

Your First Time Trial

Everyone is welcome!

Even if you're not a club member, you are very welcome to have a go at any of our Thursday evening time trials. You are allowed two rides before needing to join a club affiliated to the time trial governing body CTT (Cycling Time Trials).

If you do decide to join the club, then you will be eligible for trophies, leagues, handicap events and open events. The beauty of the time trial is that your target is to do your best. You can get help from other riders on how to improve, whatever your level of performance, as the whole atmosphere is very supportive.

Age limits

The lower age limit for a road time trial is 12 and all riders under 18 years of age will need a signed parental consent form to be presented when signing on. There is no upper age limit and many riders actually improve once they retire as they are able to spend more time training. Junior riders (under 18) are required to wear a helmet.

How you need to prepare

You can check the location of the event on [our website](#) in the Racing Section. Each course has a code (beginning with K). If you scroll right to the bottom of the page you will find the HQ/meeting place for each course. Do remember that the HQ (i.e. the lay-by where we meet and sign on) can be some distance from the start. The course can be explained to you at signing on, but you can also view the course in advance at the [Midlands DC website](#) in the courses section. When you get to the individual course page, you will see not only directions, but a link to a Google map of the course.

What you need to bring

Most people start with normal road bike, which must be roadworthy. A helmet and rear light (on flashing mode) are strongly recommended. You will need your entry fee of £2 and some money for tea/coffee and cake afterwards.

On arrival

Some people arrive by car, while others ride out to the HQ. It's a good idea to arrive at least half an hour before the start time. This will allow you ten minutes to sign on, clarify the route and sort out your bike, giving you twenty minutes to warm up. When you sign you pick up a number to pin to your back. If you are the fifth to sign on then you will have the number 5 and be fifth to start. Riders go off at one minute intervals.

At the start

As the start time approaches you will see the first few riders lining up, so you will slot in according to your number/start time. After number four is pushed off you will move forward and with 30 seconds to go you can clip in and be held. The timer will count down from ten to one and you will be pushed off (remember to have selected a low gear so you can move away easily). Not everyone chooses to be pushed off, but if you do it will save you a few seconds.

During the race

One of the arts of time trialling is pacing, and it can be all too easy to go off too fast, so for the first five minutes you should feel well within yourself. Slipstreaming another rider is not allowed in time trials, so if you catch another competitor, you have to pass them or drop back. The finish line will be marked by a chequered board where the timer will be positioned. When you cross the finish line it is helpful to the timekeeper if you shout your number, then it's back to the HQ to wait for the times to be posted (don't ask the timekeeper at the finish line as you will distract him/her from the job of timing other competitors).

After the race

Tea and coffee will be waiting! This is when riders discuss the ride and conditions and generally make excuses...but there's always next week.

And so to the next time

Many riders find time trials a motivation to improve fitness and speed. They set targets and aim to beat them. A friendly rivalry also develops and you get to know people of similar ability to yourself, which all adds to the motivation.

Open events

Each club usually holds open time trials on a couple of weekends over the season. These attract riders from all over the region and there can be up to 120 participating. You need to be a club member to take part and register in advance. If you participate in these then you will automatically be included in the [Midlands Rankings](#) which is an added incentive for progression.

Midlands Women's Series

In addition to normal club events, female cyclists in the Midlands can compete in series of time-trial events. This series typically comprises 7 events at various locations across the district. The aim is to provide informal opportunities for female cyclists to meet, to race against each other and to initiate friendships. For all women, novice or experienced, these events provide a distinct group of events to focus on for the season with some good competition against several other women. More details can be found on the [Midlands DC Website](#).

Need to know more?

If you still have any queries, please do get in touch.

Garry Hooper is the racing secretary and plays a big part in organising the Thursday evening time trials, including the signing on. His contact details are: garland.hooper@sky.com Tel: 024 7668 5970

Sheila Gillitt is Evening Time Trial Co-ordinator Tel: 024 7650 2940

See you soon!