



2020 **MS** GONG RIDE

TEAM CAPTAIN'S HANDBOOK

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THANK YOU
FOR RIDING
TO FIGHT MS

THANK YOU for riding to fight MS by entering yourself and captaining a team in the 39th MS Gong Ride.

We want you and your team to get the most out of being part of the MS Gong Ride. This handbook includes the steps of organising your team and includes all the opportunities the MS Gong Ride has available to teams and team members.

Teams play such an important role in the event and your fundraising efforts will help to improve, support and transform the lives of over 25,600 Australians living with multiple sclerosis, their families and carers.



WHAT IS MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS?

Multiple sclerosis is a disease which attacks the central nervous system. The average age of diagnosis is between 20 and 40 years, and it currently affects 25,600 Australians.

It is a lifelong disease for which there is no known cure.

Symptoms include chronic pain, vision and mobility issues, extreme fatigue, cognitive difficulties, tremors, slurring, loss of bladder or bowel control, numbness and can lead to partial or complete paralysis.

Some symptoms of multiple sclerosis:

- Extreme fatigue
- Blurred vision
- Loss of balance and muscle coordination
- Slurred speech
- Difficulty with walking
- Balance issues
- Dizziness
- Altered sensation such as tingling, numbness or pins and needles



THE MS GONG RIDE IS PERSONAL

MICHELLE AND AARON TAYLOR

Aaron Taylor rode in the MS Gong Ride 2018 because he loved to cycle. He hadn't put a huge amount of thought into what the ride actually meant, and who he was riding for... **It turned out Aaron was riding for his wife.**

Meet Michelle Taylor. Michelle's battle with MS began in an unbelievable way.

It all started when Michelle broke her ankle in December 2017. After it healed, she then broke it again in December 2018. After each break, she found walking very difficult. With two young children, Michelle was relying on the help of strangers to help her get to and from her car after school drop-off.

She also had some other symptoms, that at the time weren't linked to her broken ankle. Michelle was suffering from slurred speech, blurred vision and was unable to perform simple daily tasks such as using a pen to write a shopping list.

She eventually saw a neurologist, who

suggested these symptoms were due to an auto-immune condition called Hashimotos disease and prescribed her a 6 month course of steroids. A few weeks later, Michelle was taking her father to a neurologist for treatment for his Guillain-Barré syndrome. At this stage, the steroids had not helped, so Michelle was using walking sticks to help her get around. To her surprise her father's neurologist told Michelle he would like to check her out too.

Michelle was immediately sent for an MRI, which revealed that she had MS. Suddenly, all the symptoms Michelle had been experiencing for the last 2 years made sense. She had put her inability to walk down to her broken ankle, but it had been the first sign of MS.

There is no cure for MS, and the symptoms are unpredictable which means Michelle has to take things day by day.

Some days, Michelle is unable to walk. Her symptoms lessen and worsen depending

on the week, and she regularly undergoes infusions to help relieve her symptoms. She also trains at a gym and is working on getting fit and strong! This means she's able to live as normally as possible, going bike riding and taking her children to swimming lessons.

This year, Michelle will be cheering on Aaron and their amazing team of friends and family. Returning for their second year, Team M.I.C.H plan to smash their fundraising goal in 2020 to Fight MS!

To say thank you for taking on this challenge, Michelle has a message for you.

"Thank you SO much for riding to fight MS. Watching Aaron cross the finish line has taken on a new meaning for me since I was diagnosed. Your support means I'm not fighting this battle alone. Thank you. You're awesome!"

With your help, we can ensure no one has to face MS alone.



STEPS TO ORGANISING YOUR TEAM

1. Promote your team:

- Invite colleagues and friends by email or sharing on social media to join your team.
- If you're back in the office, download the Join Our Team posters off the MS Gong Ride Fundraising Tools webpage and put them up around the workplace.
- Customise the team's fundraising page by adding the company and sponsor logos and team images.
- Be included in your company's newsletter.

2. Organise sub-committees to organise:

- Training rides at lunch, after work or on the weekend.
- Get your own custom team jersey and kit. See our online shop for more information: shop.ms.org.au/custom-kit. Orders close Friday 11 September 2020.

- On the day logistics. See page 7 for more information.
- Fundraising and social events.

3. Book an MS Ambassador visit:

Request an MS Ambassador to visit your workplace using your preferred digital meeting platform. People with MS have a compromised immune system and therefore can't visit in person this year. They will share what it is like living with multiple sclerosis, how our services and advice help them to live better and, of course, give some inspiring fundraising ideas!

4. Talk to HR:

Talk to HR to see if the company matches fundraising, pay for the team marquee, custom jerseys or registration fees. If they do, please call MS events on 1300 733 690 and we can set up a team payment code.



TOP TIPS FROM LEGENDARY MS GONG RIDE TEAM CAPTAINS

We asked the following Team Captains for their key advice for fellow Team Captains in 2020.

