



Updated Safety Rules for Time Trial Events on the A31

Alton Cycling Club

Safety of Time Trials on A31

Introduction

Time trialling has been taking place over this stretch of road since at least the 1920's i.e. over 90 years. During any given season the A31 is used by as many as 17 cycling clubs who come from far and wide to use it for its relatively ideal riding conditions. Nearly 3000 individual rides take place over the course of a single year on this stretch of road over distances varying from 10 miles up to at least two 12 hour events thus in excess of 240 miles. As far as we can ascertain there has not been a fatality involving a cyclist in an organised event until that of August 2015, and reports of any accidents at all seem to be few and far between.

The A31 is a trunk road now mainly dual carriageway, though with some sections hatched off to single carriageway. The majority of the road is governed by the National speed limit of 70 mph though some is restricted to 60 mph. Traffic, by observation, seems to adhere reasonably well to the speed limit.

There are times when it is very busy, but evening traffic volumes vary considerably and are much higher during rush hour and up to 18.30 but reduce considerably by 19.00.

The line of the road is generally either straight or gradual curves with good sight lines ahead for motorists. The carriageways are of good width throughout.

Cyclists at no point on any course cross both carriageways i.e. perform a U turn though they do circulate around one or other of the large roundabouts at either end of the course.

There is no cycle path but there are markings and signs for cyclists on the slip roads.

Cyclist Safety

Cyclists have a duty of care not only to themselves but also to other road users including motorists with whom they share the same road space. For their own protection they should wear head protection in the form of a hard shell helmet. They should endeavour to make themselves as visible as possible with a combination of highly visible clothing and appropriate lighting. A brightly flashing rear light needs to be visible for in excess of 50 metres in order to give a motorist travelling at approximately 70 mph when the cyclist is doing 15-20 mph more than 2.5 seconds in which to react to the cyclist's presence. 2.5 seconds is widely accepted as a norm for average motorist reaction times though of course it can vary considerably. Cyclists must take up an appropriate position on the road at all times and minimise any chances of collision with other road users.

Event organisers and timekeepers

The above people have a duty of care to ensure the safety of themselves, the participating cyclists in the event and the other road users. To this end all marshals etc. should at all times during the event wear high visibility vests or jackets. The course should have clear highly visible signage at all points of access to the course warning motorists of the cycling event taking place. The timing of events is crucial in ensuring that the road is as quiet and safe as possible but that lighting conditions are also good. The officials must ensure that the individual cyclists adhere to the safety standards set for the event and have the powers to disbar anyone from taking part in the event if they are not deemed to be safe. The officials must also ensure that the road and weather conditions are such that the safety of the

event is not compromised, and have the power to postpone or cancel the event with immediate effect if these conditions are not met.

Rules

In view of the above the following rules have been agreed by the Alton Cycling Club committee:

- a) No weekday events should commence before 19.00. The season will only run during months when there is a reasonable expectation of good daylight persisting for the whole duration of the event
- b) That in all ACC events the wearing of hard shell helmets be mandatory.
- c) That in all ACC events the use of red rear flashing lights visible at over 50 metres be mandatory.
- d) That all officials present should wear 'high visibility' jackets throughout the event.
- e) That a minimum of six 'cycle event' warning signs be placed with maximum effect to warn all motorists entering that section of the A31 of the event. In addition a feather flag will be deployed near to the start layby.
- f) In the event of adverse weather or light conditions the senior timekeeper present, in consultation with other helpers, should make the decision to either postpone or cancel the event.
- g) The senior timekeeper's decision to disallow any rider from taking part in the event on any reasonable grounds including those above is final.

**Alton Cycling Club
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