



Sara Carrigan

by Rachael Jansen

IT'S SOMETHING you may not have done since you were a kid, or maybe you've never done it at all, but going for a bike ride is something you can do at any age.

You can do it on your own, or with friends or family, you can set your own pace and whether you do it for fun or fitness, you'll reap some health benefits.

The Gold Coast has more than 600km of bikeways and several cycling clubs whose lycra-clad members can be seen roadside across town in increasing numbers.

Olympic cycling champion Sara Carrigan has spent the two years since her retirement running her own cycling school

and encouraging Gold Coasters to get on their bikes. She is enthusiastic about the increasing numbers of bike riders she has noticed over the years.

"When I first started, hardly anybody was riding," Sara says. "But then, every year I came back (from half a year living overseas) there was that many more people riding."

Now, she says, there are more women joining clubs and taking up pedal power, attracted to the social aspect as much as the fitness benefits.

"For them it is a social time, as well as their exercise time," Sara says. "For some it's a confidence thing too – a lot of these ladies have never ridden a bike before.

"They're just so scared and don't know how to do it.

Once the fear has subsided, the fun comes and the improvement.

"(Teaching them) is so much more than I ever expected it to be. For me, that's been so rewarding."

Sara runs a Go for Gold program, including a beginners' ride where people learn to safely ride in groups.

"When you're riding, you don't even realise you're exercising because you're chatting to the person beside you, soaking up the environment, and being in the moment," she says.

Join up at
saracarrigan.com