



PIRANHA

TRIATHLON CLUB

Cycling Programme 2023



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1. Cycling Programme

Activity	When	Where	From – To
Cycle Induction Course	Saturday 16 th April	TBC	
March Cycling Challenge	Month of March		
Winter Virtual Turbo Session	Wednesdays 7pm	Zoom (plus Zwift optional)	October – March
Summer Skills/Strength/Hills Session	Wednesdays 7pm	Clontarf bike path at the junction with Causeway Rd (opposite the Tree of Life)	April - September
Club Spin	Sundays 7:30 to 9:00 (minimum 2 - 4 hours depending on group)	Westwood Clontarf and Yellow House, Rathfarnham	All year – except when clashes with club races/events

2. Programme Details

2.1 Cycle Induction Course – Saturday 15th April

This course will be led by Ian Cassidy, the club cycling coach. It is designed to assist new members develop the skills and know-how for group cycling in a secure and supportive environment. On completion of the course, participants will have achieved:

- Pedal drills
- Taking water while cycling
- Two by two cycling
- Calling protocols
- Up and overs

2.2 March Cycling Challenge

We all know that the longest (and best) part of any triathlon is the bike! So as the weather starts to improve in the Spring, it's time to get cycling!

Members aim to cycle the following distances over the 31 days of March:

1. Lower Target 300 km (width of Ireland); or
2. Middle Target 570 km (Mizen to Malin); or
3. Upper Target 1140 km+ (Mizen to Malin and back).

Where members reach their stated target, they will enter the draw for prizes! It's really just a bit of fun and some motivation to challenge yourself or clubmates.

Details will be posted on WhatsApp at the end of February.

2.3 Winter Virtual Turbo Session – Wednesdays 7pm

Members log into Zoom and the bike coach (Ian) will guide you through the session involving a mix of efforts and rest periods. Members use their own bike and turbo machine. Some members also use Zwift if they have a smart turbo trainer – Contact Ian if you want to be added to the Zwift Invite. You will receive a Zoom link when you sign up for the session on Glofox. It is recommended that you have water, a towel (also protects your bike) and a fan!

2.4 Summer Skills/Strength/Hills Session – Wednesdays 7pm

Once there is a stretch in the evenings, the weekly indoor turbos are replaced by a coached mid-week skills/strength session with Ian Cassidy – usually involving hill reps in Howth. The meeting point is Clontarf bike path at the junction with Causeway Rd (opposite the Tree of Life in St. Anne’s Park) unless otherwise advised via WhatsApp.

There may also be member-led hill sessions up Cruagh Rd or Stocking Lane, meeting at the Yellow House, Rathfarnham. Members will post details via WhatsApp.

2.5 Club Spin

The Club Spin is the long endurance cycle of the week. The meeting point is at Westwood Clontarf between 7:30am and 9:00am, depending on the time of the year. Cycles going to the southside can pick up members at Yellow House, Rathfarnham. Details will be circulated via WhatsApp close to the weekend.

The distances completed by each group progress during the period of November to April. Members can seed themselves into one of four groups:

- Improvers Group: 22-24kph; 40km – 60km
- Intermediate 1 Group 2: 24 -26kph; 60km – 95km
- Intermediate 2 Group: 26-28kph; 70km – 100km
- Advanced Group: 28+kph; 80+km

The intermediate groups will merge during quieter training periods of the year.

2.5.1 Cycling Gear

It’s best not to overspend initially and see how you get on with what you have. However, it is important to wrap up well for cycling in winter. Some tips until you fill out your cycling wardrobe include wearing a pair of leggings under your bike shorts, two pairs of socks and a thin ‘buff’ around your neck and under your helmet. A warm set of gloves and a rain jacket are essential for cycling in winter.

