

Newsletter

5 May 2018



Duty Roster

Saturday 5 May, Casey Fields

Jim Swainston (R), Barry Beachley, Stephanie Coulson

Saturday 12 May, Yarra Glen

Richard Dobson (R), Andrew Nielsen (TC), Nick Hainal (TC), Phil Johns, Allan Hicks, Sean Wilkeson, Andre Weber, Sean Hardy, Richard Harvey, Nick Panou

If rostered for duty, you must be at there at least 1 hour prior to start time. It's your responsibility to find a replacement if unable to do your duty, then advise Andrew Buchanan, tiptop2@optusnet.com.au

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Saturday afternoon's racing at Enterprise Drive was affected by falls. Only the first three races (A, C and E Grades) could be completed; B, D and F Grades were all abandoned. A letter from Club President Adam Dymond inside deals with this and several other matters in more detail. Please read it! Please also read the referee's report from Mark Edwards – it may make you think. There are also race reports from A and E Grades.

This Saturday at Casey Fields, we contest the Club Criterium Championships for 2018. Racing commences at 2 pm, and the registration table will close at 1.45 pm. It would be much appreciated if you could enter beforehand on TeamApp, or by email to Handicapper Peter Mackie at peter.mackie@spotless.com.au.

Championship races are raced in five-year age groups and are open to Eastern Veterans members who qualify. For the Crit Championships, riders must have ridden in at least three races with the club since 1 November 2017. Qualifying races include Eastern Vets Saturday afternoon races, Wednesday morning races at the Loop and Tuesday evening races at METEC. Note that a turn of duty does not count as a qualifying race. There are no entry fees for the Crit Championships, and there is no prize money. Medals are awarded to the top three in each age group. This year as well, there is a new 'Champion of Champions' award in all age groups. Riders accumulate points across all three Club Championship disciplines (criterium, road and time trial). The overall top three points winners in each age group will receive medals at the awards night later in the year.

The following week marks the true start of the winter season, with a kermesse at Yarra Glen on Saturday 12 May. It's time to get your climbing legs on!



Alison Skene after the Benghazi Open Handicap at Newham on Anzac Day, accepting a well-earned envelope for 10th place from Northern Cycling President, Vince Sinni. Two reports from the Benghazi, one from Alison and one from Rob Suter, are inside.



Letter from the President

Greetings members,

There are a few matters that I need to update you on.

First and foremost, you will recall that Nigel Kimber stood down as Secretary at our recent AGM. I'm pleased to announce that Susan Williams has kindly stepped up into the role. Thanks to you, Susan, and I look forward to working with you.

I'd also like to acknowledge and thank Lawrence Lee, who has offered to take over from Nigel as EVCC Webmaster. We are in the process of assessing the merits of rebuilding the website to make it more accessible and user-friendly. Lawrence and Emma Smith have put together a survey about this and a few other important matters that the committee would like your thoughts on. Please take 5 minutes to fill this out so we can gauge the level of support and interest for some changes we are considering.

I want to thank Emma for filling the gap between when Nigel stepped down and Susan came on board. *Huge kudos*, Emm, you kept the ship sailing during this period – we all knew that Nigel had big shoes to fill.

The committee has also decided we want to form a Social Subcommittee. We need three or four members, with one to act as chairperson who reports back to the General Committee. The prime objective of this subcommittee is to revisit the annual awards night. We are considering pushing it back closer to Christmas (possibly November) and making it an end-of-year gala awards night. There would be one or two meetings involved, and the rest is done via email and phone. Please put your hand up to help. In particular, I'm calling out to male club members. We have a disproportionate number of females on the GC executive in comparison to overall membership. Please call me, email or chat to me on race day if you can get involved to help out *your club*. Many hands make light work, guys ...

Finally, I'd like to make mention of the falls we had at Enterprise Drive in Rowville last Saturday. There were two separate incidents, with a total of five riders going down and two being taken by ambulance to hospital. I'm pleased to be able to report that all riders are back home and resting up. Your committee is currently undertaking a full review of what occurred and will discuss this at our next meeting. We need to ascertain what happened and why, and decide whether the circuit is too dangerous. It appears that rider error was a factor in both incidents. However, there are some concerns about the merits of continuing to race at Enterprise Drive.

