

## **TRAINING TIPS from Carmichael Training Systems (Week 9 of 12)**



### **Gear to get you through your event**

By Carmichael Training Systems

Your Tour de Cure ride will be one of the most rewarding days you spend on your bike. Although it's a long day on the saddle, with appropriate training and attention to proper gear selection, every mile can be enjoyable. You've already spent the time working on the physical aspect of getting ready for your ride; now's the time to get your gear organized for the big day. Pay attention to the following and you'll have a comfortable and successful ride.

#### **Final bike preparation**

Your body is ready for the ride; make sure your bike is as well. About two weeks before your event, bring your bike in to the local shop to have them look it over for any issues that might become problematic during your ride. They can check cables and housing, brake pads, and derailleur adjustments to make sure everything is working smoothly. When you get the bike back from the shop, make sure you go out and ride it to double-check everything is working; give yourself enough time so that if something is wrong, you can bring it back to the shop. The night before your ride, put some lube on your chain, check your tire pressure, and check to see that all bolts on the bike are tight.

#### **Clothing**

Many event rides start early in the morning and last from 2-6, even 8 hours, depending on the distance you've signed up for, and weather can change quite a bit in that time period. Make sure you have appropriate clothing to manage varying weather conditions. Layering with clothes made from materials which wick moisture from the skin is the key to staying both warm and dry. Stay away from cotton - when it becomes wet either from rain or sweat, it loses its insulating properties and you'll be miserable quickly.

On your upper body, start with a thin undershirt (you can skip this if it's going to be very warm), and put your bike jersey on over that. Also carry with you a jacket or vest to protect against wind and rain. Ideally, find something that is relatively waterproof but also allows your skin to breathe; many jackets have armpit and side zippers to improve airflow. An inexpensive rain poncho will keep you dry in a pinch, although its lack of breathability can make you sweat pretty heavily, increasing the risk of dehydration and giving you a chill when the moisture has nowhere to go. Arm warmers are also a great option as you can push them down to your wrists and pull them back without having to stop.

One article of clothing that you absolutely do not want to skimp on are cycling shorts. Invest in a trusted name brand with a quality chamois and your most sensitive parts will thank you later in the ride. And remember, cycling shorts are designed to work directly against the skin. No underwear! A quality anti-chafing cream, like Aquaphor, applied to your skin, can reduce friction resulting in more comfortable saddle time.

Here is a great chart to take the guess work out of what you need to wear to protect your core.

Temperature Range (F)	Clothing Recommendation
60 degrees and over	Wicking base layer and short-sleeved jersey, or just a short-sleeved jersey.
50-60 degrees	Wicking base layer, jersey, and wind vest. Or base layer and a long-sleeved jersey.
45-50 degrees	Wicking base layer, long-sleeved jersey. Consider a Windtex or similar wind-front long-sleeved jersey.
40-45 degrees	Wicking base layer, Windtex or similar wind-front long-sleeved jersey.
Below 40 degrees	Thermal long-sleeved base layer, Windtex long-sleeve jersey or full thermal long-sleeved jersey.

Below is a chart for what to wear on your limbs for varying temperatures.

Temperature Range (F)	Clothing Recommendation
60 degrees and over	Nothing, but you might want to carry arm warmers if you think the temperature might drop during your ride.
50-60 degrees	Arm warmers and knee warmers
45-50 degrees	Arm warmers if you're still wearing a short-sleeved jersey with a thermal vest. If you're wearing a long-sleeved jersey your arms are taken care of. Knee warmers.
40-45 degrees	At this point you should be wearing a base layer and a long-sleeved jersey. If you're arms still get cold, you could wear arm warmers under your jersey. Full leg warmers
Below 40 degrees	With the thermal base layer and warm jersey, there should be no need for arm warmers. Wear full leg warmers and consider full-length thermal tights/bibs.

### **Footwear**

A stiff-soled cycling shoe with clip-in pedals will improve power transfer and help you ride faster and use less energy than you would with tennis shoes and platform pedals. But if you don't have clip-in pedals already, don't get them right before your big ride, as they take some practice to get used to.

If you're concerned that your feet will be cold, it's often best to put shoe covers over your shoes rather than trying to cram a thicker sock into your shoes. Your feet and toes need some room to move and some air space to stay warm; cramming a thick sock into a tight

shoe can actually make your feet colder. Shoe covers are also a great option if you need to keep your feet dry.

### **Cycling Gloves**

Don't underestimate the effect gloves can have on making a long ride much more comfortable. A quality pair of gloves with a padded palm can dramatically reduce the vibration from the road resulting in less upper body fatigue and joint pain.

And finally a chart with suggestion on how to keep your hands and feet warm and dry!

Temperature Range (F)	Clothing Recommendation
60 degrees and over	Short-fingered gloves, wicking socks, traditional cycling cap or nothing under your helmet.
50-60 degrees	Short-fingered gloves or thin full-fingered gloves, wicking socks, traditional cycling cap or nothing under your helmet.
45-50 degrees	For many riders this is the most variable temperature region, where you have to decide between wicking and thermal socks, shoe covers or nothing over your shoes, and the appropriate thickness of gloves.
40-45 degrees	Long-fingered gloves (possibly of thermal/wind-stopping material), wool or thermal socks, toe covers or wind/water-proof shoe covers. Possibly a thermal skull cap under helmet.
Below 40 degrees	Thermal, wind-stopping gloves; thermal skull-cap under helmet, possibly a helmet cover, wool or thermal socks, thermal booties that cover the ankle.

### **Headwear**

Of course you already have a helmet that fits snugly but comfortably. If you've crashed with that helmet or it's experienced a significant impact, replace it. Even if it looks okay from the outside, the integrity of the helmet could be compromised. If the weather is going to be cool, keep a headband or skull cap handy to keep your ears and head warm. They're small enough that you can tuck one into your jersey pocket in case you need it.

### **Tool Kits**

You don't have to be an expert mechanic, but a small tool kit and knowledge of basic repairs can mean the difference between finishing your ride and watching it from the sag vehicle. Essentials include, but aren't limited to: Allen wrenches, tire levers, a spare tube, a patch kit, and a pump. A bike-specific multi-tool is particularly handy because of its compact size and many uses. Don't overlook the usefulness of non-traditional items for short term repairs; a little duct tape can keep a loose part attached until you get to an aid station, and an energy bar wrapper works as a great patch for a slice in your tire's sidewall.

The decision to ride a charity ride is no small undertaking; however, with the proper preparation and attention to gear detail in the days and hours before the ride, you can

cross the finish line with a smile on your face - just make sure you clean the bugs out of your teeth before you pose for pictures!!

*Carmichael Training Systems Founder and Head Coach Chris Carmichael is the 2012 National Spokesperson for the American Diabetes Association Tour de Cure. This article is part of a series of articles prepared by Chris and the coaches at CTS to help you prepare for your Tour de Cure event. For more information on CTS and to sign up for our free newsletter and a chance to win a signed copy of "The Time-Crunched Cyclist" book, visit [www.trainright.com/register](http://www.trainright.com/register).*