

## MY RIDE

### THE MAWSON TRAIL

Starting just north-east of Adelaide CBD and travelling to the outback town of Blinman in the Flinders Ranges, the Mawson Trail is the ideal option for mountain bikers wanting to travel through South Australia's regional and remote rural areas.

Over nine hundred kilometres long, the trail includes little-used country roads, State Forest and National Park fire trails, farm access tracks and unmade or unused road reserves. The Trail avoids, where possible, heavy traffic and bitumen roads, leading riders into the remote areas of the Flinders Ranges.

The Trail takes riders first through the Adelaide Hills, traversing forests, farmland and historic town such as Lobethal and Birdwood. It passes through the world-famous Barossa wine region to the mid-north towns of Kapunda and Burra, and from here winds past the towns of Hallett and Spalding, through the Bundaleer Forest and the Flinders Ranges, deep in the Australian Outback.

The final Mawson Trail arrow directs riders into the front bar of the Blinman pub, the perfect place to celebrate finally completing the Mawson Trail!

**Maps.** A full set of Mawson Trail maps are included in your registration fee. At 1:75,000, they're your essential guide to riding the trail.

A map of each day's route is available at the Information Table at each campsite. This indicates locations of refreshment and lunch stops.

The route is fully supported which means that the roads you will be riding during the event will have a far greater level of supervision than they would ordinarily. Before the cycle route is opened for riders, our signage volunteers put out directional signage to get you on to and off the Mawson Trail, plus warning signs (such as CAUTION CYCLISTS AHEAD for other traffic), while other volunteers set up the morning refreshment station.

Even though we put in a support / safety net greater than you would normally expect along quiet country roads it is important to remember that the roads we use are open to other traffic and normal road rules apply. This means that at all times you should ride to the left of the roadway, obey the road rules and look out for your fellow riders and other traffic.

We travel along mostly low traffic-volume rural roads but sometimes we have to travel sections of busier roads and occasionally on the bitumen. Our volunteer marshals, support crews and mobile mechanics are there to direct and assist you. Please help them by always following their directions and at all times ride no more than two abreast, and even then, only if conditions allow.

Mawson Trail directional arrows dot the whole route, attached to signposts, fencing and other infrastructure. The signs can blend in with the landscape, with some of the colours reflecting the unique outback landscape, so you need to be on the lookout or you might miss that crucial turn! View more details in the Mawson Trail Route Navigation info sheet.

As well as the Mawson Trail signage, you should keep a lookout for official Bicycle SA signs indicating directions off and on the Mawson Trail. These are a combination of small red directional arrows, plus signs notifying you about upcoming stops or hazards, as well as big caution signs for other road users. Be aware that just because the rider in front of you is heading up a particular road doesn't necessarily mean that it is the official cycle route!

Ride marshals may be positioned at a particular road hazard where extra caution is required. Please be alert and heed their warnings and advice.

**Single Track.** Almost every day you'll be negotiating single track; some days more than others. If you need to stop suddenly or want to get off your bike, take care to move off the track as much as possible, or choose an a section where the track opens out, so you can leave the trail without having too much impact on the vegetation.

The same rules / conventions apply when sharing single track with fellow riders. When passing call out clearly "Track right" (or "Track left" if you can't pass on the right). And if faster riders appear from behind, give them space to pass, so they don't have to break their rhythm.

**Gates.** Along the Mawson Trail you ride through many private properties and access routes where gates must be left as found. If you come to a shut gate, please do not leave it open for the riders behind you, as they may not realize that the gate ought to be shut (why would they, when it was open when they got to it!). Gates **MUST** be left as found.

The SAG Wagon has access along almost the entire Mawson Trail, with pre-arranged vehicle access arranged through Forestry, DEW and private land owners. The SAG Wagon has keys to locked gates, enabling access to provide rear support, and in case of emergency.

## **WATER**

You should carry with you at least two large (750ml) water bottles (bidons) and / or a hydration pack, and fill these up at each opportunity.

