

# Off-road Report 2019

It's been a busy year for club members competing in off-road events. The year started with National Cyclocross Championships at Gravesend in the middle of January, a full season of regional and National MTB races for several of our youth and adult members, Friday Night Summer Series from May through to August and back to cycle-cross for this Autumn and Winter. We've had a lot of successes and a few disappointments as well, but overall it's been another strong year for the club. What's been particularly satisfying is the number of women and girls who have started to race off-road this year, and we hope we can help this trend continue into 2020.

It's also been another busy year for the off-road section in hosting and running events....

## 4 MTB races as part of the Spring Youth Development Series

From the middle of April until the end of July, each week there is a series of races for youth from u8 to u16. This year the final five races of the series were MTB Cross Country events which attracted several new competitors from outside of the region.

## Friday Night Summer Series

The FNSS is the world's longest running competitive mountain biking competition. We've been hosting a race for several years and despite appearances the Bowl is one of the sterner challenges in the series. The 2019 event was no exception, with one of the biggest fields of the season.

## Central Cyclocross League

Hosting the first race of a new season always presents a few challenges, especially when there are new timings and regulations to take on board. CXL Round 1 was so well delivered by the club that the Central Cyclocross League asked us to step in when another club let them down, which means our next race will be on Saturday 30th November. We're always looking for volunteers to help, so if you're able to come along and lend a hand please get in touch.

## The Wednesday Evening 'Cross Mash-Up

Last Autumn we revamped the way that Wednesday night cyclocross training was delivered. We added more fun and encouraged a wider participation, inviting non-members to come along as well. This year the sessions have gathered momentum and we're seeing twice the level of participation. Several weeks we've had over 60 riders, and even now that it's dark, damp and gloomy we're still getting over 35 riders. It's not just about numbers though, and the most satisfying aspect of this year's Mash-Ups has been the mixture of riders that are coming along week after week - women, men, youth, novice and experienced riders could all train together.

## Off-road volunteers.

We couldn't put on the events that we do without the unstinting support of a number of key people from the adult and youth membership. We're incredibly fortunate to have a core team of members who turn up every week to put on the 'Cross Mash-Up, who are always the first to volunteer for FNSS, CXL or Youth Development races. Over the course of the year the team have delivered 6 mountain bike races, 2 major cyclocross races, 6 extra MTB training sessions and 16 'Cross Mash-Ups. They've also found time to attend dozens of other races in support of club members, and just occasionally, to ride their own bikes!