



MTBNZ Update:

National Series Forfeit, 2017

Further to the recent announcement regarding the National Series being forfeited in 2017, MTBNZ has received a large amount of feedback. While all were understandably disappointed, some were supportive of the reasons that justified this difficult decision. Amongst the feedback received, there appears to be common misunderstanding regarding the resource and funding capacity MTBNZ has at its disposal. We wish to provide further clarification on this matter for our members, as well as providing feedback on the key themes in the feedback MTBNZ received following this announcement.

Communication with Clubs

Until May 2016, MTBNZ's Secretary position had been vacant for three years. This had significantly compromised the organisation's ability to ensure consistency in timely and reliable communication with affiliated clubs and members. Kim Hurst took up this position four months ago, which has allowed MTBNZ to make significant progress in a short timeframe including: building a robust email distribution list reaching all MTB clubs across the country (to engage with both affiliated to MTBNZ and non-affiliated); providing regular updates for clubs and members; and significantly enhancing the utilisation of our MTBNZ Facebook page. Three clubs who expressed concern regarding communication problems last week have been contacted directly by MTBNZ to resolve these. If your club has not been receiving news and updates by email, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Secretary so we can ensure you remain well informed.

Press Release and Racing

While some found the announcement about the decision regarding the National Series 2017 longwinded, this was done with the intention to provide robust background information outlining MTBNZ's reasoning given the gravity of the decision. This needed to be read thoroughly.

For some time, MTBNZ has been concerned about the level of racing our National Series (aka NZ Cup) has provided our racers. National events should provide progression from club events and assist our athletes in their development towards Continental, Junior World Series/World Cup and World Championships. MTBNZ remains strongly supportive of the people working hard at club level to provide many of the events on our current racing calendar, particularly given we are in an era of an increasingly competitive racing market tailoring to a variety of race formats and disciplines, with tight resourcing and a well-utilised steadfast group of volunteers assisting in event delivery.

MTBNZ is heartened to see the establishment of the recently announced six-round DH Series through a collaborative club initiative, although reflects some disappointment that this could not be achieved when initial discussions were held about the National Series four months ago. Ultimately, the end result is positive for our DH racers, which is most welcomed by MTBNZ who have been communicating with the event organisers and wish to provide some sort of recognition to these races.

World Championships 2017 Selection

Understandably, some of our members expressed concern about the selection process for World Championships 2017 in light of the absence of a National Series this season. Cycling New Zealand's selection convener is currently reviewing the selection criteria and has requested input from MTBNZ to identify 3 or 4 events for the disciplines of DH and XC. When this process is complete and the selection criteria are approved by Cycling New Zealand, MTBNZ will be publishing the details to allow clubs and racers to be guided by this when building their race schedule should they be aiming for World Championships in 2017.

Resources and Funding

MTBNZ derives the vast majority of its income from member affiliation levies, and does not receive funding directly from Sport NZ, High Performance Sport NZ, or Cycling New Zealand. Elite / High Performance riders receive funding through strictly allocated High Performance Sport New Zealand funds which are administered by Cycling New Zealand.

Currently, MTBNZ has an Executive Committee of six members. These are all volunteers who receive no remuneration for their time investment and efforts, which the organisation relies heavily on to remain effective. They have all been involved with our sport for many years and bring with them a considerable amount of knowledge. We will be updating the website to include profiles of each member of the team so our members and affiliated clubs have better understanding of the background of our people that form the Executive.

MTBNZ Affiliation in 2017

MTBNZ is currently working with Cycling New Zealand to agree affiliation costs and benefits for MTB clubs, and ensure compliance with the cascading membership model which was ratified in the Cycling New Zealand constitution at the Cycling New Zealand AGM in 2015.

In the interim, all 2016 affiliated clubs are covered until 31 December 2016. We will contact clubs in November with affiliation details and membership processes.

We recognise that MTBNZ must strive to increase the value that affiliation adds to clubs. In 2017, all MTB clubs will affiliate to MTBNZ and Cycling New Zealand jointly to gain these benefits, including but not exclusively to the following:

1. Full Cycling New Zealand Club Liability Insurance –
<http://www.cyclingnewzealand.nz/clubs-and-membership/clubs>

2. Certification and written support for funding and community funding initiatives from MTBNZ;
3. Entitles a host Event Director (ED) of MTBNZ Branded/Badged events and Cycling New Zealand/MTBNZ Championship events financial support (negotiated case by case dependant on available funds), but in general:
 - a. If an affiliated club hosts a MTBNZ Branded or Badged event - MTBNZ will waiver up to \$500 off their affiliation fee to be paid in the following financial year.
 - b. Funding of associated Cycling New Zealand/MTBNZ Commissaire costs (reimbursement or payment);
 - c. MTBNZ Medals (all age groups DH/XC);
 - d. Promotion of the event on Cycling New Zealand/MTBNZ platforms.
4. Club and affiliated Elite or representative rider support and licencing via Cycling New Zealand/MTBNZ and support such as:
 - a. MTBNZ Uniforms for DH/XC selected riders to the World Champs (or other).

Work Behind The Scenes

MTBNZ undertakes a considerable amount of work behind the scenes, which is not always readily apparent to its members. A couple of examples of this sort of activity include the following.

Some of the work that has taken place over the last two years recently came to fruition with the successful launch of the MTB National Performance Hub in Rotorua. While this is a Cycling New Zealand funded programme, the concept is a joint MTBNZ and Cycling New Zealand initiative designed to enhance rider development, which has been bought to life through working together and leveraging MTBNZ leadership and contacts within the sport.

For our DH World Championships campaign this year, MTBNZ and Cycling New Zealand agreed to appoint a team manager – Dave Hamilton - for the DH team. This role was funded by Cycling New Zealand, and was critical in the support of our racers overseas.

MTBNZ recently received this feedback from the family of Billy Meaclem, a DH rider at the 2016 World Championships:

"We just wanted to pass on our thanks for a wonderful World Champs experience....We have heard from other parents that this is the first time there has been a DH team camp. We are super pleased we got to be a part of it and hope it continues in future years, it is fantastic for the riders involved.

Both the MTB National Performance Hub and the establishment of a DH World Championships Team Manager are just two examples of how MTBNZ represents the sport to achieve support and resource for the betterment of our racers and sporting community.

MTBNZ is an official member organisation to Cycling New Zealand. MTBNZ represents the sport of MTB within the National Federation of New Zealand Cycling sports – Cycling New Zealand. In the true “sports” aspect of our sport, members and clubs and MTBNZ are all inextricably linked. It is critical for MTBNZ to achieve a recognised space within the community of our sport. The Executive Committee are committed to achieving this by continuing to develop our alliances with clubs and members with ongoing representation of our sport to Cycling New Zealand and wider organisations.