



Eastern veterans cycling club

Respecting the Rights of all Road Users

Newsletter November 24th 2007

Graded Scratch Races – METEC – November 17th.

Race report.

Despite the Australian Championships in Torquay and the Great Doherty Tour it was an impressive turnout of eighty-one competitors on the day. The numbers weighted away from the top grades with several of the regulars away at the afore mentioned events.

It was great to see Rob Amos at the event, the handicapper asking for a note before allowing him a start. Rob assuring Graeme that Jan knew he was coming to the races, she just didn't know he'd brought his bike with him.

The weather didn't have a clue what it was doing, the wind changed its mind half-a-dozen times during the day's proceedings and we had a light shower as things got under way then hot sticky conditions as the sun cleared the clouds. Only to have the rain return just after racing was completed.

a-grade

With a few of the regulars out for one reason or another it was a small group that took to the large circuit for fifty-five minutes. Russ Newman's shorts drawing some comments from the sideline. The damp conditions that greeted the first race had the half dozen starters riding tentatively for the first few laps, so much so that b-grade were nipping at their derailleurs for fifteen minutes. The few attacks by Russ or Ian Milner in that first quarter hour were quickly chased down and the gap opened up over b-grade was short lived, the pursuants sitting up as soon as contact was made.

Fifteen minutes in, the rain long gone and the track dry Ian continued his aggression this time off the finish straight, with Phil Cavaleri chasing. The break lasting a lap before it was reeled in. The next couple of laps saw a different rider taking a break over the hump only to have their lead run down before the end of the lap. Until it was Paul Wilson's turn and he held his break for a couple of laps before the inevitable reunion.

No sooner was it back together again than Ian M. had another go only to have his efforts nullified soon after. Having no joy at instigating a move Ian changed tack, waiting for someone else to attack, in this instance Paul, and then bridge with the intent of combining to break the back of the bunch. Not to be so as Russ deemed it a break to be involved in, Phil

Thompson not wanting to miss out led the other two back into the race closing it all down once more. In the reunion Phil T got squeezed out and ended up taking pit-lane.

Into the last twenty minutes of the race Ian reverts to plan A, and finally he's rewarded with a significant break which he extended to 200-metres after two laps. All he needed now was one rider, and only one, to ride across and they could set about consolidating the advantage. Phil T. was the man with the race sense and the legs to make that move. And with encouragement from the sidelines the pair set about taking the race away from the others.

The chase was never organised, the lead continuously rotated but there was no structure and the gap to the leaders fluctuated; closing as the chasers showed some interest and then expanding as they seemed to lose direction. By the time the bell was rung the two leaders led by the length of the finish straight, not enough to start a game of mouse-trap but enough to allow a tactical sprint.

It was the king of tactics who won the day, Phil T. following Ian through the last corner jumped early to take the win just ahead of Ian who had managed to come back and seriously threaten him for the big money. Michael Buckley made his play for the last of the cash early, starting his sprint before the last corner he led the remainder into the straight with a gap that he was able to hold over the fast closing chasers.

Ian Milner's aggression and efforts to make a race of it were rewarded with the president's award for 'ride of the day'.

b-grade

Unusual weather conditions greeted the start of the METEC crit. Blazing sunshine and a moderate North-westerly gave way to a light shower and drop in the wind all in the moments leading up to the start of the race. The threat of a greasy track had some riders releasing air from their tyres on the start line and it was in these damp conditions that 11 starters set off on their journey - 55 minutes plus the bell lap.

Due to the light film of water on the circuit the first few laps were negotiated fairly cautiously, although not as cautiously as a-grade and this week it was b-grade that found themselves hampered by a slow higher-grade race. However, it wasn't long before the cloudy skies gave way to blazing sun, drying out the track and making for some fast and furious racing.

