



## CHAIN MAIL - JUNE 2021

### (The JUNIOR/YOUTH NEWSLETTER of Velo Club Venta)

It seems only two minutes since I last sat down to right an edition of Chain Mail. What a month of cycling action May was with thrills and (unfortunately) a few spills, riders competing in national road and MTB events, regional circuit and time trial events, local circuit and crit races and to top it off, the legendary Battle in the Bowl. I hope you are sitting comfortably because this is a bumper edition, catching up on all of the action from the last month in this latest edition of Chain Mail.

Stuart Gilmour – VC Venta Youth Racing Officer

### May Racing In Action

May saw us taking the next step on the British Cycling pathway out of lockdown with national ranking points returning for age groups upwards from under 14 and the thirty minute limit on race times and thirty rider limits removed in mid-May. This meant some longer races for some of the older youth riders towards the end of the month and in to June which is a step up for many of them, but nothing compared to the two hour race at Battle in the Bowl. So where to start?

Four riders travelled to Kent at the beginning of May for the four stage race known as Deux Jours de Cyclopark. What a superb facility Cyclopark is with a road circuit and permanent CX course as well as facilities for BMX. Four half hour stages over two days with sprints to earn bonus seconds made for some superb racing for the overall general classification victory in each group. Oscar Pasmore finished 17<sup>th</sup> from 25 in the under 14 boys group with solid riding over the four stages. Georgina Pasmore was up against a national standard field in the under 16 girls taking 11<sup>th</sup> overall. The under 16 boys were split in to two pools loosely based on first and second year riders. Alex Murphy with a best placing of second on stage two finished 4<sup>th</sup> on GC. A superb weekend from Alex. Matthew Gilmour in the older under 16 group had a best placing of third on stage two to finish 6<sup>th</sup> on GC. A great weekend of cycle racing.



The Southern MTB XC season continued with round three on 9<sup>th</sup> May at Folly Farm near Basingstoke. Pedro Hutchinson and Bobby Buenfeld are leading the way for VCV youth in the off road disciplines currently. Once again the lack of racing during the traditional CX season saw a field stacked with talent taking to the start line at Folly Farm. Pedro rode strongly to take 6<sup>th</sup> place and Bobby also with a good performance taking 11<sup>th</sup> in the youth male category. Pablo Hutchinson unfortunately was a DNF in the youth male race.

It was hugely frustrating that we had to take the decision to cancel the first round of the VCV Park & Ride crits that were scheduled to take place on 16<sup>th</sup> May, but rider safety is always of paramount importance for organisers and due to travellers camped up on our circuit we regrettably could not ensure riders would be safe.

Circuit racing at Portsmouth continues every week on a Wednesday evening with several VC Venta youth riders having made the short journey down to the Mountbatten track during May. Samuel Hughes has been a regular VCV rider and will have been delighted to take a victory.

Palmer Park stadium in Reading hosted the latest round of the National Youth track omnium qualifying events on 22<sup>nd</sup> May with Samuel Hughes taking 12<sup>th</sup> place in the under 14 boys event and Matthew Gilmour and Alex Murphy 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> respectively in the under 16 boys event. The youth omniums for track bikes are a tough days racing with five separate events counting towards a final position.



.....and so to Battle in the Bowl on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May. I think this event deserves its own report later on copied from Malcolm's report on Facebook. Super fantastic to see so many VCV youth and junior riders taking part on a weekend of rather mixed weather.

The latest round of the Southern youth series was the Omega Youth Circuit event at Portsmouth Mountbatten on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> May. The number of riders in all age groups was slightly disappointing but VCV were there with good representation. Monty Wilden rode in the under 12 race taking a podium with 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Well done Monty. In the under 14 race Oscar Lawrence rode strongly to take the second VCV podium of the day with 3<sup>rd</sup> place and Samuel Hughes in 7<sup>th</sup>. The dynamic duo of Murphy and Gilmour bossed the under 16 race, Matt taking the victory and Alex taking second place on the line in a sprint from Ed Charles of Worx Factory racing.



Last but certainly not least a quick drop-in with Oscar Pratt our first year junior who raced in The Colin Lewis Grand Prix at Torbay Velopark in Paignton on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> May. Oscar rode well and finished just outside of the top ten as he finds his feet in adult racing while still inhibited by a restricted gear required for juniors. The gear restriction is undoubtedly a disadvantage on a flat circuit like Torbay Velopark but more suitable courses for Oscar to come as the season progresses undoubtedly.

May finished with the first round of the National Youth Series on a true criterium style circuit at Loughborough University campus. Full report later on along with a summary of the TT activity from May.

