

## SAMCA PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2018

2018 has been both successful and challenging. We have had some excellent racing and great camaraderie but I'm not going to deny that there have been some challenges. I will address those in a moment.

Our race program got off to an excellent start with CAMS in January. What I found most gratifying about this event was the interstate participation. Roughly one third of the road race field were visitors and I guess that proportion extended to the other races in the series.

The 2017/18 Criterium series was well supported as usual despite the dislocation caused by horse and car activities. The summer Crits continue to be popular year on year.

The Tour of Goolwa (Mark7) in February was the most successful yet and highlights the popularity of teams racing. The 2018 field had to be capped at 144 based on safety concerns.

Our road race program of nine Opens and three State Championships ran smoothly.

Having said that I am now going to raise some of the challenges we need to address to ensure a viable future. Masters cycling continues to confront the realities of 21<sup>st</sup> century lifestyles. Workplace and family demands in conjunction with multiple sporting options continue to place membership and volunteer numbers under pressure. We are not alone here. Sporting clubs of all stripes face similar issues.

In pure numbers our racing membership fell by about 5% from 2017 to 2018. A small decline but it continues a trend. Our RR Open fields have been declining for several years. Go back five years and 100 plus riders was the norm. Some of that decline can obviously be put down to the host of cycling alternatives that are on offer. Also, in

SAMCA and interstate the senior age categories are getting thinner. The common theme here is poor personal health or that of a partner. Additionally, older racers seem to morph into recreational riders.

To partly address that problem SAMCA recently took a proposal to the National body to lower the entry age for male members. The rationale being if we are losing members at the high end let's get them as early as possible at the low end. Our proposal was accepted but will not be implemented until the AVCC AGM in May 2019 due to constitutional requirements. We don't anticipate a flood of new entrants but when this was discussed at the national level, there were multiple anecdotes around refusing membership requests from males aged 30/35. You can guess where these potential members probably finished up.

With membership numbers in mind, I as President over the past twelve months have stressed the importance of maintaining and hopefully increasing our market share by doing things more efficiently and freshening our RR program. For example, to alleviate the date clashes that annoy our members usually in spring events, the 2019 race program from July through December will be subject to change. We anticipate formalising the July/December program in May.

Regarding the race program here are a few proposed changes/additions.

There will be a TTT at Milang hosted by Southern Vets and open to all clubs.

VLCC anticipate moving two of their three Opens from Outer Harbour. The first in February is tentatively planned for the Mount Crawford area and the second later in the year for Lyndoch.

Adelaide Hills will no longer stage the August Open at Burford Hill due to traffic volumes in the area. This event will very likely move to

the Mt Torrens/Tunkillo/Birdwood Loop. The Hills also plans two Kermeese style events in 2019, both of which will be Invitations and open to all members.

Having been in the Presidents chair for twelve months, I am of the view that at some point our three clubs will have to merge or at least collaborate more closely to secure SAMCA's long term future. Some people will see this comment as heresy but I call it reality. SA and Victoria are the only states with multiple clubs. WA, QLD and ACT are single entities and race with fields of 100 or so. TAS has one very small club. And as an aside, the AVCC has no presence in NSW.

With apologies to certain people in the room, our refereeing ranks are ageing and in recognition of that Chief Referee Bob Cotton has been actively mentoring younger referees during the past twelve months. I thank Bob and his colleagues for their efforts. Without refs we don't race. Bob will continue in the Chief Referee position in 2019.

SAMCA anticipates strong support for the CAMS series in January. The road race will go up Willunga Hill which was a talking point amongst my interstate colleagues in Melbourne last September. The CAMS sub committee chaired by Robert Freak has been working on the event for several months. I thank all sub committee members.

Also looking forward Adelaide (SAMCA) will host the 2020 AVCC National Titles.

As I mentioned in a Presidential post several months ago, road racing in the eastern states and WA is increasingly being run on either closed circuits (industrial estates) or multiple laps of short courses. This is in response to the ever tightening compliance requirements from police and local/state governments. As an example of how the noose is tightening, ACT Masters in the past have conducted road races over the NSW border. Recently their access to those roads was curtailed due to a government directive. My interstate colleagues

would kill to be able to offer their members race circuits of 50/60ks and beyond. In light of the above difficulties, the SAMCA committee continues to be aware of the importance of working within the regulatory framework. Riders need to play their part too.

Without mentioning names, I wish to acknowledge the contribution of all committee members and volunteers who have contributed over the past twelve months.

I will mention one person tonight and that is Georg Thierry. I'm sure you have all been delighted at the functionality of the new website. Georg put endless hours into that project at minimal cost to SAMCA.

Finally, I remind you that Paz Russo died early in the year. He was something of an icon at SAMCA and a past President. In his memory the Southern Vets Twin Peaks event scheduled for December 02 will carry Paz's name.

Thank you

David Degenhardt

SAMCA President

