



Training for the RONA MS Bike Tour

Whether you are new to the tour or have been riding for years, we would like to share with you some tips that we hope will help you with your training.

There are three areas to keep in focus while training: mind, body and equipment.

Let's start with **RIDING GEAR**:

Obviously most importantly is the bike that you chose to ride. Contrary to some belief, it is not the size of the frame that is important but whether you can obtain a correct riding position. The two main considerations in doing this are saddle and handle bar height.



Saddle height- First, make sure the saddle is level, not tilted up or down. Put on your riding shoes, and then climb on with the bike beside to a table or wall so you can hold yourself up. Put your heels on the pedals, using the bottom side if toe clips and straps are attached. Pedal backwards. When seat height is correct, your knees will straighten at the bottom of each stroke but you won't have to rock your hips to keep your heels in contact.

Move the saddle up or down accordingly. Of course, when really riding you should have the ball of each foot on the pedal. This will produce the proper knee bend for efficiency and comfort.



Handlebar height- On most bikes, the bar height can be adjusted up or down. When viewed from the side, if the handlebar isn't the same height as the saddle or within two inches of being that high, raise it. Conventional quill stems have an expander bolt that holds the stem inside the bike's head tube. Caution: Never raise the stem above the "maximum height" line engraved on its side.

Other things you will definitely want to check out are:

Wheels - Check the rim and tires. Be sure that when you lift up each end of the bike and spin the wheel, the rim does not wobble or touch against the pad. The tires should have no cuts or spots that are bare of tread.

Chains and cables- Two things you *shouldn't* see when checking your chain: dry spots or dripping oil. Take special care that lube is inside the link; if it is not, it can attract dirt and/or rust.

What to Wear: Next, you will need to consider what you are wearing. One thing to note is that it is not a good idea to purchase new gear right before the ride. Ride with it on while training because you don't want any surprises during the event.

1st and foremost, you must have a helmet. It is mandatory in any RONA MS Bike Tour. You want it to fit securely to your head, while still remaining comfortable.

Padded Shorts would be the next thing to consider. They are essential in keeping you comfortable while sitting on the saddle for any period of time. You don't have to go with the tight fitting Lycra; you could instead, select a baggy style with a liner. Just be aware that the more loosely they fit, the more likely there are bunch and become uncomfortable.

Also, you may want to have a cycling jersey, gloves and riding shoes.

Let's move on to the essentials for the **BODY**:

Stretch: One of, if not the most important thing to do is to keep your muscles relaxed. The best way to achieve this is by stretching regularly while training. Stretching is to be done slowly, without too much pressure being applied to any point. Only stretch to the point that makes you feel good. For even better results, warm up with your bike for several minutes and then stretch.

Hydration and nutrition are vital to being successful. Although, sweating is a great way to regulate body heat, when sweating you lose a large amount of nutrients. You are also losing electrolytes that when lost in excess, can cause dizziness and muscle cramps.

So, what can you do? Drink them back in. The best idea is to drink 12-18 ounces of water per hour of exercise. But sometimes water isn't enough. Sports drinks contain electrolytes and carbohydrates that your body needs in order to boost endurance.

And lastly, but most definitely not least, remember to keep your **MIND** healthy.

Keep motivated. There will be days that you just don't feel like you can go on. Any rider will tell you that. Most, however, will also tell you that it is worth it to push yourself to keep going. Some suggestions on keeping yourself focused:

Train with other people. Keep each other's spirits up and stay accountable to one another.

Get objective feedback. Monitor your actions. There is nothing better than to realize that you are getting better, riding faster or longer.

Stay goal-focused. Keep a note of your goals and personal expectations. Forcing yourself to take the time to write it out will keep it fresh in your mind.

Change it up. Take a different route, ride at different paces, and alternate your workout and stretching routines. All of these things will help you to reduce any feeling of repetitiveness or uniformity that you may be feeling.

Most important:

KEEP ON RIDING!

It's an excellent form of exercise and is enjoyable. You will feel the benefits both mentally and physically. Get riding and have fun.