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### **Format and Timing of Cycling New Zealand National Championships**

1. Cycling New Zealand Federation is currently undergoing a review of all National Championships, for discussion at the forthcoming AGM in Dunedin, May 2008
2. Championships included in the review are:
  - National Club Road Championships
  - National Elite/U23 Road Championships
  - National Criterium Championships
  - National Track Championships
  - National Madison Championships
3. Before considering the first three road championships, it is worth observing some of the perceived shortcomings in recent events.
4. Since the introduction of club based road championships in 2002, numbers of participants have increased dramatically, but so has the cost and complexity involved with staging these large events. This has had the result of deterring clubs from volunteering to stage National Championships, and in particular the National Road (now National Club) Championships.
5. It is considered that in order to go some way to rectifying this situation, and to preserve some degree of rotation of the championships throughout the country, Cycling New Zealand needs to assume more control over the events.
6. For example, should Cycling New Zealand, through grants or sponsorship, raise the funds required to purchase the numerous and expensive paraphernalia associated with (primarily road) championships, then not only would ongoing costs be dramatically reduced, but the workload on the organising club would similarly reduce and the standard of championships would rise and be consistent.
7. Items which could be purchased and held by Cycling New Zealand would include:
  - Finish area banners
  - Podiums
  - Podium backdrops
  - Timing equipment (to include transponder systems)

- Photo-finish cameras
- Vehicle and hand held radio systems
- Vehicle PA systems
- Vehicle beacon lights
- Roadside signs, flags, etc (eg, feed zone, distance markers)

8. Costs for the equipment and ongoing maintenance could be deferred by hiring such equipment out to clubs and other organisations (including affiliated bodies such as MTB and BMX) for non-championship events, when available.

9. Similarly, not all clubs and centres have access to the number of officials, managers and volunteers to stage major championships, and once again, it is considered that Cycling New Zealand needs to be more actively involved in resourcing and allocating manpower to stage these events. This would also include Cycling New Zealand promoting and recruiting more of its membership for training as Commissaires, Timekeepers, Judges, etc.

10. Finally on this topic, it is considered that Cycling New Zealand needs to assemble exhaustive manuals to assist Clubs and Centres in staging National Championships, both to improve standards and to ensure consistency from year to year. At the early stages in planning a representative of Cycling New Zealand should be actively involved with the event organisers to ensure that issues are resolved and the courses are acceptable.

#### National Club Road Championships

11. It is considered that the move to club based championships has been successful, with numbers of participants rising each year.

12. The introduction of the "Elite/U23" Road Championships has reduced the quality of the SM/U23M/SW fields at the Club Road Championships, and has reduced the prospect of media attention at this event.

13. It is considered that the change of name to National Club Road Championships has also degraded the image of the event, and the title should return to National Road Championships. To this end the SM/U23M and SW events should be removed from the programme (as they are currently catered for in the "Elite/U23" Road Championships)

14. This would have the added benefit of effectively removing 1 day from the event, reducing overall costs to both the organiser and the teams involved.

15. Some events within the championship are historically poorly represented (M7M and Master Women categories), even though national membership figures would indicate otherwise, except in the older Master Women (5,6,7) categories. Bearing in mind that participants, in order to attend, generally need to book and pay for travel and accommodation well in advance of entry closing dates, they are naturally reticent to enter with no guarantee of their events being staged. Some such guarantee that their events will be run would go some way to giving them confidence to make the financial and training commitments knowing that they would not be wasted.

## Timing of the National Club Road Championships

16. The presumption made in discussing the timing of the National Club Road Championships is that they form the focus of the road racing season and are the top priority event on the calendar.

17. To this end it appears odd that the Championships are not at the peak of the racing year.

18. Holding the Championships in October requires cyclists to train the hardest throughout the winter months, with little focus throughout the summer months other than commercially promoted events (as opposed to club and centre based programmes).

19. Training and racing during the winter months in less than ideal conditions is both unpleasant and potentially dangerous, especially in the colder South Island. With low temperatures and short daylight hours, road conditions can be treacherous, and sun-strike can make cyclists all but invisible to other road users. Incidences of illness and injury through riding in these conditions are high, resulting in a reduction in preparation time and a drop in performance at the Championships.

20. The requirement to train and race throughout the winter also has the negative effect of not providing a rest period for both cyclists and officials.

21. For school/university students, October is also a critical time of the year for study, with students foregoing critical pre-examination work to train and attend racing. University students in their final year may find that the essential winter training/racing programme is in the heart of their vital final examinations. Given the study requirements, together with the poor weather conditions and short daylight hours, it is not surprising that junior riders (U17/U19/U23) are not seen at their peak in October.

