



# Eastern veterans cycling club

Respecting the Rights of all Road Users

*Newsletter December 13<sup>th</sup> 2008*

## Casey Fields, Graded Scratch Races - December 6<sup>th</sup>

### Race report

Melbourne's south-west out did itself this week with a strong westerly blowing across the Casey Fields circuit, a wind that picked up throughout the afternoon and that gusted stronger at times. Before the race started the conditions were overcast and after proceedings had finished it threatened rain, but in between it was glorious windy sunshine.

The tour of Bright was on this weekend and it proved more attractive to our top level members, the two Eastern a-graders who didn't go to Bright were bolstered by a couple of southern members, the other fields fared a bit better and it was sixty-nine riders who set off for between an hour ten and an hour's racing.

With only four starters in a-grade the decision was taken to race them with b-grade but to give the lower grade a bit of a head start.

### b-grade

With three-quarters of a lap head start the fourteen in b-grade set about making the most of the lack of pursuit, tapping out a leisurely pace to the back straight. Unfortunately they didn't make the most of their time alone and as they rounded the corner into the long straight things got serious as a-grade were let loose. A lack of organisation in the peleton saw the pursuers take time out of the b-grade bunch over the first couple of laps but as the situation sunk in some semblance of order came to the group as a handful of the riders started rolling through.

With concerted coordinated effort the b-grader's took back the time they'd lost and were looking like they'd stay away but a few not doing turns made it difficult to maintain a smooth working pace-line. Then as the conditions started to take their toll, and the adrenalin started to wear thin the chasers started to again close the gap.

At twenty-five minutes in the fourteen were down to thirteen, two laps later the thirteen were ten as a few more succumbed to the work effort. Thirty-five minutes in, ten leg-weary cyclists and with a rapidly closing, well oiled chase machine bearing down on them the b-grade bunch backed it off a tad to save their legs for the now inevitable capture and the undoubtable surge/attack by the a-graders. Unfortunately for Steve Ross this didn't come early enough, Steve slipping off

the back half a lap before they eased up, then as a-grade steamed past a last ditch effort to hang on proved good for a couple of hundred metres before the legs cried 'enough!' and he was again circulating on his own.

### a-grade

The math was simple one and a half kilometres deficit, one hour ten minutes to make up that deficit, that was going to require an average race speed of just under 1.5 kilometres per hour better than the b-grade bunch.

As soon as the four were set off in pursuit they settled into a working group, each rider doing a stint then swinging up the road to allow the next rider through. Over the first couple of laps the signs were encouraging but then the b-grade bunch appeared to get their act together and things weren't looking quite so promising. Regardless, everybody continued to work for the team and with Justin Davis doing some hard turns into the wind the balance started to swing the other way.

As time went by the signs ahead improved as the hare started to shed a few members and with just over half the race done a couple of the b-grade riders were now behind the pursuants and capture was imminent and almost certainly assured. With b-grade departing the finish straight as the four a-grade riders started up to the line and still twenty-minutes to go there was time to rest the legs and plan the next move. Fifty-five minutes down things were settled, it was time to haul the remnants of b-grade in and enact plan-a.

Unfortunately for plan-a the b-grade bunch had seen unification approaching and had eased up the pace in anticipation. As the two groups came together along the short finish straight with one-hour two-minutes elapsed Rob Amos and Justin dug deep, riding straight past the weary but wary b-grade bunch. The pair garnering a quick thirty metres before the bunch could wind up a response, but a response they mounted, serious efforts by Thorkild, Frank Nyhuis and Kevin Starr stretching the bunch to near breaking point, a gap appearing mid-way threatening to split the group into two six-packs. But, as the leaders of the chase caught the breakaway the a-graders who had been left behind pulled the remainder back restoring it to a group of eleven.

Plan-b; run the clock down a bit, keep the pace up and then send the other two up the road two laps from the finish. The Thompsons Phil and Mark getting clear, and with only Thorkild, David Holt and Martin Stalder chasing they were able to put

some distance into that chase. The break established, two away, it was time to re-form the a-grade bunch, sixty-nine minutes showing on the race clock Justin and Rob broke ranks and bridged to the lead pair, their move stretching the chase bunch to a long line, Ian Smith the last to lose contact with the attacking pair's wheels.

