

Mountain Bike Team Dunghutti

Submission to the:
House Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
Inquiry into the contribution of sport to Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring

Agency: Dunghutti Sport and Recreation Indigenous Corporation

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1. Introduction

This paper discusses the contributions of mountain biking (as a sport, recreation and transport) to Indigenous wellbeing and mentoring reporting on the progress of “MTB Team Dunghutti” – an initiative of Dunghutti Sport and Recreation Indigenous Corporation (DSRIC) in Kempsey, NSW.

2. Background:

In late 2009, DSRIC’s Hector Ritchie, Jamie Thaidy and myself, Jai Cooper (Sole Trader – Round River) met in Kempsey on the Mid North Coast of NSW to discuss the potential for development of a mountain bike program based locally.

Discussion included a range of potential benefits and program areas for using mountain biking with the Indigenous community and resulted in the launch of “MTB Team Dunghutti”. Following initiatives developed in 2010, a draft discussion paper was produced in May 2011 and forms an appendix to this paper.



Jai Cooper, Jamie Thaidy, Bradley Sines - MTB Team Dunghutti, 2010

Our initial hopes and expectations have been confirmed and contributions of mountain biking to the Indigenous community of Kempsey have proven to be extensive.

3. “MTB Team Dunghutti” today

Currently, Mountain Bike Team Dunghutti is active and progressing. Dunghutti Sport and Recreation Indigenous Corporation employs John Marshall as co-ordinator with funding from the Australian Government’s Department of Health and Ageing.

Volunteer mentors continue to support program delivery.

DSRIC is currently delivering the “Ganangga” program to youth at risk in the care of Burrun Dalai Aboriginal Corporation. The current program is for 10 boys aged 8-14. Once completed, there are plans to follow with a similar girls program. Ongoing fee-for-service delivery opportunities are under negotiation primarily servicing the local community.



DSRIC assets include a fleet of mountain bike, tools and spare parts; cycle jerseys; lockable trailer with advertising; and associated extras (laptop, first aid kit, gps units, water containers, etc.). DSRIC operates from the homes of staff and volunteer mentors.

It is recognised that “MTB Team Dunghutti” has succeeded largely by servicing needs within the local community and not making any significant moves to target the elite, national or international market and events. Further potential exists for directly or indirectly engaging external markets.

4. Outcomes primarily benefitting DSRIC

DSRIC’s governance and delivery capacity have benefitted strongly. The mountain biking program has been a tangible achievement for the organisation boosting credibility within, and outside of, the local Indigenous community.

DSRIC's governance has developed including improved risk management procedures and documentation, model program outlines and instructional information, production of a sponsor brief, media releases and other improved business marketing skills.

DSRIC has been able to operate effectively without an office space or venue with associated maintenance burdens. Success has, in part, come from the mobile delivery capacity of the group and the program. MTB Team Dunghutti operates through the use of private residences and a lockable trailer. The trail network adjoining South Kempsey (and, note, similar networks adjoin many towns in our region) is maintained by the local club. As the trails are on public land (state forest), they are open for use at all hours. Essentially, a free and accessible venue has been provided. Goodwill to the club is returned by club memberships, some on-ground works to maintain trails and maintained harmony between riders and the community.

Other benefits have come from donations, eg. contribution of pre-loved bikes restored by the local Men's Shed and donated to local youth, pre-loved cycle wear from local club members. A sense of support for the initiative and stake in its development exists amongst the wider community.

5. Outcomes primarily for program participants

5.1 **Physical fitness** is a predictable benefit from mountain biking and this has been confirmed. Although no data has been collected, it is expected that programs have contributed to cardio-vascular health including awareness-raising of the impacts of smoking and nutrition.

