

Track 1  
Information for Participants

What to prepare for:

- *Dress appropriately for the weather.* If it is cold outside, it will be cool inside. In the winter, the temperature is maintained at 13 degrees C, so arm and leg warmers are appropriate.
- *Clothing should fit tightly* so as not to get in moving parts of the bicycle
- *Wear cycling gloves*, even if you do not use them ordinarily. There is a lot of vibration on the track.
- *Bring your helmet, cycling shoes, and pedals.* If you do not have any of these items, they can be provided. Shoes with firm, smooth soles are best if you do not have cycling shoes and pedals
- *Measure your bike and bring the measurements with you.* Measure the distance from the center of the bottom bracket to the top of the saddle along the seat tube and the distance from the front tip of the saddle to the center of the handlebars.
- *If you have a pump, please bring it.* No commercially available bicycle pump is able to withstand the repeated use of pumping 24-36 tires every few days. For this reason, none of the pumps at the track work.
- *Please bring your fee in exact cash.* The fee for the session is \$20. The fee for a rental bike is \$10. We are not equipped to handle credit or debit cards.
- *Bring sufficient food and water.* Your session will last two to three hours. Expect to eat and drink what you would on a bike ride of that duration.

What to do once you have arrived:

- *Please do not cross the track in cycling shoes or socks.* Cycling shoes chew up the track surface and socks are too slippery on the incline. Wear your street shoes and carry your cycling shoes in with you. Since the washrooms are on the far side of the track, you will need to change shoes to visit them.
- *Please complete a registration form and waiver.* Please also sign the passport card your session leader will hand out along with the other forms. Once you have completed the documentation, give the forms together with your fees to the session leader.
- *Select and fit a bike.* Select a bike that approximates the distance from saddle tip to handlebars on your road bike. When standing over the top tube with both feet on the ground there should be a bit of space between the top tube and your crotch. Adjust the saddle to be at the same height as your road bike. Alternatively, you may use the wooden boxes you see placed around the infield to help you adjust the saddle height. Stand on the box to sling a leg over the saddle and check that it is just slightly bent when you are seated on the saddle and the pedal is in the lowest position. Pedals should be put on finger tight. Please do not make any other adjustments to the bike.
- *Perform the bike check* described on the cards you will see hanging from the bike racks. As an added precaution, your session leader will take you through the bike check routine at the start of the session.

What to expect:

- *You will be riding a track bike.* A track bike has a single gear fixed to the rear wheel (so that when the wheels turn the pedals must turn and vice versa), no brakes, and dropped bars.

*Why one gear fixed to the hub?* Because you don't need multiple gears on the track, and when you don't need multiple gears you don't need a freewheel mechanism, which compromises efficiency and control.

*Why no brakes?* Because with one gear fixed to the hub you can brake by resisting the pedal motion and because on the track there is no need to brake. Everyone is going in the same direction and there is no reason to stop suddenly. Braking would only cause havoc for following riders.

*Why dropped bars?* Because riding on the drops maximizes control. Through almost all of this session people will be expected to ride with their hands on the drops.

- *Always stand on the side of the bike opposite the chain.* Safety dictates keeping as far away as possible from moving parts. This also helps keep chain grease off your legs.
- *To start going* straddle the top tube. Reach back behind yourself, grab the saddle, lift the rear end of the bike off the ground, and turn the pedals until the right pedal is in the 2 o'clock position. Then set the bike down and stand on the right pedal while lifting yourself up onto the saddle. The bike will move forward as you put your weight on the pedal. Start riding, turn your pedals over, and clip in. It may take some practice to do this while the pedals are moving.
- *To stop*, resist the motion of the pedals. As the bike slows to a stop remove your back foot (whichever one is at the rear of the pedal stroke) from the pedal and put it on the ground.
- *Participants in this session will need a moderate degree of strength and endurance. Bike handling skills are an asset.* You should be able to climb two flights of stairs without needing a rest part way up, and be able to complete a one hour bike ride on the road. Being able to ride slowly without falling over, ride with only one hand on the bars, and corner at moderately high speeds are assets but by no means prerequisites. While on the track, you must maintain a speed of 30 km/h, which takes about as much effort as maintaining 25 km/h on the road.

Course Outline:

#### I. The track bike

*Here you will get an introduction to riding the track bike, including a bike safety check and practice stopping, starting, braking, and riding out of the saddle.*

#### II. Turning and cornering

*Here you will get practice manoeuvring and tipping the bike, signalling, and shoulder-checking. This will help prepare you for your first laps.*

#### III. First laps

*Here you will begin to ride the track, first in small groups and then in larger groups.*

#### IV. Entering and exiting

*Riding track is like flying a plane. Take-off and landing pose the greatest challenges. A major portion of track time will be spent on practice getting on and off the track safely, first as a group and then while others are riding on the track.*

## V. Passing over; skills and drills

*As you become more comfortable your instructors will take you through a series of drills to enhance your confidence and control and develop the appropriate reactions when riding with other.*

### Important Advice

*This advice applies once you start doing laps on the track. Prior to that, simply slow down and stay behind riders in front of you.*

- *You must maintain a speed of 30 km/h to stay on the track through the turns. If you are travelling more slowly than that, you need to move down onto the blue band at the bottom of the track.*
- *If you find yourself rising above the red line, you are not in control and need to slow down. The faster you go, the harder it will be for you to hold a line through the turns. People have a natural tendency to drift up the track through the turns because they are uncomfortable cornering tightly at speed. Before you can go fast you must demonstrate that you have overcome that instinct.*
- *If you are traveling over 25 km/h you must at all costs remain on the track. At speeds over 25 km/h it is not possible to turn when you reach the corners, particularly on the concrete, which is very slippery.*
- *Look where you want to go, not where you don't want to go.*
- *For your riding at this session, maintain a distance of 3-5 bike lengths from the rider in front of you. If you come up on another rider, turn up the track, never down. The route down track is always shorter and faster which will only bring you even closer. The route up track is always longer and slower.*
- *If you approach a rider in front of you, position yourself just slightly higher on the track (to their right).*
- *If a rider in front of you wants to get off the track while the exercise is continuing, maintain your speed and pass over them (to their right).*
- *If you need to get off the track, move down onto the portion of the track between the black line and the blue band and motion to those behind you to ride over you or shout "coming off!" Reduce your speed on the finish line straight and move down onto the blue band as you come through the turns after the finish line. Exit the track following the black exit line. Do not leave the track if your speed is too high or stay up on the track if your speed is too low. Being correctly positioned for the speed you are traveling is more important than exiting on the exit line.*

Once your session ends:

We hope you will enjoy your time at the Forest City Velodrome and want to come back to develop your skills and learn what more the track has to offer. Graduates of Track 1 will receive an initialled and dated "passport" that entitles them to attend any Recreational or "Skills and Drills" session upon payment of applicable fees.

You will learn the most if you come to our "Skills and Drills" sessions, one of which is offered at no cost immediately after Saturday Track 1. When at Recreational Sessions, please stay below the blue line that runs down the middle of the track and please stay behind other riders. Pass over them only if they leave the track.

As you do laps, work on the following skills: shoulder checking without deviating from your line, doing laps out of the saddle, doing laps with one hand behind your back. As your skills increase, you will be invited to participate in some of the more challenging things we do at the track.