

NIGEL'S RACE REPORT

Before the race Barry Robertson asked me "what's the plan?". Given a couple of abysmal performances in the previous two races (Crits at METEC), a week off for duty, a corked thigh from an embarrassing encounter with the crossbar (wood slat wharves), and a little blood draining. The plan was simply to try to stay with the bunch and if I was still there at the foot of the last climb make an effort up it and see what fell out of the tree. True to cyclist form this was only half the story, there were mumbblings in my mind to test myself and the bunch on the small inclines during the second lap.

On the start line Ronnie Stranks gave a brief briefing alerting us to the possibility of rain and for the need to take care, especially on the left-hander at the bottom of the hill. With these words we set off for at a sedate pace till racing started in earnest after the afore mentioned tight left hander. Most of us negotiating the corner within the bounds of reasonable safety, Barry must have been thinking about his washing line and not his ride line through the corner, causing him to make some comment about bed linen as he's scrambled back onto the correct side of the white line.

With the flag raised it didn't take long before Phil Smith has set about testing the bunch on the first of the small inclines. He couldn't be serious, a full race ahead of him, a chasing bunch of six, and a noticeable head wind, he couldn't be serious. S...., he just might be. The bunch swung into maintenance mode - roll and pick up the pace enough to not let him get any further ahead, let the conditions knock some sense into him and bring him back. Maintenance mode soon became survival mode as Phil continued to push the chasers to their limits, Rob Amos, Guy Green and myself being tested as we kept a semblance of a pace line going.

A mild panic set in as the terrain suggested we were approaching the far turn-around, Phil still had a decent gap and wouldn't be constrained by the 'neutrality' of the turn. At the turn the gap was around fifty metres and the bunch was down to four, Barry and Ian Smith having quietly slipped off the back at some point between the start of the chase and where we were now.

The return leg was little different to the outbound leg, the lone break-away rider disappearing around a corner or over a crest to be lost to sight for a while before a straight stretch of road afforded a glimpse of him ahead. The pace was taking its toll in the chase group, the rotation at the front dropping to two and a half, your's truly succumbing to the pace and missing the odd turn.

The turnaround at the end of the first lap showed that we had taken a bit out of Phil's lead, but again being free of the 'neutrality' of the turn he was able to take some of that back into the start of the second lap. The climb at the start of the lap saw the lead come right back, a delay after the descent to gather a drink bottle saw the break over and Phil finally returned to the flock.

The early efforts putting a hold on my thoughts of testing the remainder, but not on those of Rob or Phil. Each taking turns to kick the pace at various points, the last coming just before the turn at the race halfway point. Each surge was met with immediate response and it was a group of five that turned to the encouragement of Craig Peacock who had the music pumping.

The slowing of pace for the turn provided the opportunity to look around and check out the scenery. The cows standing in the fields chewing their cud ran contrary to Ronnie's warnings of rain, the Northerly breeze also suggesting a dry finish to the race. With the wind behind us it was a relatively quick and uneventful run back to the bell. Rob Amos and Phil Smith sharing most of the pace setting duties, the remainder of us content to be led.

After the bell Phil made another effort to get away, toward the top of the climb he's put in an effort and surged. Nobody was going to give the little guy an inch and digging deep we've gone over the top together.

The outbound leg of the third lap followed much the same schedule as the second with Phil Smith making a couple of serious attempts to shake the rest of us, all to no avail as we didn't want a repeat of the first lap. A few spots of rain before the final turn and Craig doing his best Mary Poppins impersonation to some heavy metal emanating from his car stereo had me looking to the fields. The cows were lying down and as we turned we turned into the wind, a change was on the way, would we beat the rain back?

On two occasions on the return I've maintained momentum through a dip and onto the up and decided to test my legs and put a bit of hurt into the legs of the others before the last pinch. Approaching Nankervis Rd. I've revisited the plan and determined that it was viable. Moving to the front before dropping the chain to the 39 I've led the troops into the last climb. As the road started its upward journey I've gone to rise out of the saddle only to have the legs say "you've gotta be kidding, right?". They were right and the bum stayed where it was. As the metres slowly disappeared under the wheels the legs stopped their whining and the speed picked up. Feeling capable, but still

sitting, I've given it all I could and managed to crest the top with a break over the others. Too much spent on the climb and despite pushing it down to the final turn it was all back together as we turned into Greens Rd. for home.

Having spent all the biscuits I'd brought with me I've delivered the train to the last corner where Rob and Guy jumped with Phil and then Rob Graham in pursuit. In the wash up Guy just got over Rob, Phil holding on to take third.

Figures for the race: 50.52k @ 35.7kph in 1:24:50

The 2007 Alpine Classic

Barry Robertson

Keith, I rode it last year, (130 km in 40 +degree heat). My 2007 good news story is that I didn't ride it this year!!!.

Ian Smith et al

The forecast for Falls Creek was min 7, max 8 with isolated showers in the Alpine region - a contrast from last year's heat wave. So with arm warmers on and rain jacket in the pocket I set off with Matt White for another attempt. We met up with Ian Milner and Phil Tattersall at the start (06.20) and quite a few other Eastern riders were spotted – although not all were in Eastern gear. (Contact Su Pretto for all the Eastern cycling kit guys!)

After struggling last year in the heat I thought I would take it easy up Tawonga for the first time. Some of the trees have already begun regrowth since the fires a few weeks ago – the vivid green standing out against the black background of the burnt forest.

At the top we said goodbye to Il Falco (Ian M) and Il Falco jnr (Matt W) as they disappeared down the slope.

We regrouped and at the first stop at Mt Beauty to refill the bidons we spotted Peter Howard who started 20 mins after us – although it must have taken us at least 10 minutes to get out of the starting chute such was the congestion at Bright.

The climb up Falls was uneventful (for us) and the weather looked fine towards the top. Quentin Frayne was repairing a puncture as we passed but declined any assistance from us or brother Nigel. There seemed to be a surprisingly large number of punctures this year for some reason – happily I wasn't included. The temperature gauge at Howmans Gap said 11 degrees but it didn't feel that cool with the morning sun and no breeze.

And so it was very pleasant at the top of Falls Creek. A couple more Eastern sightings - Nick Bird and Nigel Kimber just as we left – (he'd punctured)

Another easy descent from Falls as it was very busy (with bikes) – more so than other years I think. Between Bogong and Falls I recall seeing David Casey, Dale Thompson and Andrew Dick on the 130 km ride – all looking good. Heading up towards Bogong were Neil Wray, John Macleod and Tom O'Malley looking fine in their Eastern gear. A quick stop at Mt Beauty to thank Phil's daughters for the rousing reception and off to tackle Tawonga Gap again. Once again the memory of last year made us ride within ourselves but with the temperature in the mid twenties there were very few people stopped or walking as there was one year ago. The severe drought meant there was just a dribble from the spring half way up – certainly not sufficient to fill the many bidons of the riders stopped there last year.

Over the top of Tawonga and another superb decent. A tailwind let us practice our handicap riding and put paid to three or four riders who thought they were good enough to stay with the Eastern train.

Bright for lunch at 12. 10 pm. Still feeling good at this stage but Buffalo awaits.

We had a quick stop at the motel so I refilled the Berocca canister with Staminade powder and dumped my jacket, but kept the arm warmers just in case.

Another steady climb in perfect conditions. As we approached the water stop with 8 km to go my feet were starting to numb so it was a very welcome stop although we didn't need fluids. A few more Eastern riders were spotted already on the descent – Tony Chandler, Roman Suran and Rudy Joosten. Not quite sure of the order or where exactly we saw them – maybe I wasn't feeling as good as I thought.

Over the top and a very welcome downhill and a short ride to the chalet where we were supplied with chocolate cake and the ice creams we'd only heard about last year.

Eastern riders included new member Matt Cornford looking quite comfortable, but very happy it was all downhill from here. The four of us set off with Nigel Kimber but Nigel wanted a few mementos of the occasion and stopped to take pictures. With Il Falco and Il Falco jnr showing us the way down he was never going to catch us.

This year, instead of being at Mt Beauty, the photo spot was at the bottom of Buffalo – at least we had the time to do up the jerseys and smile.

That left only six km to go on relatively flat roads although with the slight head wind any rises in the road were not very welcome. The Eastern welcoming committee came out to greet us on the run into Bright – Thanks Steve Short and Peter Wykes.

All four of us finished at 16. 03 for a ride time of 8. 24. I still felt pretty good after the finish – much better than the previous 200 km and certainly much better than 130 km last year. Roll on 2008

Thanks Matt, Phil and Ian - you made the ride very enjoyable.

Nigel Frayne

Well, where do you start? For me it was a few months back when the training rides got harder and steeper. To that end I want to acknowledge the continued encouragement and knowledge of my riding 'buddies'; Helen (for the Sunday recovery rides), Tim, Nick, Tony, and especially brother Quentin. Without the constant challenge of holding their wheels, watching and learning from their skill during the year I would never have made it over the 200k on my first attempt. The weather gods smiled down on us this year and after surviving last year's 140k horror show in the 46 degree heat wave I felt pretty confident I was ready for this one.

So, I'm all kitted up with food (4 Gels and lots of snakes), 2 bidons (one Gatorade, one water) and extra clothing (vest and arms), I roll down to the rendezvous point at the 0620 hrs start line. Thousands of riders but none of my planned riding partners. Hmm, good start. I head for the front of the line and see brother Q arriving. He's just downed a Neurofin for breakfast - and it got worse for him as the morning progressed. Bummer! We came across Tony just outside Bright and he joined us. I was feeling good but have had it

drummed into me, 'don't go out too hard'. Q and Tony were a bit sprightly for me so I decided to fall back. Pretty soon I was rolling in among the nameless faces of the throng working our way up the first climb, Tawonga Gap Part 1 probably averaging 13 - 14 kph.

No problems keeping a steady pace up and over though already I was ready to remove the singlet - phew, hot work! Still it was handy for the fast descent down the other side. One problem with enjoying quick descents is passing other riders holding the middle of the road. Why do they do that? My max down there was 66.3kph so I'm sure I was overtaking some of them by 20 - 30kph. Then you're on the white line coming into right handers or having to cross in front of them safely ;- for left handers. Still, it felt quite safe and no close shaves or incidents encountered.

At the bottom we take the left turn and roll out through the valley loop to Mt Beauty. I love that loop! It's an easy roll and combined with some co-operative riders you can get a nice train going to minimise the cross winds. Arriving at the 'service park' in good shape I jettisoned the singlet and refilled both bidons - which I had steadily drunk. A quick visit to the loo and off we go with a yeast bun in hand turning left and immediately start the climb up Falls Creek. Not enjoying the bun so offer it to the ravens that are circling overhead waiting for riders to drop ;-)

A few kms into the climb I am overtaken by 3 Eastern Vets, my racing club, so I up my pace and join them for a chat. It's all about finding the right sustainable pace isn't it? Now I look back on it the extra 1 kph that we were doing in that bunch of 4 proved a handy boost for my overall ride time. If I'd been alone at that point who knows how long I'd have taken. Three quarters of the way up we come round a bend and there's Quentin with his bike upside down repairing a flat. No point waiting since as soon as he gets going he'll leave me for dead. Or so I thought. Already the front of the peloton are descending with that clattering thundery whoosh. Why are they all smiling?

The Falls climb is a nice one as there are various false flats and short descents to break up the climbing. That works for me. Gradually I have moved away ahead of my Vets buddies keeping a comfortable pace up the last steady climb to the next 'service park'. Same routine as before, loo and bidon refills but also grab one of the excellent fruit muffins and a banana. As usual Audax has things beautifully set up for us. I see Tim and rush out to call him but he's away. I dash for the bike to try to catch him but have to put on the vest and arms - it's quite nippy up there. Just as I'm about to descend I notice I've left the bidons on the table. Idiot! That could have been one ugly mistake. By the time I collect them Tim's well gone so I enjoy the descent mostly alone apart from one section where I follow Ian Milner's (another Eastern Vet) wheel for a while. Wow for a big guy he doesn't fear the quick stuff! I keep looking for Quentin and don't see him for way too long, still climbing up with a long face - he's had a second flat. Some days. . . .

As I near the bottom I see there are still riders starting the climb. Hmm, so maybe that's why the front riders smile but I dare not, there's still way too far to go for contentedness. Anyway I remember that most of them are from the 0640 hrs start so are already 20 minutes behind us. With an eye to the horizon and memories of Tawonga Gap part II with its melting tar blisters popping under my wheels still in my mind from last year, I reach for the first of my Gels. I reach the base of the climb, remove the vest and arms covers and get into a groove sitting on about 12 -13 kph. Feeling pretty good. After a timeless period I sense a rider in red and yellow (the Vets jersey colours) passing on my right - I exclaim, "not those bloody Vets stalking me again"! A bemused voice comes back at me, "you okay mate? You seem a bit delirious". Oops, it's not the Vets, maybe I am losing it.

Like the many riders I spent time with over the course of the day this fellow was friendly and in good humour. This year I was able to enjoy this aspect of the ride mainly due to the comfort zone I was riding in. At no point was I stressed to the point of not being able to enjoy a friendly conversation. In fact, managing to breathe in through the nose all the way meant I arrived home in so much better shape than last year's open mouthed gasping and huffing and blowing. There's so much to learn about this riding caper.

Anyway, making a long story longer, Tawonga Gap part II has been conquered - wow only one more climb to go - hmm, but it is Buffalo. . . . keep safe dude. The long descent down the other side is full of sweeping bends and only one or two hairpins so the brake blocks stay pretty cool. Once again a team up with another co-operative rider and we take turns sheltering from the increasing head wind through the valley and back into Bright. Fabulous stuff! Only 70 km to go - 70!!! Ouch that's a ride in itself.

I drop and go at the 'service park' and forgo the goodies laid out there and make a quick detour for the apartment where I have stashed a nice cold Staminade in the fridge. The 15 minutes it takes to down it, swallow a Gel and refill the 2 bidons for the third time (1 Gator, 1 water), off load the vest, singlet and arm covers is well spent and I feel fresh as I climb aboard the trusty steed and head for the final hill, er, call that mountain, have to maintain respect for the ones that can hurt you. Somehow I stumble across Tim and other riding buddy Nick, who I hadn't seen all day. I join their train of 6 riders and we speed for the base of the final climb.

Those few pinches before you reach the Gatehouse are quite fun aren't they? Our group breaks up and I see Nick and two others move ahead. I'm alone in the middle and I notice Tim has found a slower pace with the other two in tow. Okay, time to find that groove again. 12 kph seems about right, sticking to the saddle until the legs start to really burn at which point I stand on the pedals and picture Lance bouncing his way to the top of l'Alpe d'Huez. Dream on mate . . . more delirium setting in? And so it goes for what seems like an eternity, up and around and around again. However

the pace is still a steady 12 - 13 kph and I see a blue jersey ahead. Nick? No must be a mirage. As I get closer and closer we arrive at the Water stop. It is Nick and he stops for a squirt down and refills. This is my first 'yardstick' within the 20km climb so I know it's only 8 km to go, I prefer to keep moving. If I stop now I might not get going again.

Incredible! I've reached the Gap and start falling over the other side. Oh what relief to the legs. Those last 3 kms of the climb are the first I'd started to feel real discomfort and the legs are almost gone. Now it's just a couple of kms across the basin to the Chalet and those ice creams! When I pull in to service there are the wonderful Audax volunteers, clapping and cheering each rider as they arrive. One comes over and offers to take out my drop and go slip from the sweaty plastic bag in the back pocket of my jersey. This is great stuff. I find a chair and settle in with dreamed of icy pole for which the sensation of eating doesn't disappoint. Nick joins me with some sickly kind of rich caramel slice thing - looks good, I want one of them!

However, eating orgy is curtailed as Tim arrives. He's on a mission - "hey you guys there's PBs up for grabs here". He's out to break the 9 hour barrier. We remount the steeds and head for the descent. Somehow we get split up, Tim flies through the Gap and heads downhill. Nick is a bit behind with me bringing up the rear. Just as I hit the Gap a bloody Transit Van takes off and I'm stuck behind. Braking braking - it refuses to pass Nick and get off my planet. My descent is getting stolen away. Every left hander he cuts sending dust and stones into my face - puking exhaust into my nostrils. This is ugly. Should I break all the rules and pass him? No chance, there are too many riders still coming up and other traffic weaving in and out of them. Hazards a plenty - and not fair to the Audax organisers. I'm doomed and pull back out of the stench. We roll up behind a BMW crawling along taking videos of the riders coming up. Oh dear!

By the time they pull off we are almost at the Gatehouse and the descent of Buffalo has to be shelved until next year. The drag back in to Bright is a slick affair with Nick rolling over and doing some strong turns into the wind. Another rider joins in and then we catch up Tim, who also joins in. We're cruising on 33 - 35 kph until my turn comes around at which point we drop to 28. The legs are gone. The other lads drag me home with one last big push along the boulevard and into Bright. You bewdy! It's done.

