



# Eastern veterans cycling club

www.easternvets.com.au

**Respecting the Rights of all Road Users**

**Newsletter April 24<sup>th</sup> 2010**

## **Graded Scratch Races – Arthurs Creek – April 14<sup>th</sup>**

### **Race report**

Near perfect conditions and a strengthening club brought out the masses – 80 members signing up for a range of forays on the Arthurs Creek – Strathewen circuit. B, C & D grades sporting nigh on capacity fields.

### **a-grade**

A small field of nine, dominated by the white and black colours of Team Degani; three of the crew (Darren, Frank & Trevor) determined to test the legs of the likes of Guy Green and Roy Clark. Gerard Donnelly recently back from surgery an unknown and the two in Kosdown blue (David and Phil) sure to make an impact. The gutsy Rob Amos rounding out the nine and not to be ignored.

The initial neutral period allowing the finishing touches to be applied to any plans or tactics. Once under way it was Small Bunch Racing 101 as the pace was shared and maintained at a level that deterred thought of an attack. The second lap progressed to SBR 201, Roy, Rob and Gerald testing the waters before the far turnaround. Their move stirring the pot, Kosdown playing the Phil Smith card leaving Degani and Guy Green to respond and restore the status quo. On the return Rob again found himself with some privacy but with no-one for company there was little heart in it and he was soon returned to the fold. A fairly sedate climb up the pinch and a roll to the turn and it was still nine together going into the second half of the race.

SBR 301 - those with the strongest hand lead hard. Frank Nyhuis attacking a third of the way out and opening a gap that the remainder weren't too interested in chasing down – Rob, Roy, Gerard and Phil Smith rolling turns to keep a loose reign; David, Trevor and Darren enjoying the respite. By the far turnaround Frank's lead had grown to a couple of minutes and action was required. Gerard Donnelly first to respond, on the rise before the turn, with Trevor, the nominated minder, in pursuit. Rob Amos also chased, catching Trevor by the turn. Trevor, caught in two minds (assist Rob chase Gerard (and by inference, Frank) or sit on and hope Rob could do it alone), opted to sit and hope. The lack of cooperation allowing Phil Smith to lead the remainder back onto the pair's wheels on the rise from the turn.

The fast, winding, generally down hill (and downwind), section off the rise providing Roy his opportunity to go, Roy's move Guy's cue. One well up the road, one chasing and two

in pursuit left three to chase with two passengers enjoying (? – ed.) the situation and the scenery.

Some solid riding saw Frank turn to start the last lap with a much reduced gap over Gerard, Guy and Roy not much further back. With capture inevitable Frank rode tempo to the top of the hill allowing a group of four to form to contest the last lap. The quartet putting in hard turns to consolidate their advantage.

On the technical drop to Nankervis Road Rob made an effort to break the shackles and bridge to the leaders, Darren Darling, the nominated minder, with eyes wide shut in pursuit and hoping to survive the bend at the bottom of the hill; he did and caught Rob to boot.

Short of the final turn Phil and Trevor joined the pairing of Rob and Darren and it was made obvious that the horse had bolted as the lead group headed back to claim the prize. 2.68k from the turn and with under six kilometres to go Frank lost all power to the rear wheel, a look down revealing ninety-six missing links. As the other three rode off around the next corner Frank was left to ponder what could have been as he waited for the others to pass by and take in his demise. The reaction from Frank's teammates was audible as the realisation that there was too much to do to regain the race hit home.

With the loss of Frank the lead trio continued to push the pace, fairly content to work together and battle it out in a final dash for the line. A dash won by Gerard a bike length ahead of Guy with Roy a couple of metres back in third. The sprint for pride was won by Darren Darling ahead of Degani team-mate Trevor Coulter.

### **b-grade**

It was a beautiful day for a ride, ideal weather, picturesque countryside, the company of a score of like minded companions. Who could ask for anything more? The race controller's imposed neutral zone came and went but the pace stayed the same. Why spoil a good thing? Rob Harris the first to remember it was a race, twenty souls knocked from their reverie and calling muscles into action.

The ice broken there was no shortage of individuals prepared to put their nose to the wind; Ray Russo, Steve Ross, Ian Smith and Thorkild Muuholm all finding their way to the front on the way to Strathewen for the first time. The sight of the returning a-grade race well short of the turn had many asking "are they going that

fast or are we going that slow?'. Turning the bunch at the cone was like manoeuvring a semi in a tight laneway. Shortly after getting the prime mover moving the c-grade bunch appear to answer the question – we were going that slow.

