CYCLO-CROSS ORGANISER'S WORKBOOK

I N D E X

I. INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS CYCLO-CROSS?

At one time, this was a fairly simple question to answer: cyclo-cross was off-road cycle racing, usually over a circuit 2 to 3 miles in length, where competitors covered a variety of terrain, including natural and man-made obstacles where they would be obliged to dismount and carry their bikes.

However the nature of cyclo-cross has changed in many ways since the end of the 1980s. At the highest level, on the international stage, the sport has reinvented itself to carve out an identity which is distinctive from the new rival discipline of cross country mountain biking. Regulations have been introduced to make courses faster, wider and more raceable, with the severity of obstacles and the need to dismount much reduced. The phrase “the formula one of cycle sport” was coined, and a World Cup series and World Ranking system introduced. Coupled with the move from separate professional and amateur codes to fully open racing, the sport has developed greatly at world level, setting new standards and dominated by a small core of cyclo-cross specialists.

At the same time many local events, and not only in Britain, have continued to be staged year after year virtually without change, sticking to a formula where the challenge of the terrain is equal to, or supersedes, the race between competitors. At one time, the term “mud-plugging” was used as a pejorative term by cyclo-cross’s detractors, but it is a format which still has many adherents. In Britain in recent years there has been much debate over the relative merits of old versus new, technical versus non-technical courses, mud plugging v criterium-like circuits etc. Much of this debate has missed the point. The real issue is how to make events more raceable, more attractive to both potential competitors and spectators, and ultimately more self-sustaining, whatever the style of circuit.

II. FINDING A VENUE

The first aim of an organiser is to find a venue with terrain which offers an appropriate challenge to competitors, and, where appropriate, an interesting spectacle for spectators. In reality, the choice of venue is usually decided by a combination of three criteria: cost, suitability of terrain and access to supporting facilities.

Cost: The overriding factor in staging an event is undoubtedly cost. There may be charges for land use, either in the form of a flat fee or a per rider levy. There may also be charges for the use of supporting facilities, such as changing rooms and showers. Often, even if a venue is provided "free of charge", the landowner may have to meet the costs of a building caretaker or park ranger, and may naturally wish to pass these costs on to the race organiser. Most local events operate on an entry-on-the-line system, so an organiser needs to set his race budget with the number of likely entrants in mind. It is a useful idea to set two or three alternative budgets, according to different levels of participation. Budgets are discussed in more detail in section iv.

Suitability of terrain: A cyclo-cross course can be devised on a wide variety of terrain. Venues have included public parks, disused quarries, the peripheries of sports centres, farms, grassland and school grounds. It is not necessary to have severe inclines, nor to employ every available climb and descent where the terrain is more severe - a successful cyclo-cross course can be devised on even the flattest terrain with a little ingenuity. Nor is a vast area of land required. By employing loops and double-backs, a course can be laid out on a relatively compact area of land, with the added advantage that spectators can view the racing a number of times each lap. Good drainage, for at least a good proportion of the proposed course, is an important factor. A venue which seems ideal at a summer inspection can be very different and perhaps even unrideable at a wet winter race meeting. Avoid clay soil and potentially boggy landscapes which may become quickly saturated. The possibility of incorporating a section of tarmac road or other hard surface should also be considered: this is a particularly important factor in top level events.

Access to supporting facilities: Many organisers regard the provision of toilets, changing accommodation and, where possible, showers as an essential part of the race organisation package, and they are certainly welcomed by competitors, especially after a cold and muddy event.

Multiple-use facilities: The use of facilities which cater for a number of sports can often be ideal for the needs of cyclo-cross, combining adjacent changing accommodation with a variety of terrain on the surrounding land. Multi-use cycling facilities are particularly appropriate, and British Cycling's Facilities Strategy encourages the use and development of such facilities. Cyclo-cross events have been successfully staged on and around closed road circuits (e.g. Lee Valley, Hillingdon, Hetton) and outdoor tracks (Kirkby, Scunthorpe, Herne Hill, Halesowen).

III. DEVISING A COURSE

A course should ideally comprise a circuit of 2,500 to 3,500 metres in length, which depending upon the nature of the terrain, the climatic conditions and the standard of the participants should produce a lap time for senior riders of around 6 to 8 minutes. For youth competitors a shorter circuit should be employed, usually by excluding a section or sections of the full course. A separate, simplified course should be devised for under 12s.

Cyclo-cross courses can be planned in the most unlikely places by using imagination, initiative, improvisation and a few stakes and tape. Some may have limitations, but may be better than no course at all. At many venues, organisers face restrictions on the land they can utilise when building a course. They may be prohibited from crossing sports pitches or be confined to the perimeters of facilities. Sometimes features which the organiser wishes to incorporate may be some way apart, necessitating a long transfer from one section to another and thus extending the lap length. Using such features may also involve difficult or restricted access points where the course becomes unsatisfactorily narrow.

The guidelines below aim to outline best practice when devising a course. Not every element may be feasible at every venue, nor will every element be necessary, especially at small local events. It is a good idea to devise the course with the help of an experienced cyclo-cross competitor. Many potential new organisers may be more familiar with cross-country mountain biking than cyclo-cross and may attempt to use this background accordingly. Cyclo-cross is not the same as mountain biking, and requires different skills. Mountain bikes are welcome at the majority of domestic events but a primary objective must be to construct a cyclo-cross course not a mountain bike trail. A good rule of thumb is to examine a proposed section of course and ask the question: "Would it be an advantage to use a mountain bike here?" If the answer is "yes", try to look for an alternative. *See also:* **RISK ASSESSMENT**

Course Formation
A clover-leaf or similar pattern will give a reasonably sized course within a comparatively small area. It will also enable race officials to monitor the race more effectively and allow commentators and spectators to see more of the race and to keep in touch with race leaders. This formation does have its drawbacks, however: it requires more and better course marking and more race marshals to secure and define the course.

