



Eastern veterans cycling club

Respecting the Rights of all Road Users

Newsletter August 22nd 2009

Graded Scratch Races – METEC – August 15th

Race report

It was METEC, it wasn't meant to be windy. But a strong northerly pushed the riders along the stretch between the front and back sections of the circuit, encouraged echelons to the right along the back, echelons to the left down the finish straight and that had riders scrambling for cover on the short stretches after the hump and through the last corner.

The unseasonably warm weather bringing our 81 riders and a couple of dozen spectators supporting their respective parent or partner, which was great to see.

a-grade (1:45, 14 starters)

One hour forty-five minutes, one hundred and five minutes. At 38kph that's 66.5 times over the hump, 66.5 times into the wind after the hump and again at the top corner. It's 66 looks to the side line in the hope that they'll take pity and end the pain early - ok, that's taking it a bit far, but as the time ran down the conditions were certainly taking their toll and those left circulating were looking for an end to the hurt. The hurt starting early with a couple of antagonists (Guy Green, Steve Ross, Phil Smith) stirring the pot from the second lap, the big bunch of fourteen seeing all of the initial moves quashed before they could develop. But at around fifteen minutes into proceedings - 9.5 laps down, Guy Green moved up the sheltered, left hand side of the bunch along the finish straight and carried the momentum off the front. There was no response until Andy Burmas put aside the fact that the race was only 13% completed and crossed - just to cover the move. Still no response and as the pair turned downwind they held a handy little lead.

A couple of intervening bunches instilled panic in the chase but too late. Guy and Andy making the most of the tail wind negotiating the overtaking well before the 'neutral' corner off the hump. The chase not so lucky. It was a strung out chase, a few getting well up the d-grade bunch before the corner, the remainder holding back till the corner was cleared. Phil Smith, Russell Newnham and Thorkild gaining the advantage of being further up the road when neutral was called. A solid lap by Phil saw the lead group swell to four, Russell reaping that benefit. Thorkild having to do it alone and paying for it later. Clear of the lower grades the chase bunch couldn't (wouldn't) get organised and Roy Clark picked his moment a lap later to make his own way across to the leaders.

Six away, eight chasing - despite the makeup of the break it wasn't over yet, heck, the fat lady hadn't even started putting her makeup on. But still the chase was not working despite words of encouragement from Nigel Kimber (encouragement? - ed.). After a couple of laps of disjointed chasing a ray of light as an Eastern jersey sporting the number 12 was seen isolated and coming back to the bunch.

Five away, eight in the chase group. Thorkild joined the workers but his efforts to bridge had cost him too much and fifteen minutes after being unhitched from the break he was again circulating alone, this time off the back of the (still disorganised) chase. In Thorkild's time in the chase things improved further with Andy Burmas, having matched it with the best and not shirked a turn, deciding that the calibre of the break was too strong and opting to withdraw and return to the shelter of the bigger bunch.

Four away, eight behind. Andy taking over where Thorkild left off but the lack of coordination (and cooperation) in the chase against the well oiled discipline of the leaders saw the gap start to slowly increase. Uneven work loads, surging, and the price of earlier efforts, saw the chase group down to five (or six) as the hour ticked over, the lead four still rotating and circulating smoothly. It was now two races, or one race and a procession, the fat lady was in full voice now. The second group on the road, seemingly forgetting there were four riders ahead, started attacking each other. One hour ten down, the third attack in as many laps, and Nigel had no more, both physical and psychological. It was four together against four apart.

It was inevitable that the leaders would lap the chasers and this occurred with still over a quarter of an hour on the race clock. And still the chase fought each other.

Despite having over a lap on the competition the lead group continued to work smoothly and evenly to the bell. A small discrepancy in chronometers foiling any plans for a late breakaway, the bell seemingly rung a couple of minutes early and finding Phil Smith in the rabbit seat. With little choice Phil led Roy, Russell and Guy through the last lap, kicking early on the last corner in the hope the others would take time drawing straws. They didn't and all were on his wheel as he rounded the final bend into the run to the finish. Guy went left, Russell went right, Roy went backwards. Russell went fastest, using stored energy to pull away from the others with a big turn of speed, finishing metres ahead of Guy, Phil following equidistant back and Roy cruising over the line for fourth.

b-grade (1:40, 19 starters)(Damian Burke)

Surprise rippled through the bunch as Graeme announced that we are in the middle of the road season so a race time of approximately 1:40 was the target, coupled with the unusually warm sun & wind many of us looked in trepidation at our one bidon & wondered whether it was full enough to get us through the time.

