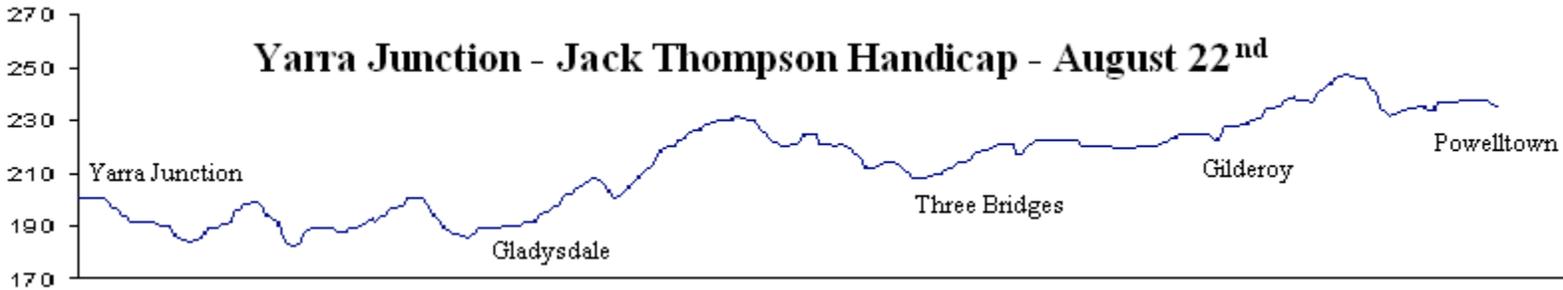




Eastern veterans cycling club

Respecting the Rights of all Road Users

Newsletter August 29th 2009



Race report

Windy and overcast, not bad conditions for a bike race but enough to deter 10 of the 76 registered starters, the majority of whom were from the out-markers which pretty much put paid to their chances of finishing in the money.

Limit (26 minutes, 2 starters) /
22 minutes (4 starters)

Both limit and second limit were bicimated by no-shows raising the question; to wait or not to wait? Unlikely to match the sprinters in the 19-minute bunch there was little option but to try and hope to stay away. Ronnie Stranks and Brian Farrell had the honour of getting proceedings under way, Geoff Cranstone, JC Wilson and Alan Sandford started their pursuit four minutes later.

Ronnie and Brian worked well together completing the first leg in just under 28 minutes, the return showing that the chase was closing but had been reduced to two. Alan Sandford having lost contact on one of the early rises in the lap, by the time Geoff or JC had noticed the gap was too large to wait up for and Alan was last seen riding alone into the wooded section of the course.

Half way home the limit bunch swelled in size as JC and Geoff rode up to the two out-markers. Embracing the opportunity for increased respite the two groups integrated seamlessly and continued on its way. Just into the second lap it was obvious that limit's time in the sun was done as the combined fifteen and nineteen minute behemoth stormed up to the turn. The small limit crew continued to swap turns and maintain a solid pace until Mr Parker and his bunch rode past putting an end to all but JC's race. JC grabbing a passing wheel, the other three left to continue on their way, free to enjoy the scenery and speculate the fortunes of those still to pass them. The small limit remnant completing the course in under two hours, a not too shabby achievement for a small group on a windy day.

19 minutes (6 starters)

If ever there was an argument for rolling off the start line and waiting for the following mark; being outnumbered more than two to one would be a valid one. The six 19-minutemen opting to not bust a gut trying to stay away but to roll through and wait for the inevitable capture by the pursuing fourteen 15-minutemen. Despite the 80% effort a lack of race fitness saw one drop from the six early in the first leg then a mechanical at around five kilometres had the bunch down to four. Brett Robinson realigned his drive chain and caught the bunch only to drop it again, both the chain and the bunch. The second time Brett had help rejoining his bunch as the chasing 15-minute bunch swallowed him up before the first turn at Powelltown and he joined the throng.

The four remaining members of the group continued rolling turns to the Yarra Junction turn where they got a gauge on the chase – imminent capture. The decision was taken to back right off, save the legs and hop on the bus. A decision that paid for three, Peter Kronemann, spending too many bickies in the run back, opting to drop out.

Murray Howlett was keen to feature in the results and felt obliged to be seen to be deserving of being there at the end, Peter Mackie and Graham Haines were happy to watch the others work from the back and content to just make up the numbers at the finish.

Club Clothing

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.

15 minutes (13 starters)(Mal Jones)

On paper, the Jack Thompson handicap looked a good thing for the 15-minute mark. Three groups ahead – 19, 22 and 26 minutes, four groups behind; 11, 7 and 3 minutes plus scratch. A

strong group of 14 mostly d-graders, including the colonel, had most thinking a strong result was achievable.