Refreshment stops and lunch stops are placed along the Mawson Trail approximately every 25km – 30km. Make sure you stop and take on water throughout the day and drink every 10 minutes whether you feel thirsty or not. Feeling thirsty is a sign that may already be dehydrated.

## RIDE MARSHALS

The volunteer Ride Marshals are the angels on bikes who support you along the route. Clearly identified with reflective vests, the Ride Marshals are always there with a smile, supporting word and of course a hand with puncture fixing, brake and gear adjusting and any amount of useful advice to keep you going. You'll see them at the departure gate each morning, ready with a bike pump if needed, and you may of course see them on the Trail. The Ride Marshals pay particular attention to riders in the back third of the group, so they don't often arrive in camp until very late in the day, tired but happy with another job well done.

## SAG WAGON

The 4WD SAG Wagon follows the last group of riders and collects the signage on the way. In the event of an accident or breakdown the SAG Wagon will collect you and your bike and transport you to the finish. You can contact the SAG Wagon on 0438 438 846. Other roaming support vehicles travel along 2WD accessible sections of the route and will stop for you if you have your bike rested on its saddle by the roadside.

To avoid the SAG Wagon driving past while you are away from the Trail (toilet stop, sightseeing, etc.) please place your bike clearly visible on the side of the Trail.

Please inform the SAG Wagon, Refreshment Stop or Lunch volunteers if you plan to take a detour to a tourist site, winery or pub, etc. We won't necessarily wait for you as you while away the hours on the pub verandah, but at least we can let you know if you'll be unsupported for the rest of the day's route.

## SETTING OUT EACH DAY

Once you have packed and loaded your luggage it's time to saddle up and hit the Trail. Before you leave the campsite make sure you fill all your water bottles and even though the sun may not yet be much above the horizon, apply plenty of SPF30+ sunblock.

The route opens each morning from the campsite at 7:30am (when it's a long day ahead we may open the route at 7am) and closes at dusk each evening (or as soon as the SAG Wagon follows the last rider into campsite). We would like you to leave the morning campsite no later than 8am each day so we can pack up and move on to our next home and get it ready for when you arrive.

Please don't leave the campsite before 7.30am (or 7am when we start early. Any change to the route open times will be announced at the rider briefing each evening at 7pm) as we have to get signs, marshals and refreshment stops set up in advance along the first part of the Trail and we don't want you riding along an unsupported cycle route.

Our SAG Wagon will leave the campsite after the official last rider set off, and follows the last group of riders.

## IT MAKES TRAIL SENSE

We want your help to make the ride as safe as can be. Here are seven practical things you can do to help us help you and other riders:

1. Be alert at all times. Pay attention and look where you are going. Keep a look out for who is behind you and who is beside you especially when riding close to others. Just because you are surrounded by people on bikes doesn't mean that the risk of a collision has been eliminated. In tight bunches it is considerably riskier. It is easy to accidentally clip another rider's wheel and lose your stability. Indicate and call out your intention to slow down, stop or change direction.
2. Be predictable. Always ride so that others can have proper warning of your movements. Ride in a straight predictable line and don't wobble all over the road or stop suddenly. When passing other riders always announce your intention by shouting "passing" before you overtake the rider in front. And always pass on their right hand side. Never pass on their left.
3. Ride at a slower than normal speed down hills. Riding in a large event is not the same as riding the open road on your own. You have to allow for other riders and passing traffic. In crowded conditions you have less room to manoeuvre so you have to ride slower down hills and on the flat than you would normally do riding solo. You should always be prepared to stop. Expect the unexpected around the next corner! There could be another rider stopped on the road or a branch fallen from a tree, or any other obstacle.
4. Ride only in the left lane and on narrow two-lane roadways ride in single file. On approaches to towns and in larger built-up areas you can expect to share the road with other traffic. If you ride two abreast or too far out from the edge you increase the dangers for others trying to pass you by forcing them out into oncoming traffic. We recommend that you always allow for others to pass you on your right side.
5. Stop at all red traffic lights and stop signs. Remember, there aren't any special road closures on the Outback Odyssey so normal road rules apply. You must obey the directions of ride marshals. They are doing their job to see that everyone enjoys a safe ride.
6. Keep well clear of other riders. Remember if your front wheel tips the rear wheel of the rider in front it is YOU who falls. And it is often the poor soul behind you who suffers a major catastrophe trying to avoid what for you may be only a minor incident.
7. Look out for each other. If you find someone in distress, stop and offer help; just being there can provide all the support that is needed.

