

behind
bars

Newsletter

Eastern Veterans Cycling Club



July 3, 2014

Last Opportunity



Booking for TdF Night Tickets close Sunday 6th July.

Join your fellow Eastern Vet competitors in an enjoyable social evening.

**The Kilsyth Club
Friday 11 July
7pm for 7:30pm Start**

Invite your cycling buddies, they will thank you!

Three course meal. Guest speaker – Keith Flory. Door prizes and bargains.

Tickets available Saturday or contact David at davemacq@bigpond.com.



Contents: Duty roster. Race reports. Race results. Future events. Training rides. Members' corner.

Duty Roster

This Week on 5 July: Casey Fields: John Thomson, Russell Wheelhouse & Louise Wolfers

Next Week on 12 July: Gruyere: Tony Curulli, Walter Savini, Andrew Neilsen, Owen Anstey, James Aylmer, Terry Murdoch, Daryl Beovich, Rob Lewis, Julian Paynter, Peter Bertelsen.

Note: Members rostered for marshal or traffic control duties must be at the circuit at least one hour before the scheduled start time to assist with the setting up of the course. (But bring your bike, you just never know). If a marshal fails to turn up for duty, a rider will be balloted to do that duty. If you cannot turn up for duty, you must find a replacement and please advise Andrew Buchanan at tiptop2@optusnet.com.au.

Gruyere Kermesse 28th June

The turn-out was probably comparable to that which could be expected for a Sunday night home fixture for Melbourne at the G. No doubt some were storing up "Brownie points" by saying I think I will skip racing today to spend some time with you/the kids.

The "quality" stayed home with only the hard men in C and D Grades fronting up in decent numbers, but I understand that some quickly regretted that call and retired well before the checkered flag.

Thanks to Nigel, Chris, Mal and Peter for reports on their Grades. In Members' Corner Geoff O'Loghlen relates his experiences riding in Italy, Shane Dwyer reflects on what it means to be a cyclist and there is a report on Melburn Roobaix (with pics).

A Grade: Nigel Kimber

Gruyere not a popular circuit – well not if numbers count, a-grade out numbering b-grade for the first time in I don't know how long. Talk around the table was to merge the two, there were certainly a couple of the six who could have stepped up to join the nine in white – Darren and Chris may find it difficult to convince the handicapper that they should continue in the green.

A-Grade. Nine starters, a tough five kilometre loop, and a start list that didn't promise it would be any easier. Guy Green had a point to prove after last week, Roy Clark coming back into form after a bit of a lull, Phil Smith back to his best if not better and capable of TTing the full distance. Jean-Philippe would be on to and in to anything, Rob Amos who knows no pain and won't give in. Ken Mayberry, Phil

Cavaleri and Lawrence Lee rounding out the bunch, all light weight and quick and sure not to leave as much on the Killara Rd hill as either Rob or I and therefore have more left in the tank for the end.

In a tactical repeat of last week the group rode the first lap together before Guy attacked on the first pinch of the second, quickly opening a small gap that nobody was in a hurry to close. Gut was quickly allowed 100m and my plans to see the race out from the back of the bunch went out the window. One rider, one-hundred metres up the road was a good thing – let him set the pace, let him wear himself out, but the leash had to be held and it didn't look like anybody else was putting their hand up to do so, so there went my plans.

And just like last week JP wanted a piece of the action and set off in pursuit. Two away - not so good. But still, the head wind along Medhurst Road was solid enough that two against seven was not a fair fight. The chase got organised then didn't then did then didn't, despite the lack of coordination in the chase and the fact that the lead twosome had put in a big effort and disappeared over the Killara Rd climb they came back into view after two laps, the wind seemingly to have done the job.

Unfortunately the only job it did was to prompt Phil Smith and Roy Clark to bridge the now bridgeable gap, Guy seeing his buddy coming across backed the pace a bit and it was now four against five. And that was about the end of it for those of us left behind. Despite the seemingly pointlessness of it a couple of the chasers continued to chase whilst the others contributed where they could.





