

2007 BP MS150 - Training Ride #3 - Royal H.S. South - 7:45 am!

That's right - it says 7:45 am up there in the subject line!

More on this later but the bottom line is there are a lot of groups training and we are working hard to avoid any conflicts. Based on how well we got away last week, a start promptly at 7:45 am should keep us ahead of any conflicts this Saturday. Set your alarm clock 15 minutes earlier and start planning what you will do with the 15 minutes of bonus time after the ride...

582...

Five hundred and eighty two...

That's how many of you signed in last Saturday!

Actually, I saw a number of riders who could not have signed in based on when they arrived and where they parked so I would say we really had 600+ riders.

All but seven of you signed out too - maybe those seven fell in the seven lakes at Seven Lake H.S! Most of the MIA riders did e-mail or call me and let me know they finished so I didn't have to set my alarm for 2:00 am to call and check up on them...

Overall, you did listen to the pre-ride announcements (hopefully, the mother of all megaphones will be working this week) and read my e-mail. It is early in the season and still have opportunities to get better and I know that all of you will before we head off to Austin. See some of the safety tips and reminders in the Safety Corner below.

In other news, one rider has become our first rider to miss turns and get bonus miles on the first two rides. I'm not saying who it is but I will be keeping an eye on them and making sure they have a map and look at it this week!-)

Today, I will cover these important items:

- **2007 BP MS150 Training Ride 3 - Brookshire-South**
- **Check-in Update - Wrist bands required**
- **Safety Corner - Ride Feedback,**
- **Ride Marshals/Medics/Police Riders**
- **Safety Reminder - NO Headphones!**
- **General Ride Information**

Note to our out-of-town readers - The weekly notes are primarily focused on the training series and I know that you won't be able to join us. The notes do give you an idea of how far we are riding and how hilly so you can plan your training in parallel. Please also pay attention to the safety tips, etc. These issues tend to be universal and we can learn from them wherever we are.

2007 BP MS150 Training Ride 3 - Brookshire-South - Royal H.S. - 7:45 am

As noted, we are starting at 7:45 am. This will get us on the road just ahead of a Bike Barn Drop-in ride from the middle school next door at 8 am. We WILL depart at 7:45 and the high school parking will be full by 7:20 so, if you are running late, you will miss our start, and may get caught up in the Bike Barn crowd.

This week, we continue with the last of our three classic close rides - The Brookshire South route. The roads remain fairly flat but there will be one modest climb near the end and the long riders have to cross the Brazos River on FM1489 twice but this is still a flat ride out in the pleasant, quiet countryside close to town.

Almost all the roads we are riding on are single lane with no shoulder so you MUST ride single file, even if there are only two of you who want to visit. The only exceptions to this are on FM1093 and Hwy 36 (long route only) which have a shoulder. You must stay on the shoulder but can ride two abreast as long as you switch to single file to pass or when being passed.

The short ride is 26 miles and the long is 51 miles. The online map is current.

NOTE - Only 19+ mph riders should be going long this early in the season. Those of you who have been riding for a while and need more than 26 miles, you can take FM1489 down to Hwy 36 and turn around back to the rest stop in Simonton. This should give you a good 38 mile ride with rest stops at 15 and 27 miles which is perfect for all but the 19+ mph riders. Be sure to call your intention to make the u-turn and slow as you approach Hwy 36.

To get to the start of the ride:

Take I-10 west to 1st Brookshire exit to Hwy 359, turn right, go to light, turn left, go to the SECOND light, turn right, go over railroad tracks. Continue through Pattison on 359 about 2 miles. You will see a sign for Royal High School on the right (Durkin Rd). Turn right, pass the elementary school AND the middle school until you get to the third school - the high school.

NOTE

Bike Barn has a drop-in ride starting at the middle school at 8:00 am. It is critical that you arrive 15 minutes earlier and come to the High School. This means arrive by 7:00 am if you are paid and have ridden before or 6:45 am if this is your first ride and/or you need to pay for the training series.

NOTE2

Royal HS has a good size parking lot in the back but we will fill the lot. It is critical that you carpool unless you are a support volunteer this week. If you arrive w/o a carpool or after 7:20 or so, you will need to go past the high school, turn right and proceed to the stadium behind the high school. Park there and ride over to the high school for our start. If you are not carpooling, arrive early as ALL riders MUST sign in (see below) and you will need to allow extra time to park offsite and ride over. If you are a habitual late arrive, I know that the Bike Barn rides are pretty pleasant but don't have the support, food/drinks or porta-lets that we have...

The carpool forum can be reached in one click from our club site -
www.conocophillipsbikeclub.org

Our volunteers this week come from **BP, Apache, Minute Maid and Granite Properties**. Be sure to thank them for the great work they do.

NOTE3

Our rest stop is also the Simonton fire house. We have never had a conflict but PLEASE remember to not leave your bikes blocking the fire doors or on the pavement while you are at the rest stop.

