

Cycleworld Cyclocross Series

The series enters its third year since being reintroduced to the calendar in 2023, with numbers remaining steady in both CX and MTB bike classes. It is disappointing that the [CX & MTB] numbers haven't increased over three seasons, and equally disappointing that female participation remains low. It is acknowledged that there are new faces each year, but not enough to see the series grow.

The committee consists of six members, five of whom take responsibility for being race organiser for at least one race, whilst everyone still retains their specialist areas like course design, risk assessment, etc. This model has worked really well so far in sharing the workload whilst enabling each of us to become familiar with what is required as a race organiser. We encourage other committees to consider doing the same next year.

The core five locations we use have proved to be very popular with members, and securing these venues has been relatively straightforward each year, with the usual challenges of submitting requests for road closures and ACLMS land usage. The committee hasn't been met with any resistance to land usage, both public and private, and on the whole, it has been largely positive, with only a couple of isolated incidents of public interference during a race, which was handled by the volunteers at the time. There have been no reports of issues from Traffic, ACLMS, or parishes in this present series. It's important to note that ACLMS allowed use of Vazon this year without any admin costs; however, in future years, there is likely to be a fee to pay.

As always, the weather is the star of each race, but we do hope for more wind, rain, and mud in future races to really provide the spirit of CX we all want.

The committee has tried to be creative with course design, although this is sometimes restricted by the venue, safety, course setup, and clear down resources. As always, the team is extremely grateful to those who assist before, during, and after races. It is worth noting that, as usual, marshal duties are not being filled before race day, and we are having to rely on parents and other spectators (members) to fill gaps in marshal posts. This isn't a sustainable way to operate and puts events at risk of cancellation.

We have listened to feedback and, where possible, have made improvements without changing too much between each race. Shortening the gap between CX and MTB starts is one example - this depends on the course and number of competitors and will be reviewed at each race.

The team has secured a new venue which it hopes to use in this series for an additional race in early January.

We encourage more riders to take up CX, as an extension to the road season, to carry on the enjoyment of gravel riding/racing, or just to try something different. The more riders there are, the more competitive the racing can be. For this reason, we are continuing to not restrict tyre width or implement some of the other rules which might discourage riders from giving it a try. There is also a desire to align age groups with the same used in MTB racing throughout the year, and this is likely to be implemented in the next series.