

**Velo Club Venta Annual General Meeting**  
**To be held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 25 November 2021**  
**Pre-AGM reports**

**Women's Committee – report from Michele Ward:**

After re-joining the club in 2012 when I moved to Winchester (having raced for Venta in the mid 90's) I am moving to the Chichester area in December so will be stepping down from the club. This will leave the committee to just Jen Robinson at present as Helen Armour is also stepping down.

I have put a message on the women's FB page to see if any interest. I am due to speak to Tina Webster about joining the committee. I personally think she would be a great advocate for promoting/encouraging women's cycling in the club.

We need to try and re-engage those people who's membership has expired and have not been renewed and the new people to the women's facebook group that have yet to actually join the club. For the women's side I think it is really important to work on the social side of the club for them as well as the skills, accessible group rides.

Womens Rides:

The ride uptake since the return to normal activity, has been slow on the women's side. We have struggled with filling leaders for a bi weekly rides, with a handful of leaders picking up most of the rides.

We have a ride leaders chat group on facebook and these are the current members:

Elaine Rust  
Helen Armour  
Jen Robinson  
Kirsty Lewis  
Lucy Porcher  
Nici Ferguson  
Sophie Koenig  
Vanda Kyselicova

I have put a message on asking if these people are happy to continue.

MTB

There are a number of women that ride off road in the club both MTB and CX/Gravel

A group of 6 are joining the Women's MTB ride out at Swinley on the 14th November

Track

There was quiet a bit of interested in having a go at the track, I tried to organise a session in September at Bournemouth but could not get arranged in time. So if the club does run any track sessions, please can they also be advertised on the womens face book page

Zwift

In lockdown we started a Saturday morning ride which was well attended. We banded the ride so that all riders could ride at their own pace but still be part of the group. This was quite successful. It may be

worth considering running these during bad weather/on the alternative weekends to the road rides. We chat on discord and have a Venta Women's chat group set up: <https://discord.gg/AdcJ8HYb>

A number of the women riders in the club regularly race on the Zwift in the Zwift Racing League and the WRTL. As we did not have enough riders to enter our own Venta Team we have been riding with Sotonia.

#### Coaching:

I believe there is a desire and need for some women's only coaching sessions to be provided by the club. This is a great way to build the skill on the women and to give them the confidence to ride in groups and hopefully to progress onto the main club runs for a few.

#### Bike Maintenance Session:

We held our beginners bike maintenance session on the 4th November, which was very well received. The feedback that we have received has been excellent. We booked Littleton Village Hall and had Darren Longhurst for Velo-care deliver the session. We have an intermediate session arranged for 11th November and we currently have 10 women booked onto the session.

#### Women's Social Events

We have arranged for our first social drinks evening since the pandemic – this is happening Friday 12th November. This is something we have historically arranged 4 times a year

#### Women's Road Race

I have completed the British Cycling events survey/event interest form for the women's road race. I have initially put the date of 27th March but have also said we are open to looking at other dates to ensure no clashes etc. And to give flexibility to an organiser. Chris Hughes said he may consider running but would need to look at an alternative date

#### **Go-Ride Coaching**

Richard Sambrook Smith – Go-Ride Head Coach – provided the following summary:

#### Thank you

I would like to thank all the volunteers who gave up their time to ensure that Go-Ride continues to provide a fun, enjoyable coaching series for all the young cyclists that attend.

Malcolm Cross; Toby Leyland; Steve Cox; Chris Hughes; Mark Berry; Start Gilmour; Tansy Gill; James Cocker; Raf Izak; Steve Swift; Neil Wyatt; Paul Barker; Andy Watkins Vicki Passmore and Marium Zain.

In addition to the adult volunteers, we have also been joined by three DofE volunteers – George Whittle, Freya Leyland, and Monty Wyatt.

#### Go-Ride Sessions

With the lifting of Covid restrictions, we have been able to run a full Go-Ride series this year at the Park & Ride, consisting of 6 sessions in each of Spring, Summer and Autumn – with a couple of sessions having to be dropped - one due to travellers on the site and one due to poor weather.