Unlike the chasers the leaders worked together and consolidated their advantage. From around half race distance Phil Smith decided that he didn't need the others and tried to push away along Killara Road, Guy Green the one to drag him back each time, until lap nine when neither Roy nor JP could respond allowing Phil and Guy to garner a twenty meter gap as they crested the rise. An effort by JP on the descent and the flat brought it back together as they raced past the officials.

Two to go for the leaders and Phil was at it again - on the first of the two humps out the back, and that was too much for JP who couldn't mount a response, Guy and Roy riding away to join Phil. The gap incentive enough for the three to work together to put the composition of the podium out of the question. JP left to survive the better part of two laps in no-man's land, dragging the last of his reserves to stay away from the chasers.

Two to go for the chasers and it was still a few doing the bulk of the work, along Medhurst Rd Rob was generous, riding down the middle of the road providing shelter for all and sundry, yours truly not so charitable, riding one in from the left hopeful that it was Rob in the box seat. Up Killara Road for the second last time and the twinges that had threatened on the fourth lap came back with a vengeance, nearly every muscle, and even the bones, in the right leg cramped and with a wave of the elbow I waved good-bye to the guys. Nursing the legs to the crest the gap was not that great and some managed effort had me back in contact before the turn onto Medhurst for the last time. An attack by Rob on the first of the Medhurst bumps and this time there was no coming back.

As I made my way round for the last time the leaders were finishing; Guy, Phil and Roy – in that order. Jean-Philippe managed to remain in no-man's land and finish a lone fourth ahead of the remnants of the chase group.

B Grade: Chris Ellenby.

A small but quality field of five lined for the start at Gruyere. Skies were overcast with strong cold northerlies but fortunately no sign of rain on the radar. Darren Woolhouse was clearly the race favourite based on recent wins at the Omara 100, Gruyere (by several minutes!) and a bunch sprint win at Yarra Glen last week (second to Dave Moreland's dominating breakaway). Glenn Newnham and Leo Webb were fast finishers and Bruce Will was a solid rider.

The pace was comfortable over the first few laps with each of us sharing the workload by rolling over on the flat sections. Around lap 4, Darren was getting a bit twitchy and gradually picked up the pace up the hill. Glenn and Leo were able to hold his wheel while Bruce and I struggled to bridge the gap over the hill. I was the weakest climber and the slowest sprinter in the group, so I needed a strategy to give me any chance of finishing on the podium.

Around lap 6, I decided to wind it up just prior to the tail wind section. I kept it going down the hill and pushed hard at the base of the hill with the wind giving me some much needed momentum. My pace slowed to a crawl (20 kph) near the top of the hill with Darren, Glenn and Leo bridging the gap by the top of the hill. They were all breathing hard which was a good sign. So I tried the predictable come-from-behind surge again at the same spot and opened up a nice gap again. Darren jumped a bit earlier this time at the base of the hill to bridge the gap and flew past me on his own near the top. Fortunately, he eased up allowing me to join him about a kilometre past the hill-top.

Over the remaining laps, Darren and I worked well together to keep the chasing group at bay. Darren pulled me up the hill every time. He was riding well within his comfort zone and was able to provide plenty words of encouragement to get me over the hill every lap. His recent form shows he is ready for the elite A Grade group.

Darren strolled to the finish line to win easily while I was gasping to hang on to finish one metre behind him in second place. Glenn and Leo fought it out for 3rd place about a minute behind us with Leo just getting the edge.

Overall, a rewarding race on a challenging course. Thanks again Darren!

C Grade: Mal Jones.

Twas a cold, dark and gloomy afternoon, and like the weather, heavily foreboding on the minds of the assembled participants. Bah, enough of that crap, let's get down to the race report...

Yep, it was cold, but no, it didn't rally stifle any interest by the C grade community in having a crack at 9 laps of Gruyere, one of the more challenging courses on the Eastern roster.





With 15 starters lining up, it promised to be quite a competitive outing, but that pesky hill really sorted things out quickly.

Dave McCormack and Ian Milner let the bunch around for the first (neutral) lap before things started in earnest as we came over the finish line to the 8 laps to go card.