Under the inclement conditions a-grade wasn't in a hurry to start racing and it took around fifteen minutes before they committed to some sort of effort and started to ride away from the b-grade race. As soon as there was a bit of space between the two bunches Andy Burmas and Matt White attacked the bunch. The pair taking a good lead that had Kevin Starr pounding the pedals to bring it back. A combination of Kevin's efforts and a lacklustre a-grade stymied this initial move, the bunch back together again a couple of minutes later.

The post-conjunction reduction in pace and another effort by the higher grade created another gap that Andy was quick to leap into. The status-quo was maintained for a lap before Rob Truscott & Matt made their move to bridge, the presence of a-grade foiling this attempt, the chasing bunch happy to have things back the way they were.

A couple more attacks out of the b-grade bunch by the likes of Kevin, Rob and Matt over the middle twenty minutes had the antagonists passing or threatening to pass a-grade. These moves finally getting the message across, a-grade finally pulling a collective digit and heading up the road allowing the b-grade race to continue in peace. Unfortunately these interim attacks were thwarted by the interference of a-grade and through some solid chasing by Thorkild Muurkolm and the bunch.

The dawning of the realisation on a-grade was a little too late for anybody thinking of attacking. The race now at the stage where riders were thinking of the finish and only doing what had to be done to ensure they arrived at the last corner with enough to have a shot at the money. This didn't stop a couple of the stronger riders from having a go, Steve Fothergill and Thorkild being a couple who tried. But their efforts both thwarted, and stymied, by the bunch.

With fifty minutes gone Steve and Thorkild made a final bid to smash the bunch but only succeeded in stretching it to near breaking point and when their legs ran out of go the bunch concertinaed back into formation.

In a memorable move, Kevin Starr tried to anticipate the bell making his own final desperate bid for freedom along the finish straight only to find that there was no bell - a bit of a case of premature acceleration.

As was pretty much pre-destined from the outset it came down to a bunch sprint, a matter of metres separating first to 8th place. Some wild and woolly, Djamilidine Abdujaparov style sprinting by some of the guys making it a bit interesting to say the least but hey, that's criterium racing. Fortunately everybody stayed upright and crossed the finish line in a tight knit group that had the officials on the line earning their money as they picked the top three from the mass of riders; Harold Simpson just ahead of Rob Truscott and Bob Lewis.

All in all a great race, fast with lots of attacks conducted on a good circuit in excellent conditions.

c-grade - Su Pretto's swan song

The biggest field of the day also started at a sedate pace, the conditions dictating prudence over something. It was fifteen minutes of tempo riding before Tony Curulli made a move that was quickly jumped on by Gary LeRoy, the pair building their advantage to around a hundred metres over a couple of laps. When Peter Ransome made a move to join them the chasers got serious and ten minutes after it started it was grupetto again. Which is how it stayed for the next 15 minutes until Peter and Tony were back in the fray.

This little sojourn didn't last long, the bunch bringing it back together in short order only to have Steve Short counter attack with Su Pretto on his wheel. The consequent chase stretched the bunch beyond breaking point, almost halving it. A determined effort by the leaders of both chase groups saw it back together after two laps.

The scene had been set and the counter counter attacks started, first it was Andrew Neilson, Shane Schlotterlein, Geoff Puttock and Greg Lipple who jumped away, but a very quick reaction by the remainder saw that move closed down within half a lap. Then Greg was back in it, this time with Steve Short and they managed to get a 200m lead before the inevitable chase bore down on them. All of this attacking and chasing taking its toll on a couple of riders.

The penultimate move was made by Ian Smith and A. Gullace but again the peleton were not going to allow them any lee-way and there fifteen minutes was cut short (by about fourteen and a half minutes). The final move was that of Shorty who must have received a shock when the officials rang the bell, jumping to a handy little gap as the group crossed the finish line for the next to last time.

It was almost edge of your seat stuff (I'm sure Steve was on the edge of his - ed.) as Steve took his hard fought break over the hump and into the last half lap. OK, they were only playing with him swamping him before the final turn as a mass of riders scrambled for clear road to the finish.

