**Titchfield Terriers 2021…ish Tour of Eastern Dolomites**

**Initial Brief**

The following outlines the current plan for the 2021 tour.

**DATES -** The first day of riding will be TBC. The final day of riding will be TBC. The start & finish will be Treviso, Italy.

**ROUTE -** The ride will be 8 or 9 days, covering 965km and roughly 18,000m of ascent, aimed at taking in a Italy, Austria, Slovenia. It is not our hardest tour however it is a long one and should not be undertaken lightly.

There will be a route defined - normally I take charge of the actual route, having taken input from the group, and I make available the GPX. For 2021, Hamish & I have worked on the route so far & Rick will post the GPX and the route card on the web site <http://www.redvelo.co.uk/>

The route covers some fantastic mountains & cols east of the route we rode in 2014.

**OPERATING PRINCIPLE -** We are on holiday, it's not a race, and everyone is free to do whatever they want to do, ride/not ride/ solo etc, however we would expect that those opting out of standard practice to inform the others to ensure no misunderstandings. Normally we will ride as one group, although it is not to be considered unsporting if riders wish to ride the hills at their own pace. Unless conditions make stopping unsafe, normally we would regroup at the top & bottom of each of the larger cols. Riders intending on riding the full route will need to be on reasonably good form on arrival at the start of Day 1, so the differences shouldn't be huge. Clearly if you are slow due to lack of effort then you should expect a torrent of abuse from the peloton.

**ACCOMODATION –** Hopefully someone will volunteer again to oversee accommodation bookings. We will aim to book reasonable accommodation within a reasonable price bracket. Examples are shown on the Route Card. Subsequently, this will mean that some accommodation will be of higher quality than others. The key aim is function over luxury.

To get a good idea of numbers and to allow for booking of accommodation **we would like to establish initial numbers as soon as we can, recognising that we have not yet set the start date.** We will then proceed to book accommodation based on the numbers confirmed on TBC. Those who are not able to commit before end of TBC will be able to access the accommodation details from the web site in due course, such that you can book your own accommodation. To confirm your place, **you will need to pay £250/head into an account specified,** which he will then use to pay the deposits. We will then pay the accommodation balance each day of the ride and then add this to the split bill at the end of the tour.

**DEPART TIME -** There will be a daily depart time scheduled over pre-dinner beers the previous day. Rick generally maintains the clock, and if you are much more than a few minutes late, (without warning) don't be surprised if you are left behind.

**SUPPORT VEHICLES -** We aim to have one or two volunteers to drive the support vehicles, however as they too are on holiday, they decide their plan and the riders have to make their plans around them. That said, I expect that we will have a support driver fairly close to the riders most of the trip. Subsequently, it is fairly normal to meet up with the support drivers through the day, including lunch breaks, allowing for clothing change, food & drink top up. The previous DS Rob Andrews & Sarah Perkins will have first refusal of these roles due to past excellence, however either/both may wish to ride or not attend, so the preference is not an assumption.

**FOOD (OFF THE BIKE).** Unless it is decided that time doesn't allow, then we would expect to stop for one or two coffee breaks & lunch each day & enjoy an evening meal at a restaurant close to the accommodation. All payments throughout the week will be added to the bill at the end of the week. All riders will pay the sum requested, no questions asked. For anyone that this arrangement doesn't suit, then you should sort yourself out for the entire week. There will be no offence taken if this is your preferred option.

**FOOD (ON THE BIKE).** Energy bars, gels, sports drinks & recovery drinks are recommended - it is going to be a long week. I think everyone will know what they need themselves, but as guidance, I plan to have a box of bars & gels in the car, carry 1bar, 1gel, 1 replacement drink sachet each day, in addition to the drink I start with. Whenever I eat one, I will replace it at the next support rendezvous. Clearly if there is going to be a long period between support car rendezvous I will take more.

**TOOLS & SPARES -** It goes without saying, that if you know you've brought everything you'll need then you won't be disappointed when someone else doesn't have what you need! That said, Rick & I will take fairly full tool kits & track pumps, so we don't all need to take those. As for spares, well...presuming your bike is in good order at the start in terms of new chain, cables etc, then probably just a few tubes, gas & maybe a tyre are required, and the smart rider will take a spare derailleur hanger, as these are normally bike specific and hard to come by out on the journey. It makes sense to bring any degreaser & chain lubes etc that you may need. In terms of wheels, Rick & I will bring a spare set, so there will be some in two vehicles. When riding then you need to carry whatever you would for any other self-sustaining day out riding. For me that means, 2 tubes, 2 gas, a few self-adhesive patches, multi-tool, a few chain links & pins.

**CLOTHING** - the weather in the mountains can be highly variable, so you should expect that at some time you will ride in the wet n cold (8C) & the dry & hot (35C), so bring all the clothes to satisfy your own requirements. As with food, it is normal to take support stops to change kit as the weather dictates. If the mountain weather is particularly poor then we may alter the days route to minimize the discomfort.

**PERSONAL HEALTH -** If you are certain you are not going to fall off, get a sore bum, blisters, sunburn, insect bites & general all over body pain, then you can probably just travel light. If you think you might suffer any of these ailments, bring the stuff you think might help you feel better/hold you together. Some clothes hand wash might be advisable, for the benefit of others, if not yourself.

I think that covers most things.

Sparky