

Limbs 4 Life peer support volunteer Gerry Jenkins shares his experience of participating in the 2006 Around the bay in a day challenge.

One leg around the Bay Gerry Jenkins

What was I doing in Sorrento at 7.30 on a cold wet Sunday morning? I must have lost the plot somewhere along the way. If I hadn't talked my office mates into joining me, I would have skipped the whole thing and stayed between the sheets. The double espresso soon kicked in and my peddles started turning faster and faster in an effort to keep up with the group.

The ATB experience is one that I'll cherish for the rest of my life. I had never experienced anything of this scale before. Over 14,000 bicyclists participated, mostly 2 wheelers, some unicyclists and a handful of recumbents such as myself. Our office team was decked out in the same Lycra uniform proudly displaying our company logos. It was great being part of the team. We tried to stay within eyesight of one another but that soon proved impossible because of the massive crowd of bikers.



An hour after the start, there wasn't much left in my tank when I reached the foot of Mount Martha. I grabbed a sleeve of energy gel and swallowed hard. Then cranked the iPod up a notch and just peddled like mad in low gear. It was a 20 minute climb and I think that everybody passed me twice.

Some time later, I made it to Frankston, the official half way stop. It was a remarkable atmosphere. Hundred of bikers we're hanging around, recharging their batteries and psyching themselves up for the final leg. At this point, I felt confident that the worse was behind me. I was determined to chip away at the ride and make it all the way. A couple more sleeves of energy gel and back on the trike I went.

Turning on to Beach Road was a major lift. Surely the end was near. At this stage it was grind... grind... grind. The adrenalin must have been kicking in because I was neither sore nor tired; through Brighton, then St Kilda and then South Melbourne with the Telstra Dome in sight! The peloton seemed to narrow the closer we got to our destination.

Finally through to the finish line at Docklands! What a rush... I was overcome by a tremendous sense of accomplishment. What started as a dream 4 months ago became a reality.

We've already set our sights on ATB 2007 210km. We're hoping that the

DaimlerChrysler team will be the biggest one yet!

For information about the ATB and other events visit Bicycle Victoria web site
www.bv.com.au



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