With Mick Paull a late scratching from the event, Mal Jones was elevated up from the 19-minute mark to fill the spot (at Mal's request).

Typically, there wasn't a lot of time to plan a strategy before hitting the road. It looked like who, what and how it was all going to unfold would be done on the fly – literally as the starters sent the bunch off towards Powelltown.

The charge down the hill stretched everyone out, but the ranks quickly closed up as Graeme Parker got the group organized into an efficient rolling peleton.

As the road leveled out, the pace settled in to around 35 km/h, demanding, but with the bunch working like a well oiled machine and rotating in a very smooth and orderly fashion, it was also comfortable enough for most to keep up.

Kevin Mills, fresh back from riding the Pyrenees in July and in his first handicap race in 3 years, was the first to succumb to the pressure and dropped off after taking a couple of turns.

The bunch rolled on minus Kevin, and by Three Bridges began to sight and swallow up the stragglers from the earlier marks. Some made a vain attempt to hang on, but the willing pace simply proved too much and they were there and gone in what seemed like a flash.

And on it went. Bunch captain Mal Jones was urging everyone on, and when he wasn't encouraging, cajoling and generally making a lot of noise, Matt Robinson took over. The pace was still high, and with the Powelltown turn looming, the news filtered through that the 11-minute bunch had only gained 20 seconds.

No time for calculators, the mental arithmetic suggested that if they only lopped off 20 seconds in 15 kilometres, and we could hold them to that gain on each turn, they'd still finish more than 2 minutes behind us. Pedal harder; keep that rotation smooth and fluid!

The Powelltown turn also gave everyone the chance to see how far away the minutes ahead were, and conversely, how much the minutes behind had closed the gap.

Out of the turn the discipline was fantastic as everyone regrouped and worked as one, now with the knowledge that the 19-minute group wasn't all that far ahead – and we still had a healthy break over the pursuers.

Even though the pace was still right up into the 35km/h average, the more forgiving profile of the return leg gave everyone a chance for a bit of a breather – until the 19-minute group came into sight up ahead.

Up went the collective effort, with Sam Bruzese, Andrew Buchanan, Ben De Jong, Jake Jodlowski, Paul Kelly, David Machell, Ted McCoy, Louise McKimmie, Graeme Parker, Ed

Smith and John Thompson being urged along by Mal Jones and Matt Robinson. Let's make this pass fast and ruthless!

The first thing the 19-minute group knew was when the 15-minute bunch streamed past. This time, some passengers were able to get on board, some of which joined in taking turns. Some were able to maintain the pace, while others dropped off or sensibly stayed at the back of the now extended bunch.

At the end of the first lap it was another clean and disciplined turn. The riders at the front waited until the all clear call came from the back and then the collective effort went up, with the speed again settling into the mid 30s.

Knowing that the 22 and 26-minute groups were still ahead, the chase was on. The solid pace was beginning to tell as a couple of riders struggled to keep up. Jake Jodlowski was dropped on the outward leg, but managed to get back on and stay with the bunch.

Midway through the trip to Powelltown the 22-minute bunch was swallowed up, with some again trying to hang on. JC Wilson was there for a turn or maybe 2, but the unrelenting pace meant most were pushed to the back.

Finally, glimpses of Ronnie Stranks' fluoro orange riding jersey meant that the 15-minute group was about to catch the limit riders – and still hadn't been passed by any of the shorter minutes.

It was a nice moment to take the Powelltown turn with nothing but the lead car and 15 kilometres of clear road ahead.

As the turn was rounded, the disciplined bunch regrouped and pushed off towards Yarra Junction, now only concerned about getting to the finish before being overtaken.

Legs were getting tired and heavy as the pace was really beginning to tell. And still, the tempo was unrelenting as the metres and kilometres were covered.

At something like 3 or 4 kilometres from the finish, Matt Robinson summoned everyone to put in one last big (consistent) effort. Lactic build up notwithstanding, the speed went up again as most responded.

Some nervous glances over the shoulder was an indication that the pursuing group/s were steadily closing, so the pressure was by now almost begrudgingly maintained, this time pulling a group of 5 or so off the front.

Andrew Buchanan, Sam Bruzese, Ted McCoy, Matt Robinson and Mal Jones (apologies to anyone else that was there, things were a bit hectic by this stage) had upped the speed to open up a small gap – not so much trying to get away, but in an effort to drag the remaining 15 minute riders along to keep them out of the clutches of the pursuers.

The tactic worked as first Ben De Jong got across and then most of the rest came across. With just over a kilometre to go and the finish almost within sight, the call came from Graeme: "They're 200 metres behind us".

