

Last Sunday saw five Griffith Cycle Club riders travel to Cootamundra to contest the prestigious Cootamundra Annual Cycle Classic. First commenced in 1957 the race has had many illustrious names contesting the 53 year old event.

The race is a 106 km State Open road handicap race that saw 175 riders from all over the State and Victoria take the start.

Mal Blake was Griffith's star performer on the day riding in the 13:00 minute group. Blake managed to negotiate all the climbs safely in his group. With 15km remaining his group hit the lead however they were soon swallowed up by the hard charging scratch group.

Blake finally succumbed to the relentless pace on the final climb just 8km from the finish. Blake trailed in a few minutes behind the winners after a very good ride.

Jason Minato also put in a strong ride from the 7:30 minute group. Minato was struggling early but recovered to put in a strong ride. When the scratch group caught his group with 40km to race Minato dug deep to stay in contact.

With three tough successive climbs to get over Minato dug deep but lost contact on the second. His chance of sprinting for the win was gone but Minato rode out the race in fine style to see the finish.

Kingsley Massey was a big chance going into the race with his 20:00 minute handicap but a set of terrible legs on the day soon ended that hope.

Jeff Stoll was in the 13:00 minute group with Blake but he was hammered on a big climb at the 20km mark. Peter Budd suffered a similar fate on the nasty climb but both riders managed to put in a good training ride with the groups behind until they called it a day.

Kingsley Massey backed up the next day to contest the 69km recovery race. Finding the legs that eluded him the day before Massey put in a huge ride on the tough course.

His 23:00 minute group swept all before them and with 15km to the finish they were starting to think about the win.

Massey put himself in good position coming into the final bend with 450 metres to the line. The downhill sprint was fast and Massey took a great sixth place to end his weekend with some prizemoney.

This weekend will see the Griffith Club riders have a weekend off for Father's Day. The following Saturday the Griffith Cycle Club is hosting the Bertoldo Spring Classic interclub event. Riders from across the Riverina are expected to attend to contest this event, the first round of the Tour of Two Rivers.