



Bike Manawatu Chairperson's Report 2015

Steve Stannard 25th March 2015

It doesn't seem like very long since last year's Bike Manawatu AGM. The year has gone very quickly and many things have happened.

Since the AGM last year, there have been many changes for us and these continue even tonight. Change is forced upon us sometimes and at other times we choose to change. Either way it provides challenges, but also often solutions.

The big change for Bike Manawatu (BM) has been that two of the people who were a substantial force of the club have stepped down. Paul van Velthooven resigned as Chair and also from the Board mid year in 2014, and Glenys Taylor stepped down as Secretary at the end of the year. Both people put a huge amount of time and energy into ensuring that Bike Manawatu was a stable and functional sporting club. Many club members will not know how much work it takes to keep a sporting club on an even keel and maintain a successful financial and performance record. I'd like to take the opportunity to once again thank Glenys and Paul for their endeavours.

It has certainly been a challenge for me to step up into the Chair's role. Glenys was a great help for the latter part of last year, but with her resignation, the challenge suddenly became immense. I certainly now know how much work Glenys and Paul put into their respective roles! At this point I'd like to apologise to anyone to whom I have been tardy in replying to their correspondence or unable to help in other ways; I have dropped a few balls in my stint as Secretary-come-Chair... I would like to thank all the other Board members for their assistance during this time, in particular Iona and Kelly who have taken on some of the secretary roles at time as well as being very active Board members.

One of their jobs, ably assisted by John van Lienen, has been to recruit an administrator to shoulder many of the tasks which Glenys performed. I am pleased to report that, through an advertised and contestable process, we have appointed Christine Christie as the new Bike Manawatu Administrator.

I am delighted now to have a very capable person to whom I can now hand over many of the jobs I have been doing over the past three months! On the other hand, it means that due to a conflict of interest, long-serving Board member Mike Christie must now stand down from the Board. His experience, wisdom, and business nous will be missed, but he remains an active club member, heavily involved in the Manfeild event, and I'm certain will be very supportive of Christine in her new role.

In a related context, the club has decided to enlist the services of local business Aspect Solutions to manage our accounting. This provides us with access to the Xero accounting software which enables us to know our financial position at any time, but also to very quickly judge the income vs expenditure on individual activities. The other reason for this move is that our auditor indicated last year that, given our annual turnover, we should be GST registered. This, of course, now means that we must pay GST on our income and reclaim GST on our expenses. The Xero software will enable us to do that very easily. For this reason, our club race entry fees may go up from \$3 to \$4 in the near future, as we have to pay GST on every one of those!

I'd like to mention some of the highlights of the year for me at least; these of course revolve around riding.

The most enjoyable for me, not just related to this year but over the past few years, is seeing our young club members develop into young, capable and well-rounded adults. Bike Manawatu, in conjunction with local Schools (and their cycling programs) play a big part of this, providing a safe and supportive environment which allows the kids to work hard, socialize well, and excel. Other sports do this also, but we here in the Manawatu do it well with cycling. I'd like to thank Mike Simpson and our other members who work with the Schools to make the School's Cycling programme the success it is, not only in the context of sporting results, but the people it helps develop. On that note, I can't help but mention the dominance of Manawatu junior riders at a regional and national level. We are held up as an example of how it can be done.

On the international stage, club members Simon van Velthooven and Jesse Sergent continue their careers at the highest level and their exploits continue to be an inspiration to club members, competitive and social alike. They will soon be joined by a large handful of others such as Campbell and Kate Stewart, Joel Yates, George Roberts, Robert and Elizabeth Stannard, Michaela Drummond, Nate Levin, Carne Groube, Chris Denholm and Alex West, who have all performed with distinction overseas on NZ teams during the past 12 months.

In terms of results, we should not forget that we have some Masters riders who also do very well on a national stage, both on road and track.

We have provided some financial support to the younger well-performed riders through our Rider Development Fund to help them realize their dreams, and we should strive to continue doing that. In return, however, these and the other riders who the club and many members support need to return the favour in some way either now or in the future. With that in mind, I'd encourage them to find some time to help with the odd club race and/or other non-riding activities which, by necessity, the club performs. One person who has done this with aplomb is Kate Stewart. She has been fantastic help to Ian Gray with track racing and was also "priceless" during the 2014 Novice Tour.

On the topic of volunteering for club events and activities; we are always needing people to help. Often it's the parents who man the roadside or take the entries for races in which their kids are involved. A big thank you to those who have performed these duties and a bigger thank you for those who do this on a weekly basis. These jobs are often thankless, sometimes uncomfortable, and take up precious weekend time. For those club members or rider supporters or parents that currently don't volunteer but would like to, I'd love to talk to you!

Bike Manawatu is now known for organizing a couple of iconic NZ events: The Novice Tour, The Manfeild 6 hr Challenge, and The Feilding Festival of Cycling. We have small but very well organized and productive groups who make these events not only a success for the riders, but they provide valuable income for the club. I'd like to note the work of Mike Christie, Katherine Stannard, Glenys Taylor and their respective teams for their hard work last year, and again this year in chairing these event groups. One change we are making this year is to appoint an Event Coordinator. This person's role is to be the person who knows which event is on when, so that the people or groups organizing individual events are working in unison, and that the membership knows when all the events are on. I'm pleased to say that Gabrielle Bahler has agreed to fill this role and I look forward to working with her. We still require someone to take the reins to oversee the road racing events, so don't be surprised if I shoulder tap some of you!

For our social and fun rides, those which cater for the growing number of older riders; we continually get good numbers at the Sunday morning rides and other special events which are occasionally organised. It would be great for the club if more of these "Sunday riders" were BM members. A larger club gives us a greater ability to pursue our goals such as bigger and better events, more racing, rider support, and social activities. It also gives us more clout with Cycling NZ, PNCC, and the Regional Sporting Trust. Please encourage any regular riding partners who are not BM club members to join.

This, however, brings me to the issue of what BM can provide to its members. There must be some perceived value in being a member else it becomes very difficult to convince anyone to join! Our club

membership is \$35 for adults and \$25 for juniors, this is the same whether or not you affiliate through Cycling NZ (formerly BikeNZ). For this you get to be part of a successful club which organizes club racing and social rides, discounted club clothing, social events (such as this), and discounted entry fees to events we organize. Affiliating through Cycling NZ enables a rider to race at out-of-town Cycling NZ accredited events, but many riders do not want or need that. This is why we now have a club-only membership for which you pay direct to BM. Cycling NZ struggles to be able to show value to the majority of its membership and potential membership and I believe this is the biggest challenge the sport faces in NZ. Until this is fixed, the only way cycling will grow is through the hard work of the clubs as the coalface of the sport.

In the Manawatu, for growth to occur and to be the “heart of NZ cycling” we must press our local and regional councils for safer places to ride, both on and off road. Bike Manawatu was behind a submission to PNCC to include, in their Ten Year Long Term Plan, an off-road cycling circuit that could be used for criterium racing, as well as day-to-day riding for all levels of riders. Apart from providing a place that we can hold weekly events, I believe that it would be a great asset to encourage older people to hone the cycling skills, at any time of the day, without having to worry about traffic. I would urge each and every member to place a submission to PNCC recognizing the importance of this facility.

Finally, we will have a number of fresh faces on the Board after tonight. I am looking forward to working with those people to make Bike Manawatu an even bigger and better sporting organization that it is now. The future for cycling looks good, particularly here in the Manawatu, and I look forward to the next twelve months working hard for the riders and riding the wave of popularity the sport currently enjoys.

Safe riding,



Steve Stannard

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