We stamp the clock at 1537 hrs, 9 hrs 17 min after the 0620 hrs start. Tim has blitzed his PB with an 8 hr 57 min total time as he started at 0640 hrs.

My stats:

Total time	9 hrs 17 min
Ride time	8 hrs 29 min
Rest time	48 min (hmm, can shave some off that next year!)
Ave speed	23.0 kph
Max speed	66.3 kph
Distance	194.8 km

4 bidons water; 4 bidons Gatorade; 600 ml Staminade; 2 GU gels; 1/2 yeast bun; 1 fruit muffin; 1 icy pole; 1/2 nasty caramel slice and a handful of All Natural snakes.

My first 200 - very satisfying - bring on next year.
Ciao.

Quentin Frayne

A bit of a tale of woe from me this year!

I'd spent the two weeks prior to the AC trying to dodge a mean virus that had run through the family. Dragged myself to the start of the 6:20 am 200 km with a headache that had kept me awake since 2 or 3 am. Had a Nurofen already under the belt with breakfast - no, not a good way to start! Rode OK until two flats at about 6 km from Falls (when a swag of Eastern riders with Ians Milner and Smith setting the pace came past offering commiserations) . . . and again 2 km later . . . which slowed things down considerably (methinks a dodgy replacement tube there). Proceeded to bonk (despite consuming what seemed more than adequate fuel) with 2km to go to falls, and decided Bright would be the end of my day, if I could manage to drag myself back there. Another Nurofen at Falls Ck and a fun descent (a boy has to have SOME fun). Got through severe, ride-stopping cramps after the descent from Falls and crawled up Tawonga without stopping. Back in Bright after 130 km in 6 hr 35 total time for a ride time of 5 hr 22. Home to bed. Not what you would call a joyous day out on the bike. Fancy finishing the 200 in last year's heat and a DNF in 07's perfect conditions!

Oh well, bring on 2008 I say. Lots of PBs that I know of. Hope everyone enjoyed the day. Audax were sensational in their

Peter Doonan

January 25 - 110 km **Bright - Mt Hotham and return**. Great ride ! Absolutely out of the box weather - calm and mild - and lovely quiet road - saw only 1/2 dozen cars for the entire ride. Rode easy out to Harrierville, past the site of the school house (where I was born) then started the climb steeply immediately after the church (where I was christened), very steep at The Meg, flatish for ~8 km until the ski resort entry then a series of v. steep steps to the top, inc some short sharp downhills. Used mostly 23 and 25 cogs.

Very exposed past the Dargo turnoff, with largish cliffs, big drops and scree on the road surface, and I got a mild but definite sense of vertigo looking over the edge. Quick stop at the top then headed back. The 1st part of the (unfamiliar) descent is fairly intimidating so I didn't let it rip - only 79 kph max which is pretty ordinary compared to the alleged top speed of Stuart O'Grady of >100 kph down here. As the Alpine is only a couple of days away, kept the whole thing in check as much as possible and finished fresh. 4 hours (exactly) ride time. Really enjoyable and satisfying to have finally done it !

January 27 - **140 km Alpine** (actual distance ~136 km). Marvellous day out. Mild conditions although a bit windy, and heaps cooler than last year. Went steady

out, used the 25 cog for ~200 m on the 1st Tawonga climb - the only time it got touched all day as it turned out. Nice quick descent, tapped around Mt Beauty then back up Tawonga in the 23/21/19 - very comfortable and enjoying myself. Found myself #1 on the road about 1 km from the top. Ripping descent and had a close call - fully committed into a RH bend, coming into the apex, spot 2 'tools' wobbling up the climb in the RH lane and had to stand the bike up to thread the needle between them and the LH exit line. Had a good verbal vent at them, which was probably lost in the wind but made me feel a bit better. If nothing else, it gave me a useful adrenalin shot!

Leisurely stop at Bright allowed 2 guys to catch up (both had short "throw and go" stops), who I caught up with again just out of Bright, tried to work with them but I dropped them (unintentionally) on the 1st tiny climb. Nice pace up Mt Buffalo in 23/21, feeling serene and solitary as I didn't see another ascending cyclist (the last-placed 70 km rider) until 1/2 way up. Fantastic sight of hundreds of beautiful vintage Harleys and Indians descending took my mind off things. Quick stop at The Chalet - cold - then another fast descent. Passed the 2nd-placed rider about ~25 mins behind me, overtook two old Harleys near the top (man, these things are gorgeous but only have about a 2 degree lean angle before something scrapes), started cramping down the inner thighs quite badly 1/2 way down (should have drunk more at the Bright and Chalet stops) so had to back off and keep the legs rolling without pressure. Good pace into Bright and finished in 4 hours 50 mins ride time - ave 28.2 kph. Other than the cramps at the end, felt really good and positive throughout.

Great couple of days riding.

Tony Chandler

I had a great day doing the Alpine classic. I left with the first bunch at 6. 20 am and we set a good pace out to Tawonga Gap. Most of the time we were sitting just under 40 kph until we started the climb. I went over the top with only 10-15 riders in front of me but didn't descend into Tawonga very well and was caught by about 5 or 6 people. On the climb from Mount Beauty up to Falls Creek I went pretty well to be around 10-15th person up to the checkpoint I passed some of the guys who went too hard up Tawonga Gap but a few got past me too. I did a better job of descending this time and only one person caught me before Mount Beauty.

On the climb back up Tawonga Gap I was able to maintain a solid 16-17 kph and was well on track to break my target time of 7 hrs to complete the course. However at the bottom of Tawonga Gap on the flat section back to Bright I broke a spoke on the rear wheel. I was able to get back to the checkpoint and waited for my wife to bring me a spare wheel from the B and B where we were staying. This cost me a little over 40 minutes at the checkpoint. People I had passed on the ascent of Falls Creek passed me as I sat waiting. When I got going again I was pretty frustrated and pressed hard to the top of Mt Buffalo and passed a lot

of people again, I tried to maintain 16-17 kph on the climb but the last kilometre I started to tire and dropped to 14-15. By the time I got to the top I had just over 50 minutes to get back to Bright from the checkpoint at the Chalet. I went down as fast as I could trying to recall how Phil Anderson descended on the training camp in November. I called out "go Eastern" to a bunch of Eastern riders who were coming up the mountain as I went down. By the time I got over the last rise on the way back to Bright I ran out of steam.

Fortunately I was able to get on to the back of a bunch of riders who started at 6. 40 and they towed me back. One of them asked me what time I started, when I told him 6. 20 he said to the others "eh we're 20 minutes up on him". I clenched my teeth and said nothing, I was just glad for some help as I had pretty much been riding alone from the top of Falls Creek.

My ride time for 200 km was 6 hrs 56 min. At an average of 28.3 kph.

Total time 7 hrs 40 min. Busting a spoke cost me 40 minutes, but I still had a great day.

Liz Randall

Hadn't entered originally, but finally paid and was therefore legal. But a poorly positioned new saddle caused back (not butt) pain+++ and so I stopped about 2-3 km shy of the top. Turned round and after a sojourn at the Mt Beauty bakery rode back with John Macleod, Graham Cadd, Alan Cunneen and Juanita Stumbles.

Best part? . . the TT effort on the way home from the base of Tawonga gap and Bright with Juanita and someone from Ballarat. Woo! Hoo!

Nick Bird

Okay, the idea started last year when I had dreams of improving my climbing and Carl mentioned the Alpine would be a good challenge.

Then I was at the Blackburn dinner and the guy opposite me asked if I was doing the Alpine, and I said yes. He asked if I had entered and he told me entries had closed.

Now, this was months ago. I thought, oh well that's that idea; looks like I am not doing the Alpine. Fortunately or unfortunately for me one of Lawrence's students had an invite that he didn't want and I suddenly had a ticket. Hoorah for Lawrence.

Carl had done lots of base with me and Lawrence has had me do lots of climbing. I had done all the preparation all I could physically do but like most people, I would always like to have done more, but with work and extra commitments, I can only do what I can do with the time, the body and muscles I have.

Then the bushfires started, and I thought the event was going to be cancelled. But I kept training, secretly thinking the thing wasn't going ahead; and I guess sort of hoping it was going to be canned. And as the event approached, the worse I felt, 'oh god, not going to make it, ahh I am not ready for this; not ready at all!

The Alpine has forced me to work to the goal of completing it. Going up hills and riding new places, and learning the art of climbing better has helped me become more familiar with extra training venues and other aspects to life fitness via the bike, which is all good.

I am finally getting used to sharing the roads with mad car drivers, which is a good thing. But I still don't like 6 am rides and will do everything in my power to avoid them.

The lead up hasn't been that good, though- some poor form in races and plummeting 1:20 times hasn't helped the confidence thing; and putting on three kg over Christmas certainly hasn't helped achieve the confidence boost to complete an event as difficult as the Alpine.

But I have been on the saddle as per my programme, so thought at least I have done what's meant to be done for an event like this, well to prepare me anyway.

So like it or lump it, the event is going ahead and off I go to Bright, I must go. Okay on the way, sharing the car with an a grader who predicted I finish the ride in eleven hours, which I thought fabulous because that means I will make the cut off of thirteen, which I was aiming for. And he is in a grade so he must know.

Okay drove up to Bright on the Friday, and stayed at Myrtleford (30 km) out of Bright because I couldn't get accommodation in Bright city.

This meant I had to get up 30 minutes earlier than other people. I rocked up at the motel around 6 pm and asked for dinner in their restaurant, when the person said that the restaurant is booked. I thought this wasn't possible, what is this Lygon Street?

So off to the main street in a town, which sort of looked like the town in Flying Doctors, looking for a carb meal.

Now for those of you who don't know me I can be described as the accidental tourist from hell. I am particular about food, to say the least. I was truly in hell and kicking myself for being disorganised. I have Lawrence's voice in my head (Lawrence is my cycling coach) saying remember have a good meal on the Friday night.

Found a pizza place, which looked like a glorified Milk Bar. There were a bunch of hooligans out the front smoking, which added to the whole atmosphere . I was not in Smith Street that's for sure.

Great, I need to eat a solid meal and I am stuck in town for a crappy pizza, hardly the most nutritious food but at least full of carbs. Anyway they had a pasta menu and I thought I would give it a try. The lady cooked me a lovely wonderful pasta dish and I had some garlic bread. It was nice.

This is food I don't normally eat and I found it a bit rich, but treated it as a treat. So had heaps to eat including sweats and went back to the motel and decided to pump up the tyres and get the bike ready. Blew a valve, changed the tube, checked the bolts and was ready for the 200 km dash in the mountains.

I crashed to bed and had a good sleep and woke up at 4:45 am for breakfast, which included four bits of toast, two wheat bix, and orange juice.

Got ready, showered and drove to Bright arriving at 5:30 am. Had no idea where to go, so I followed the other cars to the car parking area. After discussions with the other cyclists around me, I decided to wear a wind vest and arm warmers. I am one of these people that would rather overheat than freeze. I hate being cold. And given it was eight degrees in Falls Creek, I thought I am going to freeze to death if not die from climbing the damn things.

I rocked up to the starting area; again no idea where to go but followed the bikes.

Opposite was a restaurant hijacked by Audax, so I went in, and the lady said ten bucks for breakfast. I thought I have already had breakfast but could do with a coffee.

Anyway paid my ten dollars and because I am mental and from Horsham (I have to eat because I paid for it) I had to get my moneys worth, so forced down cornflakes, coffee and orange juice.

Okay totally full and worried about where I was going to take a slash on the mountains with all of this fluid on board. Glad I didn't have scales near by because I think if I had weighed myself at this stage I would have gone home! And believe me, I have been so wound up over my weight lately, I would have driven back to Melbourne if I had blown up from all this carb loading.

Before I knew it, the 6:20s had left and it was time for us 6:40s to take off. I was at the start line and a bloke commented on my granny gears (I had some easy gears installed on my bike for this event).

He reckoned I won't use it till Buffalo (the last climb) I said I had no idea but was glad I had them as I was pushing 84 kg up the hill, plus my gear and my bike. I reckon a total weight of around 100 kg. I got the idea of changing my gears from the aboc climbing camp. I sore how Jess climbed Hotham wonderfully and she was glad she had the extra gears, so I thought I will do it, spinning and grinning is better than crying and stalling.

Yeah I am not a girl but I want the gear there to save my legs as my legs aren't as strong as they should be and I need that granny gear. I did notice around me, the starting area was full of whippets, guys that looked like they were around 70 kg. In an instant I was regretting the food I had eaten over Xmas, and secretly hated them all for being skinny!

And off we went. Heart rate monitor was not working for the first 30km. Wasn't too stressed as hadn't started climbing yet. After fiddling (stupid polar), it finally clicked in. Was riding with a group of guys doing around 36 km and my HR was a nice 110, a nice warm up for the hills I thought. Was chatting with some of the guys, most who had ridden the 200 before. They thought I would be okay but explained the importance of pacing.

And this reinforced what Lawrence has been saying to me the last few weeks. "Remember Nick it's not a race; it's an endurance event."

The first climb began – Tawonga Gap. I had developed a methodology for myself to help me climb, it's an acronym – HRC- Heart rate, rhythm and cadence. I know it seems ridiculous but I have been known to kill myself early so I had to keep reinforcing the distance I had to go, and what I needed to do to get there. Rhythm and core stability were the issues for me today, as I wanted to avoid wasting energy and cramping. I had HR limits in my mind and I wasn't to reach them and if I did I had to minimise the time I was in these limits.

I have been known for not starting well, and truthfully, Tawonga Gap was not different in that respect. In fact it was one of the worst climbs of the day for me.

The climb started out of nowhere. Everyone was passing me – literally. Grinding, grinding and felt like I was getting nowhere, legs as sore as hell, ahhh screaming inside, regurgitating cornflakes and indigestion- yuk!

"remember Nick it is not a race," so I was getting my head around that, looked down, legs were not spinning, so went down several gears to one of my easiest gears. Heart rate was 170 – way above what it should have been for a long day.

Okay was panicking, climb WAS not going well. Regretting a big breakfast as I could feel breakfast sitting there and making me almost sick. I started to cramp in the left quad- ouch. At this stage I was off the seat.

I grinded away, I started spinning the legs, my heart rate started to come down and I began to maintain my core and stroke and started feeling good. Okay I started climbing. A steep section approached, I again got off the seat and was grimacing – a lady next to me said, it was early for me to be grimacing, I told her, I was warming up, and I thought concentrate on what you are doing, and thought something else but unwilling to publicly broadcast it on the net!

Climb over, and I noticed I was in the granny gear. Not a good start Nick- a long way to go. At this stage I was concerned that I was NOT going to make the 200. There was a stop at Tawonga Gap but it wasn't a card puncher, so I continued on to spin the pain out of my legs. It was clear I wasn't warm for the climb, and I thought I am fitter than this, I have done the training, knuckle down and I'll be okay.

Span the legs down the descent and on the flat, in and out of the big chain ring, down in the drops because I didn't want to become cold, and I wasn't going to freeze on the flat and after what I had been through at Tawonga Gap, I wanted to make sure I was nicely warmed up. I wanted to see my Hr rise on the flat and get pumped for what awaited me, a 30km climb at Falls Creek. And I have climbed Falls Creek before in a climbing session with my mate Brian, and it was bloody hard, especially the last 7-10 kms.

I Stopped at Mount Beauty for a pea and a bun then off to Falls Creek. I wasn't hungry and after just digesting breakfast I didn't feel like any food at all. But Lawrence told me to keep eating no matter what so in the mouth goes a bun and a banana, and some extra fluids.

Off to the Falls Creek climb, sat on the seat, span the legs and climbed the hill beautifully, maintaining my heart rate at around 160 for most of the climb, my rhythm felt good and when I was off the seat, I maintained my core and felt comfortable.

Legs were not hurting at all. Indeed it was not as hard as the Wall. I wasn't going fast but was passing lots of people, which was hairy at times because most riders didn't stay to the left. I think all the good climbers were well ahead of me and I was at the back with people wobbling all over the road, which after doing Hotham I fully understand their pain. Having being there myself, I just tried not to get knocked by them, which meant I really had to look around me, not just ahead, great another thing to worry about.

A guy almost knocked me off whilst he was taking a drink. He swung out at least six feet, right across the road. I was off the seat when this happened and avoided an accident by braking. , which is an interesting concept when climbing.

Falls Creek was the easiest climb for the day I thought. It was a breeze.

Got to the top, had some food- forced some down, replenished fluids and down to Mount Beauty again via Tawonga Gap. Descending down Falls was nice, but I was conscious of many people passing me descending. I have to work at going faster down hills, it's quite an art really. The max speed I reached was 64. 2 KM, which is a PB for me, but slow for someone wanting to race better.

Going up Tawonga Gap again wasn't particularly easy, but the second half of the climb was a lot easier. Nearly got knocked off by a car who left me no room but I survived. The other cyclists abused the driver. I was more concerned about getting up the hill than some idiot who doesn't know how to drive. And was conscious of what had happened in a C grade race at Glenvale where a rider abused a driver and six riders got disqualified- so I am thinking we are lucky to have the roads and keep my thoughts to myself. But the driver was being an idiot. But the guys who mouthed the driver weren't much better. For once I was not the centre of the dramas.

