



# eastern veterans cycling club

[www.easternvets.com](http://www.easternvets.com)

**Newsletter June 30<sup>th</sup> 2007**

## Macclesfield – June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### Race report.

56 competitors and a dozen or so helpers made their way to the Macclesfield primary school (which is not only still there but is growing) for the mid-winter solstice classic scratch race. Some taking a slightly more scenic route than others. The conditions a bit on the cool side, but not as cold as last week at Smurf City, and with what must have been a gentle tail wind home it was almost ideal conditions for a bike race.

#### a-grade (4 laps – 64k)

All the little names were out with Guy, Rob and Roy heading a fairly strong a-grade contingent. Ian Milner joining us as penance for ripping b-grade apart in his last couple of starts putting the numbers into double figures.

Having taken the climb from the start spinning the cranks on the 39-18 those that were slow to engage the 53 over the crest found themselves hurriedly reaching for it as somebody has decided to make the most of the first downhill stretch. A glance at the speedo showed 70.0kph, a glance was all I was prepared to take as we barrelled down the road. And that pretty much set the tone for the race.

Rob Amos and Roy Clark the main antagonists, Rob continuing his form of the previous visit using Newtonian concepts to catapult himself off the front as the road approached its nadir. Tony Chandler and Phil Smith also found themselves riding clear of the bunch at times. None of the moves amounting to anything, single rider breaks being hauled in with minimal response from the bunch, multiple rider breaks being responded to a little more urgently as one bunny, not thinking, thought two had a chance against eight.

And that was the way it progressed for the first three laps, most of the moves being instigated on the descents (Rob) or the flat (Roy or Phil). Surprisingly nobody hitting the bunch on the first climb out of the far turnaround or over the last kilometre before the Macclesfield turn. The biggest gap and most threatening break came mid-way back for the third time as Roy has decided that if we weren't going to let him go he didn't want to lead any more. Having returned to the bunch after one attack Roy sat up and the speed

dropped right back, Rob & Tony seizing the opportunity to ride off. Looking around nobody seemed too keen to give chase so I jumped and gave chase. Three-quarters of the way across a look back showed one rider twenty metres back and fading, the bunch a further twenty metres behind him. Making the juncture it was now time to get serious, unfortunately the bunch beat us to it and before long it was all back together.

Around the Macclesfield turn for the last time, the bell rung, it was down to the serious end of the bike race. This was where it was going to happen, or not, depending on the others' mind-set and level of fatigue. Not feeling too bad myself I've decided that there'd be no harm in trying to put some hurt into the others' legs. The worst that could happen would be to achieve nothing. The first little rise on the outbound leg was to be the point of implementation, from second wheel it was pretty much simply a case of maintaining the momentum as the leader lost their's and then out of the saddle to accelerate over the top. The effort opened a gap but with the bunch actively chasing, three quarters of a lap to run and hurting legs the only option was to sit up and wait for the others to bridge the twenty metres. A kilometre down the road, another incline, another effort, another gap, another chase and back together again. Then a descent, the sound of rushing wheels as Rob has done what he is fast becoming known to do, powering down the slope and up the other side (almost). Unfortunately gravity works both ways and Rob seemed to be more affected than others and it was back together again before the crest.

Another dipper and with Rob at the front it was time for a bit of his own back. I managed to carry the break over the crest but the effort told as the next look back showed the bunch right there.

Another effort leading to the last descent before the turnaround did nothing but assure me of clean air as we went down hill. Crouched low the speedo quickly climbed to maximum as I awaited the inevitable 'whoosh' of Rob rushing by. Nothing. The road turned upward, the speed went downward and finally Rob rides past with Tony on his wheel, the bunch a couple of bike lengths back. Slotted into third wheel we all headed to the final turn and the last eight point eight one k.

The neutral zone from the final turn extended to the foot of the first hill as everybody psyched themselves for the anticipated attack and the effort that would be required to meet it. This was it, last chance, I'd attack one-quarter to one-third of the way up. I'd been preparing for this from before the turnaround, not dropping back in the bunch but remaining at second wheel, ready to launch myself as everybody settled into grind mode. As the road climbed out of the valley I climbed out of the saddle and started the attack, oops, a bit early, too late now. Three-quarters of the way up, the legs tiring, it was back in the saddle for the last 50m and over the top, Phil on my wheel "that stretched them" he said. By the time the heartbeat was back at an acceptable level and the breathing had returned to heavy a look over the shoulder revealed everybody still there. It might have stretched them, but it didn't appear to break any of them.

