



#GBDURO21

GBDURO MANUAL V.2 JAN 2021

THE RACING COLLECTIVE

GBDURO IS A 2000KM, NO-FRILLS, 4-STAGE, SELF-SUPPORTED GRAVEL RELIABILITY TRIAL FROM LAND'S END TO JOHN O'GROATS.

It is run by The Racing Collective, a not-for-profit road and gravel bikepacking club for self-supported racers. Inspired by races like the Transcontinental and the Tour Divide, we set out to construct a series of trials that carried this spirit of self-sufficiency, which can be completed closer to home. *We seek the freedom and feral mindset that comes from riding fast and far.*

Meanwhile, all too aware that the environment we ride in needs protecting, our long-term aim as a club is to buy land in the UK and rewild it through the restoration of natural forests for wildlife and future adventurers to enjoy. Conscious of the looming climate crisis, this will no-fly ride i.e. riders must find their own way to/from this event without flying.

Last year, coronavirus restrictions pushed us to establish a self-sufficiency rule set where riders hit the 2,000km route in a single stage and had to do so without the use of commercial services i.e. carrying all their own food

from start to finish. We loved some aspects of this approach, namely that it focussed riders' attention on the natural environment rather than the next resupply point. But GBDURO is as much about the community at the checkpoints as it is about riding hard during the stages. *With that in mind, GBDURO21 will revert back to the original, self-supported format for 2021.*

This manual contains enough information for you to decide if you wish to enter #GBDURO21, but no more.

More detailed info will only be provided to those who have been accepted to ride.

We'd like to thank the countless people who have chipped in behind the scenes to create a unique event.

Good luck,
The Racing Collective



RIDING ON THE SHOULDER OF GIANTS

On 1 July, 1903, 60 men mounted their bicycles outside the Café au Reveil Matin in a Parisian suburb to embark on a 2,400km tour of France. A third were professionals sponsored by bicycle manufacturers, the others simply devotees of the sport.



Gravel stages

There were only six stages—as opposed to the 21 stages in modern tours — but the distances covered in each of them were monstrous, an average of 400km. Between one and three rest days were scheduled between stages for recovery. The race leader wore a green armband to signify his position (the famed yellow jersey was not introduced until 1919). The cyclists in 1903 rode over unpaved roads, riding through the day and night to complete the required distances.

Self-supported

The first stage of the 1903 race was particularly dastardly. The route from Paris to Lyon stretched nearly 500km. No doubt several of the riders who wheeled away from Paris worried not about winning the race—but surviving it. They rode as individuals, not team members. Riders could receive no help. They could not gin the slipstream of fellow riders or vehicles of any kind. They rode without support cars. Cyclists were responsible for making their own repairs.

Scrappy rolling picnic

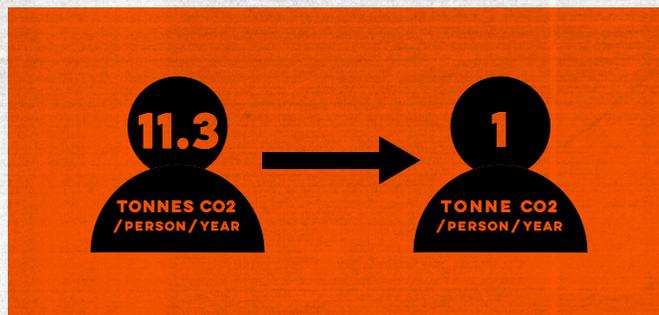
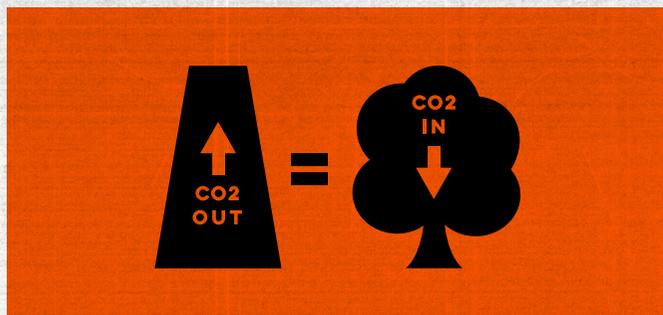
The first Tour de France was won in 1903 by chimney sweep Maurice Garin, who reportedly ate at bars and drank from fountains to sustain himself during the race. Prior to ~1960, riders drank alcohol during the race, from beer to wine to champagne, for both hydration and (let's be honest) a more fun ride. During the 17th stage of the 1935 Tour, nearly the entire peloton took a break to booze with locals—Julien Moineau the rider who passed on beer wound up winning the stage.

This write-up is made up of extracts from two sources:
[History.com](http://www.history.com)
[Bicycling.com](http://www.bicycling.com)

Image from <http://andrewritchie.files.wordpress.com>

WHY NO FLY?

GBDURO is no-fly ride i.e. we do not accept entries from participants who plan to fly to / from the event. Although we understand this measure makes participating in the event harder or even impossible for some people within our community, we feel it is the only choice we can make, as we do not want the impact of these carbon emissions on our conscience. Flying might not be the only trace we leave as cyclists, but it is a substantial one.



