

21 March 2020

Eastern Cycling Club

Newsletter

Duty Roster

The duty roster is in abeyance while racing is suspended in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Casey Fields reverted to form last Saturday, with a strong southerly wind putting even the strongest riders to the test. Results and a threesome of race reports are inside.

Of course, the biggest news from the past week is that last Saturday's racing at Casey will be our last for some time. All club racing has been suspended for an indefinite period in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. There's a message from Club President Adam Dymond on the next page. Events that will not now go ahead as planned include:

- the ECC/VCV Open, sponsored by Snooze Nunawading, which we were scheduled to host at Seymour this coming Saturday
- the Eastern Grand Prix women's race at Casey Fields on Saturday 4 April
- the final rounds of the Croydon Cycleworks Summer Twilight Crit Series at Metec.

The Below the Belt Pedalthon at Sandown last Sunday was also postponed indefinitely, though at least it had already raised a significant amount of money – reportedly, close to \$100,000 – for the ANZUP Group and clinical trials of treatments for urogenital cancers. ANZUP hopes to reschedule the event.

At this stage the plan in newsletter land is to keep producing them – if not every week necessarily, then as often as there is significant news or other content to share. It could be a chance to dig out some classic old race reports from the archive. If you have ideas about what you would like to read in the newsletter while there is no racing to report on, please get in touch by email at editor@easterncycling.com. Maybe, as Glenn Newnham suggested the other day, it's time for home trainer race reports ...



Four of the five podiums (from left, A, C, D and E Grades) from Casey Fields on Saturday. Scroll down for results and reports. The gremlins got B Grade and John Eddy.



Message from the President

Greetings Members,

Further to the email you received on Monday evening, we have taken the decision to suspend all ECC races indefinitely due to COVID-19. We decided to act early as we had a deadline looming for registrations for the Open Handicap at Seymour and also wanted to give 24 hours notice for anyone planning to race on Tuesday night. This decision has since been vindicated, with both the Australian Veteran Cycling Council and Cycling Australia recommending that all clubs suspend racing.

While this is obviously disappointing, it's clearly the right decision. I thank and commend all members for their understanding and support in accepting this difficult decision.

In particular I feel for our women's committee, who have been working hard for months to plan the Women's Grand Prix at Casey on Saturday 4 April. I'm sure this event will be rescheduled and run with passion and vigour in due course. Likewise, we hope to reschedule our Open Handicap and any other affected signature events.

Unfortunately, this means an early end to this year's Croydon Cycleworks Twilight Crit series. I will speak to the committee and David Richards in due course about how and when we recognise the series. At this stage, the podium is 1st Darren Woolhouse with 86 points, 2nd Chris Hughson with 76 points and 3rd Peter Gray with 74 points. Well done to all participants in the series, and thanks once again to David and the CCW team for their support, including weekly Ride of the Night prizes.

We will inform you in due course on when and how we resume racing. In the meantime, look after yourselves, your loved ones and each other. Keep in touch with anyone who may be vulnerable or subject to depression; FaceTime, Viber and even the telephone are great mediums for this.

Finally, getting on the bike in any form is cathartic and great for our physical and mental wellbeing, so just keep riding, guys!

Take care and regards,
Adam



Graded scratch races, Casey Fields, 14 March

Grade	1st	2nd	3rd
A Grade (9)	Glenn Newnham	Max Kornhofer	Jean-Philippe Leclercq
B Grade (7)	Dean Niclasen	Craig Stannard	Nick Tapp
C Grade (6)	Paul James	Dean Tune	Ken Saxton
D Grade (5)	John Williams	Max Michelson	Greg Harvey
E Grade (8)	Phil Johns	Neil Cartledge	John Eddy

A Grade (I)

By Glenn Newnham

Oh man, it was windy at Casey on Saturday. I turned up reasonably early and because of low numbers Pete was considering running B and A together. I'm all for a bigger bunch, but it seemed all the A Graders were just running late, and we ended up with a strong bunch of nine, and all grades starting separately. The big sprinters were there, Chris Hughson and Steve Ross, some steady pace-setters in Paul Webster, Paul Firth and Perry Peters, and those that could drive a breakaway, including Rob Amos, J-P and Max Kornhofer. In the warm-up I caught up with Dean Tune, then chatted to Steve Ross about the changing situation around COVID-19.

We had a rather casual neutral lap, which we stretched out over a few laps. Once the pace picked up, Paul Firth was looking a little white-faced and pretty quickly he wished us all the best and joined the back of B Grade. It was Max giving everyone the most to complain about. He'd move to the front and then up the pace as we hit the crosswind, to the point where the rest of us felt like we were sprinting. Rob and J-P were also taking turns hurting the bunch. By half race distance Paul Webster

was starting to groan, and a couple of laps later he'd also disappeared.

