

ON THE HAMMER

FROM THE EDITOR

Lots going on lately, a hectic few months of trailwork sessions, organising and volunteering, all paid off with the success of Round #5 of the Vic Enduro Series (VES) held on Nail Can Hill. Winter's a great time to ride, the trails are nice and tacky and solid and you don't sweat out the entire contents of the 3 litre Camelbak you just drank (that makes it sound really gross doesn't it!) It's also nice to be able to ride in some rain for a change.

This issue we have a great article on the 2010 RAMBO series so far from Greg Boyall. With only one round to go on the 8th of August, in Albury, make sure you get along and have some fun.

Shelley Kamevaar tells us about trying to keep a bunch of teenage DHers in line whilst overseas for the World Championships in Colorado in 2001.

Danny King writes about getting the opportunity to host Round #5 of the VES and reports on the days success from an organisation perspective.

I managed to rope Tory Thomas in from her busy schedule to give us an account of how her race went at the VES 6Hr (for which I'm extremely appreciative, thanks Tory!) Tory hails from Mt. Beauty and is frequently making appearances on podiums around the country and locally in the North East, including often at our races. Tory suggested I also give my account, as a first-time Enduro racer. I thought this was a great idea, so we have two accounts of the VES 6Hr for you to enjoy—an experienced racer and first-timers perspectives.

Ant Cheesman tells us about some hard lessons he learnt on a recent road ride, I can feel the pain as I read it. Its some good advice, backed up with the hard encounter to prove it.

Remember, the AWMTB Annual General Meeting is on Tuesday the 3rd of August at 6:00pm in the Stanley A Function room of the Commercial Club. Come along, put your skills and enthusiasm forward and have your say on helping make MTBing in Albury/Wodonga even better next year, and then enjoy the socializing and drinks and nibbles afterwards.

See you there, Eliot van Brummelen.

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RAMBO 2010 PROGRESS

by Greg Boyall

The Riverina Alpine Mountain Bike Open – Series 3, commenced in May with the inclusion of a 35km point-to-point race through the forest between Beechworth and Yackandandah.

Those new to mountain biking may not be aware that up until a few years ago, this race and another point-to-point, the Beechworth to Eldorado, were classic races on the mountain bike calendar and attracted a diverse range of entrants, including many from Melbourne and surrounds.

The huge amount of work required to successfully run such an event had meant that it had been unable to be run by a relatively small club like the Beechworth Chain Gang (BCG), but the RAMBO committee had agreed that it would be a fantastic race to be able to run again, so the call went out for AWMTB'ers to assist. Fortunately, 13 members and friends put their hands up to assist BCG with the marshalling of this event.



Sean Moloney racing in RAMBO Round 1 – Beechworth to Yack. Photo by Eliot van Brummelen.

We had received about 80 pre-entries, so I was anticipating a great start to the series and packed in an additional 20 entry forms and numbers for late entrants. This proved to be

way under the mark as when Wes from BCG kicked off the race, 129 starters jockeyed for positions on the opening climb. That includes the unnamed AWMTB'er lining up to start in the opposite direction.

The race course was mostly fire trails with a bit of single track thrown in, and included a bit of everything, including a muddy creek crossing or two, short steep descents through gullies, high speed long descents and a gut busting rock strewn hill climb. (And also some hiking if you were on a singlespeed.)

It was a relief every time I saw a marshal, as I wasn't keen on trying to backtrack in the event of a wrong turn. The race certainly highlighted the opportunities for some great rides in the future in this neck of the woods.

The race was hotly contested at the pointy end and won by Cal Britten, closely followed by Damian Gillard (AWMTB) and Aaron Knight. There were some noteworthy performances by Dave Schilg, Scott McPherson and Brad Rose, and a fine effort by the four juniors who tackled this daunting course.

Wes and Tim and a few others from BCG did a fantastic job of organising this race and once again, I would like to thank the AWMTB volunteers, whose attendance ensured the successful running of this classic.

