



# Eastern veterans cycling club

www.easternvets.com.au

**Respecting the Rights of all Road Users**

**Newsletter July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010**

## **Steels Creek – Graded Scratch & Teams’ Races – June 26<sup>th</sup>**

### **Race report**

A forecast of cold, wet and miserable conditions didn't discourage the hardy membership of Eastern Vets from turning out in numbers for last week's scratch race at Steels Creek. Even with the threat of hail deterring members of the lower grades it was a healthy 74 who fronted the starter to compete in four well patronised races, punctures and imminent hypothermia meant a few fewer finished the race than started but it was still good racing.

Proceedings were led off by a full strength Teams' Race, a couple of teams having to cajole a ring-in or two to fill the numbers. No sooner had the two-dozen headed over the first rise and out of sight than the rain started, only to stop just in time for the post-race presentations. Solid b, c and d-grade fields followed the Teams Race into the descending precipitation for their allotted race duration

### **Teams Race**

Even the arm-chair experts could have predicted the early stages of this race, with Tony Chandler (Adriatic) on the start line there were no prizes for picking him to be aggressive early. Tony had to bide his time a bit as it was Shane Stiles (Doherty Sheet Metal/Eltham Cycles) who, with no formal notification of 'neutral to the top of the hill', was away from the gun. The remainder in no hurry to chase him down, 60k alone in those conditions - not going to happen. And sure enough it didn't, Shane was shortly back in the bunch, but not for long.

The first couple of kilometres were peppered with shakers, Shane one of the major protagonists, Tony also rattling the pedals a couple of times in anticipation. The most promising of the early moves involved Nigel Kimber (Omara cycles) following Shane up the road, the pair opening a tidy little gap before it was brought back, providing the launch pad for Tony to counter attack, which he did, to never be returned. Peter Howard (Doherty/Eltham Cycles) and Peter O'Callaghan (Croydon Cycleworks/Pick-a-Part) joining Tony in his exploit.

Despite the strength in the break there was little response in the chase, much of the work falling to Nigel and Rob Amos (Velocino Cycles). Consequently the trio were able to hold their advantage to the first turn at Steels Creek and slowly build it over the next lap and a half.

As the lead grew a few more souls made their way to the front of the chase; the Donnellys Frank & Gerard (Celtic/TFM), Trevor Coulter & Steve Ross (Team Degani) and Tony Zanalla (Omara) but organisation was lacking and the gap to the leaders didn't come down.

In the break the three were working hard to build their advantage, Peter Howard and Tony Chandler putting in solid turns, Peter O'Callaghan hanging on and contributing where he could.

By half race distance puncture and fatigue had dropped a couple from the chase and the leaders had enough of a break to ease back a bit and mark tempo confident that the half-lap turnarounds, and the long straight sections, were enough to keep an eye on the pursuit.

As the race entered its second half conditions deteriorated, the rain got heavier, the temperature shed a few more degrees and the chase continued in its disorganised way. Toward the end of the third lap, the prospect of still being able to bridge to the leaders saw Trevor and Steven of Team Degani make an attempt to do so, Shane Stiles marking them. To no avail, too many in the bunch keen to join them but not enough keen to continue the work and chase down the leaders, the peloton appearing to settle down to race for fourth.

Rob Amos (Velocino cycles), not content to bide time, attacked the bunch going down to the tennis courts in the hope of taking a break into the final turn but nobody was going to let him go and he was caught just before the turn. Gerard Donnelly (Celtic/TFM) mirrored Rob's actions going back up the hill past the tennis courts and opened a good gap that took the bunch over a kilometre to close down. Boyd Friis countered his team-mate's return but was quickly brought back and the status quo returned.

A couple of kilometres from the finish civility in the break ended with an attack by Tony Chandler, a move that was responded to and eventually closed, Peter O'Callaghan driving the chase and ultimately ending up on the front, a position neither Tony nor Peter Howard wanted. Confident they had enough of a gap to the chase Peter O'C. was encouraged to stay on the front and lead the other two to the line. A finish that was destined to become a two-man sprint with the hapless Peter O'C. having to resign himself to an inevitable third. It was Tony who judged the uphill finish best to beat Peter H. in the run for the line. A win for Adriatic, boosting their standing in the team's category and elevating Tony to second in the individual classification, the second place by Peter Howard extending his, and Doherty/Eltham Cycles', lead in both classifications. Peter O'Callaghan's third

boosting Croydon Cycleworks/Pick-a-Part team to the same position (3<sup>rd</sup>) in the team's standings.

