

Newsletter



Duty Roster

**Saturday 16 December,
Casey Fields**

Colin Mortley (R), Geoff Mackay

Saturday 23 December

No racing

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, tjtop2@optusnet.com.au

Results and a full house of race reports from last Saturday at Casey Fields are inside. This week we are at Casey again for the final Saturday races for 2017 – the Christmas Handicap. There will be a round of graded scratch races, then the first five finishers from each grade will race off in a three-lap handicap. The registration desk will close at 1.45 pm and racing starts at 2 pm. It's a closed circuit with no vehicular traffic, but tail lights are still required.

There was no racing in the Croydon Cycleworks summer series this week. Instead, a good number of Tuesday night regulars took to the hills on Kym Petersen's wheel (see picture below). Results from Wednesday morning's criterium at the Loop in Kew are on page 6.

Note that there will be no racing on Saturday 23 December or Saturday 30 December. There will be a newsletter as normal next week; transmission may be patchy over the holiday season (unless anyone else wants to try their hand) while the Editor tries to clock up some pre-Alpine Classic kilometres.

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Not the METEC Tuesday night crit. Photo: Walter Savini



Graded scratch races at Casey Fields, 9 December

Grade	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
A Grade (9)	Jean-Philippe Leclercq	Chris Hughson	Phil Cavaleri	
B Grade (14)	Mark Edwards	Rob Amos	Chris Ellenby	
C Grade (15)	Walter Savini	Tony Curulli	Rob Truscott	Russell Wheelhouse
D Grade (9)	Adam Hinds	Rob Castellani	Ken Allan	
E Grade (8)	Pat Ruys	Susan Williams	Alan Cunneen	
F Grade (5)	Rod Goodes	Jim Swainston	Brian Farrell	

A Grade

By Jean-Philippe Leclercq

We were nine riders on starting line and with this strong Casey wind, the race was going to be tough. Having raced the day before at Sandown, my plan was to be passive for the first 45 minutes, manage my heavy legs and then see if any opportunities towards the end of the race for a lucky break.

Straight after the neutral lap, Phil Cavaleri launched the first attack. As I saw Phil taking off, my frog instinct took over my plan to sit on for 45 minutes. So I went after Phil, but we were caught back within 500 metres. I thought to myself, I can't even stick to my plan for more than 2 minutes! From there I decided to throw away my '45 min sit on' plan and to participate to the attacks. It was good racing with attacks coming from almost all riders.

The strongest rider was the 10th rider, Mr Casey Wind, and this caused for a few of us to drop, one by one. At the end we were five riders left, including Phil, Chris Hughson, Alex Randall, David Holt and Nigel. And a frog made six.

In the last two laps, I was aiming to take off on the last lap, but this move did not happen, could not find the right timing to do so. Among the six of us, there were some strong sprinters and I was not confident on my chance to place. The only way for me to secure a place was to take off in the back straight

and hopefully surprise the other five riders. I failed to my '45 min sit on' plan but found the right timing for the 'back straight surprise sprint' plan. In the final 20 metres of the sprint (I was gradually dropping in speed and 20 m felt like 2 km!) I had Chris on my left and Phil on my right and both strongly coming back on to me quickly, but I somehow managed to stay ahead, and not by much!

It was good to see Rob Amos back into racing. With very little training (or close to none?) he managed to finish 2nd in a strong B Grade field, amazing performance by Rob. Patiently waiting for Rob to come back in A Grade when he is ready, and to shake up the field as he knows well how to do.

B Grade

By Mark Edwards

Race day Saturday

You know how it goes. A party, an old friends' catch-up, Friday night, pre-Christmas.

You know how it goes. Late, too late. Too many negronis too fast. It's 2.15 am race day, they are finally all gone, and H. says now is the time to tidy up. Yes, really. It's after 3 when the dishwasher is loaded, the folding tables and chairs away, the linen in the washing machine and too many bottles and cans to fit in the recycling bin. It's 4 am and I'm awake, hungover, bladder bloated with a jug of water, attempting to rehydrate, and she's snoring.





Life's good.

