

2020 NEWSLETTER



A President's Perspective:

Chris Stredwick

Wow, what an unusual and challenging year! Despite all the chaos of COVID, we as a club have still been able to achieve a lot.

To kick off the year we hosted the 2nd round of the Tas Gravity Enduro series at the Penguin MTB Park and the Dial Range. This was then followed by a club organised 3 race XC series and a 4 race "Funduro" gravity enduro series, before COVID put everything to a halt.



We were fortunate that despite the lockdown the Next Level MTB crew could continue with construction on the Iron Tor and Ironcliffe Ridge trails, and wow, what spectacular trails they turned out to be!

The new Dial Range trails certainly turn up the volume in difficulty, with much more technical riding than the previous trails brought. This is certainly something that the more advanced riders have been craving. On top of that is the absolutely stunning views from multiple locations on both trails. I must thank all those who have been involved in the project, it has been a monumental effort for a small club to plan and manage and we certainly have something to be proud of.

In the shadow of the Dial trails, the Penguin MTB park is quietly getting a makeover, thanks to a Tas Community Fund grant. There have been drainage improvements, an all over upgrade of the "Return of the Penguin" trail, some bigger berms on "Easy Peasy", some reworking and reshaping of the Freeride area and a huge rework and realignment of the "Prehistoric Park" trail to make it much more beginner friendly.

Another thing the club has had a small involvement, is the Wild Mersey trails. The work here has been able to continue and there will be new trails opening before Christmas and more to come next year. Around 60km of extra trail will be complete by this time next year, truly something worth waiting for.

We also have the newly formed Emu Bay Trail Alliance. This enthusiastic group have come under the CCMBC banner and are doing great things towards gaining MTB trails in the Burnie area. The Burnie Council have already committed to a pump track and urban trail and the group are planning singletrack bush trails.

With other big MTB projects planned around the state, it certainly is a great time to be a mountain biker in Tasmania.

Journey to the Top of Mt Dial – a mountain biker’s dream

Chris Fletcher

The Club only really started getting serious momentum when it secured a lease on the old Penguin Speedway space in 2012 from the Council. Soon after, pretty crude single track was created in what was quickly named up the ‘Penguin Mountain Bike Park’ – home of mountain biking on the north-west coast!

Urged on by the fact that the Club at last had its own patch to develop, improvements came quickly. With small grants from the State and local government and some creative use of several ‘work for the dole’ (Commonwealth funded) labour gangs, ‘Flying in a Blue Dream’ and its timber features took shape. The free-ride area (made possible by Tasmanian Community Fund grant) followed and then the Little Devils’ skills area. All the while the ‘Clubbies’ were eyeing off the untapped Dial Range and lamenting the crude riding there was to be had up there – most of it steep fire trails.



The completion of the Montgomery Loop (opened in December 2018) was a huge step forward for the Club – it had designed, sourced the funding, and overseen the construction of one of the best ‘green’ trails in the state. The strategists knew this first mountain bike trail foray into the Dial was always going to attract large numbers of riders and finding funding to push a trail further south into the Dial Range was just a matter of time.

The opening of the Iron Tor Loop and Dial Summit Track was a triumph in maximising bang for the buck. State Government ‘Cycle Tourism’ funding of \$300,000 got surveys, design, Parks approvals, and construction of one of the best 10 km intermediate trails in the country.

Real ‘bang for buck’ is elusive, it more often than not relies on those directly involved contributing over-and-above to complete the project. ‘Stage 2’, the trail to the top of Mt Dial and return became a labour of love and a deep commitment for the build team determined to deliver not just a cross country trail, but the best riding experience the northern Dial could possibly offer. The team created a trail that challenges riders of all abilities to develop technically while soaking up a genuine Tasmanian back-country experience.

Having highly skilled and emotionally invested ‘locals’ working from the ‘dreaming’ phase through to trail completion, is largely why Tasmania now boasts another outstanding mountain bike trail asset. Well done guys.



Tas Gravity Enduro Series

Danny King, King Miller Events

The 2020/21 GIANT Tas Gravity Enduro Series kicked off in style on 24th October in Penguin town. Utilising 3 trail networks; Marcelo's, Dial Range and the Penguin MTB Park, the event brought together the best trails on offer.

The highlight of course was the new Iron Tor descent. This stunning trail has plenty of fun features with lots of fast flow making it a huge hit amongst riders and I am sure it was one of the main reasons for the large number of competitors attending the event.