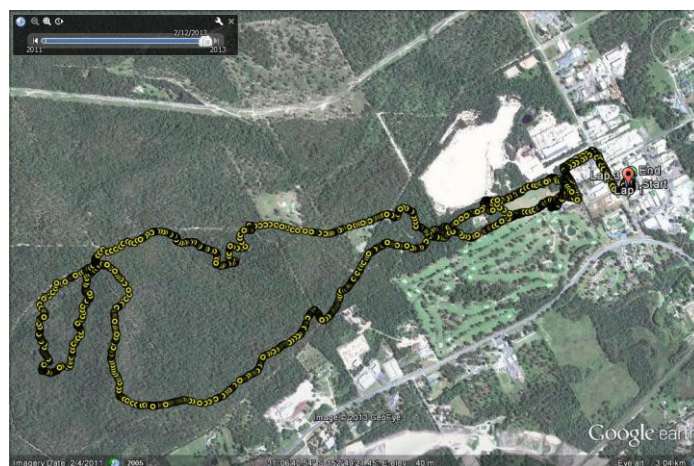
5.2 **Management of risk compensation** has occurred. Mountain biking has provided an adventure-based adrenalin outcome in a managed setting. Risk compensatory behaviours in the Indigenous community of Kempsey are often associated with crime. Adventure sports provide a viable alternative to this syndrome. Further, rates of safe behaviours can be addressed more effectively, eg. participants willingness to wear helmets is high. The wearing of a helmet while in the program, despite being mandatory, has been perceived as a sign of status - that participants are engaged in risky behaviour while riding and thus worthy of status. This contrasts to common behaviour in low risk settings where helmet wearing is stigmatised and avoidance of wearing helmets is actually promoted for its anti-authoritarian value. Australia's mandatory helmet laws result in early criminalisation of youth - particularly Indigenous



youth. Alternatively, helmet-wearing in adventure sports results in the personal development of the capacity to objectively assess risk and undermines associated stigma.

5.3 Transport independence has been confirmed as an outcome. Mountain biking provides a genuine cheap and accessible form of transport – not just a sport outcome. Increased use of bikes as a means of transport has been observed particularly amongst staff and volunteer mentors of DSRIC. The radius of travel has increased and dependence of ride-sharing has been reduced. Mechanical skills have been further increased independence including improved vocational opportunities.

5.4 Literacy and numeracy have been addressed within the programs. In addition to improved governance and program capacity, GPS (global positioning system) units and heart rate monitors have been trialed. Participants have been able to make navigational and mathematical calculations of distance, time, elevation, temperature, speed and improved use of information technology – all while in the process of enjoying an adventure. Downloading of data produces graphs and maps that have personal relevance to participants. The introduction of these technologies in a traditional classroom setting would be comparatively difficult and less relevant.



Further a school attendance component to the program similar to the “No school, no pool” policy has been applied.

5.5 Nutrition has been addressed through healthy eating. Suitable foods are provided prior to rides and discussion of suitable nutrition for elite competition is included. Interest in elite level nutrition is high.

5.6 Self-esteem of participants has improved by developing: a sense of achievement, the volunteer ethos amongst mentors, group co-operative behaviours, etc.

5.7 Vocational opportunities for individuals have increased. The program has revealed genuine commercial potential allowing staff to recognise service provision as a genuine employment/business outcome and alternative to other sectors, eg. relocation to areas of high employment for activities such as mining requires leaving existing social structures in Kempsey.

6. Outcomes generally benefitting the wider community

6.1 Asset improvement has occurred.

The project has further encouraged trail development and formalisation of the network by the local club. The use of facilities including the Burnt Bridge Mission Shed has resulted in reduced use of the site for illicit drug use and restored its previous vandalised condition including landscaping and litter removal. Awareness of illegal dumping on land managed by Kempsey Local Aboriginal Lands Council has increased and social pressure has increased for personal responsibility for waste management.

6.2 External funding has been attracted to the community. As an example, grant funding was acquired by West Kempsey Public School from commercial sponsor National Australia Bank (\$25,000 & \$50,000 in programs in 2010-12). Ground Effect Clothing (New Zealand) provided funding through the “Slush Fund” for trail building tools. Reinvestment of these and other funding into the community through employment and patronage, eg. bike shop, has had “trickle down” benefits.

6.3 Social harmony has improved through this program. Initial wariness of regular local mountain bike club members existed and has been overcome. A key component was that DSRIC persisted with the program over a period of years rather than having a short term focus. Further, joining of the local club by Indigenous people improved the attitude to use of the trails and increased receptiveness to the program.



