



Eastern veterans cycling club

Respecting the Rights of all Road Users

Newsletter January 17th 2009

Dunlop Road, Omara Graded Scratch Races - January 10th

The weather may have postponed or cancelled the last two Omara events but not this week, the ambient 28 degrees tempered by a cool southerly breeze and a light cloud cover dissipating to see the races conducted in almost ideal conditions. The question on the committee's mind was pretty much answered with a turnout of ninety-eight competitors and a couple of dozen spectators along to enjoy the day's proceedings. A couple of new members bolstering the numbers in the lower grades, a-grade augmented by a couple of new members of its own, the signing up of team Celtic from Southern adding to the field. As per schedule for Dunlop Road racing was split and it was a, c and e grades off at two o'clock with the second round getting under way around three-twenty.

Race report

a-grade

Almost a third of the nineteen starters were new members, some regular Dunlop Road attendees came across from Southern and some new faces making up the 'new' contingent. The Celtic Decor boys were there in numbers and constituted half the newbies, were they to be a force?

We'd soon find out as we were off, the first quarter lap done at moderate pace until Frank Nyhuis (wearing the no. 1 saddle cloth) took his position at the front of the line and woke everybody up. The remainder of the lap completed before the starters had time to organise the next bunch away. A second lap at full gas then it was somebody else's turn and the pace eased a tad until Trent Brown jumped the bunch along Dunlop Road, taking a quick fifty metre gap that the remainder were happy to let him have, but no more, the bunch pace set to match his as he pushed his big frame around the circuit. When Roy Clark tried to bridge the gap the bunch responded and it was all quickly back together. No sooner had it come together than it was broken apart, David Holt testing the legs, Rob Amos responding, the pair enjoyed a couple of laps swapping turns whilst the bunch considered their options. When it eventually came back together Phil Smith had a go at getting clear but when one, then two, then a third and fourth set about joining him the bunch accepted that as an invitation and en-masse crashed the party. Not to be deterred Phil tried again next lap and was rewarded with much the same result.

Thirty-five minutes into the race, as the bunch rounded into Dunlop Road, Roy took advantage of being first onto the gas and jumped clear, Gerard Donnelly and one other going with

him to make it a three man break. Frank Nyhuis wasn't far behind and upped it a notch to catch the disappearing wheel, the bunch pretty much on his. Having caught the three Frank kept going only to have Roy sit up and the bunch follow suit. Frank spent the next couple of laps on his own before Rob got clear of the bunch and bridged, the pair spending another couple of laps slogging it out.

A working break and less than half the race to go it was looking like a possibly decisive move. Phil Smith and Gerard thought so and set about getting in on the act. Catching the lead pair and driving past to maintain the momentum, Rob had just enough to catch Gerard's wheel, Frank didn't and was destined for the chase bunch. The bunch showing no respect when they did catch him, Frank losing touch with the caboose and destined to spend the rest of his race chasing the runaway train. Steven Ross also coming adrift around the same time reduced the bunch to seventeen.

The pace see-sawed through the next couple of laps as competitors watched each other and tested each other, speeds ranging from 53 to 33kph as somebody would jump then sit up when they realised the bunch was still on their wheel.

Finally Neville Martin broke the shackles and managed to get a bit of a gap that nobody had the resources to respond to. Gerard Donnelly was the first to find the necessary inclination and set about getting across. Phil Smith saw this as an opportunity and gave chase also. Three away this late in the race had a chance so Nigel Kimber set about upping the chances and joined them, Rob Amos of a similar mind wasn't far behind. Unfortunately the bunch weren't either and after a lap it was over.

Having softened the bunch Gerard had another dig, this time with Boyd Friis and Phil Thompson for company. Again Nigel, and then Rob, set about building the bridge and crossing it. The earlier tenderising process must have worked as the break of five slowly extended their lead over the next couple of laps, things were looking good for the escapees as the fifty-five minute mark approached. Too good and Damian Burke set about joining the party with Phil Cavaleri and one other, the bunch using the chase group as the carrot weren't far behind. Fifty-six minutes after it all got under way it was back together again sans the two who had drifted away around mid-race.

The next time up the finish straight Nigel hugged the left gutter as the bunch swung wide, hoping to lose the lead for a bit of a break. The bunch weren't interested as they held position up the right

hand side of Geddes Street. Alone (and maybe forgotten) Nigel tried to sneak away, heading the bunch by twenty metres as he crossed the line to the sound of silence. Encouragement from those on the line wasn't enough, the promise of at least two more laps taking the wind from the sails and it was back to the fold soon after rounding the corner into Dunlop Road. And two laps it was to be, Neville Martin leading the bunch up the last straight next lap to receive the bell.