ROUND 2 – MT. BEAUTY

Round 2 enabled the team at Mt. Beauty to show us their stuff. As usual, there was plenty to show with a course that offered lots of flowing descending singletrack, as long as you were up for the climbing beforehand. Although there were some outstanding wins in each of the categories, the next 5-6 places in each of the categories was where all the action was with seconds deciding places between riders. It just shows that it's just as competitive mid field as



it is at the head of the pack. While not meaning to embarrass anyone, you're riding amongst some pretty elite company in some of these races. Anyone who followed road racing from the mid 70's will know what I mean. (Hint: check Sport A).

ROUND 3 – BRIGHT

We promised no mud for Bright – but that was just a hoax to get you there. Over 60 riders lined up for some slippin', slidin' fun. Although, I must admit that it was a joy for those in the Expert race to volunteer to start first and carve up the course for everyone else, although the laughs were back on us by the second lap and beyond. The course offered lots of single track through the pine forest between Bright and Wandiligong, and terrain that is a bit of a novelty to Nail Can rock riders.

This was definitely a course to test skills and I am sure quite a few riders wished they had listened to Ross from the Alpine Cycling Club when he recommended tractor tyres. If there is one thing about the RAMBO series – there is no shortage of variety, or KitKats—judging by the supply on the timers' table.

portunity for some real upsets. The course laid out was in perfect condition after a bit of rain during the week and the Wagga crew were even kind enough to leave out the last climb (somehow) before their spectacular downhill run through the Luge and Brad's Pit.

There are always plenty of compliments to Wagga for the way their races are conducted and Ang and the team lived up to expectations again.

To top it off, we all got stuck into the barby at the end, kindly put on by the Wagga team.

RESULTS

I have purposely left results out as you can check these out on the website. Like a lot of mountain bike events, the RAMBO series is as much about having a go on courses offering a wide range of terrain, with a different bunch of competitors, as it is about absolute results. That said, there is no shortage of competitiveness in each of the categories, and with one round to go in Albury on August 8th, we can expect some thrilling one-on-one's in the battle for series placings.

Greg Boyall.



Presentations at Bright. Photo by Paul Bristow.

ROUND 4 – WAGGA

Wagga staged round four and with a turnout of 85 riders, some of whom were putting in their first show for the series, so there was the op-



MANAGING SAM HILL

by Shelley Kamevaar

In 2001 I had the immense pleasure of again managing the Australian Mountain Bike Team for the World Championships in Vail, Colorado. With a fresh recruit of Junior Downhillers, that included the now world famous Sam Hill, you can only imagine the amount of mischief a bunch of teenage boys, in another country, away from Mum and Dad, and with downhill blood running through their veins can get up to.

So here's my story: Sam was 16, the youngest you could be to qualify for the Australian Team, an extremely softly spoken child, or should I say unable to string two words together, which I know is normal for teenagers from Western Australia. John Waddell was the same when he raced the 1997 and 1998 World Championships with me.

We had raced a couple of world cups at Monte Saint Anne in Canada and Mount Snow in Vermont leading up to the Worlds and then spent a week in Breckenridge acclimatising to the altitude at 12,000 feet before the Worlds started. This had obviously given the Juniors too much free time as when we left this location, on inspection of the Junior DH Boys room they had managed to shoot holes in the walls, light shades and in each other with BB guns they had acquired at the local Wal-Mart. After a strict reprimanding, removal of the guns and sincere apology to the landlords and payment for the destruction caused, we moved to our new very flash apartments in Vail.

On Tuesday the 11th of September the day before the Worlds were due to start we awoke to the Twin Towers being hit by the first plane and watched for the rest of the day in horror as it all unravelled on TV. It was an extremely emotional time as our team mechanic and masseuse were Americans and had been living and travelling with us for quite sometime; and of course the realisation we may not be flying home Monday after the World Championships.

Wednesday was declared a day of remembrance around the country and so the races were postponed and a gathering of all of the Teams from all over the world was held with a minutes silence. But while we were paying our respects, Sam and his accomplices were up to no good! On returning to our apartment the Police were waiting. They had been called as 3 young boys had been shooting paint balls with shangi's from the balcony, at some poor innocent Americans playing golf on the course below. I think the Americans already felt like they were under attack with all of their planes being hijacked, let alone having some snotty nosed kids taking pot shots at them while they were trying to play a game of golf.

