

## 05 Richmond Bike Park



In 2002 I was contacted by a Richmond city representative regarding a proposed jump park to be built in Richmond bordering on Steveston British Columbia. With the great success of Myrtle Jump Park in North Vancouver, I offered all the assistance I could leaning heavily on community involvement and local youth initiatives as well as my recent experience and building techniques. It was determined that the Richmond park would move forward on its own momentum and city and locals came together to build one of the first skills park in existence.

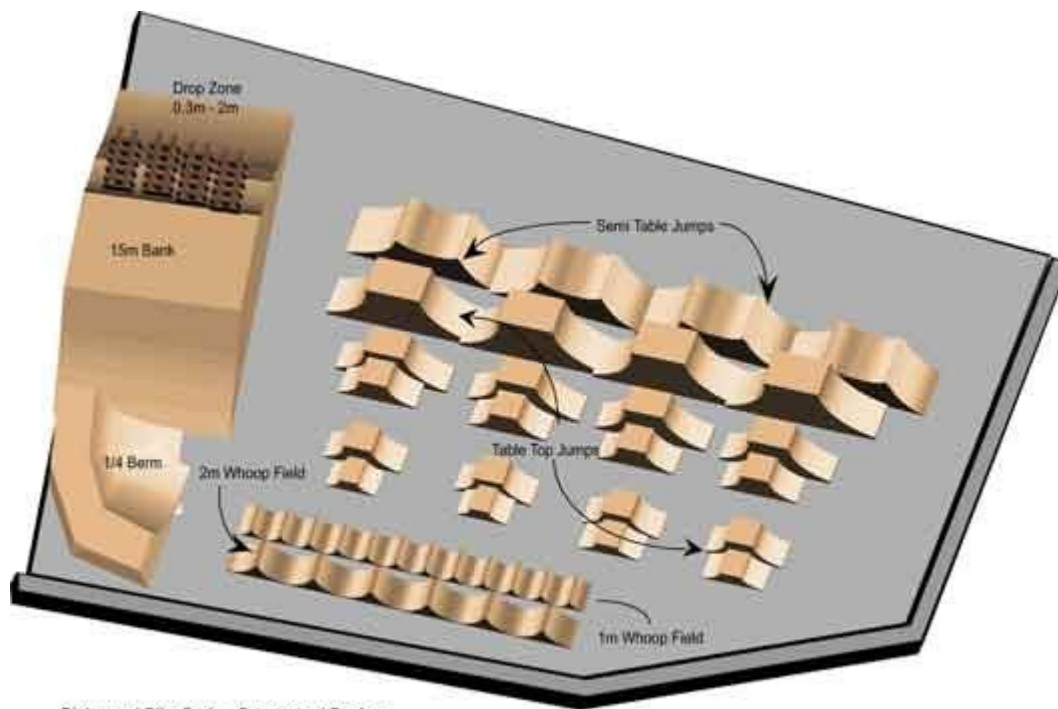


Over time (3 years) it became very apparent that the development of the park did not achieve its goals and a drastic change was needed. Hoots was contacted by Jamie Esko of the parks and community services department of Richmond City and agreed to meet and discuss the possibility of retro fitting or rebuilding the current site. Jamie had used the three years experience gained to develop incredible insight on how the next phase of development would work including input from the community. Information on users, politics and possible recreation programming opportunity were all discussed and Jamie started dialogue with the local

community centers to get local youth fired up, getting word around to the local shops about the interest in park retooling. Several workshops were held to get feedback on the park and to try and create terms of reference as well as a detailed wish list for a future park.



It was agreed that Hoots would come up with 3 designs for the jump and technical areas that would be voted on at the bike park by the locals and word was spread using cycling forums, posters and word of mouth of the target date to discuss these items. At the park a variety of users showed up, from young kids looking to be part of a new park to the original builders who felt that they were unappreciated by the municipality. The designs were discussed and in the end a final design choice was made by everyone with options taken from the other 2 options added to enhance the park.



#### Richmond Bike Park – Conceptual Design

Drawn By J. Matthews – February 8, 2005

Not to scale, vertical has been exaggerated

After final designs were completed and approved by planning and parks department, the city decided to split the construction of the park between City and Hoots. Contracts were drawn up and Jamie helped provide the framework for progressive work dialogue that resulted in clear defined roles and responsibilities.

The City started build and stabilized the start bank, managed on going materials deployment, designed and manufactured a steel guard rail and brought in capping materials. Once the city was completed Hoots got to work full on! Because of timing we started the build of the park in late October and had to use special techniques to keep the building materials dry enough to work with during the on and off again coastal showers.



Hoots brought in King Kubota contracting and Mountain Bike Mike set to work building and forming a masterpiece. Hoots hired several experienced builders and in eight solid days of work the start bank got reworked, progressive jump lines were blocked in, shaped and packed.



Once the park was this far, capping material brought in by the city was installed for better drainage and five more days of detailed lip, transition and drainage shaping all compiled to create all weather riding potential.



During the build several challenges came to light quickly, the least of which was a high water table (due to the proximity of the Fraser river), blue clay content in build materials and riders (poachers) that would not stay out of the construction site during non build hours knocking down barriers and fences and creating a ton of extra rut repair work. The extracurricular usage of a park in construction really defines the quality of the park and I have a great deal of patience for poaching, but a couple of groups were brutal at this park and had little respect, strange since the basis of a jump site is respect.



Youth, and local riders were encouraged to come out and help polish the park once all equipment was gone and a day was set aside for work on the park combined with a grand opening which brought out the locals in droves. The youth worked hard and much was accomplished setting the stage for ownership.





All in all Richmond is one of the great jump parks, lots of variations and changeups in lines, tons of progression and great jumps. Rather than spend a great deal of time maintaining the jumps some local youth have chosen to add options to them and has created some tension as the city cannot understand why localized youth would not embrace this park especially when the local community has really taken a shine to it. I think the lesson learned here is that if you promote through community and youth centers you need to back it up with programming.



This jump park is a favourite and true testament to the possibility of sustainable jump building with little maintenance required.



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