



## Get Into Time-Trialing

Time Trials are a great way to get into the world of competitive cycling. For the vast majority of British racing cyclists, including the very best ones, a club 10 mile time trial was their first race.

So what's Time Trailing all about? It's known as the race of truth, it's just you riding on your own over a set course against the watch. The rider completing the course in the lowest time wins.



But within this very simple context there is a lot of variation which provides competition for cyclists of very different abilities, ages and levels of fitness. This specific area of the sport in England and Wales is governed by Cycle Time Trials, previously called the Road Time Trials Council. Their Website is <http://www.ctt.org.uk> and cyclists who ride time trials are often referred to as “testers”.



Events fall into two broad categories; **Club Events** and **Open Events**;

### Club Events

Most people start with a few club events which provide a cheap way to give it a try in a very relaxed atmosphere. As well as attracting newcomers, our club events are used by the more experienced riders as training. So you're likely to meet some very dedicated cyclists who may appear to ride impossibly fast, don't worry as they were newcomers to the sport once.

Many Corinium CC riders take part in the Thursday Evening 10 series which runs every Thursday from April to the end of August. This series is shared with Swindon RC and the clubs take alternate weeks in organising these events.

The HQ for the series is the Bradstone Pavilion in Ashton Keynes which can be found from the following link;

<http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=405368&y=194155&z=115&sv=405368,194155&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=591&ax=405368&ay=194155&lm=0>





The 10mile course is centred around Latton which is about 3 miles from the HQ and it takes just under 15minutes to get to the start of the course. Although the club events are quite relaxed there are some rules which must be adhered to for safety and the smooth running of the event:

- You must sign a form and be issued with a number which will also determine your starting position.
- You must be aware of the displayed Course Risk Assessment which may have some special details for that particular day's event.
- Some nights, owing to light or conditions the number of entrants will be limited so preference is given to entrants who are current members of either Swindon RC or Corinium CC
- You must be a member of a club which is affiliated to CTT (Corinium CC is affiliated).
- You will have a pair of race numbers of which the larger one must be worn and be clearly visible from the rear and the smaller one is to be worn on the left arm to aid the timekeepers.
- Hard shell safety helmets are recommended for all competitors and are mandatory for anyone under 18 years of age.
- Competitors under 18 years of age must supply a completed Parental Consent form.
- Your bike must be road worthy.

Make sure you know where the course goes, where the start and finish are and where the turn is. The course is clearly shown in the HQ and there are signage boards and marshals around the route to guide you when riding. If in any doubt about the course please ask when you sign on. Next thing to do is go to the start and wait for your turn. Riders start at one minute intervals. For an evening event the first rider will start at say 7.01pm the second at 7.02 and so on. There will be a pusher off; who will hold you and your bike so that you can clip your shoes into the pedals. The pusher will hold you with 30 seconds to go. Try to keep still and don't stand up - it makes it really hard for the pusher off. The timekeeper will count down; 30 seconds to go, 15, 10, 5,4,3,2,1, go. Away you go.



Remember that you are sharing the roads with other road users and having a number on your back gives you no special privileges. You must obey Road Traffic Regulations.



If you get caught by a rider starting after you let them pass and DO NOT even attempt to sit on their wheel, take pace, shelter, draft or whatever else you may want to call it. It's cheating, against the rules and will get you disqualified at least. If you catch someone who started before you - WELL DONE - go straight past don't have a rest by sitting on their wheel for a bit.

At the finish shout out your number - it helps the timekeeper.

After the finish there is a large lay-by to pull into to catch your breath before you return to the HQ where you can change/shower and wait for the timekeeper(s) to return with the times. DO NOT disturb the timekeeper at the finish or turn on the straight after the finish. You must be wary of other road-users and competitors on the course.

Most riders hang around at the HQ and have a cup of tea and a well-deserved piece of cake (or if you're lucky – Bud's legendary flapjack) with the other riders for a while, listen to everyone explain why they didn't go quicker, make a few excuses of your own, then come back next week to do it again. Now you've got a time to aim for and I bet you go quicker second time.



## Open Events

Open events are a bit more formal but the format is just the same. You cannot enter on the day for Open time trials. You need to send a completed, official entry form together with a cheque for the entry fee to the event secretary. Entry forms can be downloaded from

[www.cyclingtimetrials.org.uk/forms/CTTEntryForm.doc](http://www.cyclingtimetrials.org.uk/forms/CTTEntryForm.doc). The closing date for weekend events is usually the Tuesday 11 or 12 days before the race.

All open events (not club events), throughout the country for the year are listed in the CTT Handbook. The handbook can be bought on line from the CTT Shop [www.cyclingtimetrials.org.uk/store/index](http://www.cyclingtimetrials.org.uk/store/index). This handbook also contains all the Rules and Regulations. Entry fees for Open events are higher than club events but there will be prizes and an HQ. You'll receive a start sheet in the post and a result sheet up to a month after the event. At the event HQ everyone's time will be written on a result board around which everyone tends to gather after the event to explain why they didn't go quicker and so on. There will be refreshments at the HQ (tea and cakes, the best reason for riding TTs).





The standard distances for Time Trials are 10 miles, 25 miles, 30 miles (although there are very few 30s these days), 50 miles and 100 miles and the time events 12 hour and 24 hour where the rider covering the most miles wins. There are also non-standard distance events which are often run on sporting (for sporting read 'hilly') courses. We are lucky in Cirencester as during the year many Open events are run on the A417/419 at various distances (10, 25, 50 and 100 miles) throughout the season and the designated courses are fairly straight and fast. They offer the opportunity to compete with some of the best in the country attracted to these events as well as offer the chance to try for a personal best. Open events start in February and continue until October when the hill climb season starts.

If you have started cycling during the winter it is likely you'll want to race before the club events start, which means entering an open event. No problem, you don't have to ride club events first. I would recommend going out to an event first or travel with a club mate. There's lots of other stuff to ramble on about; 2 up time trials, medium gear events, middle markers events, fast courses, vets standards, time trial bikes, the merits of disk wheels ....



Best you get involved and find out for yourself.