

2022 Enduro World Series Mountain Bike Event Cancelled



Press Release: 27 August 2021

In light of the ongoing global uncertainty surrounding COVID-19, the Enduro Sports Organisation (ESO) and the Nelson Mountain Bike Club (NMTBC) have made the reluctant decision to cancel the Nelson leg of the Enduro World Series (EWS).

The Enduro World Series, an international mountain biking event, attracts hundreds of pro-riders from around the globe and Nelson was scheduled to host one of the eleven rounds in April 2022.

After working on several variations and plans for EWS Nelson, the Enduro Sports Organisation (ESO) and the Nelson Mountain Bike Club (NMTBC) have agreed that April 2022 is not the best time to hold the event.

Nelson Mountain Bike Club Chair Melanie Schroder says the decision is devastating to all those who have worked so hard to bring the event to Nelson.

"Nelson was bursting with excitement at the prospect of an EWS being held here. New trails have been built, we will have new infrastructure in place for all mountain bikers and the course was going to showcase the best trails that are unique to anywhere else in the world. We look forward to working with the ESO to plan an event in the future where it will be a truly world event that everyone can attend without restrictions."

Planning for the EWS began in 2019, when the NMTBC's bid to hold an Enduro World Series round in Nelson in 2021 was successful. Work began in 2020 but was immediately hindered by the March 2020 COVID-19 outbreak and the EWS was postponed to 2022 to allow the South American rounds, which were also postponed, to take place in 2021.

Despite best efforts, securing commercial support for the event has been slow due to the uncertainty of COVID-19. In June, the ESO advised that many of the European and American teams were not budgeting to come to New Zealand and Australia in 2022 because of the additional expense and uncertainty COVID-19 had created around border openings and restricted managed isolation availability.

As a result, the NMTBC started work on a potential Trans-Tasman EWS series with their Australian counterparts and the ESO, but this has now been cancelled.

NMTBC EWS Board Chair Chris Short says it has been a stressful time for the team on the ground trying to pull the event together.

"We made the right call, a tough one, albeit, but the right one for NMTBC and Nelson, nonetheless. Hopefully, in the future we can bring the EWS to Nelson in a way that allows for the opportunity to be maximised."

Nelson Mayor Rachel Reese says every event cancellation due to the effects of COVID-19 is a blow, and the Enduro World Series 2022 is no exception.

"The dedication and commitment hundreds of members of our community put into planning this event over the past two years is a testament to just how pivotal it was in showcasing our city, and our tracks, on an

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international mountain biking stage, and how just how devastating this news will be for so many. But, just like the riders who would have competed, we can and will push through this to emerge stronger on the other side.

“The hard work behind the scenes of this event has not been in vain; it has allowed us to build international connections that position Nelson as a top contender to host future mountain biking events, and you can be assured we will be actively seeking and pursuing those opportunities as they arise in due course.”

NMTBC chair Melanie Schroder says despite the cancellation, NMTBC is proud of the benefits the EWS opportunity has brought to Nelson.

Thanks to connections from local business Hyperformance Hardware, which distributes Santa Cruz bicycles throughout New Zealand, NMTBC was able to secure funding for a new iconic trail in the Nelson network from the international Santa Cruz PayDirt fund. The Santa Cruz Paydirt fund wanted the Nelson community to benefit from the EWS, and a new iconic trail was built as a result.

This allowed Nelson City Council to re-direct funds tagged for this trail into the renewal of other trails in the network that are widely used by beginner and intermediate riders. The renewal works are due to begin in the next few months.

In addition, the EWS’s endorsement of Nelson by accepting it as a host for one of its prestigious rounds has caught the attention of the global mountain biking community. The EWS has a worldwide following of mountain bikers who are highly connected, with an average social media reach per event of over 3,330,000.

NMTBC would like to thank Nelson City Council, Ngati Koata and the Nelson Regional Development Agency for supporting their efforts to bring the EWS to Nelson. NMTBC will continue to keep relationships and options open for a potential future event, but believe that Nelson should be showcased at a time when people from around the world can immediately book a ticket to visit when they see how amazing it is.

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