – qualities she'll need cycling Sydney's toughest and most beautiful bike ride next month.

Normanhurst architect, Meredith Quinlan, aged 44, whose sports of choice are ultramarathons and 24-hour mountain bike rides, will test different skills when she enters the Bobbin Head Cycle Classic on March 26.

While it's clear that no one gets to be an ultramarathon runner and do wildly dangerous, 24-hour mountain bike rides without extraordinary endurance and determination, Meredith is modest about her capacity to compete in what she calls a short course - which is, in fact, the longest in the Bobbo – the 104-kilometre ride.

"Any decent girl rider would do more than 100 kilometres in a ride," Meredith said, but she is worried the course is a bit short for her to shine.

"I'm not very good at achieving speeds over short distances."

Although the Bobbo is a cycle classic, and not a race, Meredith is unapologetic when she says "everything's a race!".

Meredith started running when she was 31. A former gymnast, she said she squandered her twenties and, on reaching her thirties, decided she needed to exercise if she wanted to keep eating.

"That's when I dragged my old body out for 15 minutes twice a week to run," Meredith said.

It took four years, slowly increasing the duration and frequency of her runs, to build up to distance running.

Following in the footsteps of Dean Karnazes, author of Ultramarathon Man, Meredith started with a 50-miler (80 kilometres) and found she could do it. Advancing to the next stage - the 100-miler (160 kilometres) – she just kept getting better, eventually making the Australian ultramarathon track racing team six times.

Her real love though is running or riding in the bush. When injury forced her to take a rest from running, she started cycling to work – from Normanhurst to Ultimo - with a local commuter group the Easy Riders.

But running and riding in the bush are her real loves, which is why mountain bike riding appeals.

She's a believer in theories that time spent in the bush increases mental capacity and cognitive abilities.

"It's quite a good way of solving problems," she said, "sorting the wood from the trees. If I've had a stressful day at work, it's a good way to release the pressure."

Then again, she says, work is "a nice place to recover during the day between cycling or running sessions".

The Bobbin head Cycle Classic is organised by four local Rotary Clubs with Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury as a major partner and beneficiary of funds raised.

Register at <http://www.bobbinheadcycleclassic.com.au/index.php/register>.

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