



2019/20 President's Report

Executive Summary

2019/20 has been a challenging year for the Ballarat Sebastopol Cycle Club. The biggest challenges appeared as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and the government restrictions put in place to combat the spread of the virus. Almost overnight in mid-March, all cycling programs including racing and coaching were cancelled with no clear future date to return. Even training outdoors was limited to solo cycling only or groups of people from the same household. The uncertain future made it impossible for sub-committees to plan any outdoors activities and due to cycling being classified as a 'contact sport' (because we're within 1.5 meters of each other), the *return to play* was always going to be delayed.

Thankfully, our club committee and our sub-committees were up for the challenge and I'm proud to say that we have come through the other side a stronger and more connected club than before. Whilst membership numbers have understandably remained similar to last year, our community engagement has grown enormously. We have almost 2000 people following each of the clubs 3 Facebook pages for Road/Track, BMX and Mountain Biking. We also have well over 1000 followers on the Cycling Ballarat Instagram page plus hundreds of email addresses on sub-committee databases.

Although the year has been tough there have been many successes worth celebrating or at least acknowledging. Here are just a few:

- Nicholas White representing Australia in the World Under 23 Road Cycling Championships and then competing in the Tour de l'Avenir (basically the Tour de France for under 23's) in Europe. We look forward to seeing what lies ahead for Nick in 2021.
- Completing the state-of-the-art BMX track resurfacing with lighting now installed at Marty Busch Reserve. This facility is now one of the best in the country and most importantly it has already attracted a lot of new members. An exciting connection has also been made with Phoenix College which has the potential to really grow the popularity of BMX in Ballarat.
- Successfully organising and hosting another fantastic Fred Icke Road Race but this time on a totally new course with the start/finish line in Kingston. We partnered with the Kingston Pub and once again, the Fred Icke was the most popular one-day event on the Cycling Victoria calendar.
- Daniel Bucknall winning a state title at the Darebin International Sports Centre (DISC) along with many other medals at various other track and criterium events.
- Successfully being awarded another CX State Round and Federation University offering to be a major partner with our club for years to come.
- Successfully winning a \$3,000 grant to conduct the Pedal Power Program which teaches cycling skills to kids with Autism



As we look ahead, the cycling landscape is about to change in Australia. Due to mounting government pressure and for financial reasons, all cycling disciplines will move under one umbrella called AusCycling. From 1st November 2020, generally speaking, a membership will give that person access to participate in multiple disciplines through a combined insurance. This is extremely exciting for our club and our members because our club is unique in the fact, we are setup perfectly to match with all of the disciplines under the one umbrella too.

Thank you to our volunteer-run sub-committees who continually give up their time to help make BSCC a better club. Thank you to our members for their support and their patience during a difficult but successful year. Bring on 2020/21!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Canny".

Tim Canny | President



Road Division Summary

2019/20 can be summarised as a year of two distinct periods. The first period was outdoors with others and the second was indoors or outside alone. Yes, it was a strange year for sure but we made the best of a difficult situation. Thankfully, cycling is a sport that you can perform on your own, which is what the government was enforcing us to do following the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. In addition, we are also lucky that we live in an age where we can ride our bikes (competitively if we wish) on smart trainers, indoors and online. This is the type of riding that took place in the second period of the year from March to June 2020.

Pre COVID-19 we were fortunate to have a lot of our events take place as planned. In September, we hosted another successful Cycling Victoria Road and Time Trial Championships in Burrumbeet where Liam White took home a silver medal in the Men's Elite Race. Our Club Championships which was held in Blampied from the Captain Creek Winery. Angus Lyons was a deserving winner of his first Championship sash.

Due to the high numbers of competitors at our Wednesday night criteriums, the Road Racing Committee decided to trial 6 categories over two sessions of racing on one night. Whilst the racing was a lot safer, it did not attract the same big numbers. This will be one of the challenges we will have to work out before or during next season. It was pleasing to see the growth in junior numbers. Chris Liston's skills sessions and race simulations were enjoyed by many kids. Unfortunately, due to government restrictions, we were unable to hold our Criterium Club Championships. We hope to hold these at the end of this year instead if possible.

The BSCC organised Fred Icke Road Race took place on Saturday 29th February on a new course starting and finishing in beautiful Kingston. The event attracted almost 300 competitors and was once again, the most popular event on the Victorian Road Series calendar. The Fred Icke is likely to be held at the same time in 2021 and due to the positive feedback it will be on the same course.

The annual Tri-Series with Geelong and Colac Cycling Clubs unofficially went ahead online via indoor training software, Zwift. Although the shield was not up for grabs, BSCC members supported the 3-race series strongly and easily took the points over our rivals.

At an elite level, 2020 has been another remarkable year for our club. Nicholas White competed at the highest level at the Tour d'Avenir (basically Tour de France for under 23's) in August and represented Australia at the World Championships in September. Meanwhile, fellow elite rider Angus Lyons performed incredibly well overseas winning stage one of the Tour of Indonesia then finishing that tour 2nd on GC.