Matt Robinson rallied everyone for one last effort up the last hill before the turn into the finish straight. Now the legs weren't hurting... they were close to numb with the huge effort!

Over the rise and the torture wasn't quite over yet, there was still the climb up to the finish. Out of nowhere, the surge started with a couple of hundred metres to go. Now it was a sprint with every man (and lone woman - Louise McKimmie) for themselves.

Ben De Jong read it best, and gave it everything he had to open a small break. The last few metres were nerve wracking for him as he waited to be overrun. But, he valiantly held on to take the win, his first in a handicap race.

In a close finish, Graeme Parker managed to get over the top of Paul Kelly for second place, with Matt Robinson in 4th, David Machell 5th, Murray Howlett (19-minutes) 6th, Ed Smith 7th, Ted McCoy 8th, Andrew Buchanan 9th and Geoff Cranstone (22-minutes) 10th.

The remainder of the 15 minutes bunch weren't far behind with Louise McKimmie coming in around 12th place and taking the honours as the first woman.

Special thanks to Matt Robinson and Graeme Parker for their encouragement and commitment in getting/keeping the 15-minute group organized and focused to ultimately take 8 of the top 10 places, passing all the groups ahead and staying away from the chasers to the finish.

11 minutes (13 starters)

Chasing a strong 15-minute group this mob set off at a cracking pace and self-destructed, riders being shelled at a fairly regular rate from very early in the race until just a small core remained to fight the conditions and stay the pursuers.

7 minutes (13 starters)(Nick Tapp)

Hmm. Let me see, now.

Ah yes, a handicap.

Let's get organised. Which way do we rotate? This way? No, that way. Come on, work together.

Suddenly we have two bunches – one faster, one slower. This is madness; we have to cooperate. Back together again and chase, chase, chase.

Where's Martin Stalder? Dropped him quite early.

There's a straggler. And another.

Ian Smith and Matt White try to marshal our efforts, the common theme being 'talk to each other!' Keeping it together is harder on the rises (as usual) and the wind is not helping. Peter Shanahan is riding strongly – good to see, also Phil Pelgrim, Wayne Doherty, Smithy, Matt and Anthony Gullace all putting in, Dean Jones another riding strongly and not

missing a turn. With the tail wind pushing us along some gaps formed in front of others but we were working well.

Turning at Powelltown and we haven't caught either of the big groups in front (11 minutes or 15 minutes) but continue to collect, and drop, those from further out. We catch the remnants of the 11-minute bunch on the way back to Yarra Junction picking up Richard Dobson, Dave McCormack and Dave Worland who all get in and do some turns.

The communication continues but despite calls of 'Don't surge! Don't surge!' a rider riding through surges again.

It's easier after the bell with the wind behind us – but it's easier for the 15-minute group up the road as well. At the final turn in Powelltown we still have a way to go to make the catch. Quentin Frayne (manning the cone) tells us 'Three minutes! They've got three minutes on you.', it sounds like a lot.

Back into the wind, a few riders do longish turns on the front before anyone pulls past. One shouldn't, of course, but you have to give it everything. They're not there, they're not there – and then suddenly, after Gladysdale, we round a bend and they are there. The sight of the quarry lends us motivation, even if it's too late for energy, and we get the gap down.

We're still not working smoothly, but we should do this. Then suddenly there's a car between us and them. It slows and keeps left and we file past on the right, keeping left of the centre line, then re-form.

The line is just up there. We're closing but they're sprinting and we're not going to get there. The fight goes out of the chase. The front of our group merges into the back of theirs as we cross the line. Another 200 metres and we'd have been in amongst it. Was the car the difference? Maybe, maybe not. They did well to stay away.

An average speed of 38 point something so we didn't do too badly, either – but not quite well enough. Sixty kilometres of hard riding in the tank will have to do. It could be worse.

3 minutes (10 starters)(Damian Burke)

The feeling in the strong 10-man 3-minute bunch was high, out numbering scratch two to one and with some known strong men; Mick Jamison, Rob Harris and Damian Burke having proved their strength last week at a windy METEC, combined with a couple of part time a-graders this group not only had a chance of taking the race they could do it in fastest time. But first; the sizable bunches ahead and the gaps determined by Graeme Parker, if history was any measure it wasn't going to be an easy ride.

Knowing the ability of the handicapper second scratch took off hard and didn't let up. The early pace finding the un-race-fit Mark Wallace starting to struggle around half way out before he became the first casualty just before Powelltown. Despite the bunch rolling smoothly it quickly became apparent that David Anderson and Frank Nyhuis were feeling strong, Mick, Steven Ross, Phil Thompson and Rob Harris also looking good.