Course Width
Cyclo-cross is a racing discipline, and courses should be sufficiently wide to allow overtaking at all points. The international regulations stipulate a minimum width of 3 metres, and this should be the goal for as much of the course as possible, including technical sections. "Single Track" should be avoided: it is not a feature of modern cyclo-cross, although it is still found on many courses. Woodland single tracks, with "rough-stuff" features such as exposed roots and excessively bumpy terrain are still popular with many competitors, but they are not conducive to fast racing. This is another feature where mountain bikes have an advantage, and is more appropriate in cross country mountain bike courses. Also to be avoided are sections which, while nominally meeting the minimum width requirements, contain only a narrow racing line with unrideable sections to right and/or left. There will inevitably be a "best line" within the width of the course, but it should not be the "only line".

Course Marking
There are two reasons for marking out a course: firstly to unambiguously define the route for the competitors, and secondly to separate the competitors from officials and spectators for safety purposes. Plastic tape attached to wooden or plastic stakes is the norm for course marking (metal stakes should be avoided), but more robust fencing or crowd control barriers may be needed for key areas in bigger events. In small local races, obvious straightforward sections, which connect one technical feature to another, are often unmarked, with course marking restricted to indicating changes of direction. In many cases this is sufficient, but organisers should be wary of the occasional unscrupulous competitor who may use the excuse of an ambiguously marked course to cut corners. This creates problems for the race judges, but such instances are rare at local events. At major races it is important to fully mark the course to prevent such occurrences.

However the most important role of course marking is to indicate to non-competitors that a cyclo-cross race is taking place. The extent and standard of such marking will depend upon the size of the event and the extent to which the venue is open to the wider public. If it is a small event at a private venue and is restricted to competitors, their helpers and officials then minimal course marking may be adequate. Otherwise the following measures should be considered:

- Taping-off the course.
- Barriers or more secure fencing at points where crowds may congregate, e.g. start and finish, obstacles.

- Marshals at points where public paths or regularly used routes cross the course.
- Marshals at public access points to the course area.

If a course is being planned in a public park or over common land where there are regularly used paths, it is best minimise the number of crossings and to sensitively marshal those crossings which are used. People who go for daily walks or runs may easily become incensed if they find their usual route is affected by a cyclo-cross, even though permission has been granted.

Ascents, Descents and Adverse Cambers.

The distribution of ascents and descents around a course can be the key to staging a good event. Try to intersperse these, along with other technical sections, with less demanding parts of the circuit that can be used as recuperative features. Cyclo-cross courses do not require a huge variation in elevation. Generally, uphill sections should be short but challenging: try to avoid long slow drags, which nowadays are more the province of cross-country mountain biking. If there is no alternative but to include a significant climb, it is better to break it up into sections if possible – don't look at a hill and think you must go straight up! Try to gain the height in stages interspersed with flat or even slightly downhill stretches.

Some ascents are designed to be sufficiently severe to enforce a dismount and create a "run-up", although don't be surprised if the better riders can still reach the top without doing so. A well-designed "run-up" should allow either option, and the good technician can often dismount, run and remount faster than the competitor who opts to ride. Again such sections should be short and sharp.

Care should be taken when devising descents to ensure that they are not excessively dangerous. "Extreme" features such as drop-offs to the side or "bomb-holes" should be avoided. Consideration must be given to providing safe "run-outs" at the immediate foot of steep descents, without sharp bends or potential hazards such as buildings or trees.

Where the landscape is less severe but still undulating, technical sections can still be created by marking the course so that the circuit follows an adverse camber along the side of an incline. This may not look as spectacular as a steep descent, but is nevertheless a good test of a rider's skills. The course marking at the lower side of the adverse camber should be sufficiently robust to protect both rider and spectator.

Artificial Obstacles

Artificial obstacles are generally used either to break up particularly flat courses or sections, or to force riders to dismount before an ascent and thus make them run rather than ride up the climb. In the past "natural" obstacles, such as fallen tree trunks, were utilised, but under current regulations obstacles are standardised, and should be in the form of planks across the course. The more technically proficient competitors are able to "bunny-hop" these obstacles without dismounting, and to discourage this the height of obstacles at international level has been set at 40 cm. For domestic races this should be regarded as a maximum height. The following provisions should also apply to all obstacles:

- They should cover the full width of the course.
- They should be solid over their full height (i.e. no gap between the ground and the bottom of the obstacle).
- They should not be made of metal.

International regulations allow only one set of planks per circuit, comprising two planks set 4 metres apart.

Road/Tarmac Sections

Efforts should be made to include some road or tarmac sections on the circuit, both as a recuperative feature and to encourage more open and faster racing. At international level such sections are obligatory and are utilised for the start and finish zones.

Unusual Features

The provisions outlined above should be sufficient to provide a varied and challenging course, however other features also occur, either naturally due to the nature of the terrain, or artificially to create more interest on an otherwise bland course. The examples below are not exhaustive and should be considered only with caution:

Steps. The ascent of steps is one way to ensure that even the strongest and most technically proficient rider must dismount and carry the bike. Wide, rustic style steps have been an exciting feature of some major events but have usually been specially constructed. The temptation to utilise existing steps as a course feature should be examined carefully before proceeding. Concrete steps, and the descent of steps of any kind are forbidden.

