

AAP TODAY

*News from Jakarta,
Suva & London
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*New software for
AAP Market Quote
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*Win Champagne
and jackets
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AAPT RINGING IN LOTS OF NEW CHANGES

AAP Telecommunications has set its sights on a fantastic 100 fold growth in business over the next five years.

And General Manager, Bill Egan, says that's not just talk, but a realistic expectation.

"In our first year of operation we handled one million calls, by 1996 we expect to handle 100 million," he said.

Business is currently growing at the extraordinary rate of 25 per cent a month thanks to CityDial, CityDial Plus, SmartLine, OfficeDial and FreeDial and its Dedicated Services.

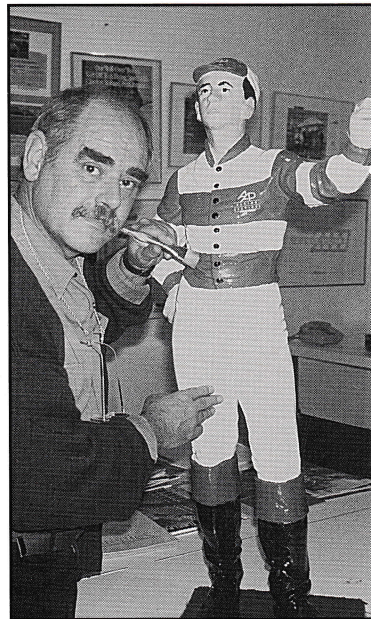
Now that will be boosted with the introduction of MEGA, a simplified and informative billing system, and AAPT's Virtual Private Network.

Special attention to customer needs and the purchase of a super efficient \$2 million toll switch will also build business.

MEGA is a unique billing system which will give AAPT's customers more information about, and control over, their telecommunications than was previously available.

"Our Mega billing system is a full network management report," said Bill. "It has details about the number of calls made most frequently and suggestions on where savings can be made. It has been extremely well accepted."

AAPT is currently in the process of introducing a state of the art Virtual Private Network - Vantage. It offers any company with offices in dif-



AAP's latest recruit is a three feet six jockey. However its unlikely "Scobie" will do much track work - he is made from solid metal. Corporate and Media Services General Manager David Jensen found him in an antique shop and with the assistance of Racing Services staff had the figure repainted in the blue and white AAP colours. "Scobie" will be used in Racing Services promotions.

ferent locations the advantages of a sophisticated private network, such as short dialling codes, national and international dialling and ID and account codes, without the high costs and administrative problems inherent in dedicated private line networks.

Like all of AAPT's other services, Vantage will bring savings of up to 40 per cent to a company's communications budget.

Although AAPT's competitive pricing tempts business away from Telecom, it is

excellent service which holds them, Bill believes.

"We handle everything we do in a very personalised manner," said Bill. "We have yet to lose a customer in anger.

"In all, AAPT provides telecommunications services in the way customers want, rather than services, which in the past, have been given to them," Bill said.

For more information about AAPT's sophisticated new switching system turn to page 4.

MEDIANET IN SYDNEY OLYMPIC 2000 BID

Sydney's Olympic 2000 committee has signed up AAP's MediaNet press release distribution service to help its bid to stage the games.

MediaNet will handle all the press releases from the Olympic bid committee both nationally and internationally.

MediaNet sales executive, Phillip Ostle negotiated the deal closely assisted on complex distribution schedules by MediaNet Business Manager Rex Mitchell and Group Manager, Queensland and Northern Territory, Ross Gilligan.

"The bulk of the transmission will be overseas to international news agencies and IOC countries," said Phillip.

"The committee has to show that Sydney has the facilities, accommodation, transport and everything else that is needed to stage a successful Olympics."

And AAP is also giving the Olympic bid a helping hand.

"We've decided to put a bit in ourselves and have given a good price for the MediaNet service," said Phillip.

If Sydney does win the Olympics then MediaNet will be in the running to distribute a much greater volume of information.

"Our role would grow significantly," said Phillip.

Sydney 2000 media relations officer, Andrew Woodward, said: "We don't think of MediaNet as a customer, more a part of our team."

"MediaNet is in the best position to meet our needs."

* Phillip will be seeing a friend from his RAF days thanks to an article in Reuters World.

Phillip saw a piece in the magazine about the retirement of John Daniel, a senior newspaper finance executive in England, and recognised him as an old air force buddy.

"We did our national service in Singapore in 1954 and I was a witness at his wedding to an RAF telephone operator," Phillip said.

"He's an extraordinarily decent chap but I last saw him in the 1960's."

Phillip wrote to Reuters World asking them to forward a letter on and a few weeks ago got a reply from John.

"I got a lovely letter back," Phillip said.

"By another extraordinary coincidence John has a brother in New Zealand who he is going to visit next year and he will be making a part of call in Sydney."



AAP had a high profile at the Australian Telecommunications Users Group convention in Melbourne earlier in the year. The exhibition is the largest in the Southern Hemisphere and is attended by all the major players in the telecommunications field.

YOUR OWN AIRPORT SCREEN

The AAP Group has developed Australia's first real-time flight arrival and departure service for passenger aircraft.

Called TravelNet, it is being sold by the electronic services sales team headed by George Pardon, who has notched up sales of the service even before it has been officially launched.

It enables subscribers to monitor the scheduled arrival or departure of any passenger aircraft at any of the major airports around Australia.

The PC based service has been developed by AAP's technical development team headed by Nick Hughes with Mal Ward spear heading its development.

TravelNet currently has data from all domestic carriers with data feeds being supplied by Ansett and Australian Airlines and their subsidiaries. The data feed from Qantas and other international carriers will be added to the service shortly.

It is designed for hotels, taxi and hire car companies, Federal and State government departments and any organisation with a need for up to date and accurate information.

"It saves having to call an airline, waiting for an answer and then having to listen to a recording," said George. "By the end of July we already had four installations without launching it. TravelNet is going to be a great service to sell."

It enables subscribers to look at any arrival or departure by inserting a four letter code. The first two identifies the airline, the third the airport, and the fourth, arrival or departure.

GOLF TEES OFF FOR \$1 MILLION

The AAP Group's prestigious annual charity golf tournament, which has already raised \$3 million dollars in its six year history, is aiming to collect a massive \$1 million in 1993.

Now known as the AAP Financial Markets Len Evans Charity Golf Event it will be played at Pennant Hills Golf Club on February 19 followed by a dinner and auction at the Regent in Sydney.

Len has been master of ceremonies and auctioneer for all the previous events and the new name recognises his contribution.

Money is raised from charges to play in the tournament, sponsorship, an auction at the post match dinner, and a bumper raffle.

More than 550 leading financiers are expected to pay between \$300 and \$600 to play and/or attend the dinner. Last year the first player teed off at sunrise and the last at 1pm.