Either my work of the lap so far had done some damage or everybody had worked out that an attack wasn't going to stick, either way the race pretty much settled down giving legs a little time to recover. My work wasn't done though, with nobody stretching the group another slow incline just begging to be hit hard saw myself and Phil take a twenty metre break out of the others. Three rotations (of a couple of hundred metres each) and it was obvious this wasn't going to stick either. The final move came two kilometres from home, again on an up, again it resulted in a momentary break but it was one too many, the legs feeling like they were trying to push the bike through molasses.

The others have come up once again and set themselves for the now inevitable sprint. Content to let me set the pace they have patiently waited till the finish was in sight before starting their jostling for positions, the small increase in pace too much for my tired legs, the whole bunch simply riding around me and me unable to do anything about it. By the time the legs started to feel like they might be able to make an effort the group was fifty metres up the road and about to start the sprint in earnest. Too little too late and I watched somebody (Geoff Thompson) get up over somebody else (Guy) and somebody else (Phil) through the haze of exertion from my vantage point back down the road.

Figures for the race : 64.67k at 36kph in 1:47:45 .

#### **b-grade** (4 laps 64k)

The usual suspects set about setting the pace on the outward bound leg, Kevin Starr, David Anderson and Phil Cavalieri being prominent in this regard. Peter Shanahan, as is his want, launched a couple of attacks during the first 2 laps but these didn't amount to anything as the main bunch picked up the speed and slowly reeled him in. Olivier Pomie always willing to work hard to keep the attacks to a minimum.

A number of riders seemed to have trouble with their gears when riding up the small hill after the far turn. One casualty here was Bob Lewis who retired after what sounded like a very ugly gear change.

John Thomas, after struggling early, started upping the pace and it looked as though the race was going to get serious, but the bunch was big enough and enough riders were willing to work to ensure the group stayed as one.

Over the first 3 laps the bunch seemed pretty happy to stay together and it looked as though a bunch sprint was in order ....until.... At the ascent of the aforementioned hill on the last lap Wayne Robinson, having his first B grade ride, attacked and put the bunch into trouble. Only Phil Cavalieri and Nick Tapp (also first B grade outing for a while) were able to join him. These three opened a nice gap of 50m or so and it looked as though they would go on from there as the bunch was split and struggling. Jeff Pretto and David Anderson were the first to start the chase and the bunch was able to regroup once again. Peter Shanahan, as is his want, again launched a couple of attacks, but with tiring legs he didn't get very far. The bunch ambled towards the finish and with no further major attacks it all came down to a sprint. Wayne Robinson was first to go but the hill sapped his energy before the line and Jeff (Fish & Chips) Pretto was able to take it out from Olivier Pomie and David Anderson.

Nick Tapp's take on the race.

A bit of a warm-up and off we went, for four laps, or 64 km. The extra distance would mean more of a workout, if nothing else. And promotion meant, as far as I was concerned, an excuse to spend less time setting the pace, to watch what went on and get to know a whole new bunch of riders. And do my best to beat them, of course. Conditions were great: cool, but nothing like as cold as the previous week at Yarra Junction, with hardly any wind. I was looking out for all the characters Nigel writes about, and chats to after a race: Kevin Starr ('He'll push it along at 40 km/h through here', Nigel had said in the car); Peter Shanahan ('He'll keep attacking ... at Arthurs Creek we let him go once too often'); Jeff Pretto ('Nah, not his kind of course ...' – famous last words, eh, Quentin?). Some of these guys had beaten me home at the end of the previous week's handicap, but several had finished further back – which gave me a bit of confidence.

The first problem I had to deal with was a number that came halfway adrift almost as soon as we started, and flapped around like a mad thing – distracting for all concerned. I felt around to confirm how it was attached and in doing so must have unfastened the remaining safety pin, which then proceeded to prick me in the back. Before it could fly away I took the whole thing off and stuffed it in my back pocket – much better! Tried to settle into a rhythm, gauge the pace, observe the way this bunch behaved and responded. Soon enough, off went a lone attacker – not sure who, but not Peter Shanahan. Maybe it was Phil Cavalieri. No response, anyway, or not immediately. Let him work for a while, seemed to be the theory. Never got more than 30 m or so gap, and before the first turnaround there was a little surge, a few turns done and we were all back together. Around we went and back towards Macclesfield. Nothing much happened, then off went Peter on his first foray up the road. Again, no

response, and at the end of the lap he was still away though well within view. At this point Ian Smith went to the front, upped the tempo and proceeded to close the gap. I sat in Ian's wake for a while, then went to the front as we reeled in the escapee.

