



Commuting to work every day saw the pounds fly off

**FAT FIGURES**  
**741 CALORIES BURNED**  
A 78kg male riding for 55 minutes at a speed of 14-16mph over varied gradients is equivalent to a McDonald's special edition Grand Big Mac



INSPIRATION

MARYJANE WATSON, 54  
**HOW CYCLING CHANGED MY LIFE...**

A switch of careers saw Maryjane Watson shed over five stone

**NOW 9st 10lb (63kg)**

**THEN 16st (101kg)**

**WHAT WAS LIFE LIKE BEFORE THE BIKE?**

➤ Ten years ago I had a clinically obese BMI (36.1) but changing jobs and cycling four miles to work and back every day changed all that. My diet has never been particularly bad, just that I ate too much of it. Cycling meant I was moving more, increasing my muscle mass and metabolic rate. I cut my portion sizes and ate more protein. I only eat complex carbs ahead of a long ride.

**HOW DID CYCLING CHANGE YOUR LIFE?**

➤ Without my bike I'd be hounded with medical

conditions – I still have high blood pressure from the obesity. Cycling also kept away the darkness of depression I suffered when my children left home.

**WHAT DO YOU RIDE?**

➤ Well, I'm 5ft 6in but with a 31in inside leg, so I got a bike made for me by Hewitt Cycles in Preston. It's fantastic with a short top-tube, Shimano 105 groupset with ratios for hill work, Enigma disc brakes and a SON 28 dynamo, which is perfect for my lights and GPS.

**HOW OFTEN DO YOU RIDE?**

➤ I'm a member of Audax UK – distance over speed is what I yearn for – so I ride a lot on the Isle of Man, where I live, and occasionally in the UK. The Isle of Man is home to

inspirational cyclists such as Lizzie Holden and Anna Christian of the Drops team. Last year I averaged 1500km a month and even rode the 1400km London-Edinburgh-London audax. I managed 861km before falling asleep and off the bike! I intend to have another go.

*Thanks to fatladattheback.com for putting us in touch with Maryjane.*

**TOP TIPS**

Add more protein to your plate, or use a protein shake. I use a vegan one, Sun Warrior, it tastes lovely and keeps the 'munchies' at bay.

*Has cycling changed your life? Email us at [cyclingplus@immediate.co.uk](mailto:cyclingplus@immediate.co.uk)*

ADVICE

**5 QUICK CHECKS...**

**BEFORE SPENDING 36 HOURS IN THE SADDLE**

Mike Duff, co-founder of the Wolf Pack 500km ride, shares his tips



**1 WHERE THERE'S A WILL...**

Find your motivation – charity or to prove something – to train yourself to a new level. Last year we rode for refugee children. This year's Wolf Pack ride is to raise awareness of climate change.

**2 DO THE NUMBERS**

Pore over maps, profiles, timings, flights, weights, logistics, battery levels – everything! Know your route and have a backup plan should passes be closed, for example

**3 EMBRACE CHANGE**

Weather conditions and temperatures can change, so you need to have the right kit to suit. Do some sleep loading too, you can store some up over the week before the event.

**4 FORGET THE KS**

So your longest ever ride is only 200km? The second 200km is just like the first 200, just later, darker and mostly mental. Pushing past 400km is 99.9 per cent mental.

**5 GO NOCTURNAL**

Don't let your first night ride be your first night event. It's better to know what hallucinating at 4am on a mountain descent is like. Test your lighting setup, and all your senses in the dark, on roads you know.

*500km is a long way to ride alone, so join the team at [wolfpack.cc](http://wolfpack.cc)*