

2007 BP MS150 Training Ride #10 - Chappell Hill - 3/31, 8:00 am

OK, here's some great news...Last weekend, I drove to Fayetteville and back. The wildflowers, especially the bluebonnets along the roadside were fabulous. They should be even better this week.

It sure is a good thing that the hilliest rides of the year occur on beautiful roads when our riders and the flowers are peaking. You may want to slow down a bit to take in the beautiful views. You will definitely want to slow down to make it up a few of the hills but don't worry, there will be plenty of hills to go around for everyone!

----- **Carpool Offer for Austin Riders**

I will be in Austin this weekend but, since Chappell Hill is almost halfway to Austin, I figure to just leave a little earlier than normal and drive in from Austin. If any of our Austin riders want to carpool with me, please reply. I will be leaving quite early, 5:00 am, in order to get to town to set up but I have room for 2 more riders plus bikes. I'll be departing from very near Mopac/Anderson Road.

----- **Tragic Story has Happy Ending...**

I won't name any names but the riders who we thought were missing were actually OK. They are such a great couple that each thought the other had initialed the two of them in when they finished the ride two weeks ago.

We had observed a tearful moment of silence in their memory before our ride last Saturday so I can't tell you how excited we were when **Sam and Sandra Cornelius** reported in that they were fine!

----- **2007 BP MS150 Training Ride #10 - Chappell Hill, 3/31 - 8:00 am**

This week, you are all in for a very special treat!

It's time to head out to Chappell Hill for one of the two hilliest rides of our training series. There is a reason the town is named Chappell Hill!

If that's not enough, this is also one of the prettiest rides of the season and the local community is looking forward to our return. While we have arranged for parking, it is limited and there is only way in and out of the parking (i.e. traffic backup) so PLEASE carpool. Carpooling also makes the drive (2nd longest of the season) more fun.

NOTE - Chappell Hill is one hour northwest of town on Hwy 290. It is a fairly quick trip out but there is only one way in and out so traffic will back up entering town. PLEASE allow extra time

for this final bit of congestion because the start is actually located two blocks away from the parking area. If you are running very late and are delayed here, we won't know this and you will miss the group start. Hint - carpooling will help everyone get into town faster.

This week, the routes are 39 or 61 miles. Everyone of them will be quite hilly but you are ready for the challenge. After you finish this ride, you will laugh at anything you encounter on our ride to Austin.

We will start in the very quaint town of Chappell Hill and enjoy majestic Washington County. The Bluebonnets and Indian Paintbrush should be spectacular so, if you have to slow down a bit to make it to the top of a climb, just relax and enjoy the amazing views.

To get to the start of the ride:

Take Hwy 290 northwest to Hempstead. Continue 11 miles past Hempstead to the light at Chappell Hill (FM-1155). Turn right at the light and proceed less than a quarter mile to the open gate into the field on the right. There may be a "Welcome bikers" sign and probably some of the local residents directing you into the parking area. Please DON'T park along the streets of Chappell Hill. We have spent several years building a good relationship in this beautiful little town. They actually call and e-mail me several times a year to find out when we are coming back and what can they do to help so let's not ruin a good thing.

NOTE - I spoke to our Chappell Hill contacts on Tuesday and there is no problem right now but, if we have a heavy rain Friday (one possibility before a forecast nice weekend), our parking area may be off limits. If this is the case, we WILL be allowed to park on the streets in town but ONLY if the field is too wet.

If we have to park in town, PLEASE DON'T block and driveways or make it tight for vehicles to get down any road in town. If it feels tight, find a better spot to park and ONLY if the field on the right as you enter town is closed.

Please do NOT drive into town to the start at the museum and park there - the museum is open to visitors all day and our agreement is to park in the designated field unless it is too wet.

Allow at least one hour to drive from the tollway and I-10 to get to Chappell Hill.

NOTE - There is only one way into the start so traffic will back up entering Chappell Hill. PLEASE allow extra time to get to the ride, park, get ready, and then head over to the starting area.

