



## 2020/21 President's Report

### Executive Summary

The past year has been an extremely difficult one for Ballarat Sebastopol Cycling Club, as it would have been for most Victorian sporting clubs. The Coronavirus Pandemic continued to disrupt our club with government restrictions forcing many club organised cycling programs and activities to be postponed or cancelled altogether.

Once again, our division sub-committees were patient and resilient doing all they could to provide value for members and keeping them connected with the club and their bikes. Whilst overall club membership numbers have understandably remained similar to the two years, our community engagement continues to grow with well over 2000 people following each of the clubs 3 Facebook pages for Road/Track, BMX and Mountain Biking.

A silver lining of the pandemic, if there is such a thing, has been the huge growth in the number of people riding bikes. The challenge and opportunity for our sub-committees is to connect with these new and old cyclists and get them involved in our club activities, whatever the cycling discipline.

Although it's been another tough year there have been many successes worth celebrating. Here are just a few:

- Christian Ashby's two silver medals at the Australia Road Para-Nationals. The only person to beat him was a Tokyo Paralympic Gold Medallist.
- Successfully hosting a round of the Victorian Mountain Bike Championships at Black Hill after being awarded the event only a few weeks prior.
- Successfully organising and conducting the first Pedal Power Program in Ballarat which taught cycling skills to kids with Autism. The kids had an absolute ball and the improvement over the 4-week period was phenomenal.
- The growth in BMX member numbers and participation numbers. Coaching sessions are full and club events are running at or near capacity. Exciting times.

Thank you to our volunteer-run sub-committees who continually give up their time to help make BSCC a better club. A special thanks to the club committee who have had some extra challenges to deal with in recent times. Thank you to BSCC's partners and sponsors who play a pivotal role in supporting our club. And finally, thank you to our members for their support, resilience and their patience during another difficult but successful year. Bring on 2021/22!

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

Tim Canny | President



## Road Division Summary

Due to Covid related government restrictions, there was no road racing in the spring of 2020. The first road races after the lengthy break were in fact, the AusCycling Road National Championships in the first week of February. BSCC had a number of outstanding results. Nicholas White came agonisingly close to being crowned National Road Champion when he finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the final sprint in Buninyong. His brother Liam was not far behind in 19<sup>th</sup>. Christian Ashby collected a silver medal in both the individual time trial and the road race Para-National Championships C2 category. The only person to beat him was the 2021 Tokyo Paralympics gold medallist. A truly remarkable result.

After months of preparation, our club hosted our first Power to Pedal Program which is all about teaching kids with Autism how to ride a bike. We had 19 kids register for the program, all of whom had varying levels of competency. Club coaches Damien Keirl and Chris Liston along with their assistants Felicity Liston and Hugo Tolliday connected with the kids brilliantly resulting in some incredible improvements over the 4-week program. Following its success, the club has been invited to host another program next year which we have decided to commit to.

Our ever-popular crits made their long-awaited return in February on our slightly altered circuit in Victoria Park. Participation numbers in the free junior skills sessions averaged 25 kids every week which was our highest number in many years if not ever.

Open crit racing was conducted across two sessions again so that numbers on the track at one time were lower and racing was safer. We had a cap of 15 riders per grade and B and C grade would hit that cap most weeks. Unfortunately, rider numbers in A and D grade were often quite low and this will be something our sub-committee will address for the approaching season. After no championship was held in 2020, the 2021 Club Crit Championship took place in March and was suitably won by Liam White.

We managed to organise and hold a small number of road races from February to May this year. The Brookman made a return to the calendar but this time it was raced in Linton. In an exciting race, new member Richard Younger, took out the trophy event winning first and fastest time.

Two rounds of the Tri-Series against Colac and Geelong Cycling Clubs took place in May. The third and final round is due to take place in Colac in December. Ballarat holds a very handy lead after dominating most race categories at the Meredith and Linton races.

Another highly successful Zwift Race Series was organised to keep everyone connected, active and fit through winter and lockdown. Steven Crowe has been an instrumental inclusion onto the sub-committee with his marketing and design background assisting us to connect with Ballarat cyclists in a more effective way.

Sadly, the Fred Icke Road Race was postponed to November due to covid and looks likely not to go ahead in 2021. Likewise, our club championships.