## Battle in The Bowl 2021

Malcolm produced a Facebook report which went on the VCV facebook forum but no apologies for repeating here as Battle in the Bowl has become an iconic event in the offroad riders' calendar and right on our doorstep at the stunning venue of Matterley Bowl. Malcolm writes:

"First off were the U12 age group where we had four competing in their first bike race. Theo Skipper, Oliver Foden, Theo Hoath and Ben Phillips lined up having ridden a few laps so they knew where they were going. Tracksuits off ready to go and down came the rain, undeterred they charged off the line, long wet grass meant the biggest sprocket you had to get going was employed, legs burnt hands wiping the rain away so they could see. This was serious stuff! Well maybe not, Theo Skipp realising that Oliver had a bike mechanical jumped off to help his friend and team mate, all sorted back on and racing again (Ed. chapeau Theo. This is what being part of a team is all about). Theo Hoath and Ben Phillips fought on without problems steadily working through the field at 9 and 10 they were two of the youngest riders but not the slowest eventually finishing 13th and 15th respectively. Closely followed by Theo Skipp and Oliver Foden who came in 19th and 20th out of 29 finishers. Smiles all round told everyone that they had enjoyed themselves.

The U14 race which started at the same time was the usual frantic start a few crashes and mechanicals were soon overcome as Oscar Lawrence managed 6th closely followed by Josh Chamberlain in 7th and James Spencer 10th. Frustrations caused by racing mishaps were soon forgotten as the rain stopped and the sun came out briefly!

The 7 lap open race was next, mountain bike or cross bike can be used in this one. (Junior) Sam Murphy worked hard to finish 26th, in the top half of the senior field. The CX elite race was next 2 hours on a cyclocross bike, tyre pressures are vital, how heavy are you, how slippery is that climb and the big descent, how rough is the gravel road. How much drag is the wet grass to knobbly tyres? eating and drinking strategy? Pace judgement? More rain and a chaotic start we are off! (Apologies to Malcolm for the editing but this is a newsletter for our youth and junior riders so seniors get cut.....) As riders start to lap me, Oscar Pratt races past. Oscar is already eating Beef burger and chips as I finish, bodies and bikes are everywhere podium presentations have started before the next lot of rain comes in."

Oscar Pratt finished 9<sup>th</sup> in the elite mens field. An outstanding performance and although not specifically youth or junior related, VC Venta took the team prize as well. Sounds like a great day. I am almost tempted to have a go at this off road stuff.....or maybe not !

## National Youth Series - Loughborough

Following a covid wipeout in 2020 when there was no national youth series, the 2021 series is up and running with the first round done and dusted on a true criterium style course around Loughborough University Campus. Georgina and Oscar Pasmore, Alex Murphy and Matt Gilmour travelled to Leicestershire to compete in what turned out to be a tough event.

There was trauma before even getting to the start line when Matt got a puncture in his tubeless rear tyre following a course recce on the Sunday evening. First puncture in his tubeless tyres in eighteen months. I thought these things were meant to self-seal. The clue is probably that the tyres are eighteen months old, firstly actually not a bad amount of time to run the same set of tyres but probably time to be replaced, and secondly, the sealant inside the tyre may just have gone a little bit solid after that period of time. Saved by cycling friends, some fresh sealant did the job, hole sealed and ready to race, but not until a CO2 canister literally exploded in my hands. This was not the smoothest preparation for a national. What else could possibly go wrong.....

Monday morning started a little overcast but the mist soon burned off making a tough course even tougher as the sun came out and temperatures rose. Oscar Pasmore was first VCV rider away riding steadily to finish 41<sup>st</sup> in his first national race (I think). Great effort Oscar.

The nature of the course meant that splits were inevitable along with several crashes. The temperature continued rising as Georgina took to the start line but a brave ride avoiding the carnage on the road around her saw Georgina home safely in 57<sup>th</sup>. Matt Gilmour and Alex Murphy took to the start line in a field of 77 riders and after the race was stopped following a first lap crash the race soon split following the restart. A strong group of ten got a slight gap with Matt in an equally strong group second on the road and then another split to the third group featuring Alex. National races are a step up again from local and regional races with Matt and Alex racing for an hour and twenty minutes, nearly 28 miles of constant attacks and a punchy climb every lap. Both should be really pleased with their final positions, Matt taking 15<sup>th</sup> and Alex 37<sup>th</sup>. A great weekend of racing. The next three rounds come thick and fast with a single stage race at Hillingdon, a multiple stage race in Kent and then Scarborough including multiple climbs up the notorious Olivers Mount across three consecutive weekends during June and July.



