

DERBY HOSTS NATIONAL CYCLO-CROSS RACE

Markeaton Park in Derby has been chosen to host a national cyclo-cross race for the next 3 years. The first race at the park takes place on January 18th 2009 and is the final event in the National Trophy Series of races which takes place at various locations throughout the country.

Cyclo-cross is an exciting spectator friendly sport which takes place over short laps in a grassy and woodland environment. Competitors will encounter a variety of obstacles on the course from steep inclines which may require running up, to muddy sections and hurdles. Cyclo-cross has been the sport where many famous riders have started their careers including World & Olympic Champion Nicole Cooke (Team Halfords Bikehut) and Roger Hammond (Team Columbia).

Derby has become an established location for the National Trophy races after the Mackworth College venue was used for the last two years. Markeaton Park is a relatively new venue for cyclo-cross but has hosted 3 events in the last 2 years. It has been used for the local Notts & Derby Cyclo-Cross League events and last year for the successful Midlands Championships. In the event this next year there will be over 250 competitors competing in various age categories culminating in the elite race. This race is an internationally rated event and has attracted entries from a selection of continental riders. The race comes a week after the National Championships and precedes the World Championships for which riders will use the race as a warm up and guide to form. The Derby event has its own website at www.derby.nationaltrophy.org.uk

The organising team, comprising members of the local Derby Mercury, South Pennine and Heanor Clarion clubs has secured sponsorship with local and national organisations to enable the prestigious event to be a success. The East Midlands Development Agency, Cycle Derby, the University of Derby, along with High 5, RJ Engineering Total Hire, Derby Brewing Co. and Halfords Bikehut have kindly given their support.

The East Midlands has enjoyed great cyclo-cross success in recent years with a series of National Champions. Annie Last from Great Longstone and Derby's Sam Lowe are current national champions whilst Lucy Garner (u16 girls), Saskia Hook (u14 girls) and Geoff Giddings (Veterans) are local riders that are currently leading the National Trophy series categories.

Rob Sharman from British Cycling and Lauren Smith from Cycle Derby are organising some additional children's races alongside the main events. These will be held on a separate course adjacent to the main course and children can enter on the day or through their local Derby school. These races are designed to give youngsters a taste of off-road and cyclo-cross racing in a safe environment.

Spectators are welcome to come and get a taste of the action at the park which is now becoming a popular venue. Laps of the course are normally 7 minutes long and with several good viewpoints on the course it makes for entertaining viewing. Spectators normally gather at the most technically demanding areas such as muddy climbs and descent as well as the hurdles and steps. Racing starts at 10.30pm concluding at 3.15pm with the finish of the Elite category race. Spectator car parking is available at the main car park off A38/A52 (Ashbourne Rd) roundabout whilst free car parking is available at the University.

Full details can be found on the event website www.derby.nationaltrophy.org.uk

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NOTE FOR NEWS EDITORS

Reporters and photographers are invited to attend the event, which takes place from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Jan 18th 2009 at Markeaton Park, Derby DE22 4AA. Note that entrance to event arena and car park is off A38/A52 roundabout.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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