Neville led the final lap out, there wasn't going to be any strategy, no jockeying for positions, it was nose to the headstem stuff as Neville dragged the bunch through almost three quarters of a lap. Rounding the last corner it was still wheel astern, the whip end having no chance, the sprint starting before they rounded the corner. As Neville peeled off it was Boyd Friis leading out Celtic team mate Gerard Donnelly, Simon Bone with the ideal sit then Phil Cavaleri, Rob, Roy and Damian. Damian opted to go wide on his own and kicked hard, Boyd responded on the left side of the road taking Gerard and Simon with him. Phil C was unable to match the early acceleration and a gap formed that caught Rob on the wrong side of Phil's wheel and that had Roy scrambling to make up the lost ground, Ian Harper on his wheel hoping Roy could drag him up into contention.

A hundred and fifty metres from the line Damian still held a break over the train on the left of the road; the two-car sprinter, led by Roy, was also making ground in the centre of the road. A hundred to go and the train was closing, Boyd pushing a big gear and slowly building momentum, Simon waiting for Gerard to take over. Fifty to go the gaps were closing and it became obvious to Simon that Gerard didn't have enough to get round Boyd. Twenty-five from the line Simon had third and was driving for second, Damian still had first but it was going to be close, Boyd just centimetres off. On the line and there was no mistaking the winner, a holler of triumph from Damian announcing to everyone present (and half of Mulgrave) that he had beaten all comers. Boyd crossing a tyre-tread behind, Simon centimetres behind that then half a bike length to Gerard, Ian and Roy. The judges having to call for the photo to separate the three, Gerard getting the nod over Ian and Roy. The remainder following in in dribs and drabs over the next couple of seconds.

Figures for the race; 41.95k in 1:02:24 at 40.3kph

The finish according to Damian;

I chanced it all in a big gear, kicked hard and very early into the wind out on the right hand side giving it everything, kitchen sink, fridge, washing machine, etc. Hoping to open up a gap that meant any chasers had to battle the wind as well as coming across the road to get my wheel. Two hundred metres out the road started to kick up like I was climbing Mt Dandenong. One hundred metres out I was digging post holes going nowhere. Fifty metres out time and everything was slowing down, the line was getting further away. Twenty-five metres I looked back and realised I was clear, remembering I could not take my hands off the bars and do a salute, I let out a holler of delight that frightened kids and wild animals 6 miles away upwind.

b-grade

From the sidelines this looked a fairly intense race. As the bunch rounded the last corner on the first lap it was all together and not showing any signs of what was to come. Kevin Starr started the action on the next lap, rounding the corner 20 metres clear. Next lap it was Rob Truscott with a similar margin, then again on the following lap Rob still held twenty metres over a group of three; Thorkild Muurholm, Phil Pelgrim and David Hyde the bunch a further ten metres back.

Next time past the observer (lap 5) the three had caught Kevin and another two had joined the break making it six away and the bunch was digging deep to close it down. It took another two laps before they rounded the corner as a single unit, the pace not as frantic as it had been for the previous twelve minutes, lungs and heart desperately trying to get oxygen to, and lactic acid from, the muscles.

Gradually the pace increased over the next couple of laps with Phil Pelgrim dragging the bunch around, then stabled until, at the twenty-three minute mark, Thorkild got to the front, upped the tempo and stretched the line. Two laps later Phil Pelgrim was again off the front, and with Greg Lipple and Robert Harris held a small gap to the chasers. Next time round it was Matt White and Darren Darling who were leading the race, the bunch, led by Thorkild, were almost fifty metres in arrears and Rob Truscott was somewhere in between – either going backwards or forwards (relatively speaking).

Rob didn't catch the leaders, Matt didn't last the lap, it was Darren alone with Thorkild, Ian Smith, Anthony Gullace and Phil Pelgrim closing, the bunch not far behind. During the lap it must have come together momentarily before Ian Smith attacked the bunch, or Ian Smith managed to stay away whilst his companions faded, regardless, next time past it was Ian Smith and Kevin Starr with thirty metres on the bunch. Next lap it was Kevin Starr and Ian Smith, the lead extending to around eighty metres. And the next lap it was Phil Pelgrim and Ian Smith over a hundred metres clear of the bunch, Ian Milner in the middle trying to join them.

