

# February 2024 NEWSLETTER



## A President's Perspective:

Chris Fletcher

Anecdotally, Penguin is attracting big numbers of interstate riders to our Monty Loop and Iron Tor trails. A local business owner and mountain bike enthusiast reports the word is out that Penguin is a 'must do' before they head back home. "Everyone leaves with a smile on their face especially if they've done the Iron Tor," he reports.



This of course is no surprise to us locals..... we know the numbers. The official count for Iron Tor November to early February was 1305 riders! Two things immediately come to my mind.

1. The importance of keeping this iconic trail in tip top condition so that it continues to serve our local riders well, but also maintains its brand status as arguably the best adventure trail in the state which of course will always continue to

attract interstate and international visitors.

2. Leveraging the Iron Tor status as we continue to expand the network south through to Mt Gnomon carpark. Top quality trails in an unparalleled Tassie bush location! More on 'Stage 2B' later in this edition.

I continue to be in awe of the volunteer effort that goes on seemingly around the clock, seven days a week. Mostly we'll never know who, but we can see where they've been. The Club is so appreciative of this effort. Keep a look out for 'official' Club working bee call outs as we endeavour to keep the Park and the Dial trails in tip top condition.



2024 will be a year of hopefully significant advancement in many areas. We should start to see some work commence on a new toilet block and bike washdown station at the Mt Montgomery car park. At the Monty Loop trailhead our trailhead 'structure' will go in with trail information and a map. Up on the hill, preliminary work on Dial Stage 2B will be going on as the precise route through some very 'tricky' ground on the ridgeline is determined.

Back at the Club, we're committed to organising a few 'low key' events including a kids' skills clinic in April.

Conversations are ongoing with Council to keep alive the redevelopment of the Park as per our Master Plan completed last year. The next briefing for councillors will occur in March where we're hoping to make a genuine impact and get commitment to pursuing funding. I'll be reporting on this meeting in the next edition.

In closing, it was with much interest that I read in the latest edition of AusCycling's e newsletter [https://auscycling.org.au/nat/news/next-evolution-adaptive-downhill-first-mtb-](https://auscycling.org.au/nat/news/next-evolution-adaptive-downhill-first-mtb-national-championships)



[national-championships](https://auscycling.org.au/nat/news/next-evolution-adaptive-downhill-first-mtb-national-championships) a great article on the rise of adaptive mountain biking in mainland centres. Trails constructed for all riders, including adaptive bike riders is an important design element of our Park Master Plan (check it out on our website). It serves to remind me that not only is our sport always evolving but a future facility that is inclusive of disability riders would be a tremendous drawcard for locals and intrastate riders. Can't wait! Enjoy the bumps.....

### Penguin Mountain Bike Precinct Working Group Update

Chris Fletcher

This Council formed and run group comprises a community member as well as members from the business community, tourism, the NW Walking Club, Park and Wildlife, and two senior Council officers. Our Vice President Chris Stredwick and I, represent the Club's interests at the table. Under the terms of reference, the group is required to meet at least 4 times a year to "...provide a forum for coordinated dialogue in relation to the growth and development of the Penguin Mountain Bike Precinct, and to make recommendations to Council, CCMBC and other stakeholders in relation to the following matters:

1. Long term planning
2. Promoting Penguin as a mountain bike destination
3. Infrastructure and trail development and associated risk management
4. Advocacy and funding "

At the January meeting Chris Clark (Council) reported that the Montgomery Car Park Toilet Block Project was still in the design phase, but the project will be finished June 2025. Chris also reported that the trail extension project (Dial Stage 2B) preliminary Recreation Activity Assessment process had been completed and submitted to Parks. Ben Hill from Parks reported that the approval process was being held up by a backlog of larger federally funded projects awaiting assessment. All the while Council are getting on with engaging consultants to complete the necessary natural values surveys which includes possible impacts on rare and endangered plants and animals. It's quite a process!

Finally.... the Dial Range Recreational Management Plan is completed. It's been four years in the making but it has required quite an extensive community (user group) consultation



process. The document is a guide to what recreational activities are permitted in the Dial Range and the restrictions that apply to recreational use. Needless to say, mountain biking features quite prominently. The production of this document has largely been the reason for the years of hold up on Dial Stage 2B. With it now in the public domain, hopefully it's full steam ahead with '2B'.

