



Eastern veterans cycling club

Respecting the Rights of all Road Users

Newsletter July 19th 2008

Victoria State Home Loans Group Handicap – Steels Creek – July 12th

Race report.

It was as cold as a graveyard as 66 riders gathered at the Yarra Glen cemetery for the annual Victoria State Home Loans group handicap. A strong northerly wind bringing out the arm-warmers, legs, long fingered gloves and booties, the wind also promising a hard slog to Steels Creek and some high speeds on the return - oh for a 53-11.

f-grade

At two o'clock and with 9 degrees showing on the in-car thermometer Colin O'Brien started off down the road at the head of the fourteen riders that made up the f-grade bunch. Colin grateful to be in the car listening to a favourite CD rather than being out in the fresh air listening to the sound of breathing getting louder as muscles cried out for oxygen.

Fourteen riders, seven minutes ahead of e-grade and twenty minutes over scratch, limit stood a good chance of holding off all comers to sweep the podium, all they had to do was stay together and share the load. Share the load they sort of did, but not evenly, a few doing a bit more than others, but stay together they did – until a couple of large dogs split the bunch at the biodynamic vegetable stall on their way back to get the bell. The separation caused by the dogs, followed by the last couple of inclines, leaving the f-grade bunch in tatters. A group of six rounding the Yarra Glen cone for the last time well ahead of the remnants of their shattered bunch, the six quickly becoming four as the leaders kicked into the wind; Phil Cox and Brian Farrell finding a two-metre gap slowly and inextricably growing as Kevin Urbancic, Peter Kronemann, Les McLean and one other rode off to Steels Creek.

Ashley Willox picked up Phil and Brian soon after the turn then the three caught 'the other' from the lead bunch half way out to Steels Creek making a nice little auto-bus for the ride home.

For the leaders though came the anxious struggle into the wind for the last time, the gaps to the chasers revealing themselves as the trio headed back out. A combined d & e grade bunch still a fair way back, but with enough legs in the group to maybe run the leaders down before the turn for home. Right on their wheels and more of a treat was the b-grade mob, and they were flying, a couple of c-graders desperately clinging to the back, surely that was it, but they

still had a way to go back to get the bell and it was down-wind. Maybe, just maybe.

The race leaders continued swapping turns as the bitumen slipped by beneath their wheels, each hundred-metres conquered getting harder and harder with each kilometre traveled. If only Colin would wait and let them sit in the slipstream, even for just a couple of hundred metres. Every gust of wind through the trees cause to hold the breath in anticipation of a rampaging chase group storming by. Struggling up that little dead rise and onto the straight (ever so slightly) downhill run toward Steels Creek city limits there was no sign of the chasers, they daren't dream, their legs reminding them of the reality. At the end of that straight stretch a glance over the shoulder, a shadow back down the road, is that them or is it just a shadow? Peter, Kevin and Les knowing that if they made that final turn with a couple of minutes advantage they may just be able to hold off the pursuers, the down-hill, down-wind run going a long way to evening out even the most disparate cyclists. Another bend and it was down to the tennis courts, almost there. But alas that shadow back up on the side of the valley was more substantial and as the road flattened and died a half-score or so riders in green, yellow and blue bands flew by. The dismay at being caught after so long, after so much effort, taking more out of the legs than the change of surface had.

e-grade

At half the size of the out-markers and with seven minutes to make up the e-grade bunch had their work cut out for them, four minutes ahead of d-grade wasn't a big lead either but they had a chance so long as it stayed together and everybody pulled their weight. To their advantage they had the sergent-major along to provide advice, instruction and encouragement, Graham Parker sitting on the back for the ride, augmenting Mick Paull's captaincy of the bunch. A steady rotation of the majority of the bunch, with relief efforts put in by those who found the pace over and above the usual e-grade pace, kept the group motoring along and looking good. Until the halfway mark that was, when it became a core of three; Neil Cartledge, Mick and Bruce Hawker, cramp and fatigue taking its toll on the other members of the group.

