

Course drives home the safety message

By **SALLY FOY**

EMMA Molenaar hasn't got her licence yet, but that hasn't stopped the Batemans Bay High student lauding the benefits of Rotary's Youth Driver Awareness (RYDA) program.

The teen attended the shire's first RYDA course last year and hopes the 2009 program is just as successful for her peers.

"I will get my Ls soon but either way I learnt a lot from it," she said.

"The biggest thing for me was learning about standard drinks. I always thought one drink was one drink, but it's not, they explained that to us. A shot is more alcoholic than some drinks and vice versa."

The RYDA course aims to provide teens with the skills they need to become better drivers.

According to the Rotary Club, people under the age of 26 comprise only 15 per cent of drivers and yet are involved in 36 per cent of road fatalities.

RTA statistics state a 17-year-old driver with a P1 license is four times more likely to be involved in a fatal car crash than a driver aged



SAFETY LESSON: Batemans Bay High students Nick Kostiainen, Ryan Tidboald and Emma Molenaar are impressed with Rotary's Youth Driving Awareness (RYDA) program.

26 or older.

Batemans Bay Rotary Club's Neil Simpson said 300 shire students would be exposed to the program on April 7 and 8.

"It's a joint initiative between Batemans Bay and Moruya Rotary Clubs that each year targets Year 11 students," he said.

"We see it as a vitally important part of our work with youth."

Designed by the RTA with Government input, Mr Simpson said

the course - in terms of design and content - was superb.

Students Nick Kostiainen and Ryan Tidboald attended last year's course and are supporters of the interactive program.

"Driver perception was a big learning curve for me," Ryan said. "Making sure I use my peripheral vision to be aware of what is going on around me, not just in front of me."

For Nick, the lesson was variation in

stopping speeds.

"They tell us what speed the car will be travelling and where it will brake, and then they ask us to stand

where we think the car will stop," he said.

"Everyone got it wrong."

For information visit www.ryda.org.au.

Barefoot bowls evening

A NIGHT of barefoot bowls will be held tomorrow to raise funds for the Rotary Youth Driver Awareness program 2009.

More than 300 shire students will take part in the course on April 7 and 8, which is funded entirely by the Rotary Clubs of Batemans Bay and Moruya.

The Hawaiian-themed event will be held at the Batemans Bay Bowling Club from 6pm, cost is \$10 including a sausage sizzle.

Young drivers 'best trained' in the state

By **SAM GROVES**

THERE was nothing fast and furious about the Rotary Youth Driving Awareness (RYDA) program held last week at Moruya Jockey Club, but the 221 students did enjoy the hands-on activities.

The turnout was three times bigger than at last year's inaugural event run by Batemans Bay Rotary Club.

The braking demonstration was a hit with the young prospective drivers who learnt the fundamentals of safe braking distances.

This was one of six modules held on April 7 and 8. The module that had the greatest effect on students included stories from crash survivors, according to Rotarian Scott White.

"Students found it very inspirational, and there was a lot of comments after on how it impacted on students," he said.

"The feedback on the day from students was



DRIVER AWARENESS: Danny Hamer from Greater Southern Area Health Service gets students from across the Eurobodalla involved in the Safe Celebrating module of the Rotary Youth Driving Awareness program.

really positive.

"Hopefully, this will produce some of the best-trained drivers in the state."

The RYDA program included sections on hazard perception, stopping distances, drugs and alcohol, car finance and insurance, and information from local police.

Students from St Peter's Anglican College, Carroll College, Batemans Bay, Moruya and Narooma High Schools attended the two-day seminar hosted by local Rotary clubs. The course was aimed at year 11 students who had obtained a learner driver's licence.

Students paid \$8 to attend, which included lunch supplied by Moruya Rotary Club members.

Funding has already been secured for the program to run again in April next year. It is hoped that the number of students who undertake the course in 2010 will exceed this year's.