

## Media Release

### Pearson Takes Criterium Ahead of Howard

Local Warrigul boy Joel Pearson (Savings and Loans) proved he was back in full form after taking the stage 5 criterium leg of the Tour of Gippsland this morning.

Pearson, 26, took the 30 lap, 1.2 kilometre race in a time of 49 minutes followed by race favourite and current yellow jersey holder Leigh Howard (Jayco AIS) and Tobias Boylan (Dixon Homes) from Bundaberg Cycling Club.

Pearson, involved in a car accident in 2008 and placed in an induced coma due to injuries, remained consistent in the chase group, as 6 riders, including teammate David Pell, broke into a lead group at the 11 lap mark.

Pell held his position, flanked by power teams Budget Forklifts and Jayco AIS, Jayco AIS positioning Howard for the sprint to the line, the final lap time a blistering 1 minute 28 seconds.

Pearson praised his teammates while accepting the stage honours but also acknowledged Howard's strength in the tour so far. "I made sure I marked Leigh through to the finish" said Pearson while speaking to the crowd from the podium.

Malcolm Rudolph (Team Budget Forklifts) won the Sprint Champion jersey while Joel Pearson now holds the Criterium Championship honour ahead of Leigh Howard and Kyle Marwood (Praties Cycling Team).

Racing continues this after noon with an 88-kilometre road stage from Sale to Licola.





LAKES OIL N.L.

# 2009 Lakes Oil Tour of Gippsland

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