Up Killara Road the second time the upping of the pressure by Graeme Bull and Russell Wheelhouse initially stretched and then broke the elastic, causing a split that left 6 up the front and the rest chasing.

Franc Tomsic and John Thomson managed to chase and get back on over the next lap, helped by a tractor taking up Cahillton Road, but the other 7 were left to fend for themselves. A lap or 2 later and Franc was gone back to the bunch, another victim of the Killara Road climb.

As the laps wound down Graeme Bull spent plenty of time on the front, doing plenty of work. At different times Andrew Buchanan, Wal Savini and Russell Wheelhouse all chipped in.

Everyone was waiting for "the" attack, but with the wind and some tired legs (reminder to self, 90k rides with Peter Webb on a Friday before racing don't help...), the attacks were limited to the odd exploratory push up Killara Road, but were nothing of any consequence. It was going to be a bunch sprint between 4, 5 or 6, depending on the last trip up Killara Road.

Graeme had a fair crack, but again, was unable to get away. But it did do some damage, with John Thomson dropping off and Wal Savini put under some pressure.

Over the crest the jockeying for wheels started, with no one prepared to pass Graeme, leaving him a sitting duck leading the reduced group down the hill. That played right into Wal Savini's hands, and allowed him to get back on just at the top of the final little crest before the finish line.

Wal opened up the sprint, chased by Mal Jones, with Russell Wheelhouse also getting on. The 3 finished in that order with an unlucky Graeme Bull and Andrew Buchanan in fourth and fifth places respectively.

Overall, a great day's racing with no incidents, so well done to all.

D Grade: Peter Mackie.

Good day for a bike ride. It was a day to be a rider and not a marshal, but it looked like the marshals were going to outnumber the riders at the start. Eventually the brave turned up.

Dean Niclasen got some riders worried by doing his usual ride out in front to get a head start up the hill, which led to people chasing him to the hill and the group separated. Some riders did not return to the lead group. Actually David Coull pulled out 500 metres after we got 9 laps to go from Keith, reason unknown, potentially weather or flat?

As the laps counted down, so did the numbers. Peter Webb and David McIndoe doing the main damage, Janita Keating did surges but eventually damaged herself and fell off the group, so too Ben Muller. This left Colin, Michael Muscat, David and Peters Webb and Mackie to contest the final laps together.

Each climb saw David string the group out, with Michael and Colin having the chase on the descent to catch up. The second last ascent Peter M tried to gap the group and had a small lead on David upon getting the bell and held that gap for the final lap taking first, with David second and Peter Webb third. Colin and Michael finishing 4th and 5th respectively.

Thanks to all the marshals, I hope you all had your long-johns on! Lol!!

E Grade: No Report

Gruyere: 28/06/2014

Grade	1st	2 nd	3rd
A Grade (9)	Guy Green	Phil Smith	Roy Clark
B Grade (5)	Darren Woolhouse	Chris Ellenby	Leo Webb
C Grade (15)	Walter Savini	Mal Jones	Russell Wheelhouse
D Grade (12)	Peter Mackie	David McIndoe	Peter Webb
E Grade (7)	Barry Evans	Nick Hainal	Zenon Gawronski
F Grade (0)			





Thanks to the officials/helpers.

Peter Mackie and Ron Stranks for taking entries, Richard Dobson (referee), Ken Saxton, Michael Waterfield, Keith Wade, Alex Watts, Ian R Smith, Adrian Weber, Frank Nyhuis, Ray Watts, Darren Smith and Kay Ward for marshalling duties. Also thanks to Andrew Buchanan for managing the duty roster, Zen Gawronski for bringing the trailer, Kevin and Shelly for 1st aid and Dean Niclasen for bringing the drink refreshments.

