

NEWS

# Cyclists' taste of Ukraine

BY CONNOR PEARCE

WHAT does an international cyclist eat after they finish the longest world championship road race in recent memory?

For the Ukrainian team, it was a home-cooked meal of varenyky at Tanya Dus's apartment.

"They're like potato dumplings, and they just loved it - carbs on carbs, perfect as they're very exhausted," she said.

Ms Dus and a group of Ukrainian Australians hosted two of the Ukrainian male cyclists and their coaches for a night of Ukrainian specialities.

"We had Ukrainians from Sydney and Wollongong greeting them and we sang a bit, a few resistance songs, and the national anthem at the end."

For the Ukrainian team, competing in Wollongong came with a few additional layers.

With their homeland at war, the men had to get special dispensation to travel to Australia as men between 18 and 60 are only allowed to leave Ukraine under special circumstances.

Since arriving in Wollongong, the Ukrainian team has become almost as popular as the home nation, as numerous yellow and blue flags lined the course and with support from local bicy-



The Ukrainian team sits down to dinner in Wollongong. Picture supplied

cle stores along the way.

Ms Dus said the riders were touched and had heard the cheers of locals in their language.

"There was a little contingent in Lang Park that was screaming out, they heard us shouting for Ukraine, and

they were very buoyed by it."

Ukrainians in Wollongong have been travelling to the heart of Sydney's Ukrainian community in Lidcombe to support with rehoming efforts for those Ukrainians who have made it to Australia and organising donations to

send abroad.

For the professional cyclists, being able to compete was tinged with mixed emotions, on the one hand enjoying not having to listen for all-too-common air raid sirens, but on the other knowing that the struggle continued

for those back home.

"It's really difficult when you see them, enjoying the freedom here and things that they really relish and then knowing what they're going back to. It's actually quite heartbreaking," Ms Dus said.

With the team now packed

up and heading back home, Ms Dus said the cyclists would be taking the support of Wollongong back with them to Ukraine.

"They told us, 'We know you're supporting us from the other side of the world,'" Ms Dus said.



Supporters of the Ukrainian team cheer on the cyclists. Picture supplied



Ukrainian flags lined the streets of Wollongong. Picture supplied

## Helping artists get their name in lights

ART & CULTURE

SLAM poets, hip hop dancers, comedians and playwrights in need of a leg-up for their career are being sought by the Illawarra's prime theatre company, Merrigong.

Applications are now open for their MerrigongX program - a platform to assist emerging perfor-

mance-makers in taking what the company calls "creative risks" - and get ready for the stage.

Creatives across a range of disciplines with ties to the Illawarra region (including artists who live elsewhere) can apply for development and presentation support in 2023.



We are looking for artists across a range of disciplines.

Merrigong

Merrigong will support the journey of these new projects by commissioning the development and/or presentation of each work through three levels of support.

"We encourage applications from multi-artform and interdisciplinary practices as well as site specific works that can reactivate and re-

talise unused spaces in IPAC and the Wollongong Arts Precinct," the company said on their website.

"We are currently programming for our 2023 MerrigongX season and are looking for artists across a range of disciplines who are pushing for the new, experimental and contemporary."

This includes work that needs development, mentorship or a presentation showing; work that's already been developed and is ready for its first season; and developed work that can engage with an Illawarra audience or a site-specific location.

www.merrigong.com.au  
- DESIREE SAVAGE

## NEED ALTERATIONS OR REPAIRS TO YOUR CLOTHES?

alterations and repairs by professional clothing manufacturer

- HEM TAKE UP AND LET DOWN - ZIP REPLACEMENT
- WEDDING DRESSES - SUITS - FORMAL WEAR
- WET SUITS - MOST LEATHERS
- CURTAINS AND CUSHIONS

*Servicing the Illawarra since 1980*

**CORRIMAL**  
ALTERATIONS AND REPAIRS

394 Princes Highway, Corrimal | www.corrimalterations.com.au | Ph. 4284 4374



AV3780179