Back to Bright for a quick lunch and by the way Audax has great food and it is plentiful, you don't really need to carry much on you, just emergency jelly beans for a hypo I suggest.

After what I had gone through in the first climb by being cold, I wasn't going to sit around and chat. I arrived at the stops ate, peed, drank and filled up the bottles and off I went. For me, this was the only way I as going to make the Audax. Seriously, once I am cold, my legs are dead, and recovering and regaining that rhythm is hard for me.

Then reluctantly off to Mount Buffalo. I mean reluctantly. It is through sheer mental strength that I got back on the bike. I was very comfortable after lunch and could see my car in the car park, and was tempted to call it a day.

Legs were starting to feel really sore by now. I felt like I had done sets and sets of weights. I am thinking perhaps I went too hard up Falls Creek. Oh well not much I can do now but pedal. And pedalling I was.

Began the climb up Buffalo, and I immediately knew this was going to be the hardest. Legs weren't spinning and lots of people passing me. I had little rhythm and my heart rate was dropping to 130, which meant I was stuffed. Oh oh what now?

Never give up; never surrender!

Emergency – should call Lawrence, but what can she do, here I am blowing up and nowhere to go but up. I certainly wasn't going to quit that's for sure. That was not an option. To quit, they would have to take me off in an ambulance.

I was sucking on water bottle like there was no tomorrow. The bottles, which I filled with cordial at lunch was really sweat; it was foul, and I had two water bottles full of the stuff. Totally my fault – did not check it. And it was mixed with my anti-cramping powder- big big mistake. Never do this- I was cursing myself! Bloody idiot!

Reluctantly I was drinking it, but in many ways it was making me feel worse. Not climbing well at all. In the second gear from the top and considering using granny but was thinking, don't do it Nick, don't be gutless, be a man god damn it! This gear is for an emergency, is this an emergency? Ride through the pain you wimp.

Thankfully there was an Audax water cart half way up the mountain. I stopped and got my bottles filled with water, tipped the cordial out and refused to put anything but water in my water bottles. At this stage I should have had some jelly beans or something as I knew my HR was low, which is a sign of a hypo for me. I had a headache and was extremely thirsty. My legs, well can't describe how they felt, except they were getting worse by the minute. The headache persisted.

Continued to climb, but not doing well, off the seat, on the seat, passed by girls, getting worse, getting much much worse. I really wasn't spinning, I had no rhythm and my core stability was all over the place. My back was aching and my feet were burning. The feet thing was totally new. What now?

Okay 3 km to go before the end of the climb and I became dizzy and my legs weren't moving, toes are now numb. I stopped, had a bag of jellybeans and drank some water. , and then straight back on the bike.

Began to climb again and felt much much better, still not quite the same but at least got to the top with a decent cadence and heart rate and rhythm. Towards the top I started to find a rhythm and was pedalling well, and thought bring it on, can climb another few kms.

Finally reached the chalet at Buffalo and thought oh no more food!

Had a quick bite to eat, and then down the mountain back to Bright. During the descent began to cramp again- which was odd. But had stopped with the anti cramping powder but at this stage didn't want any flavour in my water bottles. Sort of hard to ride it out when you are descending Mount Buffalo but thankfully it disappeared. I almost had to stop. But mostly the climbs were over. I just sat in the drops and practiced my descending. Had no one to follow really as there were riders everywhere so made my own line.

On the flat out of Buffalo I was fully recovered and felt good, sat with some guys who were doing 44 kph into Bright. I was enjoying the ride but got dropped, or just gave up. It's not a race Nick. Sat at my own pace (36) into town and made the finish line, and then clocked the card with a time of nine hours.

I made it! I did it!

Went and got my medal (an extra \$10), I want it on my mantle so I can grandstand to my friends for the next few weeks, who don't understand 200 km of hills is hard, well hard for me anyway.

Wow- it was over. Today Sunday, I can barely walk but I have no regrets.

It was fun, challenging and most of all rewarding. Next year, I will be more careful what I put in my water bottles, I will work more on my endurance to improve the Buffalo climb, and I will carry less with me as the Audax food was more than adequate. In fact it was superb. Compared to other big cycling events, it is so well organised.

I used some anti cramping powder in my bottles, which really helped as I had been cramping in training and races. I only had two cramps over the day, which is pretty good. Cramps can be debilitating and I thought that could really get me.

My key advice is to know your heart rate zones, and use them for the event. Looking at my HR really helped me and I knew what I was doing and how I was doing it.

Yeah it's not a race; you are racing against yourself. I had no idea what time I was going to get except my aim was to do it in the qualifying time of 13 hours. Which until yesterday I wasn't sure if I was going to make it.

So now I have my medal, which is on my mantle and my jersey to say hey I did it, I'm proud of riding the Audax and hopefully there will many more Audax Alpine's for me. But for an event like this you have to train hard, I sore people pull out because they hadn't prepared. Lawrence has made sure I had done the work I needed to do to get me up those bloody mountains.

Yes a bit heavier, yes a bit slower, but a result I can build on. I recommend anyone who wants to achieve a fitness goal to do the Alpine, it is well worth it in the end. For me it was like attempting the Frankston to Melbourne Marathon. Except this time I completed it.

Nick's Alpine Advice: This is what I did for my first Alpine! It is by no means to be followed verbatim, but it is my advice only and it worked for me. This information does not reflect the opinions of aboc, just me only.

- preparation/training under guidance of a coach for at least 12 weeks;
- practice core strength and climbing technique on a stepper at the gym (30 minutes for four weeks before the event) , this really helped me (but I am particularly uncoordinated;
- heart rate monitor, including cadence;
- anti cramping powder (if you are prone to cramping) I placed extra powder in glad sandwich bags- mix with water not cordial;
- anti rash cream, apply before the event, hadn't used it before but a must for these distances- rally helped;
- spare tube/pump (of course);
- carry two large water bottles;
- change tyres two weeks before the event;
- install granny gears two- three weeks before the event;
- get bike fully serviced three weeks before event;

- carb load three days before;
- pacing- don't be tempted to try to keep up with fitter riders, climb at your own pace;
- be very conscious of struggling riders around you, they can be all over the road;
- carry two small packets of glucogel jelly beans;
- fifty dollars (emergency money));
- eat breakfast but be used to riding with lots of food in your stomach – maybe practice on a training ride, what it is going to feel like, or just don't eat too much;
- keep drinking and eating during the day even if you aren't hungry or thirsty;
- acknowledge signs of hypo and address immediately;
- don't be tempted to stop for too long; and,
- go on the aboc climbing camps- recommend at least one before doing the Alpine as

Hotham can mentally prepare you for an event like this. If you have climbed Hotham, you will mentally be ready to tackle Buffalo after Falls Creek and Tawonga Gap. Hotham helped me conquer Buffalo. Compared to Hotham, these mountains are easier, but together are just as hard.



Eastern veterans cycling club

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Newsletter February 17 2007

Graded Scratch Races, Steels Creek , February 10

Ninety three starters for our first road race of the year, shows that our policy of holding road races throughout the year is a popular one. The field may well be the biggest for a road race at Steels Creek. Conditions were pretty tough with a strong southerly making the ride back to the turn hard work, particularly through the open areas a kilometre or so before the turn/finish line. An innovation on the day was to create an additional A grade, A Elite. The top A grade riders raced in this category which allowed a number of the stronger B grade riders to go up into the normal A grade. Previously these B grade riders were on a hiding to nothing when they went up to A grade. The guns still had their race and the those going up having the opportunity to race competitively in A grade.

A Elite had 7 starters, but along the way they must have broken up, Rob Amos had a puncture and the place getters rode in amongst the D grade and almost went un noticed. Guy Green was followed some metres back by Roy Clark with a similar distance back to Mark Wallace. **A Grade** had 12 starters including Quentin Frayne, Kevin Starr (not long ago he was in C grade) and Jeff Pretto as promotees from B grade. Kurt Jensen won the sprint from a very happy Quentin Frayne and Ian Smith.

Even after the promotions to A grade, **B Grade** still had 24 starters. For the most part they stayed together, Craig Everard having a stint out in front for awhile and only one or two dropping off. In the sprint Gary Rosengarten won Bob Lewis, who is always in the mix at the finish, Martin Stalder, another consistent performer and Andrew Finnigan.

Another big field in **C Grade** with 24 starters. In a hectic sprint finish the winner was newcomer Lindy Hayward, from Grant Greenhalgh, David Casey and Graeme Parker. This was an outstanding effort by Lindy in only her fourth race, the other three being at The Loop of a Wednesday morning.

Fourteen starters in **D Grade** including Tim Hall back for his first race after a fall at Yarra Junction a year or so ago. Mark Ferrari won the sprint from Geoff Mackay followed by Tim, showing that although he hasn't been racing he still has the old sprinting ability.

With the tail win out to the turn, Brian Farrell headed off like there was no tomorrow in **E Grade**, quickly reducing the field of 13 down to 10. Brian was too strong in the sprint winning from Ron Stranks and new rider Richard Dobson.

Nigel's Race Report

It was a strange wind that blew Saturday afternoon. According to the Bureau of Meteorology it was coming from the sou'sou'west, according to me it seemed to be swirling around and always coming from in front. Taking the BoM's word for it, it was to be a tail wind out to Steels Creek and a headwind for the return leg.

The handicapper had split a-grade on paper before Rob Amos was given a chance to do it on the road, and it was seven 'elite' cyclists who headed up the road soon after two o'clock to get proceedings under way. Whilst there was no formal plan for the day I was wary of Phil Smith, his antics within the first couple of kilometres of the last road race at Arthur's Creek fresh in my mind. The same

memories must have been in the minds of the others, as no sooner had we crossed the start finish line than the seasoned members of the bunch started rolling it and we raced out to the first turnaround pushing speeds of over 50kph. Sure they may have been gravity and wind assisted, but still pretty darn quick. The high speed didn't stop Phil from having a go on one of the small rises half way out, but the speed differential was too small for him to get clear and he was soon back in the loop.

The return leg went the same way as the outbound one but with a few more riders missing turns in the rotation. The only thing keeping me on was the certain knowledge that the others couldn't possibly keep this pace up for much longer and that it would drop to a more manageable level after the first lap.

It didn't. The second and third laps unfolded in much the same way as the first with the bunch being driven at a speed that made it hard for anybody to jump away. I'm not sure of the strategies of the others, but efforts on the first incline of the third lap and again half way out saw me with two accidental breakaways that had me wondering what to do. Adopting my standard approach (keep going hard enough to make them work to catch me but not so hard that I don't have a kick to stay with the bunch when they catch me) I've waited to be caught. And caught I've been and able to hold on I have been.

The last lap started with a belated bell ringing and an extended neutral zone as members of the group sucked in fluids before putting their noses back to their respective head-stem. Another accidental breakaway over the first hill gave me a half kilometres solitude before Roy Clark has led the others past me. And it was back onto the merry-go-round until Phil had another go on the same stretch of road he hit us on in the first lap, this time it stuck and he has led us into the final turnaround. This was despite some massive efforts by Guy Green, Rob Amos and Roy to keep the bunch from losing contact, one bridging attempt before the drop to the tennis courts by myself didn't achieve a great deal.

Phil finally succumbed to the weight of numbers (and the Southerly) half way back. And that's when the real fun began. Upon catching Phil, Guy has launched the classic counter attack which, unfortunately for him, didn't achieve the desired result as most of us were able to follow him, and those who didn't were soon back on as the attack was aborted. The respite was only momentary as Rob has quickly counter attacked Guy's counter attack, Rob's effort meeting the same end as Guy's. At this point Roy must have figured the timing was right and has countered Rob's counter attack of Guy's counter attack of Phil's initial attack. Again no joy as we all seemed to have enough to react and despite stretching the rubber-band to its limit we all survived till the next time.

A few more attacks by one or another of the others finally saw Tony Chandler's rubber-band snap and he lost contact, completing the race on his own. It was only determination to bring my readers as accurate figures as possible for the race that kept me in touch with the others. A surge by Phil was just that

and my suggestion from second wheel that he keep the pace up so we could get home before the rain, was met with stony silence. We didn't beat the rain, but it was a short shower that hardly wet the road. Somewhere in and amongst all this attacking and counter attacking and rain Rob punctured, putting him out of the race, but not necessarily ending his influence on the potential outcome.

At the foot of the second last incline with Phil Smith leading and me in second wheel Guy Green has made the ultimate move. Roy and Mark Wallace were a tad slow to react but react they did, Phil waited for Rob to come through and I waited for Phil (it was going to be a long wait, time enough to get a left-handed screwdriver).

And that was how it played out, one – two – two, Guy taking the win clear of Roy who out sprinted Mark for second. Twenty metres back Phil did enough to hold off a fast finishing Nigel. With Tony and Rob making their own way back in their own time.

Figures for the race : 63.53k in 1:37:38 for an average of 39.0kph

Results

	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Elite (7)	Guy Green	Roy Clark	Mark Wallace	
Grade (12)	Kurt Jensen	Quentin Frayne	Ian Smith	
I Grade (24)	Gary Rosengarten	Bob Lewis	Martin Stalder	Andrew Finnigan
C Grade (23)	Lindy Hayward	Grant Greenhalgh	David Casey	Graeme Parker
I Grade (14)	Mark Ferrari	Geoff Mackay	Tim Hall	
I Grade (13)	Brian Farrell	Ron Stranks	Richard Dobson	

Officials

Thanks to the our officials of the day, Peter Ransome, Su Pretto, Nick Bird, Tony Power, Russell Ward, Kath Green, plus others who had pulled out and assisted at the finish. The help of Tony Power, who although is a member has only raced about once and Russell Ward, former member and enquired when driving past whether we needed extra officials is very much appreciated. Greg Lipple continues to supervise setting up the course. Greg is doing this job every week and it would help considerably if we could have a volunteer to learn the ropes of setting up our road courses to take a load of Greg's shoulders

Eastern Vets Program

Saturday	February	17	2.00pm	Dunlop Road	Charity Day
Saturday	February	24	2.00pm	Casey Fields	GSR Eastern vs Southern
Monday	February	29	8.00pm	Maroondah Club	Monthly General Meeting
Saturday	March	3	2.00pm	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races

Southern Vets Program

Sunday	February	18	9.00am	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	February	25	9.00am	Healey Road	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	March	4	9.00am	Casey Fields	Club Championships
Sunday	March	11	9.00am	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races

Northern Vets Program

Sunday	February	18	10.00am	Avenel Road Seymour	Handicap
Sunday	February	25	9.30am	National Boulevard	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	March	4	10.00am	Lancefield	Handicap
Sunday	March	11	9.30am	South Gisborne	Graded Scratch Races

RDNS Homeless Persons Christmas Present Fund

It was cancelled last year because of hot weather and it is now on Saturday 17 February at Dunlop Road. \$10 entry, prizes, raffles, BBQ, please come and assist this worthy cause. Eastern has an outstanding record of fund raising more than \$8000 four 'charity days', let us see if we can keep up the good work..

How good are your brakes?

A test on 16 different makes of brake pads carried out by the French, Top Velo, magazine provided some surprising results. The tests were carried out using Mavic Ksyrium rims and measured the stopping distances on both dry and wet asphalt (it doesn't say how fast the bike was travelling however).

Dry: Koolstop DL 13.74 m (2nd), Compagnolo 14.36 m (6th), Shimano Dura Ace 17.14 m (9th)

Wet: Koolstop DL 23.63 m (5th), Compagnolo Record 27.70 (10th), Shimano Dura Ace 40.0 m (14th, 23 m worse than the best, Tektro).

Holden High Country Cycle Challenge

This ride is on March 3 and 4 and includes The Mansfield Dash (58 km out and back to Mansfield) on Saturday morning, 51 km climb up Mt Buller Saturday afternoon and on Sunday 121 km including a descent of Mt Buller with the road closed and a ride out to Jamieson and return. We have been given 3 free entries by the organisers (value \$158 each) which will be raffled/ auctioned on Saturday with the proceeds going to the Homeless Persons Christmas Present Fund. This looks like a challenging weekend and all you 200 km Alpine Classic riders should check it out to see how Mt Buller compares with Falls Creek and Mt Buffalo.

Racing Incidents

An excellent day's racing was marred somewhat by three incidents. Two episodes of offensive language, one in the finishing sprint, another after the finish in the warm down on the Yarra Glen Eltham Road and the other the potentially very dangerous practice of grabbing the handlebars of another rider coming to the turn at the end of a lap. One rider has been fined as a result of the offensive language, the other two have escaped censure because we haven't been able to identify the riders. It is becoming more and more difficult to get permits for road circuits and we have had a number of unfavourable comments about cyclists riding/racing on the Steels Creek circuit. We only need a couple of official complaints and we may no longer be able to race on this circuit.