I will repeat my message from last year. All members have a duty of care to 'self-police' their actions when racing. The bunch captain and race referee have no way of knowing how a rider is feeling or the quality of their decision-making during a race. If you are not comfortable, or are fatigued or way off the back, consider the safety of others, ride at the back of the bunch or take yourself off the course. It's simply not worth the risk. It appears that in both incidents on Saturday, those who made the error took other innocent riders down as well.

Unfortunately, B, D and F Grade races were all cancelled. Well done to race referee Mark Edwards, who handled difficult situations on Saturday with a level head. Mark also tells me a C Grade rider who was well off the back was unhappy to be pulled out of the race near the end. Mark (in true Aussie Rules fashion) can't remember the rider's number. We remind you all to please follow the referee's instructions.

The people I've spoken to are split about Enterprise Drive. Some say that it's great to be riding at a different venue that is flat, fast and technical. Some say it's too fast and too technical, and therefore they won't ever feel comfortable to race there.





There have also been an unforeseen number of cars on the circuit (again on Saturday, one parked close to the start/finish line, meaning we had to move the start/finish again) and some coming and going during the race. The committee will discuss this at its next meeting on Wednesday 9 May (7 pm at the Maroondah Club, East Ringwood). If you have a view either way, please come along so we can get a consensus and decide the best way forward for the club on this matter – bearing in mind that our overall No. 1 priority is always rider safety.

Regards,
Adam

Graded scratch races, Enterprise Drive, 28 April

Grade	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
A Grade (12)	Chris Hughson	Scott Riddell (N)	Rob Amos	--
B Grade (11)	NO RESULT			
C Grade (17)	Craig Stannard	Ken Saxton	Tim Crowe	Bob Lewis
D Grade (6)	NO RESULT			
E Grade (9)	Harry Hibgame	J.C. Wilson	John Eddy	--
F Grade (2)	NO RESULT			

Referee's report

By Mark Edwards


When I was a teenager in the mid-1960s, I used to avoid homework listening to radio – Stan the Man, Grantley Dee and sometimes Kasey Kasem – and contemplate the mysteries of life via my cousin's cast-off man magazines. I imagined all manner of things, great victories, revenges and being the next Phantom. I can't remember them all but I'm pretty sure Vets Cycling Referee wasn't among them.

Fast forward 40-plus years, past uni, marriage, kids and a modest career, to retirement and Wednesday racing at the Loop, a weekly constant and highlight. Keith Bowen announces after just a couple of decades running the show that he's had enough, and club stalwart Super Steve Barnard puts his hand up but doesn't have Keith's stamina. Steve announces at the start line that unless we can get some more referees in the rotation, the Loop's all gunna fall over beginning 2018.

Now, Veterans racers are nothing if not canny. We all know how to let someone else do the work so we can claim the glory. There's a lot of riders suddenly inspecting their shoes and bottom brackets, and a little bit of coughing, before a few brave men put their hands up. Nick Tapp, John Williams, Rob Giles from memory, a couple of others maybe. I'm in auction mode but I feel my hand go up anyway. It's happening again. Steve sweetens the deal by guaranteeing anyone who does the Loop will be exempt from the Saturday ref roster. Hint: do not buy real estate from that dude.

You see, I always wanted a lanyard. A lanyard makes a man feel special, walk taller, and women notice. It's the 21st century's Smith and Wesson. It's gotta sit right and have proper ribbon, preferably striped. I've had a wife, and kids, employees, none of them ever paid me any respect or attention. Now I realise why, and I feel naked until I can have and hold that sweet plastic. I had one once as a visitor at a posh factory and





tried to slink out with it, but they made me give it back and I trudged the weary drive home lanyardless.

It turns out becoming a referee was pretty easy. No course (yet, coming), no tests, I just sent in my very best picture and *voilà*, it comes back in the mail. I wore it to the cafe in Blackburn to test it out and felt like one of the important people but, as Spidey's uncle says, we all know that with great power comes great responsibility. I wear my lanyard around the house to impress my gorgeous wife, but she pretends not to see it and stays her usual hard to get.

I do a few gigs, no drama, how easy is this? Holding riders at the gate, lecturing people, filling out forms. The blag flag at hand! The intoxicating power to disqualify riders, grades, even a whole race! You're not coming to my birthday party. I wonder if Hitler and Stalin got to feel this rush.