Shamed into action Nigel Kimber took the lead, down wind, down hill, head down, the needle pushing 50kph as he drove the pedals, the bunch line astern and enjoying the thrill. As Nigel tired others came to the fore; Nigel Letty, having worked the mountains from his thighs, one to continue to force the pace, Owen ?? another to join the fray. Towards lap's end a dawning of truth – the pinch, the first of four ascents. The pace eased, the bunch compacted, gears were shifted, bums lifted almost as one the group crested the hill and headed for the turn.

Another extended neutral zone as the tail closed the gaps. With three-quarters of the race still to run there was no move up the return and with all in tow there was no racing down the other side. As the road levelled the flag was raised and racing resumed. For no real reason Nigel (Kimber) attacked the field, an effort up a slight rise garnering a shadow free gap. The chase unhurried but effective all the same, the usual suspects, Nick Tapp joining the crew, returning the miscreant to the fold. The remainder of the run to the Strathewen turn conducted at a pace that allowed only the odd surge to mark an attack.

The return leg tail wind instilling a bit of apathy in the crew and providing the opportunity for Thorkild to break away, Nick Tapp quick to join him. Twenty metres may not seem much but it's a start, Nigel (K) seeing no response bridged and the three enjoyed a couple of rotations till Steve Ross brought the bunch up to play, the break absorbed to plan their next affray. In these quiet times Thorkild, Owen, Nigels (L & K) and Glen Pascal dominated the front of the race and dictated the pace.

Another rise and it was the blood-nut again out of the saddle pushing the pace and stirring the pot. The response was universal and Nigel returned in time to catch his breath before the third last time up the pinch. This time, amidst the clunking of gears, efforts were made. The light and lanky brigade all over their machines like mantis at a prayer meet pulling away up the gradient. The others reciting the mantra 'I think I can, I think I can' as they scrambled to hold wheels over the top and put their superior mass to good use on the descent.

Half race distance and the majority of the original twenty were still in contention. The run to Strathewen a little more tame than the previous lap, realisation a break was unlikely to succeed tempering the efforts of those who might have tried. A rush of blood early on the return nearly had a three Nigel break away as Nigel bridged to Nigel, unfortunately Nigel was unable to join his namesakes before the little foray was closed down. And that was the last the front saw of Nigel Frayne, jet-lag finally catching up with him forcing him to retreated to cattle-class and valiantly hold on.

The remainder of the lap playing out much like the lap before. As the race headed out for the last time a few headed to the sheds but it was still a big field that hit the flatter track after Nankervis Road. It was still the same jerseys at the front

driving the pace; Glenn, Owen, Nigel & Nigel, Nick and a few more. There was little excitement, anything that moved was jumped on before it moved, an occasional increase in tempo the only indication that somebody'd thought there was an opportunity.

Plans were being laid as to just where on the last climb that winning move was going to be made when Nigel Letty upset the apple cart. Inside three clicks from home he's pre-empted the field and soloed up the road. As those left behind looked on in disbelief at his audacity, and at each other in question, Nigel's lead grew. For the second time there was an opportunity for a three Nigel breakaway but Nigel Frayne was no where to be seen. And despite some hard turns the bunch weren't going to come this far to give the race to a pair of Nigel's.

Returned with time to recoup and reconsider before the bunch hit the bottom of the hill for the last time, and again, with the crunch of gears as that optimal ratio was selected (or something close enough), the scene was set – mountain goats v. the Pony Engines. As the pressure went on the pedals a further crunching told the story of Thorkild's demise, Nick Tapp scurrying round to the left and with the sound of Danish curses fading scrambled to third wheel over the top. Nigel Letty and A Adams just ahead, a small gap to Nigel K, Ray Russo, Steve Ross and Matt Rice the last over the hill with a chance of regrouping before the turn. A mad dash down to the cone saw the seven regroup only to stretch on the exit and concertina back as they turned into Greens Road for the run to the line.

With the rest of the race breathing down their necks there was no room to manoeuvre, well maybe one as Nigel Letty passed the lead to Nick Tapp. Nick resigned to lead the race to the line. With just the sound lungs sucking air through gaping maws from behind as the line approached Nick dared to dream. Steve Ross shattering that dream, then Ray Russo, Nigel Letty and A Adams brushing aside the shards before the line. Matt Rice followed Nick across the line, Nigel K the last of that little troupe ahead of the remainder.