Seventy minutes in; a-grade was back together, as were those who were left in b-grade, only now the roles were reversed. It took another lap before the bell was rung, a-grade slowly pulling away from b but by no means assured of victory. With this in mind it was Mark Thompson who led the race into the last two kilometres, a group of five in pursuit. Mark continued his lead-out through to the finish straight where a battle for line honours between he and Justin Davis was fought, Mark proving too strong and winning by half a wheel. Five metres back Rob Amos and Phil Thompson were locked in their own battle for third, Rob proving to have enough left after the punishment of the previous fifty-kilometres.

Fifteen seconds after the a-graders had cleared the line the five remaining b-grade riders swung around the last corner and with still two envelopes up for grabs the competition was fierce. David Holt showing that he won't be a b-grade rider for very much longer, having done a power of work throughout the race he was still able to out-sprint Kevin Starr and the other three for fifth, Kevin claiming sixth just ahead of the other three.

### **c-grade**

The prevailing conditions pretty much controlled this race, the first twenty minutes spent cruising around, getting a feel for the strength of the wind, of the legs and of the competition. More time was spent trying to get off the front rather than getting off the front, nobody too keen to do any more than they absolutely had to.

That was until Grant Greenhalgh decided that two-dozen minutes was enough and hit the bunch hard, quickly gaining a fifty metre advantage. Jason King, keen to be involved, set about bridging. The bunch of a similar mindset set about first dragging back Jason and then Grant. A couple of laps gruppetto before Gary LeRoy went for his fifteen-minutes, only to have the bunch respond almost immediately to reduce it to fifteen seconds, and then have Gary Stopar counter attack, a move that had riders scrambling for the wheel in front as the line got perilously fragile. Half a lap later it was as it had been before, the wind taken from the sails.

It was obvious that the collective weren't going to allow an individual away but despite this the next twenty minutes saw the likes of David McCormack, Harold Simpson and Grant continue to try to get something going but always the bunch would respond en-masse. With time running out Steve Barnard threw his helmet into the ring, making a couple of attempts to shed the shackles of the group but again his efforts were rewarded by a group chase.

With time up the bell was rung finding Rob Harris on the front, a position he'd occupied more often than not throughout the race. Having just completed a strong lap dragging the peleton

around he wasn't keen to do it again but none in the group were keen to relieve him of the position either, so, with head down, it was into the last lap that he drove the bus. And through the last corner and into the sprint he also led. Determined that the hard work would be rewarded Rob buried himself to the line, Grant Greenhalgh spoiling the fairytale, timing his finish impeccably, powering out of the slipstream to claim first by the narrowest of margins, Rob holding on for second from a rapidly finishing Jim Swainston.

### **d-grade**

The small wiry frame of Paul Kelly featured prominently in the d-grade race, his stature providing less front to the wind. Very early in the race (2<sup>nd</sup> lap) Paul tested the waters, David Lyons the only one to join him. After a couple of laps away and no sign of reinforcements from the nineteen strong chase bunch David saw the futility of trying to keep the hounds at bay and eased off while Paul continued to fish - an expedition that didn't last much longer.

Peter Mackie celebrated Paul's return to the fold by counter attacking only to find that nobody else liked that idea, the bunch bringing him quickly to heel. A relatively quiet ten minutes passed before Ron Peterson let loose down wind, Paul Kelly on his wheel and the remainder stretched back along the long straight, the turn and loss of speed up the finish straight seeing the line concertina back into a bunch.

Another ten minutes of relative inactivity as the bunch members considered their options before Mark Cheeseman tried to stamp his authority on the race, Ben DeJong being in the right place at the right time had little option but to go with him. Paul Kelly sensing the potential threat set about bridging, Neil Cartledge stuck to his wheel, another pair not far behind, then the bunch, all members "nose to the head-stem" as they endeavoured to keep it all together. De big Cheese and DeJong enjoyed five minutes in the sun (and wind) as the bunch picked up the interim riders - like a droplet down the window, before closing the break down.

No sooner had the bunch dragged Mark & Ben back into the fold than Nick Hainal and that man - Paul Kelly, tried to take advantage of the chase to clear off. Unfortunately momentum, and heart rates, were up and the move was quashed before it really started. Another lull in proceedings and it was looking like it was going to be a bunch sprint that settled the result.

