



# Eastern veterans cycling club

**Respecting the Rights of all Road Users**

**Newsletter April 4<sup>th</sup> 2009**

## Dunlop Road – Omara Graded Scratch Races - March 28<sup>th</sup>

A perfect day for a ride; low to mid twenties, no wind, hundreds of like minded individuals and some of the best scenery in Australia to take in as the two-dozen Eastern Vets members rode the 140 odd kilometres through the Otways to Lorne then returning to Torquay via the Great Ocean Road. Similar conditions greeted the 101 riders who made their way to Dunlop Road for the last of the Omara sponsored criterium races. It was good to see a few new members sign up on the day, a few old faces returning, and visitors from Northern and the newly formed Gippsland club.

In what must almost be a first for the club, the a-grade bunch was the biggest for the day, a full field of 25 riders getting proceedings under way at 2:00pm. c and e grades following them onto the circuit, whilst the other three grades joined the spectators on the sidelines to watch some good racing.

### Race report

#### a-grade (Nigel Kimber)

The big field was surely going to see it stay together for the allocated 55 minutes and come down to a bunch kick. Expectations were not met, nor was the intent to stay in the bunch and finish with the leaders - but that's another story. Plan A - do nothing and survive, Plan B - there is no Plan B.

After the usual pre-race briefing it was a casual first couple of laps, Justin Davis taking time out to find a replacement wheel while Andy Burmas found himself ten-metres clear of the field very early with no effort nor intent. After a lap Andy was relieved by Dale Estick but again it was more a case of the bunch being sociable rather than Dale being unsociable. But when Andy and Dale got together things began to warm up, four laps in it was time to race. It was also time to not be at the whip end of the line, leaving Damian Burke to watch Guy Green who was watching Justin I headed to sixth wheel. Just in time to see the first two disappear up the road, Rob Amos and Mick Day stirring things up.

The best laid plans; at fourth wheel I was going to be called on to contribute to the recovery of the miscreants and recovered they were. Only to see another couple go off the front. We were racing and I was chasing. A look under the arm revealed a small gap to the next chaser, a call of "we've got a gap" as the newbie took the wind inspired a bit of effort, but not enough to keep the chase at bay. As the bunch re-assembled itself another group of three formed just up the road; Phil

Smith, Mick Day and Andy B. Now, veterans' racing is an individual sport but there are some people you don't chase, be they a friend, someone you think is deserving of being given a chance or someone wearing the same colours as you. And with one Croydon CycleWorks jersey and one Doherty's jersey in the break it was looking promising and the addition of an Omara jersey would make a good mix - or at least so I thought.

A lap of keeping the hounds from the back wheel as we got organised and I thought there was a chance for this elite little group despite there still being over forty minutes to run and more than twenty riders in the chase. The constitution of the break pretty much taking the three strongest sets of legs out of the chase, leaving eighteen, but with a couple of sprinters in the mix and a few part-time a-graders the numbers were effectively reduced further. Four against twelve, and adding to that the 'individual' nature of veteran's racing making cooperation in the chase less than a certainty, I thought we had a chance. Which is why I was surprised (and a little disappointed) when Mick said it wasn't going to work and sat up, leaving three. Well we were going to make the bunch work anyway, there'd be time to recover once we were back in the fold.

The fold didn't happen, instead the break grew, from three to six, as the odd individual; Dale Estick, Steve Ross and Mark Withers (not necessarily in that order), got across and slotted into the rotation. Hesitation in the chase and cooperation in the break allowed the lead to grow. A lap of slow but steady progress started to ring a few bells in the bunch (despite the bell being over thirty minutes away), Tony Chandler sensing the danger taking off in pursuit while Damian was still content to watch the watchers. As Tony closed in on the leaders Rob Amos also made the decision to bridge and it was six, one, one and the rest. It took Tony two laps to get over to the break but no time to get over the chase, getting straight into line and doing his turns. Rob didn't make it, spending three laps in no-man's land, halfway between the two groups with no sign of help before conceding, changing down and recovering to fight later in the day.

Up front the seven of us continued to swap honest turns, each doing what we could to contribute to the benefit of the whole. Calls from the sidelines indicated we were slowly pulling away from the chase, the gap growing to almost forty seconds - more than the length of the longest straight - out of sight, out of mind, adding to the possibility of holding out. But the presence of both Guy and Mick (Doherty's) in the chase leaving that niggling doubt, but as each lap disappeared, as each minute ticked away

and the gap held that doubt diminished to be replaced with possibility.

