

## North West Cyclocross Association Report August 2018

Cyclocross in the North West is managed largely by the North West Cyclocross Association. This is primarily running the NWCCA Cyclocross League.

### The NWCCA League.

**We have had a fantastic uptake of riders registering for the league again this year.**

The NWCCA league has 12 confirmed events for this coming season at venues from Northwich, Cumbria, North East Lancashire to Merseyside, and not just the big cities. In 2017 we lost the Otterspool Park venue due to substantial fees demanded by Liverpool City Council. On the positive side, there are new venues for 2018, and new organisers.

Many riders volunteer to help at events. Each rider is asked to support two events and for these, they are awarded their average points in the league competition.

Numbers of female and children competitors has mushroomed in recent years, due to a friendly atmosphere at events and ease of participation – a bike, helmet and turn up on the day and have a go. **The women's race is now well supported, and starts 2 minutes behind the Vet50 men.**

We have a set of standards for all league events, with the race order and times specified, along with support teams, the NWCCA transponder system, standard methods for judging and results publication. Course layout follows BC and where applicable UCI guidelines.

### Venue Issues

**Last season three potential new venues were cancelled due to local authority concern over ground damage: Edge Hill University, Cumbria University at Lancaster and Fleetwood.** The Horwich event in Leverhulme park was cancelled by Bolton Council, only days before the event, however it was re-scheduled at the same venue which then took place. Jason Kenny turned up to ride this event,

Concern by ground owners about ground damage, and subsequent reparation costs is a cause for concern. The ground generally self-repairs in around 4-5 weeks. It appears that venue owners are wanting pristine ground immediately, with little thought for the great benefits of a cyclocross sporting event. Ways to deal with ground damage and to persuade ground owners that damage is transient is underway by taking series of photos after the event. It is also important that proposed courses do not use ground visibly prominent at a venue where image is considered important. The North West is not alone with this issue.

### Event Schedule

For the 2018/19 season, the NWCCA events will follow the same format as last year. The change for 2018 will be separate male / female league table to eliminate points anomalies when all together.

**10:30am Youth (U14/U16).** A 30 minute race using a large part of the main adult course, with all riders finished within 40 minutes. This race has strong competition between regular league riders. Four separate league tables.

**11:20 Under 8.** A 10 minute race for the U8 age groups. The course is generally flat with a short lap time, with riders visible at all times. No balance bikes. Two separate league table, boys and girls.

**11:45 Under 12 and Under 10.** A 15 minute race on a more demanding course than the U8 course, but still with many shorter laps, started 1 minutes apart. The course may be a small part of the main course or a totally separate course. This race is very competitive, with very capable young riders. Four separate league tables, one each for U10 and U12, boys and girls

## North West Cyclocross Association Report August 2018

**12:30 Women and Vet50 men.** A 40 minute race for all women and men over 50 age categories, started 2 minutes apart. Separate league tables, one each for Vet50 and Women.

**13:30 Vet40 men.** A 40 minute race for Vet40-49men age categories. Separate league table.

**14:30 Senior / Junior men.** A 50+ minute race for senior and junior riders, with some very competitive riding. The number of junior male riders has changed little over the years. Separate league table.

### Club and Competitor Support

Events are organised by local clubs, with the NWCCA team of officials and regular helpers adding their support. An annual training session is held to assist organisers and their teams to put on their event, and there is a NWCCA regional organiser document as reference. Clubs provide volunteers each year to support their event.

To participate in the league, registered league rider are asked to volunteer to assist at one or more events instead of riding. This is well supported by league members, and does help organisers put on each event.

### Participation

**For the 2017/18 season, rider numbers again increased compared to the previous year, with Vet40, Vet50 and women combined numbers already increased.**

### National Events

The league encourages riders to compete in the National Trophy series. NWCCA league counting events take account of clashes with NT events for the 2017 season. Numbers taking part has increased well in recent years.

For the 2017/18 season, an application was made to BC for hosting a National Trophy event for the 2018/19 season, it was rejected. A review of the options will take place again with a view to a further application. Finding a suitable venue is proving difficult: to enable a course with tarmac finish, good access and plenty of parking, toilet / shower facilities is essential.

### Officials

The NWCCA currently has a team of 6 active qualified Cyclocross Commissaires, a number of trainees, and two National Commissaires, one active at National level.

The NWCCA wishes to thank Adam Newall, BC REO for his support and assistance with the NWCCA league.

### Timing System

The timing system continued to be used, but again it failed in wet weather on a number of occasions. Manual judging and spreadsheet results processing took place. We have 4 people able to run the timing system, then verify and process results after the event. The passive system does not work well in wet conditions. Currently all registered league members are issued with a race number and passive transponder for the season, so there is a stock of around 750 transponders.

The NWCCA is planning to replace the passive transponders with the RaceResult Active transponders for the 2019/2020 season, trading in the current passive transponders when funds permit. The active system is more suited to function in wet conditions. As active transponders are significantly more expensive, by changing the way transponders are issued around 600 active transponders may be sufficient.

A recent suggestion is that NWCCA use the MyLaps system, utilising transponders within the region used for road racing: 198 from Tameside, 80 from Pendle, 100 from Carlisle. The MyLaps active transponders are three times

## North West Cyclocross Association Report August 2018

the price of the Race Result active transponder. Around 250 additional transponders would be required, either purchased or leased.

There are advantages to this approach: common pool of timing system operators, able to get involved with summer and winter events. More transponders will be available over summer, potentially enabling Litherland, Preston and Palatine to have a transponder set. Some additional kit will be required to make this happen.

There is one potential disadvantage to NWCCA events with the MyLaps option, and the reduced number of RaceResult transponders, is that riders will no longer be issued with a transponder for the season, and sign on teams will have slightly more work to issue and retrieve around 500 transponders per event.

Lastly, riders could be encouraged to lease their own MyLaps transponders for road/crit, cyclocross and use at Manchester Velodrome. This will mean a significant change to how the systems are run at each venue in term of data management, and could involve fees to MyLaps.

All options are currently under consideration with revision of the costings yet to be done. Input from and discussion with the BC North West Region is welcome.

### Coaching

Cyclocross training sessions are run by various clubs in the region for riders to attend. During the season many are weekly sessions.

### Moving Forward

The NWCCA aims to raise the standard of events each year, building on the progress made in previous years.

Alan Cook - NWCCA Chair, Len Woffindin – NWCCA Committee member