After calming the police and promising the correct discipline

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would be given to the culprits, a meeting with the XC & DH coaches was called and we made a decision that the boy's involved would not be allowed to race the World Championships. Fortunately for Sam his father was also on the trip and he made a phone call to Cycling Australia and had the ruling over turned until it could be heard properly in front of council in Australia. Obviously with his extremely successful career this was the best thing that could have happened as he won a Silver Medal at these Worlds and returned the following year with me to Kaprun in Austria to become Junior World Champion, and since has become Senior World Champion in 2006 and 2007, and World Cup winner in 2007 and 2009.

I am extremely proud of the fact that we have such a large pool of the fastest male downhillers in the world and have had for a long time. When you turn up to a downhill race in Australia you can be assured that the top guys are posting world-class times.

“Happy trails and keep pedalling.”

Shelley Kamevaar.

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EVENT WRAP – ROUND #5 OF THE VICTORIAN ENDURO SERIES HOSTED BY AWMTB. Article by Danny King

Well it all started one day when Brad mentioned to me in an email that this Tim fellow wanted to know if we were interested in hosting a round of the Victorian State Enduro Series. Brad said he was not too fussed if we did it or not and would leave it up to me... I thought about it for a minute or two and then naively thought, "This is a great idea!" I then replied to Tim saying that we were keen, tee'd up a date and the rest is history.

I have not put so much work into an event before. Many late nights and early mornings, and literally hundreds of emails (getting close to the event it was at least 10 to 15 per day), and all done with the grand plan of the perfect event. Unfortunately the event ended up far from perfect (well in my little brain anyway) but it was still very much a success thanks to everyone's efforts.

Leading up to the event I was very happy with how things were going. Local riders were showing interest as well as those from interstate and everything seemed set for a great event.

Keeping tabs on the online entries really messes with your head. You know you shouldn't worry if there aren't many entries, as most people do not enter until the last minute. But still, as an organiser, you concern yourself with these sorts of things when you really do not need to. Entries were quite slow to start with, each night I would get home and enter the number of entrants into my excel budget. With one week remaining, we moved past the break-even point with 110 riders. From then on I was not concerned, we had covered our costs and whoever enters from now on is a bonus. Thankfully we had a huge surge just before entries closed to bring our total number of riders to over 200. This was a great feeling knowing that our event

was going to be successful and all there was to do now was to show the punters a good time.

Unfortunately the weather forecast was not too flash. The weatherman said 20mm the day before and he absolutely correct. Our fantastic new event centre started to resemble where Shrek used to hang out and gumboots would be the preferred footwear for the day. The plan was to set up all the marquees and everything the day before but with all the rain it made this impractical. We then had to run around very early on the event morning to set up. This made everything a lot more rushed than it needed to be and put us on the back foot a bit. But, all things considered, we pulled through very well thanks to everyone's help.

The event ran quite smoothly. The event centre proved to be a little squished but again the weather was the main problem here as it limited the places that people could set up (especially near the hair-pin.) But once everyone was settled in they seemed happy enough.

We have had some fantastic feedback from our event. Unfortunately the rain made the event centre and finish straight a quagmire, but thankfully, due to the tireless work of our trail crew, the rest of the course received raving reviews and was bordering on perfection.

There had been a lot of discussion about the trails leading up to the event. Some of it negative but you always get clowns like that I guess. Big Dave and Ant had been working every weekend with a loyal group of volunteers to provide the best conditions for everyone on the day. They did a magnificent job—just ask anyone who rode on the day. I had concerns before the race that the event would take its toll on the trails but from what I can see it has only



worn them in and evolved them into something greater. Having the event at this time of year is definitely better than having it in summer with dusty trails. Just need to sort out the soggy event centre. Glock held up well on the day thanks to Ant's last minute paving idea. There were a few people walking but generally people were riding it comfortably, even though it was wet. A big thanks to Doug Rose for not only marking out most of the trail himself but also carrying around a broom and bucket on the morning of the event to remove all the puddles and water off the trails. If this was not done it would have been a lot sloppier out there. I cannot think of anywhere, except maybe Stromlo that would hold up this well after the amount of rain that we had.

