

# Great Canadian Bicycle Tours

## Tour/Ride Leader Guidelines

The Great Canadian Bicycle Rally Inc. (known as GCBT) is a non-profit organization committed to the promotion of affordable recreational cycling.

### Planning your Ride using 'Ride with GPS' (RWGPS)

- The club has an “organization” or “club” account on Ride with GPS. RWGPS is a web-based “app” that facilitates ride management from ride planning, scheduling, to providing leaders and riders with google based maps, cues and turn by turn instructions on portable devices such as Garmin, and /most smartphones.
- Link to club RWGPS account: <https://ridewithgps.com/organizations/129-great-canadian-bicycle-tours>
- Tours/Rides is used interchangeably and refers to all regular rides and weekend events. Tour/Ride Leaders, preferably, will be conversant with RWGPS. Training modules are available. Tour leaders will need to request “Route Manager” status in RWGPS in order to use the premium route planning features.
- An existing, unused route may be available in the Route Library on RWGPS. The club tries to have a variety of starting locations, so plan your route accordingly. You can also search the area for other rides using the “find” tab.
- Consult with the Director of Touring when planning a new ride for guidance, to ensure the ride is available, that there is no duplication of rides and to ensure all rides are included on RWGPS. Routes are subject to approval by the Director of Touring.
- Ensure enough free parking available to accommodate 40-60 cyclists, preferably with restrooms and food establishments nearby. Commuter parking lots, Community centers/arenas and large shopping mall parking lots are common starting points.
- Scenic routes along lakeshores, rivers, canals, waterfalls, escarpment, parks, mature treed roads and trails are popular.
- Points of interest, such as landmarks, historic sites, and community festivals add interest to the rides.
- Low traffic rural roads are preferred.
- Designated lunch stops are appreciated and should be located near the halfway point.
- Rides usually have at least a short, a medium and a long distance.
- Ride distances should be commensurate with the time of year. Early in the season, routes are generally shorter and flatter.
- Gravel roads are discouraged, but not always avoidable, and sometimes necessary to avoid busy roadways. Alternatives to gravel roads should be sought and can be announced at the pre-ride briefing.
- Rail trails have been part of some rides and offer some scenic benefits. However, many road riders prefer a roadway alternative.
- Overall, try to strike a balance of quality of roadways and scenery with traffic levels.
- Respect road closed signs, locked gates and no bicycle signs. The club could be exposed to liability if the club led rides in areas we are not supposed to be.
- Make sure that the lunch stops and variety stores noted on the cue sheet are still open. If it is likely a large number of members will arrive together at the same restaurant, consider giving them a heads up.

### Maps and Cue Sheets

- After the ride planning process is completed, the cue sheet and map are generated by RWGPS. They should include all the instructions, road names, major intersections, traffic sign and change in direction to allow the safe and successful navigation of the route. Ensure that POIs such as restaurants, washrooms and sights are included in the planning process. They will then be listed on the cue sheets.
- The map scale is usually too large to support turn-by-turn instructions, and sometimes RWGPS cue sheets do not automatically include all the turns. Check them carefully and, if possible, have them checked by a second person. If necessary, manually add the missing ones to the route using the “add to cue sheet” or “add POI” functions in the edit mode.
- For multiple distance routes, a separate cue sheet/map for each ride will be required.
- Routes should be traveled 1 to 2 weeks prior to the ride and the route should be edited to reflect road closures

or construction. Do not print the map and cue sheets until after the route has been checked and edited if necessary.

- RWGPS provides the choice to print out the cue sheet in two different versions. It can be generated as a PDF document "Print PDF" which can be a "4 square" option, or a columnar version "print cue sheet from browser". The choice of which option is better will depend on the number of turns to be listed on the cue sheet.
- Print sufficient copies of the maps and cue sheets based on the time of year and weather. Turnout may be as high as 50 participants and too many copies is better than not enough.
- Many of our riders download the ride map and Cue sheet onto their portable GPS device or their smartphone, and use them for route guidance, turn-by-turn spoken instructions or visual route mapping on the ride. However, some of them want to have a paper copy of the map and cue sheet as a backup for their portable devices.
- The **Events Calendar** on RWGPS is the place where all the routes for each tour are listed together and is accessible on the RWGPS club account using the calendar function. The events calendar is linked to the Club's website calendar. This permits access to the RWGPS calendar from our website, which is the main source of information for new and existing members.
- Rides are "**tagged**" in RWGPS to identify the Ride Leader who is organizing the ride that year.