Back in the chase the wise heads were content to leave the status quo, sure in their ability to get the break back and happy to have a steady pace. Happiness was fleeting, as the race entered the second half-hour the bunch started disintegrating as riders started attacking the chase group, each response putting strain on the tail until, like a lizard, a motion started by Mick saw the tail separated as the elite moved clear. The efforts of the attack, chase, counter attack, counter chase not only whittled the chase group down but it reduced the gap to the leaders until it was less than the length of the straight - in sight, in mind, reducing the possibility of holding out.

The calls from the sideline reflected the closing of the gap, and with one eye on the elapsed time and one eye on the wheel in front the brain made use of what limited oxygen was available. Legs were getting tired; the speeds along the finish straight were noticeably slower than earlier, the chase undoubtedly had both Guy and Mick in there driving it along with a few helpers. Fifty minutes gone - five to run, gap was down to 26 seconds and we were losing around 5-7 seconds a lap. At 40kph one lap takes around one minute twenty, at that rate five minutes equates to four laps, four times 5 is 20-seconds, four times 7 is 28-seconds. It was going to be close.

We were on the back of the course as the clock ticked over fifty-five minutes and Mick Day stormed past down the middle of the road. Mick was followed by a handful of riders, Rob Amos, Simon Bone, Guy Green, Justin and Damian, Damian struggling to keep his tongue from tangling in his front spokes as he desperately tried to hold onto Justin's wheel. As the chase streamed past Tony and Phil Smith managed to find what was necessary to get across the road and into the shelter of a wheel, the rest of us didn't.

I was waiting for the 'bunch' to come through, surely I'd be able to get on that. But there was no 'bunch', just a string of strung out riders with Justin at the back looking across and offering a lift. With a shake of the head the offer was declined - I was out of it. On to Geddes Street and the chase bunch reformed as the break, the remainder of the original break now making up the chase. With the coagulation of the leaders the pace eased off and there was a chance, just a chance that I could get back on. Out of the saddle, but out of bikkies, a hundred metres that late in the race was too big a gap. At the finish line it was twenty metres but the legs had nothing left and I watched the leaders round the corner and disappear up Dunlop Road, kicking myself for not accepting Justin's offer. Along Dunlop Road the two remaining fellow breakaway riders; Andy Burmas and one other, joined me and it became a battle to stay on the same lap as the leaders to the end.

Over the next ten minutes the three of us swapped turns and kept a solid, but slower, pace as the leaders started ripping into each other. Damian was the first to fall, not lasting the first lap, Phil Smith the next to find the surging pace too much as Guy and Mick alternated attacks in an effort to dislodge their competition. On the penultimate lap the efforts bore fruit, Mick getting away with Simon Bone and no chase. Around the last corner Guy talked Tony into jumping and again no

chase. With Justin leading the followers Simon took the sprint (and first place) from Mick, Tony finished hard, taking third clear of Guy, Justin and Rob who finished in that order.

Figures for my race; 47.5k in 1:08:55 for an average 41.3kph, The leaders were over half a kilometre ahead and therefore would have averaged around 41.8kph.

#### **b-grade**

No report.

#### **c-grade (Steve Short)**

After the appointment of Peter Ransome as bunch captain for the c-grade group and being given the ok. to start, Steve Szalla took off, pushing the heart rate up with a fast start. Considering that Steve has only been back racing for a short time he looked very strong as he showed a clean pair of heels up Dunlop Road, the whole group in single file scrambling for a wheel to hang on to. Steve was at the front for almost three laps before retreating to around 10th wheel to get his breathing back to a controlled level and to survey the damage he had caused.

The pace did not slacken off too much with a number of riders doing their turns at the front and keeping it honest. I was in my usual (slack) position at the tail end of the bunch riding the small chain ring to get my heart rate up. After about 5 laps I decided it was not a good position to be in, I was going to get hurt and maybe dropped. A slight slowing of the bunch at the bend before the finishing straight provided the opportunity to reposition myself around sixth wheel, slotting in behind Jimmy Swainston and in front of Colin Johnston who kindly backed off a touch to let me back in from my one out position.

A number of riders had a hit at the front trying to get away, which was good to see. At one such dig, I think by Harold Simpson or Colin O'Brien, the group was stretched out along the finishing straight and as we approached the left hander into Dunlop Road I let the gap between me and the rider in front open slightly. As I backed off at the bend a rider in front clipped the first cone making it jump around across the road. A timely reminder of Ronnie's Safety First talk and about having silly accidents for no reason. I slowed a bit after the bend letting the lead group pull away slightly before jumping across up the slight rise. There was about 7 of us in a good position to put the rest of the group in serious trouble behind but for some reason the riders at the front backed off slightly and the rest were back with us before we reached the next turn. I was thinking that that was our chance to get rid of a few of the sprinters.