I know that Mountain Biking is all about participation and it truly is. But how good was it having so many not only National but World class riders at our event: Adrian Jackson, Paul and Neil Van Der Ploeg, Tory Thomas, Jo Wall, Heather Logie, Andrew Edwards, etc. This really did add some class to the event and it was fantastic to watch them go around.

Thanks to all the people who put their hand up to volunteer for the event. We had a unprecedented number of volunteers helping out with everything from trail work leading up to the event, some people took a day off work on the Friday to help out, other people turning up at 6am on the morning of the event to help set up, around 30 volunteers on the day assisted with timing, marshalling, parking and everything else, it really was a true sign that we have a very strong club and we are heading in the right direction.

A special mention goes to Brad who did the timing on the day. Brad had complete and accurate results ready to go up as soon as the event finished. Brad did a superb job with this and it is one of the main reasons that the event pro-

jected a professional image.

All in all I am very pleased with how the event went. There are many things I wanted to do but didn't, mainly again due to the weather but honestly I think the day was a big success for the club and well worth the efforts that everyone put into it. The biggest thanks once again goes out to all the volunteers who helped out with the event. Too numerous to mention everyone but here are a few of the key players:



Danny King

- Event organiser
- Commentator
- Eddies biggest fan

Brad Spinelli

- Club President
- Event organiser
- Timing guru



Tim Rowe

- Series Director
- Commissaire on the day
- Invaluable support during organising.

Paul Bristow

- Web Design
- Consultant
- Innovator
- Bling Bike Owner
- Guardian of the Can





Dave Schilg and Anthony Cheesman

- Trail Builders – Build/Maintain it and they will come!
- Tireless effort in both liaising with council and leading trail work groups on the weekends.



Heather Schilg

- Chef – Cooking tea for Dan regularly in the lead up weeks as my wife was away and Dan was too busy/lazy to fend for himself. Also a big thanks to Heather for looking after Jayne when she had a bout of Asthma on the day.

Geoff Schilg

- For suggesting to Heather (Mum) that Dan might need feeding :)
- Geoff also did a mountain of work in the days leading up to the event.
 - A big thanks to all the Schilg's actually, they are true legends.



Some fantastic images of the event can be found at the below website. Just punch in your race number and up comes your own personal gallery. Thanks to Steven Rowe for attending our event. All images can be purchased online.

www.mtb-images.com.au



'EXPERIENCED AND NOT SO EXPERIENCED: Two Accounts of the VES Round 5 Albury 6Hr' by Tory Thomas & Eliot van Brummelen

PART 1 - OLD DOG, NEW TRICKS...

by Tory Thomas

For an experienced and fit endurance mountain biker, racing for six hours is relatively straightforward. In the world of Endurance riding, six hours is an "easy" distance—not long enough to require any stopping, and short enough to enjoy the singletrack without resenting the rocky bumps and technical drops.

Although I'm a relatively experienced endurance mountain biker, when I fronted up for the VES Albury 6 Hour, I was also relatively unfit. To be specific, I'd only completed one or two long rides (i.e. longer than a few hours) in a long time, so for me I was very unfit. But, although I knew I was unfit and thoroughly unprepared, I think I quietly hoped that somehow the body would "remember" how to race enduros.

I was relaxed and positive leading up to the race. Although I had no idea how I would cope with the stress of riding for six hours when I hadn't done any appropriate training, I distracted myself with practical tasks such as working out my gels/bidons ration for the race, and whether or not (and if so, how?) I was going to use caffeine. I talked to my coach, Damian Grundy, and my friend and former coach, Mitch Anderson, and Tim and I talked. We discussed pacing and pre-hydration, warm-up techniques and pacing, and then we talked more about pacing. It seemed pacing was the hot topic.

The night before the race, inside my head was full of sound race plans. With access to great coaches during the past eight or nine years and people really experienced in elite cycling, I know how to pace, I know how to fuel before and during a race, I know lots of strategies to help keep me racing as fast and as efficiently

as possible. So, the night before the race, our house was happy and relaxed. Dinner was relaxing, I slept well, and I awoke on race morning feeling energetic and confident.

