



Eastern veterans cycling club

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Respecting the Rights of all Road Users

Newsletter November 27th 2010

O'Mara 100 - Yarra Junction - November 20th

Race report

Full fields in the top three grades are testament to the standing of this event on our calendar, near perfect weather didn't do any harm either. A total turnout of 89 competitors and a dozen marshals and traffic control meant over a hundred EVCC members descended upon the Yarra Junction Primary School. The top three grades, making up 75% of the field, scheduled to do the hundred kilometres. D and E grades doing the big loop for a 70k race while the small f-grade group raced out to Powelltown and back.

a- grade (Nigel Kimber)

Looking at the start list the words of Billy Joel came to mind - "Man what am I doin' here?". A very strong field of twenty-four. The answer was not in Dylan but with Roy Orbison - "Working for the man", with little chance I put my hand up for duties domestique - do what I can to assist Justin and Jason.

The excitement started before the racing, a blowout in the marshalling area had Peter Knight scrambling for a spare wheel, kindly donated by Tony Chandler, then the roll out to the start revealed a slow leak in Jason Theobald's front tyre. Was this the start of my domestique duties? Was I supposed to give up a wheel? Nup, he could still ride it and the team car should have arrived at the school by the time we complete the small Yarra Junction - Powelltown - Yarra Junction lap.

Away we go, make a couple of attempts to get the foot cleated in - that's it, let the others roll through and join at the back. Nobody's going to be ~~dumb~~ brave enough to go from the get go so we can sit back and assess the field as the fields roll by.

A kilometre in and there's a rider off the front, I'm too far back to make out who it might be and what is he thinking anyway, doesn't he know there's 99k to go. Squinting the eyes I can make out a white and green kit - no it's not Tony Chandler, it's a Celtic uniform. By deduction it is Boyd Friis, all his buddies are in the bunch. Nobody's keen to bring him back nor to join him despite his continual inviting, over the shoulder, glances. But better make moves to get a bit closer to the front, just in case.

Gladysdale; nothing glad about Gladysdale (for a cyclist - ed.), a decent drop past the school on a road that requires you to keep pedaling or you'll fall off. Not looking forward to the return up here. Maintain fifth or sixth wheel, let others do the work but be ready. A couple of surges on the way out to

Powelltown but nothing serious and with interested parties in the chase I can let others do the chasing. Legs are warming up but my right foot is burning, ten kilometres in, this is not good, going to be a long painful ride.

An orderly turn (sort of) and, as is my wont I drift to the back, ensure Jason is still ok, well, that's my excuse, and it's all aboard and racing. Out of Powelltown it's line astern as somebody kicks it up, a glance down and that's 55 on the Flight Deck™. Squirrel that bit of intel away for the final return. Next time I get the teeth out of the bar tape and have a look up there's a couple away - three to be precise. Again I have to advance my position to see who they are; two Adriatic and an O'Mara kit (Tony Chandler, James Steward and Jason) - time don the apron.

Boyd tries to bridge, I'm on to that, Trevor Coulter comes up and lends a hand. Don't look to me guys, love your work. That worked and the chase is back together, a couple more come to the front, let them in, sit fifth/sixth wheel let 'em roll in front of me. The status quo maintained for the mid third of the return, the three ahead going like "cut cats" whilst the load was shared in the chase.

The blue and orange of Peter Howard and Guy Green come by, it's about to get serious and serious turns by Peter then Guy shrinks the gap to the leaders considerably then as Peter takes over Guy relaxes. Didn't see that coming¹ - back to work. Jump to Peter's wheel but the bunch can smell christian sweat and the leaders can read the writing, together again. A more sensible pace up through Gladysdale and toward Yarra Junction to start the big lap. A late surge by Peter Knight sees a gap that would be considered exempt from neutrality at the turn but a steady as she goes approach and it's all together at the turn.

Undoubtedly to the relief of Jason Jae's there with a front wheel, a quick change and some assistance, leave that to Justin I'll keep an eye on proceedings at the front. And the full compliment heads back to the dead roads of Gladysdale and beyond.

What to do? Traditionally I try to start something at the little rising right-hand sweeper before the drop into the left-hand bend and up into the wooded section. But, feeling the legs, and looking around, nup, not gunna happen. Content to hold sixth or seventh wheel through here and wait. Didn't have to wait long, Phil Smith is off into the shadows of the woods - he quickly forges a credible gap and this could be the race. Phil, a renowned time trialist and perennial hill climb champion, even with seventy kilometres to go, could prove a tough rebet to chase down.

Boyd obviously fancies Phil's chances and starts building the bridge. That's Tony and James Steward (Adriatic) out of the chase along with Frank Donnelly and Mick Day (Celtic). Again it's time to frock up, give Justin and Jason cover and try to work the Doherty's and Coonara boys over a bit. Picking up Boyd on the way across it's three away with a healthy gap.