Online retailers such as <https://www.wiggle.co.uk/>, <https://www.chainreactioncycles.com/> and <https://www.decathlon.ie/> offer a wide range of gear. In addition, there are a range of local Dublin based stores that offer cycling and triathlon gear including 360 Cycles in Clontarf (<https://www.360cycles.ie/>), WheelWorx in Lucan (<https://www.wheelworx.ie/>), Base2Race in Ballymount (<https://shop.base2race.ie/>), and Cycle Superstore in Tallaght (<https://www.cyclesuperstore.ie/shop/pc/home.asp>). These stores often sponsor club events throughout the year and have competitive online offerings.

3. Club Spin Groups

The groups are designed to ensure that each member achieves their training goals in a comfortable yet challenging set of peers. The Improvers Group will be led by an experienced bike lead from the club. Intermediate and Advanced Groups will self-lead from a panel of cycle leads within that group.

Cycle leads will rotate responsibility for determining the route and leading the cycle. A dedicated set of resources will be made available to those cycle leads – including route maps and tips for leading the groups. These resources will be continuously built-up over the season.

If you would like to join the panel of cycle leads, then please get in touch with the bike captains (Eric and Brian)!

Groups should have a maximum of 12 members to ensure safety for members and other road users.

Improvers Group

- 22-24kph, 40-60km
- Includes coffee stop
- Must have quick release wheels (so can fix punctures)
- Must have thin tires (i.e. hybrid or road bike)
- No Time Trial (TT) bikes or Tri Bars
- Nobody gets left behind!

Intermediate 1 Group

- 25-26kph, 60-95km
- Be able to drink on the bike
- Includes coffee stop
- Road bike only - no TT bikes or Tri Bars
- Responsible for self (be able to fix a puncture without help)
- Nobody gets left behind!

Intermediate 2 Group

- 26-28kph, 70-100km
- Be comfortable eating and drinking on the bike
- Optional coffee stop so must bring enough fuel (carbs) for the whole cycle
- No TT bikes or Tri-Bars in winter; these are acceptable in summer (but must never use the tri-bars within the group)
- Responsible for self (be able to fix a puncture easily, able to find your own way home if/when get dropped)
- General rule: nobody gets left behind! However, if you have moved-up against advice of cycle leads to 'have a go at the higher level' and you can't keep-up, you may be asked (respectfully!) to find your own way home.

Advanced Group

- 28+kph, 80+km
- Be comfortable eating and drinking on the bike
- Optional coffee stop so must bring enough fuel (carbs) for the whole cycle
- No TT bikes or Tri-Bars in winter; these are acceptable in summer (but must never use the tri-bars within the group)
- Responsible for self (able to change a puncture easily, able to find your own way home if/when get dropped)
- Group members will be dropped if they can't keep up! (The message may not be delivered so respectfully!)

4. Club Spin Rules

4.1 Do's

1. Do sign up for the appropriate group on Glowfox taking the distance, pace and your current fitness into account.
2. Do wear a correctly fitted and fastened cycle helmet. Under no circumstances will any member be allowed on a club cycle without a helmet.
3. Do bring enough food and drink to complete the route. This can comprise of fruit, energy bars, energy drinks and water. Remember to over-provide for food. There is nothing worse than bonking a long way from home when it is cold and wet.
4. Do dress in appropriate clothing for the weather. Check the weather the night before to determine what is required. If the cycle lead considers that you are under-dressed you may be told that you cannot come on the cycle.
5. **Do obey all traffic signals and rules of the road.** It is our responsibility to lead by example on the road (especially when we are in club colours!). We should be promoting responsible cycling for the safety of members and the general public.
6. Do have spare tubes, tyre leavers, CO2 or a pump to repair your own flat.
7. Do show up 10 minutes before the published start of the cycle. It is unfair on other club members to expect them to wait for you.
8. Do bring a fully charged mobile phone and money.
9. Do ensure your bike is road worthy, brakes are fully operational and that your tyres are pumped up to the recommended PSI (as written on the tyre).
10. Do have full length mud-guards on your front and back wheels. Not the type that protect only your rear end – full length ones that stop mud and water spraying up in the face of the person cycling behind you. Something like these (<https://www.360cycles.ie/sks-raceblade-pro-mudguard-set.html>). They can be bought in all bike shops. To be clear, this is to stop you getting other people wet and dirty, it's a nice bonus that they'll keep you clean and dry too.
11. in two close parallel lines where appropriate, to keep the group compact.
12. Do cycle a maximum of two abreast. There should be 1ft between your shoulders and the rider beside you. Also ride with approx. 1ft between your front wheel and the back wheel of the rider in front.

