

Tasman Wheelers Cycle Club

Presidents Report to the 2022 AGM

Greetings everyone,

Thank you all for coming out this evening for our 2022 AGM. I would like to particularly acknowledge life members Malcolm, Christine and Brian.

The 2022 season has seen some great successes for the Wheelers. Built out of our strong club racing we have multiple age-grade national champions and podium results, junior riders being selected for National or other representative teams including Cameron Beaumont, Florence McNabb and Kaio Lart. It is also exciting to watch our World Tour pros racing at the Tour de France with George and Jack, the Giro Donne with Niamh (currently holding the white jersey) and Finn having a storming start to his first year on the World Tour before an unfortunate season-ending injury.

The second running of the Junior Tour was a success this year. A huge thank you to everyone who volunteered their time to make this happen. This was run right at the peak of Covid concern and while this impacted numbers those who did travel were hugely appreciative of the Wheelers putting on an event commenting that kids have missed out on so much over the last two years. I strongly encourage the club to run the Junior Tour again next year as I am confident our reputation for putting on a quality event is building and I would expect the event to be well supported by riders in what are hopefully more 'normal' times ahead.

The Club remains in strong financial shape. This is due to the generous support of our sponsors. In particular I want to acknowledge the support of our title sponsor GJ Gardner Homes, thank you Graeme. We have also been successful in securing another large grant from NZCT which enabled us to modernise our traffic management equipment. This was important for keeping us compliant with traffic management requirements and also enables us to run events such as the Junior Tour at a much lower cost than before. This support keeps race fees and club membership affordable for riders and free for juniors. It has also enabled the club to support aspiring pros Ari and Keegan on their European season and Cameron on his Canadian trip.

What is of concern is the reduction in active participants in our races. This has been a trend for several years now. Over the last year there have been times where race numbers have been strong, the end of the Spring season is a good example. However, we must acknowledge these numbers have not held up and the trend is generally down. The Club as a whole, and incoming Committee will need to assess any and all opportunities to reshape the Wheelers offering to ensure the Club remains a vibrant, attractive place for current and new riders. Gravel racing is clearly a big growth trend and the feedback from our first gravel race weekend was positive, despite the event been hampered by very poor weather. This would be a concept I would encourage the Club to try again. The Wheelers have always been a focused, road-race club. A key question is this pure race-focus something that should be upheld as the club's sole purpose, or is there a wider umbrella of road/gravel bike riding that needs to be considered? Our Club is not alone in these challenges. Other road clubs and Cycling NZ report similar challenges as do other traditional, organised sports clubs in the Nelson Tasman region. During my tenure as President, the Club has not been able to unlock the solution so I pose these questions and challenges in the hope that new leadership, backed by the full support of our great club, will be able to have success in building a strong club going forward.

Lastly, as I sign off after my four years as President, I want to say a huge thank you to those who have served on the Committee with me over this time and everyone else who has volunteered their time and expertise to the running of our club. The current committee of Trevor, Don, Grant, Dom, Shane, Dave, Chris and Brent have been a pleasure to work with, thank you all.

In particular, I want to acknowledge Trevor Cameron, Grant O'Fee and Dom Foster as they stand down from the committee. The healthy state of the club finances are testament to Trevor's expertise in managing the money. This puts our club in an enviable position with options of fund growth initiatives. Grant has overseen a huge improvement and upskilling in our approach to traffic management and health and safety. His work has helped overcome some real challenges with new traffic management rules that had posed a real threat to the club's ability to race regularly. Thank you also to our trained STMS's and Brian on traffic planning as without your great work, we would not be able to race like we do. Dom works tirelessly to ensure the race calendars, road crews and club communications operate smoothly and while he is stepping down

from the Committee, has generously offered to continue to give his time to assist David as he picks up this role.

As I step away from the club Presidency to focus time on work and the new son I have coming in October I look forward to continuing to ride, race and help where I can to build on the legacy of the Wheelers as one of New Zealand best cycling clubs. Thank you all for the support over the last four years and I wish the incoming committee all the very best.

Mike Rutledge

Tasman Wheelers Club President

2019-2022