



# Vets' Handicap Explained

Many, especially younger, vets riding time trials are perplexed by the VTTA standards system and how it determines finishing order. Although the standards system is based on solid evidence of performance decline due to ageing, the results are not presented in an easily understood manner. The 'Vets Handicap Result' (VHR) is an alternative way of presenting such results and one which is becoming seen as more readily intelligible.

The traditional standards system reports results as a rider's 'plus', or the improvement in minutes and seconds over the 'base' time that the standards system gives for their age and gender. The VHR in contrast reports a handicap, or adjusted, actual time. This gives an easily understood result which can also be readily compared to other riders. We are currently running VHR as well as the traditional plus in how we report the results of our national championships as well as some other VTTA events.

The VHR, however, uses the same statistical formula as the standards tables and will therefore produce results in the same finishing order and with the same gaps between riders in terms of minutes and seconds. What changes is the presentation, not the formula that has been carefully determined from thousands of vets' results for age decline adjustments.

Under VHR the standards tables are therefore effectively recalculated as 'age adjustments'. These 'age adjustments' are then applied to the actual time for each rider. (In practice they are calculated by subtracting the baseline 40 year old standard from the standard for the rider's current age). Tables are now available that show these adjustments for all ages across all the time trialling distances and for 12 and 24 hour events.

By applying the age adjustment for the distance, the rider gets an adjusted actual time or VHR. To make this clear here is an example that compares the presentation of some results according to the traditional 'plus' and the VHR.

Rider	Age	Actual Time (a)	VTTA Standard (b)	Plus (b) – (a)	25 Mile vets adjustment (d)	VHR (a) – (d)
Man 1	60	50:43	1:10:14	+19:31	04:14	46:29
Man 2	89	1:13:02	1:31:55	+18:53	25:55	47:07
Woman 1	50	55:42	1:13:51	+17:59	07:51	48:01
Woman 2	54	59:46	1:14:44	+14:58	08:44	51:04

So instead of Man 1 telling his clubmates 'I got a plus of 19:31' (and blank stares) he can say 'I rode the equivalent of a 46 minute '25' on vet's age handicap' (and get suitable admiration!)

How might the VHR affect the VTTA's personal standards award system? In principle it would make them simpler to understand and calculate! All a rider would have to do is achieve a year-on-year improvement on their season's best vets handicap result at each distance.

In short VHR would help all vets understand theirs and others results as a personal best time (age adjusted) rather than a mysterious 'plus'. We hope this will encourage participation and make more over 40s interested to join the VTTA.

**Where to find the VHR tables:** The VHR tables for both genders and all machine types are available on the website.

Go to 'Standards' and 'Individual Standards' or 'Tandem Standards' or follow this link:

<https://www.vtta.org.uk/standards>. Click on 'Download'. Select either PDF or Excel format. In the PDF refer to pages 13 to 20 or 23 and 24. In the Excel file scroll to the end to find the VHR tables formatted for input to another spreadsheet.

This document is based upon the website news article "What is the Vets' Handicap Result?"