



Eastern veterans cycling club

www.easternvets.com

Respecting the Rights of all Road Users

Newsletter January 23rd 2010

Graded Scratch Races – Kernot - January 16th

Race report

It was a day for the sunscreen, a forecast top of 34°C in the city was matched in the country. The midday sun beating down on competitors as they congregated at the Kernot Community Hall to register and contemplate the efforts that were likely to be required over the next hour and a bit. A cool southerly wind, and clouds gathering over the southern horizon, providing, and promising, relief from the heat. Forty-six Eastern members disregarded the tyranny of distance and registered across five grades, their numbers bolstered by twelve Gippsland members, another from Central Vets and one from Canberra, sixty in total - a good turnout for our first foray into Gippsland Vets territory.

A solid thanks must be said to the Gippsland club, especially Steve Flower who did a power of work behind the scenes to make us welcome and our visit a pleasurable one, Steve and Mick sweeping, and laying out, the course before the first competitors started to arrive. Also to be thanked is Hylton Preece who created and supplied Traffic Management Plans to the relevant authorities and then had to chase around to ensure we had all required permits in time to race.

For those who didn't make it out to Kernot the course was described as undulating, this may have been a bit of a misnomer, hilly may have been a better description - hilly with sections of undulation better still. The race started with a fairly flat half-dozen kilometres up the Loch Kernot road before turning down the Woodleigh St Helier road for another kilometre to the Bass River where things started to go up. A nice little climb (1.xk) to a plateau is followed by a short sharp descent and another kilometre climb to Woodleigh. The up doesn't finish there but continues up the Gurdies St Helier road till the turn into Stewart Road. The road sort of descends from there to the Grantville - Glen Alvie Road and onto the Loch - Kernot Road for the end of lap / finish, along this stretch there are a few inclines to test the legs, and the bunch, the lap ending with a couple of small inclines, the second, shorter but a little steeper than the first, a place for a final effort to break the shackles. The southerly promised a fast finish for those who were still in contention (and with something in their legs).

a-grade

With no local knowledge the six strong a-grade bunch set off on something of a reconnaissance mission over the first lap, the pace steady and comfortable but enough to keep from being embarrassed by b-grade. The initial pace setting left to

Canberra rider Peter Klien but as the kilometres rolled by the Eastern riders came through to share the load, Frank Nyhuis and Trevor Coulter being the more predominant. Trevor throwing in the occasional surge through the lap to test the waters, the waters proving too deep for Thorkild on one of the later climbs in the lap and he was destined to complete the race alone.

Things didn't change much for the first handful of kilometres of the second lap, all wary that the race was going to be fought out in the hills. The climb from the Bass River was taken cautiously, anticipation of a move stretching nerves to their limit, Trevor obliged with a tentative feeler, nothing adventurous, nothing expected, naught achieved. A collective sigh of relief on cresting the hill intact was lost in the collective gasping for breath as the five sucked in lungfulls of air as they crossed the ridge and into the drop before the second climb.

Mick Hay consulted his notes from the first lap and used the momentum of the descent to launch an attack at the base of the second climb. Trevor Coulter heard Mick coming and was quick to respond, but not quick enough, Mick leading Trevor up the hill and over the top by a handful of metres, the bunch still a significant way down the hill. Over the top Mick didn't let up, Trevor eventually having to give up and return to the fold.

With Trevor back Rob Amos tried to organise the quartet into a chase group but the previous forty kilometres had taken their toll and despite sharing turns Mick was able to slowly draw away from the rolling foursome. A couple of kilometres from the end the bunch conceding that they were chasing in vain and it became a race for second. The resultant jockeying for position had Trevor on the front as the race approached the business end, Rob, Frank and Peter on his wheel, Mick already in the sheds.