The officials on the line had time for a breather after adjudging the top three before the remainder of the race rounded the last bend to start the uphill run to the finish. A run that was led out by Boyd Friis (Celtic/TFM) but won by David Holt (Omara cycles), David pipping Boyd on the line.

### **b-grade**

No report.

### **c-grade** (Mal Jones)

Mad dogs and Englishmen? You can add cyclists to that duo after the appalling weather at Steels Creek on the weekend.

Sadly – or surprisingly, it was actually dry when riders started arriving at the car parking area, but ominous clouds gathered soon after, bringing with them drizzle at first, then during the course of racing some fairly solid rain.

However, there having been a dearth of racing opportunities over the past few weeks, the poor conditions didn't deter 20 riders turning up to face the starter in C Grade.

With the only notable absentee being the hard charging Dave Ryan (he's having to cool his heels with a hip injury for the moment), it was a full field that headed off on the first lap of three.

With so much water coming up off the road, the front of the bunch proved to be a popular place to loiter on the way out...

Even so, there was no real urgency and as a result the pace was quite sedate, which in turn meant that at the first turn D Grade wasn't all that far behind.

Heading back towards the finish line to complete the first lap was much the same, with only a few riders stretching their legs on the couple of small hills and grabbing a gap that was of no real concern to the rest.

It was very much ditto for the second lap, with the exception that the rain belted down on the way out. If you weren't wet by then, you were definitely soaked through and miserably cold afterwards – unless you were carrying a bit more padding!

The start of the third lap lightened the mood a bit when two of the big boys in the bunch – Darren Smith and Dean Niclasen showed their road blocking prowess and slowed the field down to almost a crawl up the first hill.

It wasn't until the downhill run that first one rider was able to squeeze past the two leaders from behind (and trust me, there wasn't a lot of road to do it in), then the others followed and the fun was over.

With the cold and miserable conditions beginning to bite, joints were stiffening up, noses were runny and the general mood was one of gloom – as many had thought the pin may have been pulled at the end of the second lap.

But no, the still mostly intact bunch pushed on, heading out to the turnaround point for the last time – still with D Grade in pursuit and still not too far behind.

On the return trip the pace went up another notch, certainly aided not by the long descent, but the lure of being able to get warm again.

With the road narrowing down towards the finish (does it really do that, or is it just the feeling when you have 20 riders all jockeying for position that makes it that way?), the real race started as the last of the inclines was hit.

Richard Dobson made a break and dash for glory up the hill, and was pursued by Marc Ramsdale and Mal Jones before deciding that he was way too far from home and it was back together again.

At this point, it's over to Peter Shanahan for his recollections of how the finish unfolded:

“The race had stayed together and it was a full field heading into the sprint, which started somewhere up the first incline. We'll call that the lead out train. The riders down the back had no chance of reaching the front - unless of course they tried - which they did!

“A few riders trying to open the sprint proper, early, and on the other (wrong) side of the road had to do a bit of retreating – as a lone car was still coming through.

“Once clear Dave McCormack went but it was still a little early and he tired before the line to be swamped by the bulk of the race.

“Jimmy Swainston, proving experience counts, won the day. A well built guy, putting out more watts than the rest of us, finished second (J Kearney) and big Dean Niclasen third.

“Behind Dean I just couldn't get the tread of my tyre past that of Ken Bone leaving me fifth at the line.

“I'm guessing all those keeping the pace up finished somewhere behind. D grade were actually gaining on us, all the same”.

### **d-grade** (Tim Mortensen)

A sunny Saturday morning soon turned wet in Melbourne, but no word of cancellations this week obviously convinced many that the weather must be better up at Yarra Glen. The drive out there didn't support this assumption and probably tempted many to turn back, the conditions at Steels Creek on arrival - wet and bleak. Clearing weather prompted a vote and the majority of the 74 voted to race, which seemed like a good idea at the time, that was until the rain started falling at 2pm, and didn't stop until the race was finished.

Considering the conditions, it was a good turnout of 15 lining up at the start for 3 laps of the 16km out and back course, including JC Wilson from e-grade, riding up for the day. Seeing Graeme Parker at the start deciding to stay warm and dry had a few in the bunch wondering what they were in for.

The bunch set out at a relatively easy pace for the first lap as legs were warmed up and riders reacquainted themselves with the, watery, Steels Creek course. The work at the front on the first lap shared between Andrew Buchanan, Cube Taylor, Tim Mortensen and Neil Cartledge. The pace picked up on the return leg but it was still all together after the first lap.

On the second lap Tim Mortensen decided to pick up the pace a bit and as a consequence spent most of the outward leg setting the pace until Andrew Buchanan and new rider Chris Taylor joined in. On the return leg Chris Taylor showed his strength and opened up a handy break and seemed to be riding away easily from the bunch. Sensing possible danger Tim Mortensen joined him shortly afterwards, the two managing to hold off the chasing bunch to the turn to complete the second lap.