We had a total of 191 riders registered across the whole three series:

- Spring 78 – which included the MTB coaching that we were able to offer. Unfortunately, the area we were using become off limits for the Summer and Autumn series. However, Malcolm's regular Wednesday sessions picked up the MTB coaching at Farleigh Mount.

- Summer 68

- Autumn 45 – the registrations were limited to match the available coaches for the series.

With all the series, it was pleasing to see them sell out within a week of going live – there is definitely a demand.

### Looking forward to 2022

There are three key areas of focus for next year:

Coaches – To maintain the fantastic offer the club has to the community we need more qualified BC coaches. Now that BC are re-establishing their Coaching programme, we should have more regular opportunity to support the parental attendees move from watching, to parent helper to coach – as Paul Barker has done by achieving his Level 1 qualification last year; and Andy Watkins has started as a parent helper.

Session Structure and Content. We will be looking at both the structure of the sessions (e.g., is 3 \* 6 sessions the best way to run the sessions across the year) and the content to ensure that it remains fun, enjoyable, offers challenge, and could never be considered boring.

Links to the Club's racing offer. We will be working with Stuart and Toby to develop the connection between Go-Ride and racing, and ensure that those that want to race have a clear pathway within the club.

### **Racing 2021**

The racing activities this year consisted of an Open Time Trial in April, Open Hill Climb in September, 3 Club TT's, 3 Park and Ride Crits and the Venta Wessex CX event at a new location in the New Forest.

The Venta Road race and the 1st Park & Ride Crit event was cancelled due to COVID restrictions at the time.

### What Went Well:

1. Hosting a successful, well run, well attended Open TT and Hill climb events. Thanks to Darren Lyons and Nick Tarmey for their time and effort.
2. Well run P&R crit events with over 100+ riders on each of the 2 events. Well done to Stuart Gilmour for running these 3 events and cancellations.
3. Hosting a Spring Youth Development Session for over 25 Youth A & B riders similar to a BC RSR. The club also successfully initiated and ran Youth only chaingang rides over the summer.
4. VC venta riders involved MTB racing at XC events regionally, nationally and internationally.
5. New VC Venta Race Kit from Castelli over £15k orders in 2021
6. Road Riders progressing from 4th to 4rd Cat and 3rd Cat to 2nd Cat. Includes Oscar Pratt and Tom Smith.

7. Positive increase in number of youth A and youth B riders representing the club this year, lots of individual results, highlights include Matt Gilmour BC National School of Racing, Alex Murphy BC NSR, number of other riders selected and accepted for BC regional School of Racing sessions.

8. TT rider success in Spring Cup (Matt Gilmour), BBAR (50m, 100m, 12 hr) Nick Tarmey 9th overall Nationally.

9. Off Road ultra-endurance riders completing King Alfred Way, SDW in under 24 hours, Angus, Charles et al.

10. Zwift racing crits and Team Time Trial events over Winter, well organised by Ben Gibbs and Andrew Cowie

#### Areas to Improve on:

1. Need club volunteers to come forward to organise and run events. Same people doing the work.

2. Need Club members to attend club events, limited numbers on some of the Club TT's, they should be viewed as a "social" event with a ride attached.

3. Limited number of riders in Road race Team

4. 2022 focus will be to "target" a few events and get better participation.

5. 2022 Do less events but do them well.

### **Mountain biking and cyclocross training and racing**

#### Training

Wednesday evening training started again in March as soon as we were allowed after lockdown.

This session attracted between 15 and 25 young people and parents. It was a drop-in session with limited structure and mainly consisted of riding around the Farley Mount country park area for approximately 1-1/2 hours. With an age range of nine to 15 and a very varied ability range, extension loops, and short cuts were used to create a worthwhile session for everyone. The support of other coaches Neil Wyatt and Chris Hughes and several parents enabled this session to work with very few difficulties. As the months passed fitness and skill levels increased considerably enabling hillier and more technical sections to be ridden. Parents started to struggle!