And so it went for two more laps. I did a few turns on the front but was happy to roll back in the bunch in between times. It was only 14 strong, and there seemed no danger of getting dropped – in fact, though the pace came and went, overall I was a bit surprised it wasn't higher. A few lone attacks – usually from Peter Shanahan – went off and were duly brought back. There wasn't much chat: jovial Ian Smith, for example, was looking very focused and hardly said anything, though at one point he confessed to not feeling strong enough to do much work. Occasionally I had a word with Wayne to see how he was going and compare notes on the 'big league'. One difference I noticed: in C grade it only took a few small hills to put much of the field in some difficulty; here, everyone seemed reasonably comfortable when the road went up – apart from Martin Stalder and Olivier Pomie, who at different times had some trouble finding the right gear. Peter Shanahan had a bit of a chat to himself from time to time, but apart from that the mood was quiet and businesslike.

I think Wayne must have taken Graeme's advice to heart (Graeme advised Wayne and Nick that the bunch were mainly sprinters and if they shook them they had a chance. ed.) because, straight after the final turnaround, with 8 km to go, he took off up the first big hill. I was at third or fourth wheel at the time and decided to go with him. I didn't know whether we'd get away – let alone be able to stay away – but if we did nothing it was headed for a bunch finish with all those sprinters, so why not? Recent races had also taught me that, if we were caught, I would probably be able to recover with a spell back in the bunch, and at least we would have made the sprinters work to catch us. Wayne was slowing down by the time we crested the hill but I looked around and, sure enough, we had a gap – and one more collaborator in Phil Cavalieri. The three of us set about rolling turns and for a few ks tried to keep it fast – with Wayne, in true form, driving hard up the little rises. So hard, in fact, that I had just opened my mouth to say we were in danger of splitting apart when a glance behind told me the escape was over. Oh, well. Nothing ventured ...

Plan B it was: back into the pack to catch my breath and muster some leg strength for that sprint finish. The pace dropped to a crawl (21–22 km/h) and I was expecting someone – anyone – to jump, but the chase must have taken a bit of a toll (which was good) and there was no action until the long uphill finish began. I forgot who went around first. By then I'd got back up to the front and was sitting alongside Wayne again, I think, keeping it slow but watching for the move. I started to look out for the road sign we'd spotted from the car as the point to wait for before sprinting. It was still well up the road, barely 100m from the line. Now the move came. What to do? The legs said Go! but the head said Not yet! Three went past, Wayne went and made four, then five, and still that road sign wouldn't come. Twenty metres before it, I couldn't

wait any longer and joined the slow-motion uphill dash. Past fifth ('Go, Nick!' said Wayne), past fourth, and gaining on third and second, still feeling strong, but the line came too soon and it was fourth place for me, behind Jeff Pretto and Olivier Pomie, and half a bike behind David Anderson. Phil Cavalieri had evidently faded, Kevin Starr had cramped and been spat out when the finish went uphill, and for the rest, I know not.

#### **c-grade (3 laps 48k)**

Asking around after the race the word on this race was – Thorkild Muurholm.

According to the word Thorkild set the pace for the majority of the race and it was a pretty solid pace at that. The bunch matching b-grade on the road and Matt White, dropping a chain early in the race, had a job getting back on.

And when the likes of Ray Russo or Ross Tinkler tried to start something Thorkild was there to keep them in check. Nigel Letty and Greg Molesworth also had a crack at times but Thorkild was there to make sure the others stayed in with a chance.

At the final turn around the bunch went pretty hard up the first short sharp climb, a sign of things to come. Nick Bird, attacking on almost every incline on the return, whittled the group down a tad so there were only half a dozen left at the finish. But Thorkild was equal to whatever was thrown down and in the end simply rode strongly to the finish, the others unable to ride past him. Tony Renahan coming from nowhere took second and Nick pushed himself beyond the red zone to get over the line in third place but not much further.