AAP's Corporate and Public Affairs unit, which organises the event, is busy recruiting sponsors for the day.

In return the firms get a sign with their name and logo by the course. The 18 holes already have sponsorship.

Corporate and Media Services General Manager, David Jensen, said: "Ninety five per cent of the sponsors are clients of AAP. And as the number of sponsors for the event has grown so has the number who take our services.



Ross Whowell

"The event therefore not only raises money for many worthy causes but is good for our business."

Corporate and Public Affairs Group Manager, Greg Holland, said: "We try and get sponsors for everything from the car park to the dinner.

"About the only thing we didn't find a sponsor for last year was the grass.

"Our aim is to keep the cost of the day down to a minimum so that all the money raised goes out to charity."

The search is on for an entertaining after dinner speaker who is also a keen golf player - last year Ronnie Corbett fitted the bill.

Interest from leading news organisations looks likely to secure a big name guest.

The evening is rounded off by an auction of interesting and innovative items.

First prize is an immaculately restored 1954 red M.G. TF capable of a top speed of 142km/h.

Ten thousand tickets will be sold at \$50 a piece.

Corporate Affairs Ross Whowell has been busy scouring auction rooms for other top quality prizes.

So far he had come up with an antique writing desk, silverware and Delft crockery. He is also collecting old hickory golf clubs which will be restored and used as prizes.

Last year the day entered the Guinness Book of Records for raising \$1 million - the most amount of money for one day in a charity golf event.

The charities which will benefit from the day are: The Financial Markets Foundation for Children, St Vincent's Hospital Bone Marrow Transplant Unit, Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame, The Sunnyfield Association, The Smith Family, Odyssey House McGrath Foundation, Arthritis Foundation of Australia, Kim Morris Memorial Fund, Child Flight, Muscular Dystrophy Association of NSW, Lions International Diabetics, and Alzheimers Disease and Related Disorders Association of N.S.W.

"This is the sixth year we have held the golf day and it has grown into a top quality event that not only benefits many worthy causes but keeps the AAP name up there with the major players in the financial marketplace," said Greg.

Last year they included a trip to Wimbledon, a share market portfolio and Sir Robert Menzies personal coatstand. Prices averaged around \$30,000 for each item on the night.

Running in conjunction with the golf is an Art Union, which this year, features a number of antiques.

AAPT IS SWITCHED ON FOR FUTURE

AAP Telecommunications has substantially upgraded its network capacity by installing and commissioning a \$2 million toll switch.

The Digital Switching Corporation toll switch will give AAPT the ability to provide additional, customised services for its network users, said AAPT Chief Executive Barry Wheeler.

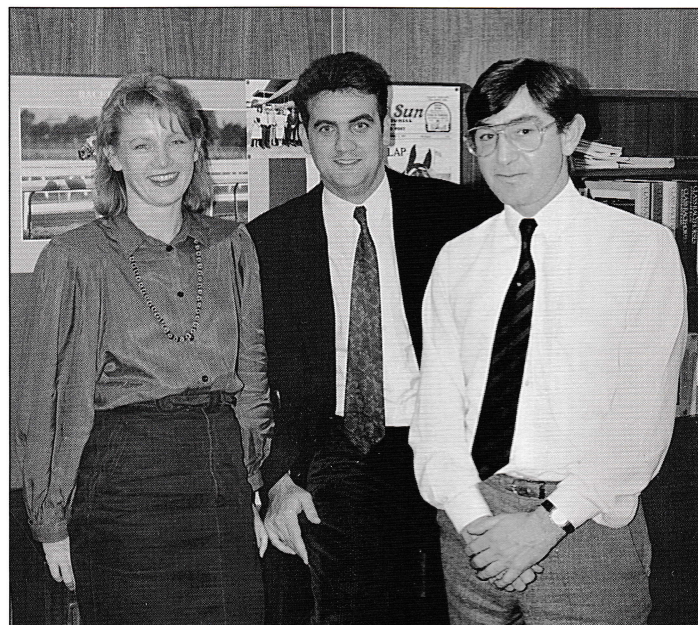
The switch, a U.S. manufactured DEX 600E, is the first of its type in Australia and will serve as the initial access point to the AAPT intelligent network.

The DSC switch will query a customer defined network database located in a separate, high speed transaction processor.

These instructions will range from simple dialling plan translations to identifying the caller, as well as any associated privileges or restrictions for completing calls on their company's virtual private network.

AAPT's voice and data services are provided through a network that comprises dedicated access lines from customers' premises, its own switching exchanges in capital cities and high capacity trunk lines leased from Telecom.

"This state of the art equipment will give us the capacity to offer even more sophisticated telecommunications to the growing business market," said Barry.



Michele Cullen, Craig Dick and Roy Bisset

RACING SERVICES BOLTS INTO THE BLACK

AAP Racing Services has doubled its client base since February and will cross the end of year post well ahead of budget.

Media Services Manager, Geoff Want, said: "We owe this success to Fastform - a simple, easy to access, form guide."

Customers receive Fastform through a dial up link that is compatible with any computer. It gives the performance of all horses in the last five, 16 or all races in all meetings for \$5, \$16, or \$30 respectively.

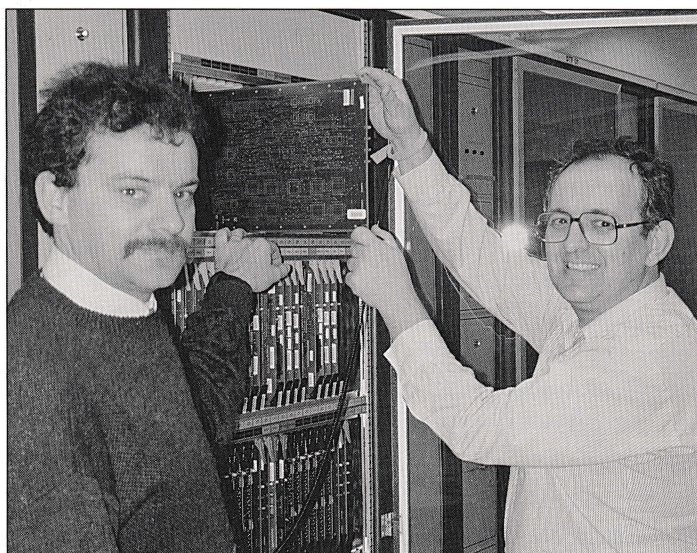
Other features include sectional times, full betting fluctuations, colours and detailed performance statistics.

There are 168 Fastform customers, of which half are punters, 10 per cent are bloodstock agents and the remainder are stud farms, jockeys, trainers, insurance agents, owners, bookmakers and racing consultants plus one TAB agency.

The Racing Services team is: Michele Cullen, Craig Dick and Roy Bisset.

Fastform complements Racing Services Thoroughbred Information Service which provides a full racing form via a telephone dial-up line to a PC.

