



STEPHEN DAU

POLICEMAN — SCIENTIST TAKES A BOW

by Brian Minards

WHEN Assistant Commissioner John Reilly walked into the Victoria Police recruiting office in Melbourne and said he wanted to join the police force he didn't exactly get the red carpet treatment.

In the first place a tape measure was produced by two doubting policemen to convince themselves that this fellow was at least the minimum required height of five feet, nine inches.

Finding in the affirmative the two sceptics then seized upon the fact that this 'would be' policeman was a self-employed dairy farmer... Did he have the scholastic ability?

'Did you go to school?'

'Yes.'

'Did you get your Intermediate?'

'Yes ... and the Leaving ... and matriculated.'

So saying John Daniel Reilly had overcome the first hurdle in his plan to become a policeman and in March 1953, a month before his 24th birthday, he became a constable in the Victoria Police.

Soon afterwards the former self-employed dairy farmer, who was later to

become a Bachelor of Science, Melbourne University, be awarded the Queens Police Medal 1978, the Queens Silver Jubilee Medal 1977, the National Medal (Clasp) 1983 and to rise to the rank of Assistant Commissioner in the Australian Federal Police was allocated a bicycle, a torch and a street directory and told to ensure that law and order prevailed for the citizens of the Melbourne suburb of Toorak.

Assistant Commissioner Reilly said it was a pretty lonely business in those days. 'There was no such thing as portable radios.

'There was no way of summoning help; if you arrested anyone you hailed a passing motorist or asked someone to ring the station to summon help.'

Mr Reilly's first pay packet with the Victoria Police contained the magnificent sum of £25. He said there was a certain irony regarding his income at that time. In the days when he applied to join the Force every applicant was interviewed by a Board of senior officers including the Chief Commissioner. When he was asked how much he earned as a dairy farmer he

said sixteen hundred pounds in the previous twelve months. Somewhat bemused the Chief Commissioner said he had earned only fifteen hundred pounds himself in the same period.

Mr Reilly's service with the Victoria Police included general duties, a stint on the Melbourne waterfront and eight years in forensic science, a span of almost twelve years during which he found time to gain his Science degree. Looking towards the future he saw his career getting bogged down in the seniority system of promotion which applied at that time.

It was 1964 and Mr Reilly resigned from the Victoria Police and joined the Commonwealth Public Service in the Patents Office of the Attorney General's Department, where he qualified as an Examiner of Patents. Two years later he moved to the Department of Primary Industry as an Agricultural Chemist. The move was fortuitous.

It was at a time when the United States had rejected imports of Australian butter and cheese claiming the products contained pesticide residue.

As luck would have it Mr Reilly had visited his brother's Gippsland property some months earlier when local farmers had been spraying with DDT to combat a plague of caterpillars. Recalling this he put two and two together and suggested that the Gippsland area may be the source of the problem, an investigation proved his theory to be correct and the problem was solved. Mr Reilly's self-confessed lucky guess was looked on by his superiors as 'excellent detective work, obviously a product of his police training'... an assessment he was not about to dispute.

In 1967 he moved to the Department of Customs and Excise where he became Assistant Director of the Special Services Branch. Unfortunately his expectations of the policy of the Department, particularly in the area of law enforcement were not realised and he left in 1970 to return to police work, this time with the former Commonwealth Police Force. His first posting was to the Australian Police College at Manly in Sydney where at the rank of Chief Inspector he became Chief Instructor.

In the nine years that followed he progressed through the ranks to become Chief Superintendent, OIC New South Wales District, the position he held in 1979 when the Commonwealth Police amalgamated with the ACT Police to become the Australian Federal Police.

Mr Reilly's career in the AFP has been no less impressive. As Chief Superintendent he has served as OIC Executive Services Division and Command Liaison and Inspection Division; he has been

Acting Assistant Commissioner Drugs, Services; and Assistant Commissioner Personnel and Services Department, Training Department; and again with Services.

With retirement just weeks away Mr Reilly looks back on a number of particular events in his career with justifiable pride. He was Dux of his recruit class; his Bachelor of Science from the University of Melbourne (which at the time was something unique in the Victoria Police); receiving the Queens Police Medal at Government House in Canberra and his appointment as a commissioned officer to the Commonwealth Police, to name just a few.