Check-in Update - Wrist bands required

Two quick facts:

- Last week, 11 of you checked in and rode without paying your fee yet. Your fees are due BEFORE you ride.
- This week, someone overheard a rider saying they were joining us w/o registering or paying because we don't check that close

I didn't want to have to do this but we need to add a rider band to the check-in process.

This means that you will need to sign in, get a band, and put it on your helmet in front where it is very visible. Each week, be sure to bring your helmet with the band on it. Riders without a band will be asked to leave our ride. It is not safe and not fair for "bandit" riders to slip in. I hate to add this overhead to your time and our expenses but getting this feedback so early led to this need.

In a related note, it puts a strain on our volunteers to have to help with accounting before each ride. Therefore, if you have not mailed payment to arrive before your first ride, your fee to pay at the ride will be \$85.

This week, we will still accept \$75 as it is too late to mail fees but starting next week, the training fees are \$75 if mailed before your first ride or \$85 at the ride.

You can mail the fee (payable to ConocoPhillips Bike Club) to me at:
Steve Moskowitz
11027 Holworth
Houston, TX 77072

The extra \$10 goes straight to the MS Society as part of my fundraising but it is time to pay if you intend to join the series!

Remember that cash needs to be in an envelope with rider name(s) before you pay - it is hard to credit cash without rider names and you may have to pay twice if you forget this important step.

Safety Corner - Ride Feedback

After our first big ride, I usually get a lot of observations and good feedback from you. This was the case again so I am sharing some of your comments and will add a few wrap-up remarks. PLEASE read all of these and take these lessons to heart. We did well last week but will get better by learning from this feedback.

Here are some of your observations and comments...

I know you go over the rules each week, so I don't want to bore you with something you already know. However, my personal experience has been that the inexperienced riders tend to obey the rules more than the experienced ones. Case in point: I was passed by 10-12 pacelines (of 5+people each) and only ½ called out "on your left" or something to that effect. The other ½ didn't say a word as they approached or passed.

SEM Comment - These are the areas that we see the most opportunity for improvement in the early weeks. Passing groups - PLEASE remember that you need to broadcast your approach, make sure it is safe to pass, and call out as you pass as well as letting the riders know how many are coming by. It may not be possible for the entire line to pass if cars are approaching - it is your responsibility to regroup after a safe pass is completed.

Also, many riders were riding more than 2 abreast down Katy Flewellen (where there is no shoulder). In spite of my calling out "car back", these riders still wouldn't fall in line. Some riders even passed to the left of slower riders and to the right of same-flow vehicles! Made me shudder.

SEM Comment - This is the other area where we need to get better each year. Riding is a fun, social activity but on single lane roads w/o a shoulder, you need to ride single file at all times. Even if there are only two of you on a leisurely ride.

I thought you might want to suggest that riders consider having a rear-view mirror either attached to their helmet or to their glasses. I personally find it helps to glance back via the mirror as well as listen for approaching riders / vehicles from behind.

I'm a beginner rider trying my first MS150. Have a mountain bike and I'm about to buy a road bike, more suitable for trainings and for the ride. A beginner buying a bike has the dilemma about sizing, as it seems few inches here and there change completely the posture.

When you buy new, you receive assistance. But on classified you are on your own choosing the ads to your right fit. Have found on the web a "fit calculator", which is helping me a lot to choose the right bike size and tune my preferred position:

http://www.competitivecyclist.com/za/CCY?PAGE=FIT_CALCULATOR_INTRO

The site has upscale-expensive bikes only, but this tool helped me a lot as reference for my shop around.

...One thing you might consider adding to your 'communication' section is the announcement 'on your wheel' (or something along those lines) for folks who join the back of a pace line.

Especially early in the ride when you're looking to find the right pace, it's nice to hop onto the back of a passing pack. but, with the wind blowing and traffic noise, it can be hard for the last rider in the line to hear a new rider come in behind him or her. though it's not right, when you think you're the last person on the line, you sometimes get sloppy or lazy and things can come apart fast if you have company you don't know about. when joining a passing pack, I'll usually tell the last rider 'hopping on' as he or she goes by just so I don't surprise anyone.

Ride Marshals/Medics/Police Riders

You may have noticed a few riders with Ride Marshal (RM) and/or Medic jerseys. This is NOT an illusion.

We have invited the Ride Marshals to participate in our training series at no cost. They will be coaching you on safe riding techniques and, on rare occasions, yelling at you if you are spread across the road or doing something else that puts you and/or other riders at risk. Our Ride Marshals are here to protect us and we expect each of you to respect them and obey their instructions.

We have also invited the HFD Medic Team and any EMS Medics and riders from any of the local police forces to participate free of charge. We hope none of these folks have any opportunities to practice their skills since all of you will always be riding safely and courteously but, in case someone forgets, we will have a team in place to keep us in line and help if there is an accident.

