



CHAIN MAIL – DECEMBER 2021

(The JUNIOR/YOUTH NEWSLETTER Of Velo Club Venta)

As I write this, there is a sprinkling of snow on the ground outside, the cyclocross South regional championships are over and the Wessex League only has a couple more rounds to go. There is no such thing as bad weather for cycling though, just the wrong clothes. If outdoor cycling does not tempt you with the wet and cold weather then why not practice those roller skills, or get in some Zwift racing if you have access to a turbo trainer. Christmas is of course just around the corner as well so a good opportunity to ask Santa for a few cycling accessories. Whatever you are doing during this cold snap, keep cycling.

Stuart Gilmour – VC Venta Youth Racing Officer

Cyclocross – The League Season So Far....

This month we will start with a review of the most recent event which was the South Region Cyclocross championship held at Keynsham near Bristol last weekend which I believe was also a counting round for the Wessex League. Regrettably there was a smaller than usual VC Venta start list in Bristol with some perhaps put off by the long journey and alas the CX gods were not looking favourably on the riders who did travel. In the Under 16 race Bobby Buenfeld got off to a storming start leading up to the first time over the hurdles. Unfortunately a stumble saw him hit the deck and then lose his chain. Going from first to last due to one mistake, Bobby fought valiantly back through the field to eventually finish 8th. I may be wrong but I believe this was Harrison Warner's first experience of a regional championship and in the same under 16 race he battled to 21st place in the boys race. Pedro Hutchinson was our only junior and like Bobby succumbed first time over the hurdles necessitating a long run to the pits and then a lonely ride in a futile chase to finish as 4th junior male. Well done to all three boys for representing the club and displaying determination with a "never give up" attitude.

The Mische Wessex Cyclocross League has seen nine rounds completed already in addition to the regional championship, with only four more rounds remaining. VC Venta has always had quite strong representation in the youth age groups but Theo Hoath has been our youngest and sole entrant in the under 12 age group this year. Consistent performances have seen Theo claim two top ten placings with a best of 6th at Andover Wheelers event and another top ten at our very own VC Venta mudfest at the New Forest Outdoor Learning Centre.

At under 14 James Spencer, Oscar Lawrence, Isla Hoults, Ethan Skipwith and Elliot Gurney have all contested at least one round. James, Oscar and Isla have all ridden to top tens with Oscar perhaps gaining the best result with a strong 6th place in the Reading round.

In the under 16 group Bobby Buenfeld, Alex Murphy, Josh Chamberlain, Dan Lean and Monty Wyatt have all ridden nearly every round. Bobby has achieved two top tens as well as his 8th place at the regional championship and currently sits 6th in the Wessex League table. Alex has three top tens and was only one place off the podium with a superb 4th place in the Andover round. Josh, Daniel and Monty have all maintained consistent performances throughout the season and between them they have all contributed to VC Venta A and B under 16 teams sitting 2nd and 10th respectively in the league standings while our under 14 team are placed 9th.

The junior mens races have seen uncharacteristically small fields but Pedro Hutchinson has been putting in a string of strong rides and currently leads the junior mens league table having won the Sotonia round and also securing three 2nd places. Oscar Hoults has taken his first steps in cyclocross racing with consistent performances. Oscar Pratt has been mixing Wessex League appearances with trips to the London and South East League and in the process has secured wins not only at Cricket St Thomas but also in VC Venta's own round of the Wessex League as well as two 3rd places. Matt Gilmour turned out for his customary one-off appearance in the Wessex League, this year choosing Southampton Sports Centre for his guest appearance.

The National Trophy is a season long cyclocross series consisting of six events and also a separate National Championship. Four rounds have already gone with racing as far afield as Derbyshire, Lancashire, Falkirk and Durham. James Spencer, Pedro Hutchinson and Oscar Pratt all contested round one in Derby with James taking 54th place in the under 14 race, Pedro and Oscar claiming 27th and 44th respectively in the junior men. Round two at Milnthorpe saw Pedro and Oscar Pratt our only young riders claiming 38th and 59th respectively. The further north, the fewer riders with Oscar Pratt the only rider crossing the border for the Scottish round and 29th place before round 4 in Durham where Pedro returned to claim 36th place but sadly Oscar did not finish due to mechanical issues.

Congratulations to all of our riders who have competed throughout the cyclocross season to date and also to your parents who perform pit duties, provide mechanical assistance, taxi driving duties, nutritional advice and sports psychology all while standing in cold, wet and sometimes muddy fields week in and week out.

