

## **2008 BP MS150 Training Series - Ride #2 - Katy Mills - Simonton, 1/26, 7:30 am**

You know, at 6:15 last Saturday morning, I thought we may have a volunteer to personally SAG each rider - the weather was looking a bit cool and overcast with very light mist...

Then, 254 of you decided to show up to ride and that seemed to be enough to get the sun out! We had a beautiful, if somewhat cool ride. Almost all of you did dress well - we only had one rider who missed the layers note and needed to SAG back in to warm up.

From what I saw, you did real well at finding the right pace group to start with. As I noted, if you passed a lot of riders at the start, you should move up to the next wave. If you passed a few riders, you may move up in your current wave. The reverse applies if you were passed a lot or a little.

Did I mention the light wind out of the northwest? Did you ever think you were going to get to I-10? Then, that mountain (AKA the Woods Rd bridge) appeared out of nowhere! The good news was that, once you got to the top of the bridge, it was a short coast down and then, to Hwy 90 where one right turn made a huge impact on your outlook on life.

We had a great support team and they reported changing what must have been a record number of flats. The runner up on flats changed was Randy McFarlane with 9. He was only topped by Randy Kleen who stopped counting at 10... The only record that didn't fall was that no one beat my record set last year of two flats in the first 6 miles. Those of you with good memories may recall that both Randys were also supporting that ride and would not let me touch my tire on either flat. Rain really brings out the road debris on this ride... A big THANKS to our GREAT support team!

One important note - we are running a few weeks ahead of schedule on our enrollment so, in order to keep the size of the series safe and manageable, **Enrollment will close at 11:59 pm on Friday, January 31, 2008!**

This is a no exceptions policy. We can not accommodate any more riders after next Friday. Riders who want to drop in will not be able to participate in our rides - we have to enforce this restriction or we will lose our ability to hold the training series. I need to ask each of you to honor this rule and not invite friends to join you on a ride unless they are a member of one of our teams and enrolled in the series.

After the MS season is over, we will offer occasional drop-in rides and the attendance goes down almost to zero. There is no support but you are welcome to invite friends along. More on that after the make it to Austin...

I will be attending a leadership retreat for the Houston Facility Management Assoc on Thursday afternoon and Friday so, if you have any questions that need an answer before the ride, please don't call or e-mail me. Your first resource should be our site - <http://www.conocophillipsbikeclub.org>. Next, touch base with your team captain.

OK, let's get on with week #2...

-----  
**2008 BP MS150 Training Series - Ride #2 - Katy Mills - Simonton, 1/26, 7:30 am**

This week, we are retuning to Sun & Ski at Katy Mills for another ride on the pleasant roads southwest of the mall. We'll be heading out to Simonton and back.

We will be getting on the road at 7:30 again to get the large waves out before traffic starts to pick up. This worked well last week as it was pretty quiet when we started and as we trickled in in small groups, we were looked after by the Katy PD officers.

NOTE - On the return to the mall, when you get to the outer loop around the parking lot, turn RIGHT (south) and come around the south side of the mall. It's a bit longer but the traffic is even lighter.

We will be starting from Katy Mills Mall. A big THANKS to Sun & Ski Sports who is sponsoring our group so that we can start from the mall this week. Sun & Ski will open at 6:30 am for our riders. You can shop for warm clothing, get help with minor pre-ride mechanical assistance and sign in. The Sun & Ski Store Manager promised to get more toe warmers and full shoe booties for those of you who wanted to have warm feet.

NOTE - There are restrooms in the mall opposite Sun & Ski that will be open for us. **Please DON'T wear your cycling shoes indoors** unless they have totally recessed clips or no clips. You could slip if you wear your clips inside. Most of us remembered this rule before the ride last week but I did see several of you with clips indoors after the ride. Please remember this safety rule.

If you are not familiar with the mall, Sun & Ski is located on the northeast side (the side facing Houston) near I-10. As you enter the mall, turn to the left and come around to the east side and you will see Sun & Ski near the front. Please don't park right near the mall entry but park near the perimeter of the parking on the east side. We will be starting from the driveway outside of Sun & Ski. We also have four porta-lets that will be outside next to the drive where we start if you need a quick stop just before we head out.

