

CYCLE CENTENNIAL

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CENTENNIAL PARKLANDS ADMINISTRATION SUGGEST THAT BUNCH TRAINING BE PROHIBITED IN CENTENNIAL PARK

For over forty years the Centennial Parklands have provided a haven for keen cyclists wishing to race and train away from the dangers of increasingly crowded public road system. In recent years, however, proposals by Centennial Parklands Administration (contra-flow lanes, speed calming devices and now what amounts to an effective ban on all bunch training) threaten a user group that accounts for over 25% of Grand Drive activity.

Background

In 2000/01, the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust commenced a Transport and Access Planning process designed to enhance the user experience by focussing on park access. The consultant survey used in the process was designed to measure park ACCESS. The survey suggested that cyclists made up less than 7% of park users. However, a subsequent survey of actual USE (carried out by Cycle Centennial) suggests that cyclists actually made up 26% of user activity on a Tuesday and 33% on a Sunday in August 2001. User responses to the consultant survey expressed concern that “packs” of cyclists “dominate park use”. The activity survey clearly shows that ‘bunch training’ actually occurs during only 7% of daylight hours.

There appears to be a culture of opposition to cycling in Centennial Park

Centennial Parklands position at present

This opposition to cycling is exemplified by two Centennial Park proposals. Firstly the proposal to put a contra-flow cycle lane on Grand Drive. This initiative ended when it was pointed out that a head-on collision between car and cycle would be roughly 120 times more damaging than a rear ender (car at 30kph, cycle at 25kph, where $e=mv^2$).

Secondly, at a time when interest in cycling has never been higher and the risks entailed in riding on public roads never more obvious, Centennial Parklands Administration are suggesting that ‘bunch training’ be ejected from the Park. It is proposed that, as an alternative, ‘bunch training’ be accommodated on a 200-metre stretch along Driver Avenue (in front of the Cricket and Sydney Stadium entrances); a proposal that is viewed by the NSW Police with some scepticism.

We urge you to sign and return the attached petition as soon as possible to Cycle Centennial by ‘snail mail’ or fax (address and number above). All signed petitions will be delivered to the Centennial Park Trustees and to the Premier of NSW.

Delegates to Cycle Centennial are Robert Barnes (St. George Cycling Club), John Buckton (President, Randwick-Botany Cycling Club), Phil McKnight (Treasurer, Sydney Cycling Club), and Fergus Neilson (Eastern Suburbs Cycling Club).

Endorsing cycling clubs: St George, Randwick-Botany, Sydney, Eastern Suburbs, Waratah Veterans, BRATS and STEAM – with a combined membership of 1,390.

PETITION OPPOSING SUGGESTIONS BY CENTENNIAL PARKLANDS ADMINISTRATION THAT BUNCH TRAINING BE PROHIBITED IN CENTENNIAL PARK

I, whose details appear immediately hereunder, endorse the following proposals put forward by Cycle Centennial acting as nominated representative of the seven cycling and triathlon clubs that regularly use the Centennial Parklands for both recreational cycling and for bunch training.

Name (capital letters please):	
Signature:	
Cycling club or affiliation:	
Suburb and postcode of residence:	

That, rather than managing the Park for ‘all activities at all times’, the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust follow the practice of other great parks (notably Central Park in New York) and manage the Parklands to accommodate different activities occurring at different times.

That, in order to further separate ‘bunch training’ from those activities with which it is most incompatible (dogs off the leash and rat-running commuters), Centennial Parklands :

- use the considerable monies saved by not implementing the contra-flow lane, speed calming devices and pedestrian crossings, to incorporate low level lighting into the landscaping program around Grand Drive so as to extend park usage in winter by cyclists, pedestrians, joggers, and horse riders;
- close Grand Drive to motorised traffic until 7:30am on Tuesday and Thursday mornings (allowing parking along Carrington Drive and outside the Randwick Gates); and
- assign ‘bunch training’ to specified days and timeslots in the early morning and late afternoon (while continuing to close park gates at sunset and accommodating evening diners at the Kiosk restaurant in parking slots on Parkes Drive north of Grand Drive).

That the most serious point of conflict between cars and cycles, the Randwick Gates, be managed by construction of a ‘park exit lane’ to accommodate the traffic build-up which, at present, banks back into the cycle lane at peak park exit times.

That the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust adopt an acceptable ‘Code of Conduct’ which:

- permits bunch training on designated days and at designated times on Grand Drive and other roads in Centennial Park;
- be applied in the context of those initiatives listed above;
- be adopted by all cycling clubs & triathlon clubs that use the park on a regular basis; and
- which focuses on ‘bunch management’ and cooperation with Park Administration (rather than merely re-stating at length the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust Regulations and the Australian Road Rules).

Note that, given the physics of drafting and the effects of gravity on riding downhill, ‘bunch training’, will inevitably involve bunches of more than 15 cyclists and speeds in excess of 30kph.

Note that ‘bunch training’ occurs only at limited times during the working week when other park activities are at relatively low ebb (primarily Tuesday and Thursday mornings 5:45am to 7:00am and Tuesdays and Thursdays evenings from 4:00pm to sunset).