Guys, this type of behaviour is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated.



Eastern veterans cycling club

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Newsletter March 3 2007

Graded Scratch Races, Casey Fields, Eastern vs Southern , February 24

Well the temperature for a change was in the low 20's, but the wind was it usual gusting best at Casey Fields. If any one is looking for a site for a wind turbine, Casey Fields would be high on the list. All up 137 riders was an excellent turn out for the Summer criterium challenge between Eastern and Southern. Southern's bonus of 5 points in their aggregate was a winner and they out numbered us 71 to 66. A bit of a disappointing turn out from our point of view, we had over 80 Eastern riders at Steels Creek a couple of weeks ago.

After a bit of debate before hand on whether the field should be split, it was decided to stagger the start with D, E and F off first, followed 10 minutes later by A, B and C. The circuit easily accommodated the 137 riders and there appeared not to be any problems when bunches were passing. It does cause problems for the judges however, trying to keep track of the bunches which in the windy conditions soon split up. This is exacerbated by the time taken to complete a lap, such that things can change dramatically from when groups pass the judges until they come around again next time.

A grade saw the ride of the day by Justin Davis, who cleared out from the rest of the field to win by the best part of a lap. Rob Crowe, Rob Amos and Christian Requin were circulating together until the last lap when Rob Crowe decided to get rid of the other two and took off to comfortably take second place. Rob Amos and Christian Requin had a hotly contested sprint for third, which was won by Rob.

Like A grade, **B grade** was evenly matched in numbers and was won by Ron Jacobson in another break away which won one of the rides of the day. Mark Withers was able to hold off Phil Thompson and Tony Mason to take second place..

In **C grade**, Eastern 13 out numbered Southern 8, and featured a break away of 4 riders. Eastern managed to get most of the points, with Phil Pelgrim winning from Ron Chapman, Ian Gillies, who I remember running a place in a similar break against Southern a year or so ago and Greg Walker.

D grade had the biggest field with 34 starters, 20 Eastern and 14 Southern, but Southern managed to get most of the points with a first and second, Jack Carecos and Damian Devereux respectively. Chris Norbury and Graeme Parker kept Eastern in the points with third and fourth.

Southern out numbered Eastern in numbers, 10 to 13 in

E grade, and managed the only clean sweep of the day. Eastern riders had a game plan at the start which was for Brian Farrell and Ronnie Stranks to chase breakaways and leave the sprinting to J C Wilson and others. On the second lap a Southern break was away and the gate closed but Ronnie was up front and chased managing to bring them back. It was a big bunch and lots of mixed capabilities. Brian Farrell put in a big attack and managed to reduce the field to about 13 riders, including 5 Eastern. In the end it was to no avail, with Southern riders finishing in the following order: John Pocock, Rob Polbodetto, Paul Boelen and Dick Verway

At last some joy, despite being out numbered 5 to 16 in

F grade, we managed the first 3 placings. With fairly regular attacks from Southern riders, Phil Cox, Rob Melasecca, Frank Gleeson and one or two others, Keith Bowen and Laurie Bohn spent a lot of the race chasing them down. Coming into the last bend new Eastern rider Tony Renahan flew past Keith Bowen to win comfortably by 10 metres or more from a tiring Keith Bowen, Laurie Bohn and Hugh Greg.

Congratulations to Southern on their convincing win and the friendly commaradie and racing on the day. We look forward to racing at Lang Lang in the winter season, where if memory serves me correctly a year or so ago we managed a narrow win.

Nigel's Race Report

As if the wind at Casey Fields isn't bad enough; on Saturday, for the Eastern v. Southern criterium, it was blowing from the south and bringing with it the wholesome aroma of chicken poo.

A big turnout saw some big fields in the middle grades and decent sized bunches in the lower grades, unfortunately the A-grade turnout wasn't that great with only 15 riders taking on the challenge. Being at Casey Fields, in the Southern heartland, and despite the number of Eastern jerseys outnumbering the number of Southern ones, the majority of the attendees were from the South. In A-grade the score sheet was 8-7 in favour of the Southerners.

The plan had been to ride 12 abreast across the track whilst Rob Amos and Tony Chandler rode off into inter-club history. But with only seven riders (including Tony and Rob) and a neutral first lap this plan was pretty much kiboshed before we started. The next best thing was to have our TT specialist quietly disappear off the front (he's small enough they may just not notice) and ride into inter-club history. Unfortunately they noticed.

The personal plan had been to leave the stronger Eastern riders to try to make their own inter-club history and to simply mark any move by Southern to bring them back. The neutral lap was a bonus, giving me the opportunity of personal glory in that I did my bit at the front - for a whole lap. Ian Smith thought he'd get in early as well and took over once the flag was raised and before it got too serious. But it wasn't long before Phil Smith implemented plan-b and rode off into the stinking wind. There was no urgency from Southern and we were lookin' goood. For a couple of laps, at least.

Then Southern started to bring Phil back by launching a series of bridging attempts. Each attempt was marked by an Eastern rider and didn't last long but it was enough to slowly peg back Phil until a last attempt by Justin Davis (Southern) brought him, his shadow (in this instance - Rob) and the remainder of the bunch onto Phil's wheel. A counter attack by Justin (oh to be young

again) was covered by Phil, but a second surge from Justin was too much for Phil to respond to, leaving him in no-mans land - thirty metres ahead of the bunch and an increasing number of metres behind the diminishing O'Mara jersey of Justin.

It took a few laps before Phil returned to the flock, no Eastern rider was going to bring him in and the Southern guys were content to hold him within reach. This was probably a tactical error on our part, but already the brain was beginning to suffer the effects of oxygen deprivation (or maybe it was chook poop poisoning).

Even with one of their own away Southern set a high pace and continued to attempt to get another rider away. Despite being outnumbered, it was now seven-five, they had one away and we were down two riders who had had to withdraw for one reason and another, we (Rob, Phil, Roy Clarke, Tony, and myself) managed to cover all that was thrown at us and throw in the odd attempt ourselves.

That was until the last lap when things got really serious, Rob Crowe attacked early and with relatively fresh legs was able to get clear and stay clear taking a comfortable second. Next to jump was Christian Requin of Southern, this time Rob was quick enough to cover his wheel and had enough left to out sprint him on the line. Roy Clarke covered the next Southern surge and was also strong enough to take the sprint for a bit of personal, and club, pride. The remainder of us came in in dribs and drabs, leg weary, light headed and chest heavy.

Figures for the race were; 40.3k in 1:02 for an average of 39kph

Results

	First	Second	Third	Fourth	ts E	ts S
15 (7E, 8S)	Justin Davis (S)	Rob Crowe (S)	Rob Amos	Christian Requin (S)	2	9
23 (11E, 12S)	Ron Jacobson (S)	Mark Withers (S)	Phil Thompson	Tony Mason (S)	2	9
21 (13E, 8S)	Phil Pelgrim	Ron Chapman (S)	Ian Gillies	Greg Walker (S)	7	4
34 (20E, 14S)	Jack Carecos (S)	Damian Devereux	Chris Norbury	Graeme Parker	3	8
23 (10E, 13S)	John Pocock (S)	Rob Polbodetto (S)	Paul Boelen (S)	Dick Verway (S)	0	11
21 (5E, 16S)	Tony Renahan	Keith Bowen	Laurie Bohn	Hugh Green (S)	10	1

Officials

Rob Truscott was the man in charge assisted by Keith (Tracker) White and several others as they dropped out during the race, including many Southern riders. Glenn Archer and Steve Fothergill had a good supply of drinks and Ronnie Stranks had the BBQ "fired up", literally when it burst into flames. Thanks to all who helped in any way to make the day a great success.

Eastern Vets Program

Saturday	March	3	2.00pm	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	March	10	2.00pm	Gatwick Drive	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	March	17	2.00pm	Newham	50 km Handicap
Saturday	March	24	2.00pm	Metec	Graded Scratch Races
Monday	March	26	8.00 pm	Maroondah Club	Annual Meeting

Southern Vets Program

Sunday	March	4	9.00am	Casey Fields	Club Championships
Sunday	March	11	9.00am	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	March	18	9.00am	Lakewood Blvd	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	March	25	9.00am	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races

Northern Vets Program

Sunday	March	4	10.00am	Lancefield	Handicap
Sunday	March	11	9.30am	South Gisborne	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	March	18	10.00am	Ballan	Ballan Festival
Sunday	March	25	10.00am	East Trentham	Handicap

Tour of Spain 2007

An invitation to members and partners to join a tour to the **Vuelta 2007**, get to ride in and see Spain, with Alan Cunneen.

The tour dates are from Wednesday September 12th until Monday September 24th 2007, with Graham Baxter Sporting Tours. They are a London based tour group with which I've done the tour de France and the Giro. In fact the tour guide for the Vuelta is Marcelenino who is Spanish and he is the same one we had for the Giro, an ex CSC rider and he was truly excellent.

The tour is for 12 nights, four star luxury hotel accommodation, breakfast and dinner (four courses with wine) each day, coach transfers, including pick up to and from Madrid airport, guides and other tours.

Each day you usually get a choice of 2, 3 or 4 rides, depending on current location of hotel and where the tour is, or none if you just wish to sight see around the town, see the start of the stage or you can ride to the start do the flat stage to meet the bus, or catch the coach to the bottom of the climb, do the climb to the finish etc ride back to the hotel or catch the bus to the next hotel. This tour group has non riders as well, eg at the Giro there was a group of racing cyclists from California with 19 members, including 5 non riders. The cost is \$4,000 (land content) but if entering as a group we get 5% discount for more than 5 and 10% for more than 10, with a 30% deposit and the balance due 8 weeks before tour date. This price compared to an Australian tour is up to a third cheaper. Probably we should have our entry sent in no later than by the end of March.

If you are interested in further details, see www.sportingtours.co.uk see 'The Final Week' and contact Alan Cunneen 0421328181.

Coming Events

The long awaited race with Macedon Ranges Club will be on March 17 at Newham. Members will remember that this race was cancelled at the last minute last year when we were unable to race because of the refusal of the police to grant a permit. Details of how to get there and entries will be provided next week.

Gatwick Drive

We are going back to Gatwick Drive on March 10. This circuit was previously used by Eastern but not in the last 7 or 8 years. Old hands say that it is as good as Dunlop Road. Make sure you are there on March 10 to check it out.

Newham Handicap

We had to cancel this race last year because we were unable to obtain a permit from the police. It is on again on March 17 on a different circuit. The race start and finish is at Newham, a small village west of Lancefield. The circuit incorporates eastern portion of Northern's Lancefield circuit and misses the steep climb as you turn left from the Lancefield Kyneton Road. There are few undulations just after the start on the way to Lancefield, after that it is pretty flat. There is a need to negotiate one roundabout where the circuit runs parallel to the Calder Freeway. There will be marshalls there, but riders will need to exercise caution. It is a fast circuit, ideal as a handicap course. Entries will open next week.



Eastern veterans cycling club

www.easternvets.com

Newsletter March 10 2007

Rob Graham Memorial Ride, Casey Fields, March 3



VALE ROB GRAHAM

A tower of strength - candle is lit.

Rob Graham was involved in a freak accident on his way to join the Tuesday riding group in their ride into the city by the Yarra bike path. He swerved to allow two schoolgirls to stay on the bike path and his front wheel has landed in a 'culvert' on the edge in the grass, which stopped the bike and he fell straight on to his head and left shoulder. The witnesses gave resuscitation until the ambulance arrived. The damage to C1 and C2 was so complete, the spinal cord was severed. Late on Wednesday Rob came out of an induced coma and was told by the doctor the full extent of his injuries.

Rob decided that his life would be better served by donating his organs and his life support systems were turned off on Friday morning.

Rob's memory will live on in the people who receive his organs; they are extremely fortunate as we all know he was super fit and his organs are in top condition.

A few of us were fortunate to see him win by 100 metres or more in his last A grade race at Northern on Sunday. Rob took off in the last lap in that familiar low crouch he used to great effect in time trials which were his forte. He then streeted the opposition.

Rob was a fine man, an outstanding club member and we will miss him enormously.

Our deepest and sincerest sympathies extend to Julie, Adam, Elissa, Yasmin, mother Irene, father Peter and his extended family.

A group of approximately 50 riders rode laps at Casey Fields on March 3, in memory of Rob. Rob's son Adam led the group on his mountain bike. Riders donated \$720 which will be forwarded to the Austin Health Spinal Unit.

Eastern Vets Program

Saturday	March	10	2.00pm	Gatwick Drive	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	March	17	2.00pm	Newham	50 km Handicap
Saturday	March	24	2.00pm	Metec	Graded Scratch Races
Monday	March	26	8.00 pm	Maroondah Club	Annual Meeting
Saturday	March	31	2.00pm	Dunlop Road	Charity Day

Southern Vets Program

Sunday	March	11	9.00am	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	March	18	9.00am	Lakewood Blvd	Graded Scratch Races
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Sunday	April	1	9.00am	Lakewood Blvd	Graded Scratch Races

Northern Vets Program

Sunday	March	11	9.30am	South Gisborne	Graded Scratch Races
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Eastern veterans cycling club

www.easternvets.com

Newsletter March 17 2007

MY FATHER THE LEGEND – ADAM GRAHAM

My dad is the best father I could have had. He always did everything he could for me. His love, respect and complete devotion to bringing me up were something that I always felt in debt of. All I ever needed in life was to make him proud; some how look after him like he did for me.

You can parent in many ways but my dad never got angry and took things away. I can remember his version of grounding was to only stop me from going to the movies. He still let me out of the house to see my friends and I never really went to the movies anyway! I never understood this, other parents enforced real groundings, but my dad disciplined in a much more concrete way, out of gaining respect. He had gained my eternal respect from very early on and I never lost this respect. As a child I idolised him, he was my mentor, my security, my dad.

I'll never know how my dad was able to do so much with me when it was just the two of us. He took me on many trips with Warrandyte high. He held me down to Ayres rock when it was windy or would let me fly down Mt Buller on my skis in front of him. We even travelled together up the entire eastern side of Australia for 3 months on his long service leave. We would go up to Noosa, with my aunties Heather and Barbie. He would still take me every week to see my mum's parents nanna and pa Young. We would always drop in to Terrara Ct to nanna and pa Graham. He would train and I would watch or try and join in. I would go to the Duatholons, then to the Triathlons. I did a lot of training with him. I had no choice; wherever he was I would go.

I still haven't had a choice, and I never will. I will always train, and train hard at that! My motivation was to try and be like my dad, awesome. It still is. He had so many sporting achievements from his early days playing football and cricket to golf and running. His accomplishments at triathlon competitions were 4th in the world and Australian champion in his age group many times. Finally my dad got the riding bug, which saw him winning races frequently including the Australian time trail championship. His training intensity could be shown by the thick steam rising from his body while riding in the garage for hours in the winter. I know he may not be able to train and ride with me physically anymore, but I have already felt his presence this week while riding and training in the gym.

My dad would never boast, he might just smile and pull one of his funny faces at a compliment. To sum his attitude up: It did not matter how hard something was, if it had to be done my dad would do a fantastic job. This strength of character is what I had to harness to be with him right until the end early last Friday morning. He has made history. He is the first person in Australia to donate multiple organs after not being brain dead. He is incredible.

It was my dad's strength and fitness that enabled him to survive the initial accident, just to say goodbye. My dad didn't deserve to have to make the choice whether to live or not. I am though eternally grateful that in his last minutes awake that I got to tell him that he has done the best job possible to bring me up and that he is the best dad. I also got to tell him that could not express how much I loved and respected him.

When he first woke up in hospital I promised that I would be there with him and support him no matter what. I was able to do that. I promised my dad that I'd always try my hardest to make him proud. I will be doing that. I also promised him I would be ok. Without him I could never be ok. However, without him only physically, but still with his strength, values and attitude in my mind and his spirit by my side, I can uphold that promise.

I love you dad. I will always miss you.

My Dad bought me this guitar; he put me through guitar lessons for many years. His rule with practise was however; "If I can hear it, it's too loud." Well this time dad, I hope you don't mind me just having a jam with your old favourite song "Riders on the Storm".

Graded Scratch Races, Metec , March 10

A minor panic on Thursday when Matt White who was in Singapore, was advised by Maroondah Council that they would not be issuing a permit for our planned race at Gatwick Drive. There seems to be some suggestion that perhaps the application may have been lost, but the official version seems to be that we need VicRoads permission to lower the speed limit (we don't, they are not VicRoads roads) and that there was insufficient time for the occupiers to be notified of our race. This was notwithstanding that we had a permit to race there this time last year, but we had to cancel because of hot weather. Anyway the good news was that Metec was available and the word was quickly spread and only a few riders turned up at Gatwick Drive where Nigel Kimber redirected them to Metec.

Near perfect conditions, warm, sunny, not a cloud in the sky, bit of a wind and the longest course available at Metec. All up we had 81 starters.