Sand. Uncommon in Britain, but a regular feature in races in Belgium and Holland, where circuits are often devised on coastal dune sites. A useful addition if available, to give competitors a taste of the continental scene.

Water/stream crossings. Water crossings of any kind should be avoided. If it is impossible to transit from one section of the course to another without crossing water then efforts should be made either to construct a bridge (of sufficient width) or, where the crossing is narrow, oblige riders to dismount. Bear in mind that a negligible trickle at a summer inspection could become a raging torrent at a winter race.
Ditches. Ditches are acceptable where the depression is shallow and it is possible to ride in and out (and taking into account the provisions for water crossings if water is present). For narrower ditches, if unavoidable, competitors should be obliged to dismount.
Indoor sections. Major events in Belgium and Switzerland have sometimes taken the course through the beer tent! Great for atmosphere at big events but hardly practical for local promotions.

The Starting Zone
The organisation of the starting zone probably causes more problems than any other single feature, especially where there is a large entry. The domestic cyclo-cross regulations specify that: *"The starting section shall be devised so that riders may safely progress onto the main circuit. The first narrowing or obstacle after the starting section may not be abrupt but shall allow the riders to pass easily. The first bend shall be less than a right angle turn."*

As the regulation suggests, it is common for the starting leg of a cyclo-cross race to be outside the course proper. The traditional thinking in Britain has been that all riders line up in an arc of one or two rows and the field is sufficiently dispersed by the time it funnels into the main course. With a small number of riders this is feasible, but as the numbers increase problems arise. A venue may not provide sufficient space to allow this, it may be difficult to ensure that the terrain to be crossed is approximately the same for all, and there may not be sufficient lead in to the main course.

The solution to this is to employ a narrower starting zone, still on a leg outside the main course, but with the riders lined up in a number of shorter rows. It is advantageous for this line-up to be organised, either by random draw or more commonly in accordance with a ranking based upon previous performances, with the better riders claiming the front rows. This addresses the problem whereby slower riders inhibit the faster starters at the beginning of the race, something which can lead to accidents. At major and international events the starting zone is invariably on the road, with riders gridded according to performance.

The additional provisions for international races are also useful as guidelines for all events. The starting leg should have a minimum width of 6 metres and a length of 200 metres on firm ground before reaching the first off-road section. This should be sufficient to allow the field to spread out and prevent bottlenecks when the main course is reached. By the same token, the starting leg should be flat or uphill: a downhill start can bring the field too quickly to the first technical sections.

The Finishing Zone
Judges and recorders will appreciate a fairly open finish area, so that riders can be seen approaching from some 150 – 200 metres and do not disappear around a bend immediately after crossing the finish line. There should in any case be sufficient braking space after the finish line to allow for a sprint finish. A downhill finish should be avoided. As spectators and photographers tend to cluster around the finish area, special consideration should be given to the course marking and fencing in this zone. An area for the judging team and other officials should be kept clear of spectators. As with starting zones, finishing straights in international races are invariably on the road.

Equipment Pits
In cyclo-cross, competitors have the opportunity to change onto a fresh bike if they have mechanical difficulty, or if their original bike is simply clogged with mud. The zones where bikes can be changed are called equipment pits, and where they are employed bike changes can only be made in these pits. In local events, where traditionally few competitors have a second bike, there is no obligation under the domestic regulations to have equipment pits, but they are obligatory in more important races (designated as category B or higher).

There should be a maximum of two equipment pits on the circuit, judiciously placed so that they are evenly spaced. Where the formation of the course allows, one double pit can be installed which allows a rider to change bikes at the same pit from different parts of the course. The majority of riders dismount and mount to the left of their cycles, so pits should be placed on the right hand side of the course.

The equipment pit is normally an open area at the side of the course. However in national and international events a separate pit lane is obligatory, and only riders who require an equipment change can enter the pit lane.

IV. RISK ASSESSMENT

It is increasingly common for the landowner of a proposed cyclo-cross venue to request that a risk assessment be carried out, either as a final requirement before the date of the event, or even before formal permission for use of the venue is granted. Some organisers are intimidated by the term “risk assessment”, but all events have been subject to an informal risk assessment even if the organiser doesn’t realise it. To take a ludicrous example, no cyclo-cross course is directed over a 100 metre cliff or across six lanes of a motorway because this would obviously be perceived as an unacceptably high risk. A formal risk assessment procedure allows an organiser to better evaluate the course and venue in relation to the requirements of the regulations and the potential risks to competitors, officials, spectators and the general public.

Risk assessment was first developed in cycling in anticipation of legislation which will make this process compulsory for events on the public highway. However it has now become a regular requirement for all kinds of public or recreational events and the practice has been extended to all cycling disciplines. Under the proposed legislation, the evaluation of risk assessments for events on public land would be the responsibility of Regional Safety Advisory Groups, however the principle has become widely established, and assessments may be demanded by a variety of agencies.

The overriding aim of a risk assessment is to ensure that an event is run in as safe an environment as possible, both for competitors and non-competitors alike. Care must be taken to ensure that the course is not hazardous to the riders but at the same time is designed and marked out in such a way as not to present a hazard to spectators and other users of the venue.

In the event of an accident, the injured party may seek to hold responsible the organiser, his marshals or the commissaire for failing to anticipate that such injury could arise as a result of the race. It is essential therefore that all possible steps are taken to reduce this risk. We all enjoy the benefits of event insurance but the inconvenience and trauma associated with a court case are something to be avoided. Risk assessment is therefore not something to be taken lightly, nor is it something to be feared. It should combine common sense with practical solutions.

