**VCV Racing Report 2023**

A full season of racing with riders competing for VC Venta in regional, national and international races across all disciplines, Road, CX, Track, MTB, TT, TTT and ultra endurance events.

The focus for 2023 was to build the opportunities for the full range of riders in the club. Covering support for the Junior race team, regional and national level racing, Masters Racing as well as promoting entries at selected events as part of the “Ride as a Team” initiative.

The “Ride as Team” initiative was aimed at targeting specific events and providing a financial discount to encourage more participation on a specific date/event. This was successful for CX, MTB and Circuit at Thruxton. The opportunity for extending this to Masters racing was put on hold due to event cancellations. We will be repeating this initiative again in 2024 across MTB, Circuit and TT events.

Velo Club Venta for the second-year running were 1st ranked club in Road & Track South region beating 55 other teams. This shows the breadth of talent across a number of riders across a number of races. Well done all.

Leading the BC Regional Rankings points table were: Bobby Buenfeld, Sam Talent, Hamish Hunter, Will Hart, Tom Smith, Oscar Hoult, Alex Murphy and Jamie Plumb (the only one not under 20!).

Leading the BC National ranking points were: Jamie Plumb, Alex Murphy, Sam Hughes, Corbin Gregson, Jack Tomlinson, Ali Gardner.

Congratulations to a large number of riders (too many to mention) who have moved up the rankings this year.

**Race as a Team**

We will be repeating this in 2024 and targeting the Southern MTB XC series, Thruxton Circuit Races and a Masters road race.

**Events**

The club ran a number of successful events in 2023 with the focus on putting on events that our members want to ride and race in, they take up a huge amount of time and effort so a big thank to the event organisers and volunteers (you know who you are). Highlights include:

VCV Open TT on Alresford circuit with over 60 entrants, a great start to the season. This has now been branded as The Water Cress TT. Thankyou Ben Gibbs for a very well-run event.

VCV Road Race held as a Regional B Cat 3/4 race on the Littleton circuit with Oscar Hoult on the podium, Bobby lead Junior. Special mention to Ollie Pickering for being Road Captain on the day.

VCV Hill climb, another well run and organised event by Nick Tarmey previously featured in British Cycling spotlight on volunteers. Due to a decline in numbers this will not be repeated in 2024 in its current format.

**Esports**

As part of the extended Venta race offerings, we continued to enter teams, in the Zwift eRacing platform, across all abilities. We entered teams in the Zwift Racing League, WTRL Team Time Trial and the newly created British Cycling South Spring LIZR.

Venta entered 4 teams for Round 2 & 3 of the ZRL which stretched from October 23 - March 24. An eclectic mix across the race classes may not have won many team honours but provided a great opportunity for people to build their fitness working towards their summer goals. At the sharp end there were good results from Matt Gilmour when his road racing and training schedule allowed. Oscar Hoult stood out with multiple strong performances as he went from strength to strength across the season against some very strong international competition.

The curtain came down on the eRacing season with the British Cycling South Spring LIZR. This pitted Venta against local teams such as Sotonia, Bath CC, Poole Wheelers, etc. Venta came 1st in the Team Title with Oscar Hoult standing on the top step of the individual podium, in the blue ribbon A category, holding off some very strong competition.

The start of the 23/24 season has already gone well for Oscar as he has beaten riders who have previously qualified and raced in the World eRacing Championships. We look forward to following his progress!

**MTB**

We had an increasing number of riders entering races including: Southern XC MTB, Central XC and Vittoria MTB monster marathon. This year we also had riders representing the club in the Algarve Bike Challenge, Appeninica Stage race and special mention for Jorge Manso taking on the Cape Epic.

**Chase the Sun, Etape’s, Dragons and Mallorca 312’s**

There is an increasing number of riders competing and completing a range of national and international events. These often require a serious training commitment and a large amount of effort on the day. Each and every rider who pulls on the Venta Shirt on the start line for these events does the club proud, and so to these riders I include a congratulatory nod and acknowledgement of the hard work and commitment you have put in.

**Ultra-Endurance**

Increasing number of club riders getting involved in ultra-endurance riding and racing with events lasting 24hours ++ including Audax, SDW\*2, KAW, Tor Divide, Trans Balkans to mention but a few. Keep up the exploring and adventure riding. Special mention to Nick Tarmey for an incredible Paris Brest Paris 1,200km in 47.5 hours. Chapeau, Legend Status confirmed again!

**Moving On**

We have been fortunate to develop a rich pipeline of successful, talented and motivated riders. We are realistic in how much support we as a club can give them. We will not try to hold onto these riders, instead we want to give them a platform to jump onwards and upwards to the next level. Good luck to those racing in different colours next season, you will always be welcome back at VC Venta.

With thanks to our sponsors in 2023: The London Camera Exchange & The Endurance Habit.