The Loop 02/07/2014

	Division 1 (8)	Division 2 (7)	Division 3 (10)	Division 4 (4)
First	D Burke (N)	R Wheelhouse	H Simpson	S O'Keefe
Second	P Thompson	C Ellenby	S Dwyer	F Lees
Third	R Russo	I Flannery (N)	S Coulson	L Bohn

Future events:

Eastern Vets Program: www.easternvets.com/

	Date	Time	Location	Melway Ref	Event
Saturday July	5	2:00pm	Casey Fields	134 E10	GSR- Criterium
Friday July	11	7:30pm	Club Kilsyth		TdF Night
Saturday July	12	2:00pm	Gruyere	282 F10	GSR – Kermesse (A Grade teams race)
Saturday July	19	2:00pm	Eildon	910 U8	GSR
Saturday July	26	2:00pm	Arthurs Creek	510 N12	GSR
Monday July	28	7:30pm	Club Ringwood	50 C3	Monthly GM

Note: Graded Scratch Race entries are accepted on the day up to 15 minutes before the advertised race start time. Handicap entries close the Tuesday before the race. Riders entering a handicap MUST pay the entry fee regardless of participation. Fees are due on race day; entrants will NOT be allowed to start in any EVCC race until fees have been paid. No late entries will be accepted for either scratch races or handicaps. Entries to handicaps can be submitted via e-mail to the handicapper or on any race day prior to the eve.

Northern Vets Program: <http://www.northerncycling.com/>

Date 2014	Race	Dist.	Venue	Time	Event
06/07/2014	Criterium	1hr+Bell	National Blvd (Ford)	9:00 am	Winter Crit Series Race 4
13/07/2014	No Racing				Mid-year break.
20/07/2014	No racing				Mid-year break.
27/07/2014	Time Trial	TBD	Baliang Hall, Baliang	9:00 am	Bike Force TT Series Race 2

AVCC National Championships PERTH 26-29 SEPTEMBER 2014

Registrations are now open for the AVCC National Championships to be run in Perth, Western Australia from 26th to 29th September 2014. There will be two track championship events, road, Criterium and 25km time trial championships. The track at the Speed Dome, Midvale, will host individual time trial and pursuit championships - road bikes will be allowed for these events.

A link to IMG's event desk can be found on the West Coast Masters CC 'Nationals' web page at: <http://www.masterscycling.asn.au/nationals/nationals.htm> There is also a guide to the process available through a link on that page, or directly at: <http://www.wcmasterscycling.asn.au/nationals/2014RegistrationGuide.pdf>. The event is also listed on the AVCC web page at: <http://www.ausvetcycling.com/#>





Training Rides

Day/Time/Place	Route	Style	Contact
Tuesdays 9:30 am (9:00 am during DST) Main Yarra Trail (meet under Burke Road overpass)	Under Burke Road on Main Yarra Trail to Southbank via Yarra Boulevard and bike paths along the river and return.	Social, bike paths and roads, coffee @ Southbank.	Keithb33@optusnet.com.au
Sunday Morning Beach Road Ride Leave 8.00 am sharp Meet at Peanut Farm Reserve. Cnr Blessington & Chaucer Sts. St Kilda.	Ride along Beach Rd To Frankston. 10 min stop. Then ride back to St Kilda. (approx. 65 km)	Social Ride - Coffee back at St Kilda	

Members' Corner

In addition to race reports, every Member is invited to submit cycling-related material of possible wider interest including favorite rides, best or worst cycling experiences, brushes with fame (or the infamous), cycling holiday snaps, etc.

Riding the Dolomites in Northern Italy (Geoff O'Loghlen).

Well its good to be home in Melbourne isn't it - who wouldn't want to be in the rain and cold and wet when the TdF starts in only a few days and a few plane rides away.

I wouldn't, that's who! But then again I've just finished the mountains, lakes & musics tour of 2014. And a reckoning must be coming.

And I reckon that 18 rides, a thousand kilometers, 55 hours on a saddle, and 26,600 meters of vertical ascent isn't the worst preparation for the forthcoming old man's Wednesday race at Kew Boulevard, next week.

The brief rundown on the tour is:

The ride that broke me. Prato Valentino on 21 May. The big ones of Bormio (Stelvio, Gavia & Mortirolo) were closed due to snow so I thought to take on some of the smaller lesser known lights of the Valtellina Valley. So I headed off, confident in my Arthurs Seat capabilities, to take on the PV, Passo Aprica and Passo San Marco.

