

Media Release

Howard Reins Supreme

Geelong's Leigh Howard reined supreme winning the Lakes Oil Tour of Gippsland today, stamping his name firmly on top of the list of young Australian riders to watch in Europe in the future.

Howard displayed his skill in the saddle by taking the first sprint of the criterium before laying low behind teammates for the final stage of the tour, a 44 kilometre waterfront circuit held in Paynesville.

The Jayco AIS team of Jack Bobridge, Rohan Dennis, Luke Davison, Glenn O'Shae, Michael Matthews and Adam Semple lead the way for Howard to break into a sprint to the finish line in a time of 58 minutes and 57 seconds.

19-year-old Howard was full of praise for his team; saying he had finished the 5-day tour feeling good and was ready to travel to Europe next week with the National Team.

Malcolm Rudolph (Team Budget Forklifts), favourite for the Sprint Jersey, fell early in the 40-lap criterium and was sent to hospital with a suspected broken jaw. He retained a narrow lead in the category to take the overall sprint jersey, David Pell claiming second place along with the Most Aggressive Rider Jersey.

Joel Pearson (Savings and Loans) leader in the Criterium category withdrew making way for Howard to gain yet another jersey in the vast array of colours the champion now carries.

Fly V Australia, managed by Tour de France rider Henk Vogals, won the team championship and placed second and third in the general classification, with David Kemp (2nd) and Hayden Brooks (3rd). Henk praising his team of 5 riders said, "without the Scody Cup Championship event, there would be a major void in Australian cycling".

Howard currently holds the leaders position in the Scody Cup National Cycling Series with 103 points, with David Kemp on 72 and Richard Lang on 46.

The next stage of the series will be contested in Geelong from the 12th to the 16th of August.

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