Extension of the program to engage DSRIC volunteers with other elite sporting activities has emerged. DSRIC volunteers have worked at Ironman Australia and other wider community events, eg. NAIDOC week, “Deadly Days” celebration, etc. receiving community recognition.



Notable has been the reminder to all of the worst case scenario: if the program was to end today, then Indigenous people have been riding bikes and that in itself is of no concern, only benefit, to the wider community.

A “gift economy” has begun to emerge. Elite cycling includes a high component of material consumption with an ongoing pursuit of technological advance. Accordingly, there is a pool of second hand items seeking an appreciative home. MTB Team Dunghutti has provided this to the wider community and developed a supportive attitude amongst others in the community.

6.4 Women and families have benefitted. Women who would have previously not participated in adventure activities have been engaged in a supportive environment. Parents have reported riding with their children as a family-bonding activity.



A future opportunity is for engagement of Indigenous women in women-specific mountain biking programs, eg. “Women on Wheels” and “Gear Up Girl” programs.

6.5 Ethical standards have developed. For example, local artist Richard E. Kelly has received payments for artwork used in team jerseys and understanding of the textile industry has increased. Richard has been involved from design through to production and accreditation through the Indigenous Art Code has been achieved through adherence to ethical treatment principles.



6.6 E-business opportunities are an area for further development that may occur through the sport of mountain biking. As an example, a second round of cycle wear has been produced and opportunities for commercial sales are under consideration. On-line ordering of gear provides a genuine alternative for a local artist such as Richard to expand beyond traditional retail sales.



6.7 Business credibility has increased. As DSRIC has persisted with the program over years, perceptions have improved. The attitude by DSRIC to mountain biking as a long-term sporting, but also transport and social, investment has meant that attitudes to Indigenous business have changed. The ability of the program to hibernate during the hot months and re-emerge has boosted credibility. Further, complementing mountain biking with kayaking as a wet season activity has provided a full calendar for accessible adventure sport suited to Kempsey's climate and conditions.

6.8 Accessibility is a strong advantage of mountain biking. For example, an Indigenous youth of South Kempsey or Purfleet near Taree can pick up their bike at any hour and ride into the forest with or without company to gain an enjoyable and healthy experience at no cost. There are options within the sport for formal events and team activities providing the associated benefits.

It is recommended against actively attempting to recruit Indigenous sportspersons for elite level cycling at this stage. The pinnacle of both mountain biking and road cycling is highly focussed and resource demanding. Support for the grassroots of this activity, specifically mountain biking, will provide the widest range of benefits for Indigenous communities.

7. Barriers and associated strategies

The following barriers have been encountered. Discussion below addresses them and provides recommended strategies.

A culture of **“negativity dominance”** can exist, eg. “it won’t work”, anti-Kempsey sentiments, “they’ll vandalise it”, etc. This has been addressed by reminding stakeholders of the worst case scenario and that it itself is a good outcome.

Insecurity is a significant concern. For example, negotiations with the Slim Dusty Centre at the gateway to Kempsey with a proposal for a pump track and trail head promoting and improving access to the wider trail network were unsuccessful. This was due to a reported crime that had previously occurred at a neighbouring property. Notably, the crime was not committed by mountain bikers. From experience at other locations, the presence of mountain biking is a highly effective deterrent to crime and is recognised as a means to

reduce crime. A mountain bike is silent and able to access difficult areas thus deterring those with ill intentions. Attitudes amongst participants (largely from “at-risk” populations) have been positive and no negative behaviour has been observed by program participants. However, in this example, insecurity was too great.

Tight controls are placed on **community facilities** inhibiting access. For example, distribution of keys for community buildings is limited for security reasons. The strategy of having a lockable trailer and the fact that the trails are on public land has somewhat circumvented this challenge.

Financial administration of DSRIC has been a challenge. Although with best intentions to maintain integrity, financial management by an appointed administrator has slowed processing of financial transactions. This is increasingly being addressed by use of technology, eg. electronic funds transfers, to process payments.

Climatic conditions have, at times, presented challenges. The region is climatically advantaged over other areas but still subject to warm and humid summers with extreme rainfall in short periods resulting in flood events. Co-delivery with canoeing/kayaking is envisaged as a program alternative.

