

# President's Report - 2015

2015 was a good year for cycling at Monash University and MCAT as a club. We achieved several important milestones in our development as a recognisable organisation paving the way for us to become not only an officially recognised but sustainable group.

MCAT was formed to encompass the related cycling and triathlon activities on and around campus. Its conception was in response to the vacuum left by progressive collapse of both Monash Cycling, swimming squads at Monash Sport and an association with campus based Mornington Peninsula Triathlon Club. Thus the challenge set to MCAT since its inception in 2013 has been to re-establish these sports around Monash campuses and avoid making the fatal mistakes of its predecessors.

In 2015 our greatest challenges were consistency in attendance, officiating and recognition. In 2016 we must consolidate these achievements and use them to ensure the club's longevity, in no small part by succession and progression of its leadership. We have come so far as a group and I firmly believe that this is the year we succeed as an organised and united club or fail as an unsustainable group.

## 2015 Milestones:

- Inaugural AGM
- Election of committee
- Creation of bank account to manage funds
- Goals for attendance and continuity

These milestones were key requirements for the application to become a legally recognised non-for profit club. While we have not yet made this application, it has been a goal of committee to make this possible when the time arises. Legal recognition affords greater access to insurance for its members and liability protection for the organisers. It also comes with strict requirements to structure and consistency of operations, requirements we have not yet been positioned to meet.

## 2015 Activities/Actions

- Pursuit of accreditation as a recognised club NFP/TM Affiliation
- Swim sessions
- Social events
- Yarrowonga Triathlon championships
- Regular bunch rides and training at the JT Packer Park Velodrome
- O week entry/exit
- Committee meetings

## Successes

Successful activities expanded in 2015 include: social events, major venue and route changes (JT Packer Park and safer group rides) and O week presence. Safer rides plays into the need for risk assessment further to liability cover conditionally granted by Team Monash, as well as making activities more appealing to less confident riders. These activities should be continued and refined, good job everyone.

## Learning Experiences

Unsuccessful pursuits include swim sessions, uniform revision action-group, affiliation as a club with Team Monash and regular committee meetings.

**Swim sessions** were planned in a safe-to-fail manner. A three week fully supported course of swims was planned to gauge public interest and refine coaching/organisation challenges. Attendance by members across the timeframe was essentially nil, with only one attendee intending to swim but going to the wrong venue. The nominated coach was also unsuccessfully engaged, totally nil attendance as well. The reason for this failure is thought to be due to: diverse preferences for swim times; diverse existing swim venue memberships of members; lack of focus around swimming level (intimidation of 'too fast' perceptions). The time-limited structure of this attempt is accepted as beneficial by those involved. It allows for management of limited volunteer time resources against a challenging bootstrap activity. Swims should be reviewed on a yearly basis as our user-base grows. It should be noted that TM has been quoted in saying that "a swim squad will never exist on campus again". In context, a swim squad may not exist on campus as it was, but it is the challenge for MCAT to ensure that one day a swim squad exists *somewhere* that serves *Monash Students* wherever/whoever they are.

**Committee meetings** were not regular and as such the committee was largely unaccountable for its goals. Despite achieving much in the year, it was agreed that regular meetings would contribute greatly to ease-of-management for our future committee. A regular timeframe for quarterly meetings has been developed as a response to our learning here.

**Succession** has always been a focus, but only recently been a possibility for MCAT. With the scope of challenges set to this committee, on the background of a fledgling member-base, we have only recently been positioned to enact succession within the committee. The bottom-line; we must kick-start a pathway for management succession within MCAT immediately. This will require:

- continuation and refreshment of the *committee*
- continued development of *club frameworks*, and
- *mentoring* of future potential presidents.

**Affiliation** has been discussed at length with Team Monash (TM). The conclusion of which is that affiliation is, at present, not appropriate for MCAT. At present we are associated with Team Monash as a '*group*'. This affords us potential for conditional liability cover from

TM without the requirements of incorporation as a legal entity denoted by *affiliation*. *Affiliation* would not afford us greater cover through TM, but the incorporation as a legal entity would allow us to independently purchase insurance policies. As implied, this would require a reliable income stream for a questionable net benefit. While we have agreed not to pursue *affiliation* at present, we do recommend progress towards incorporation to keep growth options for MCAT open.

A **uniform** revision group was formed to begin planning the future change of uniform on a 3 year cycle. No progress was made within this group. Furthermore, new policy by Monash University administration has been formed that will require all clubs and groups to relinquish individual and creative design. At this stage, future uniforms will be required to be bought from a single common supplier with strict restrictions on design including:

- No club branding
- Set Monash colour palette
- Potential allowed club name printed in small typical font.
- No sponsor graphics or naming

The details and enforcement of this are still ongoing, however, clearly new uniform design is not practical in the short-term. This should be monitored by committee as an area of negotiation with Monash and Team Monash. Restriction in uniform based marketing does not align with forced financial and management independence of clubs. As a Monash Uni policy (not TM), we should help TM advocate for our rights, but first convince TM that this is in all our best interests.

**Triathlon** training and racing was not coherent in 2015. Reasons may be due to a lack of membership and/or community leaders. An attempt for organising accommodation to Yarrowonga Triathlon (which hosts the Uni Games Triathlon) was made, but fell through due to uncertainty in attendance volume. TM has recently indicated the potential for subsidising accommodation at this event due to its association with the AUG. This could help rally Monash triathletes to the event. Barriers to popularity of the event include: distance, cost, lack of visibility of uni-games placing at the event, and lack of lead-in triathlon group focus on campus. Due to the committed nature of triathlon, we are currently exploring the outsourcing of triathlon coaching (and motivation) to local triathlon club Bayside Triathlon Club. This relieves our limited volunteer coaching resources and strengthens community relations.

## List of current relations (Stakeholders, Partners, Friends)

- Team Monash (uniforms, affiliation, AUG sponsorship - yarrowonga, insurance)
- Brighton PhysioSports - (MCAT name gets discount, they are reliable in excellent care targeted to cycling and triathlon)
- Carnegie Cycling Club - (we use their velodrome, recommended as cycling club for licensing by default)
- Giant Ormond - (aware of MCAT; committee link)
- Champion Systems (good relationship, supplied uniforms for 3 years, pay model appropriate to club)
- The Office of Environmental Sustainability (ride2uni)

- Monash Sport (associated by location, services include: pool; conference rooms; AUG meetings)
- Bayside Triathlon Club - in negotiation as preferred triathlon training group.
- RunMonash (Trevor is awesome, recommended for running; avoid overlap of running operations)

Anthony Khoo, President  
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