#### **d-grade (3 laps 48k)**

A big field in d-grade set the scene for a defensive race. Which is basically the way it panned out, the whole 15 starters being there at the end, the sprinters having their day over a course that can favour a couple of strong riders if they can get away.

Nick Hainal was again the main aggressor within the group constantly trying to get things going but always ridden down by the bunch. Grant Greenhalgh and Joanne Sabbatini riding strongly all race helping to keep things together. Frank Nyhuis, who was dropped last time here, also put in a good performance.

On the last lap the last of Nick's endeavours to get away almost succeeded, Nick and Dave Woreland getting a 50m gap that they held for almost five-kilometres before a serious effort by the bunch reeled them back in and it came down to the anticipated sprint. A lack of race experience saw Frank go too early, only to be swamped before the line by the more seasoned members of the group.

#### **e-grade (2 laps 32k)**

With the exception of one rider the e-grade race stayed together for the first three-quarters of the race until Ronnie Stranks made his trade-mark move up the first hill on the final return leg ripping the small bunch apart. Bruce Peacock cresting the top twenty metres in arrears, Brian Farrell a further 20m back, the remainder struggling even further back.

Bruce was able to make up the deficit and joined with Ron to put the others well and truly out of contention. Brian

almost got to join the party but the gap proved too much, Brian completing the last seven kilometres tantalising close to the promise of respite ahead. Ron taking every opportunity to put the hurt into Bruce eventually got away two-kilometres from the finish, riding away to a comfortable win. Bruce having done enough finished a clear second ahead of Brian, who again was clear of the remainder.

## Results

|                     | <b>First</b>      | <b>Second</b> | <b>Third</b>   |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------|----------------|
| <b>a-grade (10)</b> | Geoff Thomson     | Guy Green     | Phil Smith     |
| <b>b-grade (14)</b> | Jeff Pretto       | Olivier Pomie | David Anderson |
| <b>c-grade (11)</b> | Thorkild Muurholm | Tony Renehan  | Nick Bird      |
| <b>d-grade (15)</b> | Jo Ann Sabbatini  | Graeme Parker | Nick Hainal    |
| <b>e-grade (6)</b>  | Ron Stranks       | Bruce Peacock | Brian Farrell  |

## Officials

Thanks to Graeme Parker and Ron Stranks for taking entries. Greg Lipple organising the troops who, this week, included; Keith Bowen, Hylton Preece, Peter Ransome, Steve Short, Andrew Ferridge, Michael Fisher (the younger), the Frayne brothers - Nigel and Quentin and Russel Lewis. Derek Dawkins led the way in his Jag and Andrew Finnegan brought up the rear. As always thanks to JC for carting the trailer, Su Pretto for dealing the merchandise and Peter Mackie on drinks.

## Eastern Vets Program

|               |             |           |               |                  |  |
|---------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|--|
| Saturday      | June        | 30        | 2:00pm        | METEC            | Graded Scratch Races   |
| Saturday      | July        | 7         | 2:00pm        | Killara Road     | Graded Scratch Races   |
| <b>Sunday</b> | <b>July</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>9:00am</b> | <b>Lang Lang</b> | <b>Eastern v Southern GSR</b>  |
| Saturday      | July        | 21        | 2:00pm        | Yarra Junction   | ITT Championship / Rob Graham Memorial ITT<br>See below for information concerning this event. |
| Saturday      | July        | 28        | 2:00pm        | METEC            | Graded Scratch Races   |

**Note :** Graded Scratch Race entries are accepted on the day up to 15 minutes before the advertised race start time. Handicap entries close the Tuesday before the race. No late entries will be accepted for either scratch races or handicaps. Entries to handicaps can be submitted via e-mail to the handicapper or on any race day prior to the event.

## Southern Vets Program

|        |      |    |        |                   |                      |
|--------|------|----|--------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Sunday | July | 1  | 9:00am | Cora Lyn – Bayles | Anniversary Handicap |
| Sunday | July | 8  | 9:00am | Casey Fields      | Graded Scratch Races |
| Sunday | July | 15 | 9:00am | Lang Lang         | Graded Scratch Races |
| Sunday | July | 22 | 9:00am | Somers            | Graded Scratch Races |

**Note :** Southern Vets have a 'No licence – No race' policy. If you are going to race with Southern take your licence with you.