Funding insecurity in Aboriginal programs undermines delivery. For example, verbal assurances in 2012 of funding via the Indigenous Employment Program for a Business Feasibility Study did not eventuate.

Risk aversion and risk management is a challenge. There is a reasonable, but sometimes overly-cautious, attitude to adventure activities. A well managed mountain biking program focussing on cross-country riding can be relatively safe. However, a poor understanding (often due to misconceptions of the sport) can lead to risk aversion. Use of images to convey that there are various forms of mountain biking and that extreme freestyle and downhill mountain biking are not compulsory inclusions in the program, let alone considered in it at all, is a good method to reassure concerns. Further, use of comprehensive activity-specific insurance provided by Mountain Biking Australia (MTBA) through affiliated club membership is recommended. Provision of qualified staff trained by the industry body, MTBA, have achieved greater acceptance.

Elite focus provides a barrier to Indigenous uptake. It is notable that there is an absence of submissions from Mountain Bike Australia or Cycling Australia to the Inquiry. Despite discussions and receiving in-principle support for the programs, there is a strong focus on elite achievement by these agencies. However, the wider benefits to Indigenous people of grassroots development will be higher than many other sports because of the additional social, transport and accessibility factors and this should be further considered in funding models.

8. Mentoring opportunities

Mountain biking provides unique and largely undeveloped mentoring opportunities for Indigenous communities.



Intergenerational interaction potential is high. Recent advances in mountain bike technology, eg. dual suspension, have allowed greater participation by adults into later years. Adults can participate longer in cycling sports due to lower joint impact compared to running and contact sports. The combination of excitement through taking obstacles at your chosen speed as well as cardio vascular and endurance outcomes make mountain biking attractive to youth and seniors.

The activity of mountain biking is not limited to just the sport. In addition to a welcoming elite sporting environment, mountain biking can be for nature education and appreciation – well suited to mentoring. Activities such as trail construction involve cooperative group work leading to improved land management skills and awareness. Associated activities including mechanics, artwork, marketing and promotions have opportunity for mentoring roles. There are roles for mentors with many skills (not just sporting skills) to be directly involved in mountain biking.

The social dynamics of mountain biking have advantages for mentoring. It is conducted in a pleasant environment with ample opportunity for either solitary or social riding. There are few distractions. For example, trail biking is comparatively noisy and full face helmets limit communication. While mountain biking, there are no shops to visit or other distractions so there is plenty of time for quality mentoring. Mountain biking requires co-operative behaviours, eg. the whole group must wait for the slowest and be supportive. Competitive endurance mountain-biking is generally undertaken in teams. Cycling is often described as “the new golf” for the social dynamics and benefits derived, eg. business networking.

Mountain biking is recognised as an activity for both men and women with opportunities for both gender-specific and non-gender-specific participation.

Mountain biking is affordable, sustainable, culturally acceptable and fun. Trail networks exist and are developing in close proximity to Indigenous population centres. The accessibility of mountain biking for Indigenous communities is high and the health and mentoring outcomes are many.



Abbreviations:

DSRIC – Dunghutti Sport and Recreation Indigenous Corporation

MTB – Mountain Bike

MTBA – Mountain Biking Australia

Appendix - Draft Discussion Paper:

Mountain biking and Indigenous Communities

Jai Cooper, May 2011

Background:

Mountain biking and Indigenous communities are a “natural fit”. The rise of the sport in past decades and specifically in recent years provides an opportunity for Indigenous people to benefit from the social, environmental and economic outcomes that can be derived from this fun activity.

This paper is to provide an initial background for discussion of development of the unique relationship between the mountain biking “scene” and Aboriginal communities on the Mid-North-Coast of NSW and beyond in coming years.

What is (and why) mountain biking?

Mechanically, mountain biking is a form of cycling on bikes built suitably robust to traverse difficult terrain both in the bush and the urban environment. Mountain biking differs from BMX cycling in that it uses geared bikes with wheels of 26 or 29 inch diameter. Mountain biking provides both an exciting and attractive means to participate in sport and recreation as well as a highly effective form of transport. Disciplines of mountain biking range from gentle use of wide low gradient trails to technically challenging steep grades and can engage a range of levels of stamina and skill from beginner to extreme.