Two thirds of the race run and the three riders (Ian, Ian & Phil) rounded the last corner well clear of the bunch which was now seriously digging deep to bring the break back, the effort showing as an occasional rider slipped from the slip-stream to be lost from the group. So it was next time round but not the next, Ian Smith had again lost his companions and was doing it alone. Kevin Starr and Phil Pelgrim, keen to get back to where they'd once been, were trying to get across. But it was Peter Shannahan that held Ian's wheel the next time round the corner, the lead not so great as the effort was beginning to show, the chase was almost upon the break.

Forty-eight minutes after Kevin Starr had set the tone of the race it was back together. What was it to be next time round? Less of the same? The race winding down as it surrendered to an almost inevitable bunch kick? No, Ian Smith making another move, with the original aggressor – Kevin Starr. For the next two laps the pair took the last corner clear of the bunch and were still twenty metres ahead on the bell. The two almost getting away with it but the bunch timed it with near professional skill as they reeled the break in on the approach to the last corner for the last time. A

bunch kick it was going to be. The wall of riders bearing down on the line looked as though it would be intimidating to those on the line but there must have been sufficient separation for the officials to pick Leigh Bailey from Rob Truscott and Greg Lippie.

Ian Smith, for his efforts, was awarded the President's Ride of the Day.

c-grade

The c-grade bunch were in no hurry to get underway, the race starting at a steady and not too demanding pace. Until ten minutes in when Stephen Szalla launched a bit of an attack which roused the 14 others from their complacency and instigated a chase that was short, sharp and clinical. With the cobwebs cleared the pace increased to more resemble that of a race and as the clock ticked down the minutes the sweat trickled down the backs.

A few attempts over the next half hour to test the mood of the bunch revealed that it was of the kind that wasn't going to tolerate a breakaway. Which makes the next bit all the more surprising, Steve Fothergill not only catching the majority of the bunch by surprise and getting clear but doing it quietly enough that half the bunch were unawares that he was missing. Hylton Preece and Dave McCormack were two who noticed and made an effort to get him back but the bunch only saw a breakaway attempt and responded accordingly leaving Steve to plug away on his own. While the non-chase went on as they did before Steve built his lead to over the length of a straight and was out of sight and out of mind.

At what turned out to be two laps from the finish Steve Barnard attacked the bunch and got clear, Steve Szalla and David Birznieks quickly joining him. The three managed to get away and stay away, Steve Fothergill crossed the line well clear of the non-chasing-breakaway who were racing for the minor places. David Birznieks upsetting a Steve trifector winning the sprint for second, Stephen Szalla crossing second for third and Steve Barnard just missing the podium.

d-grade

It took a while for the d-grade race to get underway, the large contingent of riders deterring any inclination to go it alone. It took around half a dozen laps before there was a surge that generated a gap that stuck for more than the length of a straight, it was Mark Cheeseman who achieved this going down Geddes Street with a ten metre lead over Peter Webb who was in turn twenty metres ahead of the bunch. Next time past the officials Peter had caught Mark and the pair were increasing their lead. Paul Kelly went against plan, attempting to bridge across to the leading pair. Peter didn't have the legs to maintain the effort required to stay ahead of the field leaving Mark on his own and Peter back in the bunch which had caught Paul and were happy to let him drag them back up to Mark.

Paul's efforts were rewarded with the group back together the next time they rounded the last corner into the finish straight. Any further attempts to get clear were met with an almost

immediate response from the bunch – Paul Kelly or Richard Dobson two in particular who were keen to keep things together for at least the first half-hour or so. The negativity in the bunch quenched any inclination for an individual to strike out on their own. When the bunch pace flagged Peter Mackie would get to the front and drive it hard for a couple of hundred metres in an effort to inject some spirit into the race but to no avail. Despite a mid-race surge by Nick Hainal that saw fifty metres of daylight between his back wheel and the front of the bunch the race was destined for a bunch kick, Nick's sojourn off the front not lasting a lap, the sprinters tightening their shoes in anticipation.

And that's how the officials saw it, ringing in the d-grade race before the others. The sound of the bell shaking the sprinters from their reprieve and beginning a flurry of activity as they wend their way toward the front of the bunch. The relatively short race and consistent pace meant most thought they had enough in their legs for a shot at the win consequently the last lap was conducted at a moderate pace as riders jostled for positions trying to stay close to but clear of the front. The bunch rounded last corner intact, members of the group wary of the others, watching for the first move. When it came, it was quick and decisive, Mark Cheeseman proving too strong for Dennis Pauwels and Leon Bishop, a mass of riders following in their wake.

e-grade (Les McLean)

With 12 starters, this race looked like it would be quite a willing affair. During the first couple of laps the riders were just getting warmed up so to speak and checking each other out. eventually the pace quickened with the majority of the field doing a fair job of turn for turn.