The routes this week are 35, 44 or 53 miles. If you study the map online ( <http://www.conocophillipsbikeclub.org> ), you will see that the route is out and back with an optional loop on FM-359 to Winner Foster and Bois D'Arc. You can take the optional loop both ways for the 53 mile option or one way for 44 miles - it's about a 9 mile loop. If you are only going to take it one way, I ask you to please take the extra loop on the way out. This will help us keep an eye on all of you and will allow you to miss one possibly rough shoulder area on FM-1093 on the way out - see more on this below. Most of you will be doing the shorter route and that is perfect for the start of the season.

### **IMPORTANT Ride Details**

We will have eight porta-lets in Simonton. **Please DON'T use the side of the building!** This is not polite, not necessary and will really irritate the residents who can see you at a distance.

We have lined up quite a few officers from the Katy PD. They will be covering all the significant intersections we pass through. Please obey them and be prepared to stop as you approach each intersection.

**Riders MUST ride single file on Bois D' Arc and Winner Foster!** The residents of Fulshear are upset about the large number of bikers taking up large amounts of space on the roads and the residents have decided they need to do something about it. The residents of Fulshear will contact the Fort Bend County sheriff's office if they find riders not riding single file. We have been told that the Fort Bend county sheriff's will be out patrolling Bois D' Arc and Winner Foster on Saturday. They asked us to remind riders to come to a complete stop at all stop signs.

This is our opportunity to demonstrate that not all cyclists are inconsiderate. PLEASE ride single file and be considerate of local traffic or we will not be welcome back.

Please ride on the shoulder on FM-1093. You can ride two abreast but please allow faster riders to pass - see the Safety Corner below.

**NOTE** - Last week, there was a short stretch of FM-1093 that was being resurfaced about halfway to Fulshear. The shoulder had quite a bit of debris. Since it's been wet much of this week, the resurfacing may not be complete. Please watch for this area and if the shoulder is still rough, slow down well ahead, call "Slowing, debris in the road!" and take it slow, steady and easy. It's only a few hundred yards.

-----  
**- Safety Corner - Group Rides, Drafting & Pacelines**

Since many of you will be new this week I will repeat the notes below about riding in groups and pacelines. Please read this material, at least twice and PLEASE practice it every time you ride. Our training series is designed to help you get into shape to ride and, equally important, train you how to ride safely and courteously.

Towards this end, I will include a regular Safety Corner focusing on a topic/technique that will help ensure you get to Austin with your skin and all your bones intact. These tips are for your health. PLEASE read them and practice the exercises we will be promoting!

If some of you experienced riders want to contribute a safety tip/topic, please feel free to drop me a well written note for future use. All contributors will be noted and thanked profusely.

Please remember these key tips about a group ride.

**Do's**

- Ride smoothly and predictably
- Communicate - BOTH ways, call hazards, call when passing and listen to others
- Ride your ride at your pace
- Listen and respect the Ride Marshals, Medics and HPD officers - they are looking out for our safety
- Ride single file or max 2 abreast if on a wide shoulder or a road that is closed to regular vehicular traffic
- Enjoy the ride - Remember that this is a fund-raiser to find a cure for MS, not a race!

**Don'ts**

- Cross over the center stripe
- Pass on the right
- Overlap the wheel of the rider in front of you

- Ride in pacelines (unless you are very experienced with the general process and the specific group you are riding with)
- Wear headphones (any type) or talk on your cell phone while riding

I will come back to many of these in detail over and over until we are all familiar with the fundamentals of safe riding.

When I worked as a Ride Marshal at the Tour de Pink (GREAT ride!, pencil in Sept 7, 2008!), I witnessed two accidents. Neither was major but one may have resulted in a broken collar bone. Both did not involve any rider contact but both were the result of a slower rider being startled when a faster group passed. The slower rider startled, went off the road to the right, and fell when trying to get back on the road. Both of these accidents could have been avoided by exercising a little rider etiquette. Here are some details about how to make a safe, courteous pass.

Passing on a bicycle is a two-way event. The passer and the passee both have a few simple responsibilities that will make the pass safe and friendly.

