

Cancer survivor inspired by Lance Armstrong

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SET TO GO: Lou de Leeuw will take part in the Tour Down Under's community cycling event after recovering from cancer.

THE RIDER: Lying in a hospital bed with testicular cancer, Lou de Leeuw wished away all hopes of ever riding his bike again until Lance Armstrong did it.

Diagnosed in 2007, the city father of four began the long road to recovery after watching Armstrong, a seven-time Tour de France winner, come back from his own battle with testicular cancer.

"You get whacked and then when you actually do get better you're busy as hell because you have to catch up with life," Mr de Leeuw, 58, says.

"But Lance was a big inspiration last year, he got me back on the bike because I didn't ride after it happened.

"I thought if he could do it so could I - now I just have to win seven races."

Next Friday (January 22) he will ride in the Mutual Community Challenge Tour from Norwood to Goolwa.

In the lead-up to the gruelling 160.5km race, Mr de Leeuw, a consultant in sustainability, has been riding up to 50km three days a week which, as he says, "isn't bad for an old bloke".

"I get sort of meditative about it so I start thinking strong legs, strong head, strong heart.

"Giving up is not an option."

Riding alongside six mates, he will be cheered on by his four children and two grandchildren.

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