

Tour de Rocks

In Armidale we muster before the Sparrows can liberate a fart.
We roll 'em down the hill to Servies, not long now until we start.

We check our brakes and pump our tyres and give our chains a spray.
With the wailing of the bagpipes we're rolling and away.

We're barely up the first hill as we're climbing out of town.
When the legs start screaming at us and the lungs tell us to slow down.

But we quickly shift our focus to old Nev riding on just one leg.
And the things he's had to process, I can't deal with in my head.
And we think about the little boy who goes for Chemo again today.
And if you asked the brave little guy he'd trade places with **any** one of us today.

The tar gives way for dirt roads and the landscape opens up.
And we breathe New England's finest – bugger me if this doesn't fill your cup.

We rest our legs at Chandler School and feast the mighty platter.
After cakes and the great slices, those hills don't seem to matter.

So off we go, we're Junction Bound, just some small **undulations** till we're there.
We get to lunch, we're **buggered**, sweat rolls dripping from our hair.

But we think about our mother, our cousin or our friend, who's in a bigger battle
and right there our thoughts transcend.

You see it's not about the burning pain that's building in our legs, the taste of
blood upon our lungs, or the thumping in our heads.

We do this ride to help those folks that can't be here today.

We do this ride in the hope our kids, won't know what cancer is one day.

Down the hill we scream again to our campsite at The Junction.
After a quick dip in the river our legs once again begin to function.

Another feast, more miracles from our brilliant support crew.
An early night, we need our rest, for tomorrow's a big ride too.

The calm of dawn is breached abruptly "dead skunk in the middle of the road"
comes the bark from Sullivan.

The slumbering riders start to stir, cursing the violation to the early morning air.
But, it doesn't last – the frowns morph to grins – for today we ride for the little girl,
that is about to lose her hair.

We ride for our mate that's lost his Dad far too soon and our sister in remission.
If we can make just **one** life better, we will have done our mission.
We ride to thank the nurses, who do superhuman things.
The surgeons and the volunteers, for it's them that gives us wings.

We pack up camp and don our knicks, wave the kids away with pride.
Today's their turn to have some fun, the future of the ride.

Another day, another 2 or 3 or 4 **small** hills.
Those with cricks and aches and pains, are munching on their pills.

Somehow, we get to Bellbrook, well.... those that haven't hit a Deer.
And a small fool hardy few divert to the Pub for a cheeky Beer.

After lunch we hit the paddocks and traverse the landscape green and rich.
We cross the streams a plenty **most** go through without a hitch.
The ride is long, the legs are done, the hills are pretty bad.
But that's nothing on the family growing up without their dad.

So, we muster up our last resources and crank our shafts some more.
We're on to Willawarrin with the Pubs beckoning back door.

The schooners flow, the banjos twang as we regail the days adventures.
"Just one beer" is the common call, we'll see how the evening ventures.

Sat'dys morning with a heavy head, but a heart pumped full of pride.
We mount our bikes, one final time, the last day of the ride.

To South West Rocks, our journey's end, on the headland we'll stand as one.
We'll say some words to celebrate, the good we've all just done.

So, raise your glass and take a sip for each other have a drink.
For the day we hope and pray for may be closer than you think.

By Tim "Knighto" Knight 2019