There are two steps to risk assessment. The first takes place well in advance of the event as soon as the venue is agreed and a course route is envisaged. The Organiser is often too close to the event to see the hazards and it is recommended that a Safety Officer should be appointed at this stage. The Safety Officer should walk the course with the Organiser and look closely and independently at any hazards presented by the course. The time and day should as near as possible be the same as the race day but it must be borne in mind that trees and other hazards may change with the season.

The risk assessment document should not only cover the specific hazards of the course as far as the riders are concerned, such as tree roots and projecting branches, but also conflict points with other venue users such as footpath crossings and access points to the venue. The report should also cover the more general areas such as first aid provision and car parking arrangements. Each hazard should be analysed and measures listed to deal with them and to reduce the hazard if possible.

This risk assessment should be available to the commissaire in advance of the event so that he can ensure that the general provisions are in place. The commissaire should then give sufficient time on the day to cover the course and to ensure that the identified hazards have been dealt with but also to identify any changes which may have taken place to change the original situation. At this stage both the organiser and the commissaire should be adaptable enough to make changes to reflect the new situation and even to make changes during the race if circumstances so dictate.

The risk assessment documentation is included in Appendix 3

V. ORGANISING AN EVENT

This section deals with all those organisational requirements other than the devising of the course itself.

Pre-Event Planning and Budgets

The cost of staging an event is a factor that will underpin the decisions of an organiser at every stage of the planning process. If a "self-funded" event, with little or no sponsorship, is planned, then the organiser is heavily reliant upon support from his club plus income from entry fees to cover costs, and therefore needs to have a reasonable idea of the number of riders the event is likely to attract even before the venue is confirmed. In practice, most events in Britain are organised as part of a local league, and the organiser's first port of call should therefore be the secretary of the league, or of the cyclo-cross area or BC Division which runs it. They will be able to advise on the level of expected participation in the area, suggest possible venues and perhaps help with provision of equipment and publicity.

Many organisers devise two or three different budgets, depending on different levels of participation, which can be constantly revised according to changes in expected costs and income. The three examples below make no claims to be accurate or exhaustive, but are included to present some of the financial issues that must be considered.

Example 1: Small entry, free venue, first aid supplied by voluntary first-aider, equipment from stock.

Expenditure		*Income*	
Venue Hire	£0.00		
First Aid Cover	£0.00		
Course Marking	£0.00		
Event Insurance Fee	£12.00		
League Registration	£10.00		
Under 12s Prizes (in kind)	£5.00		
Levies - 20 S/J/V/W + 5 Youth	£77.50	Entry Fees @ £8/£4.00	£180.00
S/J/V/W Prizes	£60.00		
Youth prizes	£10.00		
TOTAL	£174.50	TOTAL	£180.00

Example 2: medium entry, free venue, donation to first aid organisation and venue caretaker, some replenishment of course marking equipment.

Expenditure		*Income*	
Venue Hire	£40.00		
First Aid Cover	£50.00		
Course Marking	£30.00		
Event Insurance Fee	£12.00		
League Registration	£10.00		
Under 12s Prizes (in kind)	£20.00	Sponsored U12 prizes	£20.00
Marshal's snacks	£20.00	Catering franchise	£30.00
Levies - 50 S/J/V/W + 15 Youth	£197.50	Entry Fees @ £9/£4.50	£517.50
S/J/V/W Prizes	£150.00		
Youth prizes	£35.00		
TOTAL	£564.50	TOTAL	£567.50

Example 1: Larger entry, some costs defrayed by local authority support.

Expenditure		*Income*	
Venue Hire	£90.00	Local Authority spons	£240.00
First Aid Cover	£75.00		
Course Marking	£150.00		
Event Insurance Fee	£12.00		
League Registration	£10.00		
Under 12s Prizes (in kind)	£20.00	Sponsored U12 prizes	£20.00
Marshal's & officials' snacks	£50.00	Catering franchise	£50.00
Levies - 80 S/J/V/W + 20 Youth	£310.00	Entry Fees @ £9/£4.50	£810.00
S/J/V/W Prizes	£350.00		
Youth prizes	£45.00		
TOTAL	£1,112.00	TOTAL	£1,120.00

Event Registration
If an event is to be part of a local or national league or series, then it is vital that the event is registered and a date agreed at the time that the season calendar is being put together. Most leagues hold a date fixing meeting between February and April, and is important that organisers try to attend this meeting, or failing that, submit their event registration form to the league secretary in advance, listing alternative dates if possible. Secretaries must submit all events to British Cycling by the middle of May for inclusion in the annual handbook and event calendar magazine, an important source of publicity. Events can be registered at any time of year, but it is up to the local league as to whether an event which is submitted at a later date can be fitted into the league structure.

Publicity
There are three types of publicity: the first designed to attract participants, the second to encourage spectators, and the third to acknowledge the support of sponsors. Whatever the level of event, publicity shouldn't be ignored: don't just put the event on and expect the riders to turn up. A modern cyclo-cross, particularly in an urban location, has the potential to draw spectators from the cycling world and the wider public if the event is properly advertised. This increases the potential for generating income from refreshment sales, raffles etc and has a major bearing on sponsorship potential. A few simple suggestions:

- Handbook advert - catches the eye of committed cyclo-cross riders
- Cycling Magazines
- Local Press - Essential contact with sports editor and possible sponsorship help
- Posters - Clubrooms, bike shops etc, other locations with permission
- Handbills - Event details for riders, map and directions etc to make it easy to find a new event.
- Websites - Area association and various cyclo-cross specific – don't forget the BC website and e-mail news service for updates and reminders.