Global temperatures will only stop rising when we reach *net-zero emissions*¹ - where carbon emitted (e.g. from the burning of fossil fuels) matches carbon sequestered (e.g. from absorption of CO₂ into the oceans or forests).

So to stabilise temperatures, the average emissions per person must fall to about *1t CO₂/year*², down from *11.3t CO₂/year* for a typical European or North American.

A return flight from London to Madrid emits *~0.5t CO₂* so you've just used half your annual carbon budget on a single trip. A return flight from London to New York emits *~1.8 t CO₂* so you've just blown the budget.

We set up this club and our rides on the founding principles of wanting to reconnect the cycling community with nature. Our aim to collectively apply the ultracyclist mindset (self-supported, self-actualised, self-motivated) to leave the world in a better state than we found it – both on the bike and in other aspect of our lives. We believe sport should be about progression, improving over time and exploring ourselves, and the world around us, as we go...the no-fly rule just adds another dimension.

If you think our take on this is a little harsh, think of the 80% of people around the world who have never taken a flight and already live below 1t CO₂/year.

¹ Net-zero: *The UK's contribution to stopping global warming, CCC, 2019 (Page 16)*

² Net-zero: *The UK's contribution to stopping global warming, CCC, 2019 (Table 1, Page 20)*

WHERE THERE'S A WILL

FOR #GBDURO21, A YEAR AFTER RETIRING FROM THE PRO CIRCUIT WITH 13 GRAND TOURS UNDER HIS BELT, **SVEIN TUFT** MADE A 2000KM ROUND TRIP COMMUTE TO/FROM THE UK FROM ANDORRA.



THERE'S A WAY

What is important to underline, is that the no-fly rule is in no way a dismissal of members or other events within our community that choose to do things differently. It's not up to us to be pointing fingers. That's not what we are about, nor is it an effective way to create real change.

As GBDURO is our initiative we want to run it in a way that we see fit. It's the one thing we actually have a say over and can align with the standards we ourselves feel most comfortable with. It's why we chose to become a non-fly event.

AND WE'D LOVE TO SEE YOU ON THE START LINE.

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GBDURO IS A 2000KM NO-FRILLS 4-STAGE SELF-SUPPORTED GRAVEL RELIABILITY TRIAL FROM LAND'S END TO JOHN O'GROATS.

It will take in some of the best riding the UK has to offer and is designed to test the versatility of rider and bike. Much of it is on road so you'll need a setup that rolls well, whilst also dealing with the rough stuff. *A gravel/adventure bike with minimum 35mm tyres is recommended.*

It will be run with a no-frills ethos. *Riders will be given a GPX file of the route, plus details of the checkpoints, and that's about it.* At all times riders are expected to embrace the self-supported nature of the ride, meaning they don't receive any form of support (including drafting) from other riders or friends/family or make bookings in advance of the ride; all food, repairs, etc, must be acquired from commercial sources or from the kindness of strangers. *The clock will stop at 3 checkpoints (CPs) on route (three campsites in mid-Wales, North England, and the Highlands) so riders can decompress, socialise and be merry. The 4 stages will each be approximately 500km in length (give or take 100km).* Validation at the start and end of each stage is done by posting a timestamped photo on Instagram. *The lowest aggregate time over the four stages 'wins'... nothing.* Riders are expected to average ~200km/day to reach the Finisher's Party on time. Dress code is charity shop neon.

We'll start out from Land's End on **14 August 2021** and end at John O'Groats on **24 August 2021** for the Finisher's Party.

ENTRIES:

- *1 January 2021* – Entries open; must be submitted by midday (GMT) on 8 January
- *By end of January* – Entrants notified if they have a place or not; successful applicants must confirm their place within 48 hours of notification
- *By midnight 9 February* - Successful applicants to make entry payment of £150 and supply proof of insurance

PREP:

- *By 1 March 2021* – Barebones details released to riders (e.g. CP locations, how tracking will work, start/end times, etc)
- *By 1 August 2021* – Riders notified to register on tracking site and GPX route released

SHOWTIME:

- *13 August 2021* – Beers on the beach from 4pm followed by pub dinner
- *14 August 2021, 8am* – Land's End, start stage 1
- *17 August 2021, 8am* – Ysbyty Cynfyn, start stage 2
- *20 August 2021, 8am* – Garrigill, start stage 3
- *23 August 2021, 8am* – Fort Augustus, start stage 4
- *24 August 2021, 8pm* – Finisher's Party at John O'Groats

HANGOVER:

- *By 29 August 2021* – riders submit GPX track of their route (i.e. within 5 days of the Finisher's Party)
- *By 5 September 2021* – final results published, dates for 2022 confirmed (provisional start date - 20 August 2022)

SOLO RIDERS:

