

2007 Training Series News - Beginner Ride #2

We still have a week to go before we really start our training series but I have plenty of news so here we go...

Today, I will be covering:

- **Beginner Ride 1 - Wrap-up**
- **Beginner Ride 2 - Sat, Jan 20, 8:00 am**
- **IMPORTANT Traffic Note - I-10 Westbound Closed from Washington to Campbell on Fri/Sat**
- **Reminder - Set Up Your Carpools Now!**
- **Explanation: Fees and Sign-in/Sign-out Process**
- **Get Ready...Get Set...Let's Rodeo!**
- **Ride Marshals Needed (two weeks left...)**
- **Bike Classes Offered**
- **What if it Rains?**

----- **Beginner Ride Wrap-up**

Last Saturday, 146 riders showed up for a 14 mile beginner ride! This was over twice what we had last year but, 50% of the riders were experienced riders who either didn't realize that this was a beginner ride or were out to help mentor our new riders.

Please note that these beginner rides are for beginners (Duh...) and for experienced riders who want to personally "adopt" a new rider or two and help them develop over the first few weeks. These rides are NOT tune-ups for the veterans who have had their bike put away for several months...

Here are a few tips I noted based on what we saw at the ride:

ALL riders MUST be registered before they can ride

- Several riders asked why they were not on the sign-in sheet - most had not registered.
If there had been an accident, we would not know who they were or who to contact
- See sign-in notes below for more reasons why you would not be on the sign-in sheet
(NOTE - Registration for the training series closes: Jan 31 - two weeks from today!)

Set clothing/eqpt out Friday night (buy a basket - makes it easy to organize/carry everything)

MUST wear helmet
LEAVE headphones at home
DON'T forget shoes, all wheels, etc.

Arrive early - 30 minutes or more before ride

- This will be critical as we move out to longer drives to the rides
- If you arrive late, you will not be able to get into the parking area on many rides as we will be departing via the entrance and will miss the group start.

Bring initial liquids - refill at rest stops

Sign in before riding

Sign out after finishing (more below)

Coordinate your clothing!!!

I will give some coaching on this as the series progresses but do try to avoid clashing socks, etc...

Beginner Ride 2 - Sat, Jan 20, 8:00 am

Before we actually start our training series, Margaret Shelton has organized a mini series of two rides for beginning riders. These rides are short - 14 and 20+ miles and are designed to help new riders get some miles in the saddle and learn to ride safely in a group. Each ride is an out and back route with a stop at a convenience store. Bring snacks and water bottles and \$ to refill at the break point.

Experienced riders should only come if you are willing to help mentor the beginners and ride at their speeds. These rides are clearly aimed at getting our beginners ready for our first training ride and are NOT intended to give any of us veterans a head start.

Margaret has lots of help from Aaron Jacks, captain of the Old School Cycling Team as well as Rebecca Nelson and the Pappa's Posse.

Here is the full scoop on the beginner rides (including directions to the starts) directly from Margaret...

The novice training rides are designed for new cyclists and cyclists not yet used to large groups -- with support from seasoned cyclists as mentors

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

Support from:

Margaret Shelton - mentor extraordinaire & pre-season saint (regular season saint as well!)

Old School Cycling, Aaron Jacks + team

Pappa's Posse, Rebecca Nelson + team

Marathon

January 20 - Sat, 8:00 am

Royal High School to Monaville and return – about 22 miles

7:15 – 7:45 am Sign in at the Royal High School parking lot

Directions to the Start:

- I-10 west to 1st Brookshire exit to Hwy 359
- Turn right, go to light (90)
- Turn left, go to 2nd light
- Turn right, go over RR tracks to school complex (about 1 mile)
- Turn right at the school complex, go past the elementary & middle schools to last school on the right
- Turn right to high school parking lot at back of school

7:45-8:30 am [more or less] welcome, safety, questions/answers before leaving north to 359

Facilities: there are restrooms in a building on the property
Riders can buy snacks and more liquids at the Monaville store!

January 27 - Sat

The training series begins!

I will leave with the "new cyclists" after the general group leaves [if anyone needs a familiar face to ride with!]

IMPORTANT Traffic Note - I-10 Westbound Closed from Washington to Campbell on Fri/Sat

TOTAL CLOSURE OF I-10 WESTBOUND BETWEEN WASHINGTON AVENUE AND CAMPBELL ROAD

9 PM, Friday, January 18 through 9 PM Saturday, January 20, 2007

Completion of Major Contract Milestones to Open the New I-10 Westbound Mainlanes and Multiple Entrance and Exit Ramps

The contractor will totally close I-10/Katy Freeway westbound between Washington Avenue and Campbell Road and the I-610/West Loop northbound and southbound direct connector ramps to I-10/Katy Freeway westbound to perform the traffic switch. Motorists are encouraged to seek alternate routes during this closure.

Reminder - Set 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>
<blocked::<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/Sign-out 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 \$65 fee covers the whole training series. This is quite a bargain! The fee will go up to \$75 if you mail it after Jan 22 or don't pay until our first ride or later.