Please be sure to thank these riders for volunteering in such vital roles.

Safety Reminder - NO Headphones!

I had at least one report of a rider wearing headphones during the ride. Wearing headphones while riding on the roads is dangerous when you're riding alone and even more dangerous when riding with a group. The purpose of our training series is to teach you to ride safely, to ride with a group, and to meet other riders. Headphones don't support any of these goals and are NOT permitted in our training series.

If any of you have a problem riding without headphones, please let me know and I will gladly refund your fee and drop you from the series.

This is a **NO EXCEPTIONS** policy!

----- General Ride Information

Start time is **8:00 SHARP** unless noted in the ride schedule - PLEASE GET TO THE START EARLY ENOUGH TO SIGN IN (7:15 or earlier!!!). A few very important things you should remember for the training rides:

- Helmets are **required** (ANSI or Snell approved). **No helmet, No ride! This is a NO EXCEPTIONS policy.**
- Safety Reminder - **NO Headphones!** This is a **NO EXCEPTIONS** policy.
- Always sign in AND out with the training ride coordinator.
- Obey all traffic signs and laws. Follow recommended safety guidelines!
- You must have registered and agreed to the online waiver prior to riding.

A few other reminders about the ride... Sign-In Details; What to Expect - Pre-Ride:

- We require all riders to sign in before each ride and sign out when **they** complete the ride. This is done to ensure that we know you have safely completed your ride. All that is required is for you to initial in and out on an alphabetical listing of registered riders.
- You will notice a column on the left labeled "Paid". If I have received your payment, there will be a "P" next to your name
- Arrive at the start (See directions) no later than 7:15 am
- NOTE - ALL riders MUST have accepted the on-line waiver to participate.
- Turn in your support fee - \$75 for each rider - a REAL bargain.

Checks should be made out to: "**ConocoPhillips Bike Club.**" Cash should have a Post-It with your name paper clipped to bills so I can credit you as paid. I will provide miscellaneous supplies at the ride but if you do this ahead, it saves a lot of time.

- Pick up ride map.
- Get you and your bike ready to ride.
- Hush up for a ride orientation at 7:50 am
- Depart PROMPTLY at 8 am.

Note - If you arrive at 7:45 and expect to do all the above by 8 am, you better be a good pursuit rider!

PLEASE arrive no later than 7:00 for your first so you have time to get everything in order and prepare to ride. PLEASE allow plenty of time to get checked in and ready to go.

What to Bring:

- Equipment - Bike, helmet (**No exceptions - No helmet, No ride!**), shoes, water bottles (filled), etc.
- Spare tube (or tubes) for your size tires
- Bottles filled with water/sports drink - We will provide drinks at designated spots on the ride but we don't have the room or ability to provide drinks before the ride

- \$75 support fee - for the entire series of training rides (a GREAT deal)
- Cell phone (turn it on after the midpoint of the ride)

How/when to pay your support fee:

- We want to keep things easy whenever possible. Your \$75 support fee is payable the first time you show up for a ride. If possible, please mail your payment in time to arrive the Wednesday prior to your first ride.
- If you pay for more than one person, please list the people covered on the check
- If you pay in cash, **(At the ride only, NO cash in the mail please!)**, please attach a Post-it note AND paper clip it to the bill so I can credit you properly.
- **PLEASE place cash payments in an envelope and write the name of the rider(s) covered and seal it.** I hate to get finicky but accounting for your donations is one of the least productive things I can do on Saturday afternoon.

What to Expect - On the Road

The purpose of this training series is two fold. First, and foremost, we want to ensure that you are in proper condition to complete the 2007 BP MS 150 and complete each training ride safely. Second, we want to ensure that you have a lot of fun before and during the ride to Austin and

make a lot of new friends in the process.

The large group means that there should be riders who ride at your pace, no matter what it is. PLEASE introduce yourself to the riders around you - this makes a HUGE difference in how easy and fun it is to get to Austin. Please also remember to talk to the riders in your group to inform them about road hazards, when you are slowing, stopping, etc.

There will be one or more rest stops at designated spots along the route. These will be pointed out at the pre-ride orientation. We will be providing snacks, water, and sports drinks at these stops. You can drop off outerwear as well but please remember to pick it up when you return to the finish.

PLEASE remember to initial the rider sheet before you start the ride and, ESPECIALLY, after you return to the finish. This helps us know that you have finished the ride. We may call your cell phone just to confirm you finished if you haven't checked in at the finish.

In case of bad weather check Bike Club messages @ 281-293-2931

Remember that you can find the old notes, schedule, ride maps, car pool forum and online bike exchange all on our club website:

www.conocophillipsbikeclub.org

I look forward to seeing many of you at Royal High School this Saturday. PLEASE remember that we start at 7:45 sharp!

Thanks!

Stephen Moskowitz

Team Captain, ConocoPhillips

281 293-2599

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