

2018 100/200 Rider Letter

Dear 100/200 Participant,

The big ride is a week away, and the weather report is looking favorable. We may see some showers, but not a washout, and the wind should be out of the west. Seven days makes for lots of time for the forecast to change, but cloudy skies are an advantage on such a long ride. We suggest bringing along one or two changes of kit, as this can make a huge difference in comfort and attitude in the second half of the ride. Dry socks can feel like a gift from the gods.

Please see the attached document. We'll have copies of it available at the start.

We're detouring around extensive road construction between Waterbury and Stowe this year. While it's all rideable, it's not much fun for quite a distance, so we're taking the opportunity to detour onto VT-12 for an extended section. This should be a special treat for those who've ridden the 100/200 in the past, as VT-12 is a sweet road on its own account. After a long, but easy climb from Morrisville to Lake Elmore, there's a 12-mile stretch of wilderness—most of it an extended descent. We'll break in Montpelier, in front of the Vermont Statehouse's golden dome (which is undergoing reconstruction), before continuing down VT-12. There is a half-mile section of dirt on Dog Team Rd that can be anywhere from smooth, to lumpy, to barely rideable on road tires, but at least it's short.

While we could skip over to Moretown and pick up 100B, staying on VT-12 takes us through Northfield, past Norwich University, and then over Braintree Gulf, which is even more fun to descend than Granville Gulf, which we will miss. While we have no rules, it is highly recommended that you stay off the brakes on the descent, if you dare, as it's far more fun that way! Most of this detour is very low-traffic, with the exception of the stretch between Randolph and Bethel, where it usually picks up a bit. Most of the pavement on this entire stretch has been redone in the past couple of years.

A detour is recommended in Bethel, due to the traffic that one typically finds on VT-107. It mostly follows the route of the old White River RR, which was nicknamed the "Peavine," due to the path it took as it followed the river. The railroad was destroyed in the Great Flood of 1927, but parts of its right-of-way are now a road that provides a low-traffic, flattish alternate to busy VT-107. About 4 miles of this detour are dirt, but it is usually quite smooth and will be checked this week. If we find it's just been graded, we'll recommend staying on VT-107. We rejoin VT-100 in Stockbridge, at mile 110.

The route sheet notes an optional detour through the town of Killington. This also includes a dirt section, which has always been smooth enough for road tires when I've ridden it. This detour clips off the worse part of the Killington climb, but also removes the nice descent that follows it. While most riders chose to skip the detour, there's no shame in taking it and saving your legs a bit. "It's a nice little road!" sez Jeanne.

The construction in Ludlow is finished, so we're returning to the break at the Ludlow Green. Sadly, the nearby laundromat is gone, along with its restroom. Taking this break requires you to continue past the VT-100 turn about 1/3 mile, then double back after the break, but we think the shade of the gazebo makes it worthwhile, as long as it's not being used for a wedding like it was a few years ago! Restrooms are available at Shaws Supermarket and the Duncan Donuts, before you get to the green.

If you haven't done so, please check out the resources on <http://100-200.org>, as they clue you in to what to expect on this ride. The most important thing to remember is that the easy part is in the beginning of the ride, so you want to be sure to pace yourself and avoid using up energy that you'll wish you had when you get to the increasingly hard climbs that come in the afternoon.

We love to call this a “Ride Without Rules,” but please be considerate of motorists early in the ride, when we typically have larger groups. Last year, some of our support people had to put up with nasty comments from drivers who found themselves stuck behind groups of riders for long stretches. Vermont state law requires cyclists to ride “as close to the right as practicable,” whatever that means. Cyclists are allowed by law to ride two-abreast, as long as it does not “impede the normal flow of traffic.” The exact meaning of these statements tends to be different for cyclists and drivers, but a reasonable interpretation would be that there should not be more than two cyclists riding side-by-side, and riders should return to single file when vehicular traffic comes up from behind. Also, support vehicles should never follow riders, even if operating their flashers. This was the primary cause of much of the traffic backup, last year. We have not made special arrangements with any towns or authorities along the way, and thus must act within the standard traffic rules, which do not allow us to impede traffic. The nature of the terrain of the first 20 miles can make it very difficult for vehicles to pass groups of cyclists safely, and we don’t want to cause a crash or road rage incident, or have any riders or supporters get stuck with a ticket.

Please note that swimming is not allowed at Vermont fishing and boat access areas. Be careful not to block access for other vehicles. Some people pulling boats are famously impatient.

