



Sparks flying in cycle race

ARMED with a new bike, good advice from fellow cyclists and a taste for a new challenge, Busselton's Kim Sparks has taken on the Cape-to-Cape Mountain Bike event.

The first stage of the event was completed from Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse to Hamelin Bay yesterday.

The riders are aiming to cycle from Hamelin Bay to Margaret River today.

Sparks told the *Times* he signed up for the ride because he liked a challenge.

"Two years ago I did the Kokoda Track for the challenge," he said. "I don't know what to expect with this event, it is unique and it is the unknown which will help me push to see my limits."

Tomorrow the bike group will take

on the Margaret River special stage then complete the event with a 60km ride to Dunsborough on Sunday.

Sparks, with friend and fellow competitor Tony Best, recently took on the Gibb River Road Mountain Bike Challenge but has been looking forward to the more technical and hilly terrain of this week's event.

In preparation, Sparks has been training three times a week, going on multi-hour trips with fellow Busselton Cycle Club members.

"I needed to build up endurance, stamina and the bum," he said.

Sparks said nerves had started to set in at the beginning of the week, including a dream about turning up late, but he was excited about taking part in the local event for the first time.

He said Best had been able to pro-

vide useful guidance on what to bring and he knew fellow riders would be supportive.

"You tend to pick up a group and they encourage you along and you talk with the people around you," he said.

The social aspect of the ride was a drawcard as well, but only after a long day of riding and then bike maintenance on arrival at their destination.

"Then it's beer o'clock - but you have to be conscious of your body's needs," he said.

There are three categories the riders will compete in, open, masters and team. The event will finish on a single track into Dunsborough on Sunday.

— Clare Allen



Ben Lloyd aims for the wicket, supported by Byron Bateson.