

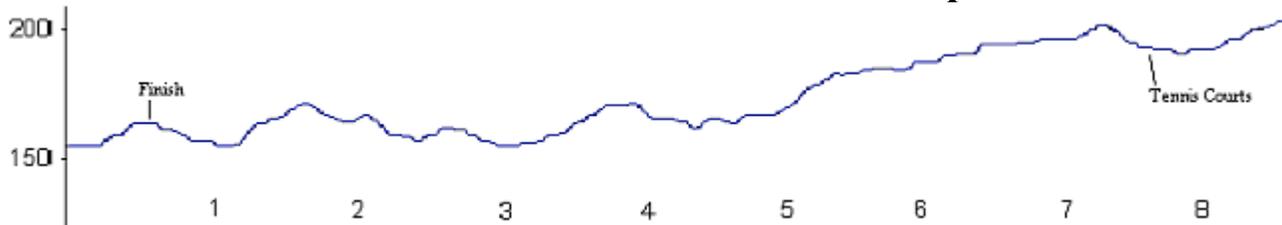


Eastern veterans cycling club

Respecting the Rights of all Road Users

Newsletter September 19th 2009

Steels Creek – Graded Scratch Races – September 12th



Race report

It was a day for an 11-27 on the back and maybe even a 55-35 on the front, a strong gusty northerly not only raising the temperatures into the high twenties but raising the return speeds into the high sixties (a-grade max was recorded at 70.9). The majority of the fifty-seven competitors doing what they could to stay in touch with the wheel in front, the odd soul that found themselves separated from the bunch having little hope in regaining the shelter of the mass.

This was our first visit back to Steels Creek since last year, the devastation of the fires earlier in the year still well and truly evident in the burnt and charred remains of the trees that lined the side of the road and away up into the hills. Good signs were abundant though, green shoots of new growth from the blackened trunks, fresh sawn timber frames awaiting cladding and the gleam of new corrugated iron showing life and residents returning and starting anew. The soft sounds of music from Ted Secombe's Gallery and Gardens providing aural delight for the visitors in attendance and to our members for the few seconds it took the race to pass the property. The parked cars, and anticipated traffic, a potential problem. Concerns about traffic were unfounded as most motorists showed patience and consideration as we raced.

a-grade (4 laps - 64k)(Nigel Kimber)

It was with heavy legs that I rolled into the registration area to sign up for today's race - too much walking (preparation for Nepal). A or B? No guts no glory - a-grade it will be. With just a couple of registrants it was probably going to be combined with b-grade anyway, I had number 4, Rob wasn't around (yet) so that makes three. The wind looking to keep a few away but still time enough for late arrivers to add their names to the list. And that wind. From the north and blowing a near gale, it was going to be tough pushing out into it but was it going to be harder trying to keep up coming back with it? Only one way to find out and it wouldn't be long.

Looking around the start line there was Trevor wearing no.7, no bigger numbers around and there was Rob, so we had a race of seven. No Guy, no Roy, no Justin. I might just be able to hang in there. And we're off, Frank Nyhuis keen to get going leading the group by 10 metres before we're half way up the first little rise. Before the start line.

A flash of colour up the right and, it's on? this early? no it can't be. It wasn't, it was Graeme Parker saying something and trying to attract Frank's attention. "Justin's on his way, he went to Arthurs Creek, is it alright by us if he rides out and turns early to join the race?" The bunch agrees. Graeme's efforts returning Frank to the fold as we set off down the first hill and into the race proper.

The plan; sit a wheel, ride the legs in a bit, don't do anything stupid - like ride at the front, just sit down the back and survive. Frank up front was doing it tough, 25kph - and we're racing. David Holt also doing a bit, and Rob, but all struggling to get the speeds out of the twenties. Hang on a minute, what am I doing on second wheel? how did that happen? And now it's the front, and my efforts aren't any more successful at getting a leading '3' on the flightdeck.