Event Officials
Once the event is confirmed, it's time to start assembling a team of officials – it's never too early to do this. The main race official, the chief commissaire, should be appointed by the regional committee, or by British Cycling for major events. The other important race official, the chief judge, may be the organiser's responsibility to appoint, or may be appointed by the local league, however the organiser will need to ensure that the chief judge has an adequate support team. See *Event Control* below. The other key positions are:

Course Director: responsible for all matters relating to the setting up of the course. It is likely that that this role may be undertaken by the organiser and coupled with the role of Event Safety Officer.

Chief Marshal: A crucial post, needed to co-ordinate the volunteer force in line with the risk assessment for the event.

Signing-On Stewards: To take entry fees, issue numbers, inspect and retain licences.

First Aid Cover: May be either a qualified first-aider or St. John's Ambulance/Paramedic cover depending upon the needs of the event.

Assistant Commissaires: May be required by the region, league, or chief commissaire for bigger events, particularly to monitor the correct use of the pit areas.

Announcer/Commentator: Important if the event is aimed at spectators.

Equipment Checklist

- Plastic or wooden stakes for course marking.
- Course marking tape.
- Safety barriers or mesh fencing as required.
- Signage for crossing points and key locations.
- Paint/chalk for finish line/start grid.
- Start equipment (whistle/klaxon/gun – may be supplied by commissaire)
- Chequered flag.
- Lapboard.
- Bell for last lap.
- Marshals' tabards/whistles.
- CB/FM radios for key officials.
- Cash float for signing-on/catering/prize envelopes.
- Race numbers
- Safety pins.
- PA system if commentator used.

Event Control

The overall control of the race on the day rests with the chief commissaire and the chief judge and it is therefore important to establish a good rapport with both, preferably before race day itself to ensure the smooth running of the event. Courses for both commissaires and judges are regularly made available.

Chief commissaire – the main official of the race and usually appointed by the area committee, or the cyclo-cross commission for major events. The chief commissaire is responsible for the overall control of the event on the day and rules upon breaches of rules and ensuring that the race is run safely and fairly. He generally controls the method of starting the race. He is also responsible for taking any disciplinary action, after discussion with any assistant commissaries and the chief judge. For a more major race, or where it is felt desirable, more than one commissaire can be appointed, particularly where pits are provided, but the extra commissaires remain under the direction of the chief commissaire.

The risk assessment document should be made available to the chief commissaire, preferably ahead of the race. The chief commissaire should inspect the course before racing and may make suggestions on any ambiguity of course marking as well as any deviations from the risk assessment. A good rapport will ensure that these discussions are carried out amicably and constructively.

Chief judge – The chief judge is responsible for the placing of the riders at the finish. The chief judge may report any infringements that he observes in the finish area but the disciplinary decision remains with the chief commissaire.

It is necessary to have more than one judge at the finish, and a judge should not double up as a commissaire as the latter may need to be called away to deal with a situation during the race. It is recommended that a minimum of three judges be used for any field of more than 40 riders and preferably at all times. One judge will call the race numbers and a second record these as a permanent record. The third then transfers these numbers on to a chart which confirms how many laps each rider has covered. A fourth official may be used as a timekeeper . Whilst times do not need to be as accurate as in other branches of the sport, it is essential that accurate lap times are recorded by one of the officials so that the number of laps to be covered can be calculated as early in the race as possible. The chief judge and chief commissaire should agree before the start who will determine the number of laps of the race.

Any disputes over placings (usually through disagreement on the number of laps recorded) should be treated seriously and the lap sheets carefully re-checked before declaring any changes.

Computer programmes are being developed to allow for the instant recording of riders and subsequent immediate transmission of the race result, but it is recommended that a back-up of manual judges should be maintained until these are fully proven.

APPENDIX 1: PLANNING CALENDAR

Up to twelve months before the event: If the venue has not been used before, check out the proposed area and course, preferable with an experienced person who might spot hazards and improvements over your original ideas. The involvement of a coach or experienced competitor at this stage would be an advantage. If the venue seems satisfactory, obtain outline permission to run an event from the landowners along with any restrictions on the dates, days or times when you could not use the venue. Check also the availability of changing rooms in the vicinity if there are none at the venue. Perform an initial risk assessment, and draft an outline race budget.

Prior to Area date-fixing meeting: Obtain an Event Registration Form from your Area Secretary and complete it with the details and proposed date of the event, keeping a reserve date in mind if possible. Submit this to the local Area in time for the date-fixing meeting, and attend this meeting if at all possible. Be prepared to give reasons for using your paticular date, particularly if the race is part of a festival etc.

Immediately after the date-fixing meeting: Confirm the date of the event with the landowners of the venue and ensure you receive confirmation of its use and ANY CHANGES TO BE MADE. Plan detailed course, using risk assessment procedures, and get a rider to try it out (with permission). Make any necessary amendments and, if required, confirm the route with the landowners.

Three months prior to the event: If the event is not sponsored, try and seek small prizes for the under 12s races from local shops and businesses. Any surplus can be used in other events.

