

# The ups and downs of mountain bike riding

**LEISURE** cyclist turned mountain bike warrior and Townsville City councillor, Ray Gartrell, shares the ups and downs of his training program for the Hotrock 8 Hour event on June 19.

**This is the second of six instalments where our intrepid city councillor takes a light-hearted look at his training program.**

THE mountain bike from Mike Prentice of Top Brand Cycles is fitted out well but like anything new, it takes time to get a feel for the bike and what it can do, no wild pigs on this machine.

But it didn't take me long to inspect the terra firma up close, but more on that later.

Training is progressing well. One day on and one day off the bike has been reasonably easy however 40 to 60 minutes riding is not that long.

Taking on 'Easy Street' with Haydn Tilley (president of the Townsville Rockwheelers Club) I was in trouble early in the climb with fitness and in more trouble coming down.

I crashed to the ground on one of the turns. Some bruising and general cuts to the arms and legs but was happy with that... it could have been a lot worse.

I did longer sessions on Saturday

## Making Tracks

with Ray Gartrell



and Sunday, the leg muscles during all the rides are a little tight and my big behind is very sore.

I have not worn Lycra in any of my training sessions so far, I'm not sure if it's a good look for me!

My goal now is to complete the Hotrock 8 Hour at beautiful Lake Ross without incurring any injury. It will be a slow but sure ride, the granny gear will be in operation.

The Advancing Amigos all need to ride the course if at all possible to see exactly what punishment we are in for. Let's face it, my best work in the sporting sphere these days is an armchair expert at home.

I'm enjoying the riding — check out the website: [www.rockwheelers.com.au/events-a-races-mainmenu-33/hotrock-8-hour.html](http://www.rockwheelers.com.au/events-a-races-mainmenu-33/hotrock-8-hour.html) and register for the race. You will get a grandstand view of me trying to stay in the saddle.

□ As all bike riders will tell you, comfort is everything, particularly for the blokes. Top Brand Cycles on Charters Towers Rd is having a free Bike Fit Night on Thursday at 6pm. If comfort is king, then don't miss the chance.