Frank again. Nobody on his wheel, better close that door. It's not much better on the wheel. Oh yes it is as Frank swings away and I'm back in the wind. Okay, I've had enough, next!. Frank again and again nobody on his wheel. This time I ain't going to be the bunny. Okay maybe not the best idea as Frank opens a twenty metre gap. I'll just mark time until someone else takes over. Stuff this, nothing behind, swing up and slow up. Still nobody. Then a blur as Rob dives left and chases. Too much for me, I'll await the bunch response and tack on the back. There was no bunch response, just ones and twos imitating Rob's move, all too much for me. From one away with twenty metres on the bunch it was the bunch away with twenty metres on one - me. Game Over. Not even going to bother chasing, even if I hold the twenty (metres gap) to the turn, I'll never close on the return; they'll turn and be away at 60+kph.

Rob Amos jumped from third wheel, past Phil Cavaleri who was content to follow the wheel ahead any which way. The remainder of the bunch responding in like manner till it was all back together (nobody aware that Nigel was left behind - ed.)

Around the turn and it was Steve Ross, Frank and Trevor Coulter setting the pace for the first half of the downwind return, the trio holding a couple of metres over the other half and swapping off turns as they enjoyed the tailwind and pushed the speeds up to the high sixties (68.9kph - Rob). Around half way back David finally closed the gap, the speed came back to the low sixties and Justin turned and gave chase. At quarter race distance it was back to a race of seven, just the rider in the Omara jersey had morphed, dropping fourteen years and developing some ability.

The second lap was fairly uneventful, the big boys sharing the load at the front, the odd surge as fresher legs were stretched was covered; given the conditions nobody was prepared to risk leaving the door open. Steve Ross bailed on the way out this lap, the wind buffeting his big frame and draining his reserves, a chance to catch up with Rob Harris, on marshal duties outside Ted Secombe's party, reason enough to stop. The return again conducted at high speed (70.9kph - Trevor) as the group enjoyed the thrill of near legal limit speeds with minimal effort required.

At half race distance it was down to six as the workers set about hauling the bunch back out to Steels Creek for the second last time. Again a case of survival over any rash acts of goat finding until Frank backed himself from the back. Failing to inform Justin of his intentions, or to invite him along, Frank attacked a couple of kilometres out from the turn and quickly gained twenty metres on the bunch, a bunch that was certain the conditions would be enough to bring him back. But they were wrong. Frank increasing his lead to fifty metres, and the bunch were forced to reconsider their options. The big four again working together to bring the margin down, control the break and then close it down as Frank went into the turn for the run to the bell. Precision timing seeing the bunch round as one and set about the leg-spinning return.

In what is becoming an almost trademark move Phil Cavaleri jumped around three-quarters of the way back, going wide to avoid hanger-onners he quickly distanced the bunch but in doing so crossed the centre line (double white) and earned instant disqualification. With no help coming from the bunch and the prospect of eight kilometres into the wind - alone, Phil sat up to return to his usual spot in the bunch. Toward the end of the lap, in a bit of a feeler move, Trevor stretched his legs on the second last incline, Rob Amos and Frank going with him, the trio creating a threatening gap that had the others digging deep to close, they dug deep enough and it was six that went to the turn together.

The bell signalling an approach to the end. But first eight kilometres of strength sapping wind to be dealt with. Again there was the occasional surge in effort in an effort to break things up but the desperation to not be left behind saw each,

and everyone, closed before it could establish as a break. It was going to come down to a sprint, a very fast sprint. Rear clusters were checked, who was running an 11? Rob making a last ditch effort just before the final turnaround, Trevor quickly jumping across to his wheel but everyone knew the stakes and everyone responded, by the turn it was all back together. The run back to the finish was conducted at an almost leisurely pace as all enjoyed the tailwind and took the opportunity to rest the legs as much as they could in anticipation of the sprint. David Holt finding himself in the lead a couple of kilometres out, and feeling spent, elected to run the group home.