Again the officials had their work cut out for them as they tried to separate the winner from the not quite winners, Tony C. getting the points from Geoff and Shane, Mick Paull a close fourth.

d-grade

Another big field and another measured start, possibly it was the heat this time that had everybody riding conservatively. Despite, or maybe because of, the presence of Rob Amos the race progressed at a consistent, none-too-taxing tempo. Chris Norbury doing the majority of the driving, the remaining twenty-one riders content to sit and watch, the majority of them watching Rob.

With almost half the race under the treads one rider figured it was time to shake the tree and see what happened. Not a lot. After an increase in tempo (Chris Norbury again) to drag him

back the race reverted to a pace a little faster than before. The increase in speed enough to put an end to thoughts of further attacks and to see a few riders lose contact over the remainder of the race.

Forty-five minutes in and there's a commotion from the gallery gathered around the traffic lights. A look across and Rob has arrived at la tete de la course. A rush of blood and a position he soon relinquished for the comfort of the mid-field. At around four laps to go Graeme Parker was overheard priming Rob, discussing the tactics for the sprint. Three laps later the majority of the original twenty riders took the bell and headed for the sprint.

Around the last corner everybody who was behind Rob was trying to position themselves on his wheel, even some of those in front of him were trying. All to no avail, Graeme Parker and Alan Hicks leading Rob through the mass and delivering him to the front 200 from the line where he took over and despite showing the signs of not having been on the bike for months was able to hold on to win by a bike-length. Gavin Plummer coming through for second, Alan Hicks holding on for third and the remainder of the bunch finishing with the same time.

Stats (G. Plummer); Average - 34.3kph, Duration - 58:22, Distance - 33.4km

e-grade

The first half of the race was run at a fairly consistent pace, the men of the bunch happy to let the lady go first (or was Juanita too strong for the boys – ed.). The one time Juanita wasn't on the front Graham Cadd was, softening the bunch up for Juanita to attack them. Which she duly did, unfortunately the peleton wasn't soft enough and her efforts came to naught.

Half way into the race and Ben deJong made it his by hitting the other 12 as they cruised down the finish straight. Juanita making a desperate bid to bridge buried herself for half a lap but just wasn't able to catch the wheel.

While Juanita returned to the others in search of assistance Ben rode off to never be caught and win by over half a lap. While Ben was winning the race the others appeared to be in

two minds about whether they could chase or not, at times the pursuants looked like they were and then they didn't.

Had it been a points race Juanita would have won it hands down (or at least got second) but as it came down to a bunch kick for the minor placings she was out muscled and out sprinted by the boys. Peter James leading Richard Maggs across the line with the majority of the original dozen hot on their wheels.

f-grade

A world champions jersey in the mix on the start line and this was going to be a tough race - Ken Woolard amongst the six competitors who took the start. Once under way Phil Cox found himself at the front and doing a lot of the driving. Whenever Phil eased up Sid Dymond was there to keep it going, Gerry Egbers also getting into the driver's seat and maintaining the punishment. Phil was never far from the front though and as the others waned he was back keeping it honest. Maybe a bit too honest for John Macleod who quietly slipped off the back to finish the race on his own.

At the bell it was the start list sans John that went around for one last time and in the finish it was the two main antagonists of the race who fought it out to the line. Phil and Sid, manno-a-manno, down the finish straight, Phil had the strength and staying power to finish ahead of Sid, Michael Fisher (senior) completing the trifecta ahead of the rest.

Tuesday Night

The enthusiasm may have been there but the racing wasn't. The hot weather rules coming into play and cancelling the evening's affairs.

Wrap up

A great day's racing was capped off with a barbecue and a great social atmosphere as we said farewell and good luck to Su and Jeff Pretto, Jeff taking up a new job in Newcastle.

Thanks to Andy Burmas (b-grade) with some help from Matt and Rob, Peter Mackie (d-grade) Phil Cox & John Macleod (f-grade) for their contributions that made the race report possible.