Phil seems reluctant to let us do a turn, maybe we're slowing him down - suits me. A couple of kilometres down the road and Trevor Coulter announces his arrival with a sarcastic "Thanks for waiting mate" (with extra dripping on the 'maaayte'). Now a foursome with clear bitumen back to the chase, a chase now sans the Coonara compliment.

Flying low to the horizon, under the radar and out of the setting sun squadron leader Smithy led his small group on to Powelltown. Well that must have been the way it was because despite eye-balling the driver of the green commodore he still drove out right in front of us. Ah, there's nothing like the smell of burning rubber and the cries of "Oi, what the?!" as we all grab fists-full of brake in an effort to avoid the inevitable - which fortunately didn't happen and so wasn't all that inevitable after all. But it was enough to scrub some rubber from the tyres, momentum from our impetus and seconds from our advantage.

Through Powelltown the chase was notably closer and as the road started up out of Boys Camp Creek the legs said "enough, it's over, wait and fight later in the day". They were lying. As Phil rode away, dragging Trevor in his wake, the bunch quickly reached me and then, just as quickly, left me behind. No response from the legs. As I watched the stretched out field disappear up and around the bends I find my place toward the back of the field, with Anthony Gullace for company. Boyd has disappeared somewhere and I think there's only Phil Cavaleri behind, maybe one other but who's counting - I certainly wasn't.

What a difference a year makes, last year I led the field up this hill, twelve months later I'm considering turning before getting to the top. I was feeling alright on the run into Powelltown, then ... poof.

With Anthony for company and encouragement we find a tempo and continue climbing. As we climb wheels come back towards us, there's Rob Amos and another just ahead, a couple more a bit further up the road. Half a klick from the top, Rob's alone and within our sights, ease past him, pick him up, he'll be very useful on the other side. We watch those ahead disappear over the bump and out of sight.

That was the way it goes for the next ten or so kilometres.

Rob taking control once over the crest and setting a pace that eventually proved too much for Anthony, leaving the pair of us to continue the chase. The small group ahead coming into view each time they hit a rise then disappearing over the top so that by the time we got there they were long gone, nothing but clear road till the next little rise and there they'd be, making their way to the crest before disappearing again. Finally juncture and we were six; Trevor Coulter, Dave Holt, Frank Nyhuis, Jason Theobald, Rob and me.

(Trevor had crested the bump alone just behind Justin Davis and ahead of Dave, Frank and Jason. Justin waited and offered Trevor a wheel, the pair racing down the hill in pursuit of the lead group which was coming together after their disjointed ascent.

A stretched out line of half-a-dozen crested the hill first, Mick Day attacking the remnants of the bunch a hundred metres afore the top to start the descent a couple of seconds clear, Peter Knight in tow. The pair, deciding it pointless to flog themselves for a couple seconds advantage, sat up and waited. A bunch of six coalescing (Mick, Peter, Michael Hay, Shane Stiles, James Steward and Simon Welsh) and starting to roll turns to hold any pursuit at bay. The pursuit being made up of Guy Green, Peter Howard, Tony Chandler, Frank Donnelly and Phil Smith and behind them Justin and Trevor

Trevor was unable to hold Justin's wheel had to let it go. Justin eventually catching those ahead who in turn caught those ahead. Trevor being caught by David Holt, Frank and Jason.

Heading to the far turn it was a group of twelve leading the race followed by a group of six with Anthony, Phil Cav, David Anderson and Boyd Friis bringing up the rear).

With some seriously stuffed legs in the sextet it was a haphazard swapping of turns to the far turnaround; Rob Amos, Frank Nyhuis and Jason doing the big turns, David doing his share. Soon after the coming together the first of the returning riders were spotted - hopefully the marshals had got the location of the turnaround wrong, by a long way. It was way too early to be seeing the leaders coming back. Then it dawned through the fatigue, these were the d-grade riders who'd not done the initial small loop but gone directly to the far turnaround.

More of the returning lower grade riders, then the Noojee-Powelltown road junction came and went - not far to go. Through the trees - cleared land, the turn just ahead, then the returning lead bunch - about a dozen strong. Voices of optimism in the chase, "They're not that far ahead", "We can catch them" I didn't want to disillusion them, my legs weren't going to go any faster.

Not a bad race. At the far turnaround a bunch of twelve followed, around 45 seconds later, by a group of six then another three equidistant back.

