

Recovery spurs Alex's ambition

By MIKE GANDON

PROMISING teenage cyclist Alex Tomlinson is moving forward after surviving a road accident at Mittagong in late April that claimed the life of his close friend and training partner Ben Mikic.

Mikic, 15, died as a result of the accident involving a collision between a vehicle and the two young riders in the late afternoon of April 27.

Tomlinson, 15, was taken to Liverpool Hospital in a serious condition. He has since recovered.

Now he is back in training and as motivated as ever in pursuit of his cycling dreams.

Together with the cycling community throughout Australia, Illawarra's internationally renowned Kersten brothers, Josh and Ben, were shocked by the accident at Mittagong.

Tomlinson, a Year 10 student at Chevalier College, Bowral, is an Illawarra Academy of Sport scholarship holder in the cycling program as was Mikic, who also attended Chevalier College.

Josh and Ben Kersten are the first IAS graduates to sponsor the program that they themselves had passed through and arranged a new state-of-the-art, carbon-fibre bike for Tomlinson from one of the academy's team sponsors, Excelpro/FRF, as part of the healing process.

"It will get me back into it, pretty much," Tomlinson said yesterday.

"I just want to get back into it with them and get my fitness back."

The NSW road championships in six weeks is a short-term goal but he prefers track racing.

Since the accident the Ben Mikic Foundation has been established with the support of patrons Brad McGee, James Williamson and Ben Kersten, to bring awareness to road safety for cyclists and also to help with financial support for up-and-coming talented cyclists.

Alex's father, Peter Tomlinson, is on the board of the Ben Mikic Foundation.

For more information visit www.benmikicfoundation.org.au



Wheels keep turning: Promising cyclist Alex Tomlinson (left) receives a new bike from internationally renowned cyclist Josh Kersten.

Picture: ROBERT PEET