From the get go Kevin Starr staked an ultimately successful claim for ride of the day, riding away on the first lap only to return and go again a lap later, this time followed by Ian Milner. Those left behind all looked at each other and wondered what was going on ... (I was also fairly sure that Kevin & Ian were thinking the same – Damian). The usual suspects John Prichard, Mick Jamison, Rob Harris & Paul Wilson variously tried to either light up the chase, or perhaps bridge the gap, but indifference seemed to rule, that, and getting used to the twists and turns of the circuit, meant nothing really happened. At about the 10 minute mark John went up the road, but was quickly reeled in, the speed dropped and status quo established itself with the two escapees continuing their steady rhythm.

Through 20 – 45 minutes not much changed, the bunch surged quite a few times, folks scrambled for wheels as small gaps opened up only for the group to then be brought together as either a slower turn happened or another bunch was passed. All were nervous about the strong cross winds, fearing a split in the field and being left with an impossible gap to bridge.

Chriss Gullace's calls from the sidelines to Anthony of the gap to Kevin & Ian were remaining remarkably constant at around 40-45 seconds. This was confirmed by observations that as the chase came off the hump the pair were always close to the finish line with never more than 50-100 meters either side. Concern flickered through the chase as a-grade went past and it looked as if the escapees may take some unethical help - they didn't.

Around the hour mark things began to unfold. The surges of the first hour's racing & the wind took its toll and six; Rob Harris, Mick Jamison, Damian Burke, Ian Smith, Anthony Gullace and Paul Wilson found themselves consistently at the front rotating through. The bunch picked up Thorkild & Frank from a-grade (who sat on for the ride), passed a couple of other bunches then looked ahead to see a large b-grade train, about a dozen strong. The six not realising they'd ridden away from the rest and were about to lap these riders as they'd worked their through other bunches, yet with all this happening, out front the two escapees were still strongly holding the lead at about 45 seconds. (I think it reached a maximum of 50 seconds if my memory is correct - Damian)

As the race progressed the pace was definitely rising steadily, more gaps opened, a few comments were passed, Mick & Ian tried a couple of solos, Paul had good legs as he stretched the group each time he came through while behind various members struggled to close the gap.

At about the 1:20 point, Mick, Rob & Damian put in some strong turns and somehow the string snapped, they found

themselves alone out front and the gap to the chasers was 40 seconds. Strong hard but steady turns were the unspoken rule as each of the 3 pursuers knuckled down to the task at hand and ever so slowly the gap began to narrow; 40, 35, 25, 20 seconds then the chase lost sight of the leaders in amongst the a-grade & other bunches. A frantic look across could not identify them and Rob put in some hurt. Two laps later, down the finishing straight, they were in sight at 100 meters ahead. Around into the downwind straight ('tween finish and hump) and it was over. Rob attacked hard on the far right of the straight Damian & Mick scrambling in his slipstream and the three flew past the surprised and exhausted pair giving them no chance to jump on. Mick then hit the front and the trio were clear.

A frantic discussion ensued as to what duration the race was: 1:40 or 1:45? And then what was the time so far? Damian misread his watch and thought there was only 2-3 minutes to go but Rob (correctly) thought there was another 5-10.

Around for another lap with Damian & Rob sharing the work, Mick playing ticket collector. Another lap and Damian sat out to recover then on the third Rob did the same, (surely into the final few laps now!). The bell tolled for the other grades and each of the leaders nervously looked back to try gauge who was chasing but it was impossible to tell. The leaders could no longer rely on Mrs Gullace either as she was calling the gaps to Anthony who had thrown the shackles from the chase group and was out in solo pursuit (where was the race radio or motorbike & chalk board!). Damian & Rob swapped turns then just as Damian rolled up after a turn, bang! Mick hit the small group near the traffic lights. Rob scrambled, while Damian crawled in an effort to close the gap - no luck! Mick was free to fly, while Rob fought to limit the gap and Damian looked to ride tempo. Around the three went, hearing the c-grade bell, only 1 to go! How wrong they were as the judges decided to leave them out there for another lap. The chequered flag saw Mick comfortably clear of Rob, with a clear gap to Damian. Anthony another solo rider clear in 4th.

