

2021 Overview

2021 was another year interrupted by the Co-Vid pandemic which led to a late start to the season and trying to squeeze as much of our calendar into a reduced time frame. This unfortunately led to some clashes with other events, although hopefully it didn't impact too much on riders. Weather also created some issues with Championships and whilst not being able to please everyone with the rearranged dates, our volunteers did their best. We hope to put together a clearer set of criteria in the coming months regarding rescheduling events due to unforeseen circumstances beyond our control.

When training did resume Sundrive Track was operating close to capacity and we had a full program of National Championships. This year we were able to run Wednesday Leagues and Saturday Sprinters Leagues and we are definitely seeing the fruits of these labours coming to the fore with a huge improvement in sprint abilities at Senior and Masters level and the technical prowess of our youth track riders on the road have attracted a few more clubs to get involved in track and we are delighted with this. We were fortunate enough with the weather apart from repeated delays in the Team//Keirin but it all worked out in the end. All in all, though it has been huge positives and we took great delight in seeing the male and female junior squads turn up from the four corners of the island twice a week to prepare for selection and participation at European level.

Orangefield track enjoyed more or less a full season of summer activities in 2021 with bi-weekly sessions held between May and September. They have had consistent number of U10-U14's attending and in the older sessions, they were able to field two strong teams for the UK School Games. This introduced certain events that our youth do not normally ride, being Madison and Team Pursuit. The riders were coached in the weeks coming up to the games and performed very well at Manchester Velodrome with the highlight being the boys placing 5th in the Team Pursuit.

All in all, the 2020/2021 Seasons saw the Kanturk Velodrome create some exciting progress and closer integration to the CI Track Commission National Facility Strategy which will secure the long-term approval for National Grade Competition at Kanturk, delivery of facilities to a national standard and ultimately open access for the Kanturk Facility to a growing support from the National Governing Body for Track Cycling in Ireland. Because the original Track Shape was not compliant with UCI/Cycling Ireland needs we have been limited to using the facility to a training only facility, including a Track Academy and Training League with limited gearing.

We hope to possibly include a 3 stage Inter Provincial Championship in 2022.

2022 Strategic Objectives

Unfortunately, numbers were down in some events and we will be looking at this going forward to see how to improve numbers both taking part in training and competing in events. Previously we had looked to encourage more youth/juniors to track by engaging with schools however this programme has been hampered by the pandemic, so hopefully we can look to continue this initiative into 2022 to help increase the numbers of youth competing in track events.

We are fortunate to have excellent coaches and willing volunteers, however these resources are stretched to their max. As we are keen to expand our program this means we are still struggling with the lack of volunteers of coaching/timing/running events and a serious lack of commissaires is also a concern. Properly trained Commissaires are essential if we are to run events in a fair and safe manner. Again, looking forward we will be looking to recruit and train more commissaires, timekeepers and volunteers to help with the load. This is essential if we are to expand our program and we will work with Cycling Ireland to get the appropriate courses set up for new recruits.

In the past there has been somewhat of a disconnect between High Performance and the Track Commission, which has meant there hasn't been a clear pathway for riders, particularly, as they progress through Junior and U23 ranks. We will continue to run our bursary to help riders competing outside of Ireland, but we have also discussed utilising some of this to help a development team compete in events and provide more of a link to High Performance. Obviously, this has been hampered both with Co-Vid and the changes at HP level. We look forward to taking these plans forward with HP in 2022, but again, delivery of this will also need additional volunteers to help out.

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On behalf of the Commission, I would like to thank all the Volunteers/Coaches/Commissaires who turn up on a regular basis and give freely of their time even on the rainy days and all the riders/parents who support Track activities around the country. And we look forward to seeing everyone in 2022.