As the bunch raced towards Powelltown for the first time the sight of the returning lead car being pursued by Ronnie Stranks and Brian Farrell showed there was still a long way to go and the limit riders were riding to the limit. Two larger bunches behind the leading pair looked to be working well and raised the smallest of doubts in the minds of the group. The presence of Graeme Parker at the head of the second group and driving that bunch had a few questioning their initial optimism. As the groups crossed it was out of sight and out of mind and noses were reapplied to the grindstone.

Out of the turn and back to Yarra Junction, the scratch bunch seen all too soon and Guy Green, impersonating Alberto Contador (or that French spectator), taking aim with loaded index and middle fingers and letting loose a couple of imaginary bullets (unlike the French spectator) - just to let the group know they were in scratch's sights.

If the aim was to psych the group out it missed, efforts were redoubled as the group hammered it back in pursuit of those ahead. Into the wind some started to miss turns, but doing the sensible thing and resting for a bit before getting back into the rotation for a bit more pain.

The road up to the Yarra Junction turn wasn't encouraging, legs were hurting, the groups ahead were seen to be still largely intact and still working smoothly and the gaps didn't seem to have closed enough. The news got no better after the turn, scratch only around a kilometre in arrears and motoring hard.

With the knowledge came effort, hard turns the order of the leg (and to the legs) but with effort came fatigue and soon gaps started appearing and individuals struggled to hold the wheel in front. Rob Harris paying for his early efforts was struggling to hold the group, Kevin Starr in the same boat. The pair, and Steve Ross, eventually succumbing to the relentless pace and letting go to be set adrift alone and at the mercy of the rapidly approaching scratch bunch.

A couple of kilometres shy of Powelltown it was over as scratch came through at less than escape velocity which allowed the remaining second-scratch riders to scramble on and the two bunches combined to head into the final fifteen kilometres a dozen strong. Despite the extra legs the return was still hard work as the group continued its relentless pursuit of those ahead. The odd lost soul passed and left to their own devices but no sign of the groups that were surely driving to the finish. A moment cresting one little rise as Trevor Coulter (scratch) dropped his chain, fortunately he held it straight and was able to ride it back on.

Flying through Three Bridges, the speedo consistently showing a '4' as the first digit and numbers greater than that as the second, but still no sign of the race lead. Then, with just over a kilometre to go, there they were, a convoy of cars in between, too little time, too little bitumen, the bunch hitting the convoy as the leaders hit the line.

For those of the 3-minutemen who finished with scratch it was 60k covered in just under the hour and a half for an average of 40.8kph.

Scratch (5 starters)

Five against the rest, the odds weren't in scratch's favour, but first there was the very strong, 10 strong, 3-minute bunch ahead to deal with. A bunch with a few a-grade ready riders and the cream of the regular b-grade field, promising a hard chase, and making fastest time far from a shoe-in. As the last of the three minute bunch disappeared around the first corner, some 600m down the road, there were still over two minutes on the countdown clock and nerves were being tested.

Five, four, three, two, one, off! And Guy Green got the bunch away and quickly up to speed with a big first turn. Small numbers and the need for speed led the group to ride a pace line rather than rolling turns, giving the members greater periods of rest and enabling the bunch to take advantage of the stronger legs. Guy and Roy Clarke the designated workhorses, Rob Amos, Trevor Coulter and David Holt sharing the other 50% of the load. Communication keeping the bunch together as the returning rider struggled to catch the last wheel and the line got stretched on the inclines.

At the first turnaround the gap to the 3-minute bunch was visibly less but nobody had marked the time. An oversight not repeated at the bell, the 3-minute bunch now just a minute ahead. The scratch bunch having found a comfortable rhythm that enabled them to drop their heart rates from over the maximum to around 80% whilst still maintaining a pace that would see second scratch caught before three-quarter race distance.

The second lap worked in favour of scratch as the group ahead started to slowly disintegrate. Mark Wallace, still finding his legs after two months volunteering his professional skills in Aceh was the first to be passed by the smoothly functioning scratch bunch. Mark the first of a series of 3-minutemen picked up and left behind; Rob Harris, Kevin Starr and Steve Ross all fading back, Steve the only one able to join the scratch express.