Damian's clock said 1:42 @ 36.2kph with the last 30 minutes at 40.5kph.

c-grade (1:30, 16 starters)

No Report.

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| <p>Club Clothing</p> <p>A range of clothing is available for sale and usually available from Kevin Starr at the races on Saturday. Check out the website (www.easternvets.com/clothing.php) for the full range of clothing.</p> |
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d-grade (1:25, 15 starters)(Mal Jones)

August winds, the promise of rain and METEC - what a fabulous combination for the 15 d-graders that turned up to race on Saturday...

Still, the short laps at the course meant that the wind only came into affect in a couple of places, and the rain did hold off, so the finish was probably going to be determined by the sprint at the end of the one hour race. Or so we collectively thought!

Hold the phone, late breaking news, the race was extended to one hour and 20 minutes. Hmm, that changes things considerably thought everyone. Quick mental calculations were done, with most expecting a slightly slower and more relaxed pace to take into account the extra distance that was to be covered (remember the energy sapping wind).

From the start that plan was obviously abandoned, not so much by any individual, but pretty much collectively by the field.

The early leaders kept the speed right up, perhaps with an idea of stringing the field out quickly and perhaps dropping some off.

Paul Kelly put in a few of his blistering charges at the end of the front straight and used the tailwind to stretch everybody out. The chase would inevitably be led by Matt Robinson to close Paul down after a lap or so, but the effects were felt as the chasing became harder lap by lap.

The race became a bit of a Robinson family affair when Brett Robinson took over the lead from brother Matt – but still kept up the same willing speed.

Surprisingly, the field remained mostly intact, with the breathers between charges enough to keep everybody reasonably close. Turns were taken with Graeme Parker, Mick Paull, Neil Wray, Sam Bruzzese, Ross Goodings, Mal Jones and Louise McKimmie all at the pointy end at one time or another.

One rider had disappeared early, the victim of a flat tyre. He rejoined the race 4 laps later, minus number and helmet band to just cruise for the remainder of the race.

As the race went past the usual one hour duration, things began to change – and quickly. Matt Robinson made a breakaway that, after several laps, put him right on the tail of c-grade.

As he went off into the distance some indecision started eating away at the rest. To chase, or wait for him to come back?

A few laps into the process, five riders decided to chase and opened a fair gap between the rest. That left Matt on the back of c-grade, five riders chasing, and the rest of d-grade chasing them.

Mick Paull rallied Brett Robinson, Sam Bruzzese and Mal Jones from “the rest” to chase down the 5 escaping riders. Deep into the race, Matt Robinson was also directed to drop off the back of c-grade. That did the trick and the group including Matt, the 5 chasers and “the rest” all rejoined minus early pacesetter Paul Kelly and Peter Webb who had both found the extended pace a little too willing.

As the field rounded the top turn into the front straight there was a collective relief as the d-grade board was sighted (at last, the pain can finish – or at least it can after the sprint...).

The moment the bell was heard the pace went up another notch or 20, meaning it was going to be a long last lap.

As the bunch headed into the last turn before the front straight, Mal Jones made one last desperate lunge to the front up the outside, but didn't have the legs to carry him any further and faded to the back.

As the riders entered the front straight, it was tight, but the big sprinter's legs of Matt Robinson, after doing so much of the work up the front, and then a solo break, still had something left to get him over the line in first place for his first d-grade win.

Coming in a close second was Neil Wray with Ross Goodings third and Sam Bruzzese in fourth.

Given the tough conditions on the day and the unexpected length (duration) of the race, it was a very good finish by all. Well done.

e-grade (1:00, 14 starters)(Les McLean)

Fourteen starters took off on their one-hour sojourn in very windy and trying conditions.

It was not long before Peter Kroneman started his normal tactics going to the front, forcing the pace and keeping up a high speed. Zenon Gawronski also put his bit in and helped Peter. Steve Hyde also hitting the front a few times to keep the pace high.