As the stand in handicapper for Graeme Parker I had plans of splitting **A grade** into two and making a handicap out of it. They didn't like that option, they said they didn't like to race flat out for an hour or so in a handicap and opted for just a scratch race. Rob Amos put in one of the rides of the year. Rob was the first away and was quickly joined by Phil Smith and the pair of them opened up a gap of 25 to 30 seconds. Eventually Phil dropped off, but Rob was able to maintain the same gap, later to be joined by Guy Green. This was a great effort by Guy to get across the gap, without anyone joining him. The two kept on circulating together and the race was over. Rob won the sprint for first. Rob rides a bike like it is a machine, his pace didn't slacken one bit during the race. Back in the bunch Phil Smith managed to slip away again and take third place with Phil Cavaleri just nudging Phil Thompson out of fourth place.

In contrast, **B grade** seemed to be content to ride around together and finish with a sprint at the end. Four names featuring regularly in the B grade results were there again this week, Rob Truscott, Bob Lewis, Terry Murdock and Kevin Starr. Guys, when Graeme is back in town running an A Elite bunch, you can look forward to a stint in A grade. We had a new rider in there, Ian Harper, who looked pretty comfortable throughout the race. Keep an eye out for him, it won't be long before he is in the placings.

Another outstanding ride in **C grade** was that of new rider Olivier Pomie. He left the rest of the field in his wake and never looked like being caught, winning by half a lap or more. Thierry Dreux as able to open up a gap of several hundred metres, but despite the cries of encouragement from his children of "come on dad" every lap was caught with a lap or two to go. In the sprint for second 68 year old Paul Kelly is back in form, and was followed by a couple in their 40's David Casey and Phil Spona (sorry guys).

D grade with 19 starters had the biggest field. Russell Lewis won the sprint from John Thomson, Louise McKimmie and new rider Gary LeRoy. Louise wanted to ride E grade to start with, "I can't ride around the turns". She later changed her mind and obviously was matching it around the corners as well as in the sprint.

E graders seem to come out in force in the crits, there were 16 starters on Saturday, but the other week only 3 at Strathewen. Juanita Stumbles who is riding very strongly at the moment and will be mixing it in D grade soon, won from Ronnie Stranks, Phil Cox and Rob Devolle

Nigel's Race Report

Having promised Mr President that I'd station myself at Gatwick Drive to direct any lost soul who wasn't aware that the day's activities had been relocated, I arrived at METEC early enough to put the bike together and complete a few laps before heading down Colchester Road. Whilst rolling the legs over JC rocked up with the trailer and asked what circuit I thought we should lay out? I suggested that as the far end of the loop had been patched we could go back to using that, and I pointed out that it had been a while since we had done the hairpin bit. I also mumbled that if we were going to do all that we may as well throw in the right-hander at the lights and go around John Evans Way. I don't think I've seen a grown man's face light up quite as much as his did as he set off – witches hats in hand.

In true autumn fashion the day had dawned clear and brisk, as the sun rose to its zenith the temperature also rose and it was under hot conditions that eleven A-grade riders set off mid-afternoon to tackle the technical layout. The numbers bolstered by a couple of late entries who were lucky the 1:45pm cut-off had been waived due to the relocation.

The nature of the circuit was always going to play into Rob Amos' hands, the expectation being that he would make a move early in the race. Given that expectation, and the make up of the field, the plan was to let the big boys (Guy Green, Justin Davis, Mick Buckley, Phil Smith and a couple of others) control the race (Rob) and for me to simply hold on for as long as I could.

As per expectations Rob had a 50m break on the field before the second lap was completed. Either we held him at that distance for the next couple of laps or he sat there waiting for somebody to come across. He didn't have long to wait as Phil Smith made a break and fought his way across. The two combined well enough to extend the lead to almost the length of the back straight until the 'big boys' got their act together and bought it back to its original measure.

Watching the two leaders coming out of the hairpin it was apparent that Phil was struggling to stay with Rob, and sure enough, a couple of laps later Rob rode away and Phil was slowly returned to the bunch. A

haphazard chase allowed Rob to increase his lead and saw the beginning of the demise of the chase bunch. After forty minutes my legs had had enough, losing contact along the finish straight, even with a slow stint leading to the hairpin I was unable to get back on and so pulled the plug.

By the time I'd stashed the bike and returned to the circuit Guy Green, having put in a few hard laps, had bridged to Rob, and the chase bunch was down to four; the three Phils (Smith, Thomson and Cavaleri) and Justin. Approaching the hour mark the two leaders were still riding strongly and the chasers were down to three; Phil, Phil and Phil. Phil Smith launching a last ditch attack, on what was to be the third last lap, was able to build a big enough gap to secure third spot, Rob Amos taking the win by out-sprinting Guy.

Figures for the race (well my race anyway) – 43 minutes 40 seconds for 27.62k at 37.9kph.

Results

	First	Second	Third	Fourth
1 Grade (10)	Rob Amos	Guy Green	Phil Smith	Phil Cavaleri
1 Grade (18)	Rob Truscott	Bob Lewis	Terry Murdock	Kevin Starr
1 Grade (18)	Olivier Pomie	Paul Kelly	David Casey	Phil Spona
1 Grade (19)	Russell Lewis	John Thomson	Louise McKimmie	Gary Leroy
1 Grade (16)	Juanita Stumbles	Ron Stranks	Phil Cox	Rob Devolle

Officials

John Thomas was the main man, assisted by various drop outs on the line. The sprints in B, C and D were all hotly contested and the judges had their work cut out to separate them. On such a hot day the drinks boys, Glenn Archer and Steve Fothergill were very popular men. Thanks to all those who helped during the day.

Eastern Vets Program

Saturday	March	17	2.00pm	Newham	50 km Handicap
Saturday	March	24	2.00pm	Metec	Graded Scratch Races
Monday	March	26	8.00 pm	Maroondah Club	Annual Meeting
Saturday	March	31	2.00pm	Dunlop Road	Charity Day
Saturday	April	7	2.00pm	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races

Southern Vets Program

Sunday	March	18	9.00am	Lakewood Blvd	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	March	25	9.00am	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	April	1	9.00am	Lakewood Blvd	Graded Scratch Races

Northern Vets Program

Sunday	March	18	10.00am	Ballan	Ballan Festival
Sunday	March	25	10.00am	East Trentham	Handicap
Sunday	April	1	9.30am	Lillee Crescent	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	April	8	No Racing		

Club Championships

The Club Summer championships are Casey Fields on April 21. Please note that to qualify you must have competed in at least 3 races (not including the championship race) since the beginning of the Summer season in November, 2006. The 3 races can include both road and criterium races.

A Message From Julie

Dear Keith

I am truly humbled by the overwhelming strength and love expressed to our family from Eastern (and Northern and Southern) members through all of the difficult days since Rob's accident. On the funeral day I simply tried to breathe and stay in the moment and found it far too difficult to make eye contact with each and every one who came to show their support, and to grieve the devastating loss of Rob.

I am so proud of Elissa and Yasmin for being able to speak yesterday; and for their partners, one who sang and played guitar, who support us. And Adam did his father proud by speaking and playing a favourite song. What a hard gig! Adam will keep Rob's bikes (except 'Bluey' which will be returned to Greg Morgan's wife and girls) and I trust he will develop his links with the Club.

Keith, I felt so privileged that you delivered the eulogy, knowing Rob, and his family, so well. It was exceptional. Thank you with deep gratitude. And I shall see you when I surface.

Phil Cavaleri has been a constant visitor and support for me and the kids; while it has obviously assisted him in dealing with his riding buddy's loss, he has really helped to set the boundaries while talking things over.

Ron Stranks has stayed in touch. I know he'll miss the riding chats he and Rob had over coffee in Eltham.

Ante Sunjo, one of Rob's best mates, was our lifeline to the school where he, Rob and I worked. He also has been a constant support, and organised the beautiful guard of honour with the GVBR kids past and present in their Top Gear jerseys. While he doesn't check his emails often (if at all!) I do hope he is supported by other riders in training and racing. Maybe his mobile number is the best link.

Rob's mother, Irene and I are in touch daily. She is an amazing woman and fabulous mother in law; and I have enormous support from their whole family, as well as my own family. I will still reach out to all those other friends who have offered to be there when things go quiet.

Robbie and I were in a very happy space together. . I feel robbed of all that continuing...hey but how lucky were we to have loved and lived together for all those years!

Please feel free to forward this to Club members one and all.

Warm Regards

Julie

Thank you for your generosity

Thank you to those riders who generously donated their prize money and made other donations in memory of Rob Graham at Metec on Tuesday and Saturday, the Loop on Wednesday and the previous Saturday at Casey Fields. I am astounded by the generosity of cyclists and together with Southern (\$1800) we have raised approximately \$4000 (Eastern \$2200), which is an outstanding effort. Thanks also to Metec who generously waived their rider fee for last Saturday. We are checking at the moment where to send our donation, but it will be somewhere at the Austin Spinal Unit or Intensive Care Unit.



Eastern veterans cycling club

www.easternvets.com

Newsletter March 24 2007



**MONDAY NIGHT MARCH 26
MAROONDAH CLUB 8.00 PM.
ANNUAL MEETING
IMPORTANT MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED.
COME ALONG AND HAVE YOUR SAY
SEE YOU THERE.**

Newham Classic Handicap, March 17

After last Saturday I will never complain about the wind at Casey Fields again. I think it was the strongest wind I have ever raced in. A check of the wind speed at the nearest weather station at Redesdale had wind speeds of 35 to 40 km/hr and gusts in the range of 45 to 55. No wonder it was tough going.

All up we had 56 starters. The undulations just after the start were tough going even though there was a helping wind and some bunches broke up before reaching the very fast section, down hill with a tail wind into Lancefield.

F grade headed off with a 25 minute start and there were only 3 of us left after the hills. We were riding serenely (?) along until the 4 strong men of the 18 minute bunch came by a few kilometres before Carlsruhe. They were teaming well together and looked to be in with a show. Turning left at Carlsruhe was into the teeth of the wind and the speed dropped into the low 20's or even slower in the gusts. The next bunch to come by was scratch, who had been reduced to 5 riders and it was clear that barring disaster they were going to get up. Tagging along on the back of them at this stage was Nick Hainal. Three B graders came by and then followed groups of 2 or 3 riders often from different bunches.

The judges with the assistance of a camera were just able to separate the place getters, Roy Clark by the barest of margins from Peter O'Callaghan, Rob Amos and Phil Smith a metre or so behind. Tom Salinger, rejoining after a break of 2 or 3 years won the B grade

sprint from M Speed and Garnet Bateson. Gary Leroy and Richard Maggs from the 18 minute E grade bunch followed. This was an outstanding effort by these two and the Brian Farrell and Ron Stranks who were not far behind.

The day was a great success both from the racing and the hospitality of the Macedon Ranges Club.

Nigel's Race Report

Happy St Patrick's day to any little Shamus's out there. Loading the car the sky above looked ominous and I was wondering if the race would go ahead but as I drove out along Mt Alexander Road to the freeway - avoiding city link (I'm a little Scottish) the sky to the North-West was looking good - a few fluffy white clouds scurrying across the blue. They were obviously on their way to the grand-prix where they were banking up to get a good look at the action.

As is my usual practice I allowed enough time to run out of petrol, stop for a toilet break and change a flat tyre, consequently I arrived at Newham almost two hours before the scheduled start time. Just enough time to do a lap of the circuit to see what we were in for. The start is a little like Steels Creek; it went up and then up again then undulating before another climb and a drop into Lancefield. After a stop for petrol in Lancefield it was back on course, following the road through Cobaw to Carlsruhe and then along the freeway before heading straight towards Hanging Rock, a sharp left and home to the finish. Beautiful roads, beautiful scenery, wooded verges, open fields and an avenue of Autumnal colours framing Hanging

Rock as the lap drew to an end. I'm glad I did the reconnaissance lap, I didn't see much more than different shades of black in the bitumen, and maybe a couple of leprechauns, during the race.

A look at the start sheet didn't bring much joy. It wasn't giving away 25 minutes to the limit markers over 48k that had me worried, it was the bunch of 15 at four minutes that was the cause for concern. A quick calculation – to make up 4 minutes over an hour (simplify the math, I'm the son of an actuary not an actuary myself) in 50k we'd have to average somewhere around 5kph faster than them, and there were only 5 of us. A couple of on-the-day entries along with Phil Cavaleri swapping from the b-grade group evened the numbers up a bit (8-16, they had some ring-ins as well), but it was still going to be a big ask.

The talk on the start line was about going to 'eleven'. Given that it was a handicap I thought they were talking was about turning it up to the max from the get-go. I later realised that it was the size of the small sprocket on the cluster they were referring to as my long legs spun like the cranks on an old Fortescue IXL 14-foot windmill in a force 7 gale.

A nervous silence hung over the scratch bunch as we watched the large b-grade bunch disappear up the road knowing that we had over three minutes to wait before we would be allowed to put the pressure to the pedals. Finally we were away and the chase was joined, the start was a little slow and a little unclean due to a little confusion as to which way to roll the bunch. The slowness didn't last, the pace soon picked up to the mid to high forties. It looked like Rob Amos, Roy Clark, Phil Smith and Peter O'Callaghan were on a mission to make up that four minutes in the first ten kilometres. The remainder of us doing our best to hang on and contribute, the strong cross-wind making it difficult to keep a smooth rotation.

It wasn't much more than ten kilometres into the race before we had the first of the green banded brigade in view and passed. Apart from the psychological boost of seeing a rider ahead and having somebody to chase down, the presence of a lone rider meant the bunch ahead was a little smaller and a little weaker. Then there was another and then another, with each rider the threat posed by the

Officials

Our thanks go to Alan Sandford and his team from Macedon Ranges who had control of proceedings at the start and finish and to the officials out on the course and in the lead and follow cars. In particular a special thanks to Hylton Preece and Ian Smith who spent 2 to 3 hours setting up the course. This was a very onerous task and made even more difficult by the dry hard ground which made the banging of stakes in almost impossible. Every access road had a sign indicating a cycle race in progress

A very special thanks to the Macedon Ranges people for their BBQ, cakes and coffee as an after race spread. It was much appreciated.

preceding group diminished. The race post-mortem revealed that the b-grade group had split in two within the first kilometre and the two groups continued to disintegrate as the miles disappeared under the diminishing number of wheels until the bunch was no more than a series of strung out cyclists.

The mad dash down to Lancefield pushed my legs to the limit and as we headed back to Cobaw I've lost contact and hadn't the reserves to get back on. The gap growing from a yard to a chain, to two, then to three chains of road as the core of scratch drew away with Tony Chandler and a Northern visitor still in the mix. Like the frog I kept going hoping that the milk would turn to butter, but the only thing that transformed were my legs to jelly.

The road back was littered with cyclists pushing into the cross-headwind in ones and twos, many appearing to have elected to turn it into a social ride chatting as they rode. There was not a coherent group to be seen, approaching Carlsruhe a pair rolling turns were the closest it got. Rounding them just before the corner it was left, straight into the wind and straight onto the small chain-ring. Needless to say this leg did nothing for the average as I struggled past the remnants of earlier bunches who were in their own way struggling to the last turn and the downwind-downhill run to the finish and the promise of respite, rest and refreshment.

The sight of the finish line was a relief for sore legs and weary bones, ah to be sure to be sure.

Figures for my ride were 47.32km in 1:17 for an average of 36.9kph.

Maximum speed was 76.8kph going into Lancefield – I could have used that 'eleven'

As for my math, for the four minute group to cover the 47.3k in 1 hour 21 meant they would have been travelling at 35kph. Like I said 'son of an actuary', to have caught them on the line we would have had to better their speed by 2kph.

Results

	First	Second	Third
I handicap	Roy Clark	Peter O'Callaghan	Rob Amos
1/2 Grade (scr)	Phil Smith	Tony Chandler	T Redman
I Grade (4 min)	Tom Salinger	M Speed	Garnet Bateson
(Grade (8 min)	Graeme Parker	Nick Tapp	David McCormack
I Grade (12 min)	Su Pretto	Nick Hainal	Tony Renehan
I Grade (18 min)	Gary Leroy	Richard Maggs	Brian Farrell
I Grade (25 min)	Hugh Greig	Keith Bowen	John Webb

It's on again next Saturday

RDNS Homeless Persons Christmas Present Fund

It was cancelled last year and again on 17 February because of hot weather. It couldn't happen again, could it? Dunlop Road, March 31. \$10 entry, prizes, raffles, BBQ, please come and assist this worthy cause. Eastern has an outstanding record of fund raising more than \$8000 over four 'charity days', let us see if we can keep up the good work..