Tim rode to Nail Can Hill from our house in Mount Beauty, and I drove in with Justine, a friend staying with us from Coffs Harbour. (I'm also coaching Justine, she's racing in the World 24 hour Solo Champs in October.) Justine is super-organised—waterbottles made up the night before, bag packed, she's the perfect athlete with her organisation!

I wasn't running too late, but then I couldn't find my car keys. Eventually I found them after a long search. So, as usual, I was now running very late to the race (sorry Justine!).



Tory playing the Glockenspiel. Photo by Tony Pincan

We arrived at the race just in time to register and take our things to the tent. Justine seemed very nervous. She took a while setting up her stuff, and I happily potted at the car, getting dressed and tinkering with things, waiting for her to warm-up with me. I did wonder how on earth I was going to ride for six hours, but I decided to just ride and see what happens, and thought, "how hard could it be?"



With eleven minutes until the race start, we started our warm-up, so my pre-race warm-up plan went out the window. I'm very accustomed to the last-minute warm-up – with only 8 or 9 minutes, I just rode up the fireroad as fast as I could, then whizzed back down the singletrack to the start line, trying to get the “feel” of the bike and the race track. Justine wasn't warming up well, she was riding tired.

Me, I felt great. I felt happy and excited about racing. The weather was good, the course seemed great, there were lots of happy and excited people at the start line, and I always enjoy racing at the Albury events.

Sitting on the startline, I became preoccupied with the idea of the “fastest prologue lap”. Apparently there was fifty dollars up for grabs for the fastest male and female. For some reason, any rational ideas of pacing and strategy were forgotten, and I became focussed on the prologue lap. I locked out my forks, and planned to ride hard to the top of the hill.

The race started, and I felt great, pedalling up the hills in the pack. I spotted friend and former TORQ teammate Jo Wall, and passed her, hitting the summit as the first girl. I was focussed on descending cleanly, cornering efficiently, pedalling through transitions – I really wanted the fastest prologue lap. I crossed the line as the first female, mission accomplished... and then I continued riding. I was racing like a XC rider, and my well-considered and sound pacing strategy was forgotten.

Pretty soon national Marathon Champ Heather Logie rode past me and I pushed as hard as I could to try and keep her in sight. Then when she transitioned to teammate Jo Wall, I chased Jo... and then I hit the wall. I bonked.

And this is where my race ended, and the suffering began. This is when I discovered that my

untrained body had no “memory” of how to race a six hour enduro. I started to feel the endorphins leave my body around 1hr 11 seconds, and by 1 hour and 24 minutes, I think everything had left my body. I was empty and groveling, and wondering how on earth I was going to ride for another four and a half hours.

Blowing up was a strange experience. It was like I'd been in a trance, racing in XC mode because that was what I'd been doing since for six years. In XC, the races are often about 1.5 hours. Although I wasn't racing fast, I was racing as fast as I could, and I could feel the bonk hit me like a truck (or like a car, I haven't been hit by a truck!) Now I felt a mixture of foolishness and helplessness – I was exhausted, and I hadn't devised a plan to ride out of exhaustion.

Tim arrived during my second hour of racing, and I knew I looked awful because as he ran alongside me up the fireroad hill, he suggested that I “shut it down, just ride, don't race, just get through the next bit”. In all my years of racing, I can't remember Tim ever telling me to switch into damage control mode. But I listened to his advice and stopped pushing on the climbs, and made up time where I could in the singletrack.

I have to thank the volunteers around the course who encouraged me and the other racers to keep on riding. Each lap there were always people to shout encouragement or just smile, seemingly understanding the world of pain I (and some of the other riders) were in. And the other racers were also really supportive, many pretending not to notice the slow-motion pedalling and slumped posture of a crushed solo rider, chirping “you're doing well”, or just “keep going.” And thanks to Tim for making all the decisions for me in transition – handing me gels or Coca-Cola when I was fading or lubing my chain when it was crunching.