Results

	First	Second	Third	Fourth
a-grade (6)	Phil Thompson	Ian Milner	Michael Buckley	
b-grade (11)	Harold Simpson	Rob Truscott	Bob Lewis	
c-grade (25)	Tony Curulli	Geoff Puttock	Shane Schlotterlein	Michael Paull
d-grade (22)	Rob Amos	Gavin Plummer	Alan Hicks	Murray Howlett
e-grade (13)	Ben deJong	Peter James	Richard Maggs	
f-grade (6)	Phil. Cox	Sid Dymond	Mike Fisher	

Aggregate Points (17/11/07)

R. Stranks	73
P. Cavaleri	66
K. Starr	64
R. Amos	61
N. Hainal	59
P. Thompson	55
G. Green	54
JC. Wilson	51
T. Curulli	49
H. Preece	49
T. Murdoch	48
T. Muurholm	48

Officials

Thanks to Graeme Parker and Keith Bowen for taking the entries, and to the Stuart Bendall and Glen Archer for running the races. Thanks also to JC for carting the trailer and Peter Mackie and David Casey on the drinks.

Eastern Vets Program

Saturday	November	24	1:00pm	Yarra Junction	O'Mara 100
Monday	November	26	8:00pm	Maroondah Club	Monthly General Meeting
Saturday	December	1	2:00pm	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	December	8	2:00pm	Dunlop Road	Graded Scratch races
Saturday	December	15	2:00pm	METEC	Christmas Handicap
Wednesday			10:00am	The Loop - Yarra Boulevard	Scratch Races
Tuesday	13/11/07 - 11/12/07 8/1/08 - 1/4/08		6:00pm	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. Riders entering a handicap **MUST** pay the entry fee regardless of participation. Fees are due on race day, entrants will **NOT** be allowed to start in any EVCC race until fees have been paid.
No late entries will be accepted for either scratch races or handicaps. Entries to handicaps can be submitted via e-mail to the handicapper or on any race day prior to the event.

Southern Vets Program

Sunday	November	25	9:00am	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	December	2	9:00am	Lakewood Blvd, Braeside	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	December	9	9:00am	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	December	16	9:00am	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Thursday	15/11/07 - 20/12/07		6:05pm	Sandown Park Raceway	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	November	25	10:00am	Lancefield	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	December	2	10:00am	Avenel Rd, Seymour	Handicap (48k)
Sunday	December	9	9:30am	National Blvd, Campbellfield	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	December	16	10:00	Avenel Rd, Seymour	Christmas Handicap (48k)

Victorian Veteran Cycling Council Program

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For your calendar

Date	Location	Event
24/11/2007	Yarra Junction	Eastern Vets O'Mara 100 Over \$2000.00 in cash and prizes Pre-entry will be required for this event as bunch sizes will be capped. As such riders who enter but do not compete will not be allowed to start another EVCC event until the entry fee has been paid.
25/11/2007	Yarra Glen	Croydon Cycleworks Twin Peaks Road Challenge 8:30am Yarra Glen () – 100k including Mt Donna Buang and Mt St Leonard \$10 entry, email info@croydoncyclworks.com or ph. 9723 5164
1/12/2007	Melbourne	SUB Women's Cycle Challenge – 55k or 20k options Http://www.supersprint.com.au Note : this event is for women only.
27/1/2008	Bright	Audax Alpine Classic Www.audax.org.au/alpine.htm Andy Burmas has some accommodation available – a_burmas@hotmail.com
15/3/2008	Torquay	Great Ocean & Otway Classic Ride - 145k or 60k options Http://www.supersprint.com.au

Other bits and pieces:

World Record

Witness history in the making on Monday Night as Liz Randall sets a world one-hour record for her age group. As there is no current record for this age group she only has to complete the hour to achieve her objective. But she needs to complete the hour and to help her do this she could use your support, she also wants to set a distance that will be hard to match. So come along and see a new world-record set and help make it a good one.