Awake at 9 am, very furry. Still feel unclean after a shower. Ticker measures aren't good, can't face breakfast.

'You're not going to race today, are you? We can put the tree up together.' Then I remember how much I love racing. It's race day! Hallelujah! The tree can wait.

Casey. I used to fret about the wind, check the forecasts, think about how tough it can be tacking upwind. Then I thought, hang on, Webby and all the greyhounds and whippets smash you on the hills – they don't even say goodbye at Gruyere. At Casey, at least you've had some results. Harden the f... up, son, the wind and the flat are the fat boys' friends. More power when the weight doesn't matter, hardly. I decide not to worry about the headache and the woozy feeling.

It's windy but! A northerly. I've seen worse but it makes the little ring warm-up a bit tedious. A new referee. Great bloke; no Sergeant Major, though. I didn't get much of the preamble but figured it was going to be much the same as all the other times. Ride around for a bit, race a bit and have a beer afterwards.

We are off. Big Dean, trimmed-down Dean, crashes straight through a ToyBrick wall and powers around, Rob Suter in green helping out, and Rob Amos, *the* Rob Amos, rolling long turns. When I first raced in the mid-2000s, in D Grade, I used to watch in awe as A Grade (and B and C) flew past, scary fast, ridiculously fast. Off the front of A, alone often enough, the steely figure in BikeGearNow kit, pedalling like a madman with blokes urging turns behind trying to wind him in. I could never imagine riding with Rob and the other gods – lean, handsome, fast, and wonderfully friendly and encouraging, especially Rob, talking to us lesser people. I was always grateful for that. Semi pros, club, national and world champions riding with us, on the same track at the same time, even if riding a few laps more.

It's hard in the wind, even at the back. The clubhouse straight, a slight downhill, is turned up to about 15 degrees. Thankfully someone has halved the course to shorten the long twisty bit, no country for old men.

We settle in, a few of us a bit wary about a break but not wanting to be close enough to the front to take a turn. Dean and Rob, Rob and Dean, a couple of others I think. Not me, I'm liking down the back with Chris E. Rob, relentless Rob A., on one leg, is hurting people, and enjoying it. It's good to be back in the saddle.


About halfway in, my plan goes awry and I find myself at the front. Heading upwind. I'm too self-conscious to peel straight off, and decide I have to do a man turn. Into the drops, head down, relax the shoulders and scrape those pedals. It feels alright, not too bad considering. I do a fair enough turn, slow and drift left for the next rider, but nothing happens. I mutter about people missing turns, look around, and I'm a little away. It's too early to be away, I don't want to hurt for that long, but Dean and Rob arrive with a gap and it's put your race face on. Ouch.

We were working away well. I was struggling but honest. Dean was pushing himself. There's gotta be some kind of guilt there. Maybe he's a Catholic. Maybe he wants to impress Rob. But he's going hard. I can see back a bit the pack is falling apart. Gaps, big gaps, ghost riders. Webb, Morris, McCormack, O'Loughlen, Dymond, Suter – good men one and all, all gone. It's still windy and it's still hard and I see Ellenby about 100 metres behind. Ellenby! He's Newman to my Seinfeld. Always Ellenby. He's working with a couple to come across. I dig in and pedal harder but I can hear the *Jaws* music. At the end of one brutal Niclasen upwind self-flagellation, Rob takes it up a notch and we drop the exhausted Dean. It's Rob and me. I'm riding with Rob Amos! Away. How good is this?

But we are now two. Rob is fierce, on one leg, tough and consistent. It's still a long way to go. I'm working at the top end of my heart rate and power. Ellenby! Ellenby has caught Niclasen and now they are working together, along with the Handicapper, and the catch is made. Now we are five. There's new green gauze caps scattered all around the track, even a few on the side watching. We've lapped a couple. It's a lot more fun lapping someone than being lapped.

