

Subject: 2010 BP MS150 Training Series - Ride 1, Sun & Ski, Katy Mills, Jan 23, 7:45 am

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First of all, you read the headline correct - 7:45 am is our start time this week - this is for your safety so please set your alarm clocks to give you (and your carpool) time to arrive at Katy Mills by 6:45..

At the recommendation of the public officials we have been working with, we are getting our large group away in waves before the Saturday traffic starts up around Katy Mills Mall. The good news is that we have a GREAT location for the start and you can sign in in the warm comfort of Sun & Ski Sports.

Before I go any further, a big CONGRATULATIONS to all of you who participated in the marathon/half-marathon last Sunday. Thanks to those of you who recognized me and called my full name. Since we have our first name on our bib, it was pretty common to here "Way to go Stephen", especially at my pace which gives spectators plenty of time to read my name. It was really cool to hear "Great job, Stephen!" along the way!

Also, WAY TO GO to Margaret Shelton and her planning team and the 142 of you who came out for the beginner ride last Saturday. It was cool and damp but not too bad and we did arrange for you to have a tail wind on the way back...GREAT JOB!

I will be sending a focus note tomorrow about the training ride details. It will cover do you need to RSVP (no), how do you sign in and out, how do we start our riders, what do the Ride Marshals do, etc. PLEASE hold your questions about the ride until after you read tomorrow's note. It should cover everything you want to know about the actual ride day experience and what you need to do.

I am trying to break the mega-notes up so this note will stick to the following topics:

- **Training Ride #1 - Klassic Katy, Jan 23, 7:45 am**
- **Safety Corner - Group Rides, Drafting & Pacelines, Helmet Fit Tips**
- **Training Series Sponsor - Sun & Ski Sports**
- **Bike Safety Class - Sat, Jan 23, 1-4 pm @ Sun & Ski**
- **Chicken Soup Cookoff, Sunday, Jan 24**
- **Last Minute Reminders**

Training Ride #1 - Klassic Katy, Jan 23, 7:45 am - 28/36 miles

This week, we kick off the season with one of our classic rides...

If this ride looks a little familiar to our veteran riders, it is probably because it is a variation on our old Katy Klassic only we are riding in the other direction at the recommendation of the Katy Police Dept.

This ride is our classic opening ride as it is close to town but the roads are not too busy (if we get away early). This ride is almost completely flat with a few dips between Fulshear and Brookshire. Most of the ride is on local roads without a shoulder so you will need to ride single file. We will have Ride Marshals, HPD riders and conscientious riders reminding you to ride "Single File". Please honor these requests so that we are welcome to come back. More on this below.

Directions to Katy Mills (from in town)

Take I-10 to the Katy Fort Bend exit and make a LEFT turn on Katy Ft Bend Rd. Go to the 2nd street on the right and make a RIGHT turn on Katy Mills Dr. When you get to the loop road around the parking, Sun & Ski is straight ahead. Make a left and turn into any of the parking aisles. Please don't park right outside the store, unless you are part of the weekly support crew. We'll leave the spots out front for in & out shoppers and this will make it safer when you return to your car.

A big THANKS to Sun & Ski Sports for hosting our first two ride starts. They are excited to be on board and will be rolling out the red carpet for us the next two weeks. For any of you who missed it, I will be sending you information on how you can sign up for Sun & Ski's 2010 MS150 Discount & Donation program. This is a great way to get the equipment and clothing you need and raise money to help fight MS. You even earn donations when your friends shop at Sun & Ski - this program helped me raise enough donations to make the Tour of Champions last year and I highly recommend it.

Here's a useful tip for riders who don't have the proper cold weather wear for the probable cold front this weekend:

1. Enroll ASAP in the Sun & Ski Discount & Donation Program (www.sunandski.com/events)
2. Read my tips on cold weather wear (on the News link at <http://www.conocophillipsbikeclub.org>)
3. Arrive at Sun & Ski early this Saturday and pick out the perfect base layer, shell, or whatever you need before we ride!

Sun & Ski will open about 6:00 am for our riders. You can shop for warm clothing, get help with minor pre-ride mechanical assistance and sign in. The restrooms in the mall opposite the front of the store will be open and have plenty of capacity. **NOTE - 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 and the clips can scratch the flooring.