After the turn, with the wind at their backs, the pace picked up but d-grade was close and as that bunch swept by it swept some of them up, the driving trio finding that extra couple of kph to hook onto the back of the higher grade bunch. The enjoyment of the run back to Yarra Glen and the bell was followed by the

sense of satisfaction at the effort required to stay with the now enhanced group (b-grade having picked them up just prior to the turn) back into the wind for the final time, and then by disappointment as, at the final turn, the remaining e-graders (along with most others) got shelled from the bunch by the b-grade surge.

d-grade

Richard Dobson quickly took charge of the eleven d-grade riders, organising a rolling bunch as they started up the first incline. The execution not so organised on the next incline as the disparity in strengths showed up. Encouragement by Laurie Baigent and Richard keeping it together and the bunch rolled over the top, rotation intact, and into the wind in pursuit of the e-grade bunch four minutes up the road. The first lap passing without incident, all in the group taking their share of the load.

The second time out into the wind proved destructive, the carrot of the e-grade bunch just ahead instilling a sense of urgency that saw a couple of members become unhitched. E-grade made the turn first, Richard and his merry crew not far behind. The downwind return leg providing a bit of respite but with the pace still hot it again proved a bit too much for some; Nick Hainal, Richard Dobson and Dean Jones being called upon to put in extra efforts to try to catch the bunch ahead. A task they succeeded in completing around half way back, half the lower grade slipping quietly onto the back of the passing d-grade train for a tow to the bell.

As the bunch neared the turn for the bell the lead car was seen coming down the hill from the start/finish, providing encouragement that the race lead was not too far away, the car crossing the bunch half way up their descent to the bottom of the rise to the bell. No sooner had the lead-car disappeared from the peripheral vision than it was replaced by cyclists in lycra as the b-grade bunch thundered past. Not the best place to do it, the downhill run and tail wind making it easy to catch the last c-grade wheel as it went past. The majority of the combined d & e grade bunch slipping into the slipstream.

c-grade

The numbers were all wrong for the c-grade group and a hard pace from the gun didn't help, two riders falling away on the first leg and another not making it back to the Yarra Glen turn with the bunch, leaving seven to start the second lap only a couple of hundred metres ahead of the b-grade bunch which was bearing down on them like a possessed caterpillar track. The inevitability of capture caused a change of thinking in the group - get over the hill and wait on the descent for the chasers. The plan came to fruition, the majority of the c-grade remnants piling onto the back of the b-grade bunch for the run to the half-way mark and beyond.

At the mid-point turn a couple of c-grade riders failed to remain in touch, Steve Short one who found himself alone - paying for the work he'd done over the first lap in an attempt to keep the mad green-hats at bay. At the bell turn the majority of the remaining c-grade riders were split from the

group, a small gap finding all but Kevin Jackson on the wrong side and, despite determined efforts by Nigel Frayne and Peter Shanahan the wind proved too much leaving the pair to slog it out to the final turn, waiting for a-grade to come by in the hope of hitching a lift.

There was no need for a thumb, Ray Russo calling Nigel into the a-grade bunch as it streamed past. Nigel's run lasting till just after the final turn where he slipped off the back and looking at a lonely ride home. It wasn't long before Paul Kelly (d-grade, also separated from b-grade bunch at the bell turn) came by and the pair started rotating turns, picking up speed and then a couple of others who had been shelled by the group they had been with, including Tony Renehan (who was too cooked to hold on for long), Ray Russo and another d-grade rider. Bolstered by the additional members the pace increased and the run home proved not so dull. At the finish Paul sat up and allowed the two c-grade riders to fight it out for the remaining grade prizes (Kevin Jackson having stayed with the b-grade bunch to the final turn finished first), Ray jumped too early fading long before the line. Nigel sitting on the original move attacked as Ray's legs gave out, taking the sprint comfortably.

b-grade

On paper this group looked favourite, a numerically bolstered a-grade bunch only two minutes behind no serious threat but incentive enough to go hard from the gun. It only took a hundred metres and the semblance of a rolling bunch was formed, another hundred metres and it almost looked professional. Then the first test - the second incline, but it held and the makings of solid group was founded. It was surprising to see the first dropped rider before the Steels Creek sign but then with the strong wind a rider on their own, once splintered from their bunch, was going to struggle. The lead car returning was noticed but, under the strain of pushing into the wind, it wasn't really registered. A second c-grade rider was passed before the tennis courts and his depleted bunch crossed not long after as they headed back to Yarra Glen. At the turn it was noted that there seemed to one or two missing from the bunch, but the others were all putting in. As the speeds picked up down toward the bridge at the tennis courts a-grade went by, they'd made ground; b-grade needed to keep the pressure on.