Socially, mountain biking is the most attractive form of cycling accessible for families. Due to advances in suspension technology, mountain biking is accessible to a wide range of ages and physical ability including older participants. Mums and Dads can join with children in a shared experience where each individual has control over their own challenge. Mountain biking provides a combination of challenge by choice and development of endurance and stamina. As an off-road sport, mountain biking reduces the challenges of cycling amongst traffic. Mountain biking can effectively double as both recreation and transport. Groups of mountain bikers can traverse lengthy trails. Unlike motor vehicles used in natural areas (eg. four wheel drives or trail bikes) everyone mountain biking participates independently and actively and can communicate effectively.

Mountain biking can provide independence for people of low income. Bikes are personal transport that can be easily maintained with a selection of tools and knowledge. No licence is required to travel significant distances in reasonably short times. Acquiring a bike is low cost and ongoing costs are minimal.

Mountain biking can address social inequity. Currently, competitive, elite and advanced touring cycling has a relative under-representation of indigenous people despite the widespread use of bikes by local communities. Entry into the mountain biking scene can be realistically achieved without the necessity of elite level equipment.

Risky behaviours can be reduced through engagement in mountain biking. Road safety can be improved by participation in cycling. Use of mountain biking in particular as a means to target youth at risk prior to reaching eligible age for a driver's licence, can be an interventionist strategy to counter anti-social behaviours associated with motor vehicles. By cycling, the individual experiences excitement and adrenalin while developing an understanding of vulnerability. Cycling thus counters both the development of aggressive road behaviour and bullying behaviour in general while still providing excitement through managed risk.

Mountain biking provides an exciting alternative that allows challenge by choice according to the individual's requirements.

Environmentally, mountain biking engages principles of sustainable development. It addresses the combined challenges of physical health, climate change, peak oil and nature deficit disorder. Cycling is a low impact activity that provides excellent cardio-vascular exercise, is emissions free and does not need fossil fuels. Mountain biking is a nature-based sport that provides strong connections to the Australian bush. Mountain biking trail projects often include revegetation and natural area restoration works.

For the above reasons and more, mountain biking is ideally placed to support Indigenous communities to "Close the Gap".

Indigenous ventures in mountain biking are already developing.



Case Study: Mountain Bike Team Dunghutti- Kempsey



Dunghutti Sport and Recreation Indigenous Corporation provides sport and recreation services to the indigenous community of Kempsey and surrounds. DSRIC developed Mountain Bike Team Dunghutti in 2010 taking advantage of the development of a network of single trail in state forest adjacent to South Kempsey.

With the support of local mountain bikers, DSRIC utilised club bikes to engage local young indigenous men and women in the sport exploring trails locally and beyond. Access to a fleet of recycled bikes was gained via the Kempsey Men's Shed which were provided to West Kempsey school. A pilot program engaging mountain biking mentors in the school developed.

Current facebook membership(May 2011) of Mountain Bike Team Dunghutti is 378.

Coverage of the program featured on SBS LIVING BLACK in October 2010:

http://player.sbs.com.au/naca#/naca/living_black/Latest/playlist/Mountain-High/

Mountain Bike Team Dunghutti members are enrolled with Conservation Volunteers, a Registered Training Organisation, in the Conservation Volunteer Training Program including trail building and site restoration at the Port Macquarie Urban Mountain Bike Park. Team members have also assisted in event management for local club races at the venue.

Expressions of interest to expand the school mentoring program to South and East Kempsey schools have developed. DSRIC is expected to soon begin delivering in the Active After Schools program funded by Ausport.

Case study: Goolagharl Trail Network and Tathra Enduro – Bega Land Council



Tathra mountain bikers combined with Bega Land Council to build the 16km “Doolagharl” track. A grant from the Mumbulla Foundation helped employ Aboriginal workers to work alongside mountain bikers and earthmoving contractors to build the trail. Entry fees from the Tathra Enduro race went towards purchasing solar panels for the Bega Land Council offices.