Where : DISC (281 Darebin Rd, Thornbury, melways 31 A7)

When : 26/11/2007 5:30pm

How much : Gold coin

What to bring : Eastern club jersey, bells, voice

Merchandise

Eastern Vets merchandise is available from Kevin Starr at most meets, you can check out what's available through the Eastern Vets web site - <http://www.easternvets.com/clothing.php>.

Hot Weather

Just a reminder that the club has a hot weather policy which states;

If the forecast temperature at 10:40am (the last forecast update from the BOM) is for a temperature of 35°C or more, races will be cancelled. Under circumstances of high humidity, races may be cancelled even though the forecast temperature is less than 35°C. A decision will be made at 10:40am and communicated to members via e-mail and the race day phone.

This policy applies to all racing conducted by Eastern Veterans Cycling Club.

If in doubt call the race day phone (0407 688 154) which should have the information available.

Austria – St Johann (part 2 – World Championship. 25/8/2007)

The course:

This was the same course as used in the World Cup earlier in the week. Three laps of a thirty-six kilometre circuit with a one point seven five-kilometre pan-handle to and from the circuit.

The race

I hadn't done a lot of thinking between the World Cup and this race and in hindsight I probably should have. And in hindsight I should have done a few other things differently, but I didn't so the race went the way the race went and I'll just have to go back to do it the way I think I should have done it.

An even bigger field was gathered at the start line as the music pumped out through the PA system. A look around from my vantage point at the back of the field revealed the number 199 saddle cloth, even with some no-shows this was a big field – TdF sized. Half a kilometre from front to back if it got stretched to single file. Unlike the TdF though, these were 190 individuals (in theory), each and every one trying to be at the pointy end of the field at the right time.

One minute to go, the nervous banter quiets as the realisation that what we are here for is about to get under way. A look to the stands, there's Susan who has come to support me for this race. Funf, Vier, Drei, Zwo, Eins, Null and we're away. Not as hectic as the World Cup race a couple of days ago but the speedo is nudging 40kph before we slow for the turn up onto the highway. A much better start than the previous race, no rubber left on the road this time. Promise of a smooth, clean, race – one can only hope.

Having started at the rear of the peleton the main aim was to get toward the front. I was looking for Guy's wheel to aim for when Dimitri (see Deutschlandsberg 4 – The Road Race 14/8/2007, newsletter of 20/10/2007) rode past, good enough. I followed him through the bunch and up the first climb to Huberhohe where I lost him just over the top. No matter, the primary objective had been achieved, I was in the top third.

From Huberhohe the race went downhill, both physically and literally. The descent in the world cup had been a tad messy, this was outright dangerous. On Tuesday I'd tasted the aroma of burning brake pads for the first time but only in the first corner, today it was every couple of hundred metres as we descended to the valley floor. The hope of a smooth race was dashed as it was full on the gas then full on the brakes, full on the gas, full on the brakes, it was incredible that nobody came unstuck. I was in the leading 25%, I daren't imagine what it was like further back. I needed to get further forward (heck everybody needed to get further forward) but there was no way. It was verge to verge cyclists riding unpredictable lines. There was nothing to do but stick the elbows, and the little fingers, out and concentrate, concentrate real hard. Making ground where you could only to loose it as the lane shut and another opened up across the road.

I think we survived the run down the descent and along the valley to the bottom of the next climb, there was a lot of shouting and a lot of braking all the way. The climb into Swendt wasn't much better, only the gradient saving the brake pads more wear. At the roundabout in Kossen several riders chose to cut the corner by taking the grass route. After this things seemed to settle down a bit, the slightly wider road giving a sense of calm to the proceedings. The hairpin turn off this road was negotiated safely and I even managed to pick up a few places on the climb. Over the top it was onto the 53 for the down-slope, I was determined to make inroads along this open fast stretch, get to the top 20 before the road turned back toward St. Johann where it narrowed down again.