13. **Do ride directly behind the wheel of the rider in front.** If you cycle in the middle of the two wheels in front of you, you WILL push the cyclist on your outside into the path of passing vehicles.
14. Be prepared on small or busy roads to ride in single file.
15. If at the lead of the group, Do navigate and point out (either with hand signals or shouts) all potholes, manhole covers and other dangers in the road that could cause punctures or accidents (see calls section).
16. If in the group, do listen to and act on the calls, and most importantly, repeat them for the cyclist behind you.
17. Do brake as gently and smoothly as you safely can when riding in a group.
18. Do ride at a steady pace, keeping the group as a compact unit.
19. Be smooth when taking your turn at the front of the group. Avoid surges. Stay alongside and Don't increase the pace to move a half wheel ahead of the rider alongside. He/she will have to speed up to maintain the two-by-two formation and the speed will escalate unnecessarily.
20. If you are at the back of the group and either see someone dropping or are being dropped Do call to the cyclists in front that the pace is too high.
21. When asked to "ease up" or "slow a little" Do not brake suddenly. Gentle ease your pace by soft-peddalling or freewheeling for a moment.
22. If you are feeling tired Do let people know. Everyone gets tired, let people know so they can slow the pace down and tuck you in the group to carry you home.

4.2 Don'ts

1. **Don't overlap wheels, or nudge in between the wheels of the riders in front.** You will come off if they move off their line to avoid a pothole etc. Don't, Don't acquire a reputation as a 'half-wheeler'!
2. Don't make any sudden movements/changes in direction off your line when in the group. You are responsible for the cyclist behind you, they are following YOUR wheel they need to trust you.
3. Don't ride off the front. This is a group ride, not a race. If you want to go faster then let the others know what you are going to do and if no one wants to join you then go off and enjoy your ride alone.
4. Don't ever use TT bars whilst cycling in the group. You will be unable to break when necessary!
5. Don't take both hands off your handlebars whilst cycling in the group. If you hit poor road surface, you will bring the rest of the group down. Wait until you're at the back of the group!
6. Don't stop pedalling if you are on the front, even going downhill. The cyclists behind you will read this as you slowing down and could be forced to brake and bunch up.
7. Don't pull out at junctions without looking, having heard the "Clear" call from a fellow cyclist (see calls section below). Check whether there is a vehicle coming yourself.
8. Don't be aggressive with cars or drivers. Regardless of who is right you lose. The car is much larger, faster, and better insured than your bicycle.

4.3 Calls

These are some calls you might hear. It is essential that you repeat them down the group so everyone can hear:

1. "Car up/Car down" : Car down refers to an on-coming car ie coming down your throat; Car up refers to a car coming from behind ie coming up your "backside". Keep tight to the cyclist next to you, and be prepared to cycle in single file
2. "Hole" : Upcoming pothole to avoid. This can also be followed by a direction i.e "HOLE LEFT".
3. "Surface" : Upcoming poor road surface or gravel-type surface.
4. "Slowing" : Usually accompanied by a hand signal. The cyclist in front needs to slow down for some reason.
5. "Stopping" : Brake (smoothly)!
6. "Wait": Usually at junctions to indicate there is a car coming
7. "Clear": To indicate that a junction is traffic free. You must check yourself and not rely on others.
8. "Heads Up": Hazard ahead, pay attention.
9. "Single out/ single file": Get into single file safely and promptly"
10. "Up and over": this is when the person at the front right of the group will move up and over to the left – the people behind will move forward to fill the gap – this movement ensures everyone has time at the front/middle/back of the group.