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## weather



Today 16-21 Rain



Tomorrow 16-23 Showers



Sunday 13-24 Cloudy



Monday 9-24 Fine

## gold lotto

August 13, 2014 draw 3373

Winning numbers

11 34 35 36 38 40

supps

18 26

Division 1.....\$0.00.....0

Division 2.....\$5719.90.....12

Division 3.....\$515.80.....207

Division 4.....\$27.55.....10,799

Division 5.....\$18.70.....22,050

Division 6.....\$12.10.....53,207

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# Cyclist takes mental health message global

DODGING scorpions and quick sand in the Kazakhstan desert are just two of Rob Lutter's unique adventures, all encountered during his quest to cycle the globe.

His journey started three years ago in London when he decided to ride 40,000km around the world to raise awareness for mental health and this week brought him to Charters Towers.

"In the beginning I was working in the film industry in London as a director's assistant and cameraman," he said.

"I was fairly unhappy and got depressed. I was hiding away in the city and lost my way, so I figured I would take my camera and video equipment and take it on the road."

Since leaving England in 2011 Mr Lutter has ridden across Europe, the Mediterranean, Turkey, the Himalayas and Central Asia.

"I got lost in the desert of Kazakhstan and had dehydration," he said.

"It was stupidity because obviously in England we don't have deserts, and I thought this is fun we're going into a desert and I took a couple of litres of water."

"24 hours later, after waking up with scorpions underneath my tent and going through quick sand and temperatures of up to 50 degrees Celsius, I thought this was serious."

"I had to leave the bike and found a farm and they gave me water and showed me the way back to the road."

"So without people's help I would not have made it, but I was very naive but I guess that is how you learn."

Taking a lot of his experiences as a learning curve, Mr Lutter has continued on in his travels, with his most recent adventures taking him to Australia.

His latest mishap landed him in Charters Towers by accident when his bike broke down outside Prairie.

"I pushed my bike into the town and the sun was setting and there were windmills turning, and I thought, 'it's not that bad is it?'" he said.

Charters Towers local Charlie Crossley was having a beer at the Prairie pub when he noticed Rob walk in looking a bit lost.

"Like any of those small little towns you have a chat and he was telling me of his plight," Mr Crossley said.

He said he was surprised when he told him he rode from England and had been travelling for the past three years.

"I thought wow that is a lot of commitment," Mr Crossley said.

"It's always good to meet new people, and he's a good bloke too."

"So I said look I am going to be in Charters Towers in the morning, you are quite welcome to come for a ride and throw your bike in the



Local Charlie Crossley said he was impressed with Rob Lutter's quest to cycle the globe and raise awareness for mental health.

Picture: SOPHIE KESTEVEN

back and get it fixed."

After Charters Towers, Mr Lutter headed to Townsville to try and get some work and raise money for Beyond Blue.

"I have been raising money in the past for a mental health charity in England called Mind," Mr Lutter said.

"But I figured while I'm in Australia, I may as well give Australians the chance to donate to

their own country."

Beyond his travels in Australia he plans to ride around America, which he said would be a big trip in itself, before heading back to England.

"Sometimes I think, 'have I bit off more than I can chew?' but I just take one day at a time," he said.

— SOPHIE KESTEVEN

## Towers produces strong women award finalists

From page 1

THE aim of the awards program is to encourage women to celebrate their contribution to rural, regional and remote communities.

Mrs Stretton said it was an honour to be chosen as a finalist.

"I realised the other night that three out of the 12 finalists (including me) all did our schooling at Charters Towers School of Distance Education and then secondary school at Blackheath and Thornburgh College," she said.

"I think there was something like 50 nominations. So for three of the finalists to all be schooled in Charters Towers, what are the odds?"

Mrs Stretton is the co founder and driver of Ask An Aussie Farmer, a Facebook page that aims to promote all types of Australian agriculture. She is also this year's

QRRRW social media co-ordinator and 2014 conference convener.

She said there are four different categories for the awards, including business; professional; community (paid) and volunteer.

Ms Keough and Mrs Stretton are two of three women to be nominated under the volunteer category.

Ms Keough is the director and co-ordinator of Camp Cobbold which is a social development program she has been running for the past six years.

"It basically provides families from remote cattle properties with a five day holiday experience up at Cobbold Gorge Resort," she said.

"I raise well over \$100,000 every year to run the program so it is affordable for families to attend."

"And we have a whole lot of programs for families that help with

recovery and resilience in the face of all the natural disasters such as Cyclone Yasi, followed by bush fires and now we are in our third year of drought.

"I think when you're a volunteer it is a good source of encouragement to keep you going," she said.

Finalist Rebecca Gunther is a beef extension officer based at Cloncurry with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. She is a finalist in the professional category and said she was "gob smacked" when she found out.

"I really love my job working within the beef industry," she said.

"Because there is never a dull moment and there's never a day that is the same because you are working with producers and different production systems."

Ms Gunther said she enjoys

working one-on-one with beef producers.

"Because that is what the extension role is all about, providing connectivity between producer on the ground with research that is happening at universities or CSIRO or MLA."

"And helping them understand what that research means to them on their property and how to adopt any of those research practices into their own management systems."

She added it was quite humbling to have recognition from her peers and fellow colleagues, because she was nominated by those she worked with.

Winners of the four categories will be announced at the 2014 QRRRW Conference Gala Dinner on September 17.

— SOPHIE KESTEVEN

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