Then Saturday comes. Enterprise Drive. Star Wars. What could go wrong? I just didn't feel comfortable. A tight but fast course, an off-camber cul-de-sac, cars and trucks parked on the side of a narrowish course, riders going both ways. I was a bit concerned about this and that. A very knowledgeable and patient Hylton Preece walked the course with me and gave great advice about possibly moving the finish away from the parked cars (a defined VVVC MAJOR HAZARD). The Traffic Management Plan and course details are beautifully laid out and the marshals do a perfect job of setting everything out as per the plan. The parked truck trailer is coned off but we don't have enough bodies for a flag waver there. A number of people are offering helpful but sometimes conflicting advice, suggesting changes to the set-out that make some sense, but I don't want to change anything to the approved plans.

I don't know if it's just me but it feels different, and I'm way more apprehensive than usual. Andrew Buchanan is calm and efficient and the set-up is done properly. Peter Mackie is a trooper and keeps me on track and prompts me a few times, he knows his stuff. I've walked the whole course several times and we are good to go. It's not easy to get everyone's attention but eventually we are off and racing. Not long after, a couple of

A Graders are down, Shelly is off attending, we neutralise for a while till it's safe to go again.


When it's time to finish, it's too tight a course to have fast and slow riders so I start taking lapped and orphaned riders out. Most are fine but one is a fangry ... but we get through that. I use a two-lap finish because I really don't want a bunch finish on a half road with riders going both ways and hope someone strong will get away, especially at the breakneck speeds of A Grade. The hot-dog course is fast slow fast slow, you can hear chains and derailleurs begging for mercy as the boys dig out of the turn. It's tough and eventually the field – by accident, injury, attrition, fatigue, retirement – is more strung out than Warren Zevon. Chris Hughson hears what I'm thinking, does the right thing and powers off to a safe solo win and grin. The boy goes alright.

OK, the first race is done, a suspected broken collarbone, cuts and bruises and skin off, I feel like the next race is going to get better but I'm flustered and forget the timing and the second race is off late.

B Grade, as usual, isn't looking as hot as A Grade, D Grade looks pretty sensible, and F Grade as expected is only three riders circulating at what looks like a comfortable pace. Just as I call in F Grade, it all goes horribly wrong and Vets racing starts to look a bit more like tenpin bowling. Only Rod Goodes gets the chequered flag as the race is abandoned, first aid and ambulance (mercifully close and fast) in and on but emergency medico Petra N. is, as often the case, first on the scene and I don't feel great but I feel a whole lot better. I know nothing of medical stuff other than it makes me squeamish, so I stay way away and hope for the best.

A lot of people pitched in, thanks to all, people contacting family, running bruised and battered riders and bikes home, ferrying cars and all sorts of things I don't even know about. It's an understatement to say I couldn't have done it without you all. A lot of phone calls (including a very attentive and helpful one from VVVC President Tom Finning), updates from Jim Swainston and others, incident reports prepared and filed, hopefully some forms lodged by the





various fallen for insurance purposes (now and perhaps much later, get them in). And too much Johnnie Walker Blue, just to settle the nerves like.

I have in the past taken a fairly casual approach to refereeing, thinking common sense as well as due diligence will work. If I get another gig, I think I will take a more formal, tedious approach (sorry) and make sure everything is understood. Please bear with me and #respectthelanyard.

I am told the VVCC is in late preparations for running referee accreditation sessions. Anyone who loves racing and is interested in the future and wellbeing of the club should think seriously about qualifying. It makes you think.

A Grade

By Rob Amos

My first time at Enterprise Drive, a short S-shape hot dog with one end around the cones and the other with cones to form a mini roundabout. Thirteen starters in A Grade, a fairly small field considering the fine weather and close location for a majority. As we set off, my main plan was to stay in the first few riders to avoid any splits or falls. Steve Ross and Kevin King, who was cornering like a seasoned crit rider rather than a triathlete, seemed to have the same idea, so we ended up doing most of the pace-setting, while Chris Hughson upped the pace with his turns.