Holding it together for much of the return the chase tried but didn't catch a glimpse of those ahead. A couple of kilometres short of the Ada Tree turnoff a lower grade rider, an incline, riders coming out of the saddle, fatigue and my front wheel is heading straight for Trevor's back wheel - this is going to end in tears. Don't know how I avoided the bitumen but an un-cleated foot and a sojourn into the dirt and the gap was too great - my race was ridden. Fortunately David Holt missed my erratic course and closed the gap to the others leaving me to not get caught by those behind.

A long, slow, solitary slog back up to the bump interrupted only by the occasional lower grade rider making the same journey in their own private hell. A few words of encouragement, of acknowledgement, shared before moving on and reengaging the battle with the mind. There was really no point, you had to get

back, there's no choice, there's no sag wagon, there's no easy ride home.

Over the bump, relief at last, for a bit. At least I'm still ahead of those behind. Use the descent for practice, concentrate, weight on the outside leg and the inside hand. The first tricky corner, sit up, through, could have done that better, concentrate, practice. Made it to the bottom without having pushed it but having negotiated most corners well. Now it's back to the grind, have to pedal to cover the next 14-15k.

Pub looks inviting, I think there's \$10 in with my tubes, definitely ten euro in there. Nup, let's get this over with. Remembering the 55kph return on the short lap it shouldn't be too difficult, there should be a tail wind home, so why am I pushing into a head wind through Powelltown?

Both feet are burning now, the legs threatening to cramp. The occasional sight of lower grade riders ahead providing incentive to push on. Brain Farrell then Ronnie, they're making a race of it. Through Gladysdale, ride the parking bays outside the school - 35 metres of dead road avoided. Out of town there's Guy Green, get outa here, pull along side and chew the fat, the race has been won by now, a puncture Guy's demise. Ronnie goes by, then Brian, they're making a race of it - good luck to them both. Then it's Trevor (???) and David Anderson.

(Back before the bump the small chase group shrank further, first Trevor cramped and had to stop to relieve it. Jason was the next to depart when Frank pushed for the top, Rob getting gapped also but rejoining early on the descent (no surprises there). The small group ultimately regrouping after Powelltown, sans Trevor and picking up a couple of riders dropped from the front runners.

Trevor descended alone and stopped again in Powelltown to fill a water bottle, having to find a tap then run the rusty water out of it first allowed David Anderson to catch up couple of kilometres out of Powelltown, the pair riding back together.

The return to the top doing damage to the lead group also; Phil Smith, trying again to use his climbing prowess, attacked the group, stretching it out. Mick Day again driving the chase with Peter, Shane, James, Guy and Michael Hay all in tow. The leaders trailed across the top by Simon and Justin with Tony cresting a bit further back, the remainder further back still. Phil was caught on the descent and left behind, Tony picking him up before the bottom, the pair having the leaders in sight as they rolled into Powelltown but Mick Hay and Shane Stiles were off the front and the half-dozen were racing. Justin Davis was between the groups and again buried himself to again regain the shelter of bunch for the run home.

All the way back, as soon as somebody could muster the energy, there were attacks, one move putting Mick Hay off the back with Guy Green for company and with Peter in the break Guy was happy to sit on till Mick was done then bridged back to the leaders. As the race entered its final stages a bit of cat and mouse allowed Mick back on as the bunch rode through Gladysdale. A puncture to Guy permanently reduced the bunch by one. Next it was cramp to Peter Howard, the lead bunch down to six.

Mick Day started the sprint, early, too early, fatigue, sweat, desire to get it over all contributing to an error of judgment. James Steward enjoying the perfect sit only to find himself out on his own a long way from the line eventually swamped by a very strong Shane Stiles and a desperately chasing Justin Davis. Shane staying ahead of Justin settled the top two places with James holding on for third ahead of Michael Hay and Mick Day. Simon Welsh rolling across in sixth.

Then the rest, Peter Howard, Tony, Phil Smith, Frank, Rob, Jason, Trevor, David, Guy, Nigel, Phil Cavaleri ...)

¹ For those who don't know me - that was sarcasm.

b-grade (Nigel Frayne & Nick Tapp)

Big bunch rolls out on my wheel for the first kilometre and I have to check myself when I'm told there's a gap of some 20 metres behind. Just a bit early for a break I'd say! A little later Ian Smith stretches his legs and jumps away for a few kilometres but is reeled back. The remainder of the first short lap is relatively uneventful and so we make it back to the start in formation before turning and heading for the hills. I gradually drift back to the caboose to put in place my plan A - 'attack, make a gap and a head start on the hill'. Rob Harris has the same idea and puts in some more efforts, one of which is strong and it takes bit of 'colonel-like' barking of orders by Damian Burke to keep it in check. I try to bridge with a few others like Thorkild but we're all chased down. Finally as we approach Powelltown I put in one last solo effort before the base of the hill arrives. Nup doesn't work. We hit the climb grupetto so now it's down to plan B - survive.