## SUSTAINABLE TRAILS – A quick lesson!

The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) have established themselves as world leaders in sustainable trails development. The South Australian mountain biking community has embraced the IMBA trail building guidelines with enthusiasm and adapted it to local conditions with promising results so far.

Bicycle SA and Adelaide Mountain Bike Club, along with Green Corps and local contractors have designed sustainable trail designs at Cudlee Creek, Mt Torrens, Melrose township and the Eagle Mountain Bike Park. These designs have become the backbone of the local MTB scene, and have received rave reviews for both their stability and their engaging rides. All very nice, but what are they?

### FULL BENCH TREAD WITHOUT SLOPE

The diagram below shows a cross section of a trail with full bench tread (where tread refers to the bearing surface). This is preferable as it uses the mineral soil that hardens well and is most 'erosion proof'. Out slope helps to ensure good rainage.

An average gradient of 10% is regarded as sustainable, with short steeper sections acceptable, provided they do not exceed half of the side slope gradient. Sustainable trails feature regular undulations, so even on an overall descent there are still short rises to help ensure good drainage. These can also make trails more fun to ride or can be used to provide short rests on tough climbs.

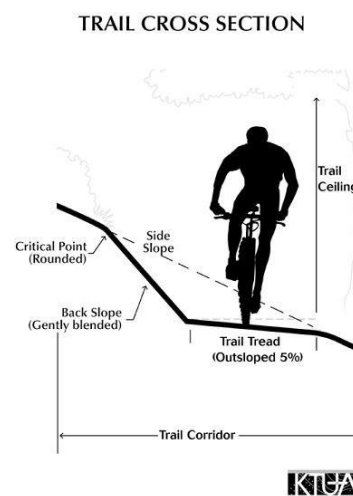


DIAGRAM COURTESY IMBA

### APPROPRIATE TRAIL FLOW

The type of environment hosting the trail generally dictates this feature. Dense vegetation and thick forest tends to suit tight and technical trails better as it keeps speeds slower where sight lines are only short. Open and flowing trails are best suited to open areas with good lines of sight as they accommodate higher speeds more safely. Regardless of style, consistent flow in a trail helps to minimise the need for heavy braking, thus reducing potential erosion.

On your journey along the Mawson Trail you will see many examples of Bicycle SA's extensive work in sustainable Trail development. From Cudlee Creek in the Adelaide Hills to Melrose in the Southern Flinders Ranges, you will have the chance to ride some of the most sustainable and exciting trails South Australia has to offer!

## THE MOUNTAIN BIKE CODE OF PRACTICE

RIDE ONLY ON FORMED TRAILS DESIGNATED FOR CYCLING

RIDE LIGHTLY AND LEAVE NO TRACE OF RUBBISH

OBEY 'NO BICYCLE' SIGNS

CONTROL YOUR BIKE

RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS

SHARE THE TRAIL

DON'T FRIGHTEN THE ANIMALS

PLAN YOUR RIDE

AVOID RIDING IN WET, MUDDY CONDITIONS

DO NOT TAKE SHORT CUTS OR FORM NEW TRAILS

TELL OTHER PEOPLE ABOUT THIS CODE

KEEP TRAILS OPEN BY SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND  
AND SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE MOUNTAIN BIKING

*Bicycle SA reserves the right to stop an individual's ride on health and safety grounds. We recommend that all riders insure themselves for Personal Accident Cover. Third Party and Personal Accident insurance covers Bicycle SA members only.*

For more information go to [www.bikesa.org.au](http://www.bikesa.org.au) or email [office@bikesa.org.au](mailto:office@bikesa.org.au)