

AN INTRODUCTION TO CRITERIUM RACING

WITH A FOCUS ON RACING AT THE TEARDROP





INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The topics covered by this presentation are:

- The local scene in Melbourne
- An overview of criterium (crit) racing
 - grading, field sizes, duration
- A discussion on racing strategies, tactics, and techniques for crit racing
- Familiarisation with the world famous Teardrop course
- Rules and safety

The objective of this presentation is to provide general information about crit racing, to ensure that people who are new to the discipline are aware of the fundamentals, and to make things safer and more enjoyable for everyone.

THE LOCAL CRIT SCENE



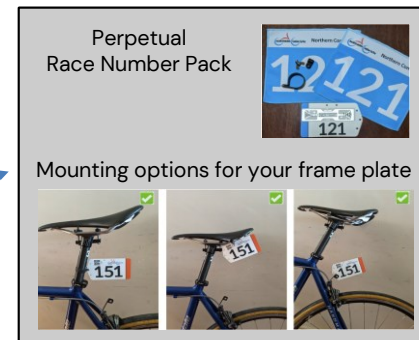
HCC's Summertime Crits:

- **When:** Wednesday evenings from October 5th to March 29th
- **Where:** [Teardrop on Yarra Boulevard](#)
- **Grades:**
 - Juniors: all season
 - Open A to D: all season
 - Women's: Oct 19–Mar 15th*
- **Briefing times:**
 - Juniors – 5:20PM
 - Open B & D – 5:50PM
 - Open A & C – 6:30PM
 - Women – 7:10pm
- **Enter** and pay via [EntryBoss](#)
- **Bring** your perpetual race number and frame plate with you or purchase one via EntryBoss and collect it at the rego desk when you first race

Other clubs offering crit races:

- [Carnegie Caulfield Cycling Club](#)
 - [Summer Sunday mornings, Glenvale Crescent, Mulgrave](#)
 - [Summer Tuesday and Thursday evenings, Sandown race track](#)
- [Southern Masters Cycling Club](#)
 - [Sunday mornings, Casey Fields](#)
- [Northern Cycling](#)
 - [Sunday mornings, National Boulevard, Campbellfield](#)

* Note: Insufficient daylight to safely run all grades in the first two and last two weeks of the season. We encourage stronger women to enter open grades for these.





GRADING, FIELD SIZES, DURATION

Grading:

- Ability-based (A, B, C, etc.)
- Age based
 - Junior, Elite, or Masters
 - Occasionally more granular – Junior and Masters sub-categories

Structure: 'X' minutes plus 1 or 3 laps. The HCC crits, when daylight allows, are:

- A Grade 40 min + 3 laps
- B Grade 35 min + 3 laps
- C Grade 30 min + 3 laps
- D Grade 25 min + 3 laps

Other club crits are generally longer as their courses tend to be flatter and less demanding. Others like Northern Cycling and Eastern Cycling have 'X' minutes plus one lap.

Field sizes typically of 30 to 40 per grade. Many clubs run two grades at a time separated by half a lap.

STRATEGIES, TACTICS, AND TECHNIQUES



Crit races tend to be intense and very punchy, especially out of corners and up hills.

Conserve your energy. Very often the winner is a rider who appears for the first time just before the finish.

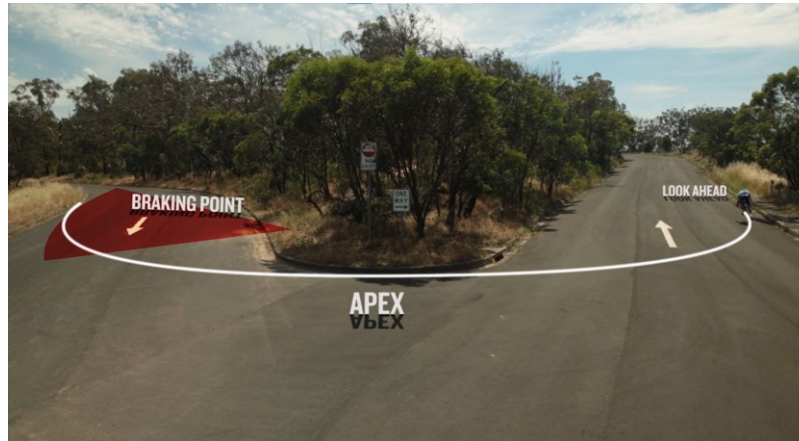
Be at the front, but not necessarily on the front of the bunch, particularly going into corners.

Be aware of where you are in the bunch and how this can change quickly.

Be prepared to chase down decisive breaks, but don't do all the work.

Often these races come down to a bunch sprint.

Cornering, especially at the Teardrop, is crucial. Click on the next slide to watch a lesson from Robbie McEwen.





**THE INSIDE LINE
CORNERING**



RULES AND SAFETY

Rules at the Teardrop:

- Obey the instructions of commissaires and marshals at all times
- Neutral (no passing) into, around, and out of the hairpin corner
- Don't pedal through the hairpin corner – left leg up
- Keep left when another grade is passing
- Keep looking ahead, especially up the hill
- Keep your line when sprinting (follow the curvature of the road, don't go in a straight line to the finish line)
- Both hands on the handlebars across the finish line
- You can take a lap out for a puncture or mechanical failure
- No physical contact between riders
- Have fun 😊

General safety advice for all bike races:

- Don't overlap wheels – 'protect your front wheel'
- Avoid sudden braking
- Don't over-inflate your tyres
- Position yourself so you have an 'escape route'
- Point and call out hazards
- Be predictable
- Treat other front wheels as you would treat your own
- Pay attention

HAWTHORN

CYCLING CLUB

