

VIS First to sign up to Sprint Series

When it comes to Australian sprint cycling, the name Shane Kelly OAM is one of the first that comes to mind.

A legend of the sport, with medals from all the global championships, he's also a member of the rare 'Best of the Best' club at the Australian Institute of Sport.

Now he works as the Sprint Cycling Coach at the Victorian Institute of Sport, alongside fellow great and VIS Track Endurance Coach Glenn O'Shea. The pair are set to bring a large contingent of 12 riders on the rise to the 2019/2010 Tasmanian Christmas Carnival Series.

With the re-introduction of sprint races at the series, former World Champion Kelly said he simply had to have his charges involved.

"The VIS are very supportive of the Tasmanian Christmas Carnivals, as it's a great opportunity for our athletes to get top quality racing and a chance to race for some good prizemoney. What a great incentive to have!" Kelly stated.



After the decision made to focus on the carnival racing over criteriums, Kelly applauded the re-introduction of sprint racing to the series and said he was looking forward to watching the next generation power it out on the famous Tasmanian tracks.

"With the added sprint series the VIS sprint crew are really looking forward to the challenge of racing the open tracks, as they spend most of the time on the indoors. What better way to round out the year than with a block of quality sprint racing," Kelly said.

In his first year as a coach last summer, O'Shea brought a handful of riders down. Now between the sprint and endurance program, a line up of a dozen emerging stars are set to ride the series at Launceston, Latrobe, Devonport and Burnie.

In 2012/2013, O'Shea became the only rider in the series history to win all four major wheels at the same series, now with his attention turned to coaching, the next generation appear in good hands.

"The 2018/19 Carnivals were a valuable experience for the young and upcoming riders from the VIS. The racing provided them with an opportunity to learn whilst racing against some of the world's best riders.

"The week of racing also gave the riders a chance to learn and appreciate the history and value of carnival racing in Australia. The riders who went last year have been looking forward with anticipation to returning for this year's carnivals after having a great time last year," O'Shea declared.

Sport Carnival Association of Tasmania President Mike Gunson said the feedback on the shift from criterium to sprint races has been well received.

"Following the research we undertook after last years series, we were given clear feedback that there was an appetite for sprint racing to return. So the clubs have responded by adding sprint races to their programs and now the announcements are coming from riders that the support is there too, which is ideal," Gunson said.