



2022 Preview

By Pino Rampini (SICC President)

A few words of introduction to the SHAPE International Cycling Club (SICC), the Club for all SHAPEians!

SICC is a group 2 Activity and was established to encourage a healthy lifestyle within the SHAPE community by riding in locally held and European road and mountain bike "randonnées" races, as well as triathlon events. SICC seeks to foster positive relationships amongst cyclists and triathletes from all Countries present at SHAPE. In addition, we aim to present SHAPE as a positive fitness model to the local Belgian and European community. The Club is open to road, mountain and triathlon disciplines and is accessible to SHAPE ID card holders only, who are over the age of 17 years and we usually have about 100 members.

Although club members predominantly ride what are known as "road bikes" (aka "racing bikes"), club members

also partake in mountain bike riding, riding gravel courses and even triathlons. Anyone of any standard can join and can almost always find someone of a similar standard to ride with (unless you really are too fast!). The club is not about racing, but some of our members enter cycling races locally and do well. All our activities are designed to be inclusive for all our members. We are affiliated to the Federation Francophone Belge du Cyclotourisme et du VTT (Belgian Francophone Cycling Federation), which means our members are invited to literally hundreds of events in the local area each year; club members are also provided insurance through the same organisation.

As the weather has slowly improved club members have come out of hibernation and left the turbo trainer behind. On Saturdays / Sundays the club participates in organised events throughout Belgium and Europe. This will see members emulating the professionals and riding

some of the Classic routes around Belgium and the Netherlands, such as Gent-Wevelgem; Tour de Flanders; Liege-Bastogne-Liege; Paris-Roubaix; Etape du Tour; Amstel Gold Race. Certain events are subsidised by the club allowing members to receive a partial refund of entry fees. Further details and procedures for joining these rides are available on the Club website.

There has also been lots of discussion about plans for the next few months and we are looking forward to getting into France, where there are some more significant hills and better roads and many opportunities for full days out on the bike with obligatory stops to explore the local culture (aka bars and cafes). The beaches of Belgium are within reach of a full day riding. There has been talk of bike packing adventures to Luxembourg and Germany, which could be a single night or multi-day adventures. Some people like to rough it under canvas but others travel light and make maximum use of the credit card!

We have a **website at www.shapecycling.com** where you can see some photos of tired people on bikes as well as finding out all about the club and how to join. You can also find us on Facebook (search for SHAPE cycling). All you need to join us is a roadworthy bike, helmet, drinks bottle and some workable legs and lungs: we'll show you the rest. What could be difficult?

The following is an overview of our weekly activities where we aim to provide something for most levels of ability and fitness for the entire SHAPE Community. Only road bikes can be used on all of the following rides that are departing at 18:00 from the SHAPE Main Gym from April to September:

Monday rides - for novices & potential members. This is our slowest ride (21-23kph) and is aimed at novice riders looking to gain experience and fitness. The ride will begin on 2nd May and is led by an experienced SICC member.

Tuesday rides - for SICC Members only. There are 3 rides available. The first group will depart for a fast ride (30-32KPH); the second group will be a bit slower (28-30KPH) and the third a steadier pace, at an average speed of no less than 27KPH. All rides are covering the same 60KM route each week.

Wednesday rides - for newcomers, novices & potential members. The route is a shorter version of the SICC Tuesday route and is approx. 38Km. It is flat and the pace is dictated by the slowest rider but you should be able to ride this route at an average speed of no less than 25KPH. The aim of these rides is to allow newcomers, novices or potential new members to build up confidence of riding in a group and to learn a regular route for future use. These rides are led by a SICC member (Ride Captain) who is responsible for maintaining an acceptable speed for the group and to ensure no one is left behind. New comers will join these rides before deciding to join the club. Only once you are a member can you ride with the club on Tuesday and Thursday.

Thursday rides - for SICC members only. There are 2 groups to suit different fitness levels but the purpose of both groups is to build power and fitness. These rides cover the same 50KM each Thursday is hillier than Tuesday rides. There are 3 fast sections where the group will split as the stronger riders try to break away from the group. However, at the end of each section the group will regroup and recover before the next fast section. Speed between fast sections will be limited to maximum 28 Km/h to enable working in the aerobic zone.



Now we look forward to new members joining us once they have settled in. If you are a somewhat fit recreational cyclist, check us out on our website or join us on our forthcoming Wednesday or Monday evening newcomers' rides that leave the SHAPE gym at 1800 hours.

If you need any further information about the Club do not hesitate to get in touch with me at 065 44 5128