#### Summer Racing

The first race of the season was the local Battle in The Bowl cyclocross event. The club was well represented in the U12, U14 and U16 age groups, many racing for the first time, everyone finished with a few youth riders finishing in the top ten.

The senior two-hour race included eleven Venta riders across different age and gender groups this race turned into a real war of attrition due to the severe nature of the course and muddy conditions. Oscar Pratt led the A team home in 8th place overall, Jo Clark was 2nd senior lady, David Spencer claimed 8th in the O40 category with Ed Gurney completing the A team scoring. After a long wait VC Venta were declared winners of the team award.

## Mountain Biking

The opening round of the Southern series held at Checkendon near Reading was the first mountain bike race held in England, not surprisingly it attracted a huge entry from all parts of the country. The racing was very tough in all categories Theo Hoath in only his second race finished in the top ten in the U12 event.

Bobby Buenfield 12th and Pedro Hutchinson 4th rode superbly in the U16 race . Other Venta riders racing were Ty Miller in the O40 race finishing in the top third of the field Rob Tutt similarly in the O50 and Malcolm Cross 5th in the O60 field.

There were five rounds of the Southern Mountain bike series, in other rounds Jo Clarke Expert ladies 2nd, Lydia Gould O60 1st, David Martin O50 top third of the field joined riders who competed in round one. Pedro and Bobby raced consistently throughout the series and tackled several of the National rounds in Cornwall and Wales. In the Southern Championships Malcolm Cross finished 2nd in the O60 event.

## National Mountain Bike Championships

Held in July on a very tough course in Plymouth, Bobby and Pedro raced hard in a very tough field finishing in the top third of the field. Malcolm Cross rode the O60 event finishing 7th

## Cyclocross Training Autumn 2021

Wednesday evening training is now taking place at Westgate School. This is proving very popular with more than twenty young riders attending, this training is more structured around skills that are taught and practiced on different courses that are set up using stakes and tape.

## Wessex Cyclocross League

There have been nine rounds of the league so far. Flying the flag for Venta are:

U12 - Theo Hoath

U14 - Oscar Lawrence, James Spencer, Elliot Gurney, Isla Hoult

U16 - Josh Chamberlain, Monty Wyatt, Harrison Warner, Daniel Lean, Bobby Buenfield, Alex Murphy

Junior men - Oscar Pratt, Pedro Hutchinson, Oscar Hoult, Mathew Gilmour

Senior Ladies - Jo Clarke

O60 - Lydia Gould

O40 men - David Spencer, Jorge Manso, Ty Miller, Ed Gurney, Neil Wyatt

O50 men - David Martin, Rob Tutt, Chris Hutchings

O60 men - Malcolm Cross, Stuart Gough

Senior men - John Fradgley, Ruan Simpson

So far we have had a number of podium results:

Junior men Oscar Pratt 2nd overall

Pedro Hutchinson 1st junior men's category

David Spencer 2nd O40

Jorge Manso 6th O40

Jo Clarke 2nd senior lady

Lydia Gould 1st O50

Malcolm Cross 1st O60

A small group of riders are competing in the Cyclocross National Trophy

Junior men Pedro Hutchinson and Oscar Pratt top 30

O40 - David Spencer 12th

O60 - Malcolm Cross 7th

Senior lady - Jo Clarke 12th

Wessex league Round 7 October 31<sup>st</sup>, Organising club VC Venta, New Forest Care Outdoor Learning Centre

This proved to be a challenging event to run due to some extreme weather conditions and a small number of helpers. Despite many requests for help it was left to a small group to organise and manage the days racing. Thank you to the parents and club members who came along to help setup and run the event and stayed on to take the course down after racing had finished. The torrential rain soaked the ground to such an extent that the course had to be changed several times during the day, despite this, an excellent days racing followed which appeared to be enjoyed by most!

### **VC Venta Club Rides**

VC Venta provides club rides as an opportunity for members of the club to ride together on a regular basis. For many riders in the past, this has been a staple of their involvement with the club, alongside racing.