Jockeys who subscribe to Fastform and TIS include Shane Dye, Darren Beadman, Kevin Moses (a leading Sydney jockey), Michael Clarke, and Morris Logue.



David Claydon and David Bosci

CASPAR WATCHES OVER FILES

AAP's accounts have come a long way in the six years since they were all kept on a manual card system.

Information is now processed on CASPAR - Computerised Administration System for Processing AAP and Res - which supplies information to staff and customers on 120 terminals and 20 printers throughout the Group.

CASPAR has allowed the recent introduction of invoice/statements for clients which can be understood at a glance compared to the old style statements.

Group credit manager, Betsy Cubbage, said: "The new layout has been of great benefit to our clients and their feedback has been very positive.

"In order to maintain this excellent standard there will be continual liaison with our clients to ensure they are receiving the information they require to run their businesses more successfully."

"The project could not have been achieved without the considerable effort and expertise of many people including Katie Smyth, Deborah Wordsworth and Vaso Despotovic."

Financial Controller, Neil Aveling, said: "This is just a part of CASPAR. It is far more than a billing system. It

is an integrated corporate database, providing management with information about products, services and assets, enabling them to make a better assessment of their operations.

In the past there was no accurate central data source on products and services being supplied to clients. The introduction of CASPAR in 1986 changed all this enabling AAP to ensure all the essential information on AAP products, services and assets were put on one central source. Procedures, including rolling site surveys, were put in place to ensure the integrity of the data.

New developments for CASPAR include: Customer Field Services is providing ID numbers for all pieces of equipment supported by the Group. CASPAR can use the ID to retrieve the customer, address, user and telecommunications details.

If the fault is a communications delivery problem, CASPAR can show all other work stations likely to be affected.

Group Communications, under Harry Koffke, is extending telecommunications network details, including MDS and SDS so that if a communications fault occurs all parties affected can be identified.



Neil Aveling and Betsy Cubbage

The Weird World News

AAP's newsrooms receive important stories from all over the world covering everything from earthquakes to elections.

It also gets a fair amount of weird and wacky news which is too off beat to make it into newspapers. AAP Today dredged through the system to come up with the stories others were to reticent to bring you.

Santiago: Chilean government officials are investigating how a film featuring Italian porn star and politician "Cicciolina" got on television when viewers were expecting a soccer match. The privately owned Channel 46 company blamed their opposition for engineering the steamy interference.

Detroit: A suburban library in the city lends out tools as well as tomes. Saws,

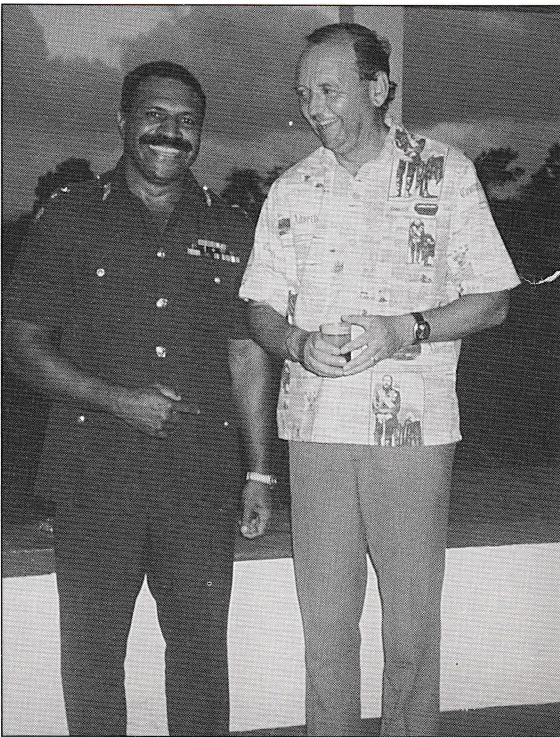
tree trimmers and electric drills are available without charge to library card holders.

London: Crooner Julio Iglesias admits to "bedding 3,000 women" in 71 countries, according to the Daily Star. He said a "joy filled my heart" when he tested negative for AIDS.

Los Angeles: Guns N' Roses guitarist Slash said it wasn't the devil that made him endorse Black Death vodka, just the offer of several free caseloads of the potent brew.

New York: Christine Brinkley, who made her modelling mark in a bikini for Sports Illustrated, said her recent cover shot for Ladies Home Journal was her swim-suit swan song.

"It's gotten to hard to suck my stomach in," she said.



James Shrimpton with then Lt Col Rabuka

Jim's jaunt around the world with AAP

Features services editor, James Shrimpton, marks 30 years with AAP this year. AAP Today asked him to recount some of his experiences with the company.

I am advised by my wife that the outstanding event of my AAP career was our meeting in the Melbourne office, where she worked as an operator, and our subsequent marriage which produced four daughters, three of whom have been employed by AAP at some time or another.

However, to go further back, I first worked for AAP from November 1955 to mid-1957, starting out in AAP's old premises off Little Collins Street in Melbourne, close by the London Hotel where a lunch of Spaghetti Bolognese followed by a T-bone steak

and chips cost three and sixpence (35 cents).

The years since then have proved that it's not only the Navy you can join to see the world.

I have been posted to the London bureau twice, covered five Olympic and four Commonwealth Games (plus one as the Australian team press officer), two Pacific Conference Games and one South Pacific Games; plus Australia's first, disastrous, World Cup soccer venture in Cambodia.

But what must be the career highlight was covering the Fiji coups d'états of 1987.

I was sent to Suva for three months in 1980 to test the viability of such an office. I reported favourably — and was promptly assigned to London!

But in 1986 I won the battle. It proved timely. I had been in Suva just one year when Lieutenant-Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka staged his first coup. No other overseas journo was there, and Rabuka cut off all phone and telex communications anyway. The AAP leased line, on which I laboriously punched up stories on tape for transmission through an archaic transmitter, was left alone — by design, I learned later.

How many times can a reporter claim to have hit front pages throughout Australia, The Times of London, the New York Times, Asahi Shimbun, the Times of India, Pravda ... and hundreds of other dailies throughout the world? For this reporter, just the once.

After the first coup I got to know Rabuka reasonably well. We discovered a mutual interest in golf, and enjoyed exchanges of views of the world during an occasional

nine holes before breakfast at the Fiji club where we were both members.

Over the years, being an AAP correspondent has enabled me to rub shoulders with international notables — to name-drop just a few: the Queen (in Canada, England, Australia and New Zealand), Prince Charles (cocktails at Buck House), Princess Anne (who had me thrown out of an Olympic reception where Press weren't allowed), Margaret Thatcher (cocktails at Number Ten), President Lyndon Johnson, Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia, Sir Donald Campbell, John Wayne, Cary Grant, Charlton Heston, Pierce Brosnan, Hayley Mills, Johnny O'Keefe and sundry Australian politicians and sports people.