Arrange first-aid provision with a first-aid organisation or a recognised first-aider(s). Check on the availability of tape and other marking-out material, pins etc. and arrange to buy or borrow an adequate amount to mark out an unambiguous course. Check also on start equipment (whistle, gun, klaxon), finish flag and lap bell. Draw up a list of marshals adequate and experienced enough to look after the safety of the course, including all points where the public would normally cross the route.

Obtain the services of an adequate number of competent judges to cover the races. Check on the appointment of the commissaire with the local Area Secretary. Arrange a public address system and a speaker, if required. Draw up a more detailed race budget allowing for the fixed charges such as venue hire, first-aid costs and officials' expenses, and variable ones such as race levies. Many organisers draw up alternative budgets depending on alternative numbers of starters.

One month prior to the event: Try some local publicity, both in the shops and local media, to try to attract the non-committed rider. Stress, if desired, the younger end of the racing.

Ensure you have, or can borrow, a sufficient amount of race numbers to cover the races. Appoint a Numbers Steward for the day.

Two weeks prior to the event: Ensure the course is still available and no unforeseen problems have occurred. Obtain any vehicle permits which may be required.

Ten days prior to the event: Send final press information to the local media. Check on the continued availability of all helpers.

On the day of the event: Arrive early with helpers and mark out the course. Position marshals. Set up signing-on control. You may consider a deposit on numbers if re-usable numbers are being used: the retention of membership cards/licences can also fulfil this function.

Ensure you have any donated prizes at the course. Arrange prize presentation as soon as possible after the race results are available unless you propose to hold an overall presentation at the end. Even then, earlier prizes can be awarded whilst awaiting the result of the last race.

Clear up the course after the racing.

After the event: Report any accidents to non-competitors, no matter how trivial, to BC HQ as soon as possible. Send results and report to the local press (and to the national cycling press if they haven't chased it), and to the cyclo-cross administrator at BC HQ.

Re-visit the course to see how racing has affected it. Not only will you then be able to answer any criticism but also you may get ideas for the future.

Pay the levies to your local Treasurer. A thank you to all helpers and landowners.

APPENDIX 2: ADMINISTRATION AND FEES

Insurance. There is no permit required to put on a cyclo-cross event, but a flat rate insurance fee of £10.00 per day is due when the event is registered. To register an event you need to complete an **Event Registration Form**, which should be returned well in advance together with the insurance fee. We need this to ensure that your event is logged on the system and is covered for public liability insurance purposes. The form also carries the details of race times and categories for the annual calendar listing, although events can be registered at any time. Event Registration forms can be obtained from the appropriate Area Secretary or from the cyclo-cross administrator at BC HQ.

Areas hold a date fixing meeting between February and April. Try and get to that meeting if you can, as this will determine the framework of local events for the following season. If you can't make the meeting, or you are arranging an event at another time of the year, contact the Area Secretary to agree a date and avoid any clashes.

Entry Fees and Race Levies. All entry fees must allow for an insurance levy of £1.50. An additional race levy of £1.50 also applies to all competitors above the youth age category (i.e. junior, senior & under 23, veterans, women). Areas or leagues may also include an additional levy, which is usually around 50p. There may also be an Area or league levy on youth entrants. It is national policy that under 12s races are free of charge to entrants, and therefore no levy applies.

Riders in the junior, senior & under 23, veterans and women's categories should be able to produce a valid BC membership card. Non-members, or those unable to produce a card, are still able to ride in the majority of events*, but are subject to an additional event surcharge fee of £3.00. £1.00 of this fee is retained by the promoting club, and the remaining £2.00 forwarded to the Area Treasurer together with the general levies.

*Regional Championships are restricted to BC members – there is no Event Surcharge facility available for these events. In addition, National Trophy and National Championships for Youth, Juniors, Under-23, Seniors and Women – require a full racing licence: membership only is insufficient.

There is no membership requirement for youth race entrants in other events, and Event Surcharges do not apply to youth riders.

A **Levy Return Form** is included with the organiser's pack, which should be completed and returned to the Area Treasurer within seven days of the event, together with a cheque to cover all national levies, area levies and the national portion of the Event Surcharges. Copies of signing-on sheets for all race categories should also be included.

APPENDIX 3: RISK ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

INTRODUCTION: RISK ASSESSMENT AND EVENT SAFETY

The following text was developed from work undertaken by Andy Relf of Trafeco and modified to cover cyclo-cross events by Gerald Blackmoor.

Risk Assessment – Hazard means the potential to cause harm. Risk means the degree of likelihood that a hazard will cause harm. Persons at risk - who may be affected by a risk i.e. a rider, spectator, marshal, official or member of the public. Risk Assessment is controlling the level of risk and is summarised as:

LOOK - EVALUATE - ACT – REVIEW

When an event is sanctioned, an organiser should obtain risk assessment documentation (from BC HQ, BC web site or regional secretary). If the course has been used before then the previous assessment should be on file, and should be checked for any changes or variations.

The Risk Assessment notification form - the front page is for event details – there are general code and specific code fields on page two, generic risk assessment on page three and specific risk assessment on page four.

Risk Assessment - How do we do it? Every feature must be considered. Risk Assessments should be made on what can be seen, and what cannot be seen but where circumstances may develop.

Risk Assessment - What are we looking for? Physical features such as natural hazards, drops and bomb holes. Hazards created by the position or movement of spectators etc. Hazards created by variations in course's surface, stones, tree roots, gullies, manholes covers, glass & metal objects.

Observation Links – The public / spectators crossing the course, the sighting of mobile canteen vans, mobile shops, other vending stores, trades vehicles and commercial property, public and competitor car parking.