It's near the end now and it starts to get interesting. Mackie goes away, a long way away. I don't think he meant to, but it was worth a go. No-one chases but





it's hard out there alone and Pete comes back into the fold. Chris attacks again and I follow. Hard. The final selection is made! But here comes Rob, will that man ever lie down? We kick away again and again. I go full gas up the finishing straight. Rob only has one speed, he can't catch us this time! But it's an A Grade one speed, a never stop one speed, and he's clawed back on again, only this time he forgot to bring Dean and Pete, and now we are three, sort of away but not quite. Dean and Pete will not let go so we have to dig in. Somehow I end up taking turns into the wind. I'm usually smarter than that but I can't work out how to break the turn cycle, so I do my best, but I can't hold both legs all the way.

The bell. I'd forgotten about the bell. I had thought this suffering was going to go on forever. On the bell lap I reckoned I was a chance. These blokes are stronger but I might be quicker. Some foxing around the back, going so slow, big Nick and Pete are closing and thinking about a Bradbury. Until Rob looks around, can't really compute B Grade mentality and decides to go from the front. I can smell Chris's brake pads as he pulls up, no A Grade wanted there, thanks. I sit on a man with one leg (yes, sadly, I am that sort of person) and come over at the finish. Another fun day at Casey.

Thanks to everyone both on and off track. It's a good club.

C Grade

By Walter Savini

Packing the bike, I left the two 50 mm carbon wheels on from Tuesday night racing – not a breath of wind in Mooroolbark, in fact perfect conditions. However, a little voice inside said bring along a 24 mm front wheel.

Anyone else notice that its taking way longer to get to the circuit? The traffic is getting way beyond a joke. With the ever-changing development along Clyde–Five Ways I almost missed the turn-off. Park the car, get out and the usual gale was there to meet me. Off comes the front 50 and is replaced with the alloy 24.

Roll up to our officials and was amazed at our Handicapper's generosity in giving me a number in the 60s and a blue cap. For those not in the know, I been battling an ongoing chest infection from July

and only started racing last Tuesday. So, not expecting to be out too long, I was quite happy to start doing some turns. Unfortunately, it also wound up some excitement for the other riders with Rob Truscott putting in some good pacing, followed by Steve Short opting to get some breaks happening, but to no avail. A couple of other riders (numbers I forget) mustered up some courage to battle the stiff breeze and pull some turns. Constant surges during the race must've hurt as I noticed a few riders were mercifully dropped from the pack.

With only a few laps to the bell, Shorty decides to do something, but somehow left me up the front with a reasonable gap. My body said go, however the head was saying stay. One more look back and a further gap of 100 metres appeared, here I just gave what I had and got home with a half-lap lead. Well done to the other placegetters in the usual Casey toughness.

Lungs and heart rate behaved this time, hope it stays this way for B Grade next year. Next week's handicap will be a different story.

Thanks to all the marshals, first-aiders and officials for their consistent help on Saturday.


D Grade

By Mike Joss

Off to the race again in timely manner, and this time I get the route right and get to Casey in plenty of time, however, I note that this week it's very windy and that's not good news to me 'cause with travelling to both Tassie and Canberra I've been off the bike a lot during the last two weeks. On a positive note, if anybody needs recommendations for the best craft breweries in these places, please give me a yell.

We're off for the neutral and I note a few new faces, but that's not unusual for me as I'm a newbie as well. However this time 'cause I don't know who's who in the bunch I'll not only keep an eye on Max Michelson but also Ken Allan, who came over me to win last time we raced here. We really only rolled round to the bell lap with no real attempt at a breakaway but that was probably due to the wind. During that time I note that only a few are brave enough to do more than a few turns into the wind while the rest of us spent the time looking for shelter.





Anyway, bell lap, and with the shorter circuit we're around the sharp bend and into the downhill, I'm sitting fourth wheel and have Adam Hinds, another rider – sorry, I'm not sure who it was – in second wheel and Ken Allan in front of me. Adam digs in downhill and mystery rider sticks on his wheel with Ken and me behind him, and we hit last corner in those positions. However, while Adam is starting to sneak away, mystery rider is slowing, and that's when I make another finishing faux pas as, for the first time in the race, I somehow elect to stay left and keep Ken on my right as we pass slowing mystery rider. So I have wind buffeting me and riders from another group to avoid on my left and Ken on my right and have nicely boxed myself in. Closer to the finish there are no more riders and I try to ramp it up but am thinking I'll probably get 3rd when from nowhere Rob Castellani swoops by on our right to claim 2nd so I'm outta the money.