Eastern Vets Program

Saturday	March	24	2.00pm	Metec	Graded Scratch Races
Monday	March	26	8.00 pm	Maroondah Club	Annual Meeting
Saturday	March	31	2.00pm	Dunlop Road	Charity Day
Saturday	April	7	2.00pm	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races (Easter)
Saturday	April	14	2.00pm	Dunlop Road	Graded Scratch Races

Southern Vets Program

Sunday	March	18	9.00am	Lakewood Blvd	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	March	25	9.00am	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	April	1	9.00am	Lakewood Blvd	Graded Scratch Races

Northern Vets Program

Sunday	March	18	10.00am	Ballan	Ballan Festival
Sunday	March	25	10.00am	East Trentham	Handicap
Sunday	April	1	9.30am	Lillee Crescent	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	April	8	No Racing		
Sunday	April	15	10.00am	Avenel Rd Seymour	Handicap

Club Championships

The Club Summer championships are Casey Fields on April 21. Please note that to qualify you must have competed in at least 3 races (not including the championship race) since the beginning of the Summer season in November, 2006. The 3 races can include both road and criterium races.

Rob Graham

Thanks to the generosity of Eastern and Southern riders an amount of \$4000 will be forwarded to the Victoria Spinal Cord Service research and development fund. A special thanks to all those riders who willingly contributed their prize money and/or made a donation. Southern riders contributed \$900, which was matched by the Club.

Sandra Farrell's Photos of the action from last Saturday



Finish, from right to left, Roy Clark, Peter O'Callaghan and Rob Amos. Phil Smith is in the background.



Gary Leroy just holding off Richard Maggs for E grade with Graeme Parker and Su Pretto in the background



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Newsletter March 31 2007

Graded Scratch Races Metec, March 24

Bleak conditions greeted the 58 starters at Metec. Showers before the race and threatening skies resulted in a reluctance of riders to pay up, just in case we got rained out. After a shower which had everyone under the shelter it eventually cleared and we were away. In contrast to our last Metec race the smaller circuit was used to take out any problem corners. This circuit is the closest thing to a track circuit, sweeping curves rather than corners, no worries about pedals hitting the ground, but on Saturday a wind to contend with.

New rider Andrew Neilson dominated E grade, lapping the field three times. When he first took off he rode past a couple of B graders without effort. I am not sure how many bunches he passed, but it would have been D, most likely C and possibly B. Andrew will find himself in C or B grade in his next race. The last time anyone lapped the field in their first race was John Jardine in D grade and again at Metec. E grade in their sprint for the minor placings got mixed up with D and C riders which made getting through a bit tricky. Shouts of "keep right" from Keith Bowen trying to sneak through on the left confused those riders who had heard shouts of keep left throughout the race.

New riders Gary Leroy and Tony Renehan were followed home by Jimmy Hobbs in D grade.

Nick Bird dominated C grade spending most of his time in the race on the front until he pulled out with the cramp! Steve Barnard and Tony Curulli came first and second and might find themselves back in B grade next week. Phil Spona came third.

Ian Smith won B grade from Glen Newham (I am assured that is 35) and Wayne Doherty.

A grade saw the familiar trio of Guy Green, Rob Amos and Roy Clark fill the placings.

Nigel's Race Report

Ever the eternal optimist I'm standing in the pouring rain affixing the race bike to the roof of the Daewoo. The intent, an hours drive to Kilsyth to suffer an equal

amount of time in the saddle before another hours drive home. Despite a delay through Ringwood I was in plenty of time to grab a broom and wander the circuit, which was a contrast to our last visit. The weather dictating that the shortest least technical layout be used. Whether it was the weather, or well behaved learner drivers, there wasn't a lot of gravel on the corners; the only sweeping to be done was of water from the puddles in the road, a fairly stiff breeze ensuring that once spread out the road surface dried quickly.

Back at the registration desk an increasing number of riders were accumulating hoping that the proximity of people would keep them warm. As the sun came out so did the wallets and entries started flowing, thirty minutes from race time it clouded over the only thing flowing then was the rain from the sky and water across the track. Just a passing shower and in no time the deluge departed and the wind had the road dry and safe for use in plenty of time for a five minute warm-up.

So it was just after two o'clock that eleven riders set off to battle the increasing wind and contest the a-grade race; a collection of the 'old faithful', a couple of new faithful and a few new faces. Maybe it was the cold weather, or the lack of warm-up, but the race started at a very pedestrian pace and it seemed as though there would be a risk of being passed by a lower grade if somebody didn't pull a digit - it wasn't going to be me. Eventually things warmed up and we were circulating at 42kph, no make that 28, no 50 as the turns in the circuit took us through the full aspects of the wind.

Ten minutes in and Rob Amos launched the first serious attack of the race although nobody took it too seriously, the thinking being that the conditions would be too much, even for Rob. Sure enough after a couple of laps at twenty metres off the front and with nobody willing to cross and help him he backed off, allowing the group to pick him up. The next eight

minutes saw a couple of increases in pace to see who would fall off the train before Rob put in another effort. This time it wasn't allowed, it took a while for individuals to respond but it had been another feeler by Rob and despite the chase being sporadic it was pretty much all back together again before the lap was over. A couple of the newer members of the troupe finding the effort too much for their elastic bands.

In an almost counter-attack Phil Smith rode off the front but with still over thirty-five minutes to race and a seriously sapping wind the response was no more than a controlled increase of pace to stop him from riding too far off the front. It took only a couple of laps again before the diminished bunch was regrouped. This was pretty much the cue for it to get seriously serious as over the ensuing laps several riders attempted to make a break, some alone, some attracting a follower or two. None lasted long before the remnants of the bunch were dragged up by one of the 'old faithful'.

Even though history wasn't one of my strong subjects at school I got myself onto Rob's wheel with 29 minutes on the race clock and waited. A minute later he was up and off with me in tow. And most everybody else. A counter from Mark Wallace saw him enjoy a couple of minutes of fame before being swept up and blown away by the chase. This was pretty much the end of my race also as the continual ask for more from Scotty came back with the familiar "I'm givin' it all she's got, she's not goin' to take it much longer". Unfortunately the Phils Smith and Thomson were on my wheel and although I called them past before I faded the gap that they had to

Officials

Geoff Cranstone, Graeme Parker assisted by dropped riders and others were in charge of proceedings and Steve Fothergill was there keeping up the supply of drinks.

bridge proved too great leaving Rob, Roy Clark and Guy Green to fight for the right to stand atop the podium. Phil S. chased for the remaining twenty-five minutes, Phil T. elected to wait for me to recover a bit and try working together to rein the others back.

It was not to be and with still ten minutes to race I was back on my Pat as a little fatigue and the strong cross-wind resulted in a coming together between myself and Phil that saw him withdraw half a lap later with a mechanical. Resigned to circulating by myself I was surprised to hear the "swoosh swoosh swoosh" of deep dish carbon rims approach from behind followed by "give . . . me . . . a . . . couple . . . of . . . minutes . . . and . . . I'll . . . do . . . a . . . turn" between large intakes of breath - Tony Chandler had been doing the 'frog' thing and had hauled himself up to my wheel. With renewed hope we set off, our primary objective to stay on the same lap as the three (plus one) in front.

The keepers of the bell were kind, ringing in the race in at fifty-eight minutes, Tony and I still 200 metres inside the same lap as the leaders. But they weren't kind enough to wait around to see us finish. We've rounded the final bend into the finish straight all set for a big sprint finish, looked up . . . and . . . nothing. No chequered flag, no body to acknowledge our achievement, not even a witches hat to mark the finish line, just a barren desolate stretch of bitumen lined by pretty sad looking patches of dead grass.

Figures for the race : 37.31 @ 37.6kph in 0:59:23

Keith Pulls the Pin

This is my last newsletter. My first newsletter was in February 2001 and I now find it very difficult to write up the race report with something different to say. Also checking back on some of my earlier newsletters my recent ones they are not as good as some of my earlier ones.

I would like to thank all those riders who willingly contributed articles or provided me with information that I could use. The highlights over the years have undoubtedly been the Around the Bay in a Day in 2003 (freezing cold and wet) and the Alpine Classic in 2006 (unbearably hot). Nigel Kimber will be taking over, so please send any stories, information etc for the Newsletter to him.

It's on again this Saturday

RDNS Homeless Persons Christmas Present Fund

It was cancelled last year and again on 17 February because of hot weather. It couldn't happen again, could it? Dunlop Road, March 31. \$10 entry, prizes, raffles, BBQ, please come and assist this worthy cause. Eastern has an outstanding record of fund raising more than \$8000 over four 'charity days', let us see if we can keep up the good work..

Results

	First	Second	Third
Grade (11)	Guy Green	Rob Amos	Roy Clark
I Grade (18)	Ian Smith	Glen Newham	Wayne Doherty
C Grade (10)	Steve Barnard	Tony Curulli	Phil Spona
I Grade (10)	Tony Renehan	Gary Leroy	Jim Hobbs
I Grade (8)	Andrew Neilson	Ron Stranks	Keith Bowen

Eastern Vets Program

Monday	March	26	8.00 pm	Maroondah Club	Annual Meeting
Saturday	March	31	2.00pm	Dunlop Road	Charity Day
Saturday	April	7	2.00pm	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races (Easter)
Saturday	April	14	2.00pm	Dunlop Road	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	April	21	2.00pm	Casey Fields	Club Championships

Southern Vets Program

Sunday	April	1	9.00am	Lakewood Blvd	Graded Scratch Races
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Northern Vets Program

Sunday	April	1	9.30am	Lillee Crescent	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	April	8	No Racing		
Sunday	April	15	10.00am	Avenel Rd Seymour	Handicap
Sunday	April	22	9.30am	Lillee Crescent	Graded Scratch Races

Club Championships

The Club Summer championships are Casey Fields on April 21. Please note that to qualify you must have competed in at least 3 races (not including the championship race) since the beginning of the Summer season in November, 2006. The 3 races can include both road and criterium races.

Rob Graham

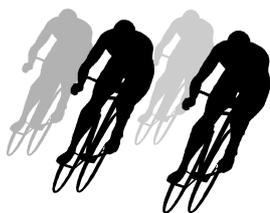
Peter Campbell has created a blog for Rob, go to <http://robertgraham2007.blogspot.com> and click on condolences and comments to add to the blog.

News From the Annual Meeting

A Elite. In a major change to our race grades, we will in future have an A Elite grade. This will enable in particular the promotion of riders from B into A without those promoted getting smashed. The effect of this change will also trickle down to the lower grades and will ensure that our grades are composed of riders of similar ability.

Office Bearers for 2007

Office	Name
President	Ian Smith
Vice Presidents	Matt White, Greg Lipple
Secretary	Keith Bowen
Editor	Nigel Kimber
Treasurer/Public Officer	John Macleod
Handicapper	Graeme Parker
Asst Handicapper	Keith Bowen
VVCC Delegates (3)	Nigel Kimber, Ian Smith, Nigel Frayne
Safety Officer	Ron Stranks
Club Captain	Ron Stranks
Vice Captain	Steve Fothergill
Referee	Graeme Parker



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Newsletter September 15 2007

Graded Scratch Races Arthurs Creek, September 8

Just perfect conditions on Saturday, reminded me of the Gold Coast, sunny blue skies, albeit 10 degrees cooler. Fifty four starters was par for this course, but the big turn out was in B grade with 19 starters. Except for E grade which was blown apart very early in the race and A grade where Guy Green came in on his own, the other bunches stayed together and caused a bit of discussion and divergent views of the judges in B and D grade.

The highlight of the day was a visit by a cheerful Rob Amos in his wheelchair. We wish Rob all the best in his continuing rehabilitation.

In **A grade**, somewhere along the way Guy Green dropped his fellow competitors and came in a comfortable winner by perhaps a minute or so. The sprint for second and third was fiercely contested with Northern rider Paul Logan just winning from Mike Fisher.

Nigel Frayne rides B grade

A nice field of about 15 riders signed on for B Grade for a spin over 4 laps on the hills of Arthurs Creek Road. The weather was perfect with only a light breeze apparent from time to time. The countryside was looking green and picturesque on the few occasions I stole a glance away from the wheels about me. With all the various race scenarios working their way mechanically through the mind there is plenty to keep one alert. However, trying to survive a cracking pace is not one of them. No-one seems to want to take up station on the front and drive things along. There is some random rotation with the likes of Kevin Starr, Tony Balint and Phil Cavaleri up there and even Nigel put in an appearance but there is little seriousness to any of the escape attempts. Perhaps it

is the thought that this is only one of four laps that is keeping us sober?

After an uneventful first lap it is Nick Tapp who moves up behind the wheel of the prime mover. He brings us homeward with a long stint for the second half of lap two. As we turn around and give Rob Amos, the welcome spectator, another wave Nigel Frayne moves to the front for the climb out onto lap three. However there is nothing serious in the move and he is clearly simply trying to keep safe for the attack that must sure be coming soon. While the occasional move does come out of the pack, the ease at which they are drawn back in indicates that a successful solo effort will not eventuate. There is one moment when 8 likely types find themselves grupetto and with a slight gap. However, seeing the danger, the tail has rejoined the beast and we all come back together as quick as you can say - well, whatever you like.

And so it goes on, through lap three and into lap four. Surely this will be the big one. . . but it seems no one has the heart for it. Even the turn-arounds have been polite and orderly with no one trying for a cheeky move. Kevin Russell is prominent for most of the homeward leg, however it is all going to come down to that last climb and a mad scramble to the line. And so it comes to pass with a predictable twist. Phil Cavaleri jumps at the base of the climb and scuttles his way skyward. Hearts are exploding and lungs gasping as we stretch out the elastic up the hill and hammer down the other side in hot pursuit. A group of 8 or 9 reform line astern after the turn and head for home. Phil is still ahead but we are gaining. I'm too far back to see just who is where but eventually even I know it is time to get out of the saddle and dig. As we cross the line I see Phil has been caught, he

survives for 3rd, rolled over by the winner from out of town - Jeff McLean with Kevin Russell keeping close company. Nick Tapp has found new sprinting vigour and speeds to the line for 4th prize ahead of a pack that includes your truly in 6th place. An interesting if not totally frantic day out on the Arthurs Creek range.

Nigel's stats: Distance 68.8km Time 2hr 03min Ave speed 33.3kph (sleepy!!) Max Speed 62.2kph (chasing Phil down the hill)

Frank Nyhuis gets initiated into C Grade

Another magnificent Saturday afternoon - sunny, low 20's, no wind. Bad for the dams, but a great day for a bike race through the gentle hills around Arthurs Creek. This was my first time at this circuit, and my first race in "C" Grade on a road circuit, so I was keen to give it a crack, and seeing we had a very small bunch, with only 8 or 9 starters, I figured my chances were as good as anybody else. Rolled in neutral down to the course proper from the Primary School, and then we were off for 3 laps. Nice little hill first up, but everyone was fresh so it wasn't too difficult yet, with Tony Curulli leading the way, Matt White and Ian "El Presidente" Smith putting in, and I was keen to stay near the front, not knowing most of the guys and also not wanting to get dropped too early. But apart from the first hill, the rest of the course was just undulating, with no-one really getting an advantage or staying away for too long before being hauled back in. We kept a pretty even pace of around 33-34kph, with mainly Tony C, Matt W and Ian SMITH pushing the pace, especially on any uphill sections, so everyone would get out of their seats to catch up before settling down on the flatter stretches, with only one rider going off the pack in the first couple of laps.

As we were getting to the last little uphill on the 2nd lap, Ian S explained to me where the finish line was, that we had to go around the turnaround before heading into Greens Rd and the chequered flag. He also suggested that if I had anything left in my legs on the last lap, that last little pinch would be a good place to try and get away before running downhill towards the finish. So we go up the hill on the last lap, with Tony C still doing a lot of work and looking good - he

Officials

Riders on the job today were: Andrew Neilson, Graham Haines, Ian Gillies, Dale Thompson, Greg Molesworth, Terry Murdock, David McCormack, Thorkild Muurholm and Nick Hainal. Thanks to the above riders and those who helped out on the finish line after their race.

told me another time he didn't really like the hilly courses, but I think he was pulling my leg. Everyone together over the hill, then as we rolled on, Ian SMITH put on a bit of a burst, then Matt WHITE at the next one, but I just tried to make sure I covered them, and didn't want anyone to get away too far.

Return leg of the last lap, and getting towards the last little pinch, I took off, hoping I would catch the rest of them napping, or out of legs, or both, and I used almost everything to the top of the hill, geared down for the run to the turnaround, but I didn't want to look around in case I'd wasted all me energy for nothing, and hit 62kph down the hill, slammed on the brakes for the turn and saw the rest of the bunch only about 15-20m behind me. If I can just keep it going for a little bit longer, I'll get round the corner and over the finish line before they catch me - I wish!!!

Unfortunately, the finish line wasn't just around the corner, I reckon it was about 1 km down the road, and all I could do was wave goodbye as the bunch sailed past me, with Matt White just pipping Tony C over the line for a great win, and Ben Schofield coming in 3rd. I may have come in stone motherless last, but I was satisfied that I put in, and I'll definitely be better prepared for next time. Knowing how far the damn finish line is from the corner, I'll make sure I save something for the sprint!

D grade managed to stay together and finish with a hotly contested sprint, won by Dave Worland by the barest of margins from Gary Leroy, followed by Hylton Preece.

