

Ramblers Cycling Club – Haumoana School Block Race

10th August 2019

A Grade

A Elite & A Grade started together again with Charlie Tattersfield setting a solid pace for the 1st couple of Km. Max Williams attacked Darryl Strachan half way on that 1st lap, taking 2 other riders. This was shut down pretty quickly by Chris Clark & Peter Meffan. The first 2 laps averaged 42 km per hour.

Lap 3 saw a split in the peloton with 5 riders in the front and 6 behind chasing. Luke Shaw won the sprint with Charlie 2nd. Brendon Vesty was 3rd after sitting on the bunch for 5 laps. Strong rides from Max and Luke Shaw.

The chasing bunch sprint was won by Mike Newall the came Jason Kelly. Great to see Andrew Torrens back racing

B Grade

This one was always going to be Fast and Furious, as the Haumoana “Crit” always is. The question was, who could be fast and furious enough to get away. With the only chance of beating “The ghost of B grade” Alexander to the finish line being a break from the bunch before the sprint, the stage was set to see who could pull it off.

Out of the school gates and with Captain Beast Greenwood doing an admirable job of neutralising the race as instructed, in what has become a feature of B grade races, “Some mothers do ‘ave ‘em” Spencer was very quickly showing his intent to ride the entire race solo to victory. Unfortunately for him, beastly was having none of that, and soon had him under control.

<https://youtu.be/mmAxNoAq8sQ>

Things came back together fairly quickly and settled into the following pattern:

- a) Everyone rides together at a high but sensible pace and catches their breath
- b) The Ghost of B grade manages to disappear to the back, making an indent in the armchair that Homer Simpson would be proud of.
- c) “Patroclus” Kelly seemingly effortlessly rides away only to sit up so abruptly that we all nearly ride into him.
- d) Beastly, Hulky, Simon, Jack, or Dylan, Brice, Justin “One of the Camerons” has a bit of a dig, only to be reeled in, in fairly short order.
- e) Aimee, Shaun, and Carl keep a low profile.
- f) And repeat.

The delightful aroma wafting from the chickens after the turn onto Parkhill Road seems to have a motivating effect, as this turns out to be the attack zone. Patroclus had one of his attempts here on

lap something, but the moment that could have made the race was on the final lap. The smell must have made him angry (you wouldn't like him when he's angry), because "Hulk" Woodward doubled in size, turned green, popped a few forehead veins, and was off with a roar. Greenwood had been caught napping down the hill and allowed himself to get distanced, got to the front intent on clawing him back, but had blown his watt load just trying to get back on, and Woodward was able to establish a sizeable gap. <https://youtu.be/0-q3a2cypXs> he stayed away for about half the final lap but was eventually reeled back in.

About 2km to go and still on TukiTuki Rd, Patroclus has a wee dig which is followed by Hulky. Patroclus quickly does his trade mark sit up, effectively launching Hulky for a break. Hulky is able to push for gap of up to 10 seconds which he holds nearly all the way up Raymond road. With a few hundred metres to go, an attack was launched by Shaun the "Dementor", the Ghost eventually jumped, to try and claw him back, followed closely by the Beast. In the end Hulky didn't have to legs to hold the lead, and was passed by Demanser, Alexander and Greenwood, with mere metres to go. Such a brave effort, and close enough to sniff it, but in the end it was to be fourth for Woodward. <https://youtu.be/OtfMPMzBgl8> Honourable mentions to Jack and Brice for doing most of the work to bring Hulky back.

Round and round we went

Hulky tried to get away

Chickens smell so bad

C Grade

Haumoana School, was the race venue with 5 laps around the school block.

Flat course, headwind finish and a possible bunch sprint was probably anticipated by all 15 riders that turned up. Going around 5 times on a familiar 7km course, may have resulted in everyone being complacent and somewhat predictable. Following wheel and shutting down any attempts of a breakaway successfully was the order of the race.

Justin Cameron made a solo breakaway early on lap 1 before the bunch reeled him in.

Strong riding by Gavin Bush, James Hillard, David McCallum, Doug Thompson and Wayne File kept the pace respectable for this grade. Ramblers Junior Most Improved rider Lily Stephens showed her deserving award by being quickest rider on lap 3 and was prominent throughout the race, not intimidated by bigger riders around her.

So, going into the start of lap 4 Justin Cameron, decided that the outcome of this race will not be down to all 15 sprinting for the finish line. Justin decided to attack, and was followed by Doug Thompson. With another full lap to go, I think the bunch thought that yeah nah...let them go we will catch them easy. Perhaps also on the mind of most, lets conserve our energy for the last lap and stick to the script of a bunch finish...may the best sprinter win.

Final lap, here we go. By this time both Justin and Doug had about a 30 second lead...there were attempts by the stronger riders to generate some momentum to close the gap. We got close, but the rotation weren't working too well and the time gap of 30 seconds were just too great for a

dysfunctional chasing bunch. By the time we got to the finishing straight, with a slight headwind things were getting desperate, as we could see Doug and Justin closing in on the finish line. So, it was basically a sprint for 11 points and below. Lily, Dylan and Hilary led the final sprint in, hotly contested by Martin Honey.

With a 10 second winning margin it was impressive riding by both Doug and Justin who took their chances, back themselves and got the result. Steve Watson holder of the yellow jersey did not race this time, may just have enough points to still hang on to the jersey for another week. It will be an interesting battle heading into the Valley/Raukawa circuit next week.

D Grade

So the race begins and I'm convinced Warren and Simon were of the opinion that the race finished at the first bend, or so it seemed. Well done to Caroline Ritchie for staying with them, as the rest of us struggled to get back on. But we all succeeded and spent the rest of the lap recovering. Then bu---r me the same happens in Lap 2. This time a few more of us were prepared and hung on for grim death. By Lap 3 we were all ready for the onslaught but thankfully things had finally calmed down.

During the bell lap Mike York continued riding off the front. Due the generosity of the rest of us, we allowed him to stay there.

So down the home straight and the field is all together with Chris Jarrett doing the work off the front. Two hundred meters from the finish a group of 7 young riders, (those under the age of 65) decided it was sprint time. I do believe iron man Warren Simpson was victorious, followed by Mike York, Phil Doolan, Mark Waldin, Ian Wright, Richard Williams and Edward West. However, I am not entirely sure as the view is rather distorted from behind. Well done everyone. An enjoyable day.

E Grade

We only had nine riders this week so there wasn't much resting with everyone having their turn on the front except one FOXY Guy that shall remain nameless who failed to go right through the rotation to fine a big guy to hide behind (Eh WARDY) - oops sorry no names. We welcomed Warren Gunn from F grade for the second time he didn't go to well the first time but is getting stronger all the time even putting on the pace in the last lap. And to (big Eddie cat-burglar) Kattenberg who broke a spoke on the third lap Hard luck Mate (yeah right).

When it came to the sprint the cream came to the top with (I live in my yellow jersey) Mary Cullen, Chairman of the board Steve Drake and the ever present Mal Warren storming the line with THE CHAIRMAN taking line honours with Mal second and still in the yellow jersey Mary third.

THE BYSTANDER

F Grade

Another great Hawkes Bay cycling day saw only three cycles line up for the start of the F grade Haumoana School Road block X3 race on Saturday.

After a neutralized start rotation began for about half a lap when one cyclist decided pace was fast enough for them so stayed at back. The pace was steady with the tandem struggling a little up the rise into wind but soon reeling in the other two. End of third lap saw us all still together. Carol was encouraged to go for line honors, which she did followed closely by Dave. So with a first place Carol now leads the points table toppling the Tandem to second. Well done Carol. Great race by all.