St Ives Cycling Club
Go Ride report
Year ended 31 October 2016

Although the number of sessions offered increased slightly in 2015/16, total attendance was down by 19%, with average riders per session falling slightly to 16.

At the end of 2013 /14, we had attempted to address the growing range of abilities within Go Ride by splitting into a Go Ride session and a more developmental session for those who wished to race. In reality for many, this turned out to simply become a two-hour session rather than a split. Therefore, as mentioned in last year's report, we reverted back to a single 1.5-hour session from September 2015.

Whilst some of this reduction can be explained by more riders racing at the weekend, we will be looking at other possible explanations and taking remedial action if necessary.

Overview

We had 20 sessions (2014/15: 17) at Hinchingbrooke and 19 sessions (2014/15: 17) at Alconbury. We run sessions every Saturday morning during school term time, alternating between the two locations and have recently introduced the opportunity for longer rides for our older members whilst the Go-Ride sessions are running.

In addition, we hosted the youth section of the Eastern League cyclocross event in November 2015 and one round of the 2016 ERYCS (Eastern Region Youth Circuit Series) at Alconbury, the fourth year we have run it. This year we also tried (albeit unsuccessfully) to add a Junior women's race but clashes with other events meant that numbers were down generally at 83 riders (2015: 105). Having said that, I am pleased to report that we were able to increase the overall prize pot and still break even.

As in previous years, we have continued to support many of the MSG Aspire sessions that were set up to develop Eastern Region MTB skills ahead of the Interregional championships in September and have continued to support riders attending British Cycling's Regional Schools of Racing ("RSR"s), that have been attended by Nathan Gibson, CC Hime, Holly Hoy and Kieran Jarvis.

St Ives often features in the Eastern region MTB XC team and 2016 was the fourth year that St Ives have fielded 2 riders for the team. Holly Hoy competed for the fourth year and Nathan Gibson joined to form part of the 8 person (4 boys, 4 girls) team. Eastern had a much better year this year, increasing to 8th out of 12 teams competing at Glasgow in July.

We also ran one round of "Muddy Monsters" for the first time in early 2016. This is a beginners 6 race Cyclocross race series held at four different locations (Ashwell, Welwyn and Cambridge as well as ourselves) and we had a terrific number of riders entering from St Ives who had never raced before.

We are now seeing unprecedented numbers of riders regularly racing in MTB and Cyclocross in all age groups, from Ruby in U8 to Nick and Holly now in Junior, but I am pleased to see to see that a few riders, for example, Angus, Owain and Jacob are also continuing to ride on the track regularly. Furthermore, we are seeing more of our riders getting involved in circuit racing.

We have recently introduced a "participation and podium program", which we hope will encourage more riders to enter races, even if they never have had a go before.

Income and expenditure
With very little expenditure required in the year other than as part of hosting events, all income has contributed to a further increase in Go Ride's healthy bank balance – this will be essential going forwards to fund new coaches training courses and for future investment.

Coaching
During the year, I have not been able to attend as many sessions as I would have liked due to other commitments, but fortunately have been able to rely on the coaching team of Mick Curtis, Rob Harding, Chris Lawrence, Simon Pauley and Gareth Smith to continue to deliver regular sessions. We have also recently welcomed Stephen Lyons as a new coach and look forward to working with him in the coming year.

Other
The Facebook Group (St Ives CC GO Ride) has continued to be our primary method of communication with riders and parents, with membership increasing 35% to 123.

Also, well done to Holly and Sam who gained their gold awards as British Cycling Young Volunteers. They both worked extremely hard in supporting not only club sessions but also wider regional events. Nathan has also been a great help this year in sessions and proved to be an inspiration to some of the younger riders with his MTB skills - I am confident he will be awarded his gold award very soon!

Michael Hoy
31 October 2016