

Iconic Cycling Events



BikeBath *BikeOxford*

Nuffield Health



Training advice

On your bike

- Cover the distance you are doing at least once before race day, keeping a solid steady pace throughout.
- Incorporate hilly routes in your long rides (the courses are hilly) using the gears accordingly regardless of whether you are moving up or down hill or into head or tail wind.
- On a hill, sit back on the saddle as when going up a hill this will maximise gluteal (buttocks) usage and then also allow better control when descending.
- Sit in the middle or to the front of the saddle when riding on the flat.
- Try and be in the position you hope to race in as much as possible. If you plan to be on the drops or aero bars then be in that position in training so that you train the muscles in that position.
- Practice eating and drinking on the bike so you learn how to handle the bike while reaching for food/drink.

- Include hill rep strength sessions –
 - Find a hill of similar length and gradient to that on the course.
 - Put your bike in a big gear and grind up the hill staying in the saddle. Ensure you pull up with the legs on the up stroke of the pedal cycle.
 - If you can't find a hill long enough, do somewhere that has a short incline or on the flat, but put in the biggest gear. Then have a few minutes easy or descend freely with little effort focusing on technique and bike handling.
- Interval training is good for increasing fitness so ensure this is done 1-2 times a week with intervals of differing length –
 - 4-6 x 5mins at moderate effort, 2mins easy between
 - 6-10 x 2mins at hard effort, 1m30s between
 - Always complete after a good warm up and after have a good cool down and STRETCH

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- Flexibility is very important. A tight muscle is a weak muscle, so do spend time on stretching after your ride.
- It doesn't have to be immediately, but definitely that day.
- Especially focus on stretching quadriceps (front of thigh), hip flexors (Groin area), Gluteal (buttock), Hamstrings (back of thigh), calves, shoulders, back and neck
- Hold each stretch for 30sec and ideally do 2-3 times.
- Try to do some central stability work several times a week to help prevent injury and improve efficiency
- Try and have a massage regularly, especially if you are training for the longer distances
- If you experience discomfort anywhere, but particularly in your shoulders, neck, hands, knees, or back you may be interested in a bike fit.
- Bike fit is imperative in reducing injury, enhancing performance and maximising your efficiency and comfort. When you buy a bike you should have it fitted to you at the shop and this is great but you then having it looked at closer, so it fits you and your biomechanics, flexibility, stability and functional stability together.

More technical advice

- Try to keep as close to 90 rpm as possible throughout the majority of your ride.
- When doing hill rep sessions in a big gear, your cadence should be around 70-80 rpm
- On the downhill sections of your hill rep session ensure your cadence (RPM) is 90-95 as this is optimal to help generate maximal power and prevent early leg fatigue.

Nutritional advice

- Have a good breakfast – e.g. porridge, yogurt and fruit with some muesli or other wholegrain cereal, wholegrain toast with nut butters, smoothie made with yogurt/milk fruit and nuts - about an hour before you start long rides so that it has time to digest and provide you with energy. Have beans or poached eggs on toast if you prefer a more savoury snack or looking to take on more protein.
- Drink a large glass of water or fruit juice. Being as little as 2% dehydrated can reduce your physical and mental performance by 10-30%
- Avoid anything 20-30 minutes before your ride as you'll go straight to burning this off and into the sugar stores rather than the fat stores which may make you need more food during the ride. Plus, if you're trying to lean down a little, it'll impact on that.
- Ensure you are well hydrated, both at the start of the ride and during it.
- If the session is less than one hour you should be fine with just water if you've eaten
- If it is longer then start taking a carbohydrate drink/food at about 1-1 1/2 hours and have small amounts but regularly so as to avoid stomach discomfort.
- Fruit juice mixed with water or cordial, both with a tiny pinch of salt added (cheaper and tastier than sports drinks)
- Eat easily digestible foods – banana, honey sandwiches, malt loaf, cereal/muesli bars, sports bars, jaffa cakes, fig rolls, fruit bread with honey/jam nut butter sandwiches, flapjack. Ideally eat little and often to avoid stomach issues
- Keep sipping your fluid (water, electrolyte drink, juice) every 10-15 minutes or so and aim to pee pale yellow! Unfortunately great coffee doesn't count so offset with a glass of water with it on the coffee stop.
- NEVER think “almost home, I'll hold off until then”. If you are hungry/thirsty have something as not doing so will mean you are more likely to overeat when you're done but also impact on following training sessions due to recovery
- Eat and drink what you will have on race day. Check what is being supplied at feed stations and try and use that if you are going to use them, otherwise have your own food
- After training, try to have a snack, especially if you are not eating for some time. Great snacks include some protein and carbohydrate and some ideas are a fruit smoothie, milkshake, banana and yogurt, pancake with honey and nut butter and obviously fluid.
- Have your meal within two hours including all food groups – protein, carbohydrates and essential fats so grilled fish or chicken with sweet potatoes and salad, omelettes, chick pea stir fry or bean and vegetable soup with bread
- If training again later, ensure you keep fuelled and hydrated.
- Snack between meals to keep energy levels up especially if you're training more than you have been. This will also help prevent overeating at meal times and build up energy levels for work and training. Ideas are a handful of nuts, seeds and dried fruit, fruit and yogurt, crumpets with nut butters, fruit breads, granola with yogurt, muesli bars etc.
- Most caffeinated drinks that people tend to use are the energy drinks but these also contain high amounts of sugar so if you have one just before you set off be mindful of the effects on blood sugar and the fuel you will initially be burning. Stick to black coffee/tea with no sugar if you are leaving it until the last 10-15 minutes.
- Small amounts of caffeine towards the second half of a long session do help to mobilise the fat stores thus providing you with energy when the glycogen stores are running out and this practice is used a lot in endurance events. It also gives you a lift in and reduces effort level.
- Play around with what you have and when so that you know what you can tolerate before the event. Do not try anything new during the event because it's there, unless you are