A copy of the Plan can be accessed through the Club's website: [www.ccmbc.com.au](http://www.ccmbc.com.au)

The next meeting is scheduled for March 26.

## Cuddles!

The hardest thing about going to Derby is deciding which trails to ride. Well now there's another choice once you've done the gruelling Krushka climb. Krushka, Trouty or CUDDLES!! My new pick is definitely Cuddles. Rated black, this trail has a bit of everything, and you can choose to make it more challenging or play it safe with multiple line choices along the way.

FLOW! There is plenty of flow and you can work up a fair bit of speed, so I'd suggest taking it easy your first time down. Have some stops to check out the different lines, because I can guarantee you will want to go back and try them all! Or maybe not all of them....there are quite a few I'm happy to skip and watch someone else do them.

Emma Lee



WALL RIDES! Yes, there are a couple of wall rides that aren't quite as difficult as what you first think. The first one is heaps of fun, but I'll leave the other one to the more confident riders. The good news is that you can ride around them both!

BOULDERS! Plenty of classic Derby boulders for the fun rock rollovers. Some are quite steep, but all super smooth and fun.

All the fun builds up to the iconic steep rock slabs with A, B and C lines. The C line is ridiculously steep and there is no going down it slow. Once you're on it, there is no going back and just hang on for dear life. Super smooth but still daunting the first couple of times. That's the "easy" option! Step it up a notch and move along to the B line. This is steeper again and not quite as smooth a ride. It's a no from me but not too bad from what I'm told.



The A line – I speak not from experience because I felt dizzy and weak at the knees just standing at the top of it...no thank you. My initial evaluation was that it is completely impossible to ride down and come out of alive. I am yet to see someone ride it in the flesh, but there are lots of videos out there and not only do they survive it, they actually make it look easy. Amazing!



So, you've made it down Cuddles. No, wait! Just when you think all the fun is over, they've thrown in something different again. The trail finishes off with a technical rocky section where line choice is everything. As always there are multiple lines, but I can tell you now, some will make your life a hell of a lot easier than others. I'll say no more and let you work that out!

Cuddles is fun and challenging without being ridiculously hard and you'll find yourself wanting to go back every time you go to Derby. The climb is good for you!

### MTB Maintenance Workshop

Steve Crocker

The Club is organising a bike maintenance workshop to be held at the Club shed at the Penguin MTB Park on the morning of Saturday May 4. The workshop will be conducted by Lance Agnew of Roam Cycles and will be 3 hours in duration. Cost will be \$120 and include a ride and a barbecue afterwards and numbers will be restricted to 8 – 10 participants. If there is adequate demand, a subsequent workshop will be organised at a later date. Keep an eye on the Club Facebook page for registration details.

### Kids Skills Clinic

Chris Fletcher



The Club is currently working on a day-long skills clinic for kids aged 5 to 12 years. Community feedback conducted last year revealed that the Club should put more emphasis in 2024 on supporting beginner riders through those tricky early stages. We are intent on delivering a very low cost, fun and safe introduction to off-road riding for these potential 'shredders'! Stay tuned for updates on our

Facebook page and website [www.ccmbc.com.au](http://www.ccmbc.com.au)

When we arrive at a new riding area, most of us rely on the trail rating signage to determine what skill level will be needed to ride it. While it is somewhat a guide rather than a standard, there is a structure behind how a trail is rated. A trail difficulty rating system allows trails to be graded according to their relative technical difficulty. Trails are classified based on the trail's physical attributes and the technical challenge of the trail, not the exertion and fitness that may be required by the user. You can have 100km of Green rated trail, this means that a beginner rider with basic mountain bike skills, should be able to ride the trail but it doesn't mean you will have the fitness or endurance to ride the whole trail.



Back in 2018, what was then known as Mountain Bike Australia, released the Australian MTB Trail Guidelines which included a revision of the Trail Difficulty Rating System (TDRS). The TDRS, which is used to grade mountain bike trails according to their relative technical difficulty, then underwent a further revision in October 2020.

