

Push to be first woman across the line

JENNI King, the current mountain bike ride marathon distance national champion, has her sights firmly fixed on being the first female to take out the Mike Carney Toyota Paluma Push, one of the Townsville 400 Festival highlights, to be held on July 24.

"In hosting Jenni for this year's push, we've certainly provided a monumental challenge for our top local male riders," Rockwheelers Mountain Bike Club event coordinator Peter Gibson said.

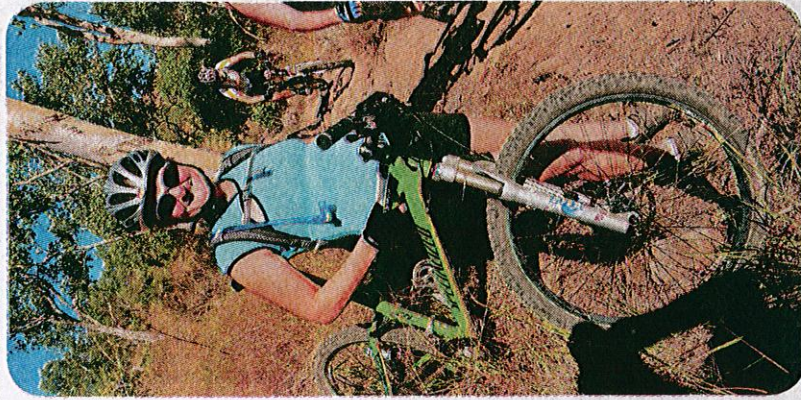
"Her involvement constitutes a wonderful boost to the Rockwheelers' efforts in promoting mountain biking, and in particular, encouraging participation by women and juniors.

"Currently, Jenni is in Europe aiming to qualify for the world championships so she will be in top form for the Paluma Push, regarded by many as Queensland's biggest mountain bike event outside south-east Queensland. Between 400 - 500 competitors have taken part each year over the last nine years and we expect the limit of 500 will participate in this year's push." The approximately 60km point to

point adventure mountain bike ride starts in Paluma Village, winds its way through World Heritage rainforest to Paluma Dam, down into big timber and open cattle country and finishes at the historic tin mining settlement of Hidden Valley.

The course consists of dirt road, old 4WD tracks and sections of cowpad single track with some climbs and lots of fun down hills. The Paluma Push recreation course is about 42km long and is recommended for novice to intermediate riders. The Paluma Push Competition Course, with extra technical sections, difficult climbs and challenging descents, is recommended for more experienced and fitter riders. Over its 10-year history, the Paluma Push has developed into an iconic mountain bike ride and an annual 'must do' fun and challenging event, Mr Gibson said.

"Competitors are primarily motivated, healthy people ranging in age from teenagers through to 70 years plus who enjoy a bit of adventure. Most are North Queenslanders but this year riders from as far away as Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra have also registered."



MIKE CARNEY TOYOTA PALUMA PUSH

- // Date: Sunday, July 24
- // Starts: 9am
- // Race course: Paluma village, Patuma Dam, Hidden Valley
- // Cost: free to spectators
- // Best vantage points: Paluma village (start) and Hidden Valley (finish)