Aware of Justin's speed, Trevor's ability to accelerate quickly and Rob's determination Frank figured his only chance was to go early and hope; hope everybody looked to someone else to chase, hope that he could maintain the effort to the finish, hope that he got an initial gap that nobody could close down. Frank jumped early, half way up the last incline. Trevor's acceleration putting him on Frank's wheel and with an ideal sit, so long as Frank could keep it going. The others taking a bit longer to wind it up but finding Trevor's wheel before the top of the hill. Frank leading the group down to the start of the sprint, his legs finally giving up a hundred metres from the line, taking Ian Smith's traffic control signal ('slow') literally as Trevor led Rob, David and the others past and into the sprint, the race for the cash starting in earnest.

All things being equal the conditions should have favored the leader, but they weren't and as Trevor closed on the line the young Justin powered past David, Rob and then Trevor, accelerating away to cross the line first, clear of the battle going on behind. The fresh, but disqualified, legs of Phil tried to follow Justin's but fell short, crossing the line in third place behind Justin and Trevor. Fourth across the line was Rob who was awarded the third place envelope which he kindly donated to the local CFA on Phil's behalf.

b-grade (4 laps - 64k)(Matt White)

It was nearly 30 degrees, 29.8 to be precise (thanks Mr Smith, or was it 28.9), anyhow it was warm....and gale force northerlies gusting erratically from the north east to the north west to boot. It was fair to say that emotions were ranging from apprehension to dread as the 16 riders headed off down Steels Creek Road for the first of 4 hard slogs into the mistral (like that word?). The absence of a few of the regular "b" grade bullies; Messrs Harris and Smith - on duty, and Mr Starr - off somewhere else, adding a glimmer of hope to the range of possibilities for the field, possibilities ranging from taking the mantle of bully for the day or, in my case, just getting to the finish line in one piece.

The first leg out was a very tactical affair, the predominant tactic being don't go to the front and if you do get there go at your own pace and don't bust a boiler, but what's this....the Steels Creek town sign, the last rise before heading down to the tennis courts and the first sign of aggression from one Paul Wilson as he jumps off the front of the bunch, first 20 then 30 and at the turn about 100 metres. Doesn't sound like much but at the turn he puts on the after-burners while the bunch, in its own polite way, stays neutral until everyone is around and grouped together.

Time for the first, and longest leg, at 8.7kms, was 23 mins 23 secs providing a dismal average of 24.9kph with a top speed of 37.3 - heading down to the tennis courts. C'mon boys that was soft.

Whoa!!! Hang on. Ian Milner has hit the front to run down the escapee, 55kph past the tennis court and on to the base of the incline, crest the hill at 37 and then up to maximum speed of 66.6, but Paul Wilson still hangs on until we get him just past the music festival around 3k from the start. I think Thorkild got to the front at some stage to help. 8.12kms at 48.4kph with a lowest speed of 32.9 on the last incline before the run to the finish. Time for the leg; 10 minutes and 5 seconds, less than half the time for the windward leg - I do believe that was harder than the run into the wind.

Second leg into the samiel (like that word?) and more of the same tactics, this is soft. I'll fix 'em. I'll show them how to ride into a wind. OK I've had enough now, about 1 km at around 25kph (OK 22kph) educational enough. What's this...the Steels Creek town sign and Paul Wilson.....yep you know the drill. But hang on, obviously Ian Milner, Thorkild, Nick Tapp and Anthony Gullace don't fancy a repeat of the devil's chase and they join with Paul to lead the bunch around the turn. 8.15k @ 24.6kph top speed 34.3. Getting softer.

The return leg starts with a noticeably slower approach to the pinch after the tennis courts before the long essentially downhill run back to the line. Until a gap starts to open up, created by Paul and Anthony as we crest the incline, Ray Russo scrambling across to join them. No organisation in those 3 and a bit of a chase from Mark Wallace and somebody else and we are back on. Then Ian M launches the attack of the race sending a wave of panic through the group as his lead opens up to nearly 200 metres until Nick Tapp takes up the lead, dragging the bunch back to Ian's wheel as we get to the halfway point still wondering how this will all unfold. The fourth leg; 8.12k at 45.0kph.