You do not need to RSVP for each ride. Once you have registered, you simply sign in each time to come out to ride. See more on the sign-in (and out) process below. This year, you will be required to sign in and get a wrist band that will be used at the start and rest stops to confirm we don't have riders sneaking in. Each week, you will need to sign in and get a different wrist band specific to that week.

Sign-in Process

- Each week, you will come to the sign-in table and there will be four sign-in lists.

We break the list into four parts (A-F, G-L, etc...) so the lines move faster

Get in the proper line for your last name

Initial in the started column by your name - PLEASE use our red pens - much easier to scan for red initials

Check the left column to see if you are paid up. The options for this column are

- P - Paid
- RM - Ride Marshal (Free)
- HPD - Houston (or other) Police Rider (Free)
- EMS - Medic (Free)
- MS - MS Staff (Free)
- (blank) - Not paid

If you are not on the sign in list, it is due to one of these reasons (in order of frequency)

- You have not registered - please head home, register and come back next week to ride
- You are not on a qualified core team and have not responded to my notes to confirm details/explanation
- You indicated you are NOT participating in the training series (your name is "invisible" on this list)

Sign-out Process

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 at 2 am Sunday morning 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!-)

Here was a Fee related Q&A that came in last week...

Q: I just registered today for the training series, but I want to ride the beginner ride this weekend. Should I go ahead and mail in my fee or bring it with me this weekend so it is known that I have registered and paid?

A: Please mail the fee. It's not required before the beginner rides and is easier to process at home rather than at a ride with LOTS of other distractions.

REMEMBER - If your training series fee does not arrive at my home by Jan 24 (next Wed), the fee goes up \$10 to \$75. If you are riding in the training series, you can (and should) mail your \$65 payment (payable to the ConocoPhillips Bike Club) ASAP to:

**Steve Moskowitz
11027 Holworth
Houston, TX 77072**

Get Ready...Get Set...Let's Rodeo...!

Be part of the 7,000 people expected for the 20th anniversary of the ConocoPhillips Rodeo Run, scheduled for 9:40 a.m. on Saturday, February 24th in downtown Houston at the corners of Texas and Smith. The event is Houston's only point-to-point 5K and 10K and participants will run/walk in front of thousands of spectators, as the Rodeo Run kicks off the annual Houston Livestock and Rodeo Parade.

Race proceeds are provided to the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Educational Fund which provides college scholarships to Texas youth. Last year the race contributed \$145,000 and \$1.65 million over the past 19 years. Registration is just \$20 (by February 3rd).

All information is available at www.ConocoPhillipsRodeoRun.com or by calling the race hotline at (281) 293-CHIP (2447).

Ride Marshals Needed (two weeks left...)

Are you a veteran of at least two BP MS 150s, are safety-conscious and like working with people?

The National MS Society, Lone Star Chapter seeks registered riders who are willing to volunteer their time to share their cycling experience, as well as provide safety guidance and assistance to cyclists along the route.

To qualify, riders must:

- * Be veterans of at least two rides from Houston to Austin
- * Complete both a First Aid/CPR course and a hands-on bike safety course
- * Be willing to volunteer as Ride Marshals for at least two Recommended Rides this spring

* Volunteer as a Ride Marshal when you attend our training rides (this one is extra for our series only)

Note that Ride Marshals, Medics, and HPD riders get to participate in our training series free - a \$65 value!

ConocoPhillips Team Members please note that our registered Ride Marshals also qualify for lodging in our block of rooms in La Grange

Please note the deadline for consideration is Jan. 31, 2007.

To register or for more info, please go to:

http://www.ms150.org/ms150/volunteering/more/ride_marshals.cfm

Bike Classes Offered

Bicycle World and Fitness in Houston is offering a variety of classes for BP MS 150 participants:

Noon Saturday, Jan. 20: Basic Repair Class

9 a.m. - noon and 1 - 4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 27: Bike Safety Class

For more information, visit the Bicycle World and Fitness Web site:

<http://bicycleworldandfitness.com/>

Sun & Ski Sports Bike University

Features free clinics on bike maintenance, safety, nutrition, training tips and many others.

When:

5 - 10 p.m. Friday, Jan. 19, with Sun & Ski Sports Customer Appreciation Reception

Noon - 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 20

Sun & Ski Sports
6100 Westheimer in Houston

Call 713-783-8180 or visit the Sun & Ski Web site for more information:

<http://www.sunandski.com/>

What if it Rains?

If it just rains, the volunteer team will still show up to support the ride unless none of you opt to ride. If we have lightning and/or thunder, we will cancel the ride.

Cold rain is on the fence. In general, none of you want to ride in cold, rainy weather but, we have an occasional rookie Aggie rider who is having a great time and doesn't seem to know enough to come in out of the rain. I recall they said: "Well, I guess I'm about as wet as I'm going to be so we might as well keep riding..." I won't embarrass anyone with names but check for a rider with the initials S. Mark West...

On Saturday morning, if the weather is questionable, I monitor the forecast and conditions where we are riding. I will place a message on the bike club line at 281 293-2931 by 5:30 am. The current message is old but this will be updated as needed.

OK, I hope to get out to help send our new riders off this Saturday and I will see many of our 300 Club Riders in Fayetteville this Sunday...

Stephen Moskowitz

Team Captain, ConocoPhillips
281 293-2599

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