In the final half hour of racing, a few solo rid-



ers rode past me and said “if we ride really fast, we’ll fit in another lap!” Oh gosh, sigh. The thought of doing any extra riding was awful, so I think I slowed down even more. I couldn’t comprehend the zest and pace of the riders whizzing past me up the hills. It was like watching people in another race!

When I crossed the finish line, I was satisfied that I’d completed the race, but mainly I was relieved that I could now stop riding. I hobbled to my car and sat down, my lower back radiating an ache I can’t ever recall from any of my previous enduros. I sat alone for more than five minutes, thinking about nothing, just enjoying sitting still. I was shattered. Everything hurt. And I had my post-race bonk, when I’m too tired and too pathetic to eat or do anything remotely useful.

Justine and Tim went pretty easy on me, quietly packing the car and letting me slowly warm back in to life.

I can’t remember much after the start of the race about the event itself—before the race, I remember happy people and friendly race organisers, a fun track and muddy transition area. But during and after the race, all I really remember is the top of the climb, saying hi to Peta or Brendan or whoever was patiently handing out encouragement.

So, in conclusion, the Albury six hour enduro was hard, and during and after the race I’ve fostered a new respect for those people who can ride and race for hours and hours, and seemingly not slow down. At the moment, I cannot fathom riding for six hours and not bonking. I’m avoiding long rides because it’s winter and also because – I confess – I think I’ve gone soft! To all of the people who paced themselves and pushed themselves to keep on going in Albury – respect!

I really hope I can train away the sloppiness and find some fitness, because I have entered the World Solo 24HR Championships being held in Canberra on 9-10 October. And I’ve just entered the JetBlack 12 Hour, being held near Sydney on 7 August, so I’d better do a long ride before then!

Thanks for reading, and thank you for yet another fantastic mtb event :)

Tory Thomas.



Determination. Photo by Tony Pincan



PART 2 - ENDURANCE RACING, THAT'S JUST A LONG XC RACE? RIGHT?...

by Eliot van Brummelen

I awoke feeling a little nervous about what would take place today. Today is the day for me to tackle my first Enduro race. My mind is at ease, but I'm physically restless with pre-race jitters. I'm well prepared—armed with some advice from Damian Gillard on the basic workings of an Enduro, enough food for a 12 Hour, and a dialled bike. Physically, I'm somewhat less than dialled so my race plan is simply to choose a pace I can hold over the whole race and to be ready for a lap every time my team mate comes through transition.

I've been for a couple of rides with my friend and teammate, Nathan Snoxall — the other half of the aptly named "Uni Bums" team. Nathan is a lot fitter and faster than me as he cruises around Melbourne a lot on the roadie and he proceeds to smash me on these practice rides he keeps referring to as 'casual.'... :P

Somewhere on one of these rides I come to realise that the beauty of the Enduro race format is that these differences in riders aren't actually problems to overcome, but instead they are part of what being a team means. Each race presents a different situation to learn from and helps each teammate grow in different areas (the area my teammates most likely grow in is 'patience', but, as its said, "patience is a virtue.") Therefore, even a somewhat mix-matched team like the Uni Bums can have a load of fun and remain competitive and come back better in the future.

I arrive at Range Road at 6am and am greeted by a small army of people already hard at work setting up the event centre. The beams of many headlamps flash around every now and then as everyone works in the lightless morning. The rain seems to have passed, but the

event centre is a muddy mess. As the Sun rises, more people turn up to help and marquees start popping up as riders arrive and secure a site at transition.

We get a good spot on the straight leading out of transition. Race start is quickly drawing near and Nathan gets prepared and warmed up. I fiddle with setting up the timing displays. Its 10am and riders are away! I head back to our marquee to get ready for when Nathan comes around. I'm a bit disorganised and don't expect Nathan to come back in so quickly. I quickly jump on the bike, almost forgetting my Camelbak. Riders are still tightly grouped, with little groups visible from afar, weaving their way around and over the hill on the first bits of singletrack—Low Range and Roxy's. I get into a rhythm quickly. The cold numbs the senses, but the climb up to Glock brings them back and makes me feel very much alive.

