

Black Canon Collective

Meeting Minutes and Actions

Prepared by Caroline Mackinlay

1. Meeting Info

Meeting: Reviewing visit to site of Russell Burton (trailbuilder) and plan for Dig Day
Date: 11 November 2008
Time: 20:00
Location: The Griffin, Frome
Attendees: Neil Cousins, Ian Crook, Andrew Denham, Ben Irons, Rob Lewis, Alastair
 Mackinlay, Caroline Mackinlay

2. Meeting Agenda

- a. Review of Sunday's short visit to site by Russell Burton (XC trailbuilder)
- b. Current state of tracks
- c. Trail marking
- d. Dig Day planning
- e. AOB

3. Minutes

a) Russell Burton's visit to site

Andrew and Neil reported on the visit to the Allotment of Russell Burton, trailbuilder extraordinaire and local XC rider, on Sunday 9 November. Russell was giving advice/input on the building of an XC loop on site.

Russell feels that our site is better suited to XC trails than DH ones, and commented that our current downhill trails are actually more like "extreme XC" ones. Land-wise, the ground below the derelict building is too wet to use – it will just cut up badly. Russell commented that our existing trails are too wet and aren't armoured for heavy use. Russell also noted that our current method of marking out the trails is very bad practice and causes a lot of erosion – see item c below.

Russell, Andrew and Neil had a look around and discussed an XC loop which would use the existing bridleways and tracks for climbing, with different downhill and jumpy loops branching off

the bridleways. Russell suggested one XC course and one main downhill run. However we really need a plan, and we need to decide what we want to build. We need to discuss as a club what we want out of the Allotment, bearing in mind our riding preferences but also the limitations of the ground we have. A discussion will be started on the Forum by Neil.

Russell was very excited by the potential of the land that we have and thinks it's a great opportunity.

b) State of the trails

The current trails (BBMS and Spoons) are in a poor state of maintenance at the moment, largely due to the weather. The tracks are flooded, and leaf litter hides the trails. They are being raked but as the leaves are falling currently the tracks are hidden again very quickly.

We need to uprate our existing tracks as they are becoming quite eroded – steps need to be taken to minimise further erosion, as well as necessary repair work.

The new trail in progress, Rudolph, was put on hold by Andrew and Neil when they visited site with Russell as they felt that it wasn't being built along the lines that were agreed during the planning stage.

Andrew suggested that as well as maintaining the tracks, at this time of year we want to emphasise other aspects of the club as well as just the land – e.g. cross-country rides and night rides, dig days, and use of the Freelaps timing equipment.

c) Trail marking

Russell Burton commented on his visit to the Allotment that using branches and logs to mark the sides of the trails causes a lot of erosion, as it forms a barrier to water. The water is directed down the track by the logs, rather than being allowed to follow its natural course (which may have been across the trail rather than down it). Russell suggested using stumps to mark the courses rather than laid-down wood.

Ian suggested ski-run style markings, i.e. Red paint on the left-hand side of the trails and blue paint on the right-hand side but there was some doubt about how long paint would stay on the ground.

The committee as a whole felt there were some health and safety issues around using stumps, since if a rider fell onto a stump with no armour on, they could injure themselves. There was some discussion to come up with alternatives. It was also pointed out by Andrew that we don't have to use the same type of marking in every situation – it has to be obvious as a trail marker, and appropriate. We will continue to evaluate alternative methods of course marking on the forum and want to have ideas by the weekend preceding the dig day.

d) Dig Day

The obvious first item for the dig day is maintenance of BBMS and Spoons. The laid wood lining the tracks has to be removed, flooded areas need to be drained, the trails need raking and

generally things need bringing back to a presentable and rideable standard. Andrew said that removing the laid wood would be a big help in keeping the tracks in good condition.

Andrew started a discussion on what we wanted to work on at the Allotment, apart from trail maintenance. Suggestions included reopening the old 143 line, or restarting Rudolph which has been put on hold. There appears to have been some confusion as to whether Rudolph was to be a fast track or a novice-friendly one. This has flagged the need for better initial planning – we need to define the aim of the track (what we want to achieve), and then bullet-point how we plan to achieve the aim. Neil will define the process for defining a new course (items to include – planning checklist, aims, criteria, Health & Safety, sustainability, building checklist).

e) AOB

The Corsley Elizabethan Evening could potentially offer us a donation of £250 but would like to know the details of what we would spend the money on.

Andrew has agreed with ATB-Sales in principle that we could use their test fleet for a ride day, but we would need to give a lot of notice if we wanted to go to a trail centre on a weekend. Rob is going to look into organising a club trip in the Spring.

Neil said that TF Tuned Shox might be able to help out with the Youth Development scheme.

Rob is going to organise a Christmas get-together at a pub.

Ben wanted to know when we'll have our first race or timing event. It was felt that early next year would be a good aim – Rob will organise this.

It was suggested by Ian that we should reduce the membership fee for the rest of the year (the membership year runs April to March). We discussed options and agreed to reduce the membership fee for new joiners to £20 for a full membership and £15 for a half-membership.

Ben said that it was unclear how to get hold of the Freelaps kit – Andrew will put something on the website to say how to rent/borrow the equipment.

Ben stated that the club's British Cycling membership needs renewing. Andrew and Ben will sort this out.

5. Next Meeting

The next committee meeting will be the regular monthly meeting on Thursday 11th December at 8pm, venue TBA.