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DYKES RIDING TO THE BALL IN STYLE by Cara Davis

Michelle (Shotty) Cannon and Dykes on Bikes vice-president Nic Fletcher at last year's Black & White Ball

Gather around, ladies, because it's time to pull your tuxes, tails, top-hats and frocks out of the closet – the annual Dykes on Bikes Black & White Ball is on again.

And with all proceeds going to the Luncheon Club, the Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service and Monica's Doggy Rescue, there's no reason not to get involved.

The dress code is simply "dress to the nines". For some that means dinner suits, bow ties and red carnations, and for others it means full leathers.

For the more feminine lesbians among us, it's dresses and tall heels all the way.

Dykes on Bikes spokeswoman Lyn Doherty, however, has a different issue to deal with.

"I have a problem of working out whether I am butch or femme," she said.

"So one year I go butch and the next year I go in high heels and stockings, and ridiculous cleavage."

Dykes on Bikes initiated the Black & White Ball in 1999, partly to raise money to donate to local charities, but also to indulge the women in their dress-ups.

And with so few opportunities to hop into their Sunday best, lesbians have jumped at the opportunity to take part in the Black & White Ball.

Naomi Palmer will host the event and DJs Sandi Hotrod and Mandy Rollins will look after the music.

Guests can compete for the "best dressed" titles while being entertained by Bec Hill and Jess Cooper, pop diva Shauna Jensen, lesbian icon Ruth Filewood and drag kings.

And the boys, Doherty said, are more than welcome.

"Boys are allowed as long as they have got girls who will look after them and make sure they don't cause any trouble," she said.

"So you don't have to be a girl and you don't have to be part of Dykes on Bikes – you just have to like having a fun time."

The Dykes on Bikes Black & White Ball is on Saturday 15 September from 7pm at Jets Sports Club, Holbeach Avenue, Tempe. Tickets are \$20 in advance or \$25 on the door. Dykes on Bikes, Sydney Leather Pride or Bears members can grab tickets for \$15. Go to Maxxx Black at 264 King St, Newtown, call Webby on 0412 028 906 or Neddy on 0418 272 936.

GIVEAWAY

Thanks to Dykes on Bikes we have two double passes to give away to the Black & White Ball. To enter, email your name and contact details to comps@ssonet.com.au and put Black & White Ball in the subject line. Entries close 5pm Friday.