The Australian TDRS uses the IMBA system of classifying trails with the following additions and interpretations:

- The addition of two new trail difficulty classifications – one new classification between green and blue and one new classification between blue and black.
- Making the following difficulty assessment criteria 'guiding criteria only'.
- Trail width.
- Trail surface.
- Trail gradient.
- Quality of signs.
- Making the following difficulty assessment criteria 'risk assessable criteria'.
- Trail exposure (the side slope below the trail).
- Natural and technical trail features.

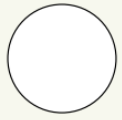
In 2020, the following revisions were made:

- Inclusion of rail trails into very easy trail grade
- Increases in trail gradient.
- Increases in level of exposure.
- Natural obstacles and technical features – height of obstacles and inclusion of new obstacles.

Other countries have different systems but basically all follow a similar approach. New Zealand have a Grade 1 to 6 but it is very similar to what we use in Australia.

Trail rating can be a bit of a contentious topic at times, as what might seem difficult for one rider might be very easy for another. This is why factors like trail width, size of features and gradient are used as this is not subject to opinion.

The TDRS is comprised of 7 different ratings.



White Circle designates a Very Easy classification. It is a 2100mm wide +/- 900 mm, likely to be a fire road, rail trail or wide single track with a gentle gradient of 7% or less with a max trail grade – 15% in sections. It should be smooth surface and free of obstacles with exposure to either side of the trail corridor includes downward slopes of up to 30% and suitable for beginner/novice cyclists with basic bike riding skills Suitable for most bikes. An example of this would be the Railton Rattler in the Wild Mersey trail network.



Green Circle has the Easy rating. Its width would be approximately 900mm +/- 300mm, generally wide single track with a gentle gradient, smooth surface and relatively free of obstacles, short sections may exceed these criteria. Climbs and descents are mostly shallow, but trail may include some moderately steep sections with an average gradient of 7% or less and a max gradient of 15%. Technical Trail Features (TTFs) include unavoidable obstacles to 100mm high, such as logs, roots and rocks, avoidable, rollable obstacles or jumps may be present and unavoidable bridges 900mm or wider. Short sections may exceed these criteria. A Green Circle trail would be suitable for beginner/novice mountain bikers with basic mountain bike skills and suitable for off-road bikes. An example of this rating is Laughing Gear at Latrobe.



Green/Blue Circle is a new addition to the rating system and bridges the gap between Green Circle trails and Blue Square trails. It was common for trails to be known as “dark green” or and “easy blue” and having a rating as Easy with Intermediate Sections, fills this gap. Green/Blue trails are single track with a moderate gradient, variable surface, and some obstacles with a trail width of 750mm +/- 200mm. Climbs have an average gradient of 7% or less but upping the max to 20% gradient. TTFs can be unavoidable obstacles to 200mm high, such as logs, roots and rocks, avoidable, rollable obstacles and jumps may be present, unavoidable bridges 900mm or wider. Short sections may exceed these criteria. The Montgomery Loop could be considered a Green/Blue trail.



Blue Square is what the majority of trail networks are made up of, seeing that this will meet the skill set of the majority of riders. Blue Square is considered an Intermediate MTB trail. Once again it is single track with moderate gradients, variable surface, and obstacles, 600mm +/- 300mm trail width, and average gradient of 10% with a max of 20% and short sections that may exceed these criteria. Exposure to either side of the trail corridor includes downward slopes of up to 50%, unavoidable obstacles to 350mm high, such as logs, roots, and rocks, avoidable, obstacles to 600mm may be present, width of deck is greater than half the height of the obstacle, tabletop jumps to 1500mm high, rollable double jumps and avoidable gap jumps, unavoidable bridges 600mm or wider. A trail like this is suitable for skilled mountain bikers with good mountain bike skills, riding proper mountain bikes. Flickity Stick's at Derby is a Blue rated trail.



