

Melbourne to Warrnambool Cycling Classic 2015

OCTOBER 17



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Mixed US Fortunes Return Victorians for “The Warrny”

BY MONIQUE HANLEY

Victorians, Miranda Griffiths and Laretta Hanson can be considered dark horses for this Saturday’s Lakes Oil Melbourne to Warrnambool, for two different reasons.

Both athletes race for US based teams and their 2015 seasons to date both experiencing unexpected outcomes.

Griffiths signed for BMW p/b Happy Tooth (USA) early in 2015 and spent the first half of the season collecting results including a 5th in Stage 1 of the Tour of the Gila.

In June she broke her wrist in a race and flew home for surgery, thinking her season was over.

Back in Ballarat and on the wind trainer, she learned she had been given a spot in “The Warrny.”



ON THE PEDALS: Miranda Griffith in action for the Holden Cycling Team.

“It was midnight in the US when entries opened so I missed out,” recalled Griffiths. “

“I put my name down on the wait list just in case I would be home and fit in time for the race.”

“When I was informed I had been given a spot in the “Warrny” I was still just able to ride on the trainer and was far from fit however it was a great motivator to get my fitness back.”

“It is not the preparation I would have liked for the race but how can I miss out on the first year we have a recognised women’s race?”



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Her renewed focus through the winter months is showing signs of paying off, with Griffiths performing strongly at Amy's Otway Tour NRS race in September while racing with the Holden Cycling Team.

She finished 2nd on the tough 120km Stage 2 and finished in 4th overall.

The notable climber is regarded a strong favourite for the women's 200km championship, and is also considered a contender for overall honours.

"I'll be disappointed if I can't get to the finish line in Warrnambool," said Griffiths.

"But I realise that it is a super tough race and that being a small climber is not going to make it any easier!"

The 2015 story of Laurretta Hanson

IT would be easy to consider Laurretta Hanson's season as the most unexpected in the women's peloton.

An academic and sports scholarship holder at Milligan College in Tennessee, Hanson surprised many with her strong performances at early season inter-collegiate racing.



SPOILS OF VICTORY: Laurretta Hanson with the impressive 2015 Tour of Somerville Trophy. Picture: Gary Ryan

The Fern Hill resident, near Mt Macedon in Victoria, was invited to guest ride with US team Fearless Femme in the South East criterium series in April, where she finished second overall.



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The team promptly signed her on for the rest of the season, where she frequently appeared on the podium across the US.

Her biggest win was at the Tour of Somerville, the oldest one day event in the US.

Despite her successes, the end of season goal in racing the “Warrny” was always in the back of her mind.

At age 20 she will be the youngest female to ever start and one of the youngest athletes in the 2015 race.

“Every weekend I have been off to a new destination for another race,” said Hanson.

“It's been difficult to put in solid blocks of training whilst still trying to stay fit and fresh for crit racing.”

“In saying that, I've still been able to put in some decent weeks with my longest ride totalling 170km through the mountains of Tennessee.”

“Obviously I would just like to finish, but to challenge myself a little more, I would like to be one of the top 5 women.”

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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