The elements had now taken their toll with the heat seeing the retirement of a few, the wind blowing "big" Mark Wallace off the circuit, a self DQ by Ian Milner (crossing the centre line) and a puncture to "Dasha" Darling (not that we're that close). The premiership quarter commences into the sirocco (like that word?) and surely this would be the defining leg of the race. An aggressive attack up the first incline after the turnaround capitalised on during the downhill section into the 2ks of undulations by.....nope, yes you guessed it, had hearts working overtime till the gap was closed and the group reunited. What's this.... the Steels Creek town sign and Paul Wilson..... this time Anthony, Thorkild, Ray Russo and the rest of the bunch were having none of it and we all went round together with an average speed for the leg of 26kph.

The run back is starting to hurt as little gaps open up, but nobody is prepared to let anyone get too far away with the consequence that gaps are quickly closed as turns are swapped at the front contributing to a healthy but hardly frantic pace which sees the field intact as we hit the penultimate turnaround covering the distance at 45.5kmh in around 10 minutes 45 seconds.

The tramontana (that's my favourite) was now showing signs of weakening, with less gusts, or maybe we were just getting used to it. Successive and repeated attacks from Thorkild, Paul, Anthony, and Ray Russo saw momentary gaps open up only to be closed down by Paul, Anthony, Ray and Thorkild. Hmmm maybe they will re-think that strategy next time. Ahh a new protagonist, Peter Shenanigans has a flutter into the breeze only to be reeled in by Thorkild, Paul or was it Anthony. And then....what's this? the Steels Creek town sign and Paul Wilson Average speed 26.4kph.

The run home and Thorkild along with Paul, Anthony and Ray crest the first incline on the way home with a gap on the rest of the field, a gap that proved deceptively hard to close as the men most likely appeared to settle down to the task of capitalising on their small but growing break. First Nigel Frayne and then Martin Stalder putting in big turns at the front to keep the break within grasp. Thorkild appearing to be the driving force at the front of the group of 4. As the chasers finally bridged the gap, gasping to capture some strength for the impending sprint, Thorkild refused to yield and stayed at the head of the bunch pulling us to the base of the last two rises around 1km from home. Over the two bumps and the climbers have failed to shake off a few of the sprinters. Not a good sign for the likes of Paul and Thorkild who had dictated the pace of the race throughout but by no means the best sprinters in the field.

As the sprint opened up it is apparent that the group has splintered a bit as Thorkild charged to the line with only Anthony and Leigh Bailey remote chances to get over the top of him. Leigh Bailey, definitely the most favored sprinter in this group, gets to Thorkild's front wheel with about 30 to go and looks to have it won until Thorkild pulls out one last effort to cross the line ahead of Leigh, Anthony following in third and Glenn Pascall in fourth. The rest of us rolling in close, but behind.
Distance: 65.7k, avg: 32.6kph, max: 66.6kph, time: 2:00:42

c-grade (3 laps - 48k)

No report.

d-grade (3 laps - 48k)(Mal Jones)

It's very likely that a few of the reports in this newsletter mention something of a strong breeze. If that's the case, they've understated it by a mile. It was a freaking howling gale - pushing straight up the road and making the outward leg pretty damn uncomfortable.

Even with the challenge of the wind, 15 hardy d-grade riders lined up to face the starter. Notable inclusions into the field were Neil Cartledge and Darren Smith, both dropping back from c-grade to try their luck.

As expected, the wind did make the job tough, but everyone worked together, rotating turns regularly off the front and trying to stay together to get the maximum protection possible.

In a repeat of his bike troubles from several weeks ago (and also the Whittlesea Challenge Ride), Andrew Buchanan had what he

thought was a chain derail on the first outward leg and pulled to the opposite side of the road, and thus considered himself out of the race (for crossing the centre line), to check it out.

