

Melbourne to Warrnambool Cycling Classic 2015

OCTOBER 17



Wednesday, October 14, 2015

WHITEHORSE'S DORIS MARR TO TACKLE "THE WARRNY"

BY MONIQUE HANLEY

BLACKBURN Cycling Club member and local Whitehorse Leader resident, Doris Marr, will create history this Saturday by lining up in the biggest ever women's field in the iconic Lakes Oil Melbourne to Warrnambool road race.

At 278.6km, "The Warrny" - as it is affectionately known - is one of the longest and oldest one day road races in the world.

The 2015 version will mark the 100th edition and 120th anniversary of the great race.

The race length and variable spring conditions, often encountering strong head winds, makes the event an epic endurance battle.

It wasn't until 1979 that women were permitted to enter the race and compete alongside the men – unique in world cycling – and since this time only fourteen women have been recorded as official finishers.

This year, with support from Cycling Victoria and sponsor Anchor Point Village Warrnambool, 25 women will start.

Despite only taking up competitive cycling in the past three seasons, Doris (48) and a mother to two children aged 11 and 13, has shown she is a natural endurance racer.

Early this year she completed a cycling 'Everesting', riding a climb repeatedly in a 24 hour period to accumulate the equivalent climbing gain of riding to Everest: 8848m.

Doris considers the Warrny as one of her biggest challenges, something she is excited to take on.

"I do love challenges," said Doris.

"I never thought I could do 3 Peaks or Everesting until I did. Up until a couple of weeks ago I didn't think I could do the Warrny - but I've done as much training as I can manage with a busy life and I'm as ready as



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ever. I will give it my best shot - once in a life time opportunity."

Cycling Victoria Chief Executive Officer, Kipp Kaufmann said the support and interest from women to compete was encouraging.

"For the past two years there have been no female entrants, but to see such a huge women's field lining up is very exciting," he said.

"We have been pleased to be able to introduce a separate women's category and also introduce for the first time ever a women's 200km Championship which will be determined during the race."

"Racing the Warrny requires skill, stamina, and mental strength, and I have no doubt these women will be up for the challenge."

Doris has also had to manage to find time to fit in training around working in IT software solutions, requiring interstate travel.

She has taken on riding an indoor training in the dark to ensure her preparation remained on track.

But she believes the commitment will be all worth it.

"My goal is to stay upright, find a good pack to race with and finish the race within the 100 minute time limit," she added.

"I will only get this one shot at the Warrny. There is no way I can commit to this sort of training again in years to come. So I will enjoy the pain and hopefully the ecstasy once I cross the finish line."

The Melbourne to Warrnambool starts at 7:30am this Saturday, departing from the Werribee Sports and Fitness Centre, Eagle Stadium.

Follow the women's race on the dedicated twitter account @AnchorPointM2W, the hashtag #WomensWarny and the official race hashtag #M2W15

For further information contact Monique Hanley, CV Women's Warny: 0411-426-539.

What: The 100th Lakes Oil Melbourne to Warrnambool cycling race, covering 278.6km and making it one of the longest and oldest one day road races in the world.

When: Saturday October 17 from 7:30am.



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Where: Departs from the Werribee Sport and Fitness Centre, and finishes on the main Highway in Warrnambool at approximately 2.30pm.

Who: In a field of around 300 riders, 25 of the starters will be women – by far the biggest female field in the history of the event.

Why: For most of the field, the aim is to get to the finish line before the official time limit, which enables riders to be awarded an official Finishers' Medallion. Given that riders must battle wind, weather, rough roads, and fatigue, these are considered one of the most prestigious prizes in cycling. The overall winners of each category also receive cash prizes.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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