



Media release

Wellington Street, Perth Western Australia 6000
Tel: (08) 9224 3943 Fax: (08) 9224 3447

20-06-06

MEDIA RELEASE

Paul's cycle for life

Walking and talking simultaneously used to leave Paul Barratt breathless – now with a new heart and lung Paul can not only walk and talk, he is cycle racing.

Last year the Carlisle resident became WA's first heart-lung recipient at Royal Perth Hospital, and he put his new organs to the test when he rode the Menzies to Kalgoorlie Cycle Classic race on June 3.

But attempting the ride was not Paul's only feat – by doing so, he and his friends also raised \$100,000 for the Heart and Lung Transplant Foundation of Western Australia – double the initial aim of \$55,000.

Paul has had ambitions to compete in the race since close friend David Keogh completed it in 1998.

"A couple of weeks after the transplant David and I joked that I was capable of anything," he said.

"This race was a way to prove to myself that I was a different person, and that I was capable.

"I am doing things now that I never dreamed I would do at any other time in my life."

The Menzies to Kalgoorlie cycle race is Australia's richest Handicapped Road Race and is known as the Synergy Menzies Classic.

Since Paul's transplant he has participated in many fundraising events, but this was by far the toughest – and because of this he wanted to donate the proceeds to a foundation that had truly saved his life.

The Heart and Lung Transplant Foundation exists to support provision of heart and lung transplants for Western Australians. All proceeds go to patient support, training and research, and increasing donor awareness.

The money raised will be used to purchase much-needed equipment in the RPH heart and lung transplant gymnasiums, which help all patients live more fulfilling lives.

Internationally, 30 to 35 days is about the average length of stay in hospital for heart and lung transplant recipients – Paul was out of hospital in just 17 days.

“Everything I’ve done since transplantation has certainly pushed the boundaries of recovery,” Paul said.

“Competing in this race was just one more step.”

Paul said that a big part of his recovery was the effort of Royal Perth’s Cardiac Physiologist and of the Heart and Lung Physiotherapist.

“It was the work they did with me in the gymnasiums and the programs they put together for me, pre and post transplant, which made the difference,” he said.

Paul’s Menzies race team comprised friends such as David Keogh and Mark Stevens, world cycling champion Steve Harcourt from Elite Racing Cycles, and a medical team, which was on stand-by.

Paul rode 86 of the race’s 132 kilometres – but, ironically, it was not his heart or lung that stopped him riding the whole distance – it was the broken rib injury he sustained a week before the race, while on a training ride.

Paul’s hard work payed off though, instead of the goal of \$55,000, the last tally put the donations in excess of \$100,000.

Once again Paul has shown what hard work and dedication can achieve, he truly is an inspiration to all.