22. Programming the Championships later would provide more focus and incentive on club and centre road programmes as preparation, avoid important study conflicts, and generally encourage riders to be at their peak performance having had a suitable winter rest period and more appropriate preparation.

## The January Option

23. With the current "Elite/U23" Championships scheduled for January, this would initially appear to be a good time to re-amalgamate the Road Championships, as we are in full summer, in a holiday period, and riders will have been able to train and compete in a full programme outside of winter.

24. January, however does present difficulties. Firstly, it is in the highest tariff season for travel and accommodation, raising the costs for teams to attend. In all but the major population centres, it is also considered unlikely that sufficient accommodation would be available in any case.

25. Secondly, reaching peak performance on road in January would conflict directly with preparation for Centre and National Track Championships, especially for junior riders who, more than any other grades, tend to compete in both disciplines. Until there

are sufficient indoor facilities to both train and compete throughout the country, which is exceedingly unlikely, track cycling will remain a summer sport, and the two disciplines of road and track should never be in conflict.

26. For these two reasons, even though it would be advantageous to re-combine the two National Road Championships, it is considered that January is not a viable option.

### The April Option

27. Leaving aside the "Elite/U23" Road Championships, April appears to be an ideal time to hold the "Club" Road Championships as it would make a logical finale to the season's racing. With Junior World Championships and other major Junior Tours (eg, Canberra) scheduled shortly afterwards, our junior riders are at their peak, and the Championships would provide a natural springboard and selection opportunity. For other riders, April championships, after a long training and racing preparation would lead them naturally into their off-season rest period during winter, rather than the current pattern of taking a short break in the height of summer.

28. However, as with all other options, there are issues with April as well.

29. If the April school holidays are seen as an appropriate period to hold the Championships, occasionally this will conflict with Easter. Generally the school holiday period is of sufficient length to avoid this, but major events and tours in other Centres would be in conflict. It is considered that any move of the Championships must have a major effect on the entire road season as a consequence, and hence it is considered that Centres/Clubs must, for the benefit of the National programme, sacrifice some history and sovereignty of their established events.

30. The April school holidays are also designed to accommodate Anzac Day, providing yet another occasional conflict. Respecting the solemnity of Anzac Day would require no racing to take place that morning.

31. Accepting that some flexibility would be required to accommodate these changing holidays, April is considered an ideal period to stage the Championships. A schedule of Autumn School Holidays, Easter, and Anzac Day for 2008 -2011 is at Appendix 1, together with proposed dates when the Championships could be scheduled.

32. Daylight Saving Time issues are also relevant in considering an April option. As can be seen at Appendix 2, April is outside the daylight saving period, but as can also be seen in Appendix 2, hours of sunrise and sunset remain acceptable to manage the existing Championship programme.

33. Climate also needs to be considered in an April option. Generally New Zealand weather patterns are more settled in April than October, with higher average temperatures, less rainfall, and lower wind speeds. A table of weather patterns for selected regions is at Appendix 3.

34. In conclusion, we consider April to be the optimum time to hold the Championships and it is believed that conflicts with National Holidays and established events at this time can and should be resolved.

### National Elite/U23 Road Championships

35. The move of these Championships to January has proved successful and popular, with meaningful champions as a result. It is not considered necessary to move them, other than taking greater pains to ensure that they do not clash with other profile events wherever possible.

36. The introduction of teams based convoy style racing has dramatically improved the standard of the event in this its 2<sup>nd</sup> year. However, current studies by the CNZ Technical Panel to introduce some form of trade teams system should be pursued for the 2009 championship if the sport is to continue to attract major sponsorship. Sponsors are unlikely to be attracted to cycling if the pinnacle event on the calendar denies them exposure and a return for their investment.

37. Although discussed at the 2007 CNZ AGM, and rejected on grounds of time constraints, it is considered that there are sufficient numbers of riders to stage separate SM and U23M events. This is considered beneficial to identify the true champion by ensuring that competitors in each age category ride their own race.

38. In common with paragraph 13 above, for the opposite reason, it is considered that the word "Elite" in the championship has a negative effect on participants, and if the proposal to remove these grades from the current club championships is accepted, then the wording should be amended to National Road Championships.

### National Criterium Championships

39. In 2007 numbers entering the National Criterium Championship were embarrassingly low. It is considered, because of the extraordinarily high costs involved in staging a criterium, especially on high profile inner city courses, it is considered that this event is outside of the scope of most clubs.