There's no sudden rush. It's just a slow and painful twisting of the knife as the selection is made. A group of about 8 climb off into the distance leaving the rest strung out behind. I'm in close proximity to three others - Owen Anstey and Tim Crowe or Rudi Botha? and Rob Harris cursing the hills not far behind. We're grinding our way up and I'm watching crazy numbers on the HRM, finally cresting the hill with a plan to stick together and form a chase. Rob Harris is coming from behind and we sit up to wait. He's a powerful rouleur for the upcoming chase. He arrives and blasts past the group - what the? We scramble onto his wheel and eventually things calm down into a very handy rolling of turns. Some time later Ian Smith arrives at pace together with Martin Stalder and a couple of others.

So now we're a powerful bunch of 8 or 9 and after a while, up in the distance, we see our prey. Eventually we hit the turn around and they don't have a big gap now. We get back into our rolling routine and work until they are probably no more than 100 metres ahead. However, the return hills are also arriving and, since they are the climbers, they're going to pull away again. And so it comes to pass. However their pace must be too hot and we start picking up the ones who can't hang on. Deb Chambers and Clem from Gippsland ...

By the time we reach the top of the climb we are also breaking apart with the climbers like Deb pulling away again. The descent is messy with some obviously more comfortable than others. On one of the sharp right handers I suddenly discover I have a closing speed of about 30kph on a slower rider and, with no time

to brake, have to yell and swing around the outside to overtake. No problems, luckily, and we continue to blast down to Powelltown. Alas, for me, a group of about 6 riders has beaten me to the bottom and have reformed and are already pulling away. It takes me over a kilometre of hard chasing to scramble back on and once there I have to sit on the back gasping to recover.

Eventually I can manage a turn or two but it seems the real pace has been swallowed up by the pain and suffering of 80km in the collective legs. No way we can reel those leaders back in at this pace. But we push on, passing Quentin with his bike upturned fixing a flat - bummer. On and on we roll encouraging each other to flog our horses mercilessly. When we reach the rises at Gladysdale I'm pretty much done and slip off the back with Ian Smith for a more genteel finish. Up ahead the chasers push on but they are well over a minute behind the leaders who, down to 5 in number, have by now finished their sprint.

I've no idea how the placings in our chase group panned out but up ahead the two erstwhile a-graders, Jeff Thompson and Damian Burke have taken 1st and 2nd. Thorkild has a good ride for 3rd, Kev Turley 4th and 'our' Nick 5th place. Great job by those guys. Eventually I roll over the line after 2hr 59min of pretty intense racing. The HR stats tell the story:
Stats: 101.00k in 2:59:37, avg 33.7kph max: 71.2kph
HR: avg: 164bpm, max: 186bpm (true!)

It's a superb day for the Omara 100 on Saturday. I know I'm a bit underdone. My previous race, three weeks earlier, ended after just 30km in a clattering slide across a wet road. But rumours of my demise have evidently gone slightly awry – just a few ks into the race, I roll up beside Martin Stalder, who asks a few questions about my injuries, seems surprised to see me on the bike. I start to understand why when he asks me, 'So you didn't break your pelvis?' No, not I – thank the stars! A case of mistaken identity, I think.

Nigel Frayne is clearly keen for the fun to begin and leads off from the start with Clem Fries in tow in the day's first escape. Both eventually see the error of their ways and we all come together again. Ian Smith also goes up the road early, and is duly brought back, but any plans for a conservative first lap go out the window when Rob Harris gets enthusiastic. He is chased down too, more than once, but Rob goes hard when he goes, and bringing him back costs some effort.

We're all together as we head out on the long lap, and the horses are frisky. Nigel bolts, looking for a head start up the hill, but there's nothing doing, and I think it's Rob who gets to the bottom first. I've been up among the workers and chasers pretty much all the way – lately I find it helps to settle the nerves – but I know now is the moment for us skinny guys to try to shape the race. Soon I'm at the front, with honorary skinny guy Thorkild, setting an exploratory tempo for now. Then Bayside Bandido número 35 (Richard Harvey) decides to shake things up. This is OK. I go with him and we establish a little gap, swap a couple of turns on the front, then we have company again. Richard lifts again, and this time I watch him go and stick to my own rhythm. Thorkild is there, and Phil

Pelgrim and Deb Chambers, both climbing smoothly. I can only guess who else – but definitely not so many now.

Richard goes across the top with 30 metres on us, and as we follow him through the cutting we crank it up and form into a chase group. Damian Burke is there, also Kevin Turley and Jeff Thomson. Quentin Frayne, Phil and Deb, Clem Fries, Thorkild and me. Swapping turns down the valley with the wind swirling around, we make little impression at first on Richard's lead. It goes out a bit, then gradually starts to come back. Quentin says, 'I don't know who he is, but I'm glad he's out there on his own.' Clem is of like mind: 'He's conserving energy, just like us. Let's leave him out there a bit longer.'

