



Rock & Rut Mountain Bike Club

Annual General Meeting 7 September 2016 at SKW

Chairman's report

General overview

The past was an exciting year for Mountain Biking in Namibia. The disciplines in the sport are expanding and we saw Downhill fully return to the scene and integrated into R&R again, enduro picking up in popularity, the BMX feeder programmes picking up around the country and we had the first Namibian lady complete in the XCO at the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

The committee worked hard over the last year on various initiatives to grow the sport, develop the talent within our club and upgrade our club's infrastructure. As set out in the Treasurer's report we were able to make significant investment back into the club on the back of healthy club finances and prudent application of our funds, including smart investing of the cash we have. Our club remains one run purely on volunteers in the committee with all funds generated going back into the club.

As set out in the Treasurer's report, the club is hugely dependent on sponsors to fund the club's activities with only 16% of the club's income derived from membership fees and the rest has to be made up from sponsorships and entry fees. Roughly two out of every three dollars that the club spends is derived from sponsorships and initiatives by the committee to raise funds through events like hosting the Nedbank challenge.

We are very thankful to our sponsors as this allows us not only to run the club but also to plough back significantly in the development of the sport.

On overall membership we did see a slight decline in numbers this year and have taken the comments from the members on board that the tracks are not suitable for everyone to participate anymore. This is something that will be closer addressed in the coming year to find the right balance between the right level of technical challenge for our top riders and enjoyment for the weekend warriors.

The Nedbank XCO series

This last season saw yet again a serious step up in the quality of courses thanks to the huge effort of the committee, Peter and his team on Farm Windhoek and the dedicated effort by Hans to find new challenges.

This was our third year where the entire series was sponsored by Nedbank and the generous sponsorship from Nedbank over the three year period amounting to over N\$ 330,000 in total allowed the club to really build out the experience for the riders and the spectators.



Unfortunately the coastal event had to be cancelled at short notice when the race director made the call that it was not safe due to wind conditions. To make up for the missed event we hosted a time trial after XC5 and the feedback was great. An alternative format, like a time trial, will probably feature in our calendar again in 2017.

The prize giving directly after XC5 also worked great and allows us to wrap up the formalities of the AGM in a separate event quite quickly.

Well done to everyone that participated. A big thank you to our day sponsors including IJG Securities, Pupkewitz Megabuild, Pupkewitz Toyota and Sanlam. The costs of presenting each event escalated a lot as we up the facilities, medics, marking and infrastructure. These day sponsors are critical to the experience on the day.

Nedbank MTB Challenge

Rock and Rut again facilitated the Nedbank MTB challenge, which also doubles as the XCM nationals. The relationship with Nedbank was strongly built on this year and Nedbank generously agreed that Rock & Rut can share in the entry fees, which allowed us to have funds available for some of our development initiatives. Most of the funds derived from this event were ploughed back into the sponsorship of the team to Marroco.

A big thank you again to Nedbank and we look forward to build on the great partnership.

The FNB Namibia Otjihavera Xperience presented by Novel Ford

In its 11th year we opted for a new format for the Otjihavera Experience changing the format from a point to point to an out and home route over both days. The format seemed to work really well and while there are a few route detail items and waterpoints to attend to in 2017, the feedback was all round positive.

Big thank you to Tony for the endless weekends to go out there, scout the trail and set it out. It does not just take a Saturday morning to develop and mark more than 130 kilometers of race routing in those mountains.

This event remains Namibia's biggest and most popular marathon stage race and this year attracted its biggest field yet. Interestingly we found that the average age of finishers for both men and women remains around 38 nudging closer to 39 this year. Do we have an ageing field?

Rock & Rut entered into a new three year sponsorship agreement with FNB Namibia as naming sponsor and Novel Ford as supporting presenting sponsor. The cost to present the event is quite substantial and if we had to fully fund it out of entry fees the cost would be prohibitive to most riders. The vast majority of the cost is covered through the sponsors.



A big thank you to all our sponsors that made this event possible again. FNB Namibia, Novel Ford, Milo / Bar One, Nivea, Fruit & Veg, Namibia Breweries, Mannie's Bike Mecca, O&L Leisure and a special thank you to the farmers.

A big thank you to Stefan Bohlke who came on board for this event and really made a huge difference. The Stefan – Hans team is a formidable force in race organising.

Development

As our club grows we also have a responsibility towards the overall success of mountain biking and cycling in Namibia. According to the NCF close to 60% of all NCF members are club members of Rock & Rut. The success of the NCF is not only critical for cycling at a national level but also for our club and to give our talented riders the best possible opportunities to compete locally and internationally. We will continue to support the NCF.

The Club's development plan was presented to the NCF this year and it sets out short, medium and longer term initiatives. A copy of the development plan is attached herewith. The club's finances are healthy at the moment allowing us to take on more initiatives, while naturally remaining cautious not to squander club funds but also not build up a reserve that just lies idle.

