

Road and Closed-Circuit Racing (Updated Dec' 2020)

An Introduction

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In the North West of England, and around the North West Region in particular, we are fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of road racing events. The season normally begins in March. This may be delayed in 2021.

Whether you are an "old hand", a complete novice, young or old, quick on the flat or a mountain goat, there will be something for you take part in.

Events are usually held at the weekend, but from Late April to August there are midweek evening races too.

Am I Fit Enough?

You never know until you try but as a general rule, if you are reasonably OK with the Club's Tempo groups, or can generally manage the pace of the Half Day group, then you should definitely give it a go! The important thing is that you are comfortable with and able to ride safely and closely to other riders, at a fast pace.

Before entering a Road Race you should have developed your bike handling skills by riding regularly in a Club group.

In a Road Race everyone's safety depends on everyone else's competence.

How Do I Get Started?

Let's assume that you have enjoyed, (coped?) with the Club's Tempo or Half Day groups, have a road-worthy racing bike (No Tri Bars) and want to compete against others.

In general, if you are 16 or older you may choose to enter a road race on a public highway course. These events are well marshalled, with warning vehicles ahead of the race, and often supported by experienced motor bike marshals.

There are also events on closed (traffic free) circuits which cater for younger riders as well as those aged 16 and over.

The three organisations that oversee cycle road racing in England are:

British Cycling (BC); TLI Cycling; and British Masters Cycle Racing (BMCR).

If you are under 40 years of age, you can join either BC or TLI Cycling.

If you are 40+, you can choose to join both of these and BMCR. You will need to apply for a Racing Licence from one or more of these organisations to enter the events they support.

Each organisation provides up to £10million of Third Party Liability Indemnity for racing and there are also various degrees of cover for general cycling.

Refer to the websites of each organisation for the full details.

Below is a brief guide to the three organisations, with links to their websites, so you can find out how to join, details of their racing programmes, and how to enter.

Road Cycle Racing Organisations in England: -

- **British Cycling** www.britishcycling.org.uk

If you wish to participate in a BC race you will need to be a BC member and to hold a Racing Licence.

There are different levels of membership, Ride, Bronze, Silver and Gold.

Bronze membership does not provide Third Party Insurance and, on its own, is insufficient to ride with Seamons CC.

Ride membership does not give full access to BC races.

If you take out Silver or Gold Membership you can opt to buy a Full Racing Licence (free

for Under 16s). depending on your ability level or age, this gives you entry into regional, national, and international events. Ranking points can be achieved, enabling you to move through the BC categories from 4th, 3rd, 2nd to 1st and Elite standard.

There is a good summary of the membership details and costs on the British Cycling website.

- **TLI Cycling Ltd** www.tlicycling.org.uk

TLI Cycling support “age-related” Road Races, Cyclo Cross/MTB events and some Time Trials in the UK, particularly across the North of England. It is an ideal way to get started, or get back into road-racing, as competitors are placed in 5 -10 year age bands.

Under 18s are allocated to two-year age bands, either as Youth or Junior competitors.

Races for competitors aged 16 or older are usually run in 2 or 3 age groups, under 40s, under 55s and over 55s for example. If you want to change to a different group, to enable you to better enjoy the experience, this can usually be arranged with the event organiser.

Membership for 2021 is free for Under 16s, and £10 for Juniors, £15 everyone else.

Race Entry Fees are usually around £12-£15.

Many of today’s top cyclists have been, and in some cases still are, active TLI Cycling competitors. These include Mark Cavendish, Alex Dowsett, Matt Brammeier, Peter Kennaugh and Mike Cummings.

The older age categories include many former professionals and national champions.

Full details of all TLI Cycling membership, events and activities can be found at the above link or contact Seamons member, Nigel Harrop.

- **British Masters Cycle Racing (BMCR).** www.bmcr.org.uk

(formerly known as The LVRC)

BMCR is organised in a similar way to TLI Cycling but is specifically for male and female Veteran category racing cyclists aged 40 or over.

Annual membership is reduced to £14 for 2021. Races typically cost £10 to £35 to enter and are organised on an age group basis. Members can opt to compete in a different age group e.g. if a 40+ rider feels that he or she is not up to the standard of that age group, they can ride in a 50+ or even 60+ race. Some of the top older riders may opt to race with a younger age group for additional competition!

If you are thinking of joining BC, TLI Cycling or BMCR and/or entering events, please **contact Barry Armstrong, the SCC Road Race Secretary at** rrsec@seamonscc.co.uk