



Leaning it right over in Williamstown. Photo • Simon Hayes

We Ain't Doin it for the Money!

Recently I was asked the question, "Why are you doing this sport?" It was then followed up with the comment that women's cycling doesn't exactly offer the opportunity of a life of financial stability. So why am I so driven to committing my whole life to it at this point in time? My response was straight forward. I want to be the best I can be at the sport that I have chosen to commit myself to.

As I have probably mentioned before, I have been cycling for about 11 years and if I walked away from the sport tomorrow I would feel like I haven't given myself the best opportunity to achieve my goals and the past 11 years would be incomplete. When I do eventually walk away from cycling, I want to be able to say I gave it everything I could. So I can feel satisfied and be able to embark on the next chapter of my life without any regrets. In saying this, I am aware that the reality still remains that no matter how much commitment a female cyclist gives to the sport, the enormous divide between the men's and women's salaries will still remain, at

least in my cycling lifetime. So if it was about the money, I would be doing something else.

I do cycling for the love of the sport, the people that I meet and ultimately the satisfaction that comes along with achieving my goals.

Cycling has not only given me success in the sporting arena, but has also helped me to grow and develop in all areas of my personal life. It has shaped me into the person I am today. I met some of my best friends through cycling—friends that I am sure I will have for life. I have travelled the world, seen some of the most incredible athletes and have been afforded experiences that if I wasn't an elite athlete would not have presented themselves. Yes, there may be more money in tennis or golf, but for me what I have experienced so far through cycling is priceless.

I'd be lying if I said cycling didn't involve sacrifice and there certainly are times that are testing to the resolve. It's the days when the alarm goes off at 5.10am and I stumble out the door to be all kitted up only to find the weather has turned on me and it is now raining.

Knowing that I have 170km of motor pacing with water spraying in my face for the next five hours before I can even contemplate walking back through the door certainly makes me think about why I'm doing this intense sport! But when earlier this year I won my third consecutive National Title I felt such a great sense of satisfaction that I didn't need to think why I do it.

Women's cycling is certainly on the rise and we all do it for our own reasons. It might be to become the next Olympic champion. Maybe just to get around in the bunch on the weekend training ride, or just for that certain familiarity of pulling into the coffee shop, dressed in the lycra to sip the morning latte and feel as though we have ridden far enough to have earned it! Any of these can give intense satisfaction.

I feel women's cycling has lots to offer and I think the increasing number of women taking up the sport each year is testament to that. So however your love of cycling may have developed, be sure to get out there and just have fun and enjoy it because that's what we do! 🍄