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### The Month Of Madness #25 (apologies to A.B. "Banjo" Paterson)

There was movement at the cyclery, for the word had passed around  
That the sun was shining down on Month of Madness, number 25 today,  
And had joined the west head riders - it was worth eight thousand pounds,  
So all the MOM hacks had gathered to the fray.  
Some tried and noted riders from pelotons near and far  
Had mustered at TC from early light,  
For the cyclists love hard riding on the WestHead new laid tar,  
And Fester snuffs the battle with delight.

There was Green P, his holidays well and truly given up,  
The old man with his legs as clean as snow;  
But few could ride beside him when his blood was fairly up -  
He would go wherever Prince and man could go.  
And Caveman and his woman came down to lend a hand,  
Few better cyclists ever held the bars;  
Not even a suicidal field mouse threw him or a nearly broken chain,  
He learnt to ride while racing in southern sun, and even rain.

And one was there, a Tiger Woman on a small and fancy beast,  
It was something like The Bike God's only slightly undersized,  
She has a touch of pure aggression - three parts triathlete at least -  
And such as are by this Peloton highly prized.  
There was Matt and Mark and Michael - just the sort that won't say die -  
And they all took turns at lead while the rest just held on for their dear lives;  
And they all bore the badge of gameness in their bright and fiery eyes,  
While we pedaled at 48 k's per hour through the main street of St Ives.

But still so far to ride out to West Head, one would doubt their power to stay,



And Fester was heard mumbling in his beard, "That Tiger Woman needs to find first gear or drop her chain

For the Fester Month of madness still has 14 days to go,

These hills are far too rough for such as me."

And we waited sad and wistful – while Claire's puncture was on the mend-

"James thought we ought to have several more of those," ;

"I warrant we'd be better with coffee from Stelvio instead,

Triathlons are never this hard – we all agreed.

"Each March the Peloton from Turramurra rides the sweeping and twisted roads that run all the way up Kosciusko's steepest side,

...and Tuscany where the hills are twice as steep and twice as rough,

Where a cyclist's cleats strike firelight from the pedals every stride,

The rider that holds his own is good enough.

And the Turramurra cyclists on their bikes make them all their own,

When even Roadies Day Off has them polishing their machine;

I have seen full many cyclists since I first commenced to ride,

But nowhere yet such cyclists have I seen."

So today we went – and found the undulations along the West Head road -

We raced away towards the turn around,

And Fester gave his orders, "Boys, someone please give me O2 or take me home,

No use to try for fancy riding now.

Patsy, Adriana and Sandy, you must wheel them to the right, at the top of what we now know as The Wall.

Ride boldly now, and never fear the spills,

For never yet was rider that could challenge Fester once he'd made a call,

Specially as he didn't climb the next to or very last of those evil little hills."

So Tiger Woman and James rode out to wheel them – Green P was racing on the wing

Where the best and boldest riders take their place,

And he raced his Pinarello past them, and he made the cranks and pedals sing

With the tyres fairly burning, as he challenged them to a race.

Then the B2's halted for a moment, when we turned onto McCarr's Creek Road,

And we saw our well-loved rest stop full in view,

And then we charged off beneath the calls from Caveman "Roll Out or fear the lash",

And off on the road through Terrey Hills we fairly flew.

Then fast the Tiger Woman followed, and on the road where Terminator usually attacks

She bounded out, around, and to the front to take the lead,

And the cadence woke the legs up, and thighs burned fiercely in the pack

From 25 days of madness and insufficient sleep.

And onward, ever onward, the Peloton held its way,

To where the National Park meets ocean and you can see the sets of Summer Bay

And then Fester muttered fiercely, "We may bid the mob good day,

No man can hold that woman up the steeper side."

When they reached the mountain's summit, even Steve Brit took a rest,

It well might make even Chardonnay hold his breath,

The road crew had stripped the tarmac, and now Mona Vale road was full

Wave sized ripples, and any slip would hurt.  
But the Peleton from Turrumurra fully trusted tyres and their tread,  
And the single line formed up with Andrew at the rear,  
And they raced down that old highway like a torrent down its bed,  
While wildlife and other cyclists watched in very fear.

The Peloton sent road kill flying, but every rider kept their feet,  
We cleared the fallen timber in our stride,  
And Fester and even Green P never lifted from their seat -  
It was grand to see those KOM contestants ride.  
Through the tea tree and residential areas, on the rough and broken ground,  
Down the hillsides at a racing pace we went;  
And we never pushed the small cog till we landed safe and sound,  
At the bottom of that terrible descent.

Some riders turned a little early as the others climbed the furthest hill,  
While car drivers passing by often gave us a friendly "toot",  
Saw the pedals driven fiercely, the usuals were right among them still,  
As they raced across the clearing in pursuit.  
Then they lost those B2 riders for a moment, where Akuna Bay road and West Head meet  
In Ku-Ring Gai Chase, but a final glimpse would reveal  
On a dim and distant hillside, Sandy, Fester, Caveman and Adriana racing yet,  
With Tiger Woman snapping at their wheels.

And she ran them single-handed till their sides were white with foam.  
She followed like Cancellara on Armstrong's track,  
Till she passed them going slow and over heated, then she led them all for home,  
And as a single cohesive unit brought them back.  
But our hardy pulmonary specialist could scarcely raise a trot,  
He was sweat from hip to shoulder from the ride;  
But his pluck was still undaunted, and his courage fiery hot,  
For never yet has Uncle Fester admitted to being tired.

And back at Turrumurra, where the après velo is all the rage  
And the cyclists are refreshed and tell their lies  
Where the coffee is pure as crystal, and the cappuccino's fairly blaze  
Around 930 on every Month of Madness Day,  
Where The Bike God plans the next challenging club ride  
To the southern highlands, ACT or Snowies, or that bloody Bumble Hill  
The Month of Madness is a household phrase today,  
And the cyclists tell the stories of their rides.