



Good afternoon!

The route for our season wrap-up ride this Saturday won't be nearly as hilly as last week but shortly after we leave Columbus and turn left onto Brune's Mill road, we will get into some really nice ups and downs for about the first 2/3 of the ride and then, after the final rest stop, we'll enjoy a quiet and pretty flat final segment back to Columbus.

We're also cutting the miles back just a little to 50/59 miles for the two route options. You don't need to overdo it one week before we all head to Austin.

We have a long drive this week to Columbus but it's another beautiful and fairly quiet route so set your alarm early enough to arrive in Columbus at 6:45 to 7:00 at the latest. We start on the same road you use to enter the park in Columbus so if you arrive after 7:45, you will have to wait for the ride to start before you will be able to park and get ready. **Please arrive by 7:15 at the absolute latest...**

I have some timely feedback and some really useful tips before we get to the ride news...

Safety Feedback - Ride on the Right Side of the Road When Climbing

One of our riders sent me some feedback below after a hilly ride that I thought would be very helpful to share this week so please read on – this is a really useful reminder that passing and climbing is a lot different than just passing on flat roads. Here is what they shared with me: "During the ride on Saturday, on several occasions, there were cyclists riding to the left of double yellow lines. When notified not to be on the left of the yellow lines, the riders ignored the warnings. A number of these occurrences were on hills with obstructed views (i.e. double yellow means no passing for cars). ...they were lucky that nothing significant occurred."

Steve's Comments - This is a very timely tip because we will see some similar rolling roads on much of the ride this week. A few key points to remember: Start in the appropriate wave - this means you won't need to pass many riders or be passed by many riders on the hilly early portions of the ride. If you need to pass slower riders, DON'T move across the center of the road! Wait until you are on a flat or downhill road that is clear and offers good visibility. Allow extra room between bikes – riders climb differently and there is more surging and slowing so allow extra room to avoid wheel overlaps and the resulting spills. The extra room tip also applies to the rough section on Brune's Mill shortly into the ride. We'll still be fairly packed so I will allow a little extra time between wave. You need to do the same and allow extra room on the rough roads. Please ride single file unless there is no traffic and no riders needing to pass. Be patient and communicate.

Useful (and almost forgotten) Tip – We Have Spare Helmets

Almost every week, I have seen one or more riders approach the sign-in area with a really forlorn look and they ask if anyone brought a spare helmet. This is a slam-dunk question because I immediately tell them that they came to the right place! We have 4-6 spare helmets that we keep at the sign-in table (usually near the Information table) just in case you forget your helmet. Please remember this and come find a helmet that fits, then be sure to adjust the straps and to return the helmet when you are finished riding so they are available again at the next ride. If you have a fairly new helmet you have upgraded and no longer use, feel free to drop it off to add to the spare collection. We cycle the older helmets out so we can use your recently replaced helmets in good condition. **We Have a (Small) Lost & Found**

Collection... Each week, we have lost items turned in during and after the ride. If you lose, or find something, please come to the Information table and turn in what you find or report what you are looking for. Doing this at the ride is the simplest and quickest way to close the loop but if this is not possible, please drop me a note ASAP and we'll see if we can help find the missing item or missing owner. It's ride 12 so we have a lot on hand right now. We do have the usual small but growing collection of water bottles and a number of other items. We also have a few unclaimed t-shirts that some of you purchased at the Chappell Hill ride last week. Please stop by the Information table if you are missing anything.

Carpooling – The 2nd Most Important Tip!

Our last two rides involve hills so that also involve small towns and a longer drive to the start. I need to remind all of you about the most important carpool tip. In order to find a carpool, you need to look! You don't need to make a heroic effort but if you make a reasonable effort and keep an open mind, the odds are good that you will find a carpool.

Here is a very interesting carpool statistic I noticed. There are numerous addresses that have 3-4 riders at the same street address that are not households but are clearly multi housing locations. Post your location on the carpool forum and mention the large complex where you live and see what happens...