About 20 minutes in, Chris upped the pace with Colin Doherty tight on his wheel. As we went around the mini roundabout, Colin's front wheel slid out on the small patches of mud. Kevin, next in line, had nowhere to go and went over the handlebars, resulting in a broken collarbone. A Grade stopped racing as riders tried to assist. The race was later restarted and like the first half the field was strung out, but still together, everyone riding with a bit more caution. Another attack by Chris finally got a small gap, another fall by Paul Webster at the opposite end helped to split the field a bit more, as a group of three chasers formed – me, Scott Riddell from Northern and Nathan White up from B Grade. A few laps later we were joined by J-P, who had punctured and went looking for a 10-speed wheel, with no luck he opted for a bike swap but went over the

'one lap out' limit. Despite strong turns by J-P we were not making any ground up on Chris and we were gapping Scott, but he managed to rejoin each lap into the roundabout. Chris took out a 'comfortable' win as Scott easily outsprinted me for 2nd. A strong chase by Nathan for 4th, while the rest of the field had called it a day.

E Grade

By Jim Swainston

We seemed to get a bit too involved with the ANZAC spirit this week as we had wounded soldiers all over the place. It was a downer after a top day at Dunlop Road the previous Saturday. E Grade escaped unscathed except for a few wounded prides – it was very easy to get dropped bouncing out of corners. We had a healthy number of nine starters and the pace was fierce for the first half. Then my observation was that things slowed a little after that. My count was four riders dropped, four together at the finish (almost), with Petra Niclasen a bit of each.

Clive Wright, Barry Ellem and myself succumbed before halfway, while 'Doc' Cunneen hung on well but hit the wall in a big way. The amazing Petra chased for a large part of the journey and actually regained the leaders temporarily towards the finish. I missed the Petra express the first time she passed me, but got on board the second time for a while. Into the last lap and Harry Hibgame must have been feeling his oats as he jumped about 400 metres out and was pursued home by J.C. Wilson and John Eddy. Sue Williams put in a creditable ride to finish 4th after looking comfortable all day.

Rod Goodes put in a great ride to be away in F Grade but sadly there was carnage behind him. A vivid memory is of Petra asking Brian Farrell to squeeze her hand if he could hear her, and Petra saying, 'That's good, Brian.' Talk about a relief!

What a day to be referee – anguish and paperwork!

Chris Hughson showed he has another string to his bow with a terrific breakaway win in A Grade.

Thanks to all and hoping for less trauma next week, in fact no trauma at all.





Wednesday criterium, the Loop, Yarra Boulevard, 2 May

Division	1st	2nd	3rd
Division 1a (7)	Iain Clark (N)	Tony Hallam (G)	Fraser Short (N)
Division 1b (14)	Glenn Wright	Chris Ellenby	Nick Gibson
Division 2 (8)	Mark Cummings (G)	John Williams	David Browne
Division 3 (9)	Tony Curulli	Ken Allan	Davina Calhaem
Division 4 (5)	Paul Griffiths (N)	Barry Rodgers	Susan Williams

Thanks to referee Nick Tapp, Dean Niclasen, Barry Rodgers, Keith Bowen and the usual band of helpers.

News etc.

Benghazi VVCC Open Handicap, Newham, 25 April

Off 33 minutes

By Alison Skene

Anzac Day, VVCC Open, 77 km, incorporating the Lancefield–Newham loop twice, extended a bit on the second lap. 99 starters.

The handicapper has been kind to me again and I'm off 33 minutes, same as when I won this race three years ago. My plan is to not do too much work before jumping on the next bunch when they catch us. Our group of six is actually quite organised, once we sort out the track vs rolling turns, and we maintain a good smooth pace for the first 12 km to Dons Road, with lots of encouraging chatter. The subsequent varied terrain challenges group cohesion, with the smaller and lighter of us naturally dropping the heavier guys on the uphill, but we manage to regroup to take advantage of the big guys on the downhill.


About halfway along Three Chain Road, we spy the 39-minute bunch up ahead, but before catching them we are joined from behind by the 30-minute group. All semblance of cohesion goes out the window at this point. For the next few kilometres, one guy from this group does 90 per

cent of the work on the front, which is interpreted as slackness on the part of all the wheel-suckers behind, or as pointless surging (by most of the said riders behind). As one of the few of the former view, I suggest getting rid of some baggage, and three of us turn on the gas, which had the desired effect of dropping quite a few.