Steve Szalla made another attempt to break things up, nobody seemed interested in helping him out so I decided to jump across to give him a hand. Steve, known for his fast sprint ability, is always good to get away with as he will always give you his best shot. Unfortunately Steve's lack of racing and the work he had been doing quickly drained his big thighs and he let me know he had no legs. We were all back together; Colin O'Brien, Colin Johnston, Harold Simpson, Jimmy Swainston, Peter Shannon and Peter Ransome using their experience and know-how to bring the group back together without over cooking themselves.

A couple of attempts over the next couple of laps by various riders came to nothing. I think it was about 15 to 20mins to go when Peter Shanahan, the kamikaze, decided to hit the group just as we came into the finishing straight. I was lucky to be sitting two bikes back and was able to chase him up the road. A quick glance over the shoulder told me that the group was unsure whether to chase or not so after encouraging Peter to keep going for another 50 meters or so we began to share the workload. I could see Peter was struggling a little so we backed the pace off to give him a chance to get his wind back. We got ourselves into a little routine swapping turns our speed changing from 41 down to 36 as we tired then picked up again. At one stage the chasing group were only about 50-60 meters off us and Peter was about to pull the pin but after a friendly reminder about his responsibilities, and that I would never speak to him again, he dug in and we managed to open up the gap again.

I know both Peter and I were hoping the workhorses would get off the front of the chasing pack and allow the sprinters up there to create some confusion. Luckily that's what must have happened the bunch was certainly big enough to catch us but they must have thought we were too far up the road. We gradually pulled a bigger gap, the plan being that every time we got around a corner and out of sight we would put in a bigger effort then settle back into tempo again. Hopefully the riders at the front of the chasing pack would get disillusioned at the sight of not making up any ground on us.

On the bell lap Guy Green instructed a-grade to kindly move to one side of the road. Peter was flagging a little on the last turn but came good as soon as the finish line came into sight, proving far to strong in the sprint, taking first place leaving me behind with a blistering sprint finish reaching a top speed of 59kph (yeah right more like 39kph). Jimmy Swainston, the legend, used all his experience to take third in the ensuing bunch sprint for the last of the placings.

It a funny game this riding, but great fun, this was my second race back since the 19th of January, my training has been non-existent and my weight has ballooned by over 5kilos. Last week at METEC I got dropped in d-grade I was embarrassed and had to scab a lift home from Smithy I felt that bad. It just goes to prove you only need a bit of luck, be in the right place at the right time, and put in a bit of effort and you are back in the money. Thanks to all the lads who rode c-grade we have a great club.....

#### **d-grade**

No report.

#### **e-grade (Les McLean)**

With such a wonderful autumn day, and this race being the last of the Saturday summer series events, 13 "would be winners" lined up at the start.

For the first two or three laps it was a pleasant stroll around the park, so to speak, with a gentle pace being the order of the day. However this started to change somewhat with Malcolm

Hayes, Stewart Jenkins and Gerald McIver (jnr) pushing the tempo up to a much higher level. The speed started to string out the field but without losing any one.

Most were watching Brian Farrell to see when he would make his move but it was Rob Melasecca who broke first and took a flyer, gaining over 100 metres on the field and rolling his big gear around very quickly. At this stage Alan Sandford remarked, "Let him dangle out there to wear him down". But Les McLean stated to Alan "No way, we let him do that in a previous race at Dunlop Road and we could not catch him and he got further away". Les, Alan and Phillip Johns then swapped hard turns to slowly bring Rob back to the fold, but it took nearly three laps to achieve this. Rob's ability to roll over that high gear for so long is remarkable.

It was then that Brian started his attacks and tried many times to break clear but each time he was not allowed to get any more than 20 metres away. Mal, Clive Wright and Geoff Cranstone then started to keep the speed up to ensure no more attacks. But Rob thought he was not done for yet and made another quick attack to try get away. However to no avail as the field knew, at that stage, not to let him take an inch and his attempt failed.

Stewart made another attempt at spreading the field but his attack also failed. The would be sprinters were biding their time and just staying out of trouble tucked up in the middle of the field.