A few started to test the waters and to see how the others would react. Matt Robinson, John Thomson, JC Wilson, John MacLeod and Barry Rodgers were the ones starting to try to get away but they were brought back every time by the determined field. John Thomson tested the field a few times with his very strong and fast turns of pace and each time the field desperately moved faster in order to counter his moves. Matt Robinson and Clive Wright also tried to a few times to break away from the field but to no avail. New rider Peter Stack did a great job and soon found his rhythm keeping with the bunch and going to the front a couple of times.

With about ten minutes to go John Thomson jumped again up the rise in Dunlop Road and this time gained a break of 20 metres on the field. The only other rider to chase him was Matt as the others all thought that hopefully he would come back to the field as in previous attempts. But they were so wrong. Matt caught John and the two of them increased their lead ever so slowly but after one lap together John rode away from Matt. The bunch sensing disaster tried to whittle down John's lead with fast turns by Barry Rodgers, JC Wilson, Les McLean and others but could not bridge the gap. At this stage Matt was dropped by John and he too came back to the bunch in the last lap.

At the bell, John Thomson had an unassailable lead and the bunch then started to think about 2nd and 3rd places with riders jostling for positions down the back straight. Moves were made at the final bend coming into the straight and after a long sprint JC Wilson easily managed to hold off Phillip Johns, Kenton Smith

and Les McLean. All accolades go to John Thomson for his very smart and gutsy move to take the initiative when he did.

f-grade

For reasons best known to the handicapper Brian Farrell found himself in this race, feeling a tad guilty about being under graded, and keen to push himself, Brian set about doing the lion's share of the work, the remaining dozen quite content to let him set the tempo for the most part. The occasional surge

by Stewart Jenkins or Ronnie Stranks providing an ideal opportunity for Brian to extend himself by leading the chase. As such the race was still together as the officials called it to a close, one lap to go and Brian was still leading the parade. And so it came to pass that half way up the finish straight the sprint started off Brian's wheel, a tightly contested affair given that most in the bunch were on relatively fresh legs. Only the given names separated the first two across the line; Darren Smith followed by Jeff (Smith) with Laurie Bohn following in third, the remainder sweeping across the line in quick succession.

Results

	First	Second	Third	Fourth
a-grade (19)	Damian Burke	Boyd Friis	Simon Bone	Gerard Donnelly
b-grade (20)	Leigh Bailey	Rob Truscott	Greg Lipple	David Hyde
c-grade (15)	Steve Fothergill	David Birznieks	Stephen Szalla	
d-grade (22)	Mark Cheeseman	Dennis Pauwells	Leon Bishop	Dean Nichlasen
e-grade (12)	John Thompson	JC Wilson	Philip Johns	
f-grade (13)	Darren Smith	Jeff Smith	Laurie Bohn	Charles Lethbridge

Officials

Thanks to Graeme Parker and Ron Stranks who were on the desk taking entries, to Nigel Frayne and his little army of helpers who set up the course, marshalled it and then packed it up, without these guys we wouldn't be allowed to race. The rostered helpers were Frank Nyhuis, Steve Short, Ian Milner, Alan Cunneen, Tim Crowe, Leon Bishop, Cameron Winton, and Darren Darling and the unrostered helpers were as numerous enabling most of those on duty to race. 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	January	17	2:00pm	Arthurs Creek	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	January	24	2:00pm	METEC	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	January	31	2:00pm	Dunlop Road	Omara Graded Scratch Races
Monday	February	2	8:00pm	Maroondah Club	Monthly meeting
Saturday	February	7	2:00pm	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Tuesday	Jan	20,27	6:00pm	METEC NB. No entry to facility before 5:00pm	Graded Scratch Races
	Feb	3,10,17,28			
	Mar	3,10,17,28,			
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	January	18	9:30am	National Blvd, Campbellfield	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	January	25	9:30am	National Blvd, Campbellfield	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	February	1	10:00am	East Trentham	48k handicap
Sunday	February	8	9:30am	Toolernvale	Alan Anderson Memorial handicap

Victorian Veteran Cycling Council Program

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