

Development Squad Race Results and Wrap Up, October - December 2011

Development squad riders took part in a number of races, both locally and interstate during the last quarter of 2011. All squad members continued to show good form and recorded many podium finishes, showing the benefits of consistency and following a structured training program. The winter of hard work is almost a fading memory, except that the mornings don't seem to be a lot warmer yet. Mugga Way and Red Hill seemed torturous at the time, but have proved the old adage that what doesn't kill us makes us stronger.

A new intake of squad members in November has been good, and it is good to see the new guys getting stuck in to some solid training and improving their skills. We can expect to see them improve rapidly under Cheryl's guidance and it won't be long before they are taking places on the podium.

Tour of Bright Race Report

The 2011 Tour of Bright was held on the weekend of 3 and 4 December. After a wet and cold week in Canberra we were worried that this year's tour was going to be a very miserable race. However, a bit of luck came our way. The sun was shining and with tops in the low to mid 20s the weather was great (except up the top of Mt Hotham!).

Three riders from the CCC development squad registered in this year's tour: Kenneth and Nathan in men's C and Andrew in Men's B.

The C grade start list had well over 100 riders and B grade more than 70, which ensured that there was going to be plenty of competition. All stages started in Bright, with Stages 1 and 3 having a neutral section through town. Stage 1 was just over 90km and included two climbs; 1 at Rosewhite and the other up Tawonga Gap with a hill top finish. Stage 2 was a 16km time trial and Stage 3 was the Hotham ascent. Stage 3 was shortened on the morning of the race due to high winds, which cut roughly 8km from the Stage!

C grade Stage 1: It seemed everyone was trying to conserve energy in this Stage for the final climb up Tawonga Gap as no one was doing much on the front. The stage was mainly flat except for one (not so challenging climb) half way at Rosewhite and the final ascent. Kenneth and Nathan did some turns on the front when the pace was really slowing, just because it was so boring! One of Kenneth's challenges was always going to be the first technical descent after Rosewhite, but with much encouragement and training from Cheryl since the Canberra Tour Kenneth managed to maintain his position down the hill in front of the bunch. As the other riders were slowing at the crest of the climb Kenneth pushed through to ensure he had a prime position at the front and could do the descent without interference from the bunch. When the bunch hit the final climb up Tawonga Gap, most of the riders were still together. After 80+km of racing, many legs were already fatigued at this point. Nathan maintained his position with the leaders for most of the way, but unfortunately ran out of energy. Kenneth took a steadier approach up this climb and passed those riders falling back, coming in at 13th.

C grade Stage 2: The C grade time trial would be the place where our squadies could pull back some of the time lost on Stage 1. The course was not too challenging; the road was mainly straight and the hills not as big as those we are used to around Stromlo. Kenneth demonstrated

his TT abilities well coming in at 2nd with an average of over 41kph. Nathan managed to improve his GC position after this stage by 11 places coming in at 16th for the ITT!

C grade Stage 3: This should have been the most challenging stage of the race, but due to poor weather the Stage was shortened considerably and the finish was brought back down Mt Hotham by some 8km. In the neutral section through Bright Nathan got a flat and because C grade had no spares vehicle, this cost Nathan a lot of time. Kenneth kept his position in the top 20 and at the start of the climb those riders not prepared for the ascent started to fall back just like in Stage 1. It's just as well that Cheryl gets us to do lots of hill climbing in training, because it pays off! The shortened course threw Kenneth off though. He kept up with the leaders through the first and most challenging section of the ascent, up to 'the Meg'. On the false flat however, he lost time. Unsure of how long the course was and how much climbing there would be he spent most of the final section of the Stage on his own until a few riders came up behind him and they started to work together. It was a shock when after only a few more kilometres Kenneth saw the '2km to go' sign. He realised he could have been going a lot faster and put on the pace for those last few kilometres coming in at 15th.

The final GC places were: Kenneth 12th and Nathan 90th C grade; Andrew 6th B grade. There were a few good lessons learned from taking part in the Tour of Bright.

1. If you have time ,try to at least drive each Stage and learn as much as you can (doing the race the previous year would also help!). Looking at profiles and maps is good, but Stage 3 probably would have gone much better for Kenneth with some firsthand study of the course.
2. Sometimes you need to get to the start line 20 minutes early because with 10 minutes to go half the field is already lining up!
3. Investing in some TT equipment really helps.
4. In a 20 to 25 minute ITT, don't carry food and water. The squadies saw some other riders doing this; it isn't necessary on such a short course and will just slow you down. Strip the bike and equipment down to the bare minimum. If you are well hydrated and fed most people should be able to go 30 minutes without eating and drinking.
5. Always be prepared for a flat. If there is no spares vehicle it is up to you to have everything you need to change or fix a blown inner tube. Don't risk it for the weight savings!

Kenneth took 2nd in Stage 2: C Grade ITT



NSW Grand Prix Criteriums

By Kimberley Wells

Picture yourself warming up around a closed course on the coast dotted with sponsorship banners, photographers and TV cameras. And then add in cyclists bringing experience from across Australia and Europe. Mix it altogether over two days of racing and you have the NSW Grand Prix Criterium events at Wollongong and Cronulla.