Keith Bowen and Glenys Jardine were given a head start in **E grade** and took off with D. Their start was to no avail and Keith was caught at the turn and Glenys on the way back on the first lap. Others faired no better, as the trio of Rob Devolle, Alan Hicks and Sue Sharples dropped the rest off one by one. Dropped riders either riding solo the rest of the way or pairing together for a while. Not even Ronnie Stranks could keep up. They finished in that order.

Results

	First	Second	Third
Grade (6)	Guy Green	Paul Logan	Mike Fisher
I Grade (19)	Jeff McLean	Kevin Russell	Phil Cavaleri
C Grade (8)	Matt White	Tony Curulli	Ben Schofield
I Grade (10)	Dave Worland	Gary Leroy	Hylton Preece
I Grade (11)	Rob Devolle	Alan Hicks	Sue Sharples

Eastern Vets Program

Saturday	September	15	2.00pm	Macclesfield	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	September	22	2.00pm	The Basin	Hill Climb Handicap
Monday	September	25	8.00pm	Maroondah Club	Monthly General Meeting
Saturday	September	29	2.00pm	Metec	Graded Scratch Races

Southern Vets Program

Sunday	September	16	9.00am	Cora Lynn	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	September	23	9.00am	Somers	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	September	30	9.00am	Lang Lang	Graded Scratch Races

Northern Vets Program

Sunday	September	16	9.30am	National Boulevard	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	September	23	10.00am	Broadford	Mountain Goat Classic
Sunday	September	30	10.00am	Lancefield	Handicap
Sunday	October	7	9.30am	National Boulevard	Graded Scratch Races

VISIT TO A THIRD WORLD COUNTRY

By Clare Robinson

Riders will recall raising money at Arthurs Creek earlier this year for Clare Robinson (daughter of Wayne) to travel to Cambodia to build houses. Clare is now back in town and here is her story regarding that experience.

Picture this – you wake up in another country on your 16th birthday. It's freezing in your room because the aircon's on full bore, so you step into the hallway and are hit with a heat wave. You're in Cambodia.

You go downstairs to breakfast after having a shower, and 11 students and 4 teachers sing Happy Birthday. Breakfast is an apple pancake with honey and a fruit shake. You are eating in luxury, but around the corner there are beggars, people with severed limbs from landmines, and children asking for your empty water bottle.

You jump in a small bus for the 1½ hour drive to a village where you will be building 4 houses that day. The roads out from Siem Reap are noisy, people tooting when they want to overtake someone, and motorbikes galore. You get out onto the dirt roads and there are potholes everywhere. You hit your head on the roof several times before you get there.

When you arrive the villagers greet you with huge smiles on their faces. It gives them much amusement to see you attempt to cross their bridges – skinny logs across a stream. We are told that we cannot praise the children, because the Gods will get jealous and bring misfortune on the family. We cannot hold babies or small kids because the family believes that could be payment for the house we are building for them, and they will not take the baby back. There is a table

underneath the house (which is on stilts) and if anything of ours goes off that table then it's free for taking.

So we start hammering. And hammering. And hammering. The floor is easiest, but once you get to the walls it's another story. Including hanging a couple of metres above the ground by your legs reaching out and around to hammer in the tin. But we succeed! Every ½ hour you stop and have a water break – drink almost a litre and have some poured over your head.

The money I raised was more than enough to pay for two of these houses and **you helped**. You should have seen these people's faces when we were finished. My group of 4 built for a widow with 5 sons. She had tears in her eyes when we handed the house over. It was amazing knowing you could bring so much joy to someone in one day.

And that was my 16th birthday! An experience I will never forget.

One of the other things we accomplished while on this trip was visiting the Bamboo Street Children's Centre. This was a World Vision organisation, and was set up for 4-12 year olds from the street. We gave them toys – slinky's, bouncy balls, marbles, skipping ropes. We played with them for a couple of hours, and when it

came time to say goodbye they caught on to the word very quickly, also forgetting their former shyness and coming up to us for hugs.

Another World Vision organisation was the Bringing Hope Project – set up for physical disabled 18-25 year olds. Most were either landmine victims missing limbs or people born with the disability. We played English Teaching games with them, and then some other good fun games such as tunnel ball etc. They were very bright happy people despite the fact they had to face every day with their disability.

Our last week was spent teaching English at Angkor Thom High School. This was an unforgettable experience, as we not only exchanged languages but also culture. We found out that girls were only allowed to see their boyfriends about once in every 2 months because if they see them more often they might fight. The friends we made there were awesome people, so friendly. Most were 19-20 year olds in Yr 9 who travelled an hour each day to and from school on a pushbike. Some were lucky enough

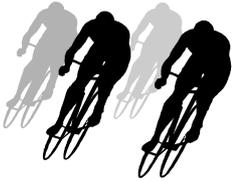
to own a motorbike, but still travelled a long way to learn. We take education for granted so much here, for them it is their future. To have a good job they want to go into the tourism industry and they must be able to communicate with foreigners.

We went to their houses on one afternoon and they were excited to show us around. Most had a few farm animals, a wooden house on stilts, and if they were extremely lucky, a run-down battery powered black and white TV, or maybe a CD player. Compared to us they have almost nothing, but they were still so proud of what they had.

Saying goodbye was the hardest goodbye I have ever had to give. Tears were shed from both parties – more so the Cambodians. They kept telling us to come back and visit them, and some of us will definitely keep that promise – I know I will. I will remember them forever.

This was a truly memorable, once in a lifetime experience. Regret carries so much baggage, it is better to just avoid it in the first place. If you get a chance in life – whatever it may be, take it





Eastern veterans cycling club

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Newsletter September 22 2007

Graded Scratch Races Macclesfield , September 15

Good conditions for Saturday's race, neither too cold or much wind. It is a while since we have been to Macclesfield and you forget until the first lap how much down there is, which you know is going to be followed by the same amount of up. A few dramas during the day, with some 'hoons' in a red Commodore or Falcon throwing a couple of stubbies on the road on the steep hill on the way back after the turn and a motorcyclist 'brushed' Su Pretto as he went past. If you get the chance get the registration number of any culprits and we will report them to the police and in the case of 'bottle throwers' the EPA. Martin Stalder, Paul Wilson and Steve Barnard all punctured as a result of the bottle throwers. Steve having a bit of wild ride a la Belocki a few years back as he tried to stay upright, but which Belocki didn't. Broken chains also seemed to be in fashion, with Michael Cosgrave breaking his before the start, but managed to make the race with the help of J C Wilson, a link opened up on Ian Milner's bike on the way back and Paul Wilson and Thorkild Muurholm also had chain problems. All up there were 52 starters.

The eight starters in **A grade** quickly split into three groups with Gerry Donnelly and Mark Wallace leading the way and opening up a big gap. With about a lap and half to go, Mark dropped off and the chasers seemed to give up, with only Ian Harper, Phil Thompson and Frank Donnelly continuing on the final lap. Ian won the sprint for second from Phil with Frank coming in some time later.

B grade (courtesy Nick Tapp) Another beautiful Saturday for a bicycle race. The testing, up-and-down course at Macclesfield makes for a race of two halves – mainly down for 8 km to the turnaround, then mainly up back to the finish. So, when Jeff Pretto commented before the race that it should suit a whippet like me (or words to that effect), he got it half right.

There were 12 or so riders in B grade. Off we went, for four laps. Downhill is not my preferred mode, so I wasn't surprised to find myself tail-end Charlie on the outward leg. No dramas, though the pace was cracking. Around the turn and back to the first climb. Ooh, yeah, that first real hill always hurts! Matt Cornford was spinning lightly and looking confident. Stefan Jusypiw hadn't delivered on his pre-race threat to attack out of the blocks, but looked as though he might bolt at any moment. I must have taken my eye off Phil Cavaleri, but I'm pretty sure it was about here

that he took off on the first attack of several for the day. I thought we caught him before the home turn, but the wisdom after the race was that Phil had been out on his own for much longer.

Lap 2 started much like the first – hell-for-leather downhill, with me at the back. Concentrating on not getting dropped, I didn't notice what was happening at the sharp end until we approached the bottom turn, when Phil went by, head down, already on his way back. He would have had about 100 m gap, and was living up to *his* pre-race vow to attack, attack. On the return leg, four or five of us worked to bring Phil back, and by the turn we were all back together.

Downhill again on Lap 3. Kevin Starr moved to the front, and for a kilometre or so I sat at second wheel behind him. Then three riders shot past, led I think by Ian Milner. Kevin took a few moments to react, and three more went by (including Barry Robertson, berating us for leaving a gap). The rest of the pack shot by, Kevin jumped on, and before I could blink I was off the back. This was serious. All the way to the outer turn, I tried to bridge that little gap without burning my legs too badly. At last I latched onto Bernie Creely at the back of the line, and the two of us carried the red lantern to the turn. Ah, the relief of turning back uphill, and a chance to make up some ground on those big blokes!

Lap 4 was slower – until, of course, Phil attacked again. This one didn't last long, though, before we reeled him in and began to compose ourselves for the finish. I went to the front with Phil, then Phil dropped back and Barry came up alongside. And then Stefan made his knockout move. With about 2 km to go, almost all of it uphill, he came around, out of the saddle, gave us all a good, hard look, and took off. For a few seconds I tried to go with him, but quickly realised that would be the end of my race, backed off and watched Stefan ride away to a gap of 50 m or so. Up the second-last hill and through the false flat, it was a battle for the minor placings. Over the last 150 m Barry Robertson edged away to grab second, a clear margin behind Stefan and a length or so in front of me. Phil Cavaleri, by his own account, had cooked himself with all that attacking, and came fourth.

All this was slightly marred by an incident with the local traffic. As I saw it, it went like this: one lap the road is

clear, then a car full of lads goes roaring by and gives us an encouraging yell – encouraging us to relocate to other parts of the country, that is. The next lap, as we barrel down one of the big hills at 50 or 60, there's a loud crack and something flies across the road out of the mass of riders ahead. The next time back past that point, going uphill, Martin Stalder is beside the road, unhurt but out of the race, and there is broken brown glass strewn across the road. Martin spends the rest of the race there, trying to remove as much as he can of the glass that has taken out one of his tyres. You can probably fill in the gaps yourself ... Ian Milner, by the way, was brought to a halt on Lap 3 by a chain link that came unpinned and caught in his derailleur, and walked back.

As usual, I forgot to stop the clock and read the average until a few ks of warm-down later. Sorry, stats fans – but 33 point something, and a max of 69.0 km/h.

In C grade the action started at the first rise after the start of the race when Thorkild managed to drop his chain. This left him a few hundred metres behind but with the entire race to get back to the bunch. The pace was not unduly fast but was reasonably constant with Frank Nyhuis and Chris Mucha leading the bunch for a great deal of the time. Nigel Letty and Matt White were also at the pointy end doing some hard turns.

And so two laps expired and at each turn we could see Thorkild powering along, trying to get back in touch. As we got the bell Thorkild has managed to latch onto the group for a well-earned rest. After the final turn Thorkild and Frank Nyhuis went clear with no one willing to close the gap. With the hill approaching Matt White took the bit between his teeth and dragged the group to within a few metres but as soon as the road went up so did the gap. Ian Smith and Matt White tried to bridge but they ran out of steam before they could close the gap. So now there was

Results

	First	Second	Third
£ Grade (8)	Gerry Donnelly	Ian Harper	Phil Thompson
I Grade (13)	Stefan Jusypiw	Barry Robertson	Nick Tapp
(Grade (10)	Thorkild	Frank Nyhuis	Ian Smith
I Grade (11)	Nick Hainal	Su Pretto	Murray Howlett
I Grade (7)	Peter Gray	Alan Hicks	Ron Stranks
I Grade (3)	Phil Cox	Sue Cox	Keith Bowen

Eastern Vets Program

Saturday	September	22	2.00pm	The Basin	Hill Climb Handicap
Monday	September	25	8.00pm	Maroondah Club	Monthly General Meeting
Saturday	September	29	2.00pm	Metec	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	October	6	2.00pm	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races

Southern Vets Program

Sunday	September	23	9.00am	Somers	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	September	30	9.00am	Lang Lang	Graded Scratch Races

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Thorkild and Frank followed by Ian and Matt and the bunch somewhere behind. Over the next couple of km's Matt and Ian joined the two leaders and held a comfortable lead. Matt must have lost interest at some stage and went back to see where the others were while the trio extended their lead. About 1km from the finish the pace was increased to the point where Ian dropped off and Frank and Thorkild went on to fight out the finish. Thorkild used his strength to power away in the final few metres and Frank had to settle for second. *(Ian Smith)*.

Fantastic ride by Thorkild after being off the back for two laps and also by Frank in only his second C grade road race.

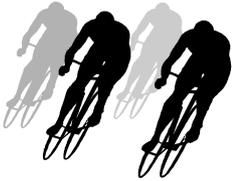
D grade managed to spit out a couple of riders, the rest remaining together for the up hill finish won by Nick Hainal, from an angry Su Pretto after her brush with the motor cyclist, and Murray Howlett.

E grade managed to stay all together at the first turn then J C Wilson decided to attack up the big hill (he was probably hoping to get to the top first). It didn't cause any reaction the bunch just rolled up it and JC went out the back. On the last lap the action was on with several attacks down the road. I think they were trying to soften Ron Stranks up for the return.

Andrew Ferridge was off the back at the last turn, but used his hill climbing skills to get back on. First time rider Peter Gray took off at the bottom of the big hill causing a reaction from the Alan Hicks and Ronnie. The three of them rode back and finished in that order. *(Brian Farrell)*.

Only three starters in **F grade**. Keith Bowen couldn't keep up the Phil and Sue Cox after the big hill on the way back on the first lap. I am told that Phil beat Sue by the barest of margins.

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Newsletter November 3 2007

Graded Scratch Races Killara Road , October 27

Warmish but overall pleasant conditions for our return to Killara Road for the first time in about 3 or 4 months. A starting list of 52 riders was a reasonable entry list. There were some notable rides, as expected Phil Smith in A grade, but the star of the day was Frank Nyhuis in C grade.

Lap one in **A grade** saw Phil Cavaleri made a brave attack on the big hill and gained about 20 metres on the pack. Boyd Friis chased down Phil with the bunch in tow. On Lap two Gerard Donnelly attacked up the big hill, I kept in his draught and followed him to the turn around. I was surprised to see the bunch had broken up and we had a 30 metre break over the rest of the field. Gerard kept a fierce pace and we worked well together to increase our break going down the hill and to the next turn. At the summit of lap three our pace slowed slightly when we noticed that there was an insurmountable gap for the chasers. Last lap was a continuation of Gerard and I swapping turns and just keeping a good tempo. On the last hill before the finish line, I put in an attack and was fortunate enough to have enough left in my legs to get away from Gerard and hold a good gap to the finish line. In the sprint for third Boyd Friis managed to stay clear of Mark Wallace. *Phil Smith*

A healthy **B Grade** bunch of 15 or so riders rolled out on a very warm Saturday afternoon accompanied by a healthy Nor - Norwester that will surely dry any jersey to a crisp, were it not for the inevitable sweat and tears that are the hallmark of Killara Rd. The other familiar feature is traffic and today we anticipate running roulette with large dump trucks who seem to be working overtime. We are warned to keep left and in single file as much as possible and generally this is the case throughout the 4 laps of racing. There is something in the air though that suggests that this race will be somewhat eventful.

With that in mind I make a conscious decision to stay alert and on guard to avoid any extraneous dramas and save my efforts for surviving attacks on the hills by riders within this healthy looking field of likely types. After the commissaires call for a quick vote "3 or 4 laps" - "FOUR!" - we roll out. A mix of riders rotate up front and the pace eventually settles into a comfortable rhythm which is maintained through the first lap. The first aforementioned potential hazards appears in the shape of a chunk of dead branch

which has fallen onto the racing line coming down the hill from the first turn. Everyone takes note and safely pass by. The second lap and already those who shouted "4 laps" are regretting their earlier enthusiasm. It's hot and while the pace is not frantic there is none-the-less the occasional surge to keep us honest. The most serious of these occurs on the hills approaching the Coldstream turn where Ross Snowball together with Steve Gray and a couple of others get a small gap into the wind. Seeing the danger the group dig deep to bridge back on before the turn. Once around Peter Shanahan rolls up front for a bit of soft pedalling to try to ease the pace. But the impetuous ones won't have a bar of it and we see the likes of Kevin Starr, Ross Snowball, Steve Gray, myself, Wayne Robinson and Andy Burmas (as I recall) working the front to keep things honest all the way to the outer turnaround. On the way I collect an insect between the glasses and forehead. Not happy with this predicament it proceeds to sting me before I can release it. Luckily it's nothing deadly and a wash with water seems to keep it to a minor swelling.

