

Melbourne to Warrnambool Cycling Classic 2015

OCTOBER 17



17 October 2015

SUNDERLAND'S CLASS SHINES IN 100TH "WARRNY" BY ROD MORRIS

IF ever the 2015 Lakes Oil Melbourne to Warrnambool cycling classic needed another tag line, it could well read: "The War of Attrition."

It could also be dubbed "The Year that Scott Sunderland stamped his class."

Sunderland, who has already forged a great resume as a track cyclist, today (October 17) won the 100th running – in the 20th anniversary – of Australia's most famous cycling race.



Weather conditions helped make it a tough race, as did the mammoth field of almost 300 riders, who were all attempting to win the race's centenary edition.

2015 CHAMPIONS:

Placegetters in the 100th running of the Lakes Oil Melbourne to Warrnambool Cycling Classic (from left) Alex Edmondson (2nd), Scott Sunderland (1st) and Oliver Kent-Spark (3rd).

Picture: ROD MORRIS



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Originally from Western Australia, Sunderland (26) now rides for the strong Budget Forklifts Racing Team and claimed the biggest road title of the next chapter of his racing life.

In one of the most exciting finishes in living memory, Sunderland had the extra burst of speed when needed, holding out Alex

Edmondson of the SASI/Callidus Cycling Team and the defending champion, Oliver Kent-Spark (search2retain-health.com.au).

For Edmondson, it was a case of déjà vu as he was second to Kent-Spark last year.

No-one could deny that the 2015 “Warrny” was indeed a great race and had all the drama of everything imaginable.

How the race unfolded –

The massive field set off from the Eagle Stadium in Werribee under a rising sun at 7.30am and some riders were under the misapprehension that the “Warrny” was a sprint race.

Some riders even fell foul of mechanical problems while the race was still under control in the Werribee outer suburbs.

The higher ranked riders and teams in the Subaru National Road Series were a little more circumspect in the opening hours of the race, letting momentum, nerves and experience take over.

Aside of the mechanicals, there were several crashes along the way.....hence the “War of Attrition.”



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Several riders were under observation of St Johns Ambulance officials travelling with the race and whilst some were able to continue, a lot didn't.

Two that had early finishes were 31-year-old St Kilda based Amy Bradley, who was involved in a nasty fall near Strathvean Creek (12km west of Cressy).

"There was some loose gravel on the side of the road and more than one rider fell in front of me and I went over the top of them," Bradley said whilst in the hands of medics.

"This is the part of cycling I don't like, but it's part of the game. Bradley is believed to have potentially serious back and neck injuries.

Another rider who could require surgery is Victorian Brendan Rowbotham, who – along with at least two riders – fell on a straight piece of road 176km into race not long after passing through Lismore. Rowbotham suffered facial injuries and was ferried to a nearby hospital.

A total of 16 intermediate sprints and five hill climbs kept plenty of interest in the "race within a race" and ensured the tempo remained at a high clip.

Early leader in the Campolina Racing Sprint Championship was Warrnambool rider, Darcy Woolley who won the sprint at Little River and was then third at the You Yangs.

Soon after that however a number of splinter groups were formed on the road and Tyson Chambers (African Wildlife Safaris) picked up a pair of sprints to jump to the lead.

Fellow breakaway Edward White mirrored Chambers' efforts, winning at Inverleigh and Barunah Plains.

Chambers drew level at Cressy, but then White went on to win the next four sprints to ensure the title was his.

White also won the Scody King of the Mountains Championship, scoring enough points to edge out Samuel Hill (GPM Stulz) although the latter was consoled by victory in the Victorian 200km Championship which was decided at Camperdown.



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Joining, Chambers, White and Hill in the breakaway group that snared most of the minor points were Peter Casey (Swiftcarbon Physio Health) and Nicholas Scoullari (Seight Cycling Team).

But as the race neared its destination the heavyweight teams increased their interest in providing the winner.

Jacob Kaufmann made a valiant attempt to bridge the gap from peloton to the escapees and when joined by his Budget Forklifts teammate, Jack Bobridge, the race was again wide open.

As the 10km mark loomed closer the peloton had basically caught all breakaways and there were an estimated 80 riders still in with a chance of victory.

The two leading teams in the NRS Championship, Charter Mason Giant and Avanti were like hawks watching each other as well as every other main challenger and that was intriguing on its own.

Thousands of sports loving fans lined the streets of Raglan Parade as the brigade of colour swept into view and charged towards the finish line.

Would it be Joseph Cooper (Avanti), Michael Schweizer (AWS), Benjamin Hill (CMR), last year's winner Oliver Kent-Spark?

As it turned out, it was none of them as Sunderland put his track sprinting skills to expert use, thundering to the line to the roar of cycling purists.

"This is wonderful," Sunderland said post-race.

"To win a road race of the prestige of the Melbourne to Warrnambool is an amazing thrill."

"Budget Forklifts has been a wonderful team for me this season and I'd like to think we've had some great results."

"For me, this ranks very highly, particularly as it the 100th centenary celebration race," he added.

Alex Edmondson was understandably disappointed to finish second for the second year running, but he can take solace from the almost endless riders of the previous 119 years that have entered more



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times that Edmondson and have never made it the podium and in some case, have not even reached the finish line.

Kent-Spark's effort in finishing third 12 months after winning the race, is exactly the same as what New Zealander Samuel Horgan did in 2013 into 2014.

Brief results –

Lakes Oil Melbourne to Warrnambool Cycling Classic

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| 1 Scott Sunderland (BFL) | 7.27.49 |
| 2 Alex Edmondson (SAS) | same time |
| 3 Oliver Kent-Spark (STR) | same time |

B Grade

| | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| 1 Ian Johnston | 7.27.49 |
| 2 Marc Loecherer | same time |
| 3 Stephen Fairless | same time |

C Grade

| | |
|------------------|-----------|
| 1 Paul Scouller | 7.50.57 |
| 2 Sam Edwards | same time |
| 3 Haydn Kavanagh | same time |

D Grade

| | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1 Wayne Hildred | 7.50.57 |
| 2 Scott Wells | same time |
| 3 David Williams | +7.19 minutes |

Women

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| 1 Laurretta Hanson | 7.50.57 |
| 2 Miranda Griffiths | same time |
| 3 Chloe McIntosh | +10.44 minutes |



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Campolina Racing Sprint Championship

| | |
|------------------------|-----------|
| 1 Edward White (GPM) | 24 points |
| 2 Tyson Chambers (AWS) | 19 |
| 3 Jacob Kaufmann (BFL) | 18 |

Scody King of the Mountain Championship

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| 1 Edward White (GPM) | 14 points |
| 2 Samuel Hill (GPM) | 10 |
| 3 Peter Casey (SPH) | 5 |

Victorian 200km Championship

Men: Samuel Hill

Women: Miranda Griffiths

First Warrnambool rider: Samuel Lane

Teams Classification

| | |
|---|----------------|
| 1 Avanti Racing Team | 22.23.27 hours |
| 2 Charter Mason Giant Racing Team | same time |
| 3 Swiftcarbon PhysioHealth Cycling Team | same time |

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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