Trevor's only hope to dislodge his lodgers, use the last of the hills. To this end Trevor went early, Rob (and the rest) desperately hanging on. The tail wind pushing the speeds up. As the road levelled Rob was still on the wheel and started to draw level. Neck and neck the pair raced for the line, Trevor pushing 53-11, Rob on the 12 and just inching up as the pair closed on the line. Just behind the pair Frank was winding up his eleven and closing on them. On the line it was Rob by the smallest of margins over Trevor, Frank needing another five metres of road - beaten for a podium place by the line.

b-grade

Most of the eleven strong bunch were content to sit back and take in the scenery while letting those who had been there before go

before. Clem Fries (of Gippsland) and Nigel Kimber doing the bulk of the trail blazing early on, the occasional sojourn to the front by Ian Smith, Greg Lipple, Nick Tapp, Steve Ross and one or two others providing a brief change of colour at the head of the peloton.

The first attack came just before the first of the climbs, Evan Butler the victim, Eddie Chihuahua and Bluey Heeler the perpetrators. In the spirit of fairness the bunch waited for Evan to catch up before setting off up the first climb of the day – intact. The tempo pace set by the leaders, as they got a feel for their legs, enabled all to crest together. The story wasn't the same over the next couple of hills, the bunch whittling down to six as those with a little less race fitness started to feel the pinch and fell away.

Despite splitting the bunch there were no heroics over the first lap, those who knew what was ahead knew better than to force the pace, those who didn't know what was ahead knew better than to be foolhardy. So it was that the remaining six crossed the finish line and descended to the community hall to start the second and final lap. It was still Clem and Nigel sharing the majority of the pace setting duties, Steve Ross, Ian Smith, Evan Butler and Nick Tapp completing the happy half-dozen and occasionally putting their noses to the wind.

There was no attack before the base of the first climb, Eddie and Bluey nowhere to be seen - probably exhausted from their earlier efforts. But Evan didn't make it to the top of the first climb in contact with the bunch and it was five across the top and down again. Any chance Evan may have had of regaining contact over the top dealt a cruel blow by the southerly which had picked up and virtually blew the riders backwards as they crested the hill and met its full force. The full force of gravity was called to action by Steve on the descent leading to the second climb, Steve hoping to gain enough momentum and gap to still be with the lighter climbers by the Stewart Road turn. Not to be, the four lighter members of the troupe catching and passing Steve half way up and riding away to continue the battle.

A couple of efforts by Nigel along Stewart Road to shake at least one and guarantee a top three place coming to naught as the other three tenaciously held his wheel. Off Stewart Road and into The Shutoff Road a look down revealed just two extra shadows, without concern for who owned the lost shadow Nigel set about consolidating the podium. As the road descended it became apparent that the lost shadow was that of Nick Tapp as first Clem then Ian took turns at the front (Nick lost ground at the turn then dropped his chain in the chase and was unable to catch up - ed.). With what Nigel considered the major competition eliminated it was time to further improve the odds, the few testing inclines before the final turn ideal ground to grind the competition down. All of Nigel's efforts were met with equal determination and as the race rolled along the final flat before turning for the finish it was still together and time to dust off plan 72a.

Around the final turn Clem rode wide leaving a gap big enough for Nigel to ride through and he was off again. Again the responses came and after some desperate scrambling Ian finally hooked Clem's wheel, it was back together and down to plan 73 - not a well thought out plan but by this time oxygen

deprivation was a contributing factor. Maintaining a reasonable tempo over the first of the final two inclines Nigel climbed out of the saddle for the last one and gave it all he had. Both Clem and Ian rose to the occasion and as the road flattened and the finish came into sight Ian found another gear and some glucose and made a bee line for the finish, Clem responded whilst Nigel pondered what could have been. It was a mercifully short sprint, Ian sensing a closing body had to call on his last reserves of lactose which he did and was able to hold on to take the win ahead of a fast finishing Clem.

c-grade (Colin O'Brien)

An interesting day was expected as we headed to a new road course near Westernport Bay, temperatures of 23°C at departure (inner eastern Melbourne) with a strong, blustery north wind rose to 34°C by Koo Wee Rup, but was down to 27°C at Keron as the predicted cool change wafted across the course.