The MOST Important Tip...Proper Hydration!!!

I don't want to say this too loud but, in 24 years, I don't think I can remember another year that has enjoyed so many GREAT cycling Saturdays from January to April... The good news is that we have enjoyed some great riding days. The bad news is many of you have not yet experienced what can happen if you don't get enough to drink.

At the very least, not drinking enough can slow you down as your muscles need a lot of water to function properly. It doesn't take much to go from slowing to cramping. The cramping can be mild (like I experienced climbing back to Chappell Hill last Saturday) to very severe to the point medical transport may be needed (like happened to one rider last week). In extreme cases, riders have died from dehydration. Fortunately, this has never occurred on the BP MS-150 but it is the #1 medical issue year after year.

Here is a high level summary of what you want to be doing this week and especially next week to get ready for back to back riding days and weather which should be warmer than any of our training rides...Proper hydration starts before even getting on the bike. Drink plenty of water the day before and drink one water bottle the morning of the ride. Drink early and often. Sports doctors recommend you drink something every 15 minutes while exercising. My rule-

of-thumb is at least one water bottle every hour, but you may need more. Once you feel thirsty, you are already dehydrated, so don't wait to start. Drink whatever tastes best... You'll drink more that way. Sports drinks are beneficial on longer rides because they replace both lost electrolytes and carbohydrates. I always carry both water and a sports drink with me. If you prefer water only, be sure you eat enough to keep your electrolytes in balance. Salty snacks are good, as are bananas. Depleted sodium levels can cause hyponatremia.

2016 Ready2Roll Cycling Training Series - Ride 12, Columbus, April 9, 8:00 am

This week, we have a fairly long drive to Columbus for our ride but within the first miles, you will understand why. Shortly after you turn off of FM-109 onto Brune's Mill Road, the road gets really rockin'. This is a quiet country road - a little bumpy at the start so leave extra room between riders and start to enjoy the roller coaster ride! There aren't any long climbs but this is a beautiful ride. Wait until you see the view from Rest Stop 1 at St. Mary's Church!

NOTE - please re-read the Safety feedback above about riding single file and allowing extra room on the rolling roads. We'll be on some really pleasant and quiet roads but you still need to pay attention to occasional traffic and NOT ride on the wrong side of the road when climbing a hill.

The main route is just over 50 miles. The long option adds a really pleasant 9.4 mile loop on the north leg of the route. The route gets fairly flat for the final 18 or so miles so you have an "active recovery" period after the rolling roads earlier in the route.

Directions to the Start - We're starting at Beason's Park just east of Columbus. Google maps shows an address for the park but when I paste this address into the Google Maps search, it sends you close but to the wrong place! When I zoom in on the aerial map and right click on the entry drive and click "What's Here?" Google Maps only says "Walnut St (no number), Columbus, TX 78934" so I don't have an address but the GPS coordinates are: 29.705658,-96.533293

To get to the start of the ride, take I-10 west past Sealy. Exit at the FIRST Columbus exit which is right at Mikeska's BBQ (Great place for lunch before the drive home!). Stay on the frontage road which veers off to the right and becomes Hwy 90 leading into Columbus. Our start is in Beason's Park which is on the left just before you get to the bridge over the Colorado River.

The sign-in area is in the pavilion on the main drive towards the back of the park. There is parking back in the park as well as in the front. We'll fill the back parking first and then, fill the front. The riders will line up on the entry road to the park at 7:45 am so any riders who arrive after 7:45 will be directed to Columbus to park and ride back to the park to sign in. **In other words, if you arrive after 7:45, you will have to park in town or wait for everyone to get on the road.** The ride back to the park is less than 2 miles and fairly quiet - you must come sign in so please allow plenty of time to get to Columbus. Carpooling is much more enjoyable for a long drive like this and puts less strain on the local community resources.

OK, that's plenty of news for today.

Thanks!

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