## Time Trial Round-Up

Last but not least in our round up of action from May, a look back at some of the time trials riders have been competing at over at Goodwood, Liss and Wool in Dorset as well as our Own club TT and BBQ at Kingsworthy and a catch up from the South Region National Youth qualifier at Lyndhurst. I know that was in June.....but only just.

The last club TT held on the Kingsworthy, Micheldever loop saw seven VCV youth riders on the start list of twenty eight riders. Not a bad percentage that. Mike Naulls wrote an excellent synopsis of the evening on the Facebook forum so no apologies for copying it here with cameo mentions in the youth letter from some of our more senior riders:

It was always going to be a 'big night' on the P751/10 during Venta's second club 10 mile time trial this year and it didn't disappoint!

"We found answers to those all important questions – would rising star, 'Matt Gilmour' deliver another dominant TT performance? How long could his minute man and real life action man 'Dazzling Daz Lyons' hold him off for? Who would win the TT throw down between 'Annie Dixey' and 'Nicola Ferguson Would Brenda' come through and do a turn on the front during her and 'Isla Hoult's' family 2 up time trial? And can **Robert Tutt** really eat burger as fast as he claimed?

It was scintillating stuff and with the being drama played out on the road, boy oh boy the locals were in for a treat!

They say the TT is the race of truth and so when Nicky passed Annie coming off the A33 into Lovedon Lane, we knew the contest was all over in the Women's category with Nicky finishing in 30:30 and Annie following up in 32:23 – both excellent times well done. Carl Morris (Nieuw Bos) was fastest on a road bike with a brilliant 24:52, but our own @alexander murphy ran him incredibly close in 24:58! There were many excellent

rides on the night on what is a genuinely challenging course, but perhaps as expected the top three placings went to **Neil Towns**, who finished in third place, astride his new TT bike on its maiden bash, completing the course in 24:34, second place went to **Darren Lyons** who followed up a recent new 10 mile TT PB (admittedly on a much faster course), with an excellent 24:04 and winner on the night was of course **Matthew Gilmour** who blasted round the course in 22:27.

Was this a new high for our young hero? Who knows, I'm sure someone else can confirm if it's a new course record. One thing we can all agree on is he's rapid. Well done Matt.

Great to see everyone at the BBQ afterwards too - wow almost like old times!

Times on the night, Matt Gilmour 22m27s, Alex Murphy 24m 58s, Pedro Hutchinson 26m 08s, Oscar Hoult 27m 40s, Oscar Lawrence 29m 24s, Samuel Hughes 31m 30s, Isla (and Brenda) Hoult 36m 26s. Well done everybody who rode.

The South District Youth time trial championship is a qualifier for the National Youth Championship in September and six VC Venta riders took to the picturesque P164 course in Lyndhurst. Samuel Hughes was very first rider away and indeed first rider back completing the course in 28m 53s followed in by Oscar Lawrence 27m 49s, Oscar Hoult 24m 38s, Pedro Hutchinson 24m 28s, Bobby Buenfeld 23m 03s and Matt Gilmour taking overall victory in 21m 27s. Bobby, Pedro and Matt also claimed the team prize for fastest combined time for a team of three riders. All six riders will be invited to the National event at Mallory Park race track in September, although there may be conflicting events as this is the same date as the Southampton Sporterium and the same weekend as the School Games.



Pedro and Bobby sporting new team colours ?



Name the boy band.....

The last word on time trials for this month is that senior member Chris Hughes is looking for a new TT rig having given his to son Samuel. Chris had promised to hand over his TT bike if Samuel could achieve a sub 30 minute ten mile effort which Sam duly delivered in early May on the P164 course at Lyndhurst. Chapeau Sam, and hope you are enjoying the new bike 😊

### Tips From the Coach

The second in our regular feature “Tips from the Coach” this month sees head coach Toby Leyland suggesting a ride without using technology. Shock, horror, riding without numbers.....The back pocket ride:

This ride is about improving your connection with your body and mind. Riding to a set intensity, power/ heart rate is important but it is useful to understand how that pace feels without relying on technology. This ride is about setting a target intensity, riding and then reviewing how close you were to your target. It does not matter what you set as your target, it could be a set of short sprints, it could be a steady zone 2 base ride, and it could be a tempo 80% ride. The main focus is to identify what you think you need, set the target and then see how close you can get with your Garmin/wahoo in your back pocket.

Step 1: set a target intensity, e.g. average HR of 140bpm, Normalised Power of 80% of threshold.

Step 2: your target should be based on how you are feeling and what you think your

body needs for the session today, check in with yourself, do you want a steady state ride or an easy ride with a few hard efforts?

