



Rock & Rut Mountain Bike Club

Annual General Meeting

IJG Trails / Farm Windhoek

11 November 2020

Chairman's Report

Dear Members

I don't know whether I should be happy to have reached the end of this year, or whether to regret that this year has passed already. It has been a very challenging year for all of us. The bright side is, that the pandemic seems to be over. However, judging by what has happened throughout this year, nothing is for certain. Surely the worst of this year was, that so many races had to be cancelled and that we were restricted to our region for such a long time. But let us be positive – next year will be better!!

Before I continue with my report, I want to thank Peter van der Merwe and IJG Trails / Farm Windhoek for availing us this beautiful venue to host our AGM.

Membership and member related initiatives

Our current membership number stands at roughly 140.

- Due to the outbreak of the pandemic and the financial difficulties a lot of our members experienced, we decided to reduce membership fees significantly to ease the financial burden.
- As in the previous two years, we have tried to keep the level of technicality of our races low and have received a lot of compliments for this. As for 2021, we will try to keep to this format.
- We have introduced two new categories to our XC series. This also proved to be a step into the right direction, as we had substantially more participants for the first two races.

Finances

I will just shortly touch on this topic as Antje will elaborate in more detail. We can proudly say, that even though this year has been challenging and we have reduced the membership fees, the club shows a small profit. This is due to the generous sponsorship of Nedbank and



our very successful Otjihavera Event. So all in all the financial position of the club remains healthy.

Nedbank MTB Challenge

This year the Nedbank MTB Challenge was once again offered, and we were privileged to be able to host this prestigious event. The event was held at the Waldorf School. Pieter van der Merwe provided a great route covering almost all of the single tracks on IJG Trails / Farm Windhoek. We had approximately 340 entrants for the three distances. Winners in the Elite 50km category were Brandon Plaatjies and Michelle Vorster.

Nedbank XC series

As the name suggests, Nedbank has once again been the title sponsor of our series even though we were not able to host the full series. This year, again due to the pandemic, the series only consisted of three races. The first two events were in the same format as in previous years. As mentioned before, we had significantly more entries. We introduced two new categories: the Marathon and e-Bike category. This seemed to be a good initiative, as the Marathon category had the most entrants for these events. For the third and final event, we decided to do it in form of a virtual race on Strava. We did experience some minor teething problems, but in general received positive feedback from the participants.

Due to the fact, that we could only have three events for this year's series, it was decided that competitors had to take part in all three events to be eligible for the final ranking. Thus the ranking was calculated favouring those that started in all three races and these were therefor placed at the top of the ranking in the respective categories. Those that only took part in one or two races, were placed below according to the points earned. In the men's elite categories where all competitors only took part in two races, we used the best combined time to establish the winner for the series

We sincerely thank Nedbank for their continued support and African Marketing for coming aboard this year as a supporting sponsor. Like I said before, we remain positive that we can host an entire series again next year, maybe even a UCI level 1 race, and look forward to yet another year of great co-operation.

A big word of thanks surely has to go to Peter van der Merwe for providing our great tracks and keeping them in such good shape.

A huge shout out to the local bike shops for providing technical assistance at the events. Without all of these awesome partners, we can definitely not host events on this level.

Nedbank Namibian National XCO Championships



The XC Nationals with Nedbank as a title sponsor, yet again, were held on Sunday, 12 July. The track was once again prepared by Peter van der Merwe and it was another awesome day of racing in the junior categories as well as the men's elite race. The Namibian XC champion for 2020 in the women's category is Michelle Vorster and in the men's category Alex Miller.

FNB Otjihavera Experience supported by Food Lover's Market

The FNB Otjihavera Experience 2020 was held from the 17th to the 18th October 2020. We were very pleased with a record entry of almost 80 teams.

This year, we decided to revert back to the original format and route. Due to the rules and regulations around Covid 19, we opted for a flowing start, where participants could start anytime from 6h00 to 7h00 in the morning. This way we avoided large start groups and everyone could start as they pleased. Comment from Alex Miller who started at the back of the field: "... at least this way I could see all the riders..."

The first day's stage started just behind Kapps Farm and led through various farms to Midgard Country Estate. The route was 86km long and total climbing for the day approximately 1200m. The riders enjoyed the awesome scenery in the Otjihavera mountains. The second day's stage started at Midgard and ended at Okapuka Guest Farm with a distance of 67km and approximately 1000m of climbing. It was an awesome event and all the riders enjoyed the return to the old route and appreciated this format of the event.

We also hosted a kids event again on the Saturday afternoon. A total of 26 kids teams entered. They had to negotiate one or two loops of 15km, depending on the age category.

The event was enjoyed by riders and their families alike. The food was good and Midgard Country Estate as well as Okapuka made sure that no one was left hungry.

First National Bank was again our main sponsor. Without them the event would not have been possible. This also enabled us to offer generous prize money for the podium finishers. A big shout out to First National Bank.

Food Lover's Market as supporting sponsor provided the supplies for all the water points and goodie bags. A huge thank you to them as well.

All the other sponsors ensured that there were product hampers for the 50 lucky prizes that were handed out at registration. We are really really grateful for all your support.

Cycletec provided tech zones at the second water point on day one and at Midgard. Thank you very much for this.



The helpers at the water points definitely also need a word of thanks.

Last but not least, I would like to extend a great big THANK YOU to Tony and Sigi Bassingthwaighe and his team for coming up with this amazing route. The marking was excellent and your assistance throughout the time leading up to and during the event was just awesome!!

Development

Unfortunately I cannot say much on this topic. Covid also had a huge impact here and all plans had to be put aside.

Website and Social Media

Our web site seems to be running smoothly and all teething problems sorted out. We have used the web site, our Facebook page as well as our Google Group Mail to distribute all news and announcements to our members and this seemed to have worked smoothly.

My Committee and helpers

Lastly, but by no means least, a special thanks to my committee, who sacrificed a substantial amount of their personal time to plan and re-plan events and thereby ensuring the continued success of the club and mountain biking in Namibia. Thank you for your friendship and commitment to the sport:

Antje Tietz: Thank you for ensuring our books are up to date. You also played a major role in the planning and organising of Otjihavera. Thank you so much for always being there.

Marion Schonecke: Thank you for your great work organising Otjihavera and helping with registration and wherever help was needed.

Kerstin Klein: Thank you for all your effort with your assistance at race registration and keeping the members updated through social media.

Mari Koch: You keep our members informed through the Google Group. Your help with Otjihavera was also invaluable, attending to the medics and seeing to it that the water points are sufficiently stocked. Thank you very much!

Niels Serrer: You provided invaluable guidance with legal aspects, keep minutes at the meetings and are always a phone call away when I needed help. Thank you for that.



Wesley Pieters: Your assistance and help negotiating with sponsors, being responsible for the marketing of our club and doing the newspaper reports is highly appreciated – thank you very much.

Mario Thiel: Thanks for your assistance and help at the XC's. You also proved your organising skills at the Otjihavera kids event which was a great success.

Oom Johan (our own Papa Beer) and Marlene, I don't know what we would do without your timing at all of our events. Thank you very much for your help, patience and guidance.

All the other helpers not mentioned, your help is highly appreciated. The list would just be too long to mention each and every one.

Unfortunately we have two committee members resigning. We therefore please need volunteers to serve on the committee for three years or assist the committee in the good work they are doing in any other way.

We wish you a good remaining part of the year and an awesome Festive Season. Those of you that are taking part in the Desert Dash – GOOD LUCK!!

Hopefully we may welcome you on board as members again in 2021.

Happy trails,

Michael Lowe
Club Chairman