At the bell the speed picked up as the riders started to try to position themselves and get the best possible wheel for the sprint. Down the back straight it was Malcolm and Gerald in front followed by Alan with Les glued to his back wheel, the rest bunched behind. At the turn into the straight Les still had Alan's wheel but lost it as the sprint started when Alan shot to the outside whilst Les got caught between Malcolm and Gerald. It was a hectic couple of seconds at this point but Les got clear and took off after Alan. To no avail, Alan was too quick and won by 3 lengths from Les with Malcolm finishing on very fast to take third, the rest of the field strung out behind. It was a great even race for the last of the series as we had many attacks, fast turns of speed and a great sprint finish.

#### **f-grade**

It was a long hour for the eleven starters in f-grade, most making it through to the finish which was decided in a bunch kick won by Geoff Smith from Daryl O'Grady and Michael Waterfield. Despite the ideal conditions it wasn't the fastest f-grade race at Dunlop Road (race average was 30.8kph), the constant surging as individuals kept attacking the field momentarily increasing the average but the consequent regrouping bringing it back down. Rob Melasecca, having warmed up in e-grade, was one of the main antagonists through the race, Michael Waterfield the other main contributor to the oscillating speeds. The few sprinters in the pack were keen to keep it together and no break lasted long, every attempt being shut down quickly.

#### **Post-amble**

Unfortunately there was an incident during the b-grade race which resulted in a fall, a rider's front tyre blowing on the top corner. Fortunately only the one rider was involved and after

being tended to by Peter Ransome at the scene and checked up in Hospital Laurie is at home nursing some bruising and a sore head but no broken bones. Laurie has extended his thanks to those who assisted him at the time and to those who looked after his stuff. The club is very fortunate to have qualified members who are ready to assist in cases such as this, thanks to Peter for being available.

This incident, and one on the start-line, highlight the need for members to be conscious of the mechanical state of their bikes. A worn tyre provides less grip and is more prone to puncture which could result in a fall. Worn cleats can result in a pulled foot which could result in a fall, the most likely scenario for

pulling a foot is when putting in an effort - sprint or attack and as Mark Wallace found out this could see you kissing the bitumen very hard (broken clavicle, cracked scapular, cracked ribs, major bruising & a week in hospital). Worn brakes could see you up the back of the rider in front and very quickly on the road.

It is the responsibility of each rider to ensure their bikes and equipment are in sound mechanical order, take a few minutes each week, before you head to the races, to check your tyres, brakes, chain, cleats and helmet.

## Results

	<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Third</b>	<b>Fourth</b>
<b>a-grade (25)</b>	Simon Bone	Mike Day	Tony Chandler	Guy Green
<b>b-grade (21)</b>	Peter Castillo	Darren Darling	Steven Flower	Ray Russo
<b>c-grade (17)</b>	Peter Shanahan	Steve Short	Jim Swainston	Dan Ives
<b>d-grade (18)</b>	Matt Robinson	Brian McCann	Leon Bishop	Murray Howlett
<b>e-grade (13)</b>	Alan Sandford	Les McLean	Malcolm Hayse	
<b>f-grade (11)</b>	Geoff Smith	Daryl O'Grady	Michael Waterfield	

## Officials

Thanks to Keith Bowen and Ron Stranks who were on the desk taking entries. Thanks to the myriad of helpers who assisted on the day. Richard Dobson was in charge of the helpers which included; Martin Stalder, Greg Lipple, Ian Smith, Steve Short, Peter Shanahan, Les McLean, Colin Morris, Alan Sanford, Rob Harris, Ben DeJong, Neil Wray, Kevin Starr and Damian Burke. Dunlop Road requires nearly a dozen officials to run a race and it is great that in addition to the rostered helpers others volunteered to do their 'off' race so the rostered members could race. A special thanks to Richard Dobson who is not only responsible for coordinating and organising marshals and traffic controllers for our races but he was race controller for the day and did traffic control for both races. Thanks also to Greg Lipple for bringing the trailer and to Peter Mackie with the drinks.

## Eastern Vets Program

<b>Saturday</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1:00pm</b>	<b>Yarra Junction</b>	<b>Omara Eastern 100</b>
Saturday	April	11	2:00pm	METEC	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	April	18	2:00pm	Casey Fields	Club Championships
Saturday	April	25	2:00pm		Graded Scratch Races
<b>Monday</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>8:00pm</b>	<b>Maroondah Club</b>	<b>Annual General Meeting</b>
				The Loop – Yarra Boulevard	Scratch Races + post race coffee

**Note :** The 1:00 start to the Omara Eastern 100 on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April.

**Note :** To be eligible for entry to the club championships you must be a member of the Eastern Veterans Cycling Club and you must have competed in at least three club events this season.