Specific Risk Assessment would include "on the day" factors such as adverse weather conditions – ice, snow, Slippery roads, all reducing visibility by overhanging trees and bushes.

Course Management – Observe all public footpaths, bridal ways, local restrictions, - What do they mean? Why are they there? Who uses them? Local knowledge is important, but you must react to what is there, and not what you expect to be there.

Before the event the safety measures must be in place. The safety officer should assess the course against the generic risk assessment, and complete a specific risk assessment if there are any last minute hazards, communicate this to the chief commissaire.

A safety briefing should always take place. If the generic and specific measures are in place then the event should start, under the control of the chief commissaire.

RISK ASSESSMENT NOTIFICATION
CYCLO-CROSS EVENT

To:		/Safety Advisory Group
To:	Event Safety Officer	

Name of Event:				
Promoting Club:				
Local Authority				
Sponsor(s):				
Date of event:				
Time of start:		Est. time of finish:	.	
Organiser/Promoter:	Forename:		Surname:	
Address:				
Address:				
Address:				
Postcode:		E- mail:		
Telephone:	*Home:*		*Mobile:*	
Safety Officer:	Forename:		Surname:	
Address:				
Address:				
Address:				
Postcode:		E- mail:		
Telephone:	*Home:*		*Mobile:*	
☐ Circuit ☐ Venue ☐ Name:				
Estimated number of participants:				
Start Area location:				
Finish Area location:				
Chief Commissaire on the day:				
Person(s) conducting Risk Assessment:				
Date of Risk Assessment:		Date of review:		

First Aid / Paramedic will be trained to the required standard. All event marshals will be trained and briefed

Signature – Event Organiser/Promoter		Date:	

Notes for guidance for the completion of this Risk Assessment:

HAZARD means the potential to cause harm.
RISK means the degree of likelihood that a hazard will cause harm.
PERSONS AT RISK who may be affected by a risk, i.e. the number of people who might be exposed to the hazard

RISK therefore reflects both the likelihood that harm will occur and it's severity.
RISK ASSESSMENT is controlling the level of risk; it might be summarised as follows:

LOOK…EVALUATE…ACT…REVIEW

Generic Risk Assessment Codes			
COLUMN A	**COLUMN C**		
	Measures to reduce risk to low. Items 1-8 to be included in ALL events, and the whole course		
Hazard Risk rating level	**1**	**Code of Practice advanced signs on approach to course**	
H = HIGH	**2**	**Code of Practice safety signs**	
	3	**Safety briefing to all competitors**	
M = MEDIUM	**4**	**Safety briefing to all marshals**	
	5	**Compliance regulations by Competitors/Officials/Marshals**	
L = LOW	**6**	**All marshals to wear Hi-Vis clothing**	
	7	**Advanced liaison with interested parties**	
	8	**Adequate and clear course marking**	
COLUMN B	9	Course direction arrows	
PERSONS AT RISK	10	Additional approach signs	
	11	Tracks to be marshalled:	3 minimum Number of marshals
A. COMPETITORS	12	Pedestrian footways to be marshalled	
	13	Officials to be identifiable	
B. SPECTATORS	14	Establish time of other events and review	
	15	Protective barriers in front of spectators	
C. PUBLIC CROSSING FROM RIGHT	16	Physical protection (e.g. straw bales)	
	17	Signposts for competitors	
D. PUBLIC CROSSING FROM LEFT	18	Protect access/egress for emergency vehicles	
	19		
E. ORGANISERS/ MARSHALS	20		
F. OTHERS – SPECIFY			
	21	Specify:	
	22	Specify:	
	23	Specify:	

EXAMPLE

Whole event codes (1-7) 1,2,3,4,5,6				**A**	**B**	**C**
ID Numbers.	**Length of course**	**Detail of hazard direction**		**Risk rating level**	**Persons at risk from hazard**	**Additional measures to reduce risk to LOW**
1 to 8	**2kms**	↑↓	← ®	**L**	**A,C,D**	**9,10,11,12**

GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT

Due to the general public and sporting events in the same location, there is a possibility that accidents may occur due to a walker or participant error, and such incidents may result in serious personal injury.

Course identification:				A	B	C	D
Whole event codes (1-8):				H/M/L	A to F	9 to 23 (only)	Additional measures to reduce risk to LOW, with name of person or official function who will reduce the risk to low (if applic.)
ID NO	Mtrs/kms from start	Detail of hazard		Risk rating level H/M/L	Persons at risk from hazard		
		Symbol	Desc.				
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							
13							
14							
15							
16							
17							
18							
19							
20							
21							
22							
23							
24							

SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

To be used in case of any additional risk that is identified on day of event.

Route ☐ Circuit ☐ Venue ☐ :	
Date of event:	

NO.	Location	Detail of hazard	Persons at risk	Risk rating
New control measures to reduce the above risk to low:				

NO.	Location	Detail of hazard	Persons at risk	Risk rating
New control measures to reduce the above risk to low:				

NO.	Location	Detail of hazard	Persons at risk	Risk rating
New control measures to reduce the above risk to low:				