Kim Nguyen, SOFT COGS – riding 15 years, raised over \$1 million

The best way to motivate the team and drive high engagement is through regular group rides and a uniform to unite and symbolise the team. For fundraising, I encourage the team to **embrace social media or send a message to their networks. Use humour!** Engage their workplace to check if they have matched funding or if they will hold a morning tea or BBQ. Most importantly, know why you are fundraising and communicate this!

Kirk Barratt, Team DXC – riding over 20 years, raised over \$500,000

Remember who you are doing this for. I know there are times when I feel too busy to organise the team but when I stop, and think of those I know with MS and what a difference we can make I'm spurred on to keep going and come back year after year.

Michael Jones, Steph's Avengers – riding 4 years, over \$262,000 raised

Delegating and getting the whole team and their friends and family involved. It is not just about the group of riders; friends and family meet us in the Gong and run the BBQ. The BBQ is a great opportunity to say thank you for the support and generous donations that everyone has given. The Gong is such a great experience that brings everyone together to work towards a common goal.

Eileen Gainsford, Westpac – first time captain last year, team 10 years riding, raised over \$1 million

We offer team incentives – like a free team jersey, a ride with Brad, a gift voucher – different things motivate different people. Also, sharing a story of someone with MS helps. Or organising events where people get something in return. For example, I did a beach yoga class with all proceeds going to MS.

Dean Zekis, Team Xtreme – riding over 10 years, raised over \$300,000

Sell advertising space on your jerseys – this made us \$30,000 alone last year! Make the sponsors feel special, give them incentives such as a VIP framed jersey or free entry to the fundraising events we organise. Sponsors love to see recognition of their goodwill, so advertise them in your digital communications.

Angelo Lofitis, Top Raisers – riding 10 years, over \$500,000 raised

Engage corporates who can benefit from the advertising on jerseys. Attract others to your team by encouraging friends to ask their friends to join the team. Personal, meaningful conversations go a long way. **Asking someone to donate will not work without the effort, so connecting with meaningful conversations increases your chances.**



TEAM FUNDRAISING IDEAS



Host a fundraising event

Hosting a small fundraising event or bring together a virtual crowd is a one of the best ways to fundraise:

After work drinks: Reserve a section of the preferred bar or pub and negotiate some bar snacks to be included. Virtual drinks are BYO so ask your friends to donate in lieu of paying for their round of drinks.

A trivia night: Everyone loves a quiz night, and this can be from the comfort of your living room, at your local pub or online.

A gym session or cycle class: Get your gym involved and invite your team.



Casual Day

Heading back to the office? You'd be amazed by the length's people bound to a professional dress code will go to just for the chance to ditch their trousers and wear jeans to the office.



Car Spot

Does someone have a car spot that they will auction off for a week?



BBQ

Get your local adult or kids sports team involved and see if you can take over their BBQ at a match. Maybe even split the proceeds between the Club and MS Gong Ride!



Team Leaderboard

The top 10 fundraising teams and top 10 fundraising individuals will be listed on the MS Gong Home page. Can you start a competition between a company you may network with?



Auction the team name and jersey design

Auction off the team name and wear your sponsor's logos go on your jersey. Highest bidder gets best position on your jersey!

Are you hosting an event?

Please remember to register your fundraising event with us. We'll promptly provide your authority to fundraise certificate and some resources to compliment your event!

Call 1300 733 690 or email events@ms.org.au



Wax and Shave

Host a Leg Wax Off or Shave Your Head event if your targeted fundraising is met – and you will become more aerodynamic!



Raffle/Auction

Think about experiences instead of things. Ask a colleagues and clients to donate a weekend at their holiday house or the use of their boat, personal training sessions or dinner-in-your-home catering.

REWARDS, AWARDS AND EXPERIENCES

Bike clinic

Cycle specialists can visit your workplace or meet digitally with your team to align the team's bikes for size, service the bikes for the big day and provide training plans and nutrition tips.

Be awarded and rewarded

- **Trophies for Biggest Team and Best Dressed Team** are awarded on event day on the Event Village Stage.
- **MS Fundraising Heroes:** Your team's individual fundraising efforts will be rewarded with a free Ruby, Gold, Silver, Bronze jersey or a T-shirt. Your team will be included on the MS Gong Ride's MS Honour Wall and on the website.

- **Thank You Function:** Top Fundraising Teams and Individuals will be the guests of honour at the Thank You Function. Fundraising efforts will be celebrated at this evening with a presentation and award ceremony. The function will be held after the event, in accordance with NSW health orders.
- **MS Retreat Marquee at Event Village:** Fundraising teams are invited into the MS VIP Marquee at the Event Village with access to a private masseuse, VIP toilets and catering. If your team has its own marquee, you are still invited to enjoy the MS Retreat amenities throughout the day.

