**CHECK YOUR BICYCLE AND YOUR GEAR BEFORE THE RIDE**

A checklist is a good way to make sure you have what you need for a safe and enjoyable ride.  These are items you should consider taking on your ride.  Most emergency gear will fit easily in a special bag that attaches under your bicycle seat.  These bags are sold at bike shops and come in a variety of sizes and styles.

**SAFETY AND EMERGENCY REPAIR CHECKLIST**

Properly fitting helmet

Sunglasses or other eye protection

Pump (consider a pump frame that attaches to bike)

Patch kit or spare tubes

Toolkit for basic repairs, including wrenches that fit your bicycle

Rain gear (it wouldn’t dare!)

Your driver's license or other ID, your cell phone, and emergency contact and medical information

First aid kit....there will be first aid kits in all emergency vehicles and at some rest stops

Reflectors and flashing rear safety light

Brightly-colored clothing to improve visibility

A few dollars in your pocket

Make sure you know how to repair a flat tire, and practice at home before you need to do it on the road.

We will have emergency vehicles following each of our routes, but it is best to use them for more critical repairs and transportation, rather than basic tire changes.

**COMFORT AND CLOTHING CHECKLIST**

Padded gloves to reduce pressure and "road shock", which can cause numb or tingling fingers

Bike shoes with firm soles make pedaling more efficient

Bike shorts with a padded lining eliminate seams and make cycling more comfortable

Bicycles seats (saddles) come in a variety of shapes and sizes, make sure yours fits *you* comfortably.

Jacket to block wind and rain

Arm warmers, leg warmers, extra clothing as appropriate

Clothing that wicks moisture will keep you dry and comfortable

Sunscreen

Lip balm with sun protection

Many cyclists use clipless pedals that allow cycling shoes to lock into place.  A simple twist of the foot releases the shoe from the pedal.  Clipless pedals allow cyclists to pull up as well as push down on the pedals and create a much more efficient pedal stroke and faster speeds.

**OTHER ESSENTIALS CHECKLIST**

Mapmyride app and/or cue sheet. These can be downloaded from our website under The Ride then Maps and Directions.

Energy foods, snacks. All rest stops will have plenty of food and drinks.  The secret to a good ride is to eat when you are not hungry, drink when you are not thirsty, and take extra energy bars along with you.

**PRE-RIDE SAFETY INSPECTION**

Check the tires for proper inflation (marked on the side of the tire) Check the tire treads for excessive wear or other damage such as imbedded glass or other objects.

Check the brakes.  Spin the wheels to check for rubbing and then apply the brakes to ensure they stop the bike smoothly and evenly.  Check the brake pads for excessive wear.

Check the cables and housing to make sure there is no fraying or splitting

Check the wheel quick release levers to ensure they are secure

Check for any loose parts of other mechanical problems

Check the chain to see if it needs to be oiled

Visit your local cycling shop for a tune-up, particularly if you haven’t ridden long distances recently.

Here are a few websites that we found interesting and helpful!

Easy tune-ups: <http://bicycling.about.com/od/bikemaintenance/a/fiveeasytuneups.htm>

Particularly good information for your first century but great advice for all:  <http://www.blayleys.com/articles/firstcentury/index.htm>