

Melbourne to Warrnambool Cycling Classic 2015

OCTOBER 17



Friday, October 9, 2015

TEAM BUDGET LOOKING FOR BIG LIFT IN “WARRNY”

By Rod Morris

IN days of old, riders in road cycling races were allowed pacers who weren't among the official entries. It allowed the entered riders to preserve energy, particularly in a race of the magnitude of “The Warrnambool.”

The 120th anniversary – and the 100th running – of the 2015 Lakes Oil Melbourne to Warrnambool cycling classic is scheduled for Saturday, October 17 and pacers will be in the field.....officially.

As the penultimate race in the 2015 Subaru National Road Series.

For Team Budget Forklifts, manager Cameron Watt has the luxury of world champions, who probably don't pacers, but the will come in handy.

Watt has a team of stars, led by the likes of Jack Bobridge, Glenn O'Shea, Luke Davison, Mitchell Mulhern and Scott Sunderland.....just for starters.

Watt hasn't finalised his team for “The Warrny” as yet, with Watt putting his riders through a vigorous training schedule in the lead-up.

Team Budget Forklifts has been one of the premier outfits in the National Road Series since its inception and is currently fourth on the standings, a position that won't be improved this week as the team is absent from the Jayco Tour of Tasmania.

Bobridge is just one cog of a well oiled TBF crew and his credentials are renowned.

Championship holder at Australian, Commonwealth and World level, Bobridge excels at track or road.

"I love doing the individual pursuit and the individual time trial on the track, while road racing is just fun in any form because anything can happen, Bobridge said.

“But definitely in the back of my head is knowing that you can't make a living riding the track, although at the same time you can make a career from the track. So at the end of the day you have to go road and I know that, because if you make the elite level on the road it can be much more lucrative financially.”

Bobridge is a third generation rider in his family, with his grandfather, father and uncles all above-average performers.

A relative newcomer to road racing after a multitude of track titles have fallen his way, Bobridge set the scene last year of things to come when he finished fifth in the Australian National Road Championship and recorded two top 10 stage placings in the Tour of California.



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Australia's bronze medal pursuit team at this year's World Track Championships in Paris, his potential is almost unlimited.

Mulhern hails from Brisbane and with a coach of the caliber of Tim Decker, fame and glory may just be around the corner.

Mulhern had an interesting start to his cycling career.

"I was watching the track cycling at the Melbourne Commonwealth Games and it inspired me to go down to my local bike shop and buy a racing machine," he said.

Scott Sunderland (25) originates from Western Australia and was a member of Australia's gold medal sprint team at the 2012 World Track Championships in the Netherlands.

A year later he won the "kilo" at the Guadalajara round of the World Track Cup.

His transition to road racing has been as smooth as butter.

He finished third in this year's Australian Criterium Championship and in the recent Lakes Oil Tour of the Great South Coast, he won four of the seven stages, but his GC chances were severely dented in the opening stage criterium, when he lost 21 seconds to the stage winner Patrick Shaw and the eventual tour winner, Patrick Bevin.

After two stages – at the time of writing – Sunderland is the best placed BFL rider in the National Road Series, standing at 7th place, some 57 points adrift of runaway leader Patrick Bevin.

Bobridge is 13th in the NRS and along with Sunderland will be looking for the ultimate test in "The Warrny" next week.

With the prestige of the race added to with its 100th staging, the quest to get their name on the honour board grows a little deeper.

Whilst still not announced just who will represent TBF next week, team manager Cameron Watt has an interesting line-up from which to choose, including: Jack Bobridge, Luke Davison, Glenn O'Shea, Scott Sunderland, Mitchell Mulhern, Jack Anderson, Josh Prete, Kristian Juel, Sam Witmitz, Tommy Nankervis, Brendan Canty, Josh Berry, Brodie Talbot, Jacob Kauffmann, Sam Horgan, Daniel Barry, Myron Simpson, Michael Torckler and Westley Gough.

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