At speeds touching 50kph the bunch flew back to Yarra Glen, only the last couple of hills dipping the speedo displays below the 40kph mark. Again the returning lead car with its gaggle of followers was sighted but so far from the turnaround that trying to determine gaps was near pointless. A bunch seen heading back to Steels Creek at the bottom of the second dip had the hearts crushed, c-grade had taken time out of b-grade over the first lap. The sight of another bunch heading out as the b-grade bunch rode up to the turn to complete the first lap had the hearts back up high, this was the c-grade bunch, not the previous one, and it was close.

Around the cone it was still a dozen b-grade riders, keen to put c-grade between them and the chasing a-grade. One and a half kilometres later a cry of "Riders Back" from Peter Shanahan attracted some dirty looks from Ian Smith and Nigel Kimber, stealth the desired attribute at the time. And with his stealth-black Alex it was Nigel who kicked it up a couple of clicks in an

endeavoured to lead the green hats past the blue with minimal interaction and integration. Mission accomplished, sort of, a couple of c-graders getting on to the bunch, a couple of b-graders finding themselves scrubbed. After the juncture it was a slightly diminished group of workers who ploughed on, dragging the bunch through the wind to half race distance. The occasional foray to the front by the odd blue-hat (Steve Short, Nigel Frayne and a couple of others) that had made their way into the group, appreciated by those who were struggling to keep the scratch bunch at bay.

As the b-grade bunch raced to the turn for half race distance a few more stragglers from the marks ahead were reeled in and let go. At the turn the distances to the stragglers respective groups were diminished but not likely to be assailed on the return leg with the strong tail wind assisting their run to the bell. So it was a little surprising that on the descent before the climb to the bell the b-grade bunch caught and passed what was left of the d and e grade bunches. Picking up half the bunch before turning for the grind back out to Steels Creek for the last time.

Out of the turn an early acceleration stretched the combined bunch to snapping point, a gap appearing around the tired d-grade legs, Paul Kelly (d), Peter Mackie (d), Louise McKimmie (d) and Neil Cartledge (e) finding themselves with a gap to bridge. With Paul encouraging the group to dig deep the four set about getting back to the slowly receding tail of the bunch ahead. The odds were stacked against them and eventually Peter, Louise and Neil faded as Paul slowly drew away in a now solo pursuit of the disappearing bunch (he didn't catch them – ed.).

As the third and final 16k lap got under way it was still a core of half a dozen b-grade riders powering the chase, a further half dozen or so riders of mixed helmet cover colours sitting on. The occasional assistance from some of the integrated lower grade riders providing some relief, Richard Dobson (d) and Dean Jones (d) excelling by making the occasional appearance on the front, riding well above their grade (Nick Hainal having more sense simply sat on the back and enjoyed the tow).

A couple of kilometres from the final turn the flashing light of the lead car was seen up the road. So far from the turn, surely the limit bunch was home and hosed. As the seconds passed the car got no closer and the realisation dawned that the car was going the same way as the chase bunch; that was the race. Despite tired legs and a road that seemed more like treacle than bitumen the b-grade bunch were on the limit riders a kilometre or so later, the three out-markers finally succumbing to the inevitable as second scratch (and their followers) powered past and on to the final turn.

In to the turn it was the same half-dozen, who had been on the front for most of the run out that led the group through and onto the last leg. Out of the turn the leaders pulled their fingers out and started the run for home as the last of the line were still to clear the cone. David Anderson, Nick Tapp, Trevor Coulter and Nigel Kimber away, Ian Smith desperately chasing and Wayne Doherty out of the saddle to get onto Ian's wheel. At the bottom of the little rise up from

the tennis courts the chasing pair linked up with the four leaders, clear road behind, the lead car ahead and the a-grade bunch only just crossing on their way to the turn. Things looked good, when Ian and Wayne got into the rotation a couple of minutes later things looked better.

