

2008 BP MS150 Training Series - Novice Ride #2, Sat, 1/12, 8:00 am

It's almost time to start our official 2008 BP MS150 training series (Jan 19) but we still have one more novice ride before we get started.

I have one key observation to share from last week - you need to drink more!

Aaron Jacks estimated we only drank a gallon or so of the water last Saturday. It was not real warm and we only went 14 miles but you still need to start drinking well before you feel thirsty and drink often. I recommend that you have two full bottles of liquid on your bike at the start and refill each to the top at each rest stop. I carry one bottle of water and one bottle of sports drink. We will have Powerade (Thanks Coca-Cola!) and water at our rest stops during the regular season.

You can expect to see a lot more information on hydration over the coming weeks. That's because dehydration is, by far, the #1 medical treatment issue on the BP MS150.

OK, we already covered the rest of the feedback (Monday, remember?) but I have one more tip before we get to the weekly ride news. If you missed the tips and feedback, Aaron Jacks has archived my "Greatest Hits" on the bike club site - <http://www.conocophillipsbikeclub.org>. Click the News link on the left to see the archive. Note the rider pictured on the News page - they look like they were years ahead of the Time magazine bright tights trend...(Ignore the meager megaphone in the photo and watch for the Mother of All Megaphones next week)

Here we go...

Novice Ride #2 - Brookshire - Monaville, Sat, 1/12, 8:00 am, 22 miles

This Saturday, Margaret Shelton is planning to once again nurture our novice riders. This ride will be a little longer than last week - eleven miles out to the rest stop and eleven miles back. Before the ride, Margaret will share some words of wisdom and some advice for new riders.

This route is very flat with one or two very mild bumps. We will be on FM-359 for most of the route. There is moderate traffic but we have a good shoulder all the way to Monaville. Like last week, you can ride up to two abreast but please stay on the shoulder. Here are a few other safety/courtesy reminders:

- Stop at all stop signs.
- About a mile into the ride, you merge onto FM-359. Go slowly and be especially careful to stay on the shoulder as you enter FM-359 from the side road. There is a slight bend to the right but you have plenty of room to merge onto the shoulder.
- Look for this road on your way back - if you miss it, you will come to Durkin Rd from the north and turn left to get back to the start
- The stop in Monaville is at the station on the left side of the road. Be careful when crossing FM-359 to stop
- If you are with a group, be sure to look well down the road both ways to ensure it is clear before calling "Clear"
- If you are unsure that there is enough time to cross, just wait but be sure to call "Slowing" as you get near and "Stopping" if you need to stop and let cars pass before turning into the rest stop

- If you are riding two abreast, listen for riders who may want to pass. If they do approach, carefully shift to single file and let them come around on your left and on the shoulder

- If you need to pass, call as you approach, wait for the riders to adjust to single file and then, start your pass.

I will have a more detailed note about passing etiquette next week. This is a skill we will focus on a lot because it makes your ride safer and a lot more pleasant. As you will learn, both parties in a pass have a few key duties to remember.

One more reminder - we will not start in formal waves this week but you should think about how fast your normal pace is. Faster riders start in the first waves, moderate riders in the middle and slower riders in the last groups. This reduces the need for passing in the beginning when riders are more congested.

The goal of this ride is to help those of you who are fairly new to cycling get used to riding on country roads and in a group. A few veteran riders will come along but they will be there to ride at your pace and help show you how to ride single file, how to communicate, how to pass, how to be passed, etc. Let me share what Margaret has set as your objectives.

Objectives:

- Making folks feel welcome into our training group
- Giving folks a chance to meet other new cyclists and seasoned cyclists
- Providing some safety training
- Initiating guidance about possible hazards while cycling
- Discussing training tips
- Handing out a welcome packet
- Practicing riding in groups
- Knowing that you can do organized rides with multitudes of other cyclists

Riders should bring liquids for the first leg of the ride

We will have maps at each ride

We will have SAG drivers for each ride

We will have a mid way rest stop

Veteran riders - please note that unless you are coming out to ride slow and serve as a mentor and/or are a ride marshal, this is not a warm-up ride.

Directions to the ride start - Royal High School, 2520 Durkin Rd, 77423

Take I-10 west to Brookshire and exit FM 359 (the first Brookshire exit). Turn right onto 359 and go to the light (Hwy 90). Turn left and go less than half a mile to FM-359 and turn right. About a mile north of town, you will see Durkin Rd and a sign to the Royal High School and Royal Elementary will be on the right. Turn right and go to the 3rd school on the right. Turn into the first drive at the High School and drive to the back lot. We will have porta-lets this week - they will be in the southwest corner of the lot.