I was fortunate enough to be included in the Suzuki/Trek Women's Team for two criteriums over November 26th & 27th. I had the opportunity to mix it with top riders at a blistering pace in 24km criteriums each day.

The scene was set at the Wollongong Lighthouse circuit with waves pounding the rocks below. It was exciting racing with team tactics coming into play with a successful breakaway producing a win for the Canberra local, Jesse Mclean, recently returned from the World Cup in Copenhagen. I managed to have a crack at the bunch sprint, pulling in an 8th place, giving me my first and only point for the races. It was then back to the team Suzuki van for a warm down and eventual return with the Suzuki team of men and women to our accommodation.



Following the buzz of Saturday's event and with a placing in the top ten of forty riders, I was called to start line to stand next to the ten fastest (and craftiest) riders. We were called individually over the loud speaker at Cronulla and TV cameras followed our every move. Much to my surprise, my family managed to catch my start line grin (and possible fist pump) live on Channel 9. My legs burned harder than they ever have along the shores of Cronulla beach and I stayed with the main pack to seal a placing of 11th.

If I think back to one year ago (nearly to the day); I had just joined the ranks of the CCC Development Squad and met Cheryl & the crew in a Café on London Circuit. (Yes, there was a time before Lonsdale Street Roasters!) And now, I find myself riding in a NRS team in races telecast live over Australia with household names as my competition.

Maybe all those Red Hills repeats and Mugga Way TTs are worth it after all!



Road Races

Development squad members put in a good show at all of the road races, despite the threatening weather on a few occasions. There were consistently strong performances as demonstrated by the many podium finishes for squad members, and some have piqued the interest of the club handicapper who will surely be bumping some people up a grade.

Corin Classic - 22nd of October

This is a tough hilly race with the final 13km climb up Corin Road an absolute killer, well done to all squad members who competed in this one.

Nathan 2nd B Grade

Kenneth 1st C Grade

Ben and Dave finished in the middle of the 26 strong C grade field

Honeysuckle Hammer - 5th of November

This was another hilly race with the final climb up honeysuckle making things very uncomfortable for a lot of competitors.

Andrew 6th A Grade

Nathan 2nd B Grade

James 6th C Grade

Tour de Femme - 13th of November

Kimberley has been going from strength to strength this year and showed that with an impressive victory in this year's Tour de Femme. There were some big names in the 459 strong

field, but Kimbers was not intimidated and despite a cracking pace early on was able to recover enough to go early on the slightly uphill sprint finish. Once out of the saddle and locked on to the finish line there was no way anyone was catching her, a great win indeed!

ACT Hill Climb Champs 2011 - 19th of November

Individual time trial up corin, 13 or so kilometres of uphill (with a headwind for some sections), this race was mentally and physically very challenging, but again squad members rose to the occasion and acquitted themselves well.

Nathan	2nd	U19
Callum	4th	U23
Andrew	3rd	Elite
Kenneth	4th	Elite
Jared	4th	MM1&2
BJ	11th	MM1&2

Lookout Hill - 26th of November

With the weather looking decidedly dodgy the numbers were well down and it looked like the hard men of C Grade were the overwhelming majority, it was decided that the grades would be combined into one. The start time was postponed to allow some stragglers to get there, including Kenneth who showed impressive speed in getting out of the car and onto the bike.

Jared	1st	C Grade
Kenneth	2nd	C Grade
Nathan	3rd	C Grade

SFP to Uriarra Homestead - 10th of December

This was the last road race of the year, squaddies were represented across the grades and Cheryl was race director, with BJ and Kenneth marshalls. It was going to be a tough race for everyone, with two laps of the three sisters to test everyone's climbing legs. Jared was competing in his first B Grade race, and acquitted himself well with a deserved third place. New squad member Tom had his first road race, and did very well to finish in 4th place in D Grade.

Andrew	3rd	A Grade
Jared	3rd	B Grade
Dave	3rd	C Grade
Tom	4th	D Grade

Criteriaums

We are now well into the crit season and all squad members are showing the benefits of a solid winter training program. Kimberley has been dominating women's A and is looking very strong. Dave has been given the nudge by the handicapper and is moving up to B Grade after demoralising the rest of C Grade with his effortless speed at the front of the bunch, Jared and Kenneth are not far behind and can expect to be promoted very shortly. This will be welcome news for Nathan, who is consistently attacking B Grade with youthful enthusiasm, finally he will have someone to help him on those breakaways and he might just snatch that elusive first place. Andrew continues to put in solid performances in A Grade and is surely impressing people with his finely sculpted calves. James, Ben, and BJ continue to look strong in C Grade, and with the other squad member promotions coming it will be a good opportunity to score

some more points. The Craigs are looking good in D Grade, and there is always a fight to get onto Craig Rossiter's wheel in the lead up to the final sprint (or if there is a headwind).

Coach Cheryl has been providing much needed tactical advice, which makes the racing more interesting, both to watch and to participate in. There have been a lot of attacks, which has worked well at disrupting the other team tactics, as well as putting us into a position to control the bunch and position us well for the sprint to the line.

After eight rounds of racing development squad members are putting in a good show on the overall leaderboard with Jared 5th overall, Kimberley 7th overall, and Dave 15th overall. Check <http://critsonline.com/> for everybody's results.