All the way back the six rolled smoothly and held all chasers at bay. On to the second last climb Nigel put most of his eggs in the one basket, digging deep in an effort to cull the field. It wasn't going to happen and the six rolled down the other side for the run up to the finish. Nigel finding himself boxed in as the pace picked up, Wayne Doherty beginning to wind things up two-hundred metres from home. The boxing doing Nigel a favour, tempering his habit of going too early, with less than one-hundred metres to the line he was finally clear and set off in pursuit just as Trevor Coulter threaded a gap between Ian and Nick in his own charge at the line. With the metres rapidly disappearing the gaps got closer and on the line it was Nigel half a wheel in front of Wayne with Trevor a further half wheel back. Nick Tapp a couple of metres behind that with Ian on his wheel and David Anderson, having seen the writing on the wall, cruising over in sixth a second or so later.

a-grade

Twenty minutes behind limit was doable, two minutes to the group in front was going to prove a little tougher, it was a big group and there were some strong legs in second scratch. With everybody doing solid turns over the first lap the gap to b-grade was down to under one and a half minutes as the nine remaining scratch riders set out for the second, one of their number having found the tempo too high. The second lap was a little tougher with a couple of riders missing the odd turn, Rob Amos, Tony Chandler, Frank Nyhuis, Ian Milner and P Purdham leading by example, Stuart Bendall making concerted efforts to contribute. The gap to the bunch ahead at the halfway point didn't look much different from the first time through and this was confirmed at the bell, b-grade one minute thirty ahead – actually taking five seconds out of the scratch bunch.

Things got less better on the last lap as the strain of the chase continued to drag on the members of the bunch, the majority of the work falling to the trio of Rob, Tony and Stuart. Consequently the group made no gains on the final outbound leg and the more savvy in the bunch started racing for the grade placings, conceding that the overall was out of reach. A couple in the bunch continued to hammer it on the homeward leg whilst others waited their opportunity. Tony had a foot in both camps and on the little rise three kilometres from the finish he put in an effort that saw him ride away from the others, gaining one hundred metres quickly. The others in the bunch feeling too weary to respond were happy to leave Tony out there. For a little while at least, Ian Milner and Rob trying to bridge, but, finding they were simply towing the others up they sat up. Rob made a last ditch effort to break the elastic on the last climb but failed to do so ending up leading out the others in their sprint for second and third in the grade, Tony having done enough to stay away. Taking advantage of Rob's lead out Stuart started the sprint in earnest with Phil Thompson on his wheel and Ian Milner in pursuit. Phil stepping out and passing Stuart twenty-metres from the line, Ian Milner's momentum carrying him into third, relegating Stuart to fourth.

Post race wrap

Sponsors are important to the club and their ability to provide the variety of events that they do. So please, if you get the opportunity to support those who support us do so. In this case it was John Walker of Victoria State Home Loans who put his hands in the company's till to provide some extra cash for the day's event (all legitimately). If you are in the market for a home loan or want to re-finance you existing loan give John or Vic State Home Loans a call and see what they can offer you.

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The club extends its thanks to John and their best wishes.

Results

	Mark	First	Second	Third
Overall		Nigel Kimber (b)	Wayne Doherty (b)	Trevor Coulter (b)
a-grade (10)	Scratch	Tony Chandler	Phil Thompson	Ian Milner
b-grade (14)	2-minutes	Nick Tapp	Ian Smith	David Anderson
c-grade (10)	5-minutes	Kevin Jackson	Nigel Frayne	Ray Russo
d-grade (11)	9-minutes	Dean Jones	Richard Dobson	Nick Hainal
e-grade (7)	13-minutes	Neil Cartledge	Michael Paull	Bruce Hawker
f-grade (14)	20-minutes	Kevin Urbancic	Peter Kronemann	Les McLean

Officials

Thanks to Graeme Parker and Ronnie Stranks who were on the desk taking entries. A circuit like Steels Creek takes a lot of marshals etc. and to these people we also say thanks; Greg Lipple, Keith Bowen, Grant Greenhalgh, Ronnie Stranks, Thorkild Muurholm, Colin O'Brien, Quentin Frayne, Anthony Gullace, Brian Gulliot, John Thompson, Ross Gardiner, Rob Truscott and Brian Gray. Thanks also to JC for bringing the trailer, to Peter Mackie who was on hand with the drinks and thanks to Richard Dobson who is responsible for the roster and looking after helmet covers and numbers.