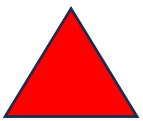
Blue/Black Square is the Intermediate/Difficult rating that is also a newer addition to the TDRS system. It would be single track with moderate gradients, variable surface, and obstacles, 600mm wide +/- 300mm in places with an average trail gradient of 20% or less with a max of 30%. It can have unavoidable obstacles to 400mm high, such as logs, roots, and rocks, avoidable, obstacles to 1000mm may be present, width of deck is greater than half the height of the obstacle, tabletop jumps to 2000mm high, rollable double jumps and avoidable gap jumps, unavoidable bridges 600mm or wider. Suitable for competent mountain bikers with good mountain bike skills, on higher end mountain bikes. Iron Tor at Penguin, would be considered a Blue/Black trail.



Black Diamond trails are getting into the advanced territory and rated as Difficult. They are more suitable for experienced mountain bikers, used to physically demanding routes, expect large, dangerous, and unavoidable obstacles and features, challenging and variable trail with long steep climbs or descents and loose surfaces. Trail width is down to and average of only 300mm with an average gradient of 20% and max of 30%. Exposure to either side of the trail corridor can include steep downward slopes or freefall. Unavoidable obstacles to 500 mm high, such as logs, roots, drop offs or constructed obstacles, avoidable obstacles to 1200mm may be present, width of deck is greater than half the height of the obstacle Tabletop jumps to 2500mm high, rollable double jumps and avoidable gap jumps. Suitable for experienced mountain bikers with very good skills, used to physically demanding trail. An example of a Black Diamond trail is Trouty at Derby.



Double Black Diamond trail is the highest rating in the TDRS system and is called the Extreme rating. This is where the big boys and girls play and is not for the faint hearted. It will have extremely difficult trails with very steep gradients, highly variable surfaces, and unavoidable, severe obstacles. The trail is 150mm +/- 100m wide with an average of 20% gradient and a max of 40% of steep loose or rocky descents or climbs. Expect unavoidable obstacles over 1000mm, avoidable, obstacles may be present, unavoidable gap jumps and doubles, unavoidable bridges 600mm or narrower, and width of bridges is unpredictable. Suitable for highly experienced mountain bikers with excellent skills, with high end mountain bikes. An example of this trail type would be Detonate at Derby.



Places like Maydena have an added rating of Proline, these trails take it to another level again with large gap jumps and drops, extremely steep terrain and highly variable surfaces. These trails are only suitable for professional-level riders. An example of a Proline trail would be Yeah Gnar on Maydena's super steep slopes.

## Quad Crown 8-10<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Liam McGuire

After our first event in 2023, some riders told us that the Wild Penguin had the best trails they have ridden in a mountain bike event in Australia. We were pretty chuffed with that, as were our local trail teams who set the courses in the Penguin and Wild Mersey trails. We released the courses a few weeks ago - head to our website for the rundown. Come for all three days or just one. It's up to you! Just make sure you don't miss out.

<https://quadcrownmtb.com.au/registration/>





## Wild Mersey Update

Nick Stredwick

Wild Mersey Mountain Bike Trails Maintenance Officer, Nick Stredwick, lets us know of the latest scene at Wild Mersey. Nick says he's been busy over summer keeping the trails clear and riding well with a focus on small drainage and minor trail tidying. There is planned to be a general refurbishment (reshaping of berms) with a digger on High Voltage and Super Hornet once moisture levels improve in the soil. Furthermore, a high priority is fixing with turnpiking and graveling the often-wet trails high up in the Badgers, particularly Bluetopia, Blue Tongue and Syked Out. Other tasks underway include getting new trail signage showing all trails (only Raptor Ridge and Frankie Flyer are missing at the moment) and working on new trailhead entrances for Latrobe and Railton.



## Tas Gravity Enduro Series

Craig Kerr

The 2023/24 Tas Gravity Enduro Series is underway and Rounds 1 (Meehan Range), 2 (George Town) and 3 (Wild Mersey) have been completed. The series finishes off with Rounds 4 March 16-17 at Maydena and the ever-popular final Round 5 and presentations at Derby April 13-14. Further information including registration and results can be found at [Tas Gravity Enduro Series](#)



## Club Merchandise and New Caps

Craig Kerr



Do yourself (and the Club) a favour and grab an Iron Tor or Penguin MTB Park tee! Just jump onto the CCMBC website and it will lead you to the great guys at [Trail Project](#). At our website you can also kit yourself out with an iconic Club riding top or a magnificent Iron Tor poster created by club member Chris Scott. These items make great birthday or Christmas presents and financially contribute to



supporting the local mountain biking scene. [http://www.cmbc.com.au/shop\\_merchandise/](http://www.cmbc.com.au/shop_merchandise/) And currently in production, the Club will very soon have an official cap. More details to be released very soon.



