



“Victorian Masters Challenge” Extended to 6 Races

A Joint Statement By Eureka Cycling Club, Geelong & Surfcoast Cycling Club and Northern Cycling

With the success of the first two rounds of the inaugural Victorian Masters Challenge (VMC), and the positive feedback from participants, the committees of Geelong & Surfcoast Cycling Club, Northern Cycling and Eureka Cycling Club (Ballarat) have proposed that the series is extended from 3 races to 6.

The series of 6 races is staged as graded scratch races with riders from each club competing to accumulate points toward the VMC Shield awarded to the club with the highest number of points at the end of the series.

Eureka will be bringing the 3rd race of the series forward from October to May 7th on the 6.3km Burrumbeet Circuit and race 4 will be in Geelong on 27th August, race 5 will be staged by Northern on 12th November with the final race to be held in Ballarat on 3rd December where the VMC Shield will be awarded to the winning club.

The idea was borne out of a concern that Masters Road Cycle Racing was losing momentum with participation diminishing across the sport since COVID. With more races being cancelled each year due to low numbers the 3 clubs who have a strong working relationship proposed the idea as a way to create more interest and participation.

“This series was a chance to promote club camaraderie and race in a unique teams format that rarely exists for the average cyclist” said Stu Brien from the Eureka Cycling Club of Ballarat. *“Team racing involves tactics, strategy and riders working together for the benefit of their club, not just themselves. The feedback from riders at all levels across the clubs has been fantastic”.*

The result has seen some of the strongest numbers racing in years (93 and 123 riders at each of the first 2 events) and the atmosphere is enthusiastic, exciting, with good natured banter between the competitors.

The hope is that this sort of participation will have a flow on effect for the rest of the season seeing numbers increase at club races throughout the year which can only help maintain a positive and healthy environment for the clubs involved. So far, there has been good signs that the event is having the desired effect with Geelong seeing excellent numbers at their Club events since the series started.

“Don’t get me wrong, we want to win this Shield, but the really important impact is participation at Club level which supports the sustainability of all our Clubs for the future” says Tina Stenos from the Geelong & Surfcoast Cycling Club. *“We are already seeing the benefits and we hope our friends at Northern and Eureka experience the same level of uptake with their membership.”*

Details on the up coming events will be posted to the various club’s web sites soon.