



CHAIN MAIL – FEBRUARY 2022

(The JUNIOR/YOUTH NEWSLETTER Of Velo Club Venta)

Belated Happy New Year to all of our youth and junior members and welcome to the first edition of Chain Mail of 2022.

The new year has already got off to a frantic start for many with riders racing the final few cyclocross races, taking to the boards for some track racing at Newport and circuit and road racing starting up all over the country.

Cycling is more than racing though with our young riders regularly joining club rides, learning new skills at track cluster sessions and simply riding together as a social group.

Whatever and wherever you ride in 2022, enjoy it. Remember **#BluesGoFaster**

Stuart Gilmour – VC Venta Youth Racing Officer

Cyclocross – They Think It's All Over.....

.....it is now. The Wessex League organisers are putting their feet up and reflecting on another successful season and we at Velo Club Venta should also be looking back on the season with immense pride and satisfaction at the progress and development made by many of our riders. The full and final Wessex League tables can be viewed here:

<https://www.wessexcyclocross.co.uk/league-tables/>

but in summary this is how our riders finished the season. The league position is based on a riders eight best individual results but as many riders did not actually ride eight events the positions should be taken in context and are not necessarily representative of any individuals strength and ability.

Under 14 - James Spencer 24th, Elliot Gurney 38th, Isla Houlton (one of only two female competitors representing the club in youth or junior this season) 45th, Oscar Lawrence 46th, Ethan Skipwith 61st.

Under 16 – Bobby Buenfeld 8th, Alex Murphy 14th, Josh Chamberlain (sources tell me perhaps the most improved rider of the season) 18th, Oscar Pasmore 23rd, Daniel Lean 30th, Harrison Warner 37th, Monty Wyatt 53rd,

Junior Women – Georgina Pasmore 2nd

Junior Men – Pedro Hutchinson 1st (fantastic season Pedro), Oscar Hoult 7th, Oscar Pratt 8th, Matt Gilmour 9th

Combined together the individual results collectively contributed to some fantastic team performances based on the top three riders accumulated points from each club.

Under 14 – A Team 9th

Under 16 – A Team 2nd, B Team 11th

Congratulations to all who rode this season. Hands up those who think our own round in October was the muddiest race of the year.

Cyclocross Training

As the 2021/22 cyclocross season sets over the horizon an old(ish) man can be found somewhere sitting in his armchair with his feet up and slippers on taking a break. We owe Malcolm Cross so much as a club for his dedication, humour and enthusiasm especially related to cyclocross and all things off road. Malcolm is taking a deserved break from CX training for a few weeks but I am already reading plans for off road rides at Farley Mount and without doubt Malcolm will be back with some structured coaching in plenty of time for the next CX season. Watch this space (or the WhatsApp group) for details.

Track Is Back

Track racing returned to Newport Velodrome in January with the hugely popular Icebreakers event, a series of three omnium style race days. Alex Murphy was our only rider and (I know) will have been disappointed with his overall position on the day but track racing just like cyclocross can be unpredictable and there will undoubtedly be better track and road race days ahead. The good news is that Alex has the chance to go again this coming Saturday 12th February when I think Samuel Hughes may also be venturing west.

The main focus of track racing for youth riders is the National Youth Omnium series. The youth omnium consists of a series of qualifying weekends with your results at each qualifying round going towards a National League table with the top twenty-four youth A boys, youth A girls, youth B boys and youth B girls qualifying for finals day in July. The first weekend of events is on 12th and 13th March at indoor venues around the country before the remaining qualifying rounds move to outdoor venues with qualifying rounds in Portsmouth, Reading and Brighton I believe. If you are interested in track racing and specifically the track omnium series full details and regulations can be found on the British Cycling website here:

<https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/track/article/20150611-track-static-content-Track-youth-omnium-series-homepage-0?c=EN>

Track Training & Coaching

Did you know there are only six indoor velodromes in the whole of the United Kingdom. They are located in Glasgow, Manchester, Derby, Newport, London (Lee Valley) and of course.....Calshot. A standard indoor velodrome is 250 metres long so Calshot is unique in this group with a track length of only 142.85 metres. It is also unique in that it does not have any heating and can be freezing cold in the Winter, but, it is only about a half hour drive from Winchester so with only six velodromes in the whole of the UK we should celebrate this facility. There are lots of opportunities to learn to ride on the track and genuinely there is no better place to start than Calshot. If you can ride there, then you genuinely can ride a velodrome anywhere. I know as I write this that several of you are planning to attend the track cluster session this evening. the next one after tonight is in four weeks on Monday 7th March. Click here for details and to sign up for March when (hopefully) the weather may be a little warmer:

<https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/events/details/257262/Go-Ride---Track-Club-Cluster---Calshot->

If you cannot make the track cluster sessions and are interested in riding on the track, Calshot do regularly run their own sessions. Check their website for details:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/thingstodo/outdoorcentres/ourcentres/calshot/hangar/the-track/youthsessions>

Road Racing

It may only be the start of February but there are already opportunities for road racing on some of our local closed circuit courses. Hillingdon Slipstreamers are organising a six race youth spring series on Sunday afternoons starting on 27th February and running every week thereafter until 3rd April. Hillingdon is a great circuit for riders and spectators and less than an hour up the M3 from Winchester, not far from Heathrow. There is also an exciting early season event at Cyclopark in Kent called Deux Jours de Cyclopark on the weekend of 5th and 6th March as well as racing at Milton Keynes and Redbridge. The full summer of Wednesday evening racing at Portsmouth Mountbatten Centre starts on Wednesday 30th March and happens every Wednesday and some Fridays and weekends until September. Details of all road racing can be found on the British Cycling events pages. If you have any questions about finding events to enter do not hesitate to ask.