## North West Coastal Pathway

Chris Stredwick

The North West Coastal Pathway has been a long time coming! The Pathway was initiated and supported by early reports, including the Wynyard to Port Sorell Cycleway (1997), Trails Tasmania Strategy (2007) and the Tasmania Physical Activity Plan 2005-2010. Then in 2009 the Cradle Coast Authority, in conjunction with Safer Roads for Cyclists Tasmania, co-operating local councils and the State Government, initiated the North West Coastal Pathway Project with the North West Coastal Pathway Plan being released in 2010.



The plan was to have a shared off-road pathway for pedestrians and cyclists that spanned the 80km from Latrobe to Wynard and linking all the cities, towns and villages along the way. Each council area would be responsible for the section in its own municipality and funding was a mixture of Federal, State and Council funds.

The Central Coast Council was on the front foot for development with the Ulverstone to Turners Beach section completed before the pathway plan was even considered. From there each council has added to their local pathway allotment and slowly the links have grown closer together. In the last few years, a



large amount of progress has been made with the stunning Mersey River section, constructed from Latrobe to Devonport, the Penguin to Sulphur Creek pathway, the Don River bridge and Formby Road link in Devonport, the West Ulverstone link and the recently opened Turners Beach to Don Hill section.

Currently the Cooe to Wynyard segment is under construction following the disused railway alignment, which is over 13km on its own. However, there are some parts still to be started, which leaves some considerable gaps in the pathway. One is linking Penguin to West Ulverstone, with some cliffside challenges to overcome and the Heybridge to Emu River section. This is the easier of the two but still requires a dedicated feasibility study and several engineering hurdles to be overcome.



**Titan Point to Burnie**



Recently, Waratah/Wynyard council advertised tenders for a feasibility and predesign study to extend the pathway from Wynyard to Stanley! Once the remaining sections are completed, the pathway will be well over 100km in length. The pathway will serve as an important recreational asset and encourage locals to get out and enjoy our beautiful coastline.

### West Ulverstone to Penguin

While the benefits of exercise and commuting to work by bike are commendable, the pathway itself is certain to become a major tourist drawcard. Already some visiting cruise ships have a cycling focus, an ultra-marathon is planned from Latrobe to Ulverstone and a new cycling hub, café and apartment are planned for Devonport.

While the pathway may not be a mountain bike trail, most mountain bike riders will ride the



pathway in some shape or form. Whether it is an easy day out on the bike, riding with young kids or to get friends and family out on their initiation into cycling. It is a huge asset to go towards the health and wellbeing of the North West Coast, and councils need to be determined to complete the missing links, along with considering cycling as a necessary consideration in future urban developments and not an afterthought. Think about how much easier the

coastal pathway would be if it had been planned from the beginning. If you are yet to venture out for a ride, run or walk on the coastal pathway, I recommend you do, you won't regret it!

### Iron Torathon

Chris Stredwick

Last year on the 25<sup>th</sup> November, we had our second and now annual Iron Torathon challenge. What's an Iron Torathon? It's a challenge to do as many laps of the CCMBC's full 12km Montgomery and Iron Tor loop as possible in one day. This time there was an easier 6km alternative called the Montgomery Burns. There's no start time, no finish time, it's not a race, it is just a personal challenge, and a fundraising platform where riders are encouraged to have people sponsor them for laps ridden, and those funds go back to building and maintaining our trails.

On that Saturday in November, 15 riders took on the Torathon and two others the Montgomery Burns circuit. The weather was looking to be a bit wet, but fortunately it was just a light shower for a few hours in the morning. Due to commitments, Andrew Cathcart did his ride the day before and set the record of an astounding 12.5 laps! The 0.5 is one Montgomery loop at the end, just so someone would have to do 13 to beat him and almost 16hrs out on the trails. That was going to be very difficult to beat! That was a massive challenge, but there were 15 brave souls to attempt the full Iron Tor loop the very next day.