Fairfax Media (SMH, Melbourne Age) featured the trails in the Travel Section:

<http://www.smh.com.au/travel/activity/active/high-in-the-saddle-20110511-1eib8.html>

Information on the Tathra Enduro can be found at South East MTB Co:

<http://www.mountainbiking.com.au/>

Video of the trails being ridden can be seen at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMviaVxzLGU>

Case Study: Jukurrpa Bikes Dot Painted Tours – Alice Springs



Jukurrpa Bikes offers year round mountain bike tours of Alice Springs and surrounds. Riding on bikes painted in traditional Aboriginal artwork, participants experience cultural sites, language and history.

More info at Jungala: <http://www.jungala.com.au/>

Potential specifically for the Mid North Coast of NSW:

Four themes: Land, People, Sharing, Achievement

Land - Trail construction and site restoration

Components:

- Trail design to sustainable principles
- Land manager liaison
- Construction
- Revegetation and regeneration
- Training and employment
- Advocacy and empowerment

Stakeholders:

- International Mountain Biking Association;
- Aboriginal Land Councils;
- Local mountain bike clubs;
- Land managers – Councils, National Parks Services, State Forest, Private
- Agencies, eg. State and Federal Environment Departments, DEEWR, Catchment Management Authorities
- Providers – Commercial contractors, Registered Training Organisations

Discussion:

The Mid North Coast of NSW is blessed with combined factors suitable for mountain biking including: year round mild climate, tall shaded forests, suitable topography and an absence of large predators.

Aboriginal population centres of the Mid North Coast often adjoin suitable mountain biking locations. For example, Burnt Bridge (South Kempsey) and Purfleet (Taree) are adjacent to areas of State Forest estate with existing and developing trail networks.

A range of mountain biking disciplines can be accommodated in the local setting including: cross-country loops, long distance forest roads, short course pump tracks and downhill technical trails.



Regeneration and revegetation of degraded lands can accompany mountain biking locations. For example, rehabilitation of quarry sites or other similar settings can be combined with situating of trail networks. The local climate promotes high growth rates. Natural resource specific funding, eg. Caring for our Country, can be sought for projects enhancing native vegetation.

Training can be delivered to establish Aboriginal people as managers of best practice in sustainable trail design, cultural awareness and natural area restoration. Skills developed have multiple vocational paths in areas such as road construction, natural resource management, horticulture, etc. and can be extended by further training and employment in this and other industries.

People - Development of juniors, families, men and women

Components:

- Independence – independent transport, bike maintenance
- Cooperation and team building – group riding, intergenerational interaction
- Health – cardio-vascular, muscular, endurance, all ages
- Active After Schools Communities program

Stakeholders:

- Community groups – schools, youth groups, women’s groups, disabled groups, Men’s Sheds
- Agencies - Dept of Health and Aging, Minister for Social Inclusion

Discussion:

Mountain biking provides opportunities to “Close the Gap” and does so by combining physical activity in a social setting suitable for indigenous communities.

Participating in the sport, supporting others, maintaining equipment, building trails or any activity associated with mountain biking is highly conducive to intergenerational interaction. Skills learned as youngsters can be revisited and shared by adults as they impart the fundamental skills of pumping up the tyres and riding a bike to younger generations. Youngsters attracted to the sport for excitement often lure their parents out of their car seats to engage in the sport and burn off calories. Skate parks and BMX bowls are often noted for high levels of litter and vandalism, by having adults riding with youth they can remind them of caring for their country, eg. by not littering.



Mountain biking promotes safety and social inclusion. Of developed nations, Australia has one of the lowest rates of female cycling. Mountain biking provides an opportunity for women to return to physical activity. The presence of mountain bikers in any local community enhances safety by

increasing the presence of people in parks and reserves. By providing an alternative to motor vehicle transport, mountain biking promotes empathy for the vulnerable and opportunities for men and women to contribute to the safety of their neighbourhoods.

Mountain biking promotes independence by facilitating low cost transport for those yet to obtain their motor vehicle licence. Mountain biking can provide an alternative transport for disqualified drivers. As a robust form of transport, a simple range of tools and skills are needed to maintain a mountain bike. Cycling provides a challenge and an opportunity for those hoping to develop independence from commercial fossil fuels for transport.