Life in AAP has had its traumas, but I've made many friends, been lots of places, met a lot of people, and it's never been dull.



Beijing 2000 Olympics interview

SALES TEAM SAY "WE CAN SAVE YOU CASH"

AAP Today is starting a series of articles looking at how various people in the company go about their jobs. To begin AAP Today journalist David Bradbury accompanied Business Communications Systems' sales executive, John Carmichael, on one of his calls.

How do you sell a voice information processing system to a man who hangs up the phone when he gets an answering machine and prefers to have all his memos written on pieces of paper?

That's the challenge John faced when he went to see the newly appointed manager of an international freight forwarding company in Sydney.

"I'm not expecting him to sign on the dotted line after our meeting," John said. "The decision making process takes about three or four months. I want to get to know his business and find out how I can help him save money."

The general manager John is due to meet is running late so another manager, in charge of the company's North American dealings, fills in.

He proves to be a goldmine of information.

The Canadian branch of the company has a voice information system and Canadians

ring up Australia expecting to be able to leave messages. He seems receptive to new ideas and is very interested in the product.

However things get tough when the general manager arrives.



John Carmichael

"I hate answering machines and hang up when I get one and I like to have all my messages written down otherwise I forget," he says.

The company also has a world wide electronic mail system and a 24 hour service manned by staff with mobile phones, he explains.

"Why should we spend more money on voice mail?" he asks.

John explains how voice mail can complement the existing communications net-

work. In this freight forwarding business customers deal with a specific manager. If they hear an engaged signal they will hang up and go to another company, because they need an answer immediately, otherwise they will miss a plane flight. But if they hear the manager's familiar voice and can leave a clear message, the manager can find out the information without having to first ring back, then contact the customer, and make a deal.

John runs through some of the other benefits - such as

Octel, the U.S. manufacturer of the voice processing systems, calculates that it costs U.S. \$8.50 to send a written memo, taking into account the time a manager spends drafting it and a secretary spends typing it.

Add to this the savings in managers' time, presently wasted when they phone someone who is engaged, then a further delay if they are on the phone when the person rings back. And at a basis of \$20 an hour voice mail soon looks attractive.

U.S. \$8.50 to send a memo

John and the manager agree to talk again.

Later John says: "The company has such a crying need for voice mail it was incredibly frustrating sitting down and explaining it again and again to him. But when he sees the money that can be saved I'm sure we'll have a sale."

AAP Comms Services is the exclusive Australian distributor of the Aspen range of Voice Information Processing Systems manufactured by the Octel Communications Corporation of the U.S.A.

AAP backs the system with a strong nation-wide network of technical support.

being able to broadcast a new idea from home, on a Sunday, to a voice box managers can pick up messages from on Monday morning. And the simplicity of the system for the first time user.

The general manager is interested but now starts to talk about his budget.

John gives a price and suggests the manager call some clients who have the system in place, such as the St. George Building Society, and find it is paying its own way.

MARKET QUOTE KNOCKS THE OPPO FOR SIX

AAP's Economic Services Division is ready to wipe the dealing room floor with the opposition thanks to brilliant new software advances pioneered by its own development team.

AAP Market Quote (AMQ) delivers the latest information from the equities and money markets as well as up to the minute news in an innovative Windows format.

Manager, Domestic Financial Products Group, Graeme Hicks, said: "Our sales team tell us that AMQ is being very well received. The Windows format allows dealers to see more on the screen than our competitors packages.

"Many other products can only display one page or graph on screen at any one time. With AMQ you can have money and equities products up and a variety of spreadsheets and graphics."

"We've been told by our customers that as far as windows functionality goes, by far we're the best."

"From a technical point of view we get market quotes to customers faster than the opposition because AMQ uses a broadcast system rather than a request/response format. The results speak for themselves, the number of AMQ's installed in the last five months has risen by 26 per cent."

Major new customers include the State Authorities Superannuation board, Prudential Bache, RMA, MLC and in Queensland the Royal Automobile Club and Queensland Industries Development Corporation.

AMQ also has the advantage of being able to be supplied on a client's own network, AAP's network or their own individual hardware.

And now AMQ has received a software boost aimed at not only making it more responsive to dealers needs but easier to upgrade.

AMQ Version 3, which was launched in June, has split the product into three separate products: AMQ Equities, AMQ Money, and AMQ News.

AMQ Equities carries share market listings from the Australian Stock Exchange.

AMQ Money provides real time information from the money markets such as foreign currency and bank bill prices.

And AMQ News provides the latest financial and general news from AAP's Baudrunner database.

Additional features of AMQ are Graphics and Options Analysis packages. Graphics allows data such as the fluctuations in a share price over a period of time to be tracked and displayed. AMQ Options is a mathematical tool for various calculations such as the measure of sensitivity of an option price to changes in interest rates.

Another development is Quote Contributor which allows users to enter money

market prices onto AAP's databases directly from an AMQ windows work station in the client's office. These prices are then disseminated into the market place. Currently only domestic money market prices are supported by the package but the program is designed to support any market.

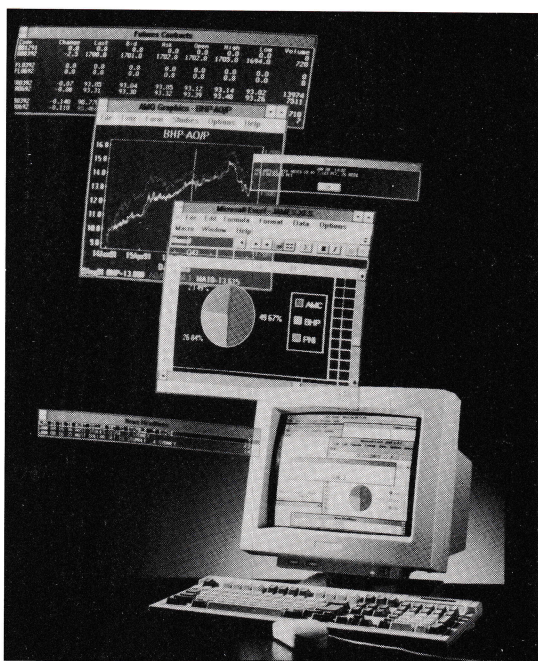
And a future product is AAP Text Contributor. With this package clients will be able to enter market forecasts,



analyses and movements onto AAP databases which will also be distributed into the market place.

The innovative forces behind AMQ Version 3 are the Domestic Financial Products Group and the technical development department in Glebe. The DFPG was set up at the beginning of the year to overcome bottle necks in the development of new services.

Its members are Caroline Hilton, Simon Stonier, Jock Campbell, James Tilley, Peter Woods and Felicity Witts. And there is a development team in Glebe primarily comprising Bruce Murphy, Steve



AMQ Windows

Gibbon and Thao Thai, but using the full resources of the technical development and production departments.