If you are not familiar with the mall, Sun & Ski is located on the northeast side (the side facing Houston) near I-10. 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 28 or 36 miles. Most of you will be doing the shorter route and that is perfect for the start of the season. There will be one rest stop just north of Fulshear. This is just past the middle of the long route and 12.3 miles into the short route.

NOTE - When returning to the mall, please stay on the perimeter loop of the parking lot until you get around to the store. Please don't take a shortcut by cutting through the parking lot to the inner loop by the mall. We all move fairly fast - for parking lot traffic and are pretty quiet so we startle many pedestrians and have to cut across traffic. The bottom line is PLEASE ride sensibly and courteously and cool down as we loop around the parking lot on the return.

ALL Riders Need to Sign in and Sign out - There will be a master list split into six parts on tables in the store. Please initial in before you ride and initial out when you are finished so we know you made it home.

IMPORTANT Ride Details

We will not be going to the Fulshear Park & Ride. The rest stop will be at a small park slightly north of Fulshear. It is on the west side of FM-359 so you will have to cross the traffic coming in and out. We have requested an officer to assist but, if one is not available, there will be volunteers to remind you to look both ways and to not proceed until you have personally confirmed that it is safe for you to turn. Please don't call out "Clear" or anything that would imply that other riders are safe to turn without checking. Each rider is responsible to confirm that it is safe for them to cross when they need to make a left turn.

Please DON'T use the permanent restrooms at the Fulshear park & ride! They are supposed to be locked but, if they aren't, please DON'T use them.

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 most cyclists are very considerate. PLEASE ride single file and be considerate of local traffic or we will not be welcome back.

Please ride on the shoulder on Hwy 90 from Brookshire back to Katy. You can ride two abreast but please allow faster riders to pass - see the Safety Corner below.

- Safety Corner - Group Rides, Drafting & Pacelines, Helmet Tips

This week, we officially start training to ride to Austin. 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.

Since we are getting ready for our first group ride, I want to talk about some group ride issues/considerations.

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 cellphone 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.

Passing - This is IMPORTANT!

We will practice the tips below over and over and I will be giving you feedback. After a few weeks, this will become second nature but please read the tips below and practice them as well as observing other riders doing the same. Be sure to communicate effectively and say "THANKS!" to show your appreciation for other riders who do the same.

Over the years, I have noticed a fairly regular issue in our rides and have observed several mishaps when a newer rider is startled during a pass and jerks causing them to lose control of their bike. In most cases, the rider recovers but I have seen a few where the rider did take a spill. These accidents can be 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 you get close (within 10-20 yards)
- Check the road behind to ensure no approaching vehicles
- Move over to allow enough room, speed up just a little and start the pass
- Call "Passing on left" as you pull near the rider

Adjust your volume for the weather - if it's calm, you don't need to shout, if it's windy, you will need to raise your voice

- 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 something 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 your line doesn't cut off the passees
- Maintain a steady speed, don't speed up until the entire group has passed - 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")

Ignoring the "Riders approaching" call and not allowing room for riders to pass is not a good way to make friends!

- 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.

I expect to see you all practicing these tips - they make a huge difference in how much we all enjoy the ride. 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
- 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

Helmet (and other) Tips

THANKS to **Chuck D'Angelo**, Team Captain of the St Catherine's Montessori Team who was mentoring riders at our newbie ride last Saturday.

Chuck noticed several riders with helmets that needed tweaking/adjustment to fit properly. Here is what Chuck wrote:

"I helped one rider with her helmet. She had it way too high all around because she had the circumference adjustment tightened too much.

Her entire forehead and back of head were exposed. I adjusted her helmet properly and one of the Ride Marshals agreed that the new fit was good.

Perhaps you could send out this link on helmet fitting? I've handed it out to all riders on the SCM Cycling Club and reviewed it with them.

http://www.cbcef.org/pdf/helmet_brochure.pdf

I saw a new rider get into an uncomfortably close encounter with a vehicle coming out of the rest stop. The rider had gotten from the rest stop to the other side of FM 359 and had started heading south.

She was having a hard time getting started. I think she was trying to get a foot into a toe clip. She also may have had her bike in a high gear; looked like she was struggling to get going. Anyway, she was plodding through the intersection at FM 1887 when a pick-up truck went around her and tried to take a right from southbound FM 359 to westbound FM 1887. Perhaps he thought that she was going to stop,

or perhaps he was just annoyed that she took so long. He just stopped there and hit his horn multiple times as she passed in front of him.