The pre-ride discussion will begin about 8:00 am and you will be on the road between 8:15 and 8:30. Here is the outline you should use for the morning:

7:30 – 8:00 am Sign in

8:00-8:30 am [more or less] welcome, safety, questions/answers before leaving

Facilities: Four porta-lets - the restrooms at the stadium may also be open

We'll also have porta-lets, snacks and water at the Monaville turnaround.

NOTE - The 8:00 am start time means you need to be ready to ride at 8:00 am - not pulling into the parking lot. If you arrive late, you can count on missing the start of the ride. PLEASE don't arrive at the last minute for our rides - this will really become critical later in the season when we are out in small towns where late arrivals don't have any room to get past the riders lining up to start.

Reminder - Start Setting Up Your Carpools Now!

When we kicked off the season, we analyzed our expected attendance and agreed to let all of you participate as long as EVERYONE except the weekly volunteer support agreed to carpool.

I CAN'T help with carpools but you can each do this. Your first resource to do this is your network of riders from your team. Please talk to your team captains (except ConocoPhillips - Me) and other riders you know from previous years.

Another EXCELLENT resource is a forum that Peter Martin set up to allow you to find other riders to carpool with as well as other cycling notes. Go to this link:
<http://pub24.bravenet.com/forum/show.php?usernum=2000958103&cpv=1>

I see at least 15-20 carpool notes there this morning. If you don't find one, post your own note. You should include your neighborhood in the subject line - the more details you put out there, the easier it is to get together.

The next option is to locate a parking lot in your area and plan to meet a group to car pool from there. PLEASE check with the owners FIRST! Many Starbucks and other places are fine with this as long as you patronize the location (if it's open) and park at the far side of the lot. Find a location and post a note to meet other riders there. Be sure to confirm some are meeting you so you aren't abandoned.

Once you get the carpool established, it's easier to keep going. Carpools with 3 or more allow back-up plans since we're not all riding on all the same weeks.

This is really important as we will NOT all fit into many of the small communities where we will be riding. The local residents really appreciate it if we make every reasonable effort to minimize our impact.

Carpooling also makes the drives to/from the rides more fun!

Explanation: Fees and sign-in Process

Several of you asked if you have to pay for each ride and do you have to register or RSVP for each ride.

The fee you paid covers the whole series. This is quite a bargain!

There is no RSVP process for each ride. You simply show up (with your carpool!) and sign in. Each week, you will need to sign in but no reply is needed for each ride. Beginning on Jan 19, you will be issued a Tyvek band. You will put this on the front area of your helmet where it can easily be seen. This will be used at the start and rest stops to confirm we don't have riders sneaking in. The bands arrived Monday and they are bright and unique!

IMPORTANT REMINDER - Hopefully, you will PLEASE remember to sign out when you complete your ride. This is important so we know who is out on the roads and who is done.

I go through the sign-in list after the ride and call anyone who didn't initial the finished column to make sure they finished...

...I wait until 2 am to be sure most riders are home when I call!:-)

Bike Shop News

Here are some upcoming events at several local bike shops:

Bicycle World & Fitness - <http://bicycleworldandfitness.com/page.cfm?PageID=112>

- Wednesday Road Ride, West U store, Jan 2, 5:30 pm
- Drop-in Ride, Jan 12 - West U Store - 8:00 am
- Basic Bike Repair, Jan 12, noon

Bike Barn - www.bikebarn.com

- Introductory Maintenance Clinic, All stores at 6:00 pm on Jan 9, Feb 13 or Mar 5
- Beginner Ladies Ride, Memorial Park Picnic Loop, Jan 12, 8:00 am
- January Drop-in Ride, Jan 20, Bike Barn, Katy, 8:00 am

Sun & Ski Sports - <http://sunandskibikes.com/index.cfm>

- Bike University, Jan 25/26
 - Free cycling clinics
 - Free laser scan bike fit (come early, this is a popular and useful offer)
 - Free prizes
 - Factory reps
 - Big Sale

I'm sorry I will not be out this Saturday - I'll be downtown resting up for the (half) marathon on Sunday. You will be in Good hands with Margaret Shelton, Aaron Jacks and a great volunteer crew from HP, Gensler and Marathon. Be sure to thank the volunteers, they do a great job.

Have a safe ride and get ready for the full court press next week when we start the regular training season...

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