Step 3 put your Garmin/wahoo/device in your back pocket (press start to record the data), or turn it to map only so don't look at the data.

Step 4 go and ride and execute your plan. Ask yourself how does this feel?

Step 5: finish and review, did you over/under achieve on your target, how close were you to your goal? Did you choose the right target, maybe you went too easy or maybe too hard? Listen to your body next time and don't just rely on your numbers.

## Go-Ride Summer

Our next block of go-ride training starts back this coming Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June at South Winchester Park & Ride after a full on six week spring programme. There were still a few spaces available so if you are interested sign up now

<https://www.vcventa.co.uk/events/16-go-ride-summer-series-2021>

## Training Opportunities

It is great writing about so many of our riders competing but success in a race does not generally come without a positive attitude to training. Development centres for road riders continue at Greenham Business Park near Newbury on Tuesday evening. There are also MTB development centres held regularly at Queen Elizabeth Country Park near Petersfield. Use this [link to see what is coming up in the near future](#):

Locally, Malcolm Cross continues to deliver cyclocross training every Wednesday evening meeting at Crabwood car park at 6.30pm.

Malcolm has also arranged a really exciting opportunity for a CX coaching session with Huw Williams at Cyclopark in Kent on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> July. Malcolm posted about this on the VCV facebook forum but details are as follows:

"This will take place on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> July starting at 11.00 and last for 3 hours, the session will be led by Huw Williams the course designer and British Cycling coach. Cyclopark is being used for a round of the Cyclocross National Trophy next season. Cost of the session will be £10.00, the circuit is a 2 1/2 hour drive from Winchester. So that I can gauge interest from club members could interested riders and parents message me to show their interest please. I do intend opening up the day to other local clubs as

numbers of 30 + can be catered for. The day will be organised around ability groups that will ride on all of the key parts of the course.”

If you do not have contact details for Malcolm and are keen to go, let me know ([gilmour999@gmail.com](mailto:gilmour999@gmail.com)) and I can put you in touch.

Back on the road and I am also looking at whether we can introduce some longer supported road rides for youth riders during the summer holidays as well as introducing regular youth chaingangs which are faster paced rides. I was hoping plans would be more advanced for these developmental club youth rides by now but unfortunately the last month has been hectic so these remain works in progress. Watch this space. Developing our older youth riders remains a core objective both personally and for the wider club.

## Jargon Busting

No jargon busting this month otherwise I will never get this edition completed. Back next month...

## The Month Ahead

As you can tell from this month's edition of Chain Mail, cycle racing is back in full swing and it is fantastic to see so many youth riders racing in Venta blue in all sorts of disciplines. A lot of focus this month on some of our older youth riders but many of our youth C,D and E riders have also been taking steps in to the world of cycle racing and there are plenty more opportunities to come over the next few weeks.

Racing continues at the park and ride over the next two weekends with our neighbours from Sotonia hosting racing this weekend Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June and then our next P&R crit event on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June.

Those of you who prefer the offroad stuff, if anyone is interested there are two more mountain bike races coming up, this Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June at Pippingford Park in East Sussex which is approximately 1 1/2 hrs drive but then a little closer on 20<sup>th</sup> June at Checkendon about 50 minutes away. Although MTB events at U12 level a cross bike is fine. You would need a mountain bike at youth level though.

Several VCV riders will be competing in the next two races in the National Youth series at Hillingdon on 19<sup>th</sup> June and “Deux Jours de Kent” on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> June.

Slightly further ahead, a great evening of town centre racing returns on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> July with Guildford town centre races. If you have ever been to the Winchester town centre criterium this is a very similar event with fast paced city centre racing in front of large crowds. Always a great evening.

Local races continue every Wednesday night at Portsmouth. Details of all events for road, track, MTB and summer CX are generally on the British Cycling website with details of time trials on the CTT website.

Everybody who is racing over the next few weeks in any discipline, good luck. Remember, "Blues Go Faster"

## **Forthcoming Calendar Dates**

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June – Sotonia Criterium Races at South Winchester Park & Ride

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> June – Club TT at Old Alresford

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June - VC Venta P&R Crits 3 of 3, S Winchester Park & Ride

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June – Goodwood TT

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June – Inter Club TT v Sotonia v Andover Wheelers

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> July – CX Coaching Session at Cyclopark

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> July – Guildford Town Centre Races

## **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/>

## **...And Finally**

Undoubtedly I have missed something as there is so much going on at the moment but do you know what.....summer is here. What better reason do you need to get your bike out and ride. Happy pedalling.