Paul Kelly had different ideas, attacking his fellow yellow banded grade-mates with just on an hour of racing completed - maybe anticipating the bell and hoping to hold the group at wheel's length. No joy and it was a bunch sprint that settled the result. The majority of the starting twenty-one making it into the last corner (and thankfully through it). As the faces of the riders came into focus Graeme Parker was sighted and the bobbing form of Mark Cheeseman could be seen desperately trying to find a path through the wall of riders in his way. Mark finally finding a gap big enough to get through but not soon enough, Mark unable to catch David Birzneiks who showed true sprinter's legs to finish just ahead of Denis Pauwells, but Mark did catch, and pass everybody else who'd been ahead and in turn relegating Graeme Parker to fourth.

## e-grade

A race in four parts, the first part, the Bill Upston part, the Brian Farrell part and the last part. Not a lot to be said about the first part – it's all been said before; testing the conditions, testing the legs, checking out the competition. The Bill Upston part had a couple of false starts but proved that persistence pays (if you want to ride alone). After three attempts to get away were ridden down Bill's fourth (and last – ed.) attempt bore fruit, riding away over two laps to a one-hundred metre lead. A distance the seven in the bunch deemed a good distance to leave him at – not too far away that it couldn't be controlled but far enough out that he may think he had a chance.

Bill's part ended at Bill's own hand, the realisation that the others were leaving him to hang and the strengthening wind encouraging him to return to the bunch. Bill's return providing naming rights opportunity for another, and it was Brian who stepped up to the rostrum and had a go.

Along the short top straight, with the wind in his face Brian struck out and was around the corner clear of pursuit and with the wind now at his back the gap quickly grew. A concerted effort saw Brian's lead blossom whilst the bunch marked time, sure they'd eventually be reunited, the wind sure to wear down even a western-plains boy. And sure enough, after seven laps away the third part was over and the fourth part was about to start.

The fourth part was an uneventful part, the bell lap more so than the preceding couple of laps as the pace dropped right back. Riders preparing for the now inevitable sprint – cue Brian Farrell, but with a slow d-grade ahead the thought of glory turned to mundanity and Brian ended up leading the bunch into the sprint. Along the back straight, the wind at their rear, speeds increased and it was at a fair clip that the bunch rounded the last corner for the dash to the line, a dash

that dashed the chances of Bill Upston. A lifted wheel (Peter), a gust of wind and Bill was ruing the lack of suspension on his bike as he followed Peter onto the dirt. But he did well to recover, get back on bitumen and chase, unfortunately not quickly enough to prevent Gerald McIver and Graham Cadd from beating him to the line.

## f-grade

The eight rider f-grade bunch circulated at a steady pace for the first twenty-five minutes, again nobody wanting to spend too much time with their noses into the wind, but all happy to help when the wind was at their backs. That was until Ronnie Stranks stirred things up with a surge into the wind - shattering the bunch. Stuart Jenkins finding himself in no-man's land between the lone leader and a small group of three; Ian Jones, JC Wilson and Daryl O'Grady. Sid Dymond and Keith Bowen completed the grade, a lack of race training showing on their faces.

It took a couple of laps but Stuart persisted and slowly but surely caught Ronnie and the pair set about nailing the lid shut. The small chase bunch tried to get on terms with the leaders but the pace proved too much for Ian and Daryl, leaving JC to his own devices. With nothing for it JC plugged away sure that the two leaders would have to ease up at some point. And ease up they did allowing JC to drag the gap back to around twenty metres before a look over the shoulder by Ronnie revealed the extent of JC's efforts and invoked an immediate response from the lead pair. JC left well and truly on his own.

The wily Ronnie kept encouraging Stuart to the front and as the bell sounded that was where they were, Ronnie happily entrenched on Stuart's wheel. And that's where he stayed, for the whole lap, despite having the sit for the sprint Stuart proved too strong and held Ronnie to second. A minute later JC ambled home for third.

## Results

|                         | First            | Second         | Third          | Fourth        | Fifth      | Sixth       |
|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>a/b-grade</b> (4/14) | Mark Thompson    | Justin Davis   | Rob Amos       | Phil Thompson | David Holt | Kevin Starr |
| <b>c-grade</b> (14)     | Grant Greenhalgh | Rob Harris     | Jim Swainston  |               |            |             |
| <b>d-grade</b> (21)     | David Birznieks  | Denis Pauwells | Mark Cheeseman |               |            |             |
| <b>e-grade</b> (8)      | Gerald McIver    | Graham Cadd    | Bill Upston    |               |            |             |
| <b>f-grade</b> (8)      | Stewart Jenkins  | Ron Stranks    | JC Wilson      |               |            |             |

## Officials

Thanks to Graeme Parker and Ron Stranks who were on the desk taking entries, to Andy Burmas, Damian Burke and Nigel Kimber who got proceedings underway and finished them off. Thanks also to JC for bringing the trailer, to Peter Mackie and his side-kick – Chris Norbury, who were on hand with the drinks and thanks to Richard Dobson who is responsible for the roster and looking after helmet covers and numbers.

