

Pain for Gain across the Nullarbor Plain

Two blokes from country NSW, one from the UK and a support driver known only as 'DZ', are about to take on the challenge of a lifetime - riding their bikes from Perth to Sydney in 22 days.

On 27 February, Nathanael Groves of Lithgow, Matthew Sheppard of Coonamble and Murray Campbell from the UK will embark on a 200km-a-day endurance ride, starting in Freemantle, WA, and finishing at Sydney's famous Bondi Beach on 20 March. Inspired by a couple of mates who are now quadriplegics due to separate accidents, the three have been in training for their big ride for the last ten weeks; including seven weeks in the UK and three weeks in Perth.

"It all started in April 2007" said Nat Groves, "when we set out on a 12 month working holiday around the world which took us to North America, Canada, South America, the UK, Europe and South East Asia. Towards the end of the year we decided we wanted to set a challenge for ourselves. In a pub one night in Edinburgh, Scotland, the challenge was set – we would ride across Australia for charity."

"We understood from the word *go* how difficult the cycle would be, but we wanted to put ourselves out of our comfort zones and do it for something that we were passionate about. This is when we chose to do the ride for *ParaQuad NSW*. We have been motivated by the way in which two of our mates are now facing life's challenging hurdles in their everyday lives. Both friends tragically sustained spinal cord injuries in separate accidents (one in a car accident and one in a diving accident) and are now quadriplegics."

"We have set up a website through *Everyday Hero* which has a direct link to enable anyone to donate to ParaQuad NSW. The website address is www.everydayhero.com.au/cycle. The money we raise will help people with spinal cord injury and their families to become more independent and be able to participate in their local communities" said Nat.

ParaQuad NSW (the Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of NSW) was founded over 46 years ago to empower people with spinal cord injury to be as independent as possible, and provides accommodation; personal care; nursing, occupational therapy and social work consultancy; education and training; information; and advocacy for people who have had a catastrophic spinal cord injury.

The most recent report from Dr Raymond Cripps of the Australian Institute of Health & Welfare (AIHW) shows that transport-related accidents accounted for 46 per cent and falls accounted for 33% of all new cases of spinal cord injury in 2005-2006. Men account for 82 per cent of all new spinal cord injuries, which occur most frequently in those aged 15-24.

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Media enquiries

For further information, or to interview **Nathanael Groves or Matthew Sheppard**: please contact Deborah Schofield, Public Relations Manager, on (02) 8741 5627 or 0448 018 439 or 0419 443 494, or by email at deborah.schofield@paraquad.org.au.

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