Fortunately, he was able to continue after dropping a minute or two and with the benefit of a short cut at the first turn was able to get back on again – but had decided that he would not contest the finish.

Turning to have the wind behind the bunch proved to be a blessing – and a change to the pace. From as low as 17kph on the way out, speedos were reported to have hit 66kph on the return leg.

The strain of working into the wind on the way out and then the very quick return leg on the first lap took its first victim. Mark Granland was dropped and unluckily not able to get back on.

At the end of the first lap it was very much a visual thing with plenty of grimacing the order of the moment as the bunch turned to face the howling gale once again. The mood wasn't helped when "Only 2 laps to go" was fired in by one of the finish line officials.

However, everyone put the head down and dealt with it the best they could. Plenty of different riders taking turns to ease the load made the trip out not as painful as it could have been.

Once the Steels Creek tennis club came into view, everyone knew the torment wasn't far from ending – until the next, and last, trip out...

The second half of the second lap saw a couple of riders make a bit of a charge. Chris Norbury upped the pace, as did John Thompson, leaving many scrambling to close the gap they'd suddenly opened.

Scratch another two, with Geoff Mackay and Mick Paull dropped as the pace intensified. Sam Bruzzese almost became another, and struggled to close what became for him a 150 metre gap. He dug deep and was finally able to make up the deficit just as the bunch completed the second lap.

Thankful of receiving the bell, the heads went down once more as the remaining 12 proceeded to work into the wind for 9 kilometres.

At the turn, no one was in too much of a hurry, with the pace still quick, but no one ready to try and burst away to a race winning lead. No doubt the wind worked against any heroics, because even if anyone did get away, it wouldn't be enough of a lead to carry to the line.

As the finish line approached, a little more urgency developed. Some shuffling for position, a little bit of testing and the scene was set for a hard charging sprint finish.

Within the last 400 metres or so, big Darren Smith nudged past a flying Kevin Mills (keen to make amends for his ordinary Jack Thompson Handicap performance at Yarra Junction a few weeks earlier) and took Mal Jones with him.

The three managed to pull just a few metres ahead and looked to be in the box seat, until... from a side street a car pulled out in front of the trio.

Leader Mal Jones looked down and saw 62 km/h on the speedo and mentally calculated that if the car didn't speed up, he was into the back of it, so elected to back off, along with Darren and Kevin.

With a loss of momentum effectively ending his race, Mal pulled out of the sprint, as did Darren Smith.

The flying bunch behind was less affected with John Thompson and Alan Hicks in the best position to take out the victory. John thought he had it, only to have Alan sneak past just on the line.

A hard charging Sam Bruzzese was right there as well, but had to settle for third place ahead of Kevin Mills in fourth. Kevin having been able to recover his composure after the car had pulled out.

The general opinion afterwards was a good race with everyone glad to see the last of the wind!

e/f-grade (2 laps - 32k)

No report.

Results

	First	Second	Third	Fourth
a-grade (8)	Justin Davis	Trevor Coulter	Rob Amos	
b-grade (16)	Thorkild Muurholm	Glenn Pascall	Leigh Bailey	Anthony Gullace
c-grade (11)	Greg Lipple	Tony Curulli	Syve Fothergill	
d-grade (15)	Alan Hicks	John Thompson	Sam Bruzzese	Kevin Mills
e/f-grade (7)	Graham Cadd	Charles Lethbridge	JC Wilson	

Officials

Thanks to Graeme Parker and Ron Stranks who were on the desk taking entries. Thanks to Ian Smith who was in charge of the minions out on the road making sure proceedings proceeded safely, the helpers including; Hylton Preece, Ross Goodings, Brendan Goss, Steve Grey, Grant Greenhalgh, Rob Harris, David McCormack and the odd non-finisher who assisted on the line to separate the place getters. 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 Peter Mackie who was on hand with the drinks.