During the early part of the race Les McLean and Zen spoke about JC Wilson doing his normal trick of jumping ahead and staying out for a bit before coming back to the field, and we both said that one day he would stay out to test us all. We had no sooner stopped our conversation than JC jumped out in front followed by Peter. They both took off as c-grade swept past they paced them for a while gaining over 100 metres on the rest of us. We were content to leave them there to perhaps tire out as the wind was making it hard for all of us let alone them. They stayed away for over 20 minutes.

Steve Hyde meanwhile was doing a great deal of work keeping the pace high, particularly up the small rise over the bridge. Jo Sabitini also put her nose in front a few times to keep the race ticking over. The strong north wind made the going hard particularly as the pace was high.

Poor George Goodrope had the misfortune to have two slow tyre leaks and had to stop twice to pump up his tyres and was ultimately lapped. JC having great form in the last few races and Peter, the strong high gear rider, were indeed a formable combination. The bunch speed increased slightly as we were all aware that they were not to be left out in front for too long and gain an impossible gap to bridge. They subsequently came back to the bunch and it was at this stage that Clive Wright and a couple of others succumbed to the race speed and dropped off the back.

Leon Bishop, Alan Sandford and Les did their bit but it was Steve that kept the pace high as he did lap after lap at the front. Because of the difficult race conditions those who were up near the front did not know who was left at the rear. Les thought Kenton Smith had been dropped but he too was still in contact at the rear of the field. Peter and JC tried once again to get away but the remainder would not have a bar of it. Leon and Steve continued to make the pace with Steve doing relentless turns in front.

At the bell the race seemed to slacken slightly and, due to the windy conditions, it was not the normal rush of sprinters jockeying for ideal positions. But down the back straight the speed increased and after the turn for the hump Leon went around the field towards the front Les sensing a golden opportunity tacked onto his wheel. Les surprised that nobody else was with him and they both came up onto the outside of JC. Coming into the final bend Leon felt the pressure and dropped back and JC went to the front with Les once again tacked onto on his wheel. Not knowing where the other sprinters, like Alan and Kenton, were Les took off coming into the straight and jumped past JC and just lasted to the line. This was how the race finished with JC a length back and Alan half a wheel behind him followed by Mal Doswell and Kenton, with the rest spread further back.

f-grade (1:00, 3 starters)

Three starters meant there was going to be nowhere to hide and made for an ideal opportunity to break away and go it alone - may as well given the limited shelter that would be available. This seemed to be the thinking within the group, Ian Jones

having an early dig but the other two weren't going to let him go. After Ian conceded that he wasn't going to be allowed off on his own Brian Farrell had a go, hoping that Ian had tired himself and that Ronnie was not on song. Brian misjudged the others and they clung to his wheel until he also conceded. Ronnie rubbed his hands together (figuratively) and made his attempt at shedding the other two but they had preserved enough to slip into his slipstream and be towed around for a couple of laps until Ronnie decided it was a dead horse.

The remainder of the race was a quiet affair, members of the small group taking their turn to set the pace. The occasional tester, to see if anybody's legs had had a change of heart, came to naught, as none had, and after an hour the bell found the little group still together, Brian on the front. In the interest of making a race of it Brian chose to lead the race through the last lap, upping the pace through the lap, Ian on his wheel, Ronnie, with the perfect sit, third. Having sheltered the others for the better part of the lap Brian peeled off as the train came into the final straight leaving Ian open to the wind to start the sprint in earnest.

Ronnie held the wheel, eventually pulling out half way to the line and moving up alongside Ian, the pair side by side as the line rushed ever closer. Slowly, slowly Ronnie inched up alongside of Ian till it was neck and neck and there was still road between the front wheels and that imaginary line 343mm above the road. A last effort by Ian to keep Ronnie from passing was met by a counter effort from Ronnie to maintain the momentum and try to edge ahead before the line. There were just a couple of centimetres in it, Ronnie's effort proving the more successful, as he took his first win after the accident two years ago that left him a battered and broken man in hospital.