After you park, get your bike ready and exit the parking area head north (right) to the 2nd street (Poplar). We have arranged to have 10 porta-lets along the fence in our parking area. There are also public restrooms on Poplar (in the historical block on your right) which will be open early for us. After you pass the historical block, turn right on Poplar and proceed about 1/4 mile to the museum where the sign-in area and start point are located. Remember, these directions are AFTER you parked your car in the field and are on your bike.

Please note the detailed map of the start details in Chappell Hill:

http://www.conocophillipsbikeclub.org/maps/CH_Start.pdf

The ONLY cars allowed to park at the museum are the support vehicles and the Smart Drinks vans. PLEASE honor this restriction as we are leaving the parking in town open for visitors later in the day..

Please DON'T park in the parking area at the (closed) restaurant on 290 where you turn into Chappell Hill.

Of course, Smart Drinks will be in Chappell Hill. Many of you have commented how great the coffee before and smoothies after the ride were.

Other special notes on this ride...

1. We will have a stand-by EMT team w/ ambulance - Washington County asks that we retain emergency service so we will have a dedicated ambulance with a two person crew from 7:45 am until 2:45 pm. They will be posted on Hwy 105 in the middle of our routes until we are all headed back to Chappell Hill.

2. FM-105 is THE major east/west road north of Chappell Hill. The long route has to cross 105 twice. Two Austin Co Sheriffs will be directing traffic at FM-105 & 2193 (on the way out) and FM-105 and 390 (on the way back). Please slow down and be prepared to stop as you approach these critical crossing points until the traffic is clear (traffic on 105 has the right of way). Obey the officers instructions and communicate clearly as you approach to riders behind you.

3. St. Matthews Lutheran Church in Sandy Hill is generously housing breakpoint 1 on the long ride. We will furnish 6 porta-lets at this stop. PLEASE use them. The church is always open but we don't want to use their facility - use our porta-lets - please DON'T attempt to enter the church to use their restrooms or wander about.

4. The other breakpoint (long and short rides) is at Washington on the Brazos State Park. We will have 6 porta-lets here as well.

Two key things to remember about this rest stop. First, SLOW DOWN as you make the right turn into the park. There may be some gravel - we had a rider take a spill here and a broken collarbone put a dent in their plan to ride to Austin in one day.

Second, our rest stop is in the new parking area on the south end of the park. As you approach the visitor center about halfway into the park, you will take a right turn and follow the road down quite a way to our rest stop. This keeps us away from the car and bus traffic going to the visitor center. I will have the Rest Stop #2 crew place signs but please look for the new road that goes off to the right to find the rest stop.

5. As soon as you head out of Chappell Hill, you will encounter several downhill stretches. Each of these are followed by a tough uphill climb. The road out of Chappell Hill has no shoulder and is not real wide so it is CRITICAL that everyone start with the appropriate pace group. This will prevent a lot of congestion and passing while we are tightly grouped.

It is also critical to take the first 5 miles easy and allow extra room for reaction time since we all take the ups and downs at different speeds. After you descend the BIG hill (you will know when you get there - it looks like the edge of the world as you approach), then you can start to organize into pacelines as long as you allow faster riders to come around and call out as you approach slower riders. Of course, if you start in the right part of the right pace group, you should not need to pass or be passed a lot at the beginning of the ride.

6. This is NOT the ride for newcomers to start their training for the MS 150! If you have been riding with us in the hills for several weeks, you should be prepared for Chappell Hill. In

past years, we have had some new riders who thought the ride sounded like a great way to start training...until they encountered the first or second climb on the way out of town. They were smart enough to stop and realize they were in over their heads and asked to be sagged back but this creates a safety hazard for riders behind and ties up SAGs that need to keep an eye on the riders on the route.

OK, it's time to get to work. Volunteers, watch for the weekly details tomorrow and everyone watch for the update and safety tips this Friday morning.

I'll see many of you in Chappell Hill Saturday...

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