The now six strong scratch bunch caught the equally numbered 3-minute remnant half way out to the Powelltown turn, the two groups combining and continuing through the last turn as one. Despite the added legs the momentum seemed to be lost, whether it was the psychological loss of a need to chase, the disruption of the well rehearsed routine, or just plain fatigue the pace dropped and it was a long time before the group caught sight of the leading bunches. As the group rounded a bend eyes would look up the road in anticipation of seeing a mass of lycra only to be met by unpopulated road or a solitary rider making their way home. It wasn't till after Gladysdale that the lycra density seen ahead indicated that the head of the race was at hand but too late, the gap too great to close in the remaining couple of kilometres.

As the lead car crossed the finish line the scratch/second scratch bunch hit the convoy that had formed behind the race. Trevor Coulter leading the line into the traffic and having the dubious honour of taking the single file sprint for fastest time just behind the last of the lead bunch, Roy and Rob, boxed in by a fairly large 4WD, following in his wake.

Results

1 st	Ben DeJong	15 min
2 nd	Graeme Parker	15 min
3 rd	Paul Kelly	15 min
4 th	Matthew Robinson	15 min
5 th	David Machell	15 min
6 th	Murray Howlett	19 min
7 th	Ed Smith	15 min
8 th	Ted McCoy	15 min
9 th	Andrew Buchanan	15 min
10 th	Geoff Cranstone	22 min

Fastest	Trevor Coulter	Scratch
First woman	Louise McKimmie	15 min

Officials

Thanks to Graeme Parker and Ron Stranks who were on the desk taking entries, and again to Graeme for another sterling job with the handicapping. Thanks to the marshals, traffic controllers and car drivers who included; the brothers Frayne; Quentin & Nigel, Frank Carroll, Nick Hainal, Ian Milner, Andrew Ferridge, Andrew Finnigan, Tom Crebbin, Michael Paull and Stuart Bendall.

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

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
Sunday	September	20	9:00am	The Basin	Hill Climb
			1:00pm	METEC	Graded Scratch Races
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	August	30	9:30am	National Boulevard	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	September	6	9:30am	Rex Rd, Campbellfield	Graded Scratch Races (crit)
Sunday	September	13	10:00am	East Trentham	Pig & Whistle h'cap – 44k
Sunday	September	20	9:30am	National Boulevard	Graded Scratch Races

Gippsland Vets Program

Sunday	September	6	10:00am	Kernot (Melways 627 K8)	46k scratch races
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Victorian Veterans Cycling Council Program

Sunday	Aug	30	2:00pm 10:00am	Halls Gap	Grampians Scratch Race Grampians Open – Handicap	Closed
Sunday	Sep	13	10:00am	Wangoon	Jack Brennan Memorial handicap	7/9 - \$15

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
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 Interested in riding as a part of a group? Get in touch with Nigel Kimber
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

Vale Peter Cox

Eastern member Peter Cox died as a result of a tragic accident on August 20. Peter was riding his bike on the Alpine Road at Bright when he was hit from behind by a bus carrying a group of school children from South Australia on their way to the snowfields. Police believe the driver of the school tour bus was dazzled by sun glare and didn't see the cyclist until it was too late.

Peter joined Eastern in late 2008 and quickly rose through the ranks to b-grade. A win in d-grade earned him promotion to c-grade, which he won first up, earning him promotion to b-grade, in which he held his own. In the Rob Graham Time Trial he was 13th overall with a sub 40 minute time for the 25 km. This was an outstanding effort, as it was his first attempt at a time trial and he came third in his age group behind two very experienced time trialists. Peter seemed modest and surprised about his ability on a bike. However given his ability as a motor cyclist and athlete it was not surprising.

His prowess on the bicycle was a follow on from his earlier sporting career as a motor cyclist and athlete. Peter competed against Hylton Preece and mainly raced production type motorcycles and was a fast rider, he was also one of the tallest in a sport that suited smaller riders but it did not seem to slow him down!

He then switched to athletics in which he put in some stellar performances as a marathon runner, which is hardly surprising with his wiry build. He had several results in the 2hr 30 - 2hr 40 mark, including 2hr 37 in the London marathon as a 47 year old (Lance could only manage 2hr 46 as a 36 year old!!). In marathon terms, sub-3 hr is the benchmark but his times were the stuff of dreams. In the words of Andy Burmas; "He just made it look so easy, poetry in motion, flawless technique. I often told people that watching Peter run was like watching Ian Thorpe swim or Lance ride a bike, but without the fanfare and the ego".

Peter will be remembered for his friendly affable manner and the fact that no matter when you saw him, even after not having seen him for several years, he had that same smile and easy going manner about him. He was one of life's gentlemen and will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

Prepared by Keith Bowen with contributions from Hylton Preece, Andy Burmas, John Williams and the Glenhuntly Athletics Club.



Peter Cox (R) and his friend Didier Martin at the Commonwealth Games, Melbourne