Max's attacks kept coming and I was lucky to be sitting on his wheel when he put in a big move up the front straight. I didn't look around but when he pulled off the front he yelled that we'd got a gap and to keep going. I kept my head down and tried to roll some decent turns. Half a lap later, you could have predicted, there was J-P rolling turns with us. He'd been gapped with Steve, Chris, Rob and Perry, had tried to bridge with Steve and then jumped across the last bit alone, leaving Steve in no-man's-land fighting the wind by himself.

The three of us (J-P, Max and I) started rolling turns, keeping a strong Steve Ross at a constant distance of around 50 metres. He didn't seem to be giving up but was having a hard time with three against one. Max put in a couple of attacks, but J-P and I weren't giving in at this late stage. We basically sat on Max for most of the last lap, and not far along the back straight he put in his final effort. It was a sensible move, using the crosswind to his advantage, but to be honest I was expecting the move and was more worried about J-P than Max. Unfortunately for J-P, he'd dropped my wheel just enough so that he had to fight the wind for the whole back straight. I ended





up having the perfect lead-out from Max and sprinted past him at the last corner. J-P was close, but Max held onto a very well deserved 2nd place. Huge kudos to him, though, as he pushed the pace the whole race and was obviously the strongest man on the day.

So apparently that is the last race for a while. I hope we manage to keep some informal rides going, even if it requires some 'social distancing'. I can't see my training/social rides with Rob Lackey stopping, or the occasional mountain bike ride with J-P et al. I'm still more scared of my kids and what they'll bring home from school than I am of any of you folk.

A Grade (II)

By Max Kornhofer

Well, we all know Casey Fields is wind-prone, but the wind on Saturday was the strongest I've experienced in my three years at Eastern.

Off we went as a group of nine and we tried to hide behind each other from the wind, but within a couple of laps the pace was on. An early break of two and the consequent chase put the speed further up, and as the bunch came together it stayed high, with riders swapping at the front of the pace line.

As I can't sprint to save my life, I decided at around half time to try to shake some off the tail, or at least blunt the edge of some, so I accelerated as I came second wheel. As much as I'm marked at Metec, this time nobody wanted to respond, so I found myself with some 20 metres gap. So, as the guys were looking at each other, I kept the foot on the gas and got up to a lead of about 15 seconds before the chase was on, and after some laps it was inevitable that they caught me, but we were down to six at this point.

As I recovered fast in the bunch and there was also some soft-peddalling happening, I decided to try again, and this time two stuck with me. Glenn Newnham was the one who accelerated

again and it was down to us two. About five minutes to go. J-P wouldn't be J-P if he didn't try to bridge, and without us paying attention (which is hard when redlining) he was suddenly again on our wheel. So with 3rd in the bag and my lacking sprint, I had to risk a bit more and I threw in my attack about 300 metres before the last corner. Glenn stayed on my wheel but we had a gap to J-P – but then my calves reminded me that I already had done a 5 km running race earlier that day. So I came up to the finish line on eggshells between my knees and feet, for sure Glenn went around me but somehow I managed to hold off J-P, although it was mere millimetres across the line. Fourth across was Steve Ross, who kept pushing although he got dropped.

Thanks for great racing. With the current circumstances, it will be the end of my season as I'm heading to my 'other home' overseas in April until November. Therefore I want to acknowledge the tight-knit community that ECC is, and all the helping hands that keep the club going. I'll miss the banter and always love it when the newsletter comes into my mailbox to read what's going on. Can't wait 'til spring again!

B Grade

By Nick Tapp

What a difference a week makes. Last week: no wind in the car park and hardly a breath on the track. This week: a thumping tailwind up the finishing straight and a fierce headwind heading back down, which meant a crosswind across the bottom of the course. Chatting with the wise and experienced David McCormack after the race, he reckoned that, given we ride so often at Casey, it's a surprise we're not all much better at racing in the wind. He explained what he meant: when he was on the front of C Grade, he rode in the middle of the road so that those behind could get





shelter. That's how you do it. Simple. Only that didn't sound like our race at all. Oh, no. In B Grade it was cling to the gutter, ride on the red, so everyone behind has to fight the wind, too. Maybe if we rode more handicaps, we might all be like Dave Mac and think of our bunch as a co-operative unit, but in a scratch race it's dog eat dog out there!