40. Also, because of the short duration of the event, it is considered unlikely that large numbers will be willing to pay the expense to travel and enter unless there is some form of additional attraction (look for example at the Christchurch Armstrong Peugeot Festival of Cycling, which included the 2006 National Criterium Championships).

41. Not all Centres or Clubs are likely to be able to stage something as large and expensive (in the region of \$250,000) as the Festival of Cycling, but perhaps including the event in conjunction with other major regional events (Lake Taupo Classic, K2, Tour of Wellington, etc).

### National Track Championships

42. These championships were the subject of a major review and overhaul at the last CNZ AGM, and it is considered that they should remain in their present format to analyse their success or otherwise.

43. With the anticipation of further (North Island) indoor velodromes the north/south rotation should continue, with the quality of racing remaining consistent from year to year.

44. However, whilst most Centres need to train outdoors, it is not considered that a change in timing would ever be possible in New Zealand away from its current position during the summer months.

#### National Madison Championships

45. The 2007 review of Track Championships at the CNZ AGM removed the Madison Championships from the National Track Championships programme, and is in future to be staged as a stand alone event.

46. For 2008 this has resulted in the Madison Championships being staged at Wanganui just 8 days prior to the National Track Championships in Invercargill.

47. For similar reasons explained above (National Criterium Championships), it is considered unlikely that sufficient numbers of teams would be willing to incur the expense of travel and accommodation for a single stand alone event.

48. It is proposed that the National Madison Championships, whilst remaining outside of the Track Championships programme, be conducted each year at the same venue as the Track Championships on the Saturday evening prior to the start of the Track Championships, when most teams could be expected already to be present. This would have the effect of increasing participation and reducing costs to both organisers and participants, although the National Track Programme may need some minor adjustment, especially in the 1<sup>st</sup> two sessions, to permit Madison riders sufficient recovery.



Derrick Nelson  
Secretary

Appendix 1

Autumn School Holidays and Dates for Easter and Anzac Day, 2008 – 2011

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Autumn School Holidays	21/4 – 2/5	9/4 – 27/4	1/4 – 19/4	15/4 – 2/5
Easter	21-24/3	10-13/4	2-5/4	21-25/4
Anzac Day	25/4	25/4	25/4	25/4
Proposed Dates for National Road Championships	October Labour Weekend as currently scheduled	16-19/4*	15-18/4*	28/4 – 1/5*

\*1 Day less required if SM/SW/U23M removed from the programme (see paragraph 13)

Appendix 2  
Daylight Saving Time Dates for 2008 – 2011

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Daylight Saving Starts	28 September	27 September	26 September	25 September
Daylight Saving Ends	6 April	5 April	4 April	3 April
Mid April Sunrise (Auckland)	6.42am	6.42am	6.42am	6.42am
Mid April Sunset (Auckland)	6.01pm	6.01pm	6.01pm	6.01pm
Mid April Sunrise (Wellington)	6.46am	6.46am	6.46am	6.46am
Mid April Sunset (Wellington)	5.57pm	5.57pm	5.57pm	5.57pm
Mid April Sunrise (Christchurch)	6.57am	6.57am	6.57am	6.57am
Mid April Sunset (Christchurch)	6.04pm	6.04pm	6.04pm	6.04pm
Mid April Sunrise (Dunedin)	7.08am	7.08am	7.08am	7.08am
Mid April Sunset (Dunedin)	6.10pm	6.10pm	6.10pm	6.10pm

Appendix 3  
New Zealand Regional Weather Patterns

	<b>Spring (Sep/Oct/Nov)</b>	<b>Summer (Dec/Jan/Feb)</b>	<b>Autumn (Mar/Apr/May)</b>	<b>Winter (Jun/Jul/Aug)</b>
<b>Bay of Islands</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>
Temperature	19 9	25 14	21 11	16 7
Rain Days	11	7	11	16
<b>Auckland</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>
Temperature	18 11	24 12	20 13	15 9
Rain Days	12	8	11	15
<b>Rotorua</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>
Temperature	17 7	24 12	18 9	13 4
Rain Days	11	9	9	13
<b>Wellington</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>
Temperature	15 9	20 13	17 11	12 6
Rain Days	11	7	10	13
<b>Christchurch</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>
Temperature	17 7	22 12	18 8	12 3
Rain Days	7	7	7	7
<b>Queenstown</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>	<b>High Low</b>
Temperature	16 5	22 10	16 6	10 1
Rain Days	9	8	8	7

