

2021 PNP Road Report – Mike O’Neil

The season

Once again we used our existing template to run our Summer Series. The major difference this time being we only ran four events due to not running an event on the Wellington side of the Remutaka Hill as indicated in last year’s wrap up. As our events were held in the Wairarapa we did not participate in the Bike the Hutt festival that runs in February.

Numbers were down on previous years, with 130 unique riders across our series.

All events had entries ranging between approximately 60 to 70 riders. This level of entries does make the events marginal to run successfully.

Men continue to make up the bulk of our fields, 107 male riders across the series compared to 22 women. Of those riders 10 were U19, comprised of 1 junior woman, and 9 junior men.

Long Course remains the most popular overall, with entries across the series favouring long course on pretty much a 3 to 1 basis.

There were no major incidents to report, although we did make good use of our onsite medical team at the Millars Rd event where we had a significant crash early in the long course event. We had one rider hospitalised, and a few others also requiring medical attention or having to abandon the event. Medical costs are quite high, and they are a service that we hope to never need but having St Johns Ambulance onsite was welcomed this time!

We also ran the Wellington Centre Champs this year. The Champs were successfully run on a single day with the Individual Time Trial in the morning, and the Road Races in the afternoon. Numbers were low, although the event was put on at short notice which likely had an impact on that.

Financially we finished our season at just over a break-even status. This due for the most part to grants we received to help us fund the operational activities required to run events.

Issues

There is no significant change here; Road events remain difficult to run in the main due to traffic management concerns and costs, whilst maintaining an entry fee structure that riders will accept. Finding a variety of courses in suitably accessible locations is a challenge, as is avoiding conflict with events run by other clubs in our region. We have had a strong presence in a strengthened Wellington Centre committee with representation from three or four people from PNP regularly in attendance. The strengthened Centre committee is seeing benefits with the various clubs working together more cohesively especially with respect to a shared calendar.

Traffic Management continues to be a major issue for us with further changes in the future that will place more cost pressure on us as we run events in the form of additional resources in the form of signage and effort to setup the courses.

Course fatigue remains a concern, as is perhaps the structure of the events we run. It is probably worth taking a different look at the events and seeing how they can be made more appealing to the wider cycling community. The challenge as always will be to do so without being cost prohibitive.

As ever it is a challenge to find volunteers to help with events, be it in the planning of them, or assisting on the day and immediately after. Some of our current team are stepping down so we are seeking new members to help us continue to run events and look for new ways of meeting riders needs.

Acknowledgements

I'd like to acknowledge the work put in by Craig Chambers who was responsible for helping us gain the grant funding this year once again and was always ready to be on the ground when he wasn't on the Tour Aotearoa course during February. Also, Liz McKenna for her help with comms and related behind the scenes activity, not to mention the assistance she provided to injured riders in the Millars Rd event.

We once again had support from various business and trusts this season without which we could not have run the events. Thank you in no particular order to:

- NZ Community Trust
- Pelorus Trust
- Pak'n Save
- Mainfreight

Additionally, Steve Eldon takes care of traffic management including signage and related activity on the day of our events. We would not be as successful as we have been without his input. Likewise, Jonathan Jackson has looked after timing and results for the last few years now and always ensures things run smoothly.

Finally, I am stepping down from the committee and especially want to thank all those people who have supported me as road co-ordinator in that time. It is a real team effort to run events, and we could not have achieved what we have without the contributions of everyone involved at one time or another. Thank you!