Prato Valentino was the first on the list. While vague road directions and a warm, dry wind didn't ring any alarm bells I should have taken the hint of riding in the first 100 meters past a cemetery at a gradient of over 13%. For the next 21 kilometers and 105 minutes, constantly changing directions, grades and road surfaces provided the sternest test faced for over the next month. So stern it broke me. By which I mean I had to stop. I didn't choose to stop. I didn't mean to stop. I didn't want to stop. But I had to stop. On a dirt road, with a grade of something over 10 or whatever percent, and with no idea of how much further to go or what was still to come I had no choice but to stop. A car stopped to ask if I was OK. I gasped it was "molto difficile" and "sono stupido" and asked how much further to the top - which they didn't know "maybe a kilometre or two". I waved them on and after two or three attempts to actually get started up, or rather across and up, the dirt incline I finally got going again rounded the next corner a hundred meters away and faced a further ramp of a couple of hundred meters. That was the top. Physically I had been tested - this was no Arthurs Seat. Mentally I had been shattered - I am not Jens. I was broken.

The ride that beat me. Zoncolan on 30 May. If there is a point to going on a riding tour this was it. I had been to





Zoncolan in 2009 and had gotten a little way up the hill when I had to admit defeat and roll back down the hill to Liaris where feeling recovered I promptly thought I can do better than that and turned around and had another go. I got about a hundred meters further before once again I had to admit defeat. So it had been a few years but every time I had struggled on Arthurs for the last six months the mantra was that it would be good for when I was on Zoncolan again. It wasn't. Mere hacker C grade veteran riders, such as me, are not meant to be good on Zoncolan - we may be allowed on Zoncolan to see if we can survive but it will not be good. The gradient is harder for longer than anything on Baw Baw or Terry's or any other of the Melbourne terrors. The closest I can think of is Caldwell Road, the road straight ahead of you as you come under the freeway heading to Arthurs Seat. The difference is that Caldwell is about 400 meters while Zoncolan is nigh on 8 kilometers. It was inevitable that I would stop. I knew it and picked my spot. The next left-hander, where it was slightly flat and there was some shade. And that's where I stopped. I rested. I planned the next phase. I continued. I wove left and right across, but up, the road. I picked my next stop - up the road, in the shade, by that hut, just past that oncoming truck thats filling up the road. Filling up the road so much that I stopped my tacking up the road and stopped right on the verge so I didnt accidently weave in front of him as he hurtled down. We just avoided each other. I changed my plan and went past the hut, but still stopped at the next corner - to gather composure, breath and have a rest. Having recovered and planned my next phase, I headed off only to find I couldnt clip in. For the life of me I could not get my right cleat attached to the pedal. I could be beaten by a mechanical - thats almost tolerable. And I wouldnt have to keep riding upwards. And I could roll down to Liaris. And I remembered Prato Valentino. I got off the bike and reattached the right shoe by hand and then got back on, buckled up and headed off. An hour and six minutes after starting I rolled past the most magnificent cycling statue. I had covered nearly 8 kilometers. I had been beaten but not broken. Next time.

The ride that came out even. Tre Cima Di Lavedo on 28 May. I had been here a few years earlier too, when snow had called a halt to lovely days ride from Cortina d'Ampezzo past the tre croci, past the turn to Austria, past the Misurina lake and past the park gates up a few steep but short rises - the rises that Pantani used to come to train on. And now a few years later, I'm passing by again - on the way to Zoncolan, after 6 months training on Arthurs and nearly two weeks in the heart of the Dolomites getting my climbing legs and rhythms. And what better way to get my rhythm for Zoncolan than doddling up Pantani's training track. For the next couple of kilometers it was slowly up a steady incline of 13-15%. Just like Arthurs Seat really. The really steep bit of Arthurs that lasts for about 20 meters that is. Unfortunately, Arthurs also doesn't have a bit where you go "oh my god, I can't go on - but hang on this isnt Prato Bloody-tino". The struggle was on - the legs, lungs and heart were screaming to stop, the head was saying "Your meant to be going to Zoncolan" to which the legs, lungs and heart responded with "who are you kidding" to which the head responded "just get to that wall of snow and that might be the end of it" which the legs, lungs and heart promptly did. And we turned the corner thru the break in the snow and continued until the next corner where the snow completely covered the road but there was enough room to walk through the rocks and melting snow waters and slush around the snowfall to continue further. For another 800 meters the road continued with the head now firmly in the ascendancy but the legs, lungs and heart saying "see we told you we only needed a short break". And then the top. Snow. Peaks. Valleys. Breathtaking. No wonder Pantani would come here. See I told you said the head. See I told you said the legs, lungs and heart. I hadnt been beaten but I hadnt beat it either. Next time....