After almost thirty years as a policeman he has some definite views about the job and the community at large. 'There is more pressure on police than there is in a lot of other occupations because of the requirement for greater accountability and exposure by the media. Everything you do is under scrutiny.'

Mr Reilly was quick to respond to a suggestion that police today are perhaps restricted in maintaining law and order by excessive limitations. 'The introduction of so many more legislative requirements in the form of administrative law, Freedom of Information, the Police Complaints Act, Merit Protection Act, Grievance Procedures, all of these things place more demands on police. It's allied to the accountability factor.'

He said this has taken place at a time when the community as a whole is much less law abiding. 'There is a general contempt for authority in this age of so-called enlightenment and education, the belief that it is a Godgiven right to question any authority whatsoever, but that won't be my problem, in a couple of weeks time, not as a policeman anyway.'

Mr Reilly said he is looking forward to retirement, he wants to retire while he is still young enough to enjoy it. He said the AFP has achieved tremendous results and progress in its first eight years despite the ever present lack of resources. He wished it well for the future.

What will occupy his time after May? 'I like gardening and I play some lawn bowls, and my wife and I will probably travel overseas, visiting Scotland and Ireland in particular. Something else I intend doing is taking my golf much more seriously; I'll be devoting a lot more of my free time to improving my game.'

Those who know John Reilly would readily agree that if he applies the same dedication to improving his golf as he has done in his career as a policeman perhaps it would only be fair to warn Greg Norman. ●



STEPHEN DAU

Sergeant Ken Uren powers up the hill from Sullivans Creek in Canberra's city parklands.

AFP CYCLIST RUNS, SWIMS

by Brian McNamara

SERGEANT Ken Uren was won four out of seven Services Triathlons since 1981, and is a motorcycle patrolman to boot. You could say that he is fast on his feet.

Now aged 31, Ken Uren has been 13 years in the AFP, having started his working life as a bank officer. He has been in the Rescue Squad in the ACT, and his full-time assignment is on the white BMWs of Traffic Branch. When needed he is in charge of the Diving Squad.

Getting to know Ken was easy. We went for a ride along the cycle path near the office. In his cycle training gear Ken is very trim, with no surplus flesh. After accelerating past photographer Stephen Dau several times so quickly that his rear wheel kicked up gravel, Ken wasn't in the least out of breath. I asked him about his diet.

'Nothing special', he said. 'I eat usual healthy food. I might stoke up on high carbohydrates for four days before an event; spaghetti and such like. The morning of an event I'll settle for toast.'

'I don't smoke. Alcohol is out, except perhaps for a glass of red wine occasionally.'

How about training? 'I train two hours a day, in two sessions, morning and afternoon. I take Saturday off. Of the three sports, running, swimming and cycling, I devote equal time to each, but I don't mix them in any one session.'

I mentioned the old myth that good runners shouldn't cycle.

Not true, said Ken. 'I find that the three sports are complementary. I suppose if I did one or two things to excess, the other might suffer, but I believe in

quality of training rather than quantity.'

Ken varies his lengths of run or ride or swim, and his speeds. 'I might run 20 km in a session or only eight, but the total will be about 50 km a week. I'll swim eight or nine kilometres. I ride from 180 to 200 km, sometimes sprinting. With cycling it is important to keep up a high pedalling rate.'

'How does shift work affect your training program?' I asked.

'It doesn't, really. In fact the different shifts enable me to vary my training sessions, pick the weather. It's a career which mixes well with sport.'

Ken was a fun-runner and jogger until he entered his first triathlon. He borrowed his wife's ride-to-work machine for the occasion. His big first was the win in the 1981 Services event. Ken thinks he is 'old for a swimmer'. 'The youngsters are out of the water ten minutes before I am, so I have to make it up on the road,' he says.

Here are the results of Ken's recent events:

8 February 1987 — Defence and ACT Services Triathlon

1 km swim
30 km ride
10 km run

Ken came second to a man who had come tenth in the World Triathlon.

22 February 1987 — ACT Sri Chinmoy Triathlon

2.3 km swim
60 km ride
16 km run

Ken came 17th out of 600, was the first ACT entrant to finish, and was first in the 30-35 age group.

Family responsibilities? 'My wife, Maree, is very supportive. More, she's very encouraging. We have a new baby, so we're all very busy.'

Then I forgot to ask Ken what he did in his spare time. ●