Sorry I couldn't hang around but had grandad duties to attend to. Thanks to all the officials and thanks to the D Grade boys for another good, safe day.

E Grade

By Pat Ruys

It was perfect conditions at Casey Fields – for me at least – because it was windy and I train into the wind most days. There were eight of us today on the start line Barry Ellem set the pace early on in the first lap, but it wasn't long before we started doing turns.

Since we were on a short course, I knew it was going to be quick. I attacked the bunch most times into the wind, and either J.C. Wilson or Susan Williams would go to the front with the tailwind.

We had dropped Clive Wright and Tony Lateo so there were six left. When J.C. and Susan went to the front, this enabled me to recover, but 8.6 km into the race my front tube blew up and blew the tyre off the rim. J.C. straight away told me that there was a spare wheel in his ute, and as I was making my way to the car park Rob Harris, who was on marshal duty, was running towards me. Before he got to me I told him that I needed a front wheel. He then ran to his car, got his spare wheel, but it didn't have much air in it so he pumped it up. I thought that my race was over but as I only had a couple of laps out the officials ruled it would be OK to race and attack again.

I waited for my bunch to pass me and the five of them were still together. It took nearly a whole lap before my legs felt good again and I attacked the field. I never have ridden with a carbon wheel before. It felt different but great, and now I had two Germans supporting me: Continental on the front and Schwalbe on the back.

The bunch was strung out and I felt great, I attacked whenever I was able to. It wasn't long before there were only two of us left – me and my long-time friend and Dr Alan Cunneen. Susan was only about 100 metres behind us. I eased off and encouraged her to get back on, Alan led us to the line and we received the bell. I didn't know what to expect and the pace did ease off a bit that last lap. Just after the second-last corner I rolled to the front and put it up a few gears, then just after the last corner I attacked again to hold them off for the win. Susan finished 2nd, Alan 3rd and J.C. 4th.

I was extremely lucky to win today and I thank today's officials, Nick Tapp, Rob Harris, Shane Crowhurst and Gerard Donnelly, for allowing me to finish my race. I mustn't forget to thank Shelly Timson, our first-aider, always there for our safety.

F Grade

By Jim Swainston

Great to see some numbers in E and F on Saturday, an aggregate of 13 between the two grades, which gets our numbers over the 60 mark. I was with a distinguished crew in F: Rod Goodes, Doc Waterfield, Laurie Bohn and Brian Farrell, in descending age order. The weather turned out pleasant except for that unrelenting north-westerly.

We were happy to work turns with no attacks, which was appropriate for gentlemen of our vintage, but, as in all grades, the wind started to have an effect towards the end of the hour. Casey is a bit of a rarity as, not only do you get a race, but you get to watch the dramas being played out in all the other grades as well with all the twists and turns.

We were the first group to get *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Brian was doing most of the work in front and led out the sprint with Rod well placed at second wheel. As the adrenaline came into play up the straight, Rod pounced, followed by myself, with Brian





hanging on well for 3rd place. Doc Waterfield paid me a backhanded compliment after the race, saying I was the only one he could get a good sit off. I think this had a lot to do with the width of my beam! We both confessed to being over 90 kilograms. So the moral to the story is, on windy days, get behind a big

bloke. If you are sitting behind a Nick Tapp type, you may as well be doing the turn!

Thanks to all for another safe and enjoyable day. A great night of track racing will be had at Hisense Arena this Saturday night, so get along.

Wednesday criterium at the Loop, Kew, 13 December

Division	1st	2nd	3rd
Division 1 (11)	Agostino Giramondo (N)	Iain Clark (N)	Phil Cavaleri
Division 2 (14)	Tom McDonough (N)	Peter Morris	Dean Niclasen
Division 3 (5)	Stephen Barnard	Mike Joss	Paul James
Division 4 (3)	Alan Cunneen	Barry Ellem	Barry Rodgers

Thanks to Keith Bowen, Barry Rodgers, Laurie Bohn and anyone else who helped out.

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

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