To the race. The largest field of the day (19 starters) took off for the first of two hilly laps approx. 25km each. Most were thinking... how steep were those climbs and how tough? The answers would be provided soon enough. The strong, gusty, south/south westerly winds distracted us as we rolled along the first 10km or so. Sometimes the wind was behind, left to right, and even right to left... but generally a "tail" wind until the first left-hand turn when all but one rider was still together.

Turning into the gusty headwinds it was more difficult but still not too tough ... until we hit the first of the three steep hills. How tough were those hills? By the top of the second climb that question was answered unambiguously as 6 riders quickly broke away. Desperate riding saw some riders regaining the leaders by the start of the 3rd climb but by the top only 4 remained... Tim Crowe (Eastern) and Rod Cheyne, Pete Hollins and Brett Smart from Gippsland Vets who were eager to put some extra pressure on the scattering field.

Stringing out behind was John Thomas, Ben DeJong, Colin O'Brien & Richard Dobson. Further back on the second climb a second fracture saw a third group begin to form including Neil Cartledge working to pull in some stragglers... Dean Niclassen along with 2 or 3 others. As the chase topped the climb they could see the front group of four away and moving fast down the hill... the winning move.

While the four leaders were obviously keen to consolidate their break Colin & Richard began working together on the third climb and joined Peter Ransome for a km or so before picking up Ben and John a few km later. With a bunch of five the group set out to try and bridge back to the front. Suddenly Peter was gone leaving four to continue rolling over... but try as they did the leading bunch gradually moved out of sight. Despite the wind and tough hills (*or because of self preservation*) the chasing group stayed together until race end with John always looking strong.

Behind them Neil was trailing Steve Short, Harold Simpson and a Gippsland rider by several hundred metres as that small group tried to catch the second bunch before it consolidated and moved away. The gap shrank but then stretched out again when the wind came hard into their faces.

By now three distinct groups had formed...the winning one of four, a chasing bunch of four and a third of six. That left a few scattered remnants behind with the unenviable task of battling strong winds and steep hills, the reasons why each of the groups ahead gradually lost sight of each other.

But meanwhile back at the front... *“the group worked together very well for the remainder of the first lap and only eased the pressure a couple of times, giving Tim some respite. The younger guys Pete and Brett were looking particularly strong through the first lap and a half and although the chase group was not sighted, Tim was dreading being dropped and hanging out in no man's land to fend them off. Half way through the second lap, Rod began to raise the tempo through the undulations and Tim was gathering strength the longer the race went. Well clear of the bunch and 10 km from the finish, the teamwork began to fracture and Pete dropped off the group. Brett began to test the older Tim and Rod with some surges, but these attacks resulted in cramps which saw the end of Brett's assault. Rod then took up the initiative and drove hard over the last km either hoping to see Tim wilt or to gift Tim with the best lead out possible...only Rod knows. It was a solid effort from the breakaway group and Tim and Rod benefitted from the strength (and racing inexperience) of Brett and Pete”.*

An excellent win by Tim against three strong Gippsland riders (avg speed 32.5).

Meanwhile the chasing bunch of John, Colin, Richard and Ben stayed together sharing pacing duties until the final 600 meters or so when John came through with a very strong sprint followed by Colin, Richard and Ben.

“The third group of six took turns until the climbs on the second lap. Harold was tiring, Peter thought about abandoning after lap one but decided he needed the punishment for past sins. Neil was worried that Steve was going to attack, so just before the crest of the last climb made a move. There was a call to “get on his wheel!!” The downhill section to left hander onto the Grantville Rd was as hard as any on the day. The wind had risen even stronger and those with Zips were catching the gusts that threatened to push the riders off the road on several occasions.”

