

## **Your training, kit and safety guide**

**What are you training for?** Riding a long distance event like the Dirty Reiver will have its ups and downs, so having a few strategies in place for looking after yourself and keeping your focus can really help.

**How to train for this event?** The Dirty Reiver is a tough challenge. The very nature of this event means that most of your training should focus on building endurance.

Plan in several long rides of 6/7 hours plus. Intersperse these with much shorter, more focused efforts, quicker than the pace you are likely to ride the event at.

Your broad aim is to build your ability to stay in the saddle, maintaining a steady pace for long periods, whilst also developing a capacity to deal with short, sharp hills that will ask a little more of you.

In the build up to the event aim to cut down on the big miles. Long days in the saddle are tiring and should be banked by two weeks to go. The final weekend could be a mid length leg loosener, but try to err on the side of recovery.

In the final couple of weeks try to keep the mileage down, but stick to those higher intensity rides to keep the legs spinning over.

**Riding Strategy** If you are riding gravel or this event for the first time, do not get carried away trying to keep up with the faster riders at the start – you will end up paying for this later on! Image your body's energy is like a battery. If you power it too high it is never going to last all day.

The key to successfully completing this event, irrespective of fitness, is to equal out your efforts throughout the whole distance. If you do have something left in the tank then you can up your pace on the final leg home.

Working on an average speed can help but remember this will drop on long climbs and quickly pick up again as you go over the other side. It's best not to focus on this all of the time.

Riding with others is a great way to pass the miles. Taking the time to chat to someone you have never met and sharing some experiences go a long way to helping cover distance without noticing it.

Try and focus on the route as a series of short sections or smaller goals. You could aim for feed stations or distant features, however you do it, breaking the ride down into manageable chunks is good for the mind and morale.

**On the day** Start the day with a familiar breakfast that you know works for you, at least two hours before the event starts. Keep small snacks handy in case you feel hungry before registration or on the start line.

During the event itself make sure that you have a nutrition plan and stick to it. Try the plan before on a long training ride. The food you may want after 8 hours differs from what you may want in the first two hours so carry a range of tastes.

Drink small amounts every 10-15 minutes and eat something every 30 minutes. Try and consume real food in the first half of the event and in the latter half, taking those fast release carbs will take the pressure off your stomach.

Do not assume the feed stations will have everything you want or need. Keep eating and drinking right up to the feed station, this will help minimise the time you are there and make sure you do not have a gap in your energy levels.

**Final Preparations** In the lead up to the event, try and reduce unnecessary stress. Check the weather forecast and have your riding kit ready. Make sure bottles and food are topped up.

Allow plenty of travel time, especially if you are collecting your rider number on the event day morning and have your base layers on. Travel in warm clothes and keep them on until you are ready to roll out!

Two bags are useful for keeping everything to hand. One with your riding kit in and one has your bike kit in i.e. mobile phone, gps, bag with tools, spare clothes, food etc.

Have a plan for when you arrive and stick to it. Try to avoid social catch ups and distractions, you can catch up with people once you are ready to go!

### **Your kit list – What you are required to carry**

Below is the compulsory kit list for taking part in Dirty Reiver. This is by no means onerous and is the minimum requirement of all riders. The items of clothing are to keep you warm should you have to stop for a prolonged period of time, to fix a puncture or to help someone else. Please do not skimp on these items.

Everything on this list can be fitted into a couple of jersey pockets and a small seat or frame bag.

- Emergency Whistle
- Survival blanket
- Waterproof jacket (unless you are wearing it – as a minimum taped or welded seams)
- Spare warm hat or buff type head covering
- Spare thermal top
- Spare inner tube and tyre levers
- Pump
- Multitool
- Front light, at least 200 lumens or suitable for navigation and riding in the dark with at least a 2hr burn time (not applicable to 65km distance)
- Rear light with a flashing mode
- Mobile phone
- Basic first aid kit
- Food for the duration of the event
- Ability to carry at least 1.5 litres of water