Sharing of skills can be facilitated through a number of means. For example, Men's Sheds are involved in recycling bicycles from waste and from police collections of stolen bikes and work with disabled groups to develop skills in maintenance. Another example is of vision impaired people provided with their first experience of the thrill of cycling by the use of tandem bikes controlled by a full vision cyclist mentor.

As a group activity, mountain biking in the bush requires recognition of team work to support slower riders. Team racing is common in mountain biking disciplines usually in relay format.



Sharing - Ecotourism and cultural tourism

Components:

- Mountain bike tour guiding
- Special events

Stakeholders:

- Local tourism boards
- Registered Training Organisations
- Tourism operators
- Events managers

Discussion:

Mountain biking provides opportunity for entry to the adventure tourism industry with relative minimal risks. In comparison to high ropes (abseiling, rock-climbing), whitewater kayaking, etc. mountain biking is lower risk, basic skills can be acquired faster and in the event of a business downturn, the equipment remains as an asset for transport.

On the Mid North Coast, as the Pacific Highway bypasses centres such as Taree, Kempsey, and Coffs Harbour, methods to lure tourists from the highway will need to be sought to ensure the viability of the towns. The network of trails in Kempsey is located between the Burnt Bridge mission, the new Slim Dusty Centre and South Kempsey. As an example, the potential to extend the stay of visitors to Kempsey will be enhanced by promoting a trail head at the motorway services associated with the Slim Dusty Centre.

South East Mountain Bike Company has utilised the Tathra Doolagharl trails for race events attracting riders from statewide and beyond to compete. Other communities will be able to capitalise on the lucrative cyclist market by providing attractive events for visitors.

Novel events could be developed, eg. a “Reconciliation Race” could be a promotional event suited to a community such as Kempsey or Taree combining local Aboriginal riders with visiting elite riders in teams.

Electronic and printed trail guides, use of GIS/GPS.

On line merchandising of Aboriginal apparel and accessories lines – enhancing local manufacturing.

Achievement – nutrition, competition, elite performance, role modelling, coaching

Components:

- Apparel, merchandising
- Event management
- Representative squad trips to away events
- Writing for magazines
- Links to Ironman
- Travelling skills team, eg. Adiridas, Red Bull, etc.

Stakeholders:

- Mountain Biking Australian
- Dunghutti Sport and Recreation
- Commercial sponsors

Discussion:

Mountain biking provides a culturally acceptable level of entry into elite sport. The acceptability of baggy shorts and the range of disciplines of the sport allow for entry points that would increase exposure to sports where lycra and high performance is common but is otherwise seen as culturally removed for Indigenous people. Port Macquarie’s hosting of Ironman Australia provides an opportunity for volunteering and exposure to the extreme of endurance sports.

Addictive behaviours can be redirected by mountain biking. Mountain biking is effectively free of alcohol or tobacco influences or the alternative extreme of performance enhancing drugs. The regular stimulant present in mountain biking is adrenalin – highly addictive and with positive health effects. Taken regularly, adrenalin provides effective resistance to attraction to other substances.

Role modelling can be developed across communities. Mountain biking provides an opportunity for riders to visit other communities. For example, Bega now has an attractive destination for Mountain Bike Team Dunghutti. Athlete performance is enhanced by visitation by outsiders. Goals, eg. training to reach a level suitable to complete a major stage race, can be set to provide incentives.

Specific skills programs and mentoring can be developed. For example, sponsored teams of downhill or trials riders visit remote communities. Journalistic skills can be enhanced through the promotion of activities by electronic, eg. blogs, websites, and by written media, eg. mountain biking magazines. This further enhances tourism development.

Mountain biking provides an opportunity to extend The Learn Earn Legend program beyond mainstream sports. Other cross promotions, eg. Road Safety with the RTA's Bring the Mob Home Safely program, could be developed.

Potential interest from commercial sponsors could be developed.

A suite of indigenous mountain biking paraphernalia can be developed. For example, Jungala's dot painted bikes. Other possibilities include apparel, product endorsements, stickers and merchandise.

Event management skills can be developed, eg. through the marshalling of races, trip planning and navigation, support crews, nutrition planning, etc.

