

TRAINING & PREPARATION FROM CAROL COOKE AM

Carol Cooke AM is a Paralympic Gold Medallist, a World Cycling Champion, 2016 Victorian Cyclist of the Year, Order of Australia recipient, MS Sydney to the Gong Ride Ambassador – and lives with multiple sclerosis.

She has compiled some of her top training, nutrition and preparation tips to ensure you get the most out of your ride. This program assumes you have basic skills including stopping, starting, and riding with other cyclists.



12 Weeks to Go

Make sure you have your bike in good working order, to avoid a potential on-the-day mechanical issues. Check that your helmet is free from cracks, and ensure that it is correctly fitted – safety first!

Make sure you have some good comfortable gear to ride in & once you have checked these things off you are ready to get on the bike! Aim for 1x1 ride this week.

11 Weeks to Go

You want to ease yourself into this riding challenge – again aim for 1x1 hour ride. Ensure you are taking a sip of water every 10 minutes to avoid dehydration.

Don't forget to let family and friends know what you are doing by posting your fundraising page on social media or emailing them to get them to donate.

**THE CHALLENGE
TO FIGHT MS**

10 Weeks to Go

Hopefully you are now starting to gain a little more confidence! Try and aim for another 1x1 hour ride – however also try and throw in a couple of walks, pumping the arms to get your heart rate up.

During the ride, make sure that you are drinking water and take a banana or half a jam sandwich with you on this ride so you can get used to riding with something in your stomach.

9 Weeks to Go

During your 1 x1 hour ride, make a habit of signaling your intentions while on the road – the MS Sydney to the Gong ride has approximately 10,000 participants so it is important to let other riders know what you're about to do.

8 Weeks to Go

With only 8 weeks to go you want to increase the time that you spend on the bike – aim for at least 1 x 1.5 hour ride this week. Remember to make sure you're drinking every 10 minutes and have something to eat.

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7 Weeks to Go

You're almost half way to the start of the ride! This week pick it up with 2 x 1.5 hour rides, always keeping in mind hydration and nutrition. Don't worry about the distance you are riding – just focus on the time!

6 Weeks to Go

You've hit the half way mark – time to ramp up the training! Aim for 3x2 hour rides, making sure you're riding in areas where there are other cyclists. If you're already comfortable with this, look for a group to ride with – this not only develops your abilities, but makes the ride a whole lot more social!

Remind family and friends about why you are doing this training, remind them of how tough life can be for people living with MS and ask them to dig deep and donate to a great cause. A great way of doing this is by taking selfies while you are out on your rides and post them on social media. Show everyone you are serious about this ride.

5 Weeks to go

This is recovery week – with only 2 x 1 hour rides. Take the time to think about how your bike is feeling; is it causing any discomfort and can this be addressed?

4 Weeks to go

This week it's back to a bit more riding – I would suggest 3 x 1.5 hour rides. This is a great time to start thinking about the ride and preparing for any issues of punctures. There will be assistance out on the MS Gong Ride course, but why not be prepared? If you get yourself a saddlebag for underneath your set, you can have a good puncture repair kit (a tube, a pump or gas system, tire levers). You'll be an expert before you know it!

3 Weeks to go

We are at the pointy end of your training. If you are doing the 58km ride, I would suggest 2x 1.5 hour rides and 2x2 hour rides. If you are doing the 90km ride, I would suggest 2 x 1.5, 1 x 2 and 1 x 3. Try and add a few hills into your training – remember you will be cycling the climb out of the Royal National Park!

2 Weeks to go

This week aim to do the distance that you will be riding – 58km or 90km! You want to aim for 3 x 2 hour rides, with one being the distance you are taking part in.

1 Week to go

If you have been doing the training in the lead up then you should aim for 2 x 1.5 hour rides – these should be nice and easy! I would also suggest taking your bike to the bike shop for a once over before the ride!

With only one week to go this is the perfect time to remind your friends and family about your ride and ask them to donate to a great cause!

On the Day!

Make sure you eat breakfast on the morning of the ride. I suggest foods high in carbohydrates, about 2-3 hours before the start of the ride.

You've done the work, now go out and enjoy the ride! (and remember to refuel at the finish!)



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