## Eastern Vets Program

|          |          |    |        |             |                            |
|----------|----------|----|--------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Saturday | December | 13 | 2:00pm | Dunlop Road | Omara Graded Scratch Races |
| Saturday | December | 20 | 2:00pm | METEC       | Christmas handicap.        |
| Saturday | December | 27 |        | No racing   |                            |

|           |         |            |         |   |                                  |
|-----------|---------|------------|---------|---|----------------------------------|
| Saturday  | January | 3          | 2:00pm  | Casey Fields  | Graded Scratch Races             |
| Tuesday   | Dec     | 16,23      | 6:00pm  | METEC<br><b>NB.</b> No entry to facility<br>before 5:00pm | Graded Scratch Races             |
|           | Jan     | 6,13,20,27 |         |   |                                  |
|           | Feb     | tba.       |         |   |                                  |
| Wednesday |         |            | 10:00am | The Loop – Yarra Boulevard                                | Scratch Races + post race coffee |

**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.

### Northern Vets Program

|        |          |    |         |                              |                        |
|--------|----------|----|---------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Sunday | December | 14 | 9:30am  | National Blvd, Campbellfield | Graded Scratch Races   |
| Sunday | December | 21 | 10:00am | Avenel Road, Seymour         | 48k Christmas handicap |

### Victorian Veteran Cycling Council Program

|        |       |   |        |                     |              |            |
|--------|-------|---|--------|---------------------|--------------|------------|
| Sunday | March | 8 | 9:30am | Woodstock on Loddon | 56k Handicap | 2/3 - \$15 |
|--------|-------|---|--------|---------------------|--------------|------------|

### For your calendar

| Date       | Location   | Event   |
|------------|------------|---|
| 13/12/2008 | Shepparton | Scotty's Ride.<br>A 120km recreational challenge ride on the quiet country roads around Scott's home town of Shepparton.<br>For details check out Cyclo Sportif's website;<br>- <a href="http://www.cyclosporativic.com.au/page/events.html">http://www.cyclosporativic.com.au/page/events.html</a> |

### Other Results, etc.:

#### Tour of Bright

Just over half a dozen Eastern Members were away last week competing in the Tour of bright, all acquitting themselves well and completing the three stages.

In the Masters 1/2/3 section Simon Bone finished forty minutes down in fifty-ninth and the following competed in the Masters 4/5 race;

- 3<sup>rd</sup> - Roy Clark +0:03:45 (=2nd stage1 +0:02:30, 2nd in TT +0:00:13, 3rd stage3 +0:01:39)
- 4<sup>th</sup> - Phil Smith +0:05:27
- 6<sup>th</sup> - Michael Hay +0:07:59
- 15<sup>th</sup> - Tony Chandler +0:17:36
- 18<sup>th</sup> - Guy Green +0:21:56
- 48<sup>th</sup> - Pete Shanahan +1:01:20

#### Anaconda Adventure Race

In the Anaconda Adventure race held in Lorne last weekend former member, and popular chick, Su Pretto competed in, and completed the five events; 1.9k swim, 14.5k paddle, 16k run, 24k mountain bike ride and a 1.5k beach run to finish third in her category - female 40-49.

Her son James placed 10th in the male 18-39 category, 34th overall which is fairly impressive as the overall includes team entries (23 of the 33 preceding places). James beating his mum by one hour 18 minutes.

#### Christmas Party

Alan Cunneen is again hosting a Christmas BBQ for Eastern members, friends of Eastern and their families on Sunday 14th December at 7pm. BBQ, food, wine, beer and soft drinks supplied.  
 Waverley Family Healthcare 58 Pinewood Dr, Mt Waverley. Melways Map Ref 70 J5 parking onsite and the next door shopping centre.  
 For catering purposes please let K. Bowen know if you are going and how many by e-mail or put your name down on Saturday.

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