We turn for home only 40 metres in arrears and confident of closing the gap, but not sure what Richard has left in the legs after his extended escape. 'Not much', seems to be the answer, and Richard is only with us for a short time before he is gone again – out the back this time. Others fall by the wayside as we work to stay away from our own pursuers – maybe we conserved too much energy there, and they're not far behind. Deb drops a chain, but those at the front of the group push on unawares. Several loud yelps announce the end of Phil, with cramp ("when I suffered terminal cramp and pulled over, or more accurately, fell over! Thanks to the Harley rider and passenger who helped out but probably initially thought I'd been shot!" – P.P.). As we roll turns, Kevin and Damian look strong, but it's always Jeff who flies furthest off the front as he comes around. The undulations finally coalesce into a hill, and Thorkild goes for the whip. He evidently thinks he can give us the slip and starts to build a gap, but there's no panic in the reaction. Kevin is setting the pace, then I am. Clem is there for a while – and then he's gone off the back, too. Thorkild is back amongst us as we go through the cutting, and Jeff comes through to pace the descent. We must have lost Quentin to a cruel puncture by now, or he'd have been taking a beeline through the corners and giving us all a lesson in descending.

We hit the bottom as a group of five. Now we have to get back without giving those in pursuit a sniff at the placings, so the work rate doesn't let up. Jeff looks the clear danger man and Kevin still looks strong, Damian and Thorkild seem to be doing OK, and I'm hanging in there. Gladysdale passes and there's the first hint of shaking out for the finish. Kevin performs some stretches on the bike, Damian tightens his shoes. There's no relaxing for me, but the slight easing does mean I don't have to dig so deep to stay with the group. Jeff, who has been hectoring us all day to work harder, sees me struggling and grunts, 'Come on, matey'. The end comes in sight around the bend, we're over the first little hump, and then Damian and Jeff are off, duking it out for the win. Thorkild tries, but is left stranded and takes 3rd. Kevin has nothing left, and I have even less. Now that's what I call a race. My average 34.1 km/h for 100.64 km.

c-grade (Tim Mortensen)

Perfect conditions greeted the twenty-one c-graders who turned up for a crack at over 100km of racing; sunny and warm at 26°C with little wind. The bunch at the start was a good mix of climbers and sprinters, the short odds on climbers such as Bruce Hawker and Marc Ramsdale. With the prospect of a long, hot and hilly race, the most likely scenario was that the race would be in two parts; before and after the hill.

That is pretty much how it turned out.

Race part 1; before the hill.

Out to Powelltown and back at a fairly sedate pace, with the pace making shared by around half a dozen riders. There were a few efforts made to get an early break, Dave Worland having a few attempts, but with Marc Ramsdale patrolling near the front any breaks were quickly chased down. Things were calmer at the back of the bunch, with plenty of chatting and a chance to have a look around at the other riders. 'That guy in the black and white Macquarie gear looks like a climber, I'd put me money on him, just sitting mid field. Not chasing or attacking, just waiting for the hill then a 50k time trial to the finish!' (a natural break before the hill putting an end to that). Coming up to the Yarra Junction turnaround Marc Ramsdale attacked, getting a small break, but not enough to consider going on with. So it was all together to get the bell, with uplifting comments from the marshals such as "Only 70km to go fellas".

Things started to get a little more serious on the way back out to the hill, with Bruce Hawker displaying his climbing ability, riding off the front every time the road went upwards. Too dangerous to let go, the bunch, led by Tim Mortensen, responded each time to bring him back.

Race part 2; the hill.

Within a kilometre the bunch had split up into multiple groups. The lead group initially containing seven riders: Bruce Hawker, Marc Ramsdale, Chris Ellenby, Richard Dobson, Tim Mortensen, Ben DeJong and Nick Thompson. However the pace set by Bruce soon saw Nick dropping off the back. About a kilometre from the top Chris slipped away also followed soon after by Tim, so a group of four led over the top. Chris and Tim joined up on the descent and worked hard together to try and catch the lead bunch. Further back the rest of the bunch was split into groups of two or more trying to join up and get a big enough bunch to chase. Tim and Chris caught the lead group a few kilometres after the climb, the expanded group now rolling turns to ensure the stragglers did not catch up. A few hundred meters behind Nick Thompson and Malcolm Hayse worked hard in an effort to catch the lead group by the final turnaround, but two chasing six was never going to happen.