My ride. Zoncolan on 31 May. The day that Cadel was to duel with Richie. Then it was going to be Cadel against Quintana. And then it was Quintana against whoever. And it turned out to be Mick Rodgers' day. And it was the day after me against Zoncolan. And it was the day I would ride the other side. I pedalled in circles, I had a relaxed upper body, I breathed rhythmically, I moved rhythmically, I pedalled rhythmically. I passed people, people passed me, I still pedalled rhythmically, I passed them back. For ten kilometres I rode like a metronome. Then I reached the part where Cippolini had used a mountain bike in protest at the organizers decision to race the Giro up this part of the Zoncolan. The figures are bland, 3 kilometres at 13% average. However the road is vicious, some 13 turns with sections of 20 - 25 percent. But still I rode rhythmically, pedalling seated or standing it was rhythmical. The road was jammed with spectators heading to the summit to see Nairo, Pellizotti, Aru and Rolland. I rode rhythmically through them to the seething mass of spectators, tents, barricades, security guards and all the others needed to conclude the penultimate stage of the Giro on the ultimate climb of the Giro. I reached the top, where the riders would later collapse in exhaustion, exultation and disappointment, turned and rode down. I know how Mick Rodgers felt later that day.

The unexpected ride. Mount Scale on 20 May. Looking to ride a little longer after the long flight to Bormio and a short warm up the previous day I headed to Passo del Foscagno and passed the turn to Lago di Cancano. I had read about this as being a pretty little alpine lake and thought that would be a useful addition to the days activities as I





intended to ride Stelvio once the way was clear, later in the week. And a pleasant little climb it was for the first 6 or so kilometers with a nice steady incline of around 8%, the standard really for anything in the Dolomites, working my way through some picturesque trees and views of the valley below whilst becoming progressively more aware of the immense wall of rock towering over and in front of me. I had also heard of a supposed third way up the Stelvio which was never used and as I looked at the jagged rocks looming above the question was asked 'could this be an unknown way over the Stelvio?' There was no sign of any lake - a couple of picnic areas, a driveway down to a field, but nothing that looked like a river or stream or anything water related. But there was this wall of rock. Slowly the wall of rock in front of me came closer and I could make out a road zigzagging up the bare rock to as far as the eye could see the top of the jagged wall. No lake there. And then I turn a hairpin and climb a ramp of 10% or so and turn another hairpin and climb and turn another hairpin. For nearly 20 minutes I do nothing but turn hairpins and climb and then there's a flat section that leads into a hole in the rock and I can see on the other side the road continues into another hole in the rock and beyond that there are two medieval towers built in and on and of the rock and from there you can see down two valleys and the 17 hairpins in 4 kilometers that I've just ridden up. Magical. Beautiful. Magnificent. This is riding.

DID YOU EVER? (Shane Dwyer)