The responsibilities of the DFIG incorporate not only overseeing development of the software, but sales support, promotional activities, and client feedback.

The next stage with AMQ is to provide a hybrid network that combines both broadcast and request/response systems.



This is in response to the Stock Exchange plans to make depth of market information available. The hybrid network will be able to access information from the ASX while retaining all the benefits of the broadcast system.

It will also be able to access AMQ data bases and historical news data bases.

"We believe our competitors are struggling to find a technical solution to this very complex problem because of the sheer volume of information," said Graeme. "The hybrid network will make AMQ the most innova-

tive and versatile product offered by all the major vendors. Its development is a credit to the expertise of the technical staff," said Graeme.

"As a whole, the operation and functionality of the AMQ is second to none and with the planned enhancements we will have the best overall products in market.

"Some people may have better individual components but ours, I believe, will be overall best."



BUY! SELL!

**FIXED
INTEREST
FUTURE**

Telerate's dominance of the fixed interest rate market will soon be challenged by the AMQ Fixed Interest Analysis package.

AFIA is an analytical trading tool for the fixed interest markets.

"We have taken steps to overcome our competitor's lead by signing one of the major inter-bank fixed interest brokers and negotiations are well down the track with the other broker," said Graeme. "Prices should be available by September."

Other initiatives are the ability to historically graph fixed interest rate prices, plus the provision of a quote list to enable customer to access regularly updated prices for up to 300 fixed interest securities.

**SALES ARE
NO
PROBLEM**

Selling AAP's Market Quote system is "easy", according to AAP Reuters national sales manager, Harry Dillema.

"The product fits in well to the Australian market place because it has everything people are looking for," he said.

"People like the flexibility it has, it can be used either on our hardware or their network.

"The Windows technology allows dealers to view an enormous amount of information on the one screen.

"And because it is backed by AAP and Reuters it has a depth of domestic and international news coverage that others do not have.

"We expect it to be the dominant product in the financial market place," said Harry.

**KEATING
SIGNS
FOR AMQ**

Prime Minister Paul Keating no longer waits for the opinion polls to find out what effects his economic statements have.

He just turns to a newly purchased AAP Market Quote screen in his office.

Senior account manager, Roger Manu, said: "It's fantastic that we've got an AMQ in the Prime Minister's office.

When I'm in Canberra and potential customers ask who uses AMQ, I say the Prime Minister, they say 'Lets have a look at it.'

The PM used to have an old style Quote Retrieval Service "green screen" when he was treasurer.

The Treasury is also a customer for AAP's "pocket watch" pager type financial information service.

News from AAP elsewhere

JAKARTA

It was supposed to be a simple two hour round trip to drop some friends off at the airport for their flight home, writes AAP Jakarta bureau chief, Terry Freil.

Eight hours later, I was still stuck in Jakarta's notorious traffic, fast running out of petrol. I'd already run out of patience.

Just another day on Jakarta's crowded roads - a little worse than usual, but not totally out of the ordinary.

Traffic dominates this sprawling Asian city. One of the first Indonesian words most newcomers learn is "macet", which means traffic

jam. Distances here are given in travelling times, not kilometres, people arrive hours late for appointments and the smallest errand can take all day.

Motorcyclists ride down the footpath and cars cram five abreast when there's only three lanes as people try to keep moving. Many just resign themselves to reality and sit back in their cars and watch television, listen to music or read a book or newspaper. Some wheel and deal on mobile phones during the hours on the road. So far, the city authorities' attempts at dealing with the problem have been spectacular failures.

The latest is to restrict the three main roads to cars with three or more occupants

during the morning peak hour - which lasts from 6.30am to 10am. But at the same time they cut the number of lanes on those roads. So traffic there still moves no quicker and the mess on alternative routes is worse than ever.

The traffic police do little to help.

Indeed, some are rather more concerned with implementing their own unique on the spot fine collection: anything from \$2 to \$30 can avoid the hassle of official paperwork and get you moving again with minimum fuss.

SUVA

A friendly and co-operative clerk proved to be a gem of a contact for AAP Suva bureau chief Craig Skehan when it came to breaking the Marshall Islands affair.

Lena Tiobach obligingly faxed to Craig's Suva office various documents tendered in court throwing light on the business migration scheme of Australian businessman Gregory Symons.

She also especially arranged for typed transcripts to be made from tape recordings of April hearings dealing with forgery charges against Symons. The transcripts, provided for the bargain basement price of \$US2 a page, included politically explosive prosecution claims about links between Symons and (then) Australian cabinet minister Graham Richardson.

In the absence of police, gridlocked intersections are frequently cleared by bystanders or local food vendors. Every Indonesian, it seems, learns how to direct traffic from an early age. Children as young as five or six yell out orders.

Traffic police aside, there's only one basic rule of the road here - the driver who noses their vehicle ahead of another has right of way.

And you'd never believe it ... but the cars ahead are starting to move. And that policeman is waving me over, and he's smiling...

A series of Craig's stories got extensive play in Australian newspapers and resulted in questions being put in both the Australian House of Representatives and Senate.

In July last year, AAP had the first story on the so-called Marshall Islands Affair. Craig wrote about Symons being in the Marshall Islands to set up a business migration scheme and \$US40 million manufacturing complex with the help of glowing references from Richardson.

"Controversies which have surrounded similar past schemes in the Pacific made me suspect right from the start something was fishy," said Craig. "I telephoned a senior member of Richardson's staff, who after speaking to Richardson, confirmed that the Minister had written the reference." The resulting AAP story quoted the spokesman as saying



Downtown Jakarta

Richardson had no knowledge of Symons' business activities.

When Symons was charged in April with forgery, the Federal Opposition raised questions about last year's AAP report. The extent to which Richardson was aware of Symons' activities in the Marshall Islands - and in other business ventures - became the crux of the political controversy that cost Richardson his ministerial position. "It was certainly good breaking the story," said Craig.

He praised the efforts of AAP reporters in Australia, particularly in Canberra and Sydney, as well as significant contributions from Marshall Islands stringer Giff Johnson.

"The fact that the episode has prompted a re-look at ministerial standards - with an impact likely on a proposed code of conduct - is something positive," said Craig. "There could be a net gain for the quality of our political process."

Craig has been with AAP for nearly 13 years, including two stints in the Canberra bureau, the last as deputy bureau chief. He spent two and a half years as Papua New Guinea correspondent based in Port Moresby. A visa and work permit has just been approved for a second 12 month period in Fiji despite earlier concerns that it might be denied. With the recent election of 1987 coup leader Sitiveni Rabuka to Fiji's prime ministership, it looks like being an interesting and newsworthy year.



Trafalgar Square in the heatwave

LONDON

Life in London is really all about summer, writes AAP London bureau chief, Michael Osborne.