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

Sunday	September	20	2:00pm	METEC	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	September	26	2:00pm 2:30pm	METEC METEC	Woman's Scratch Race Graded Scratch Races
Monday	September	28	8:00pm	Maroondah Club	General Meeting
Saturday	October	3	2:00pm	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	October	10	2:00pm	Yarra Junction	Club Championships
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	September	20	9:30am	National Boulevard	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	September	27	10:00am	Broadford	Perfect Pilates Mountain Goat Classic (h'cap - 46k)
Sunday	October	4	10:00am	Carlsruhe West (Woodend)	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	October	11	10:00am	Avenal Rd (Seymour)	Vin Nuttall handicap (64k)

Gippsland Vets Program

Sunday	September	20	10:00am	Kernot (Melways 512 S10)	46k scratch races
Sunday	October	11	10:00am	Kernot (Melways 512 S10)	46k scratch races

Victorian Veterans Cycling Council Program

Sunday	October	4	10:00am	Paraparap	Stan Howard Memorial handicap	28/9 - \$15
Sunday	October	24	10:00am	Camperdown	Bill Long Camperdown to Warrnambool	19/10 - \$20

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
11/10/2009	Ballarat	Herald Sun Tour Challenge (AGF benefiting charity) - http://www.heraldsuntour.com.au/index.php?id=264
18/10/2009	Melbourne	Around the Bay in a Day.
3/1/2010	Geelong	Amy's Ride - http://www.amygillett.org.au
24/1/2010	Bright	Audax Alpine Classic - http://audax.org.au/public/
7/3/2010	Falls Creek	BV - Alpine attack, 230k. Registrations open 1/9/2009 - \$150 - www.bv.com.au/great-rides/42359
13-14/3/2010	Mansfield	SCODY High Country Cycle Challenge - http://www.bikeevents.com.au
27/3/2010	Torquay	Great Ocean & Otway Classic Ride - http://www.supersprint.com.au/

Women's racing / new rider's day;

Saturday September 26th has been designated as a day for prospective new members to come along and have a go. To promote the sport to the fairer gender the club will be holding a race for them before regular proceedings commence. There will be a training session from around 1:00pm for all new comers (male and female) then at 2:00 the women will enjoy a half-hour criterium of their own before things return to normal.

So if you know anybody who has expressed an interest in racing, gender inspecific, invite them along.

Wendy Hargreaves - It's all downhill for the lycra losers;

Some of you may have seen an article by Wendy Hargreaves in the Herald Sun of 30/8/2009 in which she belittles cyclists in general (except female cyclists who choose to wear black knicks) and generally castigates those who don lycra to enjoy the experience of cycling. Catrin Harris saw this article and was sufficiently incensed that a journalist could abuse her journalistic privilege by taking up a third of a page in a leading paper for a personal rant to write to Wendy pointing out the shortcomings and bias in her article. If anyone else saw the article and was unhappy in the way cyclists were portrayed you can write to Wendy to let her know how you feel at;

- hargreavesw@heraldsun.com.au

Or if you feel that may not be enough you could let her employer know how you feel by writing to the herald sun at;

- hssport@heraldsun.com.au

or you could write a letter to the editor through;

- <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/opinion/letter>

And if that doesn't get the response you are seeking there's always the Australian Press Council;

- <http://www.presscouncil.org.au/>

If you haven't seen the article or wish to see Catrin's comments Rob (rjhprojects@hotmail.com) will be more than happy to send you a copy of each.

Matt's wind;

mistral : French, A strong cold north-west wind in southern France and the Mediterranean

samiel : Turkish, A hot desert wind, simoom.

sirocco : Italian, The south-east wind; (from Arabic)

1. A strong southerly to southeasterly wind on the Mediterranean that originates in the Sahara and adjacent North African regions.

2. A draft of hot air from an artificial source of heat.

(not sure which is the more appropriate definition - ed.)

tramontana : Italian, A cold, dry wind from the North