### What to bring to the Ride Start

Tour Leaders can go to [www.gcbt.org](http://www.gcbt.org) and click on "Tour Leader Info" tab to download and print sufficient quantities of the sign in sheets, the rider application and the Liability Waiver.

Items to bring in sufficient quantities:

- GCBT Rider Application Form (applicable for non-members on weekend events also)
- Liability waiver (In the early part of the season, have an extra supply of waivers and applications)
- Ride Sign-In Sheet
- Clip board with a pen attached
- Five- and ten-dollar bills to make change for membership fees
- Cue Sheets with maps copied on to the back if applicable
- A copy of the Tour Leader Guidelines to act as a reminder of your responsibilities and the announcements
- Promotional materials as available

### At the Starting Point:

- The tour leader should arrive 45 minutes to 1 hour before the ride starts.
- Strive to make people feel welcome.
- Introduce yourself to people you don't know and find out if they are new to the club or cycling and the type of riding they do.
- New members can be introduced to members who ride at the same pace.
- Have sign-up sheets, rider applications, waivers, pens and maps/cues sheets in a central location.
- Be prepared to make change for day ride and membership fees, with 5 and 10 dollar bills.
- All riders must sign the Ride Sign-In sheet and the total number of riders tallied on the top of the form. Circle the temperature/weather of the day at the top of the Sign-In sheet
- Please make your best effort to ensure all riders are signed in, and if not current members, have them also complete the application, sign the Liability waiver and pay the day or member fee. **The waiver is a very important document to protect volunteers, leaders and the club from liability in the event of a lawsuit. The fees are also important to the sustainability of the club.**
- If possible, recruit someone to assist you.
- Tour leaders should be prepared to provide a Pre-ride announcement.

### Pre-ride Announcement

- Ask the riders if everyone has signed the Sign-In sheet. **All riders must have signed in. Non-members must have completed the Rider Application and the Liability Waiver, and paid the applicable fee.**
- Introduce yourself if you haven't already

- Inform riders of any changes to the route, map and cue sheet, if applicable. Note any construction or confusing intersections or signs
- Provide a reminder, especially for the benefit of new riders, that they are expected to have their bicycles in safe operating condition, to be aware of their physical limitations, and because no sweeping is conducted by the club, they should have access to a working cell phone.
- Draw riders' attention to any potentially hazardous situations along the route.
- **As a minimum Tour Leaders must say:**
  - **"Riders must obey all traffic laws and signals."**
  - **"Riders must wear an approved helmet."**
- Canvas the group to find out who is riding the long, medium, or short ride, such that they may group together or at least be aware of who is on the same route. This is especially important for welcoming new members and including them in a group that rides at their pace.
- Point out at what kilometer reading the different distance rides diverge, if applicable.
- Point out the locations of the lunch stop and snack/refreshment stops for all the rides.
- Note any points of interest along the route.
- If possible, stage the departure by having the long leave first, then medium, followed by short distance riders. Request they try to leave a couple of minutes between groups, to avoid having large numbers of riders on the road at the same time.

### During the Ride

- Set a good example.
- Follow the rules of the road and obey all traffic laws, signals, and signs both for your own safety and as an example for other riders.

### After the Ride

- Pictures and pertinent information about the ride may be posted on the website.
- Within a few days of your ride, please provide comments on the ride to the Director of Touring via email. Some points for comment:
  - Number of participants
  - Number of day riders
  - Suggestions for improving the routes
  - Any mishaps
  - Weather
  - Route issues
  - Local festival/events along the route that could impact the schedule of the ride in future years to take in the local event.
  - Membership feedback

\*\*Within one week, please mail the cheques, sign in sheets, rider applications and waivers (Cash received should be e-transferred, or converted to a personal cheque) to:

GCBT  
 c/o Carolyn Trommelen, V.P. Admin.  
 40 McNab St E  
 Elora, ON N0B 1S0

### Expenses for Tour/Ride Leaders

The GCBT board of directors recognizes there are out of pocket expenses and, if possible, makes some reimbursement, with the amount determined at the end of each year depending on club finances.

### E-Bike Policy

E bikes are allowed, provided they are built primarily of components that are used in a regular 2-wheel bicycle and looks like a regular bicycle, but equipped with an electric assist motor. In other words, it must be similar to a conventional bicycle as opposed to a motor scooter.