It's a short but sweet six weeks - despite the fact that the inappropriately named British Summer Time, the equivalent of Daylight Savings in Australia, runs from the end of March until the end of October - when this city turns on a fiesta of sun, sport and frantic socialising.

Summer generally kicks off at the end of June and stretches to the first week in August with the occasional day in May thrown in when something approaching spring is in the air.

That's when the myriad of colourful flowers bloom, when Regent's and Hyde Parks are at their prime, and when the pale-faced Poms emerge from their winter hibernation to visit the miserable mud-and-pebble-lined British beach resorts.

For us in London it's also the highlight of our year.

Though summer means sweltering in the well-heated but non-airconditioned Press Association building, it also

gives us the chance to get out and cover Edberg and Cash performing for the strawberries and cream set on the hallowed lawns of Wimbledon and see Baker-Finch and Norman in action on the manicured greens of the nation's finest golf courses.

This year our summer has been deliciously extended for two weeks by the Olympic Games which are being held in the vibrant, sexy and sun-drenched city of Barcelona.

It may sound great, but if you like gin and tonics in the garden under a setting sun at 9.20pm, you have to make the most of it, because the long, grey winter is just around the corner.

Autumn isn't too bad but it brings such a sudden and chilling temperature change, especially if the summer has been exceptionally warm or "close" as the Poms call hot weather.

The days are still pretty long, although instead of sun it's a pale shade of grey.

Then it isn't long before winter arrives and when the clocks slip back to GMT, it's dark when you wake at 7.30am and it's just as dark by 4.30pm. If you don't brave the two-degree temperatures at lunchtime, you can go for days without seeing the grey

skies, let alone the sun. Then of course there's the year-round rain, or more often than not, the drizzle.

The only respite comes in winter when the drizzle suddenly turns to snow while you wait for the bus.

I have to catch the bus because my Stg300 mountain bike I used to ride into Fleet Street from deep within Arsenal's home Territory of Highbury was stolen from our back verandah, along with the metal railing it was locked to.

The good thing about being at AAP though, is that we occasionally get to escape the British weather and the arrogant upper classes with the occasional trip to some of Europe's more romantic and historic cities.

That's when 10-hour days in the office and midnight calls at home from desk editors requesting stories are suddenly replaced by 10-hour days in Paris, Berlin or Amsterdam and midnight calls to the hotel room by desk editors requesting stories.

It's hard work but it's fun and challenging, especially if you don't have the computer software degree needed to operate the lap-tops on ten different phone systems around the continent.

But if you can survive the cold, wet and grey weather for three-quarters of the year, the long days in Fleet Street where you switch from writing a political scandal to a corporate scandal and the often frustrating Poms - the rewards of London in summer are worth the effort.

WIN!!!

A bottle of fine champagne is on offer for the first 12 correct entries drawn out of a hat in this test of trivial knowledge.

1) What year did Major General Sitiveni Rabuka overthrow the elected government of Fiji?

2) What is one of the two new divisions in Communications Services?

3) What Spanish province is Barcelona the capital of?

4) In what famous street does AAP have its London bureau?

5) What insect inspired the Bangarra dance company's last production?

6) What year was AAP founded?

7) How many miles is it from Mt Kosciusko to Darling Harbour?

Name _____

Phone _____

Cut out the quiz and send it to: Trivia Teaser, AAP Group Corporate and Public Affairs, 12th floor, 88 Pitt Street, Sydney, NSW 2000.

People on the Move ...

The AAP Group is expanding to take advantage of the opportunities in the communications industry - on this page AAP Today says hello to some of the people who have started working for the company in the last few months.

One of the first people a newcomer might speak to in AAP is Elizabeth Maguire, a receptionist with the financial arm of the Group - Economic Services in Pitt Street - who joined the company herself recently.

And those who might find the pressure of a new job too much at first may also turn to her - Elizabeth is a fully qualified nurse.

Michele Martin, is AAP Melbourne's Supreme and County Court reporter. She has previously worked with ABC Radio and the Victorian Law Institute.

"Working for AAP is like a breath of fresh air," she said.

Michele admits to being a "gym junkie" in her non working hours.

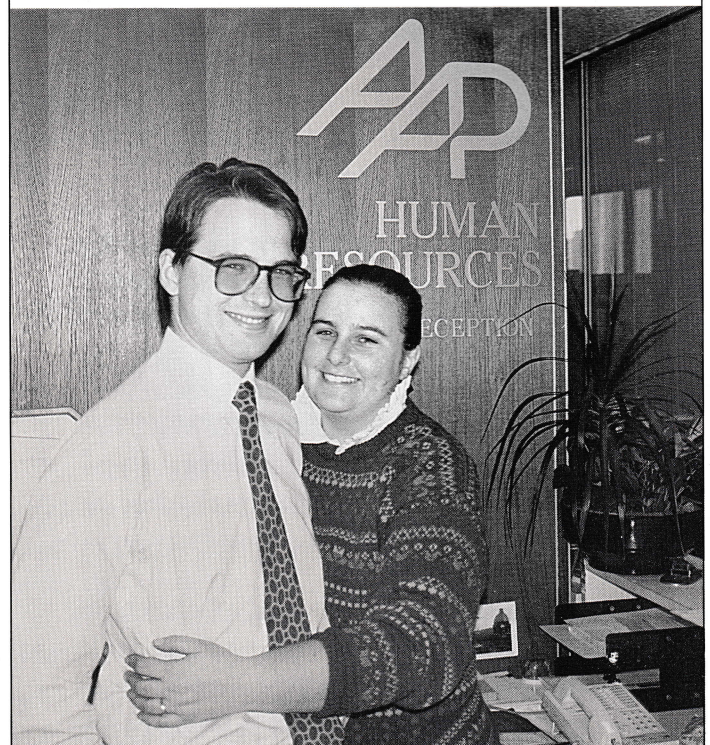
Only in Perth! Matthew Robinson, a computer maintenance technician, is looking forward to summer so he can go windsurfing after work.

The Perth office is near the Swan river. Matthew also enjoys hang gliding and motorcross.

Love is in the air for staff in the Sydney offices. William Hay, a technical analyst in Glebe and Leah Corby, from human resources in Sussex Street, have just got engaged. The couple meet two years ago in the Glebe data processing room when Leah was delivering internal mail.

William's opening line was: "What a terrible dress you're wearing." However, in spite of his way with words, Leah took a shine to him, and told a friend she fancied him, who promptly told William, who asked her out.

Two years down the track they have bought a house in Camperdown.



James Cullen, leader on the MEGA project, a new service order billing project in Glebe, came from IBM and now finds himself "moving forward at a 1,000 miles an hour".

Peter Firth, Business Development Manager in Glebe, with Customer Field Services, divides his spare time between: "Smacking my Range Rover around in the country and fly fishing".