#### **c-grade** (with Peter Shanahan)

There was movement at the schoolhouse, for the word had got around, there was money to be had, tho not quite a thousand pounds (apologies to B. Patterson). The hacks had gathered to the line, all the tried and noted riders from clubs near and far (further apologies)

Back to the race.

It was a big field - nineteen starters, the younger guns keen for some hard riding, make the older ones, and the sprinters, pay their way if they wanted a place at the end. And pay they did, the first casualty cut from the mob before the first turn. The first turn providing the opportunity to break for the hills, the response enough to keep the bunch intact – more or less, and impose the neutral turn that allowed all to regroup.

With spirits high and legs still fresh the antagonists drove the bunch at a cracking pace. The few surges met with response that kept all in tow. The first test over the pinch had many scrambling and chasing hard to the turn, the return to the top the tempo barely

eased, gaps appearing along the line. The young colts up the road, a filly in their midst, some desperate chasing saw the numbers swell, the stampede over and order restored. Half race distance, the Strathewen turn, opportunity to asses the damage done. Half the starters still in the battle, a group chasing a couple of minutes back, the occasional straggler still further adrift.

A moment of complacency, an ease of pace and Peter Shanahan could not resist. A crack of the whip and up the road, a handy gap but not for long. A few others attempted to steal a break, the response the same. It was a tried and tested bunch that hit the bottom of the pinch for the second time. Again the young guns and the mountain goats prevailed, again the others threw it all into the descent to the turn only to have to find a bit more on the climb back out.

At Strathewen for the last time the lead group was down to eight, with the wind to the rear and thoughts of a cold beer a repeat of the previous lap's att ack. The response not so intense, but just as effective if a little longer in execution. Dave Ryan led the field past Nankervis Road and to the foot of the final climb, Deb Chambers poised to bolt. Up the pinch positions were shuffled and settled, Debbie leading the men a merry chase, Richard Dobson, Tim Crowe and Graeme West those on her heels. ?? in no man's land, Pete Shanahan and Dave Ryan bringing up the rear. This time there was no regroup, the lead four around the cone and headed for home before the followers could close the gap.

The longest three-hundred metres, the dash for the line, Tim Crowe the winner ahead of Graeme West. Deb Chambers able to stay the battle worn Richard Dobson took a well-earned third.

**d-grade** (Mal Jones)

Well,

**e-grade** (Tom Saunders)

E grade saw only four riders front up to start - JC Wilson, Ron Stranks, Geoff Miller and Tom Saunders. Soon after racing started it became a race of three as JC discovered he was having a "bad asthma day" and, following back to back wins at METEC and Casey Fields, wisely opted to make this a training ride and dropped off the pack.

Back to the race and Geoff Miller got things off to a flying start nearly catching d-grade before they lifted the pace and drew away. The remaining three swapped turns for the first lap but early into the second lap Tom Saunders managed to get away and settled down for what he hoped would be a long and successful break away. Geoff Miller had other ideas and was relentless in his pursuit and ultimate capture while Ron was happy to watch these two "young" guys hurt each other.

Tom managed another break after the turn around and kept away for a couple of kilometres but once again Geoff managed to bridge the gap to bring all three back together just short of the final climb. Having a serious lack of confidence in his sprinting ability, especially against these two, Tom saw this as his last opportunity to steal the win so about half way up the climb managed another attack that earned him another break. The ten-metre gap at the top of the climb became a hundred-metre advantage down the other side which Tom was able to hold that to the line to claim his first e-grade win ahead of a fast finishing Geoff Miller with Ron taking third place.

It should be mentioned that JC, riding on his own and with ill functioning lungs, finished the first lap and then headed back out again on the second lap to finish the race which I guess proves that with enough guts and heart you don't need lungs.

**f-grade**

No report

**Results**

	<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Third</b>	<b>Fourth</b>
<b>a-grade</b> (9)	Gerard Donnely	Guy Green	Roy Clark	
<b>b-grade</b> (21)	Steve Ross	Ray Russo	Nigel Letty	A Adams
<b>c-grade</b> (19)	Tim Crowe	Graeme West	Deb Chambers	Richard Dobson
<b>d-grade</b> (22)	Sam Bruzzese	Chris Ellenby	Andrew Buchanan	Graham Parker
<b>e-grade</b> (4)	Tom Saunders	Geoff Miller	Ron Stranks	
<b>f-grade</b> (5)	Ray Watts	Petra Niclasen	Steve Goldsmith	

**Officials**

Thanks to Graham Parker and Ron Stranks on the desk taking entries. And thanks to Mark Granland, Steve Gray, Steve Fothergill, Brain Gray, Ross Goodings, Ross Gardiner, Rod Goodes and Anthony Gullace for keeping an eye on proceedings and finishing it all off safely. 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 to the new water-boy – David Ryan 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 to assist with the setting up of the course.