The descending begins with the tricky Glock and a queue is in formation. The rocks are slippery and not being able to hold speed proves to make Glock more difficult than when carrying speed—line choice is critical. I get back to transition and hear Dan and Ann Schilg yelling at me, "What's your number Eliot?!" I look down, "Oh no! I couldn't have, could I?" "Who would ever start a race without their race number on?!" Well I did (and in preparing this article, Tory Thomas reassured me that everyone has done it at least once, that makes me feel a little less embarrassed.)

I walk around transition, feeling part of one big community, it kind of feels like being at a big travelling show, taking all the new sights and sounds. I get a couple of minutes to plonk in a chair and catch up with Megan Graham, who's racing in a mixed team of three. "Great to see you Megs!", chat...chat...chat, "Gotta run, got to go cheer someone on," she says. It's about time for me to get ready for my next lap too.



We're at the halfway mark. Nathan and I are both feeling pretty good. Our pace seems to be good as our laps times are consistent, and we are eating well. I've just come in from my "perfect lap"—I climbed well to the top, feeling strong, then pinned the entire downhill from Glock to Dirt Luge, Trail Fairy and Shelobs—all as smooth as silk. I get some stylised air out of the dipper, the bike is silent all the way down Shelobs as I pick the perfect line, section after section, and I catch up to people who overtook me climbing up to the top. I love this feeling! The rain is starting to come down lightly and bringing the cold with it again. We're treated to a very welcome lunch of hotdogs and a drink of Staminade thanks to Tara Yensch, our support crew, cheer squad leader and Nathan's girlfriend.



Eliot on Intestine (complete with a number this lap).
Photo by Tony Pincan.

like I don't have the energy to do it safely, for the overtaker or myself, so I have to pull over and completely stop in some sections. My mind is filled with random thoughts about how good it will be when I get back home to relax. I have no mental control or focus. I feel like I'm pedalling in my sleep and this is some kind of weird dream. Then, suddenly I'm lying on my back just before the big berm on Roxy's; I've gone over the bars. Front wheel caught the edge of a rut. The girl behind me says, "Whoa! That was a really slow-mo one!" I'm fine, I'm just angry with myself for losing concentration in such a stupid way. For the rest of the lap I focus on focussing, but it is that kind of focussing that comes with fatigue. The kind of focussing you find yourself doing when driving a long distance and you know you should stop for a break, but you keep pressing on (stupidly, and with much higher consequences.)

My last laps get progressively slower and slower. By the last lap, I'm packing all the blue snakes into my jersey pocket (à la Katrina Rose) for a mid lap sugar hit. I make it back to the start riding on a well-timed wave of sugar. I feel great crossing the line after six hours. Dan is on the microphone pumping me up hoping to get a sprint finish out of me. I subconsciously put in some extra effort because of the encouragement. I feel like I've really achieved something. A big grin spreads across my face as I cross the line. I look around the transition area and soak in the atmosphere. I love the social aspect and the race format. I know I'll be doing more of this in the future.

An hour after this high I hit the proverbial wall. I feel good for the start of the lap, but then things start to get to me. I'm annoyed by little things that happen out on the track—like how fresh other people look (I don't even stop to think that the freshest faces might belong to members of a four person team.) Overtaking (or being overtaken) becomes a major operation; it feels

Eliot van Brummelen.



LESSONS LEARNED

by Anthony Cheesman

Oh boy did I learn some hard, hard lessons the other day.

- Mistake #1 - get home from work Friday night, not feel terribly hungry, so have a light dinner of cheese and crackers, and later on a piece of toast.
- Mistake #2 - get up pre-ride on Saturday morning, realise you forgot to buy milk on the way home from work Friday, so back up your toast dinner with a toast breakfast.
- Mistake #3 - head off for a road ride with one of the local bunches, with absolutely no idea where you're going, and only take one gel with you.

And unfortunately the surprise ride for this morning is a 140km loop, with 1300 metres of climbing. Oh boy.

I was actually feeling pretty good for the first half. I think I can pinpoint the exact time it all went wrong though - right at the summit of the Granya Gap (300ish metres over about 7km). Rolled over the top, pleased as punch that I had made it, but not feeling real snappy. No acceleration in the legs, general feeling of lethargy starting to creep in.