**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	April	5	9:30am	National Blvd, Campbellfield	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	April	12		No Racing	
Sunday	April	19	9:30am	National Blvd, Campbellfield	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	April	26			

## Victorian Veteran Cycling Council Program

Friday	April	10	12:30pm	Maryborough	South Pacific Championships – RR	Closed
Saturday	April	11	8:30am 2:00pm	Maryborough	South Pacific Championships - 300m South Pacific Championships – TT	Closed
Sunday	April	12	9:30am	Maryborough	South Pacific Championships – Crit Incorporating Victorian Championship	Closed
Monday	April	13	9:00am	Maryborough	Cecil Cripps Handicap	Closed

## Other Results, etc.:

### For your calendar

Date	Location	Event
1/4/2009	Melbourne	Around the Bay in a Day entries open for Bicycle Victoria members. Get in early if you want Melbourne - Queenscliff - Sorrento - Melbourne
Easter (April 10-12)	Maryborough	South Pacific Championships. This is a great festival of age-group racing including a road race, individual time trial, criterium and 300m sprint. The criterium championship incorporates the Victorian Championship so all VVCC licensed riders will be racing for two titles in the one race.

## Committee Matters:

At the Annual General Meeting of the EVCC held on March 30<sup>th</sup> all committee positions were spilt and refilled. There were few changes to the committee and we welcome the following to their roles for 2009 and wish them the all the best;

<b>President</b>	Matt White	<b>Vice Presidents</b>	Greg Lipple & Hylton Preece
<b>Secretary</b>	Keith Bowen	<b>Assistant Secretary</b>	Nigel Kimber
<b>Treasurer</b>	Juanita Cadd		
<b>Membership Officer</b>	John Macleod		
<b>Handicapper</b>	Graeme Parker	<b>Assistant Handicapper</b>	Keith Bowen & Peter Mackie
<b>VVCC Delegates</b>	Nigel Frayne, Nigel Kimber, Matt White (Ian Smith as backup)		
<b>Safety Officer</b>	Ron Stranks		
<b>Club Captain</b>	Ian Smith	<b>Vice Captain</b>	Steve Short
<b>Club Referees</b>	Graeme Parker & Damian Burke		
<b>Race Committee</b>	Richard Dobson, Greg Lipple & Hylton Preece		
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	Nigel Kimber		

**Congratulations** to Graeme Parker who was elected a Life Member of the club for his tireless services to the club over the past many years.

In the March General meeting a few issues were raised;

- It is becoming more and more difficult for the club to obtain permits to run races on the road, the biggest hurdle to obtaining permits is local residents complaining about the presence and behaviour of cyclists on ‘their’ roads.  
To this end we need to be considerate and careful in our treatment of other road users when we are warming up and racing, things to be attentive to include;
  - keeping left of the centre line at all times
  - being aware of following traffic and riding single file to allow them to pass
  - behaving appropriately, no hand-gestures, no abuse towards other road users

- Which brings me to another point, last week one member was fined for swearing at an official, another has only avoided the same punishment because he is unknown. We (Eastern Vets) pride ourselves on being a friendly club and the sort of abuse vented at an official last week is not acceptable, nor is the act of swearing in front of spectators, especially children. Remember we are out there for enjoyment and friendly competition, the persons running the races are doing it voluntarily and do not deserve to be abused.
- The current web-master is finding it hard to find time to keep the web site up to date and the club is looking for an assistant to aid Phil. The position will include training and mentoring by Phil and will require a couple of hours of the applicant's time each week. If anybody is interested in helping the club out with this please get in touch with Matt White.
- Sponsorship, the club is looking for a major sponsor for the Rob Graham Memorial Time Trial. The desire is for a significant cash contribution over a three year period. If any member has a business, or knows of one, that would be keen to sponsor the event then Matt White would like to talk to them.

**Cycle Sport Victoria – Masters Criterium Championships;**

Congratulations to Roy Clark who won Victorian Masters Criterium Championship in the Men's Masters 4 category in Castlemaine on Sunday.

**Police and Emergency Services Games;**

The following Eastern Members competed in the 2009 Police and Emergency Games at Newham (Northern Vets course) on Tuesday March 24<sup>th</sup>;

- Frank Nyhuis Silver medal in Time trial for 45-49yrs
- Damiano Ambrosini Bronze in 48km road race for 35-39yrs
- Mark Wallace Bronze in RR for 45-49yrs (Frank came in half a wheel behind in 4th)
- Pete Ransome Bronze in RR for 55-59yrs.
- Ben Schofield also took part in the Road race but didn't place.

If you have any news or results you'd like to share with the club let me know and

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