The resulting chase taking its toll as a number in the bunch became unhitched. Confusion at the turn, with a missing cone, allowed the bunch to close much of the gap. Unsure if they had a legitimate break at the turn, and whether they could hold the break for another lap prompted Chris and Tim to sit up and wait for the bunch. So it was back together for the third and final lap.

After a breather the pace was once again set by Tim Mortensen for much of the outward leg, before being joined by Chris and Cube Taylor. The trio opening a small break late in the leg but this was quickly closed by the bunch coming in to the final turn to home.

Andrew Buchanan took the lead early on the return, just as the heavens opened up and the rain really started coming down.

Rapidly freezing legs and mud in the eyes made the front look like the best place to be as the lead changed a number of times over the final leg.

Obviously wanting to warm up Chris Taylor jumped with about 2-3 km to go, followed closely by Tim Mortensen, the pair opening up a small gap, the bunch spread out in a line scrambling to close. Coming up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> to last hill before the finish Chris's legs tired and Tim Mortensen led off from the front, followed by Andrew Buchanan, Cube Taylor and Gary LeRoy. Unfortunately for Andrew, a front wheel puncture on the final hill ended his race and he was left to ponder what might have been.

On the final sprint Tim Mortensen led from Cube Taylor but their tiring legs allowed Gary LeRoy to sail past for victory, Tim Mortensen finishing a length behind in second and Cube Taylor in third. Newcomer Chris Taylor recovered well to chase down the 5th-placed rider on the line (apologies, didn't get name) to finish 4th in a very good performance, despite riding most of the race with a broken spoke and buckled rear wheel.

Despite the wet and freezing conditions, there were no incidents and a good safe race was enjoyed by all.

### **e-grade**

No race.

### **f-grade**

No race

## **Results**

	<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Third</b>
<b>Teams (24)</b>	Tony Chandler (Adriatic Furniture)	Peter Howard (Doherty/Eltham Cycles)	Peter O'Callaghan (Croydon Cycleworks/Pick-a-Part)
<b>b-grade (14)</b>	Warren Smith (NVCA)	R. Harvey	Ron McCurdy
<b>c-grade (20)</b>	Jim Swainston	J. Kearney	Dean Niclasen
<b>d-grade (16)</b>	Gary LeRoy,	Tim Mortensen	Cube Taylor
<b>e-grade (0)</b>	no race		
<b>f-grade (0)</b>	no race		

## **Officials**

Thanks to Graeme Parker and Ron Stranks on the desk taking entries. And thanks to the helpers on Saturday; led by John Thomas the following endured the conditions to enable us to race; Frank Carroll, Dean Jones, Philip Johns, Daryl Jowett, Chris Norbury, Ben Muller, Graham Cadd, Mathew Cornford and Keith Bowen. 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 David Ryan who was on hand with ice cold 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	July	3	2:00pm	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races & Teams Points Race
Saturday	July	10	2:00pm	METEC	Graded Scratch Races
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1:00pm</b>	<b>Yarra Junction #</b>	<b>Rob Graham Memorial Time Trial #</b>
Saturday	July	24	2:00pm	Arthurs Creek #	Graded Scratch Races #
<b>Monday</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>7:30pm</b>	<b>Maroondah Club</b>	<b>General Meeting</b>
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.

# Tail lights are a requirement for all EVCC Road events in the winter season

### Northern Vets Program

Sunday	July	4	9:30am	National Boulevard	Graded Scratch races
Sunday	July	11	10:00am	Pyalong Road, Seymour	Eagle Handicap (52k)
Sunday	July	18	9:30am	Yellow Box Drv, Somerton	Graded Scratch races
Sunday	July	25	10:00am	East Trentham	Pig & Whistle handicap (44k)

### Gippsland Vets Program

Sunday	July	4	10:00am	Kernot	Graded Scratch Race
Sunday	July	11	10:00am	Kernot	Graded Scratch Race
Sunday	July	18	10:00am	Kernot	Graded Scratch Race

### Victorian Veterans Cycling Council Program

Sunday	July	4	10:00am	Benalla	George Goodwin handicap	closed
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1:00pm</b>	<b>Yarra Junction</b>	<b>Rob Graham TT</b>	<b>7/7 - \$20</b>

**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
12/9/2010	Whittlesea	Degani Kinglake Ride - <a href="http://www.supersprint.com.au/events/degani-kinglake-ride-2010.aspx">http://www.supersprint.com.au/events/degani-kinglake-ride-2010.aspx</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>

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