

Generous donors ensure motocross future's on track

IT'S no secret that Tamworth Precision Excavations' (TPE) owner Bruce Chapman loves to go fast – whether it's on a motorbike or in an off-road race car.

That's why Bruce has recently put his energies and resources into encouraging the next generation of motorcyclists by completely redeveloping the motocross track at Oakburn Park Raceway.

He approached the Tamworth Motor Cycle Club a few months ago with an offer they couldn't refuse – to build the new track for the club at no cost whatsoever.

"The main reason for the upgrade was due to poor drainage of the 10-year-old track, along with an aged, well-worn design," Bruce said.

"During the last wet winter, a large number of race and training days had to be cancelled due to the poor condition and drainage of the old track."

The old track was completely removed and thousands of tonnes of new earth excavated, hauled, dumped, compacted and shaped to form a new track which will see the club well into the future.

When TPE manager Darren Rickard was asked to put a price on the gratis works, he estimated it was in the vicinity of \$50,000.

For the voluntary organisation run by mums and dads, TPE's generous offer



TPE foreman Mark Soper, left, a keen motorcyclist, put in plenty of his own time on the project, with TPE owner Bruce Chapman.

They were delighted to be out there to see Hayden Mills and Cody Prendergast trying out the new jumps for size. Photo: **Robert Chappell** 0303 11RCF01

was literally a dream come true for the Tamworth Motorcycle Club.

Club publicity officer Tania Mills said TPE, with its generous donation of

earthworks, machinery and expertise, had effectively ensured the future of motocross in Tamworth.

"For all of last year we tried to do it with our own limited manpower," Tania said.

"Trying to scrape together machinery

and people with the know-how to operate it was no easy task. This has meant everything to the club and to the future for our kids who love to ride."

The old track had long been a source of concern to the motorcycle club.

"We had major drainage problems and whenever there was any significant rainfall we would end up with dams," Tania said.

"We lost count of the number of meets and practice days that had to be cancelled due to these constant wash-outs."

Bruce Chapman said the new facility would be better for people on both sides of the tracks.

"For those using it, it will race faster and it's been designed to provide more spectacular viewing for the spectators," Bruce said.

"With this new design, which includes underground drainage pipes, the track should hold up in all weather conditions."

Both the club and the businesses that helped out with the redevelopment of the track hope the works will result in attracting new and past members, young and experienced, to become involved in this exciting and fast-growing sport.

Tamworth boasts a number of very talented riders, as well as up-and-coming

junior riders and club members are hoping the new track will provide just what they need to take them to the next level.

For the motocross committee, the redevelopment was a real godsend.

"Without the full support of Bruce Chapman from TPE donating all the drainage and earthworks and Humes Concrete providing the drainage pipes, we would have been getting nowhere fast," Tania said.

"This project would not have been possible without the assistance given to us by Kevin Ross Transport, Dasha's Transport, BMR Quarries, GCM Lighting, Tamworth Tilt Trays, Bell Equipment Hire, Regional Plant Hire, All About Towing, Bikes & Bits, Ride Motorcycles, Belmore Engineering, North West Cranes, Redimix Concrete and Pilliga Natural Timbers.

"The first test for the new track will be round one of the club MX championships set down for March 20."

The club is also holding a "come and try day" in May. Find out more at the website www.tamworthmotorcycleclub.com