Eastern Vets Program

Saturday	July	19	2:00pm	Yarra Junction	Rob Graham Memorial Time Trial
Saturday	July	26	2:00pm	Arthurs Creek	Graded Scratch Races
Monday	July	28	8:00pm	Maroondah Club	General Meeting
Saturday	August	2	2:00pm	Casey Fields	Dandenong Bicycle Superstore h'cap
Saturday	August	9	2:00pm	METEC	Graded Scratch Races
Wednesday			10:00am	The Loop – Yarra Boulevard	Scratch Races + post race coffee

Note : Graded Scratch Race entries are accepted on the day up to 15 minutes before the advertised race start time.

* Handicap entries close the Tuesday before the race. Riders entering a handicap **MUST** pay the entry fee regardless of participation. Fees are due on race day, entrants will **NOT** be allowed to start in any EVCC race until fees have been paid.

No late entries will be accepted for either scratch races or handicaps. Entries to handicaps can be submitted via e-mail to the handicapper or on any race day prior to the event.

Southern Vets Program

Sunday	July	20	9:00am	Somers	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	July	27	9:00am	Cora Lynn – Modella	Tracker White handicap, pre entry reqd
Sunday	August	3	9:00am	Casey Fields	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	August	10	9:00am	Crib Point	Graded Scratch Races

Note : Southern Vets have a 'No licence – No race' policy. If you are going to race with Southern take your licence with you.

* Due to Victoria Police requirements competitors for these events must have a flashing red taillight and a white headlight.

Northern Vets Program

Sunday	July	20	10:00am	East Trentham	Handicap (44k)
Sunday	July	27	9:30am	National Blvd, Campbellfield	Graded Scratch Races
Sunday	August	3	10:00am	Avenel Road, Seymour	General Memorial Handicap (64k)

Sunday	August	10	10:00am	Toolernvale	Time Trial (16k)
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Victorian Veteran Cycling Council Program

Sunday	August	31	10:00am	Halls Gap	Grampians handicap, 61k	25/8 - \$15
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For your calendar

Date	Location	Event
30/8/2008 31/8/2008	Halls Gap	Grampians VCC Graded Scratch Races VVCC Handicap A great weekend of socialising and cycling Contact Ian Smith for details or expressions of interest.
19/10/2008	Melbourne	BV Around the Bay Nigel Kimber will be leading a 250k group, there will also be a group going to Sorrento and back.

Other Results, etc.:

Southern Vets two day tour

Sat - 22k Time trial
a-grade Roy Clarke - 1st (0:30:58)
c-grade Dave McCormack - 3rd (0:38:58)
d-grade Liz Randall - 2nd (0:36:46 - bettered c-grade winner)

Sat - 60k Road Race
b-grade John Pritchard - 2nd

Sun - 70k Road Race
b-grade John Pritchard - 2nd

Overall
a-grade Roy Clark - 3rd
b-grade John Pritchard - 1st

Congratulations to these riders and others who competed.

Wanted :

Temporary newsletter editor.

Due to the current cold weather your current newsletter editor is fleeing the Southern hemisphere for some cycling in the sun. In pursuit of a real cyclist's tan Nigel is heading off to Austria for four weeks commencing 11th August and returning in time for his brother's birthday. While he is away there will be no race reports, no wit, no wisdom unless someone steps up to fill his cleats.

If you have a spare 20 hours a week and are looking for something to do give me (Nigel) a call on 0409 386 349 or get in touch via e-mail (nigel.kimber@bigpond.com / nigel.kimber@au.fujitsu.com). I will supply you with everything you might need, except the actual week's race reports, and encouragement. Did I say 20, oops, I meant 2.0 - it depends on how fast you can type.

Period of temporaryness will be for newsletters from the race of 9/8/2008 (METEC GSR - newsletter 16/8/2008) to that of 30/8/2008 (Halls Gap weekend - newsletter 6/9/2008) - four meets.

It's not like I'm desperate or something, but, if you only want to do one issue don't let that stop you from applying, if we get four one-edition editors we have the gap covered, if we only get one then that's only three weeks you go without a newsletter.

I know I'm not publicly thanking those who contribute information to the newsletters I produce but they know who they are and they know that I appreciate it. And I do thank you all for your input.