- Did you ever lie to your spouse how much your new set of wheels cost?
- Did you ever tell your spouse you won your new wheels in a raffle?
- Did you ever have your chain break when you were up out of the saddle?
- Did you ever talk with a squeaky voice for a week?
- Did you ever say you would never wear lycra?
- Did you ever say you would never shave your legs?
- Did you ever say you would never buy a plastic bike?
- Did you ever do something you said you would never do?
- Did you ever buy your first carbon bike then fall off two weeks later and break your frame?
- Did you ever then go out and buy a titanium bike?
- Did you ever meet anyone who actually loved their aluminium bike?
- Did you ever wonder why bikes made out of what is after all charcoal cost so much?
- Did you ever buy a new bike and then get put up a grade so figure you must need another new bike?
- Did you ever try explaining this logic to your spouse?
- Did you ever develop a such a clever, convoluted argument to convince yourself &/or your spouse that you needed a new set of wheels, component upgrades, carbon handlebars, a new bike, etc, etc and then realise that you should have been a taxation lawyer?
- Did you ever have someone fall off right in front of you and in the hundredth of a second before you hit them have time to wish you were somewhere else?
- Did you ever have the guy in front of you clear his nose and.....well that's enough detail?
- Did you ever believe it when people told you that you would fall off seven times before you mastered clipless pedals?
- Did you ever fall off seven times before you mastered clipless pedals?
- Did you ever forget to unclip and fall off into the rose bushes near your front door?
- Did you ever over tighten a \$200 carbon seat post and write it off?
- Did you ever have a tyre blow out and think you'd been shot?
- Did you ever lead into the finishing strait and then come last in the run to the line?
- Did you ever get a flat tyre miles from home and then notice your pump was missing?
- Did you ever fix a puncture and forget to remove the object that gave you the puncture?
- Did you ever wonder why every breakdown you ever had was at the furthest point from home on your ride?
- Did you ever think you were riding really well on a training ride and then turn around to head home and realise that you had had a tail wind?
- Did you ever have to close your eyes watching TV when there was a big fall in the peloton?
- Did you ever forget your bike was on the roof rack and drive into the garage and hear a very expensive noise?
- Did you ever see a door on a parked car that you liked?
- Did you ever abuse a car driver for failing to give way to you and then realise he had right of way?
- Did you ever have a car driver chase you only to apologize because they were in the wrong?





Did you ever wander around looking for your helmet then see your shadow and for a moment think your head had swollen and gone a funny shape?
Did you ever hire a bike in Europe and fall off because you forgot the brakes were the wrong way round?
Did you ever forget to tighten your quick release and have a wheel fall off?
Did you ever think your new seat was so uncomfortable that it must make you go faster?
Did you ever back off five metres from the finish line because you were knackered and anyway you had the race won and then come second? Or even worse, third? Or a really worse, nowhere?
Did you ever draft for a whole race and then win and then feel so guilty that you had to spend all your prize money buying people coffee to make up?
Did you ever wonder if all the “Did you evers” really happened?
Did you ever wonder if all the “Did you evers” happened to the one person?

“If you like bouncing on cobbles, getting caught in the rain, riding back-lanes in Brunswick...”

Sunday saw the running of Melburn Roobaix 14, the annual festival de bike which brings together the gamut of Melbourne cycling culture from hairy hipsters through to shaved-legged lycra louts. The course was some 35 kms commencing from the velodrome in the AH Smith Reserve in Hawthorn and wending through Kew, Abbotsford, Clifton Hill, Fitzroy North, Carlton North, Parkville, Travancore, Ascot Vale, Moonee Ponds, Brunswick West and Brunswick, ending in the Brunswick Velodrome.

Participants were required to navigate suburban streets and bike paths to locate and negotiate some 12 special sections – varying lengths of bluestone cobbled back access lanes rendered slick, muddy and treacherous by the persistent rain – and record the letter located at the end of each section to be eligible for barrel draw prizes (including a trip to Paris for Paris-Roubaix). The event commenced at 9:30 am and concluded between 3:30 and 4 pm.

It is a chance to see parts of Melbourne you would be unlikely to (or want to?) visit on any other day. It is not a race and stops for coffee, food and a libation or two are “de rigeur”. It is an event that every rider should do at least once, preferably in the company of a few mates. A number of EVCC members were among some 2000 entrants and a couple managed to make their presence felt, notably the Queen Bee with the busy worker behind and the Barrell Girl (see photos below).

Thanks to Susan, Jenny, Nikki, Kathleen, Mal and Ian whose company and unflagging good humour made the day fly by.

Tip: If Lebanese soulfood appeals, try TETA MONA at 100a Lygon Street, Brunswick East (tetamona.com.au) - they accommodated six soggy cyclists very graciously and the sharing dishes were delicious.





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