



This is one of our two partner rides for the season so I have a few additional details to share that are specific to this ride. We partner with two local rides during the season because some weeks, there are too many rides around town to avoid them all. We identified some rides that are very well organized and share our focus on safety, courtesy, and excellent support. We work closely with the organizers to ensure the ride is well planned and supported. We even use our wave start to get everyone away safely.

This ride is open to the public so any of your friends who are not participating in our series can register for this ride on the ride site and come out and join you. You do not need to register – your fee for the series includes the fee for this ride.

If you are planning to ride this Saturday, please read on – there are a few additional details you need to know about.

The first detail today is to call your attention to the start time - **9:00 am is the correct start time.** 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 if you arrive later. A rider expressed concern about the 9 am start and encountering more traffic. The good news is that we'll be well out of town and the roads we'll be on are mostly pretty quiet so the later start time won't have a significant impact on traffic. The busiest road we'll be on at the beginning and end of the ride is FM-359. It's the major north/south road but traffic is fairly light and there is a wide shoulder you will be using in both directions.

2015 Ready2Roll Cycling Training Series - Ride 3 - Pedaling the Prairie - Feb 7, 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 - 28, 45, 55 or 70 miles. The two short routes will be fairly flat while the 55 and 71 mile routes will include more of the rolling roads on FM-529 and FM-331 out to Bellville and back.

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 driving 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 some of you up FM-359 and the rest of you come out Hwy 290 (avoid the 290/610 interchange – construction has a major impact most weekends), it will significantly reduce the traffic back-up.

If you live inside the Sam Houston Tollway:

Take the Sam Houston Tollway to Hwy 290. Take 290 northwest approximately 33 miles past the tollway to the FM-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. Note that you can also take the Grand Parkway to 290 – it opened as our series began last year.

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.

Did I mention that the ride is serving coffee and breakfast before the ride so if you arrive early, you can have a light snack after signing in. This year, the lunch served after the ride will also include beer and bbq as well as live music. The organizer also told me they have a LOT of door prizes to give away and we will be eligible – as long as we are present if called.

Let me share a few more of the differences about this ride:

- **This ride is open to the public.** Anyone can register to participate in this ride on the Pedaling the Prairie web site or at the start before the ride. This means that if you have any friends who can't make our series but would like to drop in and join you for one ride, they can do that this this week.
- **This ride is open to the public.** That means that in addition to our large group, they may have as many as another 1,000 rider. There may be a big crowd out to ride if the forecast of sunny with a high in the 70's is correct. The large crowd also means:
 - **Please arrive by 7:45 am** – this will allow plenty of time to park, get ready and avoid the long line that will form later in the morning.
 - **We will use our wave start but it will take about 15-20 minutes longer to get everyone on the road.** Please be patient – some of the riders have not been through the same focus on safety and courtesy – don't let this ruin

your ride – be patient and allow extra room for unpredictable riders until you have spread out and you can safely settle into your pace with riders you know.

- **There will be two sign-in areas** – one for the general public and one for Ready2Roll Cycling. We will probably be on the far right (south) side of the covered pavilion where the sign-in is set up.
- If any of your teammates enroll for our series this Friday, after our sign-in list has gone to print, they must print out their enrollment confirmation and bring it to the ride. If there is no proof that they have enrolled, they will need to register and pay the public registration for the ride (In other words, it is much better to enroll before midnight this Thursday).

Ride Map is Online

The ride map is online at the ride site:

<http://www.pedalingtheprairie.org>

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
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 father west
5. Arrive early!!!

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 40 minutes to get everyone started but once 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 – this also includes all our Ride Marshals, Bike Medics and Law Enforcement riders..

SAG Volunteers Needed

We are looking for 3-4 more SAG volunteers to help support the ride this Saturday. This may be you or a spouse, family member or friend who is coming along. If you can recruit a SAG volunteer, please email me ASAP with their name, e-mail address and cell number. Our volunteers will help on the shorter routes so they will not need to stay until the end of the ride.

OK, that's it for today.

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

Steve Moskowitz

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