The lead bunch continued to roll turns after the turn around, content to stay together until the return climb. Shortly before the climb, Chris Ellenby made a small attack, but was kept a hundred or so meters off the front for a while before being brought back before the start of the return climb to the top. Once on the hill, Bruce Hawker and Marc Ramsdale took off followed by Richard Dobson and they were quickly out of sight. Ben DeJong wound up to chase but appeared to have a mechanical, pulling over and stopping. It was now two away, with Richard chasing, further back to Chris, then back to Tim.

Tim and Chris again linking up at the top and working hard to catch Richard, but he was not an easy one to catch. Despite only being about 200m ahead at Powelltown, it took about 8km to catch him. Now it was three chasing two, and the

leaders were being slowly but surely drawn in. However, Tim, suffering from dehydration and cramps (a week of gastro not the best preparation) found the chase too much and dropped off with about 6km to go. Chris and Richard caught Marc and Bruce shortly afterwards and the pace dropped off, enough that Tim was able to catch up at Gladysdale.

With no danger of being caught, the lead group rolled fairly easily towards the finish. Coming up to the final corner before the finishing straight Marc Ramsdale attacked, followed closely by Chris and Richard. Marc too strong taking a very good win followed closely by Chris and Richard. The heat, dehydration and cramps taking their toll on Tim and Bruce, neither in any condition to sprint by now. Tim crossing in 4th followed by Bruce a few meters back in 5th.

Comments from Peter Shanahan:

Totally stuffed. A fall at Tanjil bren on the Sunday prior not helping my preparation for the race. The incline; I try and pretend to keep on the wheel of the lead group. Ok limit the loses and crest the hill with as many guys as possible. A couple of guys just ahead and two more just in arrears. My experience of sliding down a wet bitumen road on Sunday cancelling any heroics on the descent. I opt for some company from behind.. But where's Harold Simpson? I was hoping for a bigger group, perhaps the two of us can bridge the gap to the riders in front. No chance, we did get closer on the ups, but then they would disappear and be further away on the next up. Harold finally joining us, in behind two locomotives in Ian Milner and Dean Niclasen, a few kilometres from the turn. The lead group of approximately 6 riders were a good kilometre and a bit in front. A couple of riders in view at the turn. We pick up another straggler. Soon after the turn we lose the two engines of our train. Back to auxiliary power. The four of us getting a rotation happening only to be interrupted by the odd hill. I said good bye just before the Ada Tree turn off. (24k down a gravel road to see a tree ?) no not today. Try to keep contact with the last of the group, but no I'm out of gas. Limp home to be joined, again, by Ian Milner a few kilometres from finish.

d-grade (Dave Ryan)

At last the much anticipated day had arrived for the "Omara Eastern 100", or, in our case, the "Omara Eastern 72"

All the training (at least once up the 1 in 20), dieting - so as to make the hills less steep, the carb loading - for the needed energy and bike preparation, was going to be put to good test.

Thirteen yellow hats lined up in the warm sunshine, nervous energy barely held in check awaiting the starters leisure. Twelve of the thirteen reckoned that Louise McKimmie was going to be the one to watch out for, and chase if possible up the hills.

"Don't worry" some oracle announced "She cannot descend quickly". "We can catch her on the down hill" HA! Said oracle later proven to be incorrect!

All got away safely, no incident. All were mindful of the long, mountainous ride ahead. Everyone enjoying the easy "warm up" pace on the way out to Powelltown. Turns taken, jokes made conversations shared. At the beginning of the hill, just after

Powelltown, all of the Tom-foolery abruptly stopped! No more fun to be had here!

The group stretched out as the climbers found their "pace". Louise, as expected out front, Sam Bruzzese, Paul Kelly, Peter Mackie and David Ryan settling down for the climb and sharing the front, well, sort of! Louise was away.

Peter Mackie stretching out showing excellent form, upped the pace, but was being mindful of overdoing things too early. The real chase came from Paul Kelly at about halfway up the outbound climb. Louise was getting further and further away, pushing HUGE gears and showing no signs of stress at all! Paul was chasing in earnest, the rest content to play the wait and see game.

Over the top and down the other side, at last. Louise was nowhere in sight at all. Paul barely in sight and chasing her with vengeance. About 200 - 300 meters behind, Peter Mackie was leading a solid charge to catch up, Sam Bruzzese, Franc Tomsic and David Ryan trying to stay on his wheel. The rest, led by Laurie Baigent getting down to business making the most of the down hill to get back on. This they did in about 5k or so. Peter Mackie was strongly chasing down the lead pair. Paul had almost caught Louise! Peter was now powering along and had dropped the rest of the group. He was a man on a mission. Pete soon realized that to catch the leaders, a team effort was needed! Also Louise could indeed descend! All worked hard now to play catch up. JC Wilson dropped along the way, along with Franc. It wasn't till the turnaround at Piedmont that Louise and Paul were reined in.