The results on the day were as follows....

Rider	Laps
<b>Iron Torathon</b>	
Ben Parsissons	10
Howard Crispin	8.5
Sorcha Flett	8
Wesley Howell	6
Chris Stredwick	5.5
Martin Byrne	5
Dallas van Rooyen	5
Jake Lee	4
Emma Lee	3.5
Guilherme Pelegrini	3
Melissa Britt	3
Tracey Smith	3
Nick Stredwick	2
Dougel Deans	2
Adam Ritchey	2
<b>Monty Burns</b>	
Selina Stredwick	3
Lucy Cochrane	2

The complex block contains two distinct images. The top image is a poster for the 'IRON TORATHON' event, featuring a cyclist on a rocky trail. The poster text includes: 'IRON TORATHON', 'THERE'S NO START TIME.', 'THERE'S NO FINISH TIME.', 'IT'S NOT A RACE.', 'IT'S A CHALLENGE!', and 'November 25th 2023'. The bottom image is a logo for 'Montgomery Burns' which includes a cartoon character of a man with a large nose and a 'CRADLE COAST CLUB' logo.



All up, there was a combined 876km ridden and we raised over \$2000 to go towards the Penguin MTB Park redevelopment!! After drizzle for the first couple of hours, the rest of the day was great riding weather, and the trails were hero dirt!



Thanks again to everyone that came along and pushed themselves. I'm pretty sure almost everyone had done more laps that they had ever done in one hit before. Thank you to the volunteers for setting up the marquee and organising the refreshments and thanks to Lanes IGA Supermarket for those refreshments. Please lock in the 2nd of November 2024 for the next Iron Torathon challenge.

### CCMBC Annual Christmas Ride

Steve Crocker

What is now becoming a regular feature on the Club calendar, the Club Christmas ride on December 10 again saw an increase in the number of riders out enjoying a group ride and a bit of festive season camaraderie. On a perfect December day and with the trails in tip top condition, 17 riders 'snaked' their way up Iron Tor toward the lookout for the customary group photo. Plenty of rest stops allowed everybody to regroup along the way, meet other club members, have a chat, and for those on non ebikes, and a few years under their belts, get their breath back. It was heartening to see the more experienced riders generously sharing their expertise with those



with less experience and giving them some tips on negotiating the more technical sections of the Iron Tor descent.

I encourage you to mark this ride on your calendar as it is a great way to meet other Club members and enjoy the benefits of a group ride. Special thanks to Chris Stredwick for organising this memorable event.



## Club Sponsorship

Craig Kerr

The CCMBC is now in the second year of its sponsorship program. Many thanks go to the following businesses for their much-appreciated support and we in turn encourage you to support them:

- Penguin Beer Co (Gold)
- Core Exploration (Gold)
- Lane's IGA Penguin (Gold)
- Next Level Mountain Bike (Gold)
- TasNetworks (Gold)
- Ulverstone Cycles (Silver)
- Patrick St Clinic (Bronze)



Please get in touch with Secretary, Craig Kerr ([craigkerr210@gmail.com](mailto:craigkerr210@gmail.com)) or President, Chris Fletcher ([cfletche@inet.net.au](mailto:cfletche@inet.net.au)) if you are interested in supporting your local mountain bike club and we will forward you sponsorship details.

## CCMBC Office Bearers

<b>President</b>	Chris Fletcher
<b>Vice President</b>	Chris Stredwick
<b>Treasurer</b>	Emma Lee
<b>Secretary and Newsletter Editor</b>	Craig Kerr

## Feedback and Contact

Please email the club with any feedback at [club@ccmbc.com.au](mailto:club@ccmbc.com.au) or to unsubscribe from our newsletter distribution list. Newsletter subscription is free and available from our website and our postal address is PO Box 458, Penguin 7316

Our webpage is <http://www.ccmbc.com.au/>, here you can find lots of information covering trails, contacts, events, donations, membership, photos, merchandise, newsletters etc.