

Welcome to the Berks County Bike Club. We ride year round on weekends, plus Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings from April through September. We hope you try one of our rides so in order to make it a good experience; the following information will give you a better understanding of what to expect.

**If you're considering coming out to one of our club rides, here are a few things to know.**

1. First and foremost, the club rides are 20 miles or more. Please check the ride schedule to know the distance for a particular ride. Weekday rides tend to be between 20-27 miles. The weekend rides are longer.

2. It is helpful if you have an idea of what your average pace is when you ride. It will help you when deciding on which one of our many ride and group options to consider.

3. Although the rides begin as a group, for various reasons like; average speed, hills and so forth, the group often breaks up into smaller groups and even individuals.

4. The rides are on road bikes with the exception of a several Rail Trail rides which are noted on the ride schedule.

5. It is required that you MUST wear a bike helmet.

6. Ride Host/Hostess will NOT give cue sheets to riders without helmets and that rider will not be considered an official participant of the Club ride.

\*\*\* **NO HEADPHONES** – This is for safety reasons.

**What you need/ should have for the ride:**

1. Having an odometer is strongly suggested because the ride sheets give the street names and distances to each turn for the ride. Should you get separated from the group, you will need to follow the ride sheet in order to finish.

2. We suggest having a clothes pin, small clip or way of attaching the ride sheet to your handlebars or brake cables. Some people put the sheets in their pockets but it's much easier if it's right in front of you. Or if you have a Garmin, you can find our ride sheets here on our site under "Rides".

3. A water bottle or energy drink mix, possibly a gel or energy bar.

4. Repair kit/ spare tube and some type of CO2 or pump in case you get a flat tire.

5. We suggest having a cell phone, just in case.

**When going to your first ride, what to do:**

\*\*\* **Arrive 10-15 minutes before start time so that all rides leave on time.**

1. Look for the "ride host" who will have the "sign in" sheet and ride cue sheet which gives the street names and distances for the ride.

2. Let the host know it is your first ride with the club so they can give you a quick intro on what to expect on that particular ride.

We have several group options for you to consider when deciding what ride may suit your ability and pace. .

## **Here are the different group ride options:**

\*\*\* Everyone rides at different levels and speeds. We try to encourage riders to stay in groups or even with another rider but again, with all different levels of riders, this is not always the case. All club rides are meant for each rider to have the opportunity to ride a pace that suits their training for that day whether it be the same as, faster or slower than the main group. We just want you and everyone else to enjoy the ride.

### **Weekday Rides:**

#### **Tuesday Nights - Always start from Oley High School: (21-27miles)**

1. This is the biggest club ride of the week with often more than 50 riders.
2. The ride starts out in waves in order to keep the groups smaller.
3. The first wave: 21+mph average; 2nd wave: 18-19mph; 3rd wave: 15-16mph ; 4th wave 14-15mph.

#### **Thursday Night Rides - Rides start from various locations every week: (21-27miles)**

1. Since there is generally around 25 riders or less, the entire group again usually starts together.
2. Depending on pace, hills and so forth, the group will most likely split up into smaller groups or individuals.

\*\*\*\* Thursdays, noted as "Gary's" ride, can at times be 30 or more riders and will often try to maintain a set pace. This however does not mean that you can't ride the pace you want depending on your ability and pace. Despite the set pace, that still doesn't mean that some riders may still get split off the back of the main group.

### **Weekend Rides: Different start locations every week. Check schedule: (30-45 miles)**

1. These group rides do often have more than 25 riders so at times, it does start off in two waves so again, check with the ride host to see what groups is best for you.
2. Again, depending on pace, hills and so forth, the rides almost always do split up into smaller groups as the ride continues.

## **Rambling Rides:**

1. These group rides are for riders looking for longer distance riding.
2. Rides start around 40-50 miles in spring, and ramp up to 60+ miles during the summer and fall.
3. Rides are currently scheduled for 1 ride per weekend and are posted in the BCBC newsletter.
4. Although no one will be left behind on these rides, it is important that riders have the ability to do longer rides (no sag wagon support).
5. Please bring enough food, water, and money (rest stops are usually every 20-30 miles).

## **Seasoned Spokes:**

1. No age requirement, however most of the riders are 55 plus.
2. Overall average speed is 10 -12 mph which often includes 2 or 3 five minute rest stops.
3. Group tries to stay together, doesn't always happen. If there's a new rider with the group we try to make sure they aren't left behind and stranded.
4. With exception of a few trail rides, we ride on public roads with road bikes mostly being used.

### Seasoned Spokes - Additionally:

1. Rides are scheduled for Thursday mornings throughout the year except for Thanksgiving and Christmas if it falls on a Thursday.
2. The distance is usually 20 to 25 miles. During the warmer months there is often a pre-post ride option that adds an addition 15 to 20 miles.
3. About once a month the group meets for lunch or a picnic after the ride.
4. Cue sheets and Ride with GPS maps are available for all the rides.
5. Email reminders are sent out each Monday with details for that week's ride.
6. The rides usually have 20 or fewer participants.

## **Social Stay Together Rides:**

1. The pace is between 10 to 13 mph. This really is geared for the new riders, or someone who rides slower and wants to ride with a group and feel comfortable. Typically, when they get stronger, they move up to the regular rides.
2. If there is a school age rider who wants to participate, an adult MUST accompany them.
3. The group stays together and stops every 5 - 7 miles depending on the terrain.
4. The distance is from 20 to 25 miles.

5. Road bikes are mostly used.

6. At present we are doing one ride a month.

\*\*\* We are looking for people who would be willing to host some of these rides so more can be added to the schedule. If you'd be interested in hosting, please contact Marge at [mjm2744@gmail.com](mailto:mjm2744@gmail.com)

**Where to get the most updated ride information: Facebook- "Berks Bicycle"**

If weather conditions are questionable, the ride host may notify club members by posting a message on our Facebook page "Berks Bicycle" prior to the ride based on road conditions and weather forecasted.

If you have any questions, please email one of the club officers.

**Hope to see you at a ride.**