Around the turn saw everyone slow to a social ride pace Thank goodness! A nice orderly bunch, but Louise was sneaking up to the front again. David Ryan sat on her wheel like glue for a few kilometres before turning around to see how the group was going. Alas nobody in sight! They had snuck away. The breakaway pair worked smoothly together for 10 kilometres or so, until that is, the bottom of the return hill. At this point Louise just vanished (note to self "Louise doesn't slow down for mountains!")

No point blowing up trying to chase her up the hill. Maintain form, pace, heart rate, breathing and just get there. Dave Ryan climbed and descended alone, Louise nowhere to be seen. Into Powelltown and the long 15k grind into the wind. David just waiting to be swallowed up by the main bunch, kept glancing behind. Hoping it wouldn't be long before he could get out of the headwind. At the start of one of the longer straights a glimpse of Louise was seen. She was still about 300 meters! Too far!

Another glance behind saw a yellow hat following. Closing slowly but surely was big Laurie Baigent, also on his own, battling the headwind. Laurie and Dave now riding together managed to keep up a reasonable pace and kept away from the rest of the bunch. They could however do nothing at all in catching Louise. Laurie's calves now cramping, Dave wishing that it was over! They struggled on to the finish. Louise finished way in front by some 300 meters plus. Laurie and Dave working together until the end. At the final 50 meter mark, Dave Ryan stood up to sprint for the line. Everything cramped up, but still managed to cross in second place with

Laurie in third. fourth place went to John Thomson and fifth was awarded to Sam Bruzzese.

e-grade

Under instruction from the coach Brian Farrell was primed to ride a fast race. No surprises on the run out to Powelltown, everybody aware they were going to need everything for the ascent, a steady tempo seeing the miles disappear under the wheels at a reasonable rate without blowing any gaskets.

On to the lower slopes of the bump and the testing began, Brian Farrell taking advantage of compact cranks maintaining a steady cadence in the mid-eighties and putting the hurt into everyone's legs. One by one the contenders dropped away till it was just Brian and Ronnie Stranks. An increase in effort by Brian did no good, Ronnie holding on to the top. The pair cresting with a clear advantage to the next rider on the road.

Over the top Ronnie found the biggest gear possible and barrelled down the slope while Brian followed a little more tentatively (still getting used to carbon wheels and cork brakes – ed.). Once the road stopped going down Brian caught Ron just before Charles Lethbridge caught the pair of them making a good working group of three.

After the turn it was clear this three had the race in their grasp so Ron set about trying to make it his own. A few attacks on the rises back to the start of the final pinch to the top all coming to naught as the other two reacted and retained their place in the little troop. The effort, though, taking its toll on Charles and as the road headed up for the last time, past the Ada Tree turn off, he bade the other two farewell to solo the last twenty-odd kilometres home for third. Inspired Ron tried again to shed his elongated shadow in Brian Farrell but to no avail, Brian having none of it and the pair starting the drop back down to Powelltown together.

It wasn't long before Ron was clear of Brian, a lower centre of gravity giving Ron an advantage on the fast descent. Ron crossing the Boys Camp Creek well ahead of his pursuers. The others further back still. A fast descent by Charles meant Brian had company at the bottom of the hill, the pair setting off in serious pursuit of Ron. Unfortunately Charles wasn't up to it and again it was a scattered field as it raced back to the finish.

With Ronnie in sight Brian was able to gauge the gap and slowly work his way back up to him, all but closing the gap by the time the pair struggled up the dead road through Gladysdale. Brian sitting just off the back, wise enough to know that if Ronnie so much as got a sniff of a slipstream he'd be impossible to beat. Waiting, waiting, waiting Brian waited to the last 200m before closing the final gap and riding straight past with momentum. A well executed plan that meant the Farrells ate well that night, Ronnie relegated to second, Charles coming in minutes later ahead of the lonely figures of Laurie Bohn and Richard Maggs.

f-grade

No sign of Alison Barnard at the start meant it was a sociable group of three that set out for the f-grade race; Catrin Harris. Rod Goodes and Peter Gray rolling out to Powelltown in near perfect conditions. The race slinking along as Catrin would lose a little

ground on some of the bumps but then rejoin the guys once the road levelled out.

A couple of kilometres short of Powelltown the three became four as Alison caught up and joined the party, but having arrived late and being unregistered was not in the race. The four rolled into Powelltown and round the turn where the contestants let Alison ride off before continuing their own

race. A race that involved a bit of testing on some of the bumps but that stayed together to the last hundred metres where Peter took off, Rod chased him while Catrin let the pair battle it out. Peter having enough left crossed the line first, Rod seconds behind in second while Catrin cruised home third.

