

Armidale Cycling Club

President's Report to the 2009 AGM

7 October 2009

At the end of my second term as President I can once again say it has been a very good year for the club. There have been some very good results for Armidale riders since the last AGM: Col Maciver recently became Australian road race champion in his masters category, a fantastic result for Col and the Club, and follows on from three NSW titles earlier in the year; Mitch Bullen won the Clarence Street Cycle Cup and went on to represent NSW at the National track championships; Geoff Straub rode at a high level in the National road championships, on one memorable occasion getting the Armidale jersey on national television while mixing it with the Europe-based pros; and our juniors started the year off in great style winning a number of races around the region. In my opinion a large part of their success can be attributed to the guidance and encouragement of Peter Wilkinson, and I thank him for that.

The Autumn Festival Criterium was one of the most popular Northern events attracting well over 100 riders, and this year it was a great honour to have Peter McDonald racing in Armidale as the current Australian Road Race Champion, even if the significance of this was completely missed by the Armidale Express. The Mt Yarrowyck Road Race was once again one of the toughest events on the Northern calendar with Mitch Bullen getting up for the win, the third year in a row an Armidale rider has won the race.

Our club championship series provided some excellent competition with the final outcome going down to the wire. My congratulations to our 2009 club champion Mitch Bullen, and also to the winners of B and C grade Bill Mara and Dave Rubie. Congratulations also to Cody Burton who became junior club champion at the end of last year.

On the organisational front we have improved our links with Cycling NSW as a result of a visit to Armidale by the CEO Kevin Young. This was at our instigation, and I was very grateful to Kevin for making the effort and to all those who participated in the meeting. Later in the year we had direct representation at the Cycling NSW AGM which Phil Hess attended on our behalf. As a result of these activities we now have better lines of communication with Cycling NSW and have demonstrated that we are a club who wants to participate in cycling in a positive way.

We were able to locate a storage container at the track to keep our equipment in a more convenient central location. The additional benefit is that it also gives us a more or less permanent presence at the track. Ross Burgess was responsible for making this happen, and was helped by Nick Myhill in fitting out the container with shelving and so on.

A small number of people in the club put in a large amount of work behind the scenes on behalf of the majority. I would like to personally acknowledge those people.

Secretary is perhaps the most important role in the club, because without management of memberships and applications for race approvals we would not be able to race at all. These are time consuming jobs, and we are very fortunate to have Bob Murison to do them and a whole lot more to boot.

Our treasurer Ken McDonald has managed the finances this year competently and without fuss, even though the takings for each week's race rarely balance with the number of riders entering!

Rob Tindale as Vice President took on the job of coordinating the program, which is by no means trivial given that it is hard to keep everyone happy and that it seems to need changing every other week.

Chikka Russell took on the role of publicity officer at the beginning of the year and has done an excellent job writing weekly stories for the local newspapers.

Mark Bullen as usual has helped the club in many ways beyond his official position as handicapper. This year he has put in a major effort to restore cycling to the NIAS sports program, which in the first intake included four members of our club.

Dave Jenner and Al O'Hara do a fantastic job looking after the juniors, giving up their time to run Saturday racing. Their efforts are much appreciated by the kids and parents alike.

Many others have helped out when we have needed a hand, and rest assured these efforts don't go unnoticed. If I have one minor bugbear, it is that on a few occasions those rostered to run a Saturday race have ended up riding when the club policy is that they do not. Usually this has been no problem because someone else has agreed to fill in, but I would encourage people not to shirk the role – it doesn't come up too often.

One issue I would encourage members to think about in the coming year is the way training rides are organised. As the club has grown we have members with different skills and fitness levels, and I do not think it is necessary that we all do the same thing on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday rides. We also need to be especially conscious that we share the road with cars and other vehicles and that if we don't show consideration to them they won't show consideration to us (see Kevin Young's recent letter on this here: <http://tinyurl.com/ydfbbq3>). The rides we have are generally well organized and fun, but that's not to say we shouldn't change them if it makes sense to do so. This could be something simple like splitting a large bunch into two groups, or choosing not to ride back along the highway on a Sunday morning.

Finally, I hope that you all continue to enjoy being a part of the club in the coming year; that the racing is always competitive and fair, that we can continue to enjoy riding together, that we welcome and encourage new members, and that we stay accident and injury free.

Andrew Swan