I have no idea what happened but within a kilometre of the crest riders have gone down - twenty metres directly in front of me. We're so tightly packed there's nowhere to go but into the ever increasing pile of cyclists. Fortunately I pulled up in time, just nudging the pile of cycles and riders on the tarmac. Then 'whack', I get hit from behind, and I'm a part of the pile of cyclists and bikes on the tarmac. My handlebars tangled in someone else's front wheel or someone else's handlebars were tangled in my front wheel and there's somebody screaming "my hand my hand", his hand is tangled between spokes and fork. Get his hand free, get my handlebars (or was that wheel) free, pick up my bar end plug (can't afford to lose that) put it in my mouth, mount and away. Ok not quite. Dismount, put the chain back on, assure the first aider that I'm ok (through the bar end plug), mount and away, trying to get the plug in the bar end as I started down the road. It was like pedalling through molasses and the bunch was already half a minute up the road and not going slowly. Reach round and release the rear brake, that's better but it still doesn't feel right. A check of the front wheel and it's rubbing every revolution – merda. Release the front brake, that's better, but I don't have a lot of stopping power.

By now the bunch is a long way up the road and somehow I don't think they'll be waiting for me. What to do? Bust a gut chasing a bunch doing mid-forties and, on the off chance that I catch them, hope they're riding smoother or pull the pin. It had been an experience; it was over. I followed the race back to the top of the climb at Huberhohe where I joined Susan, Kathy Green, Jeff Stobie and a few others waiting for the race to come round for the last lap.

Early on the return a couple of riders went past, chasing the bunch but my decision had been made and I let them go. Much later a bunch went by in pursuit, I hopped on that but was struggling to just stay with them, eventually letting them go and taking a shortcut up the hill.

What looked like the majority of the starters came through as a bunch on the last lap, Guy in the top 30, Roy not far behind, Tony, sucking in vast amounts of air, lumbering up the hill further back and Mark, sweat pouring down his face, still in the mix. From all accounts the race pretty much stayed together from then until around three-kilometres from home when Guy decided that if he was to have a chance he would have to do something there and then. Which he did. Unfortunately for him another rider held his wheel and enjoyed a sit to the finish before coming round and taking the championship. Guy Green second, Roy Clark twenty-fifth - 5 seconds in arrears, Mark Wallace ninetieth – a further 25 seconds down and Tony Chandler eight seconds, and two places, behind Mark. Mark made the remark after the race that it was the stampeding pink elephants threatening to trample him that kept him going for the last half-dozen kilometres.

Of the one hundred and seventy odd starters one hundred and twelve finished; the first two with the same time at two hours forty and twenty-seven seconds (for the 112k that's an average of 41.9kph), the next 88 riders were awarded the same time at – 00:00:05, the next five coming in over the next 50 seconds. The remaining seventeen trailed in from one and a half to twenty-six minutes later.

Other Results, etc.:

Fatherly Pride

Phil Cox's son – Aaron, adagoodweegend winning his first major golf tournament against some seasoned pros in Mike Harwood and Peter O'Malley and some competent amateurs in Steve Waugh, Dean Woods and Sir Richard Hadlee, oh and tangles.

Husbandly Pride

Congratulations to Sue Cox on finishing second in the 35-39yo Women's Criterium at the National Championships on the weekend.



Other Australian Championship Results

John Lynch - silver in the men's 50-54yo road race

Alan Sandford – bronze in the men's 70-74yo road race, gold in the 65+ track time trial, bronze in the 65+ track scratch race and bronze in the 70-74yo crit.

Dave Moreland – gold in the men's 45-54yo track pursuit, track time trial and track scratch race

Michael Fisher (jnr.) - bronze in the men's 40-44yo crit

Roy Clark - silver in the men's 45-49yo crit

If you have a result or an announcement you would like to share please forward it on to me (nigel.kimber@bigpond.com) and I will include it here.
