



POWERED BY



**BALLYMENA
ROAD CLUB**

Touring Group / Fun Runs



Guide for Beginners



www.ballymenaroadclub.co.uk

Issue of 11/05/2016

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Designed & Developed by MMC Solutions

BRC – STARTER PACK

Welcome to Ballymena Road Club

We have included in this pack information you may find useful as you begin your cycling experience;-

Contact Information	Name	Number
Thinking about doing a club run or fun run? Get information on average speed & length of the Saturday & Sunday runs which leave The Club House at 9.30am.	Richard	078 08865688
	Patsy	077 64765100
Get information on purchase of club kit	Alastair	078 90212409
Get information on ladies cycling clothing	Alice	078 03201748
Get information on men's cycling clothing	Patsy	077 64765100
Get information & advice on best use of gears	Jim	078 38193888

Basic Requirement

1. A roadworthy bicycle in good running order;-

A bike that is fully functional and well lubricated with efficient brakes and gears and with all bolt-on items well tightened.

Tyres and tubes should be sound and well inflated (under inflated tyres do not roll easily and invite punctures and rim damage).

If using SPD pedals then ensure your pedals are loose enough to get out of easily when you stop.

Spare tube, tyre levers, and pump (there is always help with punctures). These items can be carried strapped behind saddle or in jacket pocket.

Some form of identification, a contact telephone number for emergencies, and a statement of any special medical condition, treatment, allergies or medications taken, if applicable.

2. Adequate clothing for the conditions;-

Comfortable and protective clothing including cycling shorts/leggings, tops, rainproof jacket, gloves, and overshoes.

Helmet must be worn.

3. Food/Drink

Never set out on an empty stomach – hunger weakness (known as “knock”) is easier to prevent than cure. Always carry a bottle of water or juice.

Also carry an energy bar or chocolate bar or banana.



A recipe for a **homemade energy bar** is below;-

120 mls	Sunflower oil
200 grams	Soft brown sugar
2 tblsp	Golden syrup
1 tblsp	Peanut butter
1/2 teasp	Vanilla Extract
50 grams	Sultanas
50 grams	Almonds
50 grams	Seeds
50 grams	Chopped dates
225 grams	Oats

Bake at 180 degrees C for 15 minutes.



Riding in a Group



If you're not used to riding in a group, rolling away from the start line of a club group ride or sportive surrounded by other riders can be intimidating and by not being comfortable in a group and therefore able to shelter from the wind, you'll be making any ride significantly more difficult.

Communicate

The most important factor to successful group riding is communication. Make sure you know the meaning of and always pass any verbal signals through the group. As well as obvious shouts such as “slowing” and “braking”, others to be aware of are “car up”, meaning there is a car behind coming “up” the group and , “car down”, meaning there is a car in front coming “down” the group and “single out”, meaning to adopt single file. Be aware there are local variations of these shouts, so use your eyes too. There are a number of hand signals you should also be aware of (see illustrations below).

Beware

Stay relaxed in the group but constantly look around and don't mindlessly follow the wheels. Look past the riders in front to get a heads up of the road ahead. Always look first and let the riders around you know before moving within the group.

Obey the rules of the road – Highway Code

Most Group rides & Sportive rides take place on roads that are open to traffic and, even with those on closed roads, there's no guarantee that there won't be some traffic on the course, so ride accordingly. Respect junctions and always stay on the correct side of the road.

Ride consistently and predictably

Your movements will affect everyone in the group. Hold a straight line, don't weave and always overtake around the right hand side of the group. When you get out of the saddle ensure your momentum is going forward to avoid your bike moving backwards. Don't grab your brakes. Test your brakes in the rain when starting a downhill. When riding uphill ease back, select a lower gear at the bottom of the hill, not part way up the hill so as to avoid any damage to your bike gears.

Do shout and let the group know if you have a problem or other trouble, or if you see another rider in trouble. When riding uphill ease back, select a lower gear at the bottom of the hill, not part way up the hill so as to avoid any damage to your bike gears.

Don't overlap wheels

In case the rider ahead needs to brake, don't follow their rear wheel directly. It's perfectly acceptable and you'll get the same drafting benefit from riding six inches either side of it. However it's essential that you don't overlap their rear wheel as any sudden movements by them will be likely to bring both of you down.

Avoid half wheeling

If road conditions and traffic allows you'll often be riding two abreast. Maintain an even pace and stay level with the person next to you. Do not constantly up the pace whenever a rider draws level to you. Known as "half-wheeling" this is definitely frowned on.

Wheel suck

Don't always sit amongst the wheels and shirk your stint on the front. Even if you just put in a few turns of the pedals it'll be appreciated. However, even if you're finding the pace easy, don't get on the front and accelerate, try to maintain the pace of the group.

Don't ride near the gutter

If you're on the front of the group, don't sit near the gutter as you'll be forcing everyone else to follow you increasing the likelihood of hitting obstructions such as drain covers and of picking up punctures. Where possible, ride 1 m out from the curb.

Expect the group to change

Groups will change, fragment and reform as the ride progresses. Expect larger groups on flat sections but, on longer climbs, they'll break up. Similarly, on descents, riders will tend to string out to give more time to react at higher speeds.

Hand Signals

In addition to the standard directional signal of the left or right hand extended out to the side, which should be used whenever you are cycling on the public highway, see below some of the other common hand signals used when riding in a group situation.

Make yourself aware of these prior to going out on a group ride and also check with a group member which hand signals and verbal shouts they regularly use, as they can vary locally.

One hand as if "gently patting an invisible dog": This shows that the group is slowing down or just to ease the pace back a bit.



Pointing down at the road sometimes with a circling motion: Indicates an obstruction or hazard on the road such as a pothole, glass or drain cover that needs to be avoided. Be sensible with this one and only point out major obstacles that should be avoided. This signal is often accompanied with a call of 'hole'.



Waving/pointing behind back: Indicates that there is an obstruction such as a parked car or pedestrian and that the whole group needs to move in the direction indicated to avoid it.



There are also a number of video guides to group riding skills at <http://www.cyclingireland.ie/page/bike-for-life/cycling-tips> to help you with your group riding skills.

See <http://www.cyclingireland.ie/> for various tips, advice & cycling disciplines.

More Tips

Always.....

- give consideration to other road user particularly pedestrians, horses and other animals.
- acknowledge motorists or other road users who give you right of way or other consideration.
- slow down and be prepared to stop at roundabouts.
- stay out from car doors in town.
- when standing over your bike with one foot hooked in and the other on the road, make sure you lean towards the foot on the ground other you may fall over your bike!
- ride over gravel with care
- stay behind orange vested Marshalls
- be careful when you ride over white or yellow road markings as they can be slippery
- **CHAT** (if you have the breath) – tour cycling is a social way to exercise

Never

- use foul language.
- Throw litter.
- be guilty of Indecent Conduct along the road side or public place.
- make rude gestures to drivers when cut up by other road users. Your life could be in danger if they retaliate.
- ride over railway lines at an angle as you may slip. Ride over at right angles to the rails.
- ride over low pavements
- ride over wet leaves.
- stop or turn without making your intentions clear.
- ride up the inside of other riders or in-between two riders.
- make 2 abreast into 3 or more.

Ready for More Cycling Runs?

Possible additional mid-week runs available;-

Tues and Thursdays from 2pm

Name

Iris

Number

07516113032

Wednesday 9.30am

Geoff

07920437874

Monday to Thursday (varies) 9.30am

Patsy

07764765100

Michelin Athletic Club - Tues & Thurs 6pm

(time varies in summer months)

Maria

07816674059

CLUB CONTACTS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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