**Eastern Vets Program**

Saturday	April	24	2:00pm	METEC	Graded Scratch Races
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<b>Monday</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>8:00pm</b>	<b>Maroondah Club</b>	<b>General Meeting</b>
Saturday	May	1	2:00pm	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	May	8	2:00pm	Killara Road	Graded Scratch Races
Saturday	May	15	2:00pm	????????	Teams Race & 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	April	25	1:00pm	Lancefield	Benghazi h'cap (VVCC Open)
Sunday	May	2	10:00am	Lancefield	Club Championships
Sunday	May	9	9:30am	National Boulevard	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	May	16	10:00am	East Trentham	Pig & Whistle Handicap (44k)

### Gippsland Vets Program

Sunday	May	2	10:00am	Kernot	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	May	9	10:00am	Kernot	Graded Scratch Race
Sunday	May	16			

### Victorian Veterans Cycling Council Program

Sunday	April	25	1:00pm	Lancefield	Benghazi handicap (79k)	Closed
Sunday	May	23	10:00am	Cororooke	Colac "May Open"	12/5 - \$20
Saturday	May	29	1:00pm	Rochester	Oppy Race	19/5 - \$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
15/5/2010	San Remo	bridge 2 bass hills 8:00am start - 114k (\$70)(does most of the Kernot race loop), 8:30 start - 63k (\$55) <a href="http://www.eventsupport.com.au/">http://www.eventsupport.com.au/</a>
17/10/2010	Melbourne	Around the Bay in a Day Registrations open 1/4/2010 for BV members, 8/4/2010 for general public - <a href="http://www.bv.com.au">www.bv.com.au</a>
27/11/2010	New Zealand	Wattyl – Lake Taupo Cycle Challenge Mal Jones on 0412 569 100 or email <a href="mailto:mal@shotproperty.com.au">mal@shotproperty.com.au</a>

### R U Tuff-e-nuff

If you were inspired by Colin's adventures in the Terra Australis, on an easier scale is the R U TUFF-E-NUFF XC RACE on 20th June at Rob Amos's Chum Creek property - round 2 of the Fat Tyre Flyer Winter Series. Day licences are available.

Details are available at the web site: [www.ftf.com.au](http://www.ftf.com.au)

### Gippsland Vets – Kernot, 18th April

Gippsland Vets hosted a combine handicap last weekend, 76 riders from four clubs (13 Gippsland, 30 Northern, 29 Eastern and 4 Central Vets) greeted the starter, the limit riders having a 34 minute start on the scratch-men over the 62 kilometre course. Under blue skies and in perfect conditions the riders set off for the first 20k; up to the hiway and back, a flat fast track. The second 20k a little hillier making it hard to keep the bunches intact, then back to the start/finish to repeat the first 20.

Scratch halved its size over the first half of the race but swelled its ranks when it caught second scratch just before the half-way point. Aside from a few stragglers this bunch didn't see the remainder till almost out to the hiway for the second time, quickly overhauling the outer marks and then the remnants of third scratch just before the turn around. An effort out of the turn not

enough to shake the passengers who were desperate to stay in contention. The last of the marks on the road were caught in the second kilometre after the turn as the scratch bunch took the race lead. It was now a scratch race with a handful of the original scratch-men, most of second scratch, one or two of third scratch and an assortment of other marks making a bunch of around two-dozen racing for home. The majority of the work being left to a couple of second scratch who were keen to try to reduce the bunch through natural attrition – not to be.

A small incline three kilometres from the finish an ideal launch pad for an attack, one away and the bunch stretched out in pursuit. A kilometre later the line was restored but the pace was maintained, the last rise before the 300m run down to the finish and another surge saw half a dozen crest with a bit of a gap. Was it enough? – no, the tail catching the head just as the sprint started. The finish dominated by Northern members; Roy Clark (Eastern) relegated to second by Paul Logan, Paul Toranto (Gipps) and Stuart Bendall (Eastern) the only other non-northerners in the top ten.

The average speed for scratch was just over 40kph.

Special mention to limit rider Jenny Merrick (Gipps) who held the field at bay for over 50 kilometres on her own, a gutsy effort.

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