Brad McGee, world champion cyclist and olympic coach, has put together a program to make you a better cyclist

Topics will include: how to be a better endurance rider, bunch riding, how to climb stronger, an activation session and what you should be doing off the bike. The videos will have both standard exercises and an extension component for experienced cyclists.

Pictured left to right, Brad McGee and Stephen 'Papo' Papadopoulos.



DOUBLE YOUR DONATIONS WITH MATCHED GIVING!

How do I find out about my company's policy?

Your Human Resources Department will know whether your company matches money raised by their employees or has a program that supports the charitable causes of its employees. Tell HR about the distance of the ride, the number of members in your team and what you hope to achieve. For example, every \$250 raised pays for an MS Nurse Advisor to visit a person with MS through the crisis of a relapse.

How do I ask?

The most engaging way to ask is to do so in person. If that's not possible, send an email.

We have a letter template prepared on the website that you can share with your employer that details the event, your request and the benefits to the company of supporting your team.

Download it here msgongride.org.au/matched-giving

For matched giving our company details are: Multiple Sclerosis Limited, ABN 66 004 942 287.

Other options

If your company does not offer matched giving, they may pay for registrations, donate to the team, pay for a custom team jersey or full kit, or for the BBQ and catering on event day!

Please contact MS Events for any documentation required, including tax-deductible receipts, or a letter of thanks.

Questions?

We're here to help, contact the MS Events Team on 1300 733 690 or email events@ms.org.au

"My employer, Westpac, offers staff matched giving, where any donations employees make to registered charities are matched dollar for dollar by Westpac.

I raised more than \$7,000 across three MS Gong Rides, and Westpac has matched every dollar. Over our 10-year history in the event, our team has had hundreds of thousands of dollars matched by employers.

Many employers offer this benefit – you just need to get in touch with your Human Resources area to find out. It's a really easy way to double your fundraising efforts."

Eileen Gainsford

Westpac Team Captain, MS Gong Ride 2019 and 2020.





GET INTO GEAR - WITH YOUR CUSTOM TEAM KIT

Having a custom team kit has many benefits! It adds to the team's comradery and creates an excellent opportunity to promote your brand, or for sponsorship from supporters, clients, local businesses and suppliers, which can further add to your team fundraising.

With an MS Custom Kit, you'll get FREE Design Support, FREE Online Team Store (optional), NO Minimum Order and NO Setup Fees.

To order your custom team kit, visit: shop.ms.org.au/custom-kit
Orders close Friday 11 September 2020. Jerseys take 4-6 weeks from ordering to be delivered. To be ready for the MS Gong Ride Virtual in October and to give your sponsors the most exposure, order in July/mid-August!

BOOK A CORPORATE MARQUEE

Organise a Team Marquee at the MS Gong Ride finish village for your team to come together and celebrate completing the course and their huge effort leading up to the event.

Corporate Marquees will be made available closer to the event in line with government restrictions around COVID-19.

Please visit the website for the most up to date information or contact us, phone 1300 733 680 or email events@ms.org.au

GET INTO GEAR! ORDER NOW



SHOP.MS.ORG.AU

THE DIFFERENCE YOU MAKE

The funds you raise go directly to offering vital services and support to people living with multiple sclerosis, while the search for a cure continues. Here's what you and thousands of like-minded fundraisers make possible:



MS Connect

20,000 times the friendly and understanding MS Connect team were there to provide vital support in a time of need to people affected by multiple sclerosis. Demand for MS Connect doubled during the initial month of COVID-19.



MS Advisor program

Over 1500 people with MS receive support from caring nurses, occupational therapists and social workers through the MS Advisor program, helping them to maintain their quality of life, employment and delay disease progression.



MS Peer Support

Nearly 600 new people access a MS Peer Support group every single year, providing connection for people living with MS during what can be a confronting, challenging and confusing.



MS Education

Almost 2700 people participate in MS Education programs to help them manage living with MS and the unpredictability of their symptoms.

Your generous support ensures no one faces their MS journey alone, and helps them maintain their quality of life, employment and delay disease progression.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Meet your Fundraising Coaches for the MS Gong Ride, here to help you with any questions you have.



Your Relationship Managers are:

Fleur Huston

📞 02 8484 1355
✉️ fleur.huston@ms.org.au

Karen Thackray

📞 02 8484 1342
✉️ karen.thackray@ms.org.au

ASK US ABOUT:

- Setting up your team
- Organising an event
- MS Branded Merchandise
- Inviting people to join your team
- Personalising your fundraising page
- Ordering a custom team kit
- Posters
- Email Signatures
- Booking an Ambassador
- Promotions and prizes
- Becoming a MS Gong Fundraising Hero
- Event Day catering
- MS VIP Marquee
- Training tips and tricks
- A thank you letter
- Banking your funds
- Matched Giving



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