We’ll have some extra free flashers at the start for those who want them, and support people should be sure they get a cow bell (while they last)! Please remember that there’s no sweep on this ride and spotty cell phone service. No one has ever gotten a cell signal anywhere near the state line. There’s no way we can know who has finished and who is still on the road. We’ll hang out at the finish until we think everyone is in, but please don’t be upset if you arrive late and find no one there. This ride is for experienced cyclists who know how to be prepared for the unexpected. Since it’s possible that you might get caught riding after dark, good lights and reflective gear are recommended. Wrap a couple reflective leg bands around your seatstays, just in case. **Vermont law requires both a taillight (or at least 10 in² of reflectors) and a headlight when riding after dark. Reflective leg bands are an excellent idea in addition to a light, just in case you finish later than you expect.**

The Readsboro Inn typically will have rooms available for very reasonable rates. This is a classic, old hotel, recently refurbished, located at the last turn, a few miles from the ride’s end. They also have a restaurant and will prepare a pizza or other meal to be ready to eat in your room. It’s a great place to rest, so you can drive home safely in the daylight on Sunday. We’ve stayed there several times and have found it very nice and always clean.

If you are returning to the Canadian border after the ride, at least one rider is looking for a way back to North Troy. Contact us if you have room for an extra person, back to the start.

See you next Saturday!

Steve & Jeanne Barner

Ride Tips

Reviewing comments from riders in previous years, a couple tips come up repeatedly; pace yourself and keep the breaks short. You've been training and you're going to feel very strong at the start. Someone is going to set a fast pace early on and you're going to want to jump on their wheel. That is very often a big mistake. Pace lines can be key on this ride, but if you're going to push the pace, do it in the LAST 50 miles, not the first! That person setting the blistering pace may not finish, so don't let their approach take you down with them. Rider Jeff Warner has noted that keeping breaks to 15 minutes would enable a 17 mph pace and you would still finish an hour and a half earlier than many fast riders do. Pushing yourself so hard that you want to stay off the bike longer may be fun, but it's not the best strategy for this ride. It's not likely that you're going to get anywhere near Ted King's records, unless you are also a pro!

When riders have mishaps in a group, there is typically a common theme—that they were riding outside their ability. This leads to sloppiness that directly contributes to the accident, and it is not always those riders who pay the price. Here are a few tips that help to keep riders in a group safe:

- Stay within your comfort zone. If you feel you're riding too fast, drop back to another group. Unless you're the lanterne rouge, there's bound to be someone shortly behind with whom to share the ride.
- When riding in a bunch, keep at least some distance between your front wheel and the rear wheel of the person ahead. If you find you must "cross wheels," drop back to a safe distance immediately. If your front wheel makes contact with the other rider's rear wheel, you will almost certainly go down. Even if you don't get hurt, it might cause someone behind you to go down and they might not be so lucky. If you feel someone contact your rear wheel, don't slow down! Speed up, if you can.
- When getting out of the saddle on a climb, make a special effort not to throw the bike backwards when someone is drafting you. It is entirely natural for your bike to slow dramatically for a split second as you get out of the saddle. If the rider in back happens to be close, they might cross wheels with you and this could cause a crash.
- Don't come alongside a rider on the right, even if there is a shoulder. Conversely, be aware of other riders' positions and look before moving laterally. A friend got bumped off the road by another rider in a bunch with which I was riding a few years ago, and he was off the bike for the rest of the season.
- Observe the universal "center line rule." Don't cross the center line of the road.
- Related to the above, make a special effort to be aware of vehicles and single up to let traffic pass. We have made no contacts or special arrangements with towns along the route and have no special permissions for riders. In Vermont, it is ok to ride two-abreast as long as it does not impede the flow of traffic. Generally, this is taken to mean that riders need to single up when traffic is approaching from the rear. You'll find most drivers to be considerate, but no one likes to be stuck behind a group of cyclists who are chatting away. Many drivers will pass cyclists unsafely, such as where sight distance is restricted on curves or before the crest of a hill, even though this is not legal. Like most areas, Vermont has at least a few drivers who hate all cyclists, so don't give them an excuse to be nasty. Cyclists are required to adhere to all vehicular traffic regulations and can be ticketed for violations.
- Always ride with safety first and keep it fun!

We hope you are as psyched about the ride as we are. This will be our 19th run of the 100/200 (our first was in 1984!) and we look forward to it now as much as we ever have. We think you will agree that the 100/200 is truly one of the country's most enjoyable and memorable endurance rides.

See you at 4:30 am, Saturday the 23rd, at the Canadian border!

Steve & Jeanne Barner

sjbarner@gmavt.net

(802) 434-4497 (H)

(802) 734-2202 (Steve, cell)

(802) 578-6629 (Jeanne, cell)

Note: Unlike most normal people, our cell phones are usually off, as we don't have cell service at home.

Route Information – Turn-By-Turn

We're got some major changes, plus the usual minor shortcuts this year. All are optional, so we'll explain why you might want to take any of the optional shortcuts, in addition to describing the alternative route. The shortcuts are ones we like to take when riding on our own, so we thought we'd share them with you. They are all included in the [RideWithGPS.com map](#) and are marked as optional or recommended.

Start at the old North Troy Border Station, just south of the active station. Head away from the border on VT-243.

Turn right at the intersection right at the bottom of the hill onto Elm St. Merge onto VT-105 south (second intersection). VT-105 becomes VT-101 at mile 3.

Mile 7.4: Merge onto VT-100 south. Pay attention or you'll end up in the fire station parking lot! Sections of the pavement between here and Hyde Park are the roughest of the ride, so use caution.