Lessons here are to have your bike in a low (easy) gear when starting, not to worry about getting that second foot clipped onto a pedal or inserted into a toe clip until your moving at a good speed, and being aware of traffic coming behind you before you pass through an intersection.

By the way, my 13 year-old daughter learned indeed that "cold" and "wind" were bad four letter words for cycling. She said they were "evil." Good thing she didn't learn about "rain" or "flat" on the same ride!

Training Series Sponsor - Sun & Ski Sports

This is a BIG deal...we will now have FULL mechanical support, before, during AND after our rides! Read on for details...

Sun & Ski Sports is proud to be the exclusive sponsor of our 2010 BP MS150 Training Series. They will be providing full bike maintenance support before, during and after each training ride.

Sun & Ski Sports is a full service bike shop that offers bike sales, apparel, parts and accessories, bike repair and custom bike fittings. They outfit customers with quality merchandise, exceptional service and outstanding values. All employees are knowledgeable of the products and help provide the best possible fit.

Store Discounts and 5% Pledge Rebate Program

Sun & Ski Sports offers a store discount program to all participants in this training series plus include their exclusive 5% pledge rebate program to all who sign up. This program gives you a 5% rebate on all sales made at Sun & Ski Sports by you or your supporters towards your MS150 pledge. To enroll for store discounts and the 5% pledge rebate, just click here: www.sunandski.com/events.

Bike U, January 22-23

Sun & Ski Sports will host its annual "Bike U" Customer Appreciation night on January 22, 6-10 p.m. and Saturday, January 23, 1-4 p.m. at Sun & Ski Sports, 6100 Westheimer. The free event is open to the public and will feature:

- Customized bike fit sessions
- Cycling Clinics
- Women Specific Clinics
- Hands-on demonstrations
- Free food and drinks
- Cycling-orientated door prize give-a-aways every two hours
- Many manufacturers On-hand

- Bike Safety Class - Sat, Jan 23, 1-4 pm @ Sun & Ski

Steve Earle and our great team of LCI's are hosting another bike safety skills class this Saturday after the weekly ride. The three hour session will start in a workroom in Sun & Ski and then, move out to the parking lot for on-bike safety skill drills. This is an excellent investment of three hours and we have timed the class to allow you to ride, have lunch, and come to the class.

The class is free but is limited to the first 24 riders who RSVP to Steve.

If you want to attend, please RSVP ASAP to Steve Earle at - earle50@earthlink.net

Chicken Soup Cookoff, Sunday, Jan 24, 11:30 am - 3:00 pm

Here's a very timely event for this time of the year. This is also probably the BEST deal in town this coming weekend...

The Men's Club at Congregation Emanu El is hosting the 2010 Chicken Soup Cookoff this Sunday. As of last night, 44 local restaurants had already committed to serve up some soup! This is like a BBQ cookoff but everyone makes soup. There is a traditional soup category where the chicken soup is clearly chicken soup and a creative category where the soup starts with a chicken base and goes wherever the cook wants to take it.

There are 14 judges from the local media and other local organizations and it's a BIG deal to win in either category so the participants pull out all the stops in their soup offering, serving additional treats and decorating their tables.

For \$8 (\$5 children), you get a cup and a spoon when you arrive and, if you pace yourself right, it is (theoretically) possible to sample all 44 offerings. I have to warn you that many of the restaurants serve appetizers and all kinds of other goodies that compliment their soup so while it is possible to sample all 44 soups, I'm not sure anyone will actually succeed - they may explode first!

Emanu El is located at 1500 Sunset Blvd - just north of Rice University where Sunset and Rice Blvd come together.

For more details including a list of participating cooks, go to:

www.chickensoupcookoff.com

Be sure to arrive hungry - you WON'T leave that way!

- 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!

One more note - I DO have a real job and we are VERY busy right now kicking off some 2010 programs so it will take some time to get to replying to cycling notes. Many of the questions you are sending can be answered on our new FAQ online or by your team captain. Please check with them and, if they can't answer, they will check with me. This will ensure you get a quicker response.

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

Stephen Moskowitz

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