

# Wheeling Around Guangzhou

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY ALEXANDER LLOYD

Finding really healthy spaces for sports is not an easy task in big cities like Guangzhou, but somehow a very interesting group of Guangzhou muscle power addicts has done it. Early weekend mornings, foreign and Chinese cyclists do circuits around University City (Daxue Cheng). This group's story started when Klaus Guenther organized a group of regular bike riders, later joined by Jarek Barc and Philip Richardson. GZcycle now has more than 40 members including expats and locals, and is open to everybody who loves cycling or wants to practise it.



**W**e spoke with Jarek Barc and Philip Richardson about their two-wheeled adventures. Jarek has been in China for more than three years and operates a small sports apparel brand called Epix Gear, which makes products for cycling and triathlons; Philip Richardson is a designer of high-end loudspeaker systems who has lived in China for seven years.

**Why did you guys join GZcycle?**

**Barc:** I love cycling, but when I moved to China, I thought I would never cycle again. I met Klaus at work, and he introduced me to the group.

**Richardson:** Working and living in China is a dynamic unlike any other place I have ever lived and worked; the stress level at times is not commensurate with the reward, further causing me to seek

a healthy lifestyle amongst expatriates. I met Klaus Guenther at Hong Yan bike shop in Guangzhou and the rest is history ...

**What made you decide on cycling instead of other sports?**

**Barc:** I was an amateur mountain bike racer in the US. Cycling is more expensive and more dangerous than ball sports like tennis. However, while those sports can make you more frustrated by playing them, cycling allows you to release frustration, and to push your body further than you thought possible. The best feeling is right after a really hard ride when you feel you gave it everything you have.

**Richardson:** I rode road bikes competitively in the mid-'80s in Long Beach, California. I've always had a love of cycling and Guangzhou has many



areas for cycling with restrictions to motor vehicles, along with routes and bicycle races, that created a natural environment to get back into it.

**What has been your biggest achievement?**

**Barc:** Finishing a 12 hour endurance mountain bike race, but finishing the half

ironman this year will possibly be even more rewarding than that.

**Richardson:** My biggest achievement is actually my greatest loss – spinning and sweating away 20kg since riding with GZcycle.

For more information, visit [www.gzcycle.com](http://www.gzcycle.com). Happy spinning!



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