
SETTING RIDERS AT HALF MINUTE INTERVALS.

Under the current requirements of the Road Traffic Act, riders in time trials must be set off no less than one minute apart. If riders are set off at shorter intervals than one minute the event ceases to meet the legal definition of a time trial (as defined in the 1960 MoT Regulations¹ (*The Cycle Racing on Highway Regulations, 1960*)).

Time trials are authorised by giving not less than 28 days notification to the appropriate police authorities, whereas road races require police approval.

NB: [The Cycle Racing on Highways \(Scotland\) Regulations, 1960](#), contain the same provisions as are set out below.

If you wish to organise a time trial with riders setting off at intervals of less than one minute, you will need to ask the police for approval. The police must specifically approve such an event before it can take place. It has been recognised that there are certain advantages in setting off riders at less than one-minute intervals in time trials. These are as follows:

- ✚ On courses that are subject to time restrictions for their use; it can enable an event to clear the road before the time restriction begins, without limiting the riders.
- ✚ Evening events may be run, earlier and later in the year, within daylight hours.
- ✚ Because the riders are more closely spaced on the road, the event has a higher profile with respect to other road users and, therefore, becomes potentially safer.
- ✚ Marshals are required for only half the time they would be normally and potential disruption to other road users is also reduced.

Event promoters who wish to benefit from the above advantages may request that their District Committee approach the National Secretary (Competitions & Development) to put before the Board of Directors of Cycling Time Trials (the “Board”) a request for permission to run an event at half-minute intervals. If such permission is granted, promoters should adhere to the following guidelines:

- ✚ Send in your police notification form at the correct time before asking the police for permission to run at half-minute intervals; because if permission is refused, you will already have a ‘fall-back’ position.
- ✚ Stress the safety advantages of using half-minute intervals.
- ✚ Some police authorities will refuse you permission because (they say) it is against Cycling Time Trials Regulations.
- ✚ The Board will provide you with a letter setting out the position when they grant you permission to organise such an event.
- ✚ Put in your request to the police early as negotiation can be time consuming.

- ✚ If the police seem reluctant, invite them to observe the event and also another event that is being run at one-minute intervals, to compare the two. If you do this, ensure that you arrange a follow-up meeting to discuss their findings. Invite at least one District Official to accompany you to any meetings you have with the police. Highways England officials who maintain the roads the course uses also may wish to be involved.

If you are successful in obtaining permission the following suggestions will assist in the smooth running of the event:

- ✚ Remember that the riders will not be used to operating such a system, therefore, it is vital that all instructions on the start sheet are very explicit.
- ✚ It is recommended that two start stewards are available to hold up the riders at the start. They should work alternately, one doing the odd numbers and the other the even numbers.
- ✚ The start timekeeper will require intense concentration; so, if possible, have a second timekeeper to deal with any late starters. These should be despatched in any vacant half-minute slots or at half-minute intervals after the last rider has started.
- ✚ The extra personnel at the start area will require space to park and to carry out their duties. This should be taken into account when planning the start area. It may be necessary to use a separate assembly area for riders to congregate prior to starting.
- ✚ Set off rider number one at 30 seconds past the hour, number two at one minute past and so on. If the field is started this way, the finishing timekeeper should subtract half the rider's number from the finishing time, to calculate the elapsed time correctly.
- ✚ Although experimental events have not experienced any problems in this respect, it is suggested that you place observers around the course to report any company riding that may arise by the shortened time interval.

¹ Additional guidance to the MoT Regulations relating to time trials, can be found in the CTT Handbook.

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