Up till now, the general format of club rides has been organised Sunday morning club rides and Tuesday evening faster training rides.

The Sunday club rides have been organised as three different speed rides, for differently experienced and different fitness riders:

The Club 14 rides are based around an average speed of 14-15 miles per hour, and distance of 30-40 miles. The Club 14 is a great ride for introducing newer cyclists to the club, and those that are not comfortable taking on the faster rides for whatever reason, or just like that pace and distance. The Club 14 rides have a set of routes run on a rota basis, so that everyone knows where we are going before the ride.

The Club 16 rides are 16-17 mile per hour and range from anywhere in the high 40s to 60 miles distance. The Club 16 is normally ridden by more experienced and fitter riders that want to get in a good ride on a Sunday, with some great routes taking in beautiful countryside and fantastic roads. This ride generally has a coffee stop during it, where the riders can have a good natter and get to know new friends, or catch up with old friends. The Club 16 also runs on set routes on a rota. However, if a rider would like to lead a ride on a personal favourite route, then they can inform the Ride Officers team that they would like to do this. This can help give some extra variety and interest to the rides.

The Club 18 rides are at 18 miles per hour and up, and do not have a set route until the morning of the ride. The Club 18 rides are for experienced fast riders who are mostly looking for this to be a training ride. The route is agreed by the riders who turn up for this ride between them.

Tuesday evening rides are based around two different styles of ride: A faster chaingang type ride and a more normal paced "club" ride, but both are aimed as training rides to improve fitness and riding skills.

The chaingang ride is set on the same course each week, with a different route for summer and winter.

The club ride on Tuesdays is set on a rota of six routes of 30-40 miles.

Over the past year and a half, club rides have of course been severely hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic. At times we have had to suspend club rides completely, then we were bound by the rules of 6 riders only and having to comply to test and trace regulations. It was only in mid-July that we were able to run club rides completely without restrictions and not having to collect every rider's details. This has led to a depression in numbers of riders attending the Sunday club rides. They have not recovered to the levels of participation that was seen pre-pandemic. This may be because riders have got out of the habit

of doing a Sunday morning ride, or are doing other types of cycling, e.g., gravel, MTB, adventure, or that the rides offered on Sundays are not what riders want.

Tuesday evening rides have taken a different path. The chaingang rides have been wildly popular, normally running as two groups of fast and not quite as fast riders with healthy numbers. Conversely, the Tuesday evening "Club" training ride has been suffering from low turnout of riders.

There have been some successes over the last summer. In June we ran an extra Saturday ride to Lepe Beach which attracted good numbers on a great route through the New Forest on a fine day. Philip Allen also ran a longer than usual Sunday club run in July to the Devil's Punchbowl at Hindhead on the hottest day of the year to that point, which was a great day's riding on an amazing day.

We would like your input into whether the club rides are being run currently as you would like them, or if you would like change to happen. Your suggestions for how we run rides are very welcome. Are you happy with a set rotation of rides on Club 14 and 16 Sunday rides, or do you want them to be different every week? Are there other types or schedules of rides that you would like to see? All the rides currently provided are on-road events, would you like to see off-road rides organised as well?

One proposal is for an extra weekday evening social ride on Thursday nights in summer. The ride would finish at a pub, so that we can have enjoyable time socialising after the ride. What do you think about this idea?

Another thing that we would like to ask you about is the start/finish location of the club rides. At the moment we meet at the Winchester Hotel, which is good for parking and having toilets, but does not have other facilities or shelter. We could instead meet at a coffee shop, café, or bar, where we could gather for a coffee before or after the rides. It could give an area to shelter if the weather is inclement as well. What are your views on this?

One thing that would really help the Venta Ride Team is if more people would volunteer to lead the rides on Sundays. It is very easy to lead rides, and you can also take the ride on your favourite roads and to your secret special coffee shop. Variety is the spice of life, and the more different people lead rides, the more fun and interesting they can be.

Here's to some great cycling in 2022, Venta Rides Team.