Results

| | First | Second | Third | Fourth |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|
| a-grade (14) | Russell Newnham | Guy Green | Phil Smith | Roy Clark |
| b-grade (19) | Mick Jamison | Rob Harris | Damian Burke | Anthony Gullace |
| c-grade (16) | Jim Swainston | Darren Smith | Wayne Doherty | Grant Greenhalgh |
| d-grade (15) | Matthew Robinson | Neil Wray | Ross Gooding | Sam Bruzzese |
| e-grade (14) | Les McLean | JC Wilson | Alan Sandford | |
| f-grade (3) | Ron Stranks | Ian Jones | Brian Farrell | |

Officials

Thanks to Graeme Parker and Ron Stranks who were on the desk taking entries. Thanks to Geoff Cranstone and Stuart Bendall (broken ribs and all), who were in charge of ending the pain and deciding the winners. Also thanks to Richard Dobson who manages the duty roster and ensures we have enough people on the day for our races, to JC Wilson who brings the trailer to all our races and Ian Smith who was on hand with the drinks this week.

Note : Members rostered for marshal or traffic control duties must be at the circuit at least one hour before the scheduled start time. (but bring your bike, you just never know)

Eastern Vets Program

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|---------------|---------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------------|--|
| Saturday | August | 22 | 2:00pm | Yarra Junction | Croydon Cycleworks / Jack Thompson memorial handicap |
| Saturday | August | 29 | 2:00pm | Halls Gap | Graded Scratch Races |
| Sunday | August | 30 | 10:00am | Halls Gap | VVCC Open handicap |
| Monday | August | 31 | 8:00pm | Maroondah Club | General Meeting |
| Saturday | September | 5 | 2:00pm | Casey Fields | Avon Tyres Handicap |
| Saturday | September | 12 | 2:00pm | Arthurs Creek | Graded Scratch Races |

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|-----------|---------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Wednesday | 10:00am | The Loop – Yarra Boulevard | Scratch Races + post race coffee |
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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

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|--------|-----------|----|---------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Sunday | August | 23 | 10:00am | Lancefield | Club Championships |
| Sunday | August | 30 | 9:30am | National Boulevard | Graded Scratch Races |
| Sunday | September | 6 | 9:30am | Rex Rd, Campbelfield | Graded Scratch Races (crit) |
| Sunday | September | 13 | 10:00am | East Trentham | Pig & Whistle h'cap – 44k |

Gippsland Vets Program

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|--------|-----------|----|---------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Sunday | August | 23 | 10:00am | Kernot (Melways 627 K8) | 46k scratch races |
| Sunday | September | 6 | 10:00am | Kernot (Melways 627 K8) | 46k scratch races |

Victorian Veterans Cycling Council Program

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|--------|-----|----|-------------------|-----------|---|----------------------------|
| Sunday | Aug | 30 | 2:00pm 10:00am | Halls Gap | Grampians Scratch Race Grampians Open – Handicap | 24/8 - \$10 24/8 - \$15 |
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Note : Entries are to be on the appropriate VVCC Open entry form (available on VVCC website) and are to be accompanied by the requisite fee.

Other Results, etc.:

For your calendar

| Date | Location | Event |
|--------------|-------------|---|
| 29-30/8/2009 | Halls Gap | A great weekend of dining, socializing and cycling. - Graded Scratch race - 2:00pm 29/8 - VVCC Open handicap - 10:00am 30/8 Entries for both races are to be submitted to the VVCC on an official entry form. Details on the club's activities and accommodation for the weekend are available from Ian Smith |
| 13/9/2009 | Shepparton | Fruitloop ride, 50, 100 & 200k ride options. \$90.00 registration - www.fruitloopshepparton.com/fruitloopride/ |
| 13/9/2009 | Whittlesea | DeGani Kinglake ride, 120k - \$130, 70k - \$105 - www.supersprint.com.au/events/degani-kinglake-ride-2009.aspx |
| 18/10/2009 | Melbourne | Around the Bay in a Day. |
| 7/3/2010 | Falls Creek | BV - Alpine attack, 230k. Registrations open 1/9/2009 - \$150 - www.bv.com.au/great-rides/42359 |

Deutschlandsberg:

Tony Chandler is continuing his European campaign at the 2009 Deutschlandsberg Weltradsportwoche (World cycling week) with commendable performances in the 300m sprint and 'Berg' hill climb and a third place in the 96k road race.

Spring is in the air:

And the maggies are a swoopin'. Wanna know where they are? Check out this new web site;

- www.magpiepatrol.com

Been swooped? Then you can let others know of the pesky little blighter's whereabouts by adding its details to the map.
