

Want to do a Gran Fondo? Criterium? Road Race? Time Trial? All of the above?

Introducing the RBSC Gateway Series! This is a very exciting addition to our community designed to inspire, engage and support those of us who have ever thought about racing our bikes. In addition, this series is open to those who want to improve their bike handling, confidence and overall riding experience to make those paceline rides smooth like butter. Join us March 6th at RBCo. for a 'Chalk Talk,' a gathering of those of us interested in finding out more, sharing their interests and taking on a new challenge.

This exciting venture is brought to you by fellow RBSC members Rick Magee, Jim McDevitt and Paul Londrigan. These guys love to ride, love to race and want to add another great opportunity in the Ridgefield Bicycle Sport Club adventure.

Check out the RBSC Gateway Series mojo below. Then, join us for the Chalk Talk March 6th, 6:30pm at Ridgefield Bicycle Company to get in on the action.

The 'Spring Saturdays' skills clinics (similar to track workouts, but for cyclists) will be March 7th, 14th and 21st, weather depending.

Check it out....

Ridgefield Bicycle Sport Club

Gateway Series

The Gateway Series is designed for

- Cyclists who already race.
- Cyclists who are thinking about racing.
- Cyclists who do not want to race but want to improve their skills and fitness.

Philosophy:

We race because we love to ride our bikes. We race to give focus to our riding. We race to sharpen our skills so that we ride smoothly and gracefully. We race so we will have better stories to tell each other on long rides. Above all, we strive to ride with panache.

Goals:

- Support riders who currently race.
- Bring new racers into the field.
- Develop and support a group of Ambassador cyclists who will share their experience with less seasoned riders.
- Work on riding skills.
- Make RBSC a destination for cyclists looking to learn how to ride better.
- Share our passion and skills with new riders. This means building the sport by encouraging CCAP, working with women (who still make up a minority of racers), and making the transition from casual to more serious rider simpler.
- Start a series of training races.
- Develop a Grand Fondo.
- Develop other rides in the "recreational racing" category.

Racing

One key goal of the program is to develop and promote a road racing group. Racers should obtain their USA Cycling licenses. If you are not sure about racing but want to try it out, you can get a one day license at most race venues, or online at USA Cycling.

Road racing categories:

Men's categories range from 5 (beginner) to 1.

Women's categories range from 4 to 1.

Juniors are 9-18 years old.

Youth are under 9.

Masters are above 35 years old.

Masters may be further grouped by 5 or 10 year increments (e.g 40+, 45+, etc.).

Most masters races are limited to categories 1-4 (sometimes there are separate masters cat 5 races).

Criterium

- Usually closed to road traffic.
- Short loop (usually under a mile).
- Laps or timed race.
- Prime laps (intermediate sprints for cash or prizes).

Road Race

- May be point-to-point or a loop.
- May be single or multiple laps.
- Usually open to road traffic.

Time Trial

- May be point-to-point or loop.
- Individual starts.
- No drafting.
- Racing against the clock.

Stage Race

- Has more than one race.
- Races over several days (usually a weekend).
- Racers try for the lowest combined time.

Cyclocross

- Runs on a loop, similar to a criterium.
- Unpaved.
- Mud, steps, and other obstacles are part of the course.

Recreational Races

- Not sanctioned by USAC.
- No upgrade points.
- No license required.
- Multiple formats.
- May be grouped by age.
- Brevets (ultradistance rides).
- Various names: gran fondo, gravel grinder, tour.

Gran Fondo

- Large events.
- Not sanctioned races, but prizes may be awarded.
- Timed.
- Wide range of abilities.

Brevet or Randonneur

- Long (really long) rides.
- Timed.
- Seriously long.
- No, really, these are long rides (up to 1200 km).
- Often sanctioned by Ultra-Marathon Cycling Association (UMCA).

Resources for Racers

- USA Cycling <http://www.usacycling.org/>
- Sprinter Della Casa (Aki's blog) <http://sprinterdellacasa.blogspot.com/>
- Aki's Race Videos <https://www.youtube.com/user/SprinterDellaCasa>
- Bike Reg (registration for bike races) <https://www.bikereg.com/>
- Aetna Nutmeg Spring Series (formerly the Bethel Spring Series) <http://aetnanutmegspringseries.com/>
- Plainville Spring Series <http://www.plainvillespringseries.com/>

Skills Clinics

We are planning to run a series of skills clinics to help both racers and recreational cyclists who want to improve their cycling skills. Ambassador cyclists will help plan and run clinics. Some clinics will focus on skills for racing, others on group ride etiquette, others on fitness and training. Our first clinic will go over the following:

- Sprint drills: big gear wind ups, seated small gear spinning.
- Bumping drills: crucial for those planning to race in a crit.
- Paceline: a necessary skill for anyone riding in a group.
- Leadout: how to position your team's designated sprinter for the win.
- Holding your line: so we don't need to yell, "Hold your line!"

- Riding over obstacles: better to roll over something than swerve and take out another rider.
- Eating and drinking on the bike: otherwise, you'll get very thirsty in a race.