[Cyclocross Training](#)

Westgate School has quickly established itself as the new home for our cyclocross training squad every Wednesday night. All are welcome for some off-road training whether you are racing or not. We usually meet on the top field nearest to Chilbolton Avenue at 6.30pm for a warm up before cycling down to the main field for more

technical training. Unfortunately, we do have to pay for use of the venue so there is now a £2 cost or £3 for families with payment by BACS to the club account the preferred option.

[National Closed Circuit Time Trial Championships](#)

It seems a lot of time has passed since the National Closed Circuit Championships were held at Thruxton Race circuit in October. This is pretty much the last major time trial event of the year with Bobby Buenfeld and Matt Gilmour representing VC Venta. Both riding in the junior mens category Matt claimed 5th place overall recording a time of 24m 14s with Bobby recording 26m 07s for 12th place overall. The ride by Bobby however was also the fastest in his year group and consequently overall victory in the junior men 14 year old category. Chapeau Bobby. Both boys have had a tremendous year on the time trial bike with even greater things expected in 2022.

[Track Racing & Training](#)

The colder winter months in addition to cyclocross sees an opportunity for the trackies to get some training and racing in their legs. It is not easy for our track riders to get to competition with the nearest track leagues held midweek in Newport or Lee Valley but Alex Murphy has managed to get to three race nights in Newport where he competes in a variety of events normally consisting of an elimination race, a points race and a scratch race. Alex has also been selected to attend the National School of Racing (formerly the apprentice programme) as a guest rider where he is able to train with the best track riders in his age group from across the country.

Samuel Hughes having applied to the regional school of racing programme has also attended his first British Cycling coaching session on the track at Newport.

If you are interested in track cycling there are beginners and more advanced coaching sessions available at Calshot hosted by BC regional staff. Monday night coaching for under 18's takes place every other week on the track at Calshot with the only requirement being previous experience riding a fixed gear bike. The next session is next Monday 6th December. Details in the link below:

<https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/events/details/253206/HSBC-UK-Go-RIde---Track-Club-Cluster---Calshot-3>

Club Stuff

VC Venta will once again be organising various race days and time trials in 2022 with planning well under way for a road circuit series at South Winchester Park and ride, time trials as well as further youth and junior coaching and in-house development centres. I should hopefully have dates available for the January/February newsletter. We are also taking a mixed group of sixteen youth and adult riders to Spain for a warm weather training camp in February.....Covid permitting.

I recently went out on my first club ride for ages joining the club 14 Sunday morning ride and was thrilled to enjoy a thirty mile route with Samuel Hughes and Ethan Skipwith who were both in the group with their dads while Oscar Lawrence was out smashing it in the club 16 ride. On the same day a separate group of youth riders were out with their dads (mums are equally welcome). The club rides are a great opportunity to ride in a group at a controlled pace (club 14 approximately 14/15mph, club 16 approximately 16/17 mph). Why not venture out and join a club ride soon or arrange a group ride with your mates. Cycling really is more fun when you are riding with others.

The club normally host a Christmas dinner and awards evening, however, this festive season there are plans for something slightly different with a New Year social evening at Winchester Rugby Club in the early planning stages which will include the annual awards presentation. Watch this space for more information. It would be fantastic to see a good youth turnout when the date is confirmed and announced.

Training Opportunities

It may be cold outside but road cycling development centres continue monthly at Odd Downs on the purpose-built closed road circuit in Bath. These two hour sessions are aimed at any under 14 or under 16 rider. The next session is on Sunday 12th December and you can enter by clicking on the link below:

<https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/events/details/249280/British-Cycling-Pathway-Development-Centre-Circuit---Bath-4>

There are other road, track and MTB development centres. To find a full list of British Cycling Development Centres and other coaching click on the link below (it's a long one):

https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/events?&myevents=0&fromdate=29%2F11%2F2021&startdate=29%2F11%2F2021&todate=29%2F11%2F2022&enddate=29%2F11%2F2022&day_of_week%5B0%5D=1&day_of_week%5B1%5D=2&day_of_week%5B2%5D=3&day_of_week%5B3%5D=4&day_of_week%5B4%5D=5&day_of_week%5B5%5D=6&day_of_week%5B6%5D=7&zuv_bc_event_filter_id%5B0%5D=33&zuv_bc_event_filter_id%5B1%5D=35&series_only=0&online_entry_only=0&gender=&frontend=1&resultsperpage=30&search_type=upcomingevents&page=2

Other Useful Links

Velo Club Venta Website: <https://www.vcventa.co.uk/pages/11-about-vc-venta>

Velo Club Venta Members Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/VentaRacing>

British Cycling Website (Events): <https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/events/home>

CTT (National) Website: <https://www.cyclingtimetrials.org.uk/>

CTT (South District) Website: <http://www.southdc.org.uk/>

Miche Wessex Cyclocross League Website: <http://www.wessexcyclocross.co.uk/>