Whilst it has been another very difficult year, we believe that the road division of our club is still in a strong position. Our sub-committee continues to be committed to organising successful road cycling



programs and races that are attractive, safe and enjoyable. We're excited about what lies ahead in 2022.

### **Mountain Bike Division Summary**

The MTB division was able to hold a range of events during a pandemic interrupted year. The two highlight events were the Victorian Mountain Bike Championship Series and the 2021 instalment of the Ballarat Cycle Challenge. The club hosted a round of the Vic Champ Series at Black Hill in December 2020 with XCO format and separate category waves enabling free flowing racing on the cross-country super loop. Perfect weather and mint trail conditions saw around 120 competitors fight it out on a brutal course with fast descents and a lot of work to get back to the top. Thanks to all the Ballarat MTB club crew that volunteered and marshalled.

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. This event was rescheduled from February to March due to lockdown uncertainty but was a successful fundraiser for FECRI and enjoyed by its participants.

The club was able to sneak in a handful of senior criteriums during the daylight savings period around restrictions including two races at Andrew's private trail network in Buninyong, Black Hill, Woookarung Regional Park, Bodens Water Race and RACV Creswick.

The club is keen to develop our junior program for boys and girls, and continues to support the dirt critters program in conjunction with Club MUD and VOGA Cycle Club. The pandemic disrupted the regular season however, plans are underway to build on this program over the coming year.

Women's social group The Dirt Girls held a number of social rides in its regular first Saturday of the month timeslot. The group is all about fun, encouragement and inclusivity.

The MTB sub-committee have also been liaising with Parks Victoria regarding Woookarung master planning, with PV advising of future trail closures in the Woookarung Regional Park (previously Canadian State Forest). These trails are much loved by the wider Ballarat community and this announcement has caused much anxiety within the user groups. The BSCC MTB Division continues to advocate for an open consultation process. The club has a solid history of working with land managers, including proactively holding trail maintenance working bees and facilitating trail care education.

### **BMX Division Summary**

The BMX Division managed to hold quite a number of programs and events between lockdowns over the past 12 months. The Eureka Series club event was extremely successful even though many races had to be postponed and rescheduled due to Covid restrictions. Feedback from riders was very positive as trophies were awarded to the top 3 riders in all categories.



Demand for BMX coaching has increased dramatically over the last year. So much so, that we have had to add an additional coach. James Lauder has come on board and runs two sessions on his coaching day. James was a State Team Coach so we're thrilled to have him along with our other experienced coaches; Wayne and Nathan Jolly who do a brilliant job.

Earlier in the year, after the club successfully lobbied the Ballarat City Council, a new \$30,000 starting gate was installed. It's an excellent addition to our already top-class facility. Members are really enjoying the low-noise automated starts compared with the old heavy one.

A new \$9,000 scoring and timing system is on its way for the BMX Division which is the final (major) piece in their track upgrade. Once this is installed, the BMX facility will be the envy of all BMX Clubs. Operationally, the new system will make life a lot easier for everyone.

Whilst it's been quite a turbulent year in BMX, there has been a lot achieved. The future looks very bright with a new sub-committee appointed who are full of enthusiasm, passion and endeavour. We're really looking forward to the next chapter.

### **Track Division Summary**

Although the year was interrupted, we managed to race in the second half of the track season between lockdowns.

Damien ran a coaching session for students from Wesley Colleges' Clunes Campus. He taught them a lot about the track bikes and the equipment then they all had experience of riding on the velodrome. The students did extremely well and Damien was impressed with their behaviour and their attitude. Hopefully we can build on this in years to come.

The Ballarat Grammar School also made good use of the velodrome throughout the warmer months with their after-school program.

Sadly, we had another break-in at our Marty Busch Track facility. Our bike storage room door was smashed in and a few bikes plus the scooter were stolen. However, most items were recovered thanks to the police. Both doors have been replaced and strengthened making it a lot less likely for it to occur again.

Currently, Marty Busch is a Covid Testing Site and therefore we cannot access our club rooms nor any of our facilities. Once we can, we will schedule a working bee to tidy up and remove some clutter.

### **Cyclocross Division Summary**

BSCC did not organise any cyclocross events in the past 12 months. We will work with AusCycling to see if any suitable opportunities come up in the year ahead.