On the downhill run we have the big fella, Ian Milner moving to the front to give us some curry. With the pace up we don't negotiate the dead branch mentioned earlier quite so neatly and it is clipped by a wheel, flies up into spinning pedals and wheels, hits me on the helmet and mouth before flying off into the brush. Luckily it hit at an angle so there was no damage and at least now it was off the road. Hmm, what next? At this point the main concern is what Ian Milner is trying to do to us, repeatedly powering away on the downs and flats to get a head start on the inclines where we pick up his wheel again. Once this little game has run its course things calm down. Now there's just a growing sense of fatigue and concern that this is going to end in a sprint up the final hill before a surge to the line. In amongst this group that means it's anybody's race.

As we head for home it is clear that like minds are at work and experienced riders in Martin Stalder (on the drops as usual!), Peter Shanahan and Jeff Pretto are edging forwards. Kevin Starr is showing hill form presumably reliving his winning ways after the 1:20 hill climb. Ian Milner has had enough curry and presumably the hills but is still lurking. In fact we've only lost a few riders along the way. So the 10 - 12 of us start up the final hill at a

nervous but steady pace. I decide to keep safe as possible up front maintaining as high a cadence as I dare with a hand ever ready on the shifters. Three quarters of the way up Ross Snowball moves away and I up the pace to stay with him noticing that the sound of heavy breathing around me is getting softer, we're pulling away. This is the moment

Swiftly onto the big ring and out of the saddle - it's nausea time! Ross is away up front but I seem to be alone in second. I decide not to look around (mistake?) and push on over the crest. On the downward side the wind seems to get stronger - or is it the 60+ kmph pace? - and it's very hard work even on the drops. By the time it flattens out and the line is in sight a sense of relief starts to emerge from the red mist. However it is fatally premature as Wayne Robinson swoops from behind to take second quickly followed by Andy Burmas who just takes my wheel on the line for third. Smart riding from those two to keep it going right to the bitter end. Ross has continued his run to take the win and top spot on the podium. Thanks to the lads in the bunch for a safe and spirited race - the last of our Winter Season. Next up comes the heat of Summer crits. Stats: Race distance: 64.3km, Ave spd: 31.4kmph, Max spd: 64.5 kmph, Ride time: 2hr 02 min. *Nigel Frayne*

In **C grade** Frank Nyhuis the first time past the finish line (after half a lap) already had a commanding lead, which increased to around 3 minutes with a lap to go. He slowed over the last lap, or the chasers increased the pace, but he still managed to have a winning margin of 2 minutes. Goodbye to C grade Frank.. Gary Leroy and Keith Wade came second and third respectively. Race stats for Frank: 48.63km, 1Hr 34.09min, Av. Speed 31.04km/h., Max. speed - 64.2km/h, (and Av. Heart rate 164!)

D Grade commenced with 10 riders which included the hill lovers of Ted McCoy, Paul Kelly and Graham Haines (has being riding everyday up the 1 in 20), and a couple of unknowns Tony Gullace and Tony Rodriguez. The pace seemed fairly high from the start, however this could have been the after affects of ATB on Sunday. The 3 hill climbers shared their time out front on the first lap with a couple of short appearances from some other reluctant takers. Tony Gullace had issues with his seat early in the ride, and I made note to keep away from his wheel just in case the seat came off. The final climb of lap 1 (prior to the down hill finish) is were the cracks began to show; at

Results

	First	Second	Third
£ Grade (7)	Phil Smith	Gerry Donnelly	Boyd Friis
I Grade (14)	Ross Snowball	Wayne Robinson	Andy Burmas
(Grade (13)	Frank Nyhuis	Gary Leroy	Keith Wade
I Grade (10)	Tony Gullace	Tony Rodriguez	Ted McCoy
I Grade (8)	Ron Stranks	Sam Bruzzese	Brian Farrell

Coming events,

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November 18, Northern have issued an invitation to us to race with them at their National Boulevard circuit (Melway 7 D1), Sunday morning November 18, racing starts at 9.30, entries close 9.15. This is a super fast crit circuit, smooth roads and sweeping corners. Racing is to be followed by a BBQ.

the bottom of the climb Russ Lewis waved me through, shortly after another rider found the pace too hard, finally just short of the top Graham Haines had had enough and also lost touch with the bunch (7 riders left).

Ted and Paul continued to lead, Paul pushing hard on the big ring. A few others gave them some rest at the front, which only allowed them to recover somewhat before taking up the led again. I'm not too sure if the strong cross-wind, when heading back towards the Warburton Hwy took its toll on the riders, but we got back to the final climb, it was here Tim Crowe decided the pace was too hard. Tony Gullace had pushed it hard and created a gap on the so-called bunch (5 riders) with nobody too keen to chase as we descended. Then either Paul Kelly or Tony Rodriguez or Ted set off after Tony Gullace - confused yet?

Just after receiving the bell, Paul Kelly felt the impact of his efforts of spending too much time at the front. Then there were 5. We caught Tony Gullace just after the first slight incline and took a few deep breathes. Silly me had thoughts of getting a place, particularly since I did nothing all day. Nick Hainal decided it was time to flex some muscle and kept a good pace up towards the 1st turn. As it got near, Tony Gullace picked it up a level, causing a slight gap in the group, however this was short lived as we were all back together on the descend. Past the finish line and on the final outward leg, Tony Rodriguez decided to lift the tempo, with Tony Gullace in pursuit. Nick let them get a gap, which Ted saw and attempted to get back on, with me trying to get on Ted's wheel. The gapped (50 metres only) remained for the rest of the race. Ted and Nick tried to close it, but Tony Gullace and Tony Rodriguez were too good, mind you I was no help, after the final turn around I was gone. *Peter Mackie*

Tony Gullace (1st), Tony Rodriguez (2nd), Ted McCoy (3rd) getting over Nick (4th) on the final hill, myself a distant 5th. Well done to Paul Kelly and Tim Crowe who finished having to ride the last lap alone. Stat's: Avg 29 kmph, Heart Rate 166; time 1hr 40 minutes; distance 48k).

New rider Sam Bruzzese was able to give Ronnie Stranks a bit of a run for his money in **E grade** finishing not far behind him with Brian Farrell coming in third. This win probably ensures that the aggregate winner this year will be Ron Stranks.

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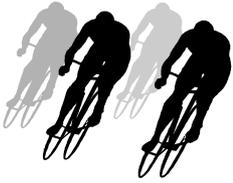
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Newsletter November 10 2007

Graded Scratch Races Casey Fields , November 3

Overcast conditions and the threat of rain kept the numbers down particularly in the higher grades. Four starters in A grade, but 22 in a combined E and F grades.

Phil Smith reports on A Grade With a 1.1/2 hour journey, clouds gathering and a forecast of continuing showers it was with some trepidation that I headed off to Casey Fields. Upon arrival it was surprising to see that most of the guns had stayed at home and that there would be a small field of A graders: Paul Wilson + the Phil's; Cavaleri, Thompson and Smith.

Combined and B grade meant that a field of about 10 headed off for 1 hour 20 around Casey fields. Despite not having the usual guns in the race it was a respectable field. All the A graders are strong riders and we also had to contend with some hard men in B grade! My plan was to ride reasonably conservatively, let a few early breaks go to see who was strong/keen and in the later half of race wait for an opportunity to attack.

Phil Cavaleri was the first rider to make his presence felt, he put in a good attack broke away and made about 40 metres on the rest of the field. Unfortunately the Casey winds were too much to battle against and Phil was absorbed by the peleton. Some notable attacks came from Paul but were chased down by the rest of the field, I also threw in a few testing attacks to keep the chasers awake.

Being well marked by the A graders I was looking forward to an opportunity to make an attack with a (softer?) B grader at the front, this scenario presented itself at about the half way mark when Kevin Starr was leading us into the headwind. I launched an attack and maintained it 1/2 a lap until the rise, I looked back to see that just Phil Thompson and Kevin Starr had managed to get on to my wheel. Our break of three had a good gap we worked well together and further extended our gap over the chasing bunch. I had of course noted that my colleagues were sharing turns with me - obviously there was no truce and everyone wanted the win!

My revised plan at this stage was to share the work with Phil and Kevin - wait until 20 mins to go and then start

attacking! At the expiration of one hour, I put in my attacks, a few worked, I was stretching the rubber band but I just couldn't break it -Phil and Kevin were tenacious in getting back on to my wheel!

The downside of all the attacks and varying pace was that the rest of the field was rapidly gaining ground on us. The bell lap came all too soon for me and we settled into a formation preparing for the sprint. Last lap and the "Go Phil" Cheers from the sideline were confusing - which one? Planning my sprint I was thinking Phil and Kevin both have a good finishing kick -but I was rating myself as I thought the slight uphill finish may suit me. Onto the back straight Kevin and Phil were leading me to the final bend, Phil kicked at the bend and charged for the line, I got onto Phil's wheel but I mis timed my surge to the line and Phil Thompson took the honours by 1/2 a bike length. I placed second with Kevin Starr (B grade) 3rd overall - A gutsy ride by Kevin! Phil Cavaleri placed third.

Phil's placed 1st to third.... If this happens again I am changing my name to Harry!

In the sprint for second and third in **B grade**, Jeff Pretto was able to hold off Jim Swainston.

In **C grade** the sprint was won by Terry Murdock from Alex Rigo and president Ian Smith, while in **D grade** Chris Norbury won the money from Michael Paull and handicapper Graeme Parker.

22 riders were on the line for the start of **E grade**, when a decision was made to split 5 off into **F grade**. Pace setters throughout the race were Juanita Stumbles and Sue Sharples, with some help from John Thomson and an occasional attack from J C Wilson. The pace was unrelenting and on the bell lap we passed C grade. Peter Gray timed his run to perfection and won from Geoff Cranstone, Richard Dobson and Sue Sharples. Except for a couple of F graders who couldn't keep up the remainder stayed and sprinted with E grade. Graham Cadd winning from Keith Bowen and John Porter. *Keith Bowen*

Results

	First	Second	Third	Fourth
1st Grade (4)	Phil Thompson	Phil Smith	Phil Cavaleri	
1st Grade (7)	Kevin Starr	Jeff Pretto	Jim Swainston	
1st Grade (11)	Terry Murdock	Alex Rigo	Ian Smith	
1st Grade (15)	Chris Norbury	Michael Paull	Graeme Parker	
1st Grade (17)	Peter Gray	Geoff Cranstone	Richard Dobson	Sue Sharples
1st Grade (5)	Graham Cadd	Keith Bowen	John Porter	

MTB Ride Bairnsdale to Nowa Nowa Rail Trail October 27/28

Last weekend six of us decided to forgo racing for the week and travel to Lakes Entrance to ride the newly opened Bairnsdale to Orbost Rail Trail. Alan Hicks had planned it earlier in the year but due to him getting seriously sick we had to postpone the trip to now.

Alan Hicks, Sid Dymond, Graeme Parker, Michael Paul, JC Wilson and myself travelled down to Lakes entrance last Friday so we could get a relatively early start on Saturday morning at the trail start in Bairnsdale.

The plan was to ride the trail to Bruthen, stop for a coffee break then continue onto Nowa Nowa for lunch. After lunch we were then to head back towards Bruthen and then turn off and travel through the forest back to Lake Tyers caravan park for some beers!

The weather Saturday was just about perfect (26 degrees) as we started our ride along the trail. Alan has ridden on the trail on a number of occasions so he was our guide for the day. The first 3 or 4 kms of the trail are sealed then the trail surface is made of compacted sandy rock which makes for very easy riding, also the grades are pretty gentle. Unfortunately we were lulled into a false sense of security with the surface as Sid crashed after riding on what turned out to be a very slippery side of the trail, he remounted with only slight injuries.

After about 4 kms the trail starts to get interesting as it crosses the Nicholson River on the old trestle railway bridge, the trail then winds it's way through little "whistle stop" places like Bumberrah and Mossiface before coming into the coffee stop at Bruthen. The countryside up there at the moment is really beautiful and green.

After a very nice coffee and cake (Graeme had two of the "best sausage rolls") we headed back out onto the trail heading for Nowa Nowa. Almost immediately out of Bruthen the trail starts climbing, still gentle grade through the forest. The trail continues on for about 8 kms before coming to the largest railway trestle bridge in Victoria (now abandoned of course). The trail does not cross the bridge but goes down into the valley on a road alongside the bridge before climbing back up to the trail proper. The bridge is impressive and is worth a visit.

From the bridge it was a gentle downhill run all the way to Nowa Nowa for our lunch stop, the bad news was we would have to ride back up the trail on our return to meet up with the forest road that would take us through to Lake Tyers.

After the lunch stop Mick and Sid decided to head back to Lake Tyers along the highway rather than do the climb back up to the forest turn off. Little did we know the last part of the ride would be the hardest!

The ride back up to the forest turn off was relatively easy due to the slight grade it was only when we turned onto the forest road did it start to get interesting. We had turned off a smooth fast surface onto a surface made up of large compacted and loose rocks which made for a Paris Roubaix like ride of about 10 kms, Graeme was finding the going tough as he had no suspension at all and was bouncing all over the place.

Once we cleared that road we had some more surprises in store as the road got a little smoother but now traversed a series of short sharp climbs and steep drops for about 8km back to the highway, after almost 5 hours of riding I was really starting to feel the short sharp climbs!!

Once on the highway it was a 15min ride back to Alan's caravan (and very cold beer) where we met up with Sid and Mick who had only just beaten us back.

It had been a great ride at just under 100km with the last part being the hardest and roughest, definitely need front suspension on those forest roads. On Saturday night we headed to the Lake Tyers Tavern for some dinner and more beers - all in all a great weekend.

There are some great rides (MTB and road) to be had in the area around Lakes Entrance and I would like to go back and do the full length of the trail from Bairnsdale to Orbost which is around 100km one way, if not on the trail there is a great road ride along the Tambo River to Bruthen and back, the roads are quiet and well maintained - seems like a great place for a ride.

Many thanks to Alan Hicks and his wife Marg for organising a great weekend away

Hylton

Coming events,

The Omara Eastern 100, Yarra Junction Saturday November 24, entries are now open and will be limited to 30 per grade, you will need to be quick of the mark so enter today, before it is too late. Entries are now open, email to keithb@rabbit.com.au, telephone to Graeme Parker 9728 8087 (before 8.00 pm) or enter on a Saturday prior to the event. Entries close 8.00 pm November 20.

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Liz attacks the World Record for 60 minutes

Please put Monday **November 26th at ~5.30pm-6.30pm** in your diaries to come and support Liz Randall in her attempt to break the women's 60-64 age grade One Hour Masters World Record on the indoor cycling velodrome. Currently it stands at 39.224 km and it will be a major challenge to go more than that.

The task: to circle around a 250m track for 60 minutes as many times as possible in one hour, the plan being to aim for 157-160 laps. This is an official attempt monitored by the UCI (the international cycling union).

The barriers to success are : fitness, comfort and **BOREDOM**.

Location: the Darebin International Sports Centre indoor velodrome at Darebin Mel ref 31A6

Normally I am competitive enough to need little support and encouragement to achieve my cycling goals, but this is different as 60 minutes is a **VERY** long time to keep a set pace (one that I can maintain without blowing up) riding the best line and all without losing concentration.

So despite the fact that it could be as interesting a spectacle as watching grass grow, I'd really appreciate your support and most of all your loud vocal encouragement, especially towards the end...jeers or cheers will be equally acceptable.

Warning there will be no spills or thrills; just guts, determination and suffering. On the plus side the licensed cafe will be open

Liz Randall

Charity Day Eastern's annual charity day will be held at Dunlop Road on December 8. This year we will be raising funds for the Alfred Trauma Centre

Eastern Veterans Cycling Club on TV this Monday at 9pm

Angelo Antignani is a competitive club cyclist and a nurse who with his club Eastern Veterans came up with a creative way to raise money for Melbourne's 20,000 homeless persons. This is the story of Angelo and the cyclists who raced on the popular and fast Dunlop Road race circuit in March to raise funds for the Homeless Persons Program. Angelo is not just a cyclist but a compassionate nurse who believes in social justice for all and works with the underprivileged and people who find life tough.

As part of the Nurse TV show, brought to you by HESTA, on Melbourne's Channel 31, Waterbyrd Filmz is very proud to announce that Eastern Veterans Cycling Club and Angelo's story will feature in this coming episode of Nurse TV on Melbourne's community television station Channel 31 at 9 pm, Monday 12 November.

One hundred free DVD copies are available of this story. You can simply send an email with your address and we can send you your free copy.

Nurse TV is in production until April 2008 and 28 new episodes are currently in production. Watch out for more health related cycling stories, which are currently in production.

Lance Armstrong runs 2:46 in last weekend's New York Marathon.

For those club members who have come to cycling from a running background, you can really appreciate what an outstanding effort this time is for the great man. Running training greatly assists cyclists however when cyclists try to run, well its not always a pretty sight. As always Lance defies all conventional thinking. This photo taken by a running friend of mine in New York shows Lance coming towards the last few kms, looking fresh and determined.

Paul Wilson



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9888 4403

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Special Offer for Eastern Vets

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