Chair Comments

We have emerged from a difficult 2020 into a stronger and more vibrant 2021. There have been many challenges since the last AGM but I believe that with the relaxing of the pandemic constraints we have moved forward as a club. Events that were mothballed in 2020 have started to re-emerge and we anticipate that this trend will continue in 2022. Our ride calendar has started to fill up again and we have had enough activity to attract a healthy number of new members through the year.

We have also evolved the club's external visibility via representation at National events, promotional website and YouTube content for The Hillclimb Project run by Bhima Bowden and via the improvements introduced by Ollie Smyth on our social media profile, all of which has really helped showcase all the club's activities and members.

Despite difficult circumstances there is much to celebrate from 2021 and even more to look forward to in 2022, with a growing number of things for you all to be involved in with the club.

Thank you all for your continued contributions, see you out on the road!

Membership

Membership for 2021 now stands at 284 an increase of 22 compared to 2020 with 55 new members joining. Interestingly, 15 new member applications were from women which has increased the club's overall female representation to 66.

Unsurprisingly, most new members joined early in the year with applications tailing off after August. Most new members took the option of Cycling UK affiliate membership when joining.

There are 11 honorary life members.

Despite 2021 membership being free, 33 members decided not to renew in 2021. There is likely to be varied reasons for this however we should not retain records any longer than necessary and their records will be deleted from our database.

Compared to other clubs the membership fee of £15 is great value and will be retained for 2022.

Our rides

The club ride calendar has slowly thawed out post COVID with many of the favourites being well attended. The Saturday and Sunday rides both easy and more challenging have been taking place every weekend with a wide and varied attendance. These club rides are the bedrock of any club as they provide a focal point for members to ride together and develop social networks. The JAR and pop-up JAR rides have also proven popular through 2021 as the club works to embrace new ways of engaging with members and creating events of interest.

Additionally, the club training rides have proved popular to bring members into the discipline of riding in tight groups. The Thursday training ride led by Fred Wardle has been especially popular this year and Fred's write ups are always worth the read!

The mid-week daytime rides have also got a loyal following of devotees. We encourage members to try new club rides as these represent great opportunities to meet different members.

It would be remiss not to record the grateful thanks of the club to the members who commit so much time and energy to ensure a varied programme of club rides. This has bene especially true through 2021 when the challenges of COVID enforced smaller ride groups have stretched resources. Thank You!

Sportives and Audaxes

Through 2021 Club members have been out and about riding in various Audax and Sportive events. Some of these have been on a solo basis, others as a club outing. The big event for the club was the Wild Wales event on 29th August. We have a long and proud history as a club of fielding a strong turnout for this event. This year 18 members took part in the 85 mile/3000m ride. Can we get to 20 members for 2022?

Glorious weather for Wild Wales

Individuals have also entered sportives aimed at raising money for the Christie Charity in Macclesfield. Members rode in the Salford – Blackpool and The Wythenshawe 100.

The weather has been variable for these events and on occasion has proved to be a challenge…

Barnard Castle Sportive in May

Community involvement

We continue to engage in local issues with Macclesfield College and Cheshire East Council on issues that impact accessibility of cycling in the region. The return of the Bikeathon Event on 23rd October was well supported by club members with more than 20 taking part across the three distances. This is a welcome return of a popular event organised by club member Darren Allgood and a great sum of @£4,500 raised for the Drop-In centre charity. Look out for the date in 2022!

End of the ride!

Supporting cycle racing

The 2021 Hill climb season has been a resounding success. The series was spread over 15 events with old favourites Cat and Fiddle interspersed with exclusive access to a special new event on Croker Hill and the Sutton TV mast. Entrants came from far and wide with a number of club riders, both experienced and novice taking part.

The Hill Climb crew have generated strong loyalty with entrants driving more than 2 hours to compete. Without doubt this series has hit new highs in terms of promoting the club and the wider experience of Peak District riding. The publicity and promotional materials set new standards in this area for the club as well.

The club 25 TT was well supported and found a date in the calendar that worked post COVID. The date will revert to its traditional slot in April for 2022, for which we need a willing volunteer to help organise.

The Wednesday night 10TT offers a great informal route into the world of Time Trialling with many new members cutting their teeth in this series. Under Pete Jackson's expert eye we have been able to run a strong Wednesday night series for all members to have a go at this specific discipline.

Racing results

Whilst the racing scene in 2020 was understandably patchy, the 2021 race calendar was packed with opportunity to compete; to once again pin on a number, to pull up the start line and question why on earth did I enter this?

The North West Cyclocross League season spilled over into spring, which provided dry and fast conditions in the April sunshine. May saw four Wheelers line up in the Crewe (not-so) Hilly time trial and five Wheelers raced in the Manchester Wheelers (almost too) Hilly time trial around Morridge Edge. In late-May, Monica Greenwood and Matt Lawton took first and second places respectively in Round 1 of the Mid-Week Mountain Bike Madness cross country race at Chorlton Water Park. Matt later went on to take second place in the Expert Male MTB Nationals at Cannock Chase.

Meanwhile, Monica focussed her efforts on road racing, taking wins at the Wyre Forest Challenge, National Masters Criterium, North West Women's Tour Prologue, and a fantastic 4th place in the National Series Curlew Cup.

The fastest Wheeler in the Club 25 mile open time trial was new member Phil Kaye. Phil takes the May White Trophy, beating Ollie Smyth into second place with a time of 56.47. Ollie achieved a PB of 57.14, which will surely be slashed next season.

Bhima's summer series Hill Climb Project attracted new and seasoned hill climbers from across the club and beyond. The enthusiasm generated spilled into autumn, with the keenest of the club's hill climbers entering open hill climb events with a view to competing in the National Hill Climb in late-October. In doing so, new member Thijs Geurts tackled the UK's longest climb up Great Dun Fell and carried his form on to a fantastic win in the Buxton CC Hilly Time Trial. Marcus Fielden was also in the prize money in the Veterans age class, taking fourth place. Monica carried forward her hill climbing form to take the win in the prestigious Michealgate Hill Dash. Four Wheelers represented the club in what would be the biggest and final hill climb of the season; the National Hill Climb up Winnats Pass. Fastest Wheeler was Bhima with a time of 4.22 (127th), ahead of Thijs and James Russell. Monica finished 15th overall in the women's event.

The race season has now turned full circle and with just a handful of cyclocross events remaining, we look to host the SupaCross in South Park on 4th January. This event relies on help from club members, so if you can, then please help (although we'd much prefer to see you racing.)

Olympic Success!

This year we are extremely proud to report Gold and Silver medal achievements from the Tokyo summer Olympics, where our very own club member and ride leader Monica Greenwood outperformed in her new role as Team GB women's track cycling Podium Coach.

It was fantastic to see her in action and hear her name checked by Laura Kenny and Katie Archibald after their win in the Madison. It was clear from their comments that Monica was a huge factor in their outstanding performance, which simply eclipsed the competition. With the Gold in the Madison and the Silver in the team pursuit, we can safely say that Monica did us proud!

The Final Word from our President

It has been good to re-engage with the committee and see the transition out of lockdown with more group riding which I am sure will increase in 2022. We have the SupaCross to look forward to and a full calendar of events for 2022, also with travel getting back to normal hopefully some trips abroad.

Join us at our AGM on Tuesday 7th December to see what's planned for the year ahead.

To end the 2021 season, we are arranging to celebrate together at our annual awards and social evening planned for 29th January 2022, keep an eye on the website for more details and hope to see you there!

Macclesfield Wheelers Committee