At the turn into Grantville Rd Neil had established a handy break from the other five crossing the line well clear in 9th place.

Although only 50km this is a tough and demanding course and though more suited to climbers familiarity with the course will make it easier for most the next time around. With the numerous exposed ridges wind is likely to be a regular factor in what we hope will be more races on an excellent circuit.

Thanks to Tim Crowe and Neil Cartledge for their contributions.

d-grade (Mal Jones)

Whether it was the distance or the supposed “undulating” course, but Kernot had one of the smaller d-grade fields for

some time. Or more precisely, Eastern Vets representative field...

Of the riders that faced the starter, nine were Eastern members, and of those, one was a new member having his first ride, and two were the sole E graders that had entered.

The remainder made up of four Gippsland Vets and one from Central Vets taking the number up to 14.

After some debate as to whether it was going to be one or two laps, it was decided to be two laps with the first under control in recognition of the two E graders, Robin Condie and Adam Dymond (they were originally only going to do one lap).

Taking off on a bright and at times blustery Kernot afternoon from the Memorial Hall, how hard could it be? Sure the long straight from the start was slightly uphill, but the first lap was very much going to be at an exploratory pace, as, with the exception of the Gippsland riders and one Eastern Vet (Mal Jones), it was all brand new terrain.

With that in mind the bunch rolled around to the first left hand turn with an ominous warning coming from within the bunch: “Just around the corner here it goes up”.

And up it went, then down and up, up and just when it looked to be all over, damn, that flat was false, and it went up again.

About the only saving grace at this point was seeing the rapidly recovering Paul Kelly directing traffic on the corner and yelling encouragement.

With the bulk of the climbs out of the way the undulating nature of the course really came out. A right turn, then another right turn and a left turn and the bunch was back on the road back to Kernot.

At last some relief with only a few small bumps to negotiate giving the bunch a chance to regroup. It wasn't without its moments though as Peter Webb's front derailleur had his chain spinning on the frame. A quick stop for Peter and he was going again, with only a hundred or so metres to close to the bunch.

From there a long mostly downhill/flat section and then left turn had everyone thinking that it was a great course, especially with the wind right up the tail providing plenty of assistance.

With one lap down the real race started as everybody safely took the right hand bend past the Kernot store and started the climb up the long straight past the hall.

When the bunch reached the beginning of the hills the second time, the pace was a little more willing, with riders beginning to drop off as too much Christmas cheer came back to haunt several.

Not surprisingly, the Gippsland Vets were right in the thick of it, making the most of their local knowledge. The feeling was that one of them would be lining up for the win, but which one...

With the finish on a straight and flat stretch of road just before entering Kernot, the answer came as the pace steadily increased in the last 800 metres or so.

At the finish it was Gippsland Vets' Phil Dell that took the chocolates ahead of Eastern's strong and fast finishing Peter Webb in second, Graeme Parker in third.

It was generally agreed that Kernot offers great riding, and thanks to Steve Flower and the Gippsland Vets crew for assisting with putting on a great event.

e-grade

No Race.

f-grade

The seven Eastern members who'd made the trek to Kernot were joined by three of the locals, the first half-dozen

kilometres spent getting acquainted. Conversation and civility ceasing as the road headed skyward. Ron Stranks relishing the change in gradient and pulling away from both his old and his new-found friends, Brian Farrell the only member of the party able to stay with him. JC doing all his ankle would allow but it wasn't enough to stay in touch and over the top he had his work cut out if he was to get back into the race, Brian and Ron did what they could to see that he didn't. Over the next dozen kilometres Ron and Brian took turns at keeping the pace at a level that would ensure them the spoils of the race.

Five from home an effort by Ronnie on one of the smaller inclines gapped Brian and that was all he needed, Ron time trialing to the finish and the win. With the carrot of Ron ahead and the stick of JC behind Brian did enough to take full advantage of the work the pair had done mid-race to stay clear for second. JC trailing Brian home took the last of the places ahead of the locals and the remainder of his Eastern colleagues.