Results

| | First | Second | Third | Fourth | Fifth |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|
| a-grade (22) | Shane Stiles | Justin Davis | James Steward | Michael Hay | Mick Day |
| b-grade (21) | Geoff Thompson | Damian Burke | Thorkild Muurholm | Kevin Turley | Nick Tapp |
| c-grade (21) | Marc Ramsdale | Chris Ellenby | Richard Dobson | Tim Mortensen | Bruce Hawker |
| d-grade (13) | Louise McKimmie | Dave Ryan | Laurie Baigent | John Thomson | Sam Bruzzese |
| e-grade (9) | Brian Farrell | Ron Stranks | Charles Lethbridge | Laurie Bohn | Richard Maggs |
| f-grade (4) | Peter Gray | Rod Goodes | Catrin Harris | | |

Officials

Thanks to Peter Mackie and Ron Stranks on the desk taking entries. Thanks to the helpers on the day, led by Greg Lipple and Hylton Preece they were; Murray Howlett, Ian Jolly, Matt White, Steve Short, Ian Jones, Frank Carroll, Peter Webb, Robin Condie, Jake Jodlowski, Gerald Donnelly, Tony Curulli, Adam Dymond, Wayne Doherty and Andrew Neilsen. 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 for bringing the trailer along and to David Ryan who was on hand again with cold drinks and Ian Smith for organising the food.

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.

Aggregate Results

| | Rider | Grade | Points |
|-----------|----------------|-------|--------|
| 1 | John C Wilson | D | 59 |
| 2 | David Ryan | C | 57 |
| 3 | Ron Stranks | E | 52 |
| 4 | Dean Niclasen | C | 51 |
| 5 | Guy Green | A | 49 |
| | Martin Stalder | B | 49 |
| 7 | Rob Amos | A | 45 |
| | Jim Swainston | B | 45 |
| 9 | Chris Ellenby | C | 44 |
| 10 | Richard Dobson | C | 40 |

Mid week

| | Rider | Grade | Points |
|----------|---------------|-------|--------|
| 1 | Mark Granland | D | 42 |
| 2 | David Holt | A | 32 |
| | John Thomson | D | |
| 4 | David Casey | D | 28 |
| | Ray Russo | B | |
| 6 | Roy Clark | A | 26 |
| 7 | Rob Amos | A | 24 |
| | Mark Edwards | B | |
| | Matt Rice | B | |
| | Darren Sith | C | |

Eastern Vets Program

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|---|
| Saturday | November | 27 | 2:00pm | Casey Fields | Graded Scratch Races & Teams Race |
| Monday | November | 29 | 7:30pm | Maroondah Club | General Meeting |
| Saturday | December | 4 | 2:00pm | Casey Fields | Graded Scratch Races |
| Saturday | December | 11 | 2:00pm | Dunlop Road | Charity Day for Motor Neurone Disease Graded Scratch Races & Team's Race |
| Saturday | December | 18 | 2:00pm | METEC | Graded Scratch Races |
| Tuesday | November | 30 | 6:00pm | METEC | Croydon Cycleworks Criterium Series |
| | December | 7 14 21 | | | |
| 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.

Northern Vets Program

| | | | | | |
|--------|----------|----|---------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Sunday | November | 28 | 10:00am | Pyalong Rd, Seymour | Chooka's Wheel Race |
| Sunday | December | 5 | | No racing | |
| Sunday | December | 12 | 10:00am | Carlsrhule West | 50k Handicap |
| Sunday | December | 19 | 10:00am | Avenel Rd, Seymour | Merle Jamieson memorial handicap |

Gippsland Vets Program

| | | | | | |
|--------|----------|----|---------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Sunday | November | 28 | 10:00am | Kernot | Graded Scratch Races |
| Sunday | December | 5 | 9:00am | Pakenham (melways 317, G6) | Graded Scratch Races |
| Sunday | December | 12 | 10:00am | Kernot | Graded Scratch Races |
| Sunday | December | 19 | 9:00am | Pakenham (melways 317, G6) | Graded Scratch Races |

Gippsland vets run a regular group ride Wednesday mornings, leaving the Kernot Hall at 9:00am

Victorian Veterans Cycling Council Program

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|

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.:

Australian Championships addendum/omission

Oops, I missed a result from the AVCC national titles in last week's newsletter; Ian Jolly drove the 700k to Canberra to compete in the 25k Individual Time Trial and finished third in his age group despite being under-g geared. Next time Ian is not going to trust the published profile but go out and recce the course in person before hand - 3% my hat.

Royalty on Beach Road

Cadel Evans was spotted, resplendent in his BMC kit, seemingly hosting a corporate bunch at Mordie. And Simon Gerrans was also seen in a small group heading south toward Mordie a little later in the morning. Who could resist that sunshine?
