

Banbury Star Cyclists' Club

Time Trial Marshalling (and Riders') Guide

Our time trial series is one of the keystones of the Club's activities during the summer months and events simply cannot happen without the support of its members in carrying out marshalling duties. Volunteering is greatly appreciated by those who organise and ride club events, whether they are weekly club events (Type B) or more formal and less regular open events (Type A).

Marshalling from time to time may seem like a chore but it is a very important role that is required to reduce the risks to riders competing in events run by the Club, and it can actually be a lot of fun. After all, you may get to stand outside chatting with club mates on a lovely sunny evening whilst cheering on the riders as they pass.

The requirement for course marshals is encompassed in our course risk assessments and is common across all events run under the authority of Cycling Time Trials, the nationally recognised authorising body for road time trials, although there are a couple of other jobs which are mentioned here.

All roles are straightforward and this guide gives a few pointers as to what is expected, what to do and what not to do.

There are three sorts of help needed on a TT night beyond the timekeeping duties. The first job is that of a number taker, the second is that of a pusher and the last is a corner or turn marshal.

As a number taker, you will simply note for the timekeeper the numbers of the riders crossing the finish line as they do so. Timekeepers are usually busy looking at their watch and noting times, so a number taker can be very helpful in ensuring that a time is correctly applied to a rider, especially if two or more riders approach the line together.

A pusher will assist riders in leaving the line promptly by enabling them to clip in and by supporting them whilst the countdown is on. At thirty seconds, advise the rider that you are ready to support them. You have two support options. The first is to stand behind and astride the rear wheel and hold the saddle underneath, ensuring that you do not knock any safety lights out of position as you do so. This is the pro method, as seen on televised time trials, but you may not be able to see behind you when using this method, so take care to be safe. The second option is to crouch down on the verge alongside the rider and take the head tube in one hand and the downtube in the other. This has some potential for difficulty as you will have to ensure you hold the rider upright rather than at an angle. You are also more likely to have to bear weight using this method. Best to practice whichever method before you start.

The role of a corner or turn marshal is the most important, as this is a safety role. That is not to say it is difficult however. A marshal's job is to:

1. Inform riders of the presence and direction of a turn or corner by obviously pointing your arm in the required direction of travel;
2. If appropriate, and only after looking twice, clearly inform riders of the absence of any traffic that may affect their safety during a turn or cornering manoeuvre by shouting - "CLEAR!" and/or if there is debris or a pothole, shout clearly what you have noticed.

A rider should not take any shout as being gospel, but it may be helpful. It is the rider's responsibility to take care for their own safety by using their eyes and ears and it is their duty to adhere to the rules of the road, especially at junctions and turns. Marshals will never be held responsible for a rider's conduct nor that of a vehicle driver. You are merely there to assist as best you can.

You should not shout anything that is unclear as that can lead to a rider making an incorrect assumption. For example, if you shout 'traffic left', is that your left or the rider's? Keep it simple and if a rider does not hear the word "CLEAR!" or similar then they are to take particularly great care.

Note that marshals have no power to stop traffic whatsoever. You will also be representing the Club and should act accordingly.

If you want to shout some friendly encouragement to a rider then do so as the rider leaves the scene at which you are marshalling – for example, as they accelerate away from the junction at which you are stationed. You will probably be thanked if you have assisted the rider, so it works both ways.

The weather may not always be so good, so bring along wet and cold weather provisions as necessary. You should report to the timekeeper and you will be told where to stand and what you need to take, if anything. When you get to your mark, if safe to do so you should check for any road debris and clear it if possible. You should place out any signs that need placing out and then await the first rider to come past. Count the riders by and once all have passed, you may return to the finish or go home.

The key rule is: DO NOT PUT YOURSELF IN DANGER.

If you have any questions about what to do in advance of an event, speak to the Club's TT Secretary, Oli Wright or email TTSecretary@banburystar.co.uk

DRAFT