Mile 34: Take second exit on Hyde Park traffic circle, leaving VT-100 and going downhill on Church St.

Turn left at the end of Church St onto Main St, then take the second right onto Depot St, just before the elementary school. Depot St eventually becomes Cady Falls Rd.

Mile 36.2 (NEW): Turn left onto Bridge St.

Mile 36.8: Cross VT-100 and continue straight onto Historic VT-100 at the next intersection.

Mile 37: Turn right to stay on Historic VT-100.

Mile 37.2: Turn left onto Upper Main St, VT-12, leaving Historic VT-100.

Mile 37.3: Bear right to stay on VT-12 (left follows VT-15A). There is a small green here which might be a good spot for a short break.

Mile 41: No turn here, but a good place to take a break by Lake Elmore.

Mile 63.1: Continue straight onto Elm St. where VT-12 turns left. Onion River Sports (Now Onion River Outdoors) is on Langdon St. (second left), if you need a bike shop.

Mile 63.4: Turn right onto State St. Take break in front of Statehouse on second block, ahead.

Mile 63.8: Turn left at the next traffic light, cross bridge and turn left onto Memorial Drive.

Mile 64.5: Bear right onto Dog River Rd. There is a 1/2 -mile stretch of dirt which we hope will be smooth, but there is no better alternative, if it's not.

Mile 65.9: Turn right onto VT-12, South.

Mile 91.4: Bear left in Randolph to stay on VT-12. The convenience store on the left is the largest in town.

Mile 91.8: Optional rest stop, just before RR tracks.

Mile 99.5 (Optional): After following the turns (left – right – right) on VT-12 through Bethel, take the right turn onto Peavine Blvd, just before the bridge over the White River. Immediately after crossing the narrow bridge (the only remaining bridge from the Peavine RR), there is a park on the left, which is a great place for a break. There are a few miles of (usually smooth) dirt on this road. At mile 105.3, the road turns back to pavement at the bottom of a steep descent. Turn left here and cross the bridge. Turn right to get back on VT-107.

Mile 110: Continue straight, rejoining VT-100 in Stockbridge.

Mile 118 (Optional): Bear left onto River Rd (dirt). It's easy to spot this, as there is a large traffic arrow indicating the right curve of VT-100, while River Rd continues straight ahead. This detour not only knocks off the toughest part of the Killington climb, it is quite scenic as it winds through a small gorge. The dirt is typically smooth and easy on standard road tires, providing it has not just been graded. The dirt turns to excellent pavement in three miles. Turn left at the end of the road to rejoin VT-100 & US-4. **Most riders opt to remain on VT-100 and turn left at the top of the hill, where it joins US-4. (Bike shop to the right.)**

Mile 123 (Optional break): Water Wheel Trading Post convenience store at bottom of US-4 descent.

Mile 127: Turn right in West Bridgewater to stay on VT-100. Convenience store and food if you want a break.

Mile 141: Turn left at intersection where VT-103 joins VT-100.

Mile 143 (Break): In Ludlow, continue straight on Main St (VT-103) where VT-100 turns right, and continue 0.3 miles to town green. Use restrooms at Shaws Supermarket or Duncan Donuts as you come into town. After break, backtrack and make the left turn onto VT-100 to start the Terrible Mountain climb.

Mile 151: Turn left at intersection of VT-155, to stay on VT-100.

Mile 154 (Weston Green): Most riders typically continue through, but support folks may find it worthwhile to hang out in Weston for a bit. The Weston Playhouse has rest rooms and a great view of the old dam in the rear. The Vermont Country Store's original location is open a couple blocks down VT-100.

Mile 159: Turn right at the intersection with VT-11, to stay on VT-100. Bear left in one-half mile to stay on VT-100 when VT-11 separates. There are stores and at this intersection.

Mile 166: Turn left at intersection with VT-30. There is an excellent convenience store here, as well as a bike shop. After some significant rollers, you're in for a nice descent through Jamaica.

Mile 174: Turn right, to stay on VT-100. Those wishing to avoid the 12-mile Mt. Snow climb can continue on VT-30 to Brattleboro, then take VT-142 to the state line. For those turning right, it's pay-back time for that sweet descent!

Mile 186 (Break): Top of the Mt. Snow climb. Most riders will want to take a short breather here. *Note that this is a private drive, though we've never seen a car here.*

Mile 197: Turn left in Wilmington at intersection with VT-9, staying on VT-100.

Mile 198: Turn right to stay on VT-100, leaving VT-9.

Mile 202 (Optional): Turn right onto Wilmington Cross Rd. This is a very steep, but short climb. This avoids the much more difficult climb out of Jacksonville. Turn right at the end, rejoining VT-100.

Mile 211: Turn left onto Tunnel St. in front of the Readsboro Inn, the first left after the Deerfield River bridge, at the bottom of the descent. If you find yourself climbing in Readsboro, you missed the turn.

Mile 214: End at state line (a half-mile past the boat launch).