

2007 MS 150 Training Series - Ride 11 - New Ulm - April 7, 8:00 am

I am sorry that we could not ride in Chappell Hill last Saturday. I was coming into Chappell Hill from the Austin (back) side of the front and as we got closer to Chappell Hill, the lightning show got more and more spectacular. We saw almost no rain on the drive but, as I have said before, if there is lightning, I cancel the ride. There was DEFINITELY a LOT of lightning Saturday morning so, at 5:45, I updated the hotline to call off the ride before most of you were on the way.

A few of you asked if we could work in a make-up ride. Unfortunately, all the details we have to plan to keep you safe, comfortable, and well supported don't fall into place well on a short fuse. If just one or key item is missing, it will severely compromise the safety of our rides so, unfortunately, it was not possible to schedule a make-up. I do know that a number of you went to Chappell Hill on your own Sunday to get in some hills. See more on this below.

Since many of us will be off on Friday, watch for the weekly update/safety tips on Thursday...

Drop-in Ride (Unsupported) - Friday, 4/6

In a related story, I have heard that a small group of riders will be carpooling to Chappell Hill this Friday for a drop-in, non-supported ride. They are likely to ride off at 7:30 to beat the rising temperatures and leave a long day after the ride. Please note that this is a non-supported ride. If it is like our summer drop-in rides, there will be maps, road summaries, and an explanation on where local stores are. Bring change and/or plan to stop at Robbie's convenience store at the light where you turn into Chappell Hill for a pit stop, cold drinks, great Fig Newtons, and to make change for the rest stops on the route. This is still an hour drive or more and it's a small town so, if you do want to drop-in, please carpool to Chappell Hill. The group says they will gather at the museum with distances from 14 to 42 or more miles. All of the miles will be hilly so, if you do go, save some energy for New Ulm on Saturday (see below).

Media Event - Three Generations of MS150 Riders

I have news from other sources that this Sunday, about 7:25 am, our Houston NBC affiliate (channel 2 or 12/312 on cable) will be airing a live story featuring three generations of MS150 riders. All three of these riders will be carpooling to New Ulm Saturday. Be sure to ask Ian Estes, Larry Estes, and Hans Mayer for their autographs on Saturday - just before they become major celebrities!

Special Treat This Week

This week, we offer one of our most outstanding rides of the entire season. The ride will be outstanding because it is beautiful, challenging, well supported, and then some.

Did I also mention that, as a special treat, we have arranged for the New Ulm Volunteer Fire Department to prepare a BBQ lunch for us this Saturday!!!

That's right, they will be making BBQ chicken and links plus potato salad and baked beans. The Fireman's Park (where we start, see below) is a delightful place for a picnic so be sure to plan to grab your BBQ lunch and replenish your calories before you head back to town.

NOTE - The BBQ will be served from 11 am until 2 pm. If you are moving slow and taking long breaks, you will miss a great BBQ lunch. You should be able to finish this 58 mile loop by 2 pm.

Don't forget that the check-in process will also be slightly different this week. We have ordered BBQ for 700 and you will be asked to check in again when you go for BBQ. The sign-in list will only list riders who are shown as paid up for the series.

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OK, the route this Saturday used to present me with a real dilemma. There are three major hills in this area but, until last year, we never could figure out how to climb them all in one ride. Two years ago, thanks to some brainstorming with the local law enforcement, some brilliant routing inspirations, and the need to avoid the antique festivals in Round Top & Warrenton, we now have a convoluted figure eight route that includes every significant climb in this part of the state - all uphill, of course! Don't worry, you are ready for these climbs and the smell of the BBQ in New Ulm will help carry you home...

I can't emphasize enough what a great ride we have planned this week. From our start in New Ulm, we'll head north to Industry and do a loop on the rolling roads north of Industry. This will be followed by a loop from Industry around to Fayetteville and returning to New Ulm via Frelsburg. There are three VERY memorable climbs on this ride - one just before Industry, one on FM-159 near Fayetteville (Rek Hill) and finally, Lone Oak Hill. I'm not sure which of these hills is the best (or worst) but you will have a chance to try all three. After this ride, there will be nothing you can't handle on your ride to Austin.

