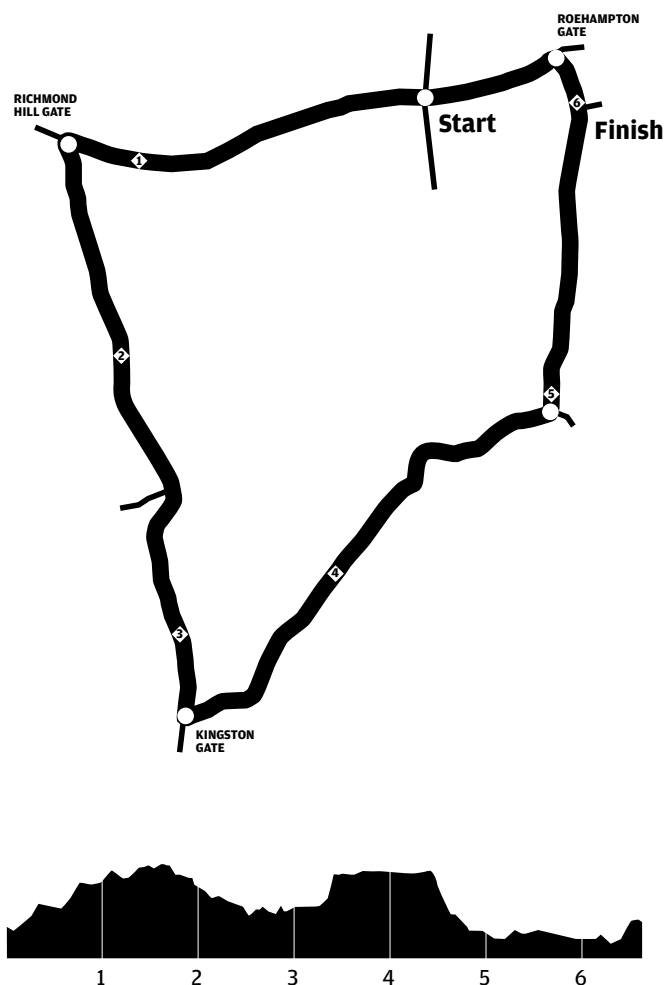


LONDON DYNAMO

Richmond Park Ride



- We finish just short of 4 laps at the car park before Roehampton Gate. Many of us stay for a coffee, snack and chat at the cafe.
- After a couple of “experimental” rides, new riders will for insurance reasons be obliged to join London Dynamo – it’s a bargain busting £30 for the year, and opens up a whole new World of cycling and social opportunities!

Objectives

- To ride and work together as a Team. By replicating race team technique, average pace can be maintained well above that of the individual, for the same level of effort.
- To ride together smoothly and at a decent pace that suits the fitness of the Group – the Leader will establish and govern this.
- Riding in close formation, safely, respectful of each other and putting the interests of the Group and other Park users above self.
- Concentrate, be smooth, be safe, and when it all comes together, as it so often does, it’s great fun and hugely satisfying.

The Basics

- The Groups initially ride in 2 parallel lines towards Richmond Gate.
- Soon after Richmond Gate the Leader will indicate that “through and off” is to begin.
- The outside line of riders smoothly picks up a pace about 1 MPH faster than the inside line.
- As the front rider in the outside line passes the front rider in the inside line, he/she moves to the left to take the lead position in the inside line. (For the purposes of these guidelines, “he” or “him” also imparts the female gender)
- A new front rider in the outside line is revealed and he does the same – and so on.
- A conveyer belt of riders or “chain gang” is created.
- As the last rider in the outside line passes the last rider in the inside line, he must say to him “last man” – to make the “last man” aware of his position and ensure the “last man” isn’t left stranded at the back – struggling to then catch the rider ahead in the outside line.
- The last rider in the inside lane then checks behind (just in case of a false call) and moves into the outside lane too – saying “last man” to the rider that was in front of him on the inside line – and so forth. You must say “last man” – rider order can change and mistakes made!
- Gaps between the riders should be narrow, to facilitate drafting or slipstreaming to reduce rider effort, and assist the Group’s pace.
- **No** overtaking of moving vehicles in the Park unless the Leader says so.
- If a slow rider chooses to drop to a slower Group, he should make his decision clear to the Leader to avoid misunderstanding.

What is it?