We took a short break at the base of the descent; hmm this might be a good opportunity to down that gel you brought with you. Unfortunately by then, the damage had been done.

So, 60ish km left to get home, no shops for about 50km, and whilst the bulk of the climbing was out of the way, it was a fairly undulating run back into town - up hill and down dale, OK if you've got some power left in the legs and can hold your speed up the climbs, however if you're starting to bonk, you are going to be in a world of hurt.

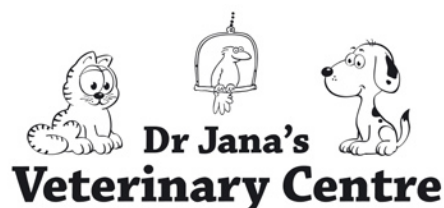
And oh boy, was I.

Things went from bad to really, really bad—really, really quickly. I was trying hard to hang on to the back of the bunch, but the elastic started to stretch and stretch and stretch and SNAP!

And that was that. I was out the back, on my own, in the middle of nowhere, completely out of steam and energy, and wondering how the hell I am going to get home without dying.

Luckily, one of the bunch had seen me crack, and slowed down to offer me a wheel to hang on to. This worked for a little while, but I was still heading down the wormhole, and approaching rock bottom. I was weaving all over the road, legs were running at I reckon 20% (and that's probably being generous), and at my worst, I was struggling to keep my

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eyes open. I just wanted to pull over, crawl into a table drain, and either fall asleep or die. I finally reached my limit, and pulled over to call Els, beg her to come and collect me, and on your way out, if you could pick up 2 litres of coke, a family size block of chocolate, and possibly a kilogram bag of mixed lollies as well. I had clearly progressed from exceptionally bad bonk, to full on proper hypoglycaemic.

Luckily, I didn't have to make that phone call. My saviour turned around, and pretty much force fed me a large portion of fruit cake that he had been saving for emergencies. I think this qualified!

The plan from that point was to grind through the next 10 or so kilometres, to the planned coffee stop, and probably strip the shop dry, and jam as much down my gob as I could. This was the big carrot that kept me going. Probably 50 times in that 10km I had imagined what I was going to buy, working out what was going to be the most efficient way to deliver sugar to my system. Can of Coke? Bottle of orange juice? Jam donut? Mixed lollies? Cake? Or all of it?

And we inched ever closer. And closer. And closer.
And got there.
And the shop was shut. GAAARGH!

Not happy Jan, not happy at all. Luckily the bunch had waited, and someone took pity on me, parting with a spare gel, and half a bidon of Enervit.

And this saved me. I could not believe the difference the gel made. Seriously, within less than 2 kilometres, I was back to normal. Tired, but normal. And itching to get home.

From this point, we were into the last 15km, which sailed along, especially as I had something back in my legs, and could hang with the bunch. But boy, oh boy, was I glad to get home. And oh boy was I hungry.

I won't tell you exactly what I ate when I charged in the door, but it did include multiple pieces of toast with peanut butter AND honey, a significant proportion of the duty-free chocolate we bought on the way home from Europe, and a fair bit of Coke. I think some cashews may have figured in there, but they didn't have any sugar in them, so I really wasn't paying attention.

Really, it's Riding 101. Eat regularly, even if you're not hungry. I shunned that rule (pffft... easy road ride, don't need to eat), and I paid for it, dearly.

Very, very hard lessons learned.

Ant Cheesman.

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August–December 2010 Events Calendar

August

- Sunday 8th - RAMBO Albury (series final).
- Sunday 29th - Super D - Club Champs Rnd 1 - Brought to you by Lavo's Electrical.

September

- Sunday 26th - Short Track - Hovell Tree Park - XC Champs Rnd 1 - Brought to you by AP Delaney and Co.

October

- Saturday 16th - XC Race - Club Champs Rnd 2 - XC Champs Rnd 2 - Brought to you by Kennedy's Wholesale.
- Sunday 24th - DH Race - Club Champs Rnd 3.

November

- Saturday 20th - XC Race - XC Champs Rnd 3 - Brought to you by Fleming Muntz Solicitors.

December

- Sunday 12th - End of year BBQ and Presentations.

