

Off Road Section

2018 Report

A cold, wet spring eventually gave way to a long, hot, dusty summer and a mild Autumn. Offroad members have raced on everything from ankle deep mud to bone dry single track with everything in between.

It's been a very full year. As CycloCross came to an end in January, Cross Country mountain biking training started in order to prepare for the first regional race in February, the first National Trophy race at the end of March and then regular races throughout the south and east



of the country right through until the National Championships at the Olympic venue of Hadleigh Park during late July.

A brief respite for the summer holidays before we were back into full swing for the Cycle-Cross season and an Autumn full of Central League and National Trophy races. The club has enjoyed a strong spring and summer of MTB racing and we continue to do well in the Central Cyclocross League across most categories. Our youth members have achieved strong results in National Trophy races for both cross country mountain biking and cyclocross.



Coaching and Racing,



Cross Country MTB Racing:

- Collaborating with David Lea of the Youth Race Squad to ensure youth members can benefit from both road race training and MTB race training.
- Engaging specialist coaches to provide support at major race venues such as Phoenix Cycle Park and Hadleigh Park
- Creating some specific coaching sessions to support athletes looking to up-skill ahead of an international event

- We built a race programme of events that built throughout the season, targeting key events and culminating in taking three riders to compete in the 2018 National Championships.



Coaching and Racing,

Cyclo-Cross:

- 6 weeks of very popular novice sessions from mid August to the end of September which has helped to introduce a large number of new racers and particularly women who want to give 'cross a try.
- The establishment of the Cross Mash-Up training sessions every week since the middle of September. Very much a social event, these sessions provide club members and 'cross racers with an opportunity to gain, develop and practice their skills whilst training with other racers from their own category. We've regularly had over 25 riders attending these sessions.
- We have had a real push this year on getting our youth and junior riders to race at a national level, one of the downsides of such a vibrant regional league is that riders get too focused on it rather than the bigger events. In previous years we have had sometimes 1 or 2 riders, this year we have managed to turn up as a team allowing a much better support and helper network pre, during and post-race.
- We have recently taken some of the Youth squad out to Belgium to watch a round of the Cyclocross World cup so they could see how the pros do it.



**CROSS
MASH-UP
SESSION**

Events:

Friday Night Summer Series, 29th June

The Friday Night Summer Series has been running for 27 years, and is one of the oldest and longest running MTB race series in the world. We've been a regular host and this year's event was particularly well attended. It was a glorious evening of warm sunshine and really competitive racing.

Unlike most of the FNSS events which are very non-technical from a riders perspective, we built a course at the Bowl using as many natural features as we could and introduced a number of decidedly un-natural ones as well including ramps, stacks of pallets and balance boards.

Planning for the 2019 event is already underway.



Events:

100th Central Cyclocross League Race, 15th September

The series goes from strength to strength with field sizes continually increasing. The atmosphere at cross is relaxed and friendly and the racing hard. We had the honour of holding the league's 100th race, Steve celebrated this in the course design.



We shook the catering up a bit replacing the usual burger van with a cake stall to raise money for a timing system for the Wednesday night youth racing – fabulous job done by bakers with a particularly impressive effort from our sellers that turned all the cake into £351.00.



Cross being social we introduced a pop up bar which



seemed to go down well with spectators, racers and particularly volunteers and organisers.

Excluding the cake sales the revenue from the Friday Night Summer Series and the Central Cyclocross League events has provided a profit of over £1000 to help bolster the club's accounts.

Volunteers, without whom very little would happen....

Thanks to the offroad volunteers who provide muscle power in clearing the course ready for MTB racing at the Bowl, who helped to build or dismantle the courses or who marshalled or helped at either the Friday Night Summer Series or the CXL cross race.

To Roelf Botha our BBQ boss who made sure course builders and dismantlers didn't go hungry

To the parents and club members who travelled miles around the country to attend races and provide support to other team members.



To the offroad coaches and helpers who set up the Wednesday sessions and help pack away afterwards.

And in particular to Steve Dicks, our event supremo, who planned and delivered both the very popular Friday Night Summer Series event and the 100th Central League Cyclocross race. Designing both courses and dealing with all the bureaucracy.



Thanks to David Lloyd for photography - <https://davidlloydphotography.smugmug.com>