- Firstly, a warm welcome to “Park Ride Corner”. We hope you find these notes helpful to your enjoyment of a cornerstone weekly event hosted by our cycling club. The note’s purpose is to assist new members, as well as to provide some brush up for old hands.
- So, without further ado, we meet in Richmond Park at 9am every Saturday morning at the mini roundabout just in from Sheen Gate, break into Groups and ride 4 laps of the Park.
- New riders should identify themselves to a member. Members – befriend new riders.
- Groups should ideally be no more than 8 riders.
- Every Group should have a leader – do as he/she says.
- First Group out is fastest, last slowest.
- Pick a Group which you think best matches your fitness.
- If the Group you ride with is too quick, drop to the Group behind, but tell the Leader.
- If the Group is too slow for you, then accept your mistake and ride at the Group’s pace – do not surge or try to force the pace in frustration. Pick a faster Group next time.

- On the last lap, riders may choose to breakaway, individually or in smaller groups.
- On the final straight, if the pace has not picked up already, it usually does! Ride considerably and safely. Do not move out of position without first looking carefully.
- The Leader makes decisions, advises the Group, and the Group obey.
- The Group can tell the leader if he's crap at the end of the ride.

Acceleration and Deceleration

- The *only time* a rider should normally need to accelerate beyond Group speed, is when he joins the outside lane of riders, having been riding at the slightly slower pace of the inside line i.e. c1 MPH faster, that is all. There are exceptions such as when the Group has been broken up at a traffic island.
- The most common mistake is made by a rider (often fit folk) when in the outside line. He finds himself at the front. Whether it is mild panic, showing off (I'm fitter than you lot!) or a miscalculation, he feels compelled to push harder than necessary, and accelerates. There should be *no acceleration* or surge of speed. MPH should be *maintained* only. To do so, measured effort is likely to be required, since as the lead rider, you will be fully exposed to the wind, and instinct will likely as not lead you to put in too much effort, leading to acceleration – **wrong**. So, no gap should open up behind you because by judicious use of your power, you have managed to maintain not loose or gain speed!
- Another common error occurs when tucking back in to the inside line at the front. Positioning is important. Take a look before you cut in. Try to maintain the same narrow gap between yourself and the new rider behind you. Too sharp, and you'll cause a concertina of braking (very dangerous). More often, the rider cutting in will forget to gently slow down, and the inside line feel compelled to speed up to catch him/her. They should **not**. The "speeding" rider should realise that nobody has overtaken him in the usual fashion on the outside and he/she has made a **schoolboy error** and gently reduce pace to that of the inside line. Similarly do **not** slow down too much.

Finer Points

- Downhill, gaps maybe increased to allow extra room for reaction time.
- Steep down hills or narrow sections eg under or over taking stationary cars should be taken in single file for safety.
- Slow riders can be encouraged back to the Group by individual and or collective action.
- When it occurs, surging is the most frequent cause of disruption to the smoothness of the ride. It's usually down to 1 or 2 riders in a Group, and they are invariably unaware of it! So don't be embarrassed if it's you who are singled out – well, not too embarrassed anyway.
- Surging causes gaps to open up behind the surging rider, and the rider behind him and so forth. Slipstreaming is reduced, rider effort increased, smoothness reduced, and so the Group's pace. Frustrating and not enjoyable at all.
- Like we said at the beginning, if the Group you have chosen is too

slow for you – stick with it or make it clear that you are breaking away. Don't spoil it for everyone else by surging and breaking the Group up.

- "Slowing", "Stopping", "Horse", "Deer", "Rider left", "Single file" and appropriate hand signals should be used by all when appropriate. Don't expect the leader to shout – use your common sense, particularly when nearer the front.
- Do not jump out of position to fill a gap when the Group is in formation. However, positions may change at junctions or on hills – so be careful not to follow your usual rider – wait for "last man" and always concentrate and look out.
- Should you get a puncture or suffer mechanical difficulty, put your hand in the air and shout your problem. You cannot expect assistance, but somebody in the group may stop to help you or ask whether you require assistance – make your requirements known. By putting your hand in the air and shouting, the group will avoid your slowing bike and a potential accident.
- In the unlikely event of an accident, the leader will stop the group and take appropriate action, or resume if sensible.
- Finally, you could be forgiven for thinking that this whole process is overly complex. Trust us when we say we've survived for years without these notes, and thoroughly enjoy our Saturday rides. We just thought these paragraphs might assist the learning process, and frankly, remind the "old hands" that you ain't too old to learn, whilst fast-tracking the new boys and girls. **Enjoy!!**