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2013 Ready2Roll Cycling Training Series - Ride 3 - Pedaling the Prairie - Feb 9, 9:00 am (Participating Version)

February 6, 2013 1:06 PM

The first detail today is to call your attention to the start time - 9:00 am is correct. We'll be starting just this side of Hempstead at the Waller County Fairgrounds - please allow plenty of time to arrive in Hempstead no later than 7:45 am as it takes a LONG while to travel the final mile or so into the parking area.

Did I mention that the ride is serving Community Coffee, Starbucks oatmeal AND breakfast tacos before the ride so if you arrive early, you can have a light snack after signing in.

This is one of our two partner rides for the season so I'm going to keep this note limited to details about the ride. Please read on if you plan to ride this week...

2013 Ready2Roll Cycling Training Series - Ride 3 - Pedaling the Prairie - Feb 9, 9:00 am

This week, we have a special treat - we're partnering with Faith West Academy for the Pedaling the Prairie ride!

We created this route with the ride organizers several years ago and there will be plenty of distance options - 24, 45, 55 or 71 miles. The two short routes will be fairly flat while the 55 and 71 mile routes will include our first preview of the rolling roads on FM-529 and FM-331 out to Bellville.

At this point in the season, I don't recommend the 55 or 71 mile options unless you have been riding all year and are ready to stretch things out. The 45 mile option will be plenty for those of you who rode 46 miles last week - the rolling roads will add to your workout this week.

Directions to the start of the ride - Waller County Fairgrounds (22000 Fairground Rd, Hempstead, 77445, GPS: 30.077756,-96.036301).

NOTE - I am recommending two routes below because if everyone takes the Hwy 290 route, traffic will really back up. Those of you who live further west should drive up FM-359 from Brookshire and miss the traffic backup. So please override your GPS unit and trust me - if we send half of you up FM-359 and half come out Hwy 290, it will significantly reduce the traffic back-up.

If you live inside the Sam Houston Tollway:

Take the tollway (or the 610 loop, if closer) to Hwy 290. Take 290 northwest approx 33 miles past the Sam Houston Tollway to the 359 exit. Turn LEFT (South) on 359 and drive about a mile to old Hwy 290. Continue under 290 about 100 yards to Old Houston Hwy. Turn LEFT on Old Houston Hwy and then, the make a RIGHT on Fairgrounds Dr. The parking will be on your left and the Fairgrounds on your right.

If you live west of the tollway:

Take I-10 west to the first Brookshire exit. Take FM-359 north approx 18 miles to Fairgrounds Dr. Make a right on Fairgrounds Dr. and the parking will be on your right and the Fairgrounds on your left.

Ride Map is Online

The ride map is online at our website as is the GPX file and, thanks to John Rufini, individual TCX files for each route.

Check this out in the Communications/Houston archives.

There is an aerial photo of the area on the map - the yellow star on the aerial photo is the fairgrounds - the parking is to the right across Fairgrounds Dr - you will be parking on the large open field and walking across the street to the covered pavilion at the lower center of the photo to sign in. The ride will line up and start on Fairgrounds Dr so, if you arrive late, you will most likely have to wait for all the riders to depart before you can get into the parking - this could be a long wait.

NOTE - Since there will be a lot of us heading to Hempstead, you want to do five things:

1. Arrive early
7:30 to 7:45 will allow you plenty of time to wait in the line to get in and still have time to sign in, use the porta-let and get ready to roll.
2. Carpool
3. Arrive early!
4. Come out 290 if you live inside or near the tollway or come up 359 from Brookshire if you live further west
5. Arrive early!!!

Water Wizard/Banana Bringer Update

This week, we do need all our Water Wizards to bring their coolers and our Banana Bringers will bring 12 cases of bananas. The ride organizer will try to send all our coolers to the earlier stops so they should get back sooner. Please be sure to have your coolers there no later than 7:45 am so they can be allocated to the rest stops.

Partner Ride Notes

This is one of our two partner rides for the season. What this means is that we have partnered with a local organized ride to allow our training group to participate as part of our training series. We work closely with the ride organizers to ensure that the route is well planned, safe and that the ride is well supported. I'm pretty sure that this is the only ride that I may have gained weight on the ride - wait until you see all the home made brownies at the rest stops!

The ride will draw a large attendance as it is open to the public. I will be directing the start and we will be using our wave start based on your pace but you can expect that some of the riders not familiar with the process and the value of the wave start will cheat so be especially careful, be patient at the start and allow a little extra time to fall into your normal ride pace. It will take longer to start all the waves but this will allow the riders to spread out more quickly and safely.

If you are coming with friends who are just participating in this ride, you can all start together. All the riders start by pace so just arrive early enough to get everyone sign in at your respective sign-in tables, then get your bikes ready and get into the line to get started. It will take us at close to 30 minutes to get everyone started but one you are on the road, you will spread out quickly and safely. Don't be in a hurry - there will be plenty of home made brownies for everyone so be patient and get ready for a really well supported and enjoyable ride.

The fee you paid for the training series includes the partner rides so you don't need to pay to ride this Saturday if you have paid your fee for the training series - this also includes all our Ride Marshals, Bike Medics and Law Enforcement riders..

Ride Registration/Payment Notes

Although you don't need to pay or register for the ride, you will need to turn in a completed waiver when you sign in Saturday morning.

Tomorrow morning, you will be receiving a copy of the waiver with all your contact information already filled in. You just need to print this, sign it, and bring it with you to the ride Saturday. If you forget, we'll have blank waiver forms to fill out at the ride - this is required for each rider who participates.

Let me repeat this again - **each of our participating riders who wants to ride does not need to register or pay but does need to bring a signed/dated waiver to our sign-in tables.** We will have our own sign-in

tables and our master sign-in list will be broken into sub-lists this week. I will send the detailed breakdown on the sign-in lists this Friday morning.

Riders will be issued two Number This Week!

We will be issuing you the Ready2Roll Cycling rider helmet number and the Pedaling the Prairie ride will be issuing you a Tyvek rider number for your jersey this week. The Ready2Roll Cycling number is a large sticker that will fit very securely on the front, center (or left front) of your helmet - you keep it on all season. The Pedaling the Prairie ride is issuing a Tyvek rider number when you sign in - please wear the Tyvek rider number on the back of your jersey. This is why we'll split the master sign-in list into sub-lists and have volunteers at each list to speed up the sign-in and number issue process. Each rider does need to have a Pedaling the Prairie number on their jersey and a Ready2Roll Cycling rider # on your helmet.

If you aren't riding this week, don't worry, we have plenty of rider numbers. You will pick up your Ready2Roll Cycling helmet number next week or at the first ride that you attend.

Reminder – RSVP is not needed and don't e-mail Your Waiver

Please DON'T reply to me to RSVP or send me your signed waiver. No RSVP is necessary and the waivers are turned in at our sign-in tables this Saturday.

All of our riders who indicated that they just want to receive the Ready2Roll Cycling e-mail will get a similar version of this note (The get the Email version) but their note won't mention the personalized waiver form and will have a link for one final chance to pay before Thursday night. You won't get that link since you are already covered.

OK, that's it for today - watch for your waiver tomorrow and the sign-in list details and other late, breaking cycling news this Friday. I also have a special edition note coming tomorrow which will include a great deal on the Road ID identification tag I mentioned last week,.

I'll see many of you in Hempstead this Saturday...

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