Some of our development initiatives over the year include

1. N\$ 25,000 contributed towards the African Champs where Vera Adriaan & Michelle Vorster competed as Rock & Rut's support to the overall development of cycling
2. N\$ 20,000 contributed towards the NCF to send the team to Lesotho
3. N\$ 15,000 contributed towards Greenspace for the sustainable development towards multi use, including Mountain Biking, of the Avis lease area
4. N\$ 19,000 towards various club members under the rules of the Rider Assistance Programme
5. N\$ 30,000 towards Michelle Vorster's participation in the XCO at the Olympics.
6. N\$ 20,000 towards the development of trails on Farm Windhoek and towards the firefighting equipment for Farm Windhoek in collaboration with Cymot

We are still planning to host a junior cycling training camp in quarter two of 2017 and more details will be communicated. This was on the 2016 "to do" list but the logistics and changes in the committee hampered our ability to also fit it in. Francois has some very exciting things planned around this.



The development plan will continuously be updated and sculpted according to the development needs and availability of club finances. Any volunteers that would like to get involved in more of the development initiatives are strongly encouraged to come forward.

The cooperation with the NCF on these initiatives was great this year and we'd like to thank Mannie and his team at the NCF for their ongoing and tireless commitment to the growth of cycling in Namibia.

Land Access and Partnerships

On the fun side we are working on opening more trails for our members and over the last few years we build good friendships with the Avis Greenspace and Y-Not towards the Heya Corridor. We are working closely with the Greenspace team to find a sensible solution for our members to be Greenspace members within the ambit of their constitution. Mountain bikers by their nature support responsible development and use of preserved areas and as such we'd like to continue to support the good work done by the Greenspace team.

We also started discussions for an Eastern link from Avis to Eisenheim and this project is ongoing. To place more focus on this we are creating a volunteer portfolio to specifically deal with landowner matters.

With the development of the Eastern Bypass road we also shifted the focus of trails to be developed more to the Kleine Kuppe side and continue to work closely with the Farm Windhoek team on this.

The voluntary portfolios are outlined in the agenda and we feel strongly that these will alleviate the pressure on the committee and allow more members to be involved in the success of the club. Where we are unable to get volunteers for some of the much needed portfolios we will unfortunately need to start paying someone for these services, which will have an affect our club finances in future.

Website

Following feedback from our members we embarked on a project to upgrade the website and have invested around N\$ 20,000 so far. This is still work in progress and we intend to have most of it completed this year still to allow for full online registration and also have all club information more readily accessible as the go-to-source for our members.

Committee

Lastly, and most definitely not least, a big thank you to our committee that sacrificed an enormous amount of time again this year. The bits that the members see on a race day is but a fraction of the



work that happens continuously behind the scenes to update databases, reconcile finances, do league logs, organise events, answer endless e-mails queries, negotiate sponsorships, run support programmes, mark tracks, develop website interfaces and work with the NCF, to name just a few tasks all done on a volunteer basis.

To our outgoing committee members Axel, Francois and Brendan thank you for the enormous contribution you made over the last few years.

Brendan's wife is probably really looking forward to having the view out her bedroom window again with the Rock & Rut trailer gone and not having to share their family holidays with the Rock & Rut laptop reconciling race entries on Chronotrac.

Francois, silently in the background you probably dealt with around 1000 e-mails a year – thank you for the knowledge that these all got dealt with on top of all the other club responsibilities you have at and around events. While Francois is stepping down he will remain involved in the junior cycling development events planned for 2017.

Axel, you did a sterling job to clean up the club's finances and you can be proud of the sound position you leave the club in and the attention to detail to account for each cent.

As indicated in the 2015 report, I will also be stepping down this year and hand over to new energy to take the club yet another step up with new initiatives and ideas. I'd like to thank the committee for their wonderful support over the last few years and believe we achieved a lot. It was a great honour to be part of the team.

Also to Pierre that elected to step down mid-year from the committee thank you for your valuable contribution to the club over your time on the committee.

To our committee members that will continue in 2017 being Johanita, Benita, Hans, Titus and Ekki all the best and you have our numbers to assist wherever we can. With the energy and skills set in the team we look forward to the direction you'll take the club in.

It was great to experience the new energy from Ekki and Benita when they were co-opted to the committee in the year, adding value from the first day.

Johanita, for the long Sunday afternoons reconciling league logs thank you, not to mention pulling together all the logistics for the XC days.

Titus, great job on getting up to speed on the membership databases and finances and I'm sure with the Koen team's effort Axel hands over to a safe pair of hands.

Hans, mate you went well and beyond the call of duty this year and without you the season would not have been anywhere near where it ended.

A thank you in Namibian cycling will not be complete without thanking Johan and Marlene for the timing service they provide. When I remember the early days of screaming numbers from the trailer as riders came past we've certainly bolted a century forward with you.

Thank you to the families of the committee members to share them while they are making a difference to the club, the sport and Namibia.

I would really like to encourage all members to be involved in the running of the club in future in whatever shape. Joining the committee is not for life, come do your two or three years and then hand over to the next set of energetic safe hands.

Enjoy the races over the festive season, the second Desert Dash under Nedbank's sponsorship and see you in 2017 for another season of blood, sweat and beers.

Happy trails,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Conrad Dempsey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Conrad Dempsey

Chairman