

MICHAELCHURCH RIDE SUN 8th September 2024 TALK ROUND

MARKING: Combination of orange ribbon markers, orange flags (on common land) and orange spray paint.

PLEASE NOTE: There are only 2 crew points, at CP1 and CP 3. Please do NOT crew anywhere else - roads too narrow.

START goes from the corner gate in the venue field.

Take left turning (not acute left). Follow road uphill 1 mile. Turn right through a small gate onto the common land (Vagar Hill). Follow orange flags diagonally uphill across the common.

ALL routes turn right at the gate at the end of the common, towards the mast.

Follow route downhill, passing through another gate. Carry on downhill on a driveway. Upon reaching the lane, turn left. Follow this lane (plenty of grass in middle) along straight, then wiggling around a farm (beware barking dogs in a hole in the roadside barn!).

Continue to follow road, going downhill until reaching forestry on left side. Then take the entrance on the left into forestry. Follow the track all the way uphill, until you reach a large gate at the top (we hope this will be open). Turn left and go along road a very short distance until reaching **CP1** and **CREW POINT**.

At CP1: All riders cross road and a bit of grass (follow markers carefully as there is a ditch hidden in the grass) then through a gate and onto a track - forestry on right and common land and fence on left. The track will eventually bear right into the forestry. Follow track along straight then bear right.

Ahead of you will be the **FIRST ROUTE DIVERGENCE**. 32km and 20km, go slight right, then straight, heading towards the forestry barrier.

18km ROUTE: Turn LEFT at route divergence, uphill on major forestry track, follow the markers until you see a LEFT TURN. This will lead you up through a gate, onto the Cefn Hill.

20km and 32km ROUTE: Continue on straight ahead, passing through a barrier. We hope to have this barrier open. If not, please ride the gap to one side carefully. It is possible, but narrow. After barrier continue on straight ahead across parking area then down grassy track. At the end, turn left up steep hill on narrow track (beautiful views to the right!). Continue to the top and then take a left up very short bank.

20km will then TURN LEFT uphill onto major track (NB 2 way section) and **32km will turn RIGHT** heading downhill on a major track.

32km ROUTE: Having turned RIGHT off short bank onto major track, follow this track for some distance. (NB after a while you will see 2 major tracks diverge. You stick to the LEFT one (you will be coming back UP the right one later). Eventually the track going out downhill will pass through open fields on either side until it comes to a lane. Turn RIGHT. Follow this lane down hill for just over a mile, then turn right back into the forestry. **This is CP2.**

Continue down track across a ford (can be a bit slippery) , then keep right. You will pass through a forestry barrier which will be open. Following that is a wonderful long canter, the majority of which goes steadily uphill. BEWARE. Unfortunately rogue sheep have got into the forestry - do look out for them particularly around bends! Also of course, there are deer in the forest. At the major junction of tracks, turn left - further up you will rejoin the SHORT ROUTE, looking out for the RIGHT turn which will lead you up a path to the gate onto the Cefn Hill.

Both 20 and 32km routes continue along major track until making a right turn along a rough track (can be slippery when wet). Gate onto open hill at the end will be manned.

ALL ROUTES go through gate and follow orange flags over open hill right to the far end. There are horses on the hill. At the far end, there are a series of gates. Between the first and second gate there is a COMPULSORY WALK SECTION because of horrid hidden ruts which are impossible to avoid. Take care! Some gates further on will be open, some manned. A couple of fields contain cows. (we are hoping that they will have been moved). The gate stewards will try to keep them away. Keep along the ridge until dropping down to the left through a couple of fields and then down a track with a stone house on your left (Coed Robin) and 2 further houses belonging to the famous Llanarth Stud. This track needs to be walked down. Upon reaching the lane below, turn RIGHT. Follow the lane just over a mile, where you will come to Michaelchurch School and **CREW POINT** in the car park. **CP3** is a little further down the lane where routes diverge.

18km ROUTE: shortly after CP3 you will be directed LEFT over a couple of fields and a stream, then steeply upwards. Please look carefully for markers as the exact route will depend on stock movement just before the day. You then will come to a drive. Turn RIGHT, then when you reach the lane, turn LEFT. Upon reaching a junction with grass triangle go LEFT. Follow road for short way, then you will be directed RIGHT off the road up a couple of fields, the last of which will bring you to opposite the double gates to the venue.

32km ROUTE. Shortly after CP3, you will be directed RIGHT, up a beautiful long field to some woodland at the top. You will then be taken on a circuit of the Michaelchurch Estate containing beautiful fields and woodland with ample opportunity for canters. The exact route will depend on stock whereabouts on the day so please follow markers carefully. Come back down adjacent field and return to the road. Turn LEFT back to CP3 - then RIGHT onto fields before following markers to the LEFT. Head over stream and take the fields up to the driveway.. Turn RIGHT onto the driveway, then turn LEFT onto the lane and follow the markers home (also described at the end of the short route).

FINISH is through the double gates and just beyond, directly downhill in the venue.

ENJOY YOUR RIDE! Please thank the gate people. Some of these gates are remote and the ones on the Cefn will have meant a hike for those volunteers, as they are a fair distance from a road!