The passer should:

- Call "Approaching rider" as they get close
- Slow down a bit to allow buffer space for both riders
- Check the road behind to ensure no approaching vehicles
- Call "Passing on left" after the other rider has acknowledged their presence
- Move over to allow enough room, speed up and make the pass
- Allow plenty of room before pulling back in to the right

The passee should:

- Be aware of approaching riders (listen, NO headphones!)
- Acknowledge calls to pass - saying "Thank You" is a GREAT way to do this!
- Maintain a steady speed and line - don't suddenly slow down or speed up as you are being passed and don't jerk your handle bars.

The process for multiple riders passing is similar with a few extra variations

The passers should do all the above plus:

- Call "Rider(s) Up, slowing!" as they approach
- Double check for approaching traffic - allow more room for multiple riders to pass
- Consolidate to single file if not already there
- The lead rider should call: "Passing on left, 7 riders" or similar to let the passees know what to expect
- The last rider should call: "Last rider" so the group knows you are all past
- Allow extra room before pulling back in so the their line doesn't cut off the passees
- Don't speed up until you are well past - your group may feel pressured to pass when it is not safe in order to avoid falling behind

The passees should do all the above plus:

- Smoothly consolidate to single file when a group approaches (the lead rider should call

"Slowing, Single file")

- Listen for the first and last passers so they know what to expect.

Note that the passers have the responsibility to ease up as they approach and wait for safe conditions to pass. The passees have the responsibility to listen, hold a steady speed and line, and go to single file to make room for the passers to get around.

We will cover these tips in the pre-ride announcements and I expect to see you all practicing this. I also expect to hear a LOT of communicating and "Thank you's" out on the roads this week and for the next three months!

Here is one more group riding tip. A question I received about pacelines.

Q: I've completed several MS150s but never a part of a team. While there have been large groups about, I've never been part of one. The extent of my drafting experience is limited to a group of 3 - and then only sporadically. Will this be covered in the next beginning ride?

A: We recommend against pacelines which is "aggressive" drafting in order to increase speed (unless you are very experienced and know your paceline riders well)

On the other hand, there is an opportunity to ride in a group and practice gentle drafting which does make your work quite a bit easier, especially on windy days. This also makes the ride a lot more fun since it is possible, and probable to meet and visit with other great riders as you go.

The key things to remember are:

1. Allow at least 12-24" between front/back wheels
2. NEVER overlap wheels!
3. Communicate with your group - call hazards, car back, slowing, stopping, turning, standing, etc...
4. Ride steady and predictable
5. Don't ride above your ability - pull off and let the group go if the pace feels too fast

Here are a few more linear thoughts on this topic:

- If a group has trained together, cycling etiquette says to let the slowest rider set the pace, now and on the way to Austin

- The ride is supposed to be fun and it is definitely more fun with a group of friends

- Friends DON'T let friends ride alone...

Hope this makes sense Save this note as it will make a lot more sense as you get more experienced.

-----

**- Last Minute Reminders:**

- Put your clothing/eqpt out Friday night
- You must have completed your annual enrollment before you ride - NO EXCEPTIONS  
(If you are getting this note directly from me (no one forwarded it), you have completed the annual enrollment)
- Only riders from our core teams can ride - we need to keep the size manageable
- Arrive on time!

-----  
Photo Gallery Continued...

Once again, Tim Hansford was out snapping lots of digital photos. He went home and immediately developed all the digits and printed the photos - isn't this new technology amazing!

You can see Tim's photos online at:

[http://www.feldoncentral.com/photos\\_enhance/CoP2008/08-0119/](http://www.feldoncentral.com/photos_enhance/CoP2008/08-0119/)

Be sure to have a look at pictures #66/67 - this is a good illustration on how to wear your 2008 rider ID band (AKA "Pit Pass")

A few more notes about your rider ID...

- This location does not significantly impair cooling or aerodynamics...
- This location does make it easier to see that you are enrolled and paid...
- It is not mandatory for your Pit Pass and cycling glasses to be color coordinated!
- I'm not sure who the rider is in #67 with the gray shell, gray wool jersey and gray base layer but he sure is dressed boring - well coordinated and warm but BORING!!!

I'll see some of you this Saturday...

**Stephen Moskowitz**

Team Captain, ConocoPhillips

281 293-2599

[steve.e.moskowitz@conocophillips.com](mailto:steve.e.moskowitz@conocophillips.com)