## Northern Vets Program

|        |      |    |         |                              |                      |
|--------|------|----|---------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Sunday | July | 1  | 9:30am  | National Blvd, Campbellfield | Graded Scratch Races |
| Sunday | July | 8  | 10:00am | Avenel Road, Seymour         | Handicap             |
| Sunday | July | 15 | 9:30am  | Gisbourne                    | Graded Scratch Races |
| Sunday | July | 22 | 9:30am  | National Blvd, Campbellfield | Graded Scratch Races |

## Victorian Veteran Cycling Council Program

|        |      |    |         |           |                                  |             |
|--------|------|----|---------|-----------|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Sunday | July | 1  | 10:00am | Benalla   | 56k handicap                     | 25/6 - \$12 |
| Sunday | July | 21 | 1:00pm  | Rushworth | Ironbark classic handicap (CVCC) | 16/7 - \$12 |

## For your calendar

| Date      | Location  | Event                                |
|-----------|-----------|--------------------------------------|
| 15/7/2007 | Lang Lang | Annual Eastern v. Southern Road Race |

|              |                |  |
|--------------|----------------|--|
|              |                | Melways reference 334 G9 or 96 A6  |
| 21/7/2007    | Yarra Junction | <p>Rob Graham Memorial Time Trial.</p> <p>Aside from being the club time-trial championship – 5year age groupings this is also a sealed handicap event.</p> <p>The Rob Graham Memorial Perpetual Trophy will be awarded to the winner of the handicap event, to be eligible for this trophy a competitor must have competed in at least three Eastern Veterans Cycling Club events this winter season.</p> |
| 25-26/8/2007 | Halls Gap      | <p>A weekend of fine food, great company, good laughs, oh and a race or two.</p> <p>25/8 – Graded Scratch races</p> <p>26/8 – Handicap</p> <p>The club will be organising accommodation options and entries, details shortly.</p>  |
| 21/10/2007   | Melbourne      | <p>Around the Bay in a Day</p> <p>Eastern Vets will have a group doing the 210k ride via Geelong &amp; Queenscliff and a group doing Melbourne – Sorrento – Melbourne.</p>   |

### **Other bits and pieces:**

#### **Eastern V. Southern - July 15th:**

At Lang Lang , this is a great circuit. It is a one lap circuit, approximately 45k for the lower grades and 60k for the higher grades - see Southern's web site for course map. The course starts flat then goes up a slow hill before undulating its way back (down) to Lang Lang.

Our Club captain, Ron Stranks, has been inconsolable since we lost the Shield to Southern at Casey during the crit season. Southern are pulling out all stops and bribing members to show up with extra points in their aggregate. Eastern members don't need to be bribed, show up and support the club.

There is no Saturday racing July 14th so there are no excuses.

There will be a BBQ & drinks afterwards.

See you all at Lang Lang.

#### **Halls Gap:**

Traditionally Eastern Vets have organised a weekend of racing away from home, in the past this has been with the Hume Vets at Benalla, this year it is to be the VVCC open hosted by the Grampians Club at Halls Gap in late August. Anybody who has attended one of these weekends will testify that it is a great weekend - two great races (a 44km scratch race on the Saturday and a 61km handicap on the Sunday), socialising, dinner and activities for non-cycling partners.

The handicap race starts at Halls Gap, then proceeds to Pomonal, skirts both Lake Fyans and Lake Lonsdale before returning to finish on Fyans Creek Road, several kilometres from Halls Gap. Beautiful scenery if you have time to look at it while racing!!

As per previous years there will be a chaperoned winery tour for the non-cycling partners on the Saturday whilst the cycling partners enjoy a leisurely ride soaking in the magnificent scenery. The day is followed by a dinner on the Saturday evening where the day's adventures are recounted. Sunday and the non-riders can enjoy a drive to Zumsteins, check out MacKenzies Falls, walk the Pinnacle Walk, visit the award winning visitors centre, amble around the art and craft centres or simply sit and enjoy a coffee in the clean air and peaceful surrounds whilst the others pound the pedals in the quest for VVCC open glory.

The club is organising accommodation at a brand new lodge and dinner has been booked at a top restaurant. Halls Gap is 260k or 3.5 hours from Melbourne and well worth the visit.

For bookings please e-mail Colin O'Brien at; colinjbg@netspace.net.au

### **Other Results, etc.:**

If you have a result or announcement you would like to share please forward it on to me and I will include it here.

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