Results

	First	Second	Third
a-grade (6)	Michael Hay	Rob Amos	Trevor Coulter
b-grade (11)	Ian Smith	Clem Fries (gipps)	Nigel Kimber
c-grade (19)	Tim Crowe	Rod Cheyne (gipps)	Brett Smart (gipps)
d-grade (14)	Phil Dell (gipps)	Peter Webb	Graeme Parker
e-grade (0)	No Race		
f-grade (10)	Ron Stranks	Brian Farrell	J.C. Wilson

Officials

Thanks to Graeme Parker and Ron Stranks who were on the desk taking entries. Thanks also to the helpers who were John Thompson, Mark Cheeseman, Kevin Starr, Darren Smith, Jim Swainston, Peter Stanley and Paul Kelly, plus the Gippsland Vets members who assisted on the day. 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 brought the trailer along and Peter Mackie who was on hand with the drinks - eventually.

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

Eastern Vets Program

Saturday	January	23	2:00pm	METEC	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	January	30	2:00pm	Dunlop Road	Graded Scratch Races
Monday	February	1	8:00pm	Maroondah Club	General Meeting
Saturday	February	6	2:00pm	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	February	13	2:00pm	Steels Creek	Graded Scratch Races
Tuesday	Jan	26	6:00pm	METEC	Graded Scratch Races
	Feb	2, 9, 16, 23			Note : No entry to circuit before 5:00pm
Wednesday			10:00am	The Loop – Yarra Boulevard	Scratch Races + post race coffee

Note : Graded Scratch Race entries are accepted on the day up to 15 minutes before the advertised race start time.

* Handicap entries close the Tuesday before the race. Riders entering a handicap **MUST** pay the entry fee regardless of participation. Fees are due on race day, entrants will **NOT** be allowed to start in any EVCC race until fees have been paid.

No late entries will be accepted for either scratch races or handicaps. Entries to handicaps can be submitted via e-mail to the handicapper or on any race day prior to the event.

Northern Vets Program

Sunday	January	24	9:00am	National Boulevard	GSR & Handicap
Sunday	January	31	10:00am	East Trentham	Pig & Whistle h'cap – 44k
Sunday	February	7	9:30am	National Boulevard	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	February	14	9:00am	Toolernvale	Alan Anderson Memorial h'cap – 48k

Gippsland Vets Program

Sunday	January	24	10:00am	Kernot	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	January	31	9:00am	Southeast Boulevard, Pakenham	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	February	7	10:00am	Kernot	Graded Scratch Races

On the off weeks the Gippsland club runs training rides from the Kernot community hall.

Victorian Veterans Cycling Council Program

Sunday	February	21	9:30am	Dookie	Malcolm Hill Cycles handicap (56k)	10/2 - \$20
Sunday	March	7	9:30am	Woodstock	O'Brien Contracting handicap (56k)	24/2 - \$20

Note : Entries can be made on-line through the VVCC website or 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
24/1/2010	Bright	Audax Alpine Classic - www.audax.org.au/public
7/3/2010	Falls Creek	BV – 3 Peak Challenge, 230k. - www.bv.com.au/great-rides/42359
13-14/3/2010	Mansfield	SCODY High Country Cycle Challenge - www.bikeevents.com.au
27/3/2010	Torquay	Great Ocean & Otway Classic Ride - www.supersprint.com.au

Stop Press.

After three years of putting together this newsletter Nigel has decided that it is time to call it a triennium and move on to new things, allowing some fresh blood to inject new enthusiasm into the medium of the club.

The club is looking for a volunteer to take over the role of newsletter editor. The club AGM is coming up in March and although the position of editor is not an elected position the AGM provides an opportune time for a changing of the guard. Any interested parties are asked to ponder their interest and to feel free to ask Nigel what is involved along with any other questions they may want to know the answer to.