There was a lot to celebrate in the year gone by in the road division. What was particularly pleasing was the response of our members and the Ballarat cycling community to the Road



Racing Committee organised online Zwift events during COVID-19. Once outdoor racing can resume, we hope to attract some of the online racers to the outdoors.

Recently, the Club successfully won a grant to conduct a Pedal Power Program which teaches cycling skills to kids with Autism

The 11-person strong Road Racing Committee will continue to be committed to developing and promoting safe, fun and exciting racing for all road members.

Mountain Bike Division Summary

The MTB division held its Club Championship XCO race in December, on the cross-country loops at Black Hill. The trail conditions were perfect, but the course was brutal! Tough climbing then challenging descents made for an exciting day. Special thanks to Mark Van Halen for his organisation, track preparation and commissaire roles - a career behind the microphone may await. Thanks also to Dom Geoghegan for race timing support, Paul Sagnol for photography services, and all the volunteers and trail fairies who made the day possible. Dan Braunsteins and Jess Egan both retained their Club Champion titles. Rohan Adams, Warren Faneco, Melissa Vandewater and Jodie Walker rounded out the podiums.

The club again provided assistance to the Fiona Elsey Cycle Classic - an event which raises funds for cancer research. Our volunteers supported their Fat Tyre Challenge option, and included route marking, safety and logistics. Ride ambassador and former world champion Jess Douglas hosted social skills sessions in the lead up to the day, and offered a smiling face and encouragement to participants on the day. The event took place on a sunny day in mid-February, and incorporated different distances to cater for a range of abilities.

The daylight savings period saw a return to fortnightly senior criteriums, with events held across a number of locations in the Ballarat area, including Black Hill, Woookarung Regional Park, Bodens Water Race, Napoleons and RACV Creswick. The club was due to test itself on Andrew's private trail network in Buninyong, when the pandemic restrictions commenced.

The dirt critters were at full force for the start of the 2019-20 season, with large numbers of juniors shedding the trails across different venues and learning from our fabulous crew of ride leaders. The club is keen to develop our junior program for boys and girls over the coming period.

Women's social group The Dirt Girls also went from strength to strength, regularly meeting



on the first Saturday of the month. The group is all about fun, encouragement and inclusivity.

Semi-regular trail maintenance working bees were also underway prior to restrictions taking force, with work being done to improve the trail conditions at both Mt Clear criterium track and the Black Hill cross country loop. The MTB sub-committee have also been liaising with Parks Victoria regarding Woookarung master planning and hope to work closely with PV to deliver good outcomes for our community.

BMX Division Summary

2019-2020 has seen huge investment into the club from both local and state governments. The investment by the State government saw an upgrade to the track surface making it an all-weather track. This was opened in late 2019 with a number of riders from across the state attending.

The local government has invested in the further development of the club with supporting of the track resurfacing and the installation of light towers around the track to assist the BMX Division in being able to provide more events and activities. The light towers should be commissioned in the second half of 2020.

We have also reached out to a local high school about running BMX courses and have had that school take up the opportunity. This has aided in spreading further awareness of BMX in Ballarat. We look forward to continuing this program on.

With the promotion of the club, we have seen an increase in memberships, however due to Covid-19, membership renewals are down in the last quarter. Members have indicated they will renew when events and activities can resume.

Our 2020 Open Race meet was very well received by the BMX community. We had a number of businesses help support the event which included a "Mayor's Race". This saw the Current Mayor and former mayor take a lap and put their reputations on the line.

We currently offer members the opportunity to represent the club by wearing a jersey, hoodie or beanie as well as a club race plate. These sales are on a pre-order basis and it has been well received by the club and the BMX community.

With Covid-19 occupying majority of the 2020, many events and training sessions had to be cancelled. This resulted in items requiring to be replaced due to expiration including food and first-aid equipment.



The BMX committee continue to look for further opportunities to upgrade and promote BMX in the community and look forward to getting back to racing and events over the next 12 months.

Track Division Summary

It was another great track season this year which wrapped up in March, just as Coronavirus restrictions came into place. Junior numbers for training were strong, with good numbers of girls & boys in all age categories participating. Motor pacing was popular again, with Joel Hossack doing a great job on the motorbike.

The season was highlighted by strong performances from the Humber sisters and Daniel Bucknall at various events throughout Victoria. Alaya and Iesha were selected to ride in the Bendigo women's Madison together, however Iesha crashed heavily in an earlier race and was sent to hospital. Thankfully, although very battered and bruised, she recovered well.

Damien Keirl continues to play a pivotal role in the development of Daniel, Alaya and Iesha. Continues to teach them how to train, how to race and also about life balance. A lot of their success can be attributed to the time and effort that Damien puts into his troops.

Whilst it could be a delayed start for track this summer, there is no doubt there will be quite a few people keen to hit the velodrome as soon as they are allowed.

Cyclocross Division Summary

After being awarded a Cycling Victoria State CX Round to be held at Federation University on Sunday 17th May, the event was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions. Nevertheless, our club can be confident that we will be awarded another State CX Round in 2021 and Federation University will kindly support it as promised in 2020.