



## Equipment: Rheal's Top Ten Tips

*By Rheal Jaillet, Owner of FitWorks in Dieppe and Lead Cyclist in the Tour of Hope*

We all embark in this great adventure with different backgrounds. Some have travelled thousands of kilometres on their bikes; others only started cycling a few months ago. But you know what? We're all champions for taking part in this challenge! And nobody – even experienced cyclists – is immune from mechanical problems. Today, I want to share a few tips to help you prepare your bike and equipment for the 2018 Tour of Hope. Enjoy the ride!

### **1. Get a good tune-up, a minimum of a week before the big day**

You don't want to wait just before leaving for the tune-up, in case major repairs are required and parts have to be ordered to get your bike in like new condition. It's also a good idea to be able to go out for a few rides after the tune-up, to make sure everything is in perfect working condition.

### **2. So What About Bike Fit?**

Needless to say, a proper bike fit will make the difference between having fun on your bike... or not enjoying your bike at all. Getting fitted for a four-day trip compared to a 40 km time trial are two completely different things. For the time trial, you want speed before comfort. However, for the long trip, you want to have comfort over speed. Don't forget that you will be riding in a pack where drafting will make wind resistance easier, so being in a super aggressive position will not make that much of a difference. If you have been riding in the same position for five years and you feel comfortable, you don't have to make major changes before going for a long ride like this, as even minor changes can make a huge difference when you are pedalling at 80 RPM for six hours.



### **3. Don't Underestimate the Importance of Good Tires!**

We all agree: a flat tire is no fun, especially when riding in a group where you will need to get in the back of a truck until the next pit stop. But of course, when doing 650 KM, the odds of getting a flat are pretty high. You can lower your odds of getting a flat by following these simple rules:

- Get a tire that has better puncture resistance. Yes, it might be a bit heavier, but the durability and puncture protection are well worth it – especially if you don't have to stop and change a tube!
- Comfort options: get 25c or even 28c tires instead of 23c (size of tires). This will increase comfort, since you will be able to run lower air pressure and will also have more grip on the road.
- Tubes: Don't go with super light weight race tubes to save weight and go faster, as they will be more prone to puncture. Remember that this is not a race, and that the extra 20 grams per tube will not make a difference.

### **4. Don't Forget the Flat Repair Kit!**

You should have, on your bike a seat bag with a spare tube, patch kit, tire levers and either a CO2 cartridge or mini hand pump.

You should also think of bringing (in your luggage), extra parts that you can easily access at pit stops (bags will be transported in trucks that will meet us at every pit stop). You should have : a minimum of 4 tubes for the 4 days of riding (don't worry, they don't go bad and you will use them eventually) as well as a spare tire (you might cut a tire to the point where it's not repairable with just an inner tube).



## 5. Bring the Right Tools

If you don't already have one, you should get a good multi-tool. It will fit in your seat bag or jersey pocket, and will have all the attachment needed to do minor repairs to get you rolling again.

## 6. Invest in Clothing

Good quality bike shorts or bibs will be a life saver on a four-day tour. With this much mileage, you will only start to appreciate them on the third or fourth day, but they do make a huge difference!

- Jersey: the Tour supplies very good quality jerseys (and it's mandatory to wear it), so no need to worry. But it might be a good idea to get a spare, just in case something happens to that one.
- Socks: People underestimate the importance of good socks, but light breathable socks will make a huge difference in how comfortable your feet will feel after being in your shoes for six to eight hours.
- Gloves: while not everyone likes to wear cycling gloves, they help with road vibration and give that extra bit of cushioning you might need for a long day on the bike.



## 7. Headgear and Shades

There are helmets at \$50 and others at \$350, what is the difference? They all pass the safety CSA test. The difference is in the weight, the ventilation they offer, as well as the various adjustments options.

Keep in mind that you don't have to pay \$350 for a helmet. The important thing is that it's safe and that you are comfortable with it.

As for glasses, the same concept applies – some are quite expensive, others more affordable. You should pick glasses that are comfortable and offer good ventilation. Glasses should always be worn while cycling.

## 8. Ridin' in the Rain

During a four-day event like the Tour of Hope, you might have to ride under heavy rain. If you want to still enjoy your ride and limit the amount of water, you should bring:

- Rain jacket: You have a few different options with rain jackets. You can either go really basic, with a plastic-type jacket that doesn't cost too much. However, keep in mind that it won't be breathable. On the other hand, by investing a little bit more, you will have a breathable water and windproof jacket that will keep you dry, both outside and inside.
- Shoe covers: a waterproof shoe cover will also help keep your feet nice and dry. Riding with wet feet for an hour or so can be fine, but after several hours, it will add up. Believe me, riding with soggy feet is not a pleasant experience.



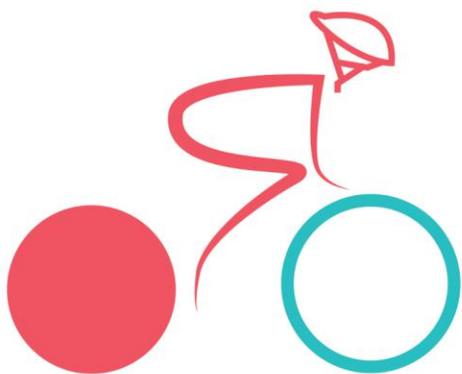
## **9. Pass the Chamois Butter, Please**

Although not an expensive item to invest in, Chamois Butter might just be the best investment you will have made by day 4 (just ask someone who has done the Tour before). Cyclists use chamois cream to prevent saddle sores or, even worse, something that can leave you off the bike for several days and require medical attention: an abscess. The idea is to minimize friction and keep bacterial build-up at bay. If you forget to apply and get sore after your ride, some saddle-sore creams act as a cure to help alleviate the pain, put a stop to any further problems, and help prevent infection.

## **10. Just. Be. Ready!**

There are no secrets to being able to bike for 650 KM. YOU HAVE TO PUT THE TIME ON THE BIKE. So get on your bike and pedal as often as you can. Call a friend and get him/her to wake up early or meet after work to go for a ride. It's easy to call off a ride when you are alone, but when you have someone waiting, you don't want to be that friend that didn't show up. The more mileage you can put on before the Tour of Hope, the easier the event will be, and the more you will be able to enjoy the ride.

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