Somewhere near the freeway, the next (26-minute) bunch joins us, and those of us strong enough to hang on are sucked along by the magnificent power of the charging peloton, taking turns where possible, shedding a few more. Along the way we pass the final out-markers and take our position behind the lead car. By the time we are through Newham the second time, we are pretty sure we are all in the money, about 10 residual from the three bunches. I know it is just a matter of hanging on for the steep bits and trust the legs for the rest, but unfortunately I suffer sharp leg cramps about 5 km from the end, with immediate effect of losing touch with the bunch. Nevertheless I manage to keep up enough pace to the end to comfortably roll through in 10th spot, over a minute up on scratch.

Congratulations to all the place-getters, who all worked hard for it. I'd have to say this is one of





the most satisfying of all the races I have done. Those Eastern riders who ventured out were rewarded with a great race. Thanks to Northern Cycling for once again playing a magnificent hosting role, sponsor TopTech Panels, and all the volunteers who kept us safe. A crash marred the race for a couple, who sustained some injuries.

Off 19 minutes

By Rob Suter

I arrived in Lancefield early (or so I thought) for the planned 1.30 start, buoyed by the sunshine, and the fact that I had managed to complete the entire A Grade race at the back of the field, after riding B, last week. To counter that was the fact that at my only three previous attempts at this circuit I'd been dropped on the hill at the turn towards Newham, and the sobering fact that a diet of 1-hour crits for the past 5 months was not the ideal preparation for a 77 km Open handicap.

Middle of the field, number-wise, off 19 minutes with nine others, including John Williams and Walter Savini, and chasing 49 minutes. If three Eastern B Graders are the middle of the field, then the rest of the state must have plenty of A and B+ riders to fill the 45 spots above and before our group!

Also off with my 'bro', Darryl Suter, except that after the race we decided that we weren't related, at least in Australia! He reckoned he wasn't going well – didn't look that way out on the road! And Michael Hartman from Northern, last week's winner at Dunlop Road, who confided that he normally rides C Grade there, and was surprised we let him drift off the front to stay away on Saturday.

To the off, and a surprisingly strong side wind across the start/finish line, given how calm (sheltered) it was at the sports ground. We settled into a decent rotation, but Walter was showing a sprightly pair of heels and going off the front at times. Come the turn towards Newham, and my *bête noire*: not surprisingly, I was struggling, and had to chase really hard to get back on over that rise and the next, to find the strongest four had us lined out in the gutter. 'Come on, guys,' I thought, 'there's still 60 km to go: that is no way to get everyone to work with you.'

Sweat in my eyes, turn at Newham, and repeat the struggle over the first rise on the road to Rochford. Chase back on at over 60 km/h – 'Bl**dy hell!' I think. Surprisingly, I led over the main rise at Rochford onto that killer uphill crawl, then found myself chewing bar tape to stay with the guy who rolled over me. A mad dash down the other side and along the flat in the tailwind, with the strong guys punching gaps into the bunch, and me trying to get back. They kept it up as we turned to cross the finish line: more expletives gasped out as I try again to get back on terms. That chasing did for John and one other, so down to eight.

Fifty kilometres to go and I assessed where I was at, not knowing what was in store on this longer lap out Carlsruhe way (or that is where I guessed we were headed), so I decided, if I was to finish, I had better go with discretion. The 22-minute bunch came into view in the distance, but dangled there, like a juicy carrot just teasing the rabbits – it wasn't until the base of Hanging Rock and the turn towards Newham that they were caught.

Helter-skelter over the Rochford Road hills, and gave my bro a hand to get back on when the first hill had us both struggling (but he had been working, I hadn't). Grovelling up that slope after Rochford and a lone scratch rider blasts past us, followed by the rest a while later. Mad dash down the hill, where I topped out at 84 km/h, and then chase back when David Tozer drifted backwards. Just there at the turn into the finish, so I sat up, not deserving to be getting in everyone's way. An average of 36.1 km/h!

Chapeau Alison, for getting in the money and holding off the charging scratch bunch. And to Walter for his strong ride. Should I have done more work? I did enough, if the lactate cough on the way home was any guide – and the sluggish legs at Enterprise Drive three days later. At least I now know the course and, hopefully, with a few more road races in my legs, can contribute more. Next time?





Future events

Eastern Vets

For other events, please refer to page 1 of this newsletter, or go to <http://easternvets.com/roster/>.

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 or Wednesday before the race, as advertised. Riders who enter a handicap *must* pay the entry fee regardless of whether they participate. 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 to the handicapper via email or TeamApp, or on any race day before the event.

Northern Vets

For details, go to www.northerncycling.com.

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