If you are thinking about racing at a National level as some of you will be, the National Youth Series dates for 2022 are confirmed with the nearest race a two day event at the beginning of July incorporating stages at Redbridge and Cyclopark. Full details of the National Youth Series and National Championship which returns to Scarborough this year can be found here on the British Cycling website:

<https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/youthcircuitseries/article/ycs1420131119-road-2014-British-Cycling-Youth-Circuit-Series---Schedule-0?c=WA>

Road Training & Go Ride

There are lots of training opportunities ongoing with development centres all around the country. The nearest currently advertised are at Palmer Park in Reading on a Monday evening or Hillingdon. Many from the club previously have travelled to Odd Downs in Bath for coaching at their development centres. Odd Downs do not have any dates currently set on the BC website but keep checking back. Development centres are listed under “Go-Ride” activities. Our own club Go-Ride coaching sessions will return in April with three six week blocks planned. There is also an intention to organise some club youth chain gangs and potentially another couple of our own development centre type training sessions at South Winchester park & ride aimed specifically at those planning to race this year.

MTB XC Series

It will be a huge disappointment for many that the legendary Battle in the Bowl is not taking place in 2022. If riding off road is your thing however the Southern XC MTB series will return with the first round on 27th March 2022 at the same venue, Matterley Basin. Other rounds listed for 2022 take place in Swanmore and Kingsclere. Full details, to enter and to keep up to date with other details go to the event page here:

https://southernxc.co.uk/?fbclid=IwAR1JVAC3k0Or_1RIDiqVFMpWm70lhcohI8vjcUvx632jMcBrOwMoVZbonCY

Club Stuff

Although we still need to be aware that covid is around, cycling activities which by their nature are (generally) outdoor are returning to some normality and there is plenty coming up over the next couple of months to keep you active and social.

CX Social - I hear rumours from the club CX WhatsApp group that you mudlarks are having an end of season celebration at The South Downs Social. I am sure everybody will have a fantastic evening. Not sure who the contact for this is, but if you know, you know.....

Annual Awards - The club Annual Awards are going to be presented at a curry night being held at Winchester Rugby Club on Friday 25th March. All are welcome to attend with a wide range of awards being given out to senior and junior riders in all disciplines as well as some more slightly random awards. Tickets can be ordered via the club website:

<https://www.vcventa.co.uk/events/vcv-awards-presentation-and-curry-night>

Spain Training Camp - On Sunday 20th February a group of members with a strong youth and junior influence will be flying to Spain for a week long warm weather training camp. This is the first time in many years that we have done a spring training camp and if successful we hope to make this an annual trip. A report and photos of the youngsters disappearing up the road in the next issue.

Club Rides – Club rides go out every Sunday morning and following some discussion on the junior WhatsApp group and after discussion at committee recently it is worth reminding everybody of the protocol for joining club rides. If you are aged 16 years and over you can join a club ride unaccompanied like any senior member of the club. If you are under 16 years of age you need to have a parent or guardian with you to ride. I know from personal experience that youth riders can become far too strong for their parents quite quickly and unaccompanied under 16's can join a club ride as long as the ride leader or another adult on the ride is willing to accept responsibility for their safety during the ride. No rider under 16 should be left on their own with less than two members at any time on club rides.

It is also really important to understand realistically where your ability fits within the club ride programme. Do not try to ride with a group which is going to be too fast for you.

As the evenings start to draw out, more members will be returning to the Tuesday chain gang and club rides. Our head coach Toby Leyland is planning to run some youth specific chain gangs as an assessment of strength and ability. Young riders are not encouraged to join a club chain gang until they have been deemed capable by Toby. Chain gangs by their nature are fast “drop” rides where it really is not fair to expect senior riders to compromise their own training to ride with youth riders who cannot hold the pace of a fast chain gang so it is really important to understand your own capability.

Apart from the formal club rides it has been really great seeing some of the VCV youth organising their own group rides. Top work from the lads and dads. Thanks to Chris Hughes for the photos.



Congratulations

Hot off the press, huge congratulations to Alex Murphy who once again has been selected to represent the British Cycling South Region. Following his regional debut as part of the team at The School Games in 2021, Alex has now been selected to ride at the prestigious Youth Tour of Scotland which takes place in April.

Congratulations also to Matt Gilmour who as a first year junior has been accepted to ride in the first senior National race of the season Perfs Road Race which takes place this coming Sunday. Why not ride out and cheer him on. Apart from Matt you will see some of the very best British domestic riders smashing it up and a super strong junior entry as well. Race starts from Southwick at 11am heading towards Wickham before turning left at the Staple Cross junction for the first of five laps of Portsdown Hill.

Some 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/>

Well, I think that is about all for this month. Hopefully you have found something in this edition which will prompt you to get out on your bike as spring approaches. We will be back in April with a review of the Spanish training camp and details of all of the winners at the VCV awards night as well as all of the latest race news and reports. If you would like to submit an article for Chain Mail please do feel free to drop me an email on info@vcventa.co.uk I would love to read and include your stories whether it is a race report, reflections on your training or simply some pics from a ride with your mates.

Stuart