RISK ASSESSMENT/ PLAN OF ACTION

PAGE 1

DESCRIPTION; CYCLO-CROSS RACE **LOCATION;** **EVENT DATE;**

THOSE AT RISK; SPECTATORS & RIDERS **ASSESSMENT DATE;** **REVIEW DATE;**

ACTIVITY/EQUIPMENT/ MATERIALS/OFFICIALS	HAZARD	RISK	REASON	ACTION	INSTRUCTIONS
Check British Cycling Regulations and guidelines on event promotion & organisation of a cyclo-cross race.	Public, helpers, children & animals	Competitors	BC requirements.	BC Cyclo-Cross Handbook Rule 4 Event Promotion	Rules & Regulations must be strictly adhered to.
Race committee to assess what is required for course marking: ropes, posts, flags, tape, signs etc.	To identify hazards i.e. where course crosses paths & tracks.	Public crossing course; stray dogs.	To direct riders & protect the public; to advise public on race direction; for competitor information	To check sufficient equipment is available for course marking	Obtain spare marking tape & check sufficient direction signs.
Check commissaire appointment.			Race officials are appointed by Area/ Division or HQ as appropriate	Contact Area/Division secretary	Commissaire is in overall charge of the event
Appoint a chief marshal			Organise & co-ordinate course design	Organise and brief marshals.	Appoint adequate marshals
Appoint Safety Officer			Safety officer to check / advise.		On course design.
Appoint Chief judge.			To aid smooth running of event.		Assist Safety officer
First Aid			First Aid must be in attendance.	Confirm availability.	Check requirements
Event publicity	Unaware public.	Public wandering onto course	To inform local residents as to the nature & duration of event.	Press release; leaflets; event signage	Inform local residents
Generator & computer equipment.	Rain / Snow	Generator & cables	Safety in area of generator & cables essential	Provide weather proof cover	LCD & earth points to be checked
Organise lap recorders & equipment			For smooth running of event.	Check equipment.	Race numbers (3 sets). Lap bell & lap numbers

RISK ASSESSMENT/ PLAN OF ACTION

DESCRIPTION; CYCLO-CROSS RACE **LOCATION;** **EVENT DATE;**

THOSE AT RISK; SPECTATORS & RIDERS **ASSESSMENT DATE;** **REVIEW DATE;**

ACTIVITY/EQUIPMENT/ MATERIALS/OFFICIALS	HAZARD	RISK	REASON	ACTION	INSTRUCTIONS
One week before Event					
Chief Marshal, Course Director & Safety Officer	Check for broken glass, metal etc.	Injury to riders	Safety of competitors & riders.	Walk course & identify all hazards to riders.	Removal of hazards if possible (dispose safely)
Chief Marshal			Check availability of marshals	Instruct Marshals on their duties.	Ensure sufficient marshals are available
Day before Event					
Course Director & Safety Officer		Reassess all risks	To prevent injury to competitors.	Cut back long grass & nettles on rough parts	Dispose of hazardous materials safely.
Course Director				Confirm helpers will be on site for course marking.	Course to be completed 1 hr before 1st event
On Day of Event					
Chief Marshal and Course Director			To identify & mark all Hazards	To instruct on course marking	
Commissaire & Safety Officer			Limit risks to riders & public.	Check course	
Chief Marshal			To check with Safety Officer as to the location of race marshals	Remind marshals of their duties & ensure they are in their correct place at all times.	
Commissaire to check	• That his instructions are carried out correctly & First Aid / Marshals are in place throughout the event. • That all Risks & Hazards are correctly identified marked & marshalled at all times. • All incidents, accidents & complaints from the public, spectators & riders are recorded & copies of the report are sent to Division, Area and/or HQ as appropriate • To submit a written Commissaires report to Division or HQ as appropriate with copies to event organiser after the event.				
Course Director				Remove all course marking & signs after completion of racing. Remove any rubbish left by spectators/ competitors.	

CYCLO-CROSS EVENT SAFETY CHECKLIST

Pre-event	
Day of event	

	Yes	No	N/A	Actions
Event notification				
Permission granted for use of land				
Police notice granted for use of highway				
Venue				
Car Parking adequate to not obstruct the public highway				
Access for emergency vehicles suitable and capable of being kept clear				
Noise (e.g. from PA system) be kept to a reasonable level				
Litter clean up programme				
Adequate precautions adopted for environmentally sensitive venue				
All temporary structures (e.g tents) secure				
Food provision and licence addressed				
Adequate precautions for dog, owner and competitor safety				
Other sporting facilities used adjacent (e.g football, hockey etc.) been prevented from causing additional hazard				
Access and egress for other facilities sufficient				
Directions to venue clear and sufficient				
Facilities (inc. changing and toilets) adequately signed				
Venue suitable for expected/actual number of spectators				
OTHER:				
Course				
Course unaffected by adverse weather conditions				
Unsound surfaces that could cause accidents removed				
Crowd control barriers erected where necessary				
Start location and assembly area created				
All turns wide and shallow (less than 90 deg.) within 200m of start				
Course width maintained for first 200m of start				
Finish area run off towards car park i.e. no return flow				
Spectators adequately protected at finish area				
Unseen obstacles (e.g. due to long grass, dog mess etc.) removed				
Sharp objects on course (e.g. broken glass, metal, syringes etc.) removed				
Course marking adequate and safe (e.g. no metal stakes)				
Undergrowth that could cause injury removed (e.g. nettles, brambles, low hanging branches etc.) List positions below:				
Physical protection in place where needed (e.g straw bales)				
Tracks marshalled				
Pedestrian footways marshalled				
Adequate width of course see rules to allow overtaking and lapping				
Course suitable for expected/actual number of participants				
Others:				
Organisation				
First Aid cover provided and adequate for event				
Pre race publicity to inform public to nature and duration of event				
Officials and Marshals in adequate numbers and briefed thoroughly				
HiVis jackets available to all marshals or officials				
Other:				

Signed …….. **Signed ……..**

Date…… **Date……**

Commissaire ***Organiser***