Not that I'm complaining – about the wind or the tactics. I know that every scrawny dog has its day, and courses like Gruyere and Yarra Glen even things out. But at Casey on a day like Saturday, a whippet like me is going to get blown about like a tumbleweed and needs a bit of rat cunning to survive. So it was good to have the likes of Dean Niclasen, Steve White, Craig Stannard and Rob Suter in the bunch to push the wind aside and make a nice eddy for those behind to shelter in – if only they'd ride in the middle and not cling to the edge! Not that I avoided the wind for the entire race, but I wondered what benefit my turns on the front were providing, aside from wearing me down and paving the way for yet another attack from someone bigger.

Rob in particular hardly seemed to notice the wind and pedalled away to a gap over and over again, forcing those of us left behind to chase. Maybe he was compensating for the absence of Chris Ellenby, who was in Bathurst, qualifying yet again for the Gran Fondo Worlds. It was Dean, though, who got away towards the business end of the race and stayed away for a few laps. If anyone was

capable of staying out there on his own, Dean seemed like a strong candidate. But with two laps to go, Dean apparently decided two laps was one lap too many, and we were finally able to close the gap. There were now four or five left of the original seven, and the foxing and maneuvering in the wind grew even more intense. Rob tried to kick away up the outside of the road more than once, but found me stuck to his wheel, while the others powered along on the other side, and Dean briefly caught his breath.

Last time across the bottom in the crosswind, Dean went to the front and applied the pressure again. We all scrambled not to be left behind, but we got stretched out in the wind and this was enough for Dean to round the last bend with a handy little lead over Craig, then Rob and me. Into the straight and Rob was done. With the wind behind us, I made up some ground in the sprint, but couldn't quite close the gap, and Dean took the win from Craig. Well done to Dean for finding that last burst of power after his solo break, and to Craig, the new Mr Consistency. Rob was unlucky to miss out on a podium spot. It was also good to see Walter Savini back on the race track again.

A week makes a difference in more ways than one, and who knows how many weeks it will be before we're all together and racing again. In the meantime, I hope everyone manages to stay healthy and finds time and the opportunity to get out on the bike.

Croydon Cycleworks Summer Twilight Crit Series, Metec

By Max Michelson

A special thank you to Pete Mackie and Chris Norbury for organising our Tuesday night crits. They are a special part of our race calendar, which I love and the members do too, so

thanks, boys, great job again. Unfortunately cut short this year but enjoyed by all.

I would also like to thank my mate, the evergreen John Thomson, for helping with refereeing when required – top job, Johnny.





A special part of our Tuesday nights was the *great* support from David Richards and the team at Croydon Cycleworks – thank you, David, for sponsoring the series, especially the

Ride of the Night. It has added a lot of fun to the night.

And a final thank you to our members who turned out to race. Stay healthy, everybody, and it's 26 weeks until we are back.

News etc.

Polo tops

Our club is in the process of organising polo tops bearing the club logo – a high-quality polo made from Coolmax material, at a cost of \$50. Great for race day or just going out socially, lets people know you belong to the great Eastern Cycling Club. I have samples for members to try on for size. These are a pre-pay order so, if you're interested, please contact me on 0438 538 139.

Max Michelson, Club Captain

Peter Gray

Congratulations to Peter Gray, who competed in the Masters Track National Championships at Anna Meares Velodrome in Brisbane last weekend. Peter gained bronze medals in MMAS 8 Individual Pursuit, Individual Sprint and 500 m Time Trial and silver in the Keirin.

Advice from Cycling Australia

Along with the AVCC and VCV, CA has also recommended that club races and organised activities be suspended until further notice in response to the coronavirus. Its communications have included the following guidelines, which are applicable to training rides.

'If you decide that your event or club activity should proceed then Cycling Australia recommends that the following restrictions should apply:

- If riding two abreast, keep the maximum allowable gap of 1.5 metres between riders and a gap of at least 1.5 m to the rider in front of you, including while stopped at intersections.
- Limit groups or bunches to 10 or fewer riders.
- Ensure all riders are self-sufficient in case of mechanical issues.
- At cafes, maintain appropriate social distancing and keep helmets, gloves and sunglasses away from tables.'





Future events

Eastern CC events

As advised on page 1 of this newsletter and elsewhere, all Eastern races are suspended until further notice in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

VCV events

After careful consideration and discussion, the Executive Committee of the VCV is recommending that all racing is suspended until 30 April 2020 when the situation will be reviewed. This means that the State Championships, the Bill Long Handicap and the Benghazi will be postponed until further notice. Full refund of all entry fees will apply. This may take a few days; please be patient.

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