

# Rod Mildner



## **“THE ROCKET from WARREN”**

Rod Mildner and his wife Kate own and operate the property “Billabulla”, a four and a half thousand hectare grazing property on the Macquarie River floodplain about forty kilometres north of Warren in Western New South Wales. Their property is a very flexible cell grazing system with around 160 paddocks ranging in size from 10ha to 300ha with the majority being around 16ha in size.

This unique grazing business has evolved from Merino and beef breeding enterprises with some cash cropping to a business that grows pasture and then attempts to match the feed available and the potential season length to various trading options with sheep and cattle. Beef breeding still occurs as well as small amounts of pasture cropping.

Rod’s interest in cycling started many years ago with the Warren Triathlon and he also has a strong interest in Aussie Rules Football. He played Aussie Rules in Orange and later played for the Dubbo Demons Aussie Rules team where his son James also played with his father in the same team. Rod enjoys going to the Warrumbungle’s as the terrain is so different to that surrounding Warren where it is mainly flat and even. His main reason for riding is to keep fit and he enjoys meditation as he rides. Rod's motto is: Stay Hard- Stay Hungry –Stay Alive. What a great way to live life.



Rod Mildner known as The Rocket from Warren has many interests as can be seen by the included photos. The first photo was taken at The Old Bank music shop in Dubbo and from the way he is holding the guitar, Rod is a **ROCKER ROCKET** from way back. Rod also likes taking his motorbike for a boat ride when the Macquarie River has water flowing strongly - let's hope he doesn't hit a snag.



Here we see Rod together with his wife Kate and his sister Suzanne celebrating a special happy occasion held at the family property "Billabulla".

## Zoo2Zoo



Rod knows every roadway around his home town of Warren and from what you hear from the locals, he rides around 200 kms a week. This photo shows just how keen Rod is of cycling as he takes on the roads around Warren following some heavy rain.



Rod has taken part in what he describes as his most favourite ride and that is the Melbourne to Dubbo Zoo2Zoo where he has participated for six years in a row. It is an event he describes as having awesome climbs, a variety of terrains, amazing participants and great support crew. He has made so many friends as a result. This photo was taken during one of those rides at Dead Horse Gap which is situated on the Alpine Way near Thredbo. This is one of the highest places in Australia with a road access.

Here we see Rod pictured with cycling friends Trudy Marquardt, Bob Sheridan and Stu Clifford during The Mudgee Cycling Classic event held in Mudgee.





This photo was taken prior to the start of another cycling event called the Tour De OROC where considerable money was raised for the Macquarie Homestay which is now proving to be so valuable in providing accommodation for those families who have members attending Dubbo Base Hospital for treatment. This event is organised by the Rotary Club of South Dubbo.

Rod Mildner has been a great advocate for raising funds for The Black Dog Institute. During Covid, a number of fundraising events have had to be postponed including a number of Zoo2Zoo events however fortunately the 2021 Melbourne to Dubbo Zoo2Zoo was able to go ahead and Rod was able to complete his sixth such event. The riders covered over 1350 kms and climbed over 13,000 metres during the ride so as you can imagine this event was certainly a challenging one. Prior to the event, Rod set a target of \$5,000.00 to raise for the Black Dog Institute with his efforts actually raising \$7364.00. What a wonderful achievement and one that he can be very proud of.

Rod is a keen writer of poetry and has written a piece about the Melbourne to Dubbo Zoo2Zoo which has now become legendary and a feature of each event. Riders and support crew stop at Yarck on the ride to Dubbo and at the Yarck Hotel Rod is always requested to perform his piece of Poetry. This feature of the ride will always remain in the memories of participants.



Rod Mildner can be very proud of his achievements. As well as running a successful farming operation he has been a talented AFL footballer, a very talented cyclist as well as a great fundraiser for charity. His ability as a poet is also now being recognised.

In a “Blast from the Past” here we see Rod taking a fantastic mark for the Dubbo Demons against tough Mudgee opposition in an AFL game held at Dubbo on the 9th of August 2009.

Well Done Rod Mildner “The Rocket from Warren”