



A Guide to Riding With The Rocky Mountain Cycling Club

INTRODUCTION

As our tagline proclaims, we really are the club "For People Who Love to Ride." You will find that we pride ourselves on serving a wide variety of cycling interests. This document is a guide to provide new members with a quick orientation to the club. It can also remind existing members of the other types of riding which they may want to try.

TYPES OF RIDES

RMCC has hundreds of members with a wide range of riding abilities. The key to having a pleasurable group-ride experience is to select the type of ride that suits your personal ability and riding goals. If you go out too fast you will likely be dropped and doing the rest of your "group" riding in a group of one. Go out too slow and you may not feel challenged, and may not be riding with those best suited to you.

There are usually two different length routes for each ride. "R/P" is the shorter Recreation/Performance route. "E" is the longer Endurance route.

Our rides are self-supported. While other riders will help you out by loaning you a tube or tool, they will expect you to come prepared - RMCC is not a club for complete novices. Unless you have some group riding experience, please take some time to observe group riding skills from the back of the group. After you are comfortable and gain some skill, you can move forward in the group. You should also be comfortable on a ride of 25-30 miles at 14-16 mph on flat ground. Starting from that base, here are the riding styles that are available to you:

Short & Steady ("R")– this is a great place to do your first ride with the club. It can be intimidating joining a group where you don't know anyone. You may arrive with thoughts like "I hope I can keep up", "Can I make it all the way?", "Is there water along the route?", "Will they take bathroom breaks", "What if I have a flat tire or break down?", and "I don't want to hold up the group". This is an R/P distance ride led by a "domestique", the club's front line ambassador, who is there specifically to answer your questions and assure that you have a pleasant first experience.

Short & Fast ("P") – these are the club "rabbits" who may be racers or experienced cyclists who are interested in speed and just don't have the time or desire to ride the longer route. They ride the R/P route hard and fast and don't take any prisoners. Be prepared and be in shape if you choose this type of ride.

Long & Steady ("E") – this is for more endurance-oriented cyclists, more miles generally at a steady pace. These rides also host our Intermediate Training Group: our resident USA Cycling coach has created a formal training program for those who want to methodically improve their riding abilities and increase their range from 30 miles up to 100 miles or more.

Long & Fast ("E") – you can ride the Endurance distance option as fast as you wish, of course, and we have a number of strong riders who do. This is excellent speed *and* endurance conditioning, great training for longer races and the more strenuous brevets.

Longer & Expeditious (Brevets) - These events - 125 to 375 miles and longer - let riders push their personal envelope of endurance, whether at a steady clip or race pace. The Randonneuring / Endurance seminars, and seasoned, accomplished RMCC veterans, are there to help. See "Randonnées" below.



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SPECIAL INTERESTS

RMCC also has some special interest groups:

Randonnées (Brevets & Populaires) – Brevets are non-competitive, challenging endurance events ranging from 200 kilometers (125 miles) to 1200 kilometers (745 miles). Populaires are shorter, 100k-200k. The RMCC sponsors these events and Randonneurs USA sanctions them. Almost a third of RMCC members participate, at varying distances that suit them. In randonneuring, finishing is more important than being fast; camaraderie is a key value, as is helping out your fellow randonneurs. For more on the Colorado Brevets, see www.rmccrides.com/brevets.htm. For more on randonneuring, see www.rusa.org.

Evening Rides – these are seasonal after-work rides. They may be short, casual rides, climbing practice, or other style depending upon the organizer.

Touring – the club offers several supported, multi-day point-to-point tours in various parts of Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and Wyoming during the year. These are over a week or a long weekend. Early-season tours are 75-90 miles per day; peak season tours are 100-110 miles per day. The regular schedule of club “E” rides prepares you for these tours, which are scenic and feature challenging terrain.

Fixed Gear – From October to March the club has weekend Fixed Gear rides. These rides are great for developing a smooth spin, increasing leg strength, improving bike handling skills, gaining a historical perspective on cycling, and just plain fun. More info: www.rmccrides.com/sundayfixedgearride.html.

Training for Ultras – Our E-ride schedule, brevets, and tours are good training for the ultra-cyclists among our members, including veterans of the Race Across America and the Furnace Creek 508. Our membership includes the managing director of the Ultra-Marathon Cycling Association, who is a certified coach. For more on ultra-cycling and the UMCA see www.ultracycling.com.

OTHER NOTES

At this time the club does not formally participate in racing, mountain biking, or touring. However, RMCC is a great incubator for new cycling ideas. If you have a special interest, or ability, feel free to approach the Board of Directors with your ideas.