



100 mile ride plan

Signing up for a long ride is a great statement of intent. But, now you've done it, how do you make sure the ride is as comfortable as you can? Preparation is key no matter the distance. Club riders might go the whole hog and ride 100 miles but for many, 30 miles is still challenge enough and with good reason - how many of your friends do you know that can cycle 30 miles and think nothing of it? As if the distance wasn't enough, the hills laying in wait will sap the strength and energy from anyone. So, here are a few thoughts on preparation for a long ride such as a sportive.

Where to start.

Bike - Make sure you are confident in the bike you will be riding. If not, seek out a full service for the trusty steed and, possibly consider getting a new one if this is something you will be doing regularly. Terry's in Yate, offer both: <http://www.bristolcycles.com/> It doesn't need to be expensive, just fit for purpose. There are excellent bargains to be had on last years' models if you shop around. You can even use the bike to work scheme to help spread the cost and save money. Something like this might help - <http://www.bike2workscheme.co.uk/> (There are others offering this scheme too).

Generally speaking, the lighter the bike the better but, for a beginner at least, I'd go for comfort. The last thing you want is to get off the bike and find the back has gone or the knee won't work. A bike fit, even a rudimentary one, can help resolve niggles like shoulder or neck pain and a professional one will deliver maximum power and an aero position. British Cycling offer guidance on a simple bike fit here:

https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/insightzone/equipment_and_set_up/position_on_the_bike/article/izn20130821-Setting-a-ride-position-0

A more in-depth one is here:

https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/insightzone/meet_the_experts/article/izn20131217-DIY-Road-and-Mountain-Bike-Fit-0

And there is always a professional bike fit if you want to go the extra mile.

Planning - Break this down. There is training, nutrition, the big day itself, clothing, travel, spares and tools and possibly accommodation. Then there is even a post ride massage and recovery time - a day off work perhaps? All this needs to be considered.

Training - Stage this carefully. I'm lucky. I ride but, 100 miles is still 100 miles and I know I will find it difficult on several fronts - comfort on the bike, energy levels, muscle fatigue

and just plain old "getting the miles in". There is a superb set of plans, guidance and advice to be found on the British Cycling website, starting here:
<http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/sportivetips>

Training should be built up slowly until you are comfortable with the distance. This does take time and with busy lives, we don't all have time to make sure we can ride 100 miles. Be specific with your training. If the ride is hilly, ride hills! and so on. The best way to prepare is to train using intervals such as Tabata or Pyramid - this type of training will allow you to get more from a shorter training session when time is short but, there is still no substitute for miles especially when you need to know that your back, bum and every other body part can stay 100 miles on the bike.

There is more to riding a bike than riding a bike - consider strength training and, you must do some solid core work. Your core ties your top half to your bottom half and, when the going gets tough and you start tire, a strong core will help enormously. It will also help hugely going uphill. Strength and endurance training on your legs, and other muscle groups too, will help to both provide stability on the bike and a useful variety to training. Get in the gym, go for a run, swim.

Lose some weight. The less you have to drag up that hill, the easier life will be. I've just lost a stone and plan on losing another half a stone in the next month or so and, my climbing ability has shot up. I feel like the youthful mountain goat I once was. Only the grey hair now gives me away. If you have it to lose, do. The benefits of an improved power to weight ratio are huge and it's way cheaper than a lighter bike.

Ride with others - Spin. Yes, Spin. Join a spin class. The interval training here will help with the overall training plans and when the weather is being, well, British, you can still train if you don't have a turbo trainer.

Join a club. The riders will be delighted to see you and share their knowledge and the pack mentality will get you out on those cold, damp mornings. You might also find some ride companions for the big day and certainly plenty of advice and guidance. The local Sodbury club have a website here: <https://sites.google.com/site/sodburycs/home>

Nutrition - Eat well. Drink well. Plenty of water - a properly hydrated body can perform 10% + better than a poorly hydrated one. Reduce the alcohol intake - it really does help. More, specific information about nutrition is available in the nutrition blog.

Make sure you take time to try out the cakey treats en route too. Essential calories, you've earned them and, someone went to trouble of baking them so get stuck in. It's not a race so take a break. Importantly, find foods that work for you - flapjacks, SIS, high 5, Etixx, Torq - there are lots to choose from.

Fuelling strategy? What is this? This is quite simply, making sure you eat a little something, every 20-30 minutes. I do and it transforms what could be a torture session on the bike, into an enjoyable experience that you will talk about for years to come. It also prevents the post ride dip. Keep to the regime during the ride and, as long as your fitness is there or thereabouts, you should find life a lot easier.

Mindset - 100 miles eh? So how do I do that? Research. Plan the ride. Check the route. Look at the hills. Think about the ride in sections. Even by food stops. Break each section down to manageable ones. Aim for that next telegraph pole. The next town. The top of that hill. Make it easy to digest and you will, literally eat the road piece by piece. Tips here from GCN - <http://youtu.be/uzHGrduO2DA> and here - http://youtu.be/NV67O_P7P_U

It's a marathon not a sprint so take your time. You want to be able to say you finished right?

Clothing, tools, travel, accommodation, spares - I'll leave that all to you unless you want help but, as a rule for spares, take 2-3 spare inner tubes and some repair patches, tyre levers and a multi tool.

Finally, get out there. You don't want to get to the big day and hurt yourself or anyone else. Give the ride medics one less person to worry about and prepare. Train. Enjoy the ride.

If you would like to discuss fitness training, training plans, support, motivation or advice, get in touch. I'd be delighted to help you get where you're going. Faster.

07900917286

jason@lifecyclept.uk

www.lifecyclepersonaltraining.uk