The route this week is about 58.5 miles. There is a 38 mile short option that comes straight back from Industry (missing hills 2 & 3) but the long route is the main event this week.

We have arranged with the New Ulm Volunteer Fire Dept to start in New Ulm at the Fireman's Park. NO PARKING in New Ulm PLEASE! Carpooling is still critical this week.

Directions to the Start of the Ride:

To get to New Ulm, take I-10 to the Sealy exit (Hwy 36). Go north through Sealy to the last light in town (just past the railroad tracks). Turn left at the light (FM-1094) and proceed west 22 miles to New Ulm.

When you get to New Ulm, turn left on FM 109, go one block past Schultz's store to Taylor St. Turn right, go down Taylor approx. 1/2 mile. The entrance to the park will be on the right, there is a sign. The park will be open about 6:30 am.

New Ulm is about an hour drive from I-10 and the tollway so be sure to leave early enough to arrive in New Ulm no later than 7:30 (7:15 if you haven't ridden before. We WILL start lining up on the road into the park about 7:45 so if you arrive late, you will have to wait for the group to depart, then enter the park to park and try to make up 15-20 minutes on the rest of the group. You DON'T want to arrive after 7:30 this week!!!

PLEASE remember to carpool, demonstrate good etiquette, use the facilities we provide, and, if you do stop at a local store, bring along cash to buy a drink or snack.

This week, there will be a shoulder for the first seven miles out of New Ulm. The shoulder is a bit rough but safe for riding. After a quick coast downhill out of town, you will quickly encounter some significant climbs. For this reason, slower riders need to start in the slower pace waves so you

aren't holding up the faster riders on this hilly stretch. In other words, PLEASE start in the appropriate pace group.

I am getting forgetful in my old age (I just turned 55 recently) so I can't recall...

...in the notes I sent earlier this year, did I remember to remind everyone to ARRIVE EARLY?

Did I mention that there is only one way in to many of our small towns and that this will get congested and that the riders will start lining up about 7:40 and if you aren't on site by 7:30 that you would be REAL sorry??

Did I mention that we CAN'T park in New Ulm and we CAN'T park on the road leading out to Fireman's Park???

Finally, I can't believe that I have let almost the entire season go by without reminding you to CARPOOL!!!

If you do nothing else, remember all the points above - namely, arrive early and carpool. This will make for a much more enjoyable ride and may be the difference between riding and not riding.

Bike Mechanics Are Back!!!

This week, Bike Barn will be providing pre-ride support. Be sure to thank the crew for coming out to provide assistance and check out the Bike Barn specials, upcoming rides, etc at:

<http://bikebarn.com/index.cfm>

Upcoming Maintenance Classes

Note the following bike repair/maintenance classes coming up. You should all be able to get a good basic knowledge on how to take care of your bike by attending one of these classes. All are free and do not require an RSVP.

Bicycle World & Fitness

Bike Repair (West U Store) - Apr 4 or Apr 11, 6:30-8:00 pm

Basic Bike Repair (Dairy Ashford) - Apr 7, noon

Calendar at: <http://bicycleworldandfitness.com/page.cfm?PageID=112>

Bike Barn

Bike Maintenance (All stores) - Apr 4, 6:00 pm

Info/optional RSVP at: <http://bikebarn.com/page.cfm?PageID=579>

Sun & Ski Sports

Basic Bike Clinic (All Stores) - Apr 5, Apr 12 or Apr 19, 7:00-8:00 pm

Info at: <http://sunandskibikes.com/page.cfm?PageID=442>

I'll see many of you in New Ulm this Saturday. I'm really looking forward to the BBQ...

Stephen Moskowitz