He joined the AAP from a computer business and finds

the company far more diverse than he first thought.

Kimberley Cole joined the Melbourne office as client services executive from Reuters Australia.

In her spare time she enjoys aerobics and basketball.

Kate Elmslie, a marketing analyst with AAP Telecommunications in Glebe, said: "I'm in the right industry and right company."

And to all the people we don't have space to include, hello, and welcome to AAP.



Glebe staff

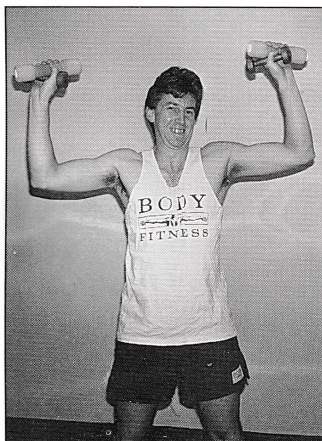
**“I feel
much
more
alert”**

FITNESS FUN

Staff in Sydney are keeping in trim over winter with regular aerobics classes.

The Sussex Street office has classes on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1.10pm on the top floor of next door Howe Building.

The Glebe office works out on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 12.10pm. The Glebe centre also has a selection of weights and exercise machines which staff can use anytime. Staff in Pitt Street are planning to have workouts on Mondays and Wednesdays at 1.10pm.



David Clarke

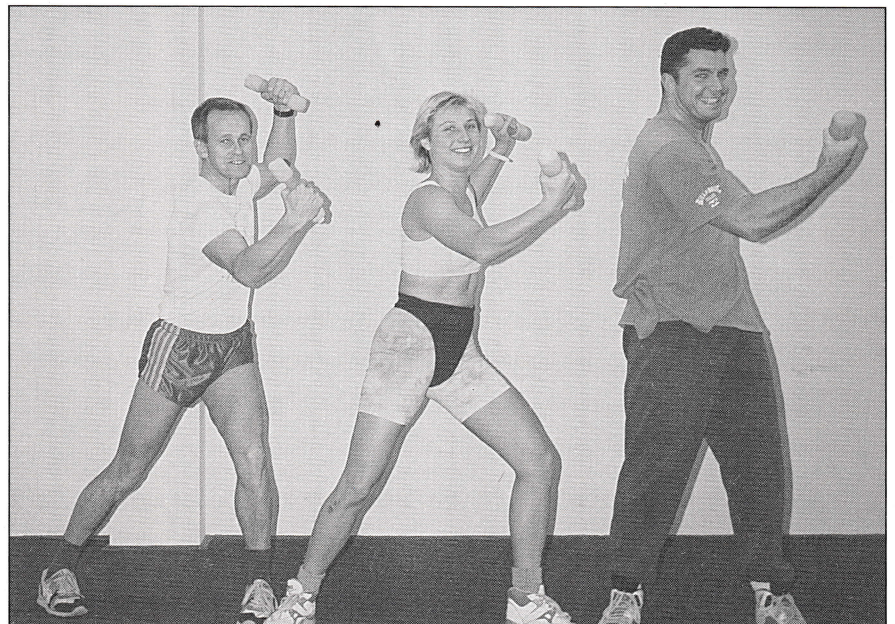
Glebe and Sussex Street have showers but staff in Pitt Street will have to make do with sponge baths.

Fitness instructor Heinke-Maria Floss said: “Aerobics is great for general health and fitness, helps weight control, it is good for your bones, gets rid of stress from work - and it’s fun. So come on and enjoy some aerobics at lunchtime.”

Lyn Clark, a receptionist at Glebe, said: “Aerobics are a good break from what can be very stressful work. I feel much more alert and fresher the rest of the day than if I just went out and sat down for lunch. Plus its a nice group of people and an enjoyable hour.”



Rosemary Dumbrell and Tracey Few



Dick Kelly, Heinke-Maria Floss and Warren Cox

WIN !!!

Attention sports buffs - this is your chance to win a quality AAP spray jacket worth \$43. AAP Today is giving away a jacket to the first 12 correct entries drawn out of a hat.

1) How many gold medals did Australia win in the 1976 Montreal Olympics?

2) What is the record State of Origin crowd?

3) What was the name of the Australian yacht that challenged for the America's Cup in 1962?

4) What is the fastest speed recorded for a tennis serve in the world?

5) How many days did Yiannis Kouros take to run from Sydney to Melbourne in 1989?

6) What score did cricketers Mark and Steve Waugh notch up for NSW at a Perth match in 1990?

7) Who rode Tawrrific in the 1989 Melbourne Cup?

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Cut out the quiz and send it to Sports Quiz, AAP Group Corporate Affairs, 12th floor, 88 Pitt Street, Sydney, 2000.



GOLF DATES

Wentworth Falls lived up to its name last month when the AAP's Social Golf Club monthly match was cancelled due to heavy rain.

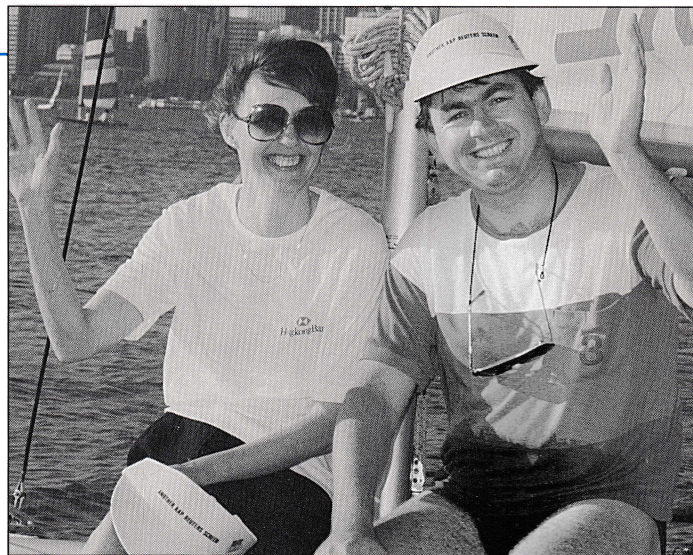
But Sydney sports journalist, Ian Jessup, is expecting a better turnout at the next meet on August 9 at the Asquith Golf Club.

"We usually get 20 players ranging across the company," he said. "It's not too competitive, the purpose is to get and have a good day's golf."

"We play a handicap system so new players need not feel they're at a disadvantage."

The Golf Club's calendar for the rest of the year is: September 27, Moore Park; October 18, Rugby League Country Club, Camden; December 6, Long Reef.

The AAP Golf Club Championship will be held on November 22, at Cumberland Golf Club.



PERTH PRIDE

Ahoy there! AAP Western Australia has taken over the sponsorship of an annual boat race on the Swan River - it will now be known as the AAP Reuters Finance Cup Regatta.