Saturday saw the running of the St. Lukes Challenge event where over 20 riders raced a shortened course on easier trails. A great time was had by all. Saturday afternoon was time to show off Marcelo's massive jump line in his backyard, and the well-attended Whip Off contest was won by local shredder, Michael Owens.



On Sunday nearly 200 riders took to the hills to compete in the main event. After significant rain on Friday, we shortened the course slightly on one stage, but the remaining trails held up amazingly well after the torrential conditions. It was a credit to the efforts of the trail builders that the event was able to progress with such minimal impact. Everyone had a great time with the stoke level off the dial (no pun intended) as riders raved about the trails, and in particular, the mighty Iron Tor of course.



We would like to thank the club for not only their support for this event, but also for their hard work with advocacy, managing the build, and all the extra work that comes along with such a massive project. The MTB park and the Dial Trails are evidence that a small group of hard workers can achieve great things and hopefully there is more where this came from.

I hope the event did its bit to publicise the Dial Range as a venue of the highest quality, with a network and built quality able to offer something unique and to the highest standard in a state full of quality trails.



When was the last time you went OTB (over the handlebars)?

At a recent post-ride barbecue, the conversation turned to a comparison of our mountain biking battle scars. We realised that, somehow, we don't go over the handlebars as much as we used to. We concluded that it is not because we are all better at riding, nor that we are simply older and wiser, but because new bike designs are keeping our rubber on the ground more easily.

I have watched mtb design changing rapidly before my eyes for over 20 years. Remember those 1990s bikes with their tall, steep geometry, narrow handlebars and 26-inch wheels that were nervous to ride, slow to corner and reluctant to roll over obstacles? Now we have bikes with long, low, slack geometry and 29-inch wheels that make us all masters of flow. I can simply enjoy the trail, knowing that my bike will take me effortlessly over that rock garden regardless of my input.



Modern bike design and suspension, which enable us to keep better contact with the ground and maintain faster rolling speed, demand a new style of trail.

Speed is a hard-earned reward. Once you have gathered so much of it, what are you going to do with it? Do you want to be continually braking and losing that hard-earned kinetic energy? Or are you going to find something fun to spend it on?

Herein lies our job as trail builders. We need to offer multiple features so riders can use that speed on features that maintain a certain flow, with minimal braking, achieving an almost auto-pilot feel. Each feature is purpose-built to suit the speed that has been acquired.

For example, having drops and jumps on the trail will increase speed, whereas rock gardens and step-ups will slow the rider's speed. All can be used to gain back altitude (and more trail length) or set the desired entry speed for a turn or berm.

E-bikes are the next step in mtb evolution and these too are driving innovation in trail design. Trails that used to be almost exclusively shuttle-accessed are now easily amenable to multiple runs on an e-bike.

Climb trails can be ridden much faster on an e-bike, and need wider turns and berms. Slow traverse sections become faster play segments, and climbing trails can have A and B lines for e-bikes to test themselves or pass the acoustic bike riders.

Trail networks where the descent trails used to be the main feature will evolve more interesting climb opportunities, reaching faraway spots with good views. Climb trails are more social nowadays and provide the space to have conversations with your friends about the tough, good old days when bikes were hard to ride.

CCMBC Office Bearers

President	Chris Stredwick
Vice President	Anne Langham
Treasurer	Selina Stredwick
Secretary	Craig Kerr

Membership, Meetings and Working Bees

If you would like to renew your CCMBC membership or join a new member (what a great Christmas or birthday present), then please visit the club's website <http://www.ccmbc.com.au/>. Donations to assist in the maintenance of our trails can also be made via our website. Our meetings are generally held on the second Tuesday of each month



at Oz Rock Inn, Ulverstone. However, please check Facebook for confirmation of this beforehand. Our next meeting is 6:30 pm Tuesday 19th November. We advertise our working bees via our Facebook page and many hands make for light work and great riding outcomes. Working bees are a fabulous opportunity to make new like-minded friends and to gain an understanding and appreciation of trail design and construction. Our next working bee is 9:30 am Sunday 15th

November. Please meet at the Mt Montgomery Carpark and wear appropriate clothing. It's also a good idea to bring a drink and a snack. Most working bees finish at lunchtime or early afternoon.

Feedback and Contact

Please email the club with any feedback or queries at club@ccmbc.com.au . Our postal address is PO Box 458, Penguin 7316.