desperate, as it may impact on the rest of the race. Ensure your bike is regularly serviced so a mechanical doesn't spoil your ride

Equipment & Clothing

- Keep moving parts clean and lubricated and check for wear and tear in the chain, rear cassette and chain rings. Make sure the brakes work well and you have some spare pads to change when required.
- A good saddle is also key. They are like shoes, some fit, some don't, so do try a few before settling on one. Most good bike shops will let you do this.
- ALWAYS wear a helmet. It may just save your life one day so don't have it hanging on the bars, that only prevents scratches to the bike, not to your head and brain.
- Spare parts are always beneficial and you should carry tyre levers, a mini pump, spare inner tubes and a multi-tool in case of accidents.
- Have adequate clothing. In this country you can never be too sure of what the weather will throw at you so be prepared. Invest in a good waterproof as this will make the best of the worst and some good arm and knee/leg warmers for those cooler morning starts that develop into a warm day.
- Don't forget the toes either as they take the brunt of cool and damp weather so some light shoe or toe covers are advisable.
- Choose sensible clothing as darker colours absorb the sun keeping you warm, but they are difficult to see. Therefore, try and brighten them up with some light arm and ankle bands or buy clothing that is lighter, even with bright stripes or something similar
- If you're riding on duller days or early morning/late evenings, ensure you have a set of bright lights that work.

Week before

- Reduce your training volume but keep intensity
- Have fewer intervals with FULL recovery
- Do not do hill reps
- Two days before, have the day off but keep stretching
- The day before, do an easy short ride with several harder short intervals – 5-8x30sec with full recovery
- Continue to stretch and do central stability work
- Don't over eat. You may have heard about "carbo loading" but with the reduced volume and same eating you will be well fuelled enough.
- However, if you are doing the longer rides, in the last 2-3 days you can increase your carbohydrate intake
- Keep well hydrated
- Don't try anything new, so no new training sessions, no new food or drinks
- Work out what, when and how much you will eat and drink and where you will pick up food/drink from
- If you want to get technical it's about 1g carbohydrate per KG body weight per hour. Remember this includes the carbs in your juice/drink and 750-1000mls of fluid an hour, more if it's hot and/or windy

Ride day

- Have your normal breakfast. If you've never had porridge don't try it on ride day
- Have your usual good fluid intake and coffee/tea
- Do a good warm up and/or take a turbo and warm up on that. Keep it easy and short but include short race pace or hard efforts – 6x20-30sec with full recovery between
- Keep hydrated
- If you are doing a longer ride, have an easily digestible snack or drink 20-30mins before the start
- During the ride, if longer than 90mins then you'll need more than just water. Start snacking after an hour.
- Use things you've used before
- Keep to your plan of eating and drinking
- Keep to a pace that you feel is sustainable and settle into it
- Keep low (aero) as much as possible especially into a head wind
- When you finish, ideally have good stretch, or at least once you're home
- Most importantly ENJOY IT, it is meant to be fun!

This advice comes from Malcolm Pascoe, a Chartered Physiotherapist at Physioimpulse.