Around 100 Perth money market dealers took up AAP's invitation to spend a late afternoon racing catamarans.

The evening was rounded off with a barbecue and drinks by the river. The winners were Robyn Paterson from the Hong Kong Bank Ltd and Nick Coleman from State Government Insurance Office.

AAP W.A. Group Manager, Bill Bowen, said: "We want to build it into a prestigious event which will enhance AAP's reputation for providing a high quality service. But we also want it to be fun."

SWANS OFFER

The AAP Group is a corporate sponsor of the Sydney Swans AFL team and staff can therefore take advantage of its merchandise order service.

A mini red and white football is available for \$10; a headband, \$5; scarf, \$5; decade in Sydney badge, \$2; flag (large) \$15 (small) \$8; red baseball cap, \$9; club tie, \$30; kick on song cassette, \$5; T-shirts (all sizes), \$25; kids T-shirts, \$16.

Polo shirts (all sizes) \$30; sweat shirts, \$36; casual shorts, \$30; replica guernseys (long sleeve) adult \$63, child \$50, sleeveless, adult, \$50, child, \$48.

Credit card orders can be made over the phone on (02) 332 3888. Postal orders to the Sydney Swans Football Club, PO Box 173, Paddington, NSW 2021, including name, address, telephone number and \$2.50 for postage.

CYCLE RACING FOR A WEEK!

Mt Kosciusko in the Snowy Mountains must be below sea level - that's what Glebe programmer Dennis Riepon thought when taking part in the Road Transport Authority's NSW Great Bike Ride.

The week long ride from Charlotte Pass to Darling Harbour in Sydney to raise money for MS took him up hills so steep he thought he was going the other way.

But he enjoyed the experience so much he is planning on going back on the ride next year.

"It was tremendous fun and I saw a lot of countryside," he said. "Although the official start was from Charlotte Pass a group of us climbed to the top of Mt Kosciusko to set off from there. When we were resting up the top, one of the other riders brought out a bag pipe

and started playing. It was an incredible experience right up to the top of this mountain."

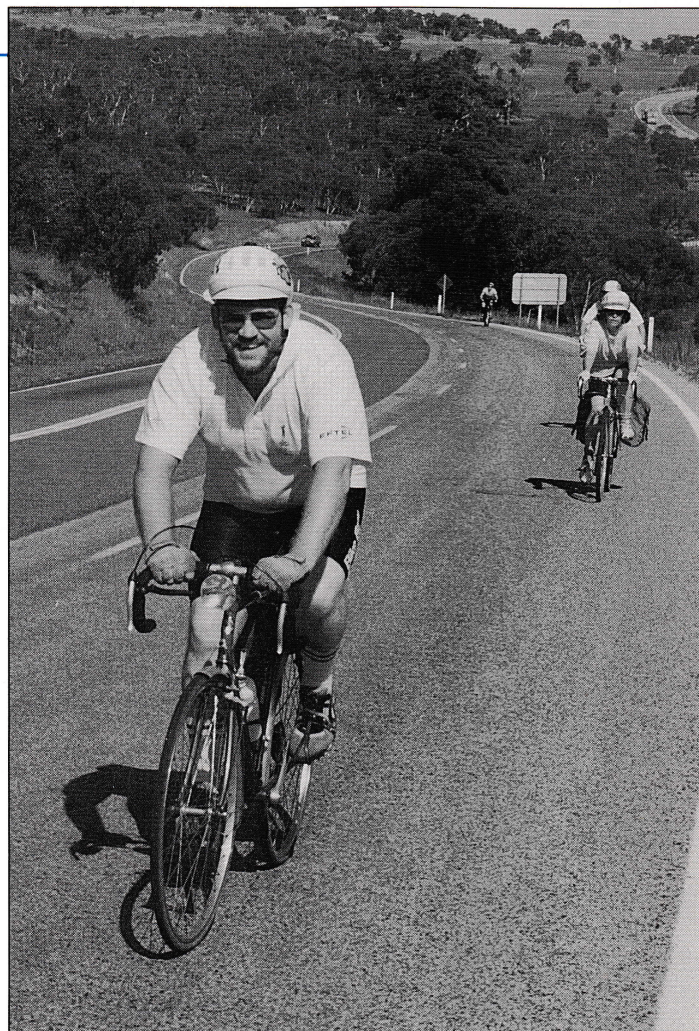
Another highlight was a 15km run down a set of hills where he zipped by all the other riders.

However a more arduous stretch was in store for him later - eight hours in the saddle for a 118km ride from Coomba to Canberra.

But Dennis was not as badly off as one of his co-riders - a postman who was on his official three speed bike.

"I don't know how he managed it, I was down to a 1/1 ratio on my touring bike on some of the hills," said Dennis.

More than 1,900 people took part in the 628 kilometre ride and the RTA had an army like transport unit trucking tents from one camping



Dennis Riepon

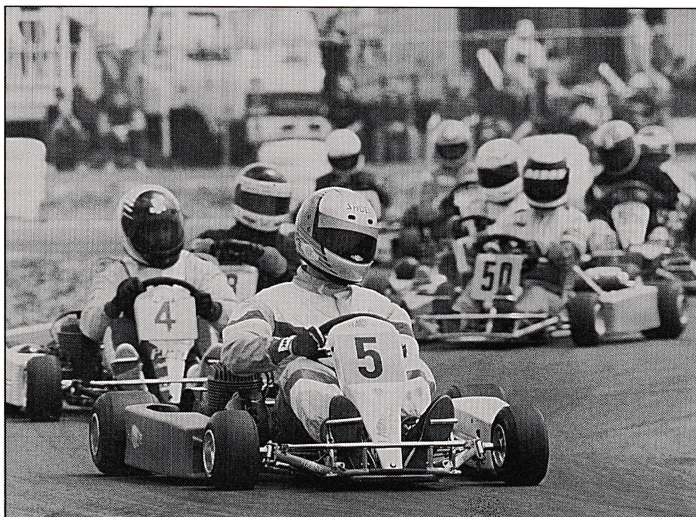
site to the other and providing huge meals for everyone.

And Dennis thanks Lady Luck for looking over him on the last day - he discovered a crack in the frame of his bike and had to nurse it into Sydney.

But that did not stop him from putting on a sprint finish at Darling Harbour.

Dennis raised \$938 from workmates for the charity.

The 500 riders who were collecting for MS raised a total of \$220,000



Mark Lowing

GOING GO KART

Reaching speeds of up to 140kmph 17-year-old Mark Lowing races his Haase Go Kart around the course at the Australian National Championships in Geelong.

Mark's dad and manager is John Lowing, General Manager Financial Markets Services in Sydney, who used

to do some motor racing himself when he was young.

"It's a fantastic feeling watching him race," said John. Mark has been racing Go Karts for three and a half years but has recently given it away to save money for an entry into Formula Ford racing.