1. **Don't be a dick** - Leave no trace, be nice, and endeavour to #bemoremike
2. **Complete the entire route, under your own power** - No drafting or motorised transport. If you leave the route then re-join it at the exactly same spot. If your bike breaks beyond repair you may take motorized transport to get it fixed, then you must ride back to the exact spot you left the route
3. **Be self-supported throughout** - No support crews, no accommodation booked in advance of the start, no food or gear caches, no gear sharing, and sleeping at commercial premises is discouraged (this is GB not Uzbekistan). These self-supported rules apply at all times i.e. including whilst at checkpoints
4. **Show evidence of your ride:**
 - 4.a) **Timing** – Stage times are done by posting a timestamped photo on Instagram at the start and end of each stage. **Stages cannot be started before the time designated in the previous section (Key Dates)**. Any riders leaving early will be removed from the tracking site/GC.
 - 4.b) **Tracking** (i.e. transmitting your live location) is done via the MAProgress site, through a SPOT tracker (personal or rented)
 - 4.c) **Validation** (i.e. proof you followed the route) is achieved by recording your daily GPX tracks on your navigation device and submit them to The Racing Collective, plus any accompanying explanations if necessary, within 5 days after the Finisher's Party
5. **Protect the integrity of the ride** – You must report any incidents where either yourself, or other riders, have broken the rules, via the email address in Section 11.

6. **Do not fly to or from the event.** We want to reduce the environmental impact of bikepacking so this ride must not create any demand for flights. Flying in a couple of days beforehand still counts as a flight. You must start your SPOT tracker so we can track your commute. We trust riders to behave in the spirit of the event but anyone who doesn't will be disqualified
See Rule 1

7. **Understand and obey all local laws**, and act responsibly with regards to other users, especially walkers who may feel vulnerable to fast moving bikes

8. **Buy your fellow riders a beer** – tradition has it that the first home buys the second place finisher a drink, the second place rider buys the third place rider a drink, and so on

PAIRS:

As per solo riders above but drafting and gear sharing is allowed within the pair:

- 1.a) Each rider in a pair must submit an entry
- 1.b) Each rider in a pair must post timestamped photos at the start and end of each stage; the timestamp of the end stamp corresponding to the slower rider in each pair will be used to calculate the stage time
- 1.c) If a rider starts a new stage before their partner has finished the previous stage, both riders will not be listed in the General Classification
- 1.d) Similarly, if a rider cannot complete the ride in the category they start in, (e.g. because their pair drops out or they ride together in co-operation with another rider) then they will be able to finish the ride but they will not be listed in the General Classification

The Rider Contract is an agreement between The Racing Collective and the Rider (whose name, address and contact details are specified in the individual's application for this ride). It sets out the terms and conditions that the Rider must agree to when accepting a place to ride. It should be considered carefully; a Rider that breaks the terms of the Rider Contract could be excluded from the ride.

The Rider accepts #GBDURO (the Ride) is a reliability trial not a race or a sportive, run on an informal basis by The Racing Collective (a not-for-profit road and gravel bikepacking club) and whilst The Racing Collective has advocated following a particular route in a particular style, ultimately the Rider is responsible for his or her own actions. Each Rider agrees to the following:

1. The Rider must attain cycle insurance covering 'liability insurance and personal accident insurance' (e.g. BC Race Gold) at their expense prior to entry. Proof of this insurance must be provided when making your entry payment.
2. The Rider accepts that safety is the paramount consideration for #GBDURO21 and takes priority over any feelings of peer pressure during the ride.
3. The Rider is fully aware and acknowledges that riding #GBDURO21 involves a serious risk of harm.
4. The Rider must be over the age of 18 at time of the start of the ride.
5. The Rider confirms they are in good health and know of no reason, physical or mental, why they could be unable to participate in the Ride.
6. The Rider must take measures to be seen by traffic during the day and night. This includes riding with at least two sets of lights (two on the front and two on the back), reflective gear and bright clothing.
7. The Rider accepts the route covers everything from riding on busy roads (including in cities) to riding in remote areas on rough terrain and technical descents. If the

Rider feels unsafe or uncomfortable about riding any part of the route for whatever reason (technical, busy road, access rights, other) then they should detour around it and join back onto the route where they see fit.

8. The Rider acknowledges and accepts full responsibility for checking and maintaining all equipment in their possession for the duration of the Ride to ensure its safe use (including by way of example, wheels, brakes, and tyres).
9. The Rider understands that no safety provisions are provided by The Racing Collective. Riders are advised to carry with them a mobile phone in case of emergency in addition to the one used for navigating, tracking, or recording. Be aware that reception will be limited in many locations. In the case of an emergency, riders should call 999.
10. The Rider must be aware that the nearest hospital or medical facility may be hours from them should they suffer any injury and that there may be a lack of helicopter assistance in some areas.
11. Under no circumstances shall The Racing Collective be liable for any actual or alleged indirect loss or consequential loss howsoever arising suffered by the Rider including, but not limited to, loss of profits, anticipated profits, savings, business or opportunity or loss of publicity or loss of reputation or opportunity to enhance reputation or any other sort of economic loss. Similarly none of The Racing Collective volunteers shall be liable to any Rider for death or personal injury, damage to property or other loss or damage of any nature whatsoever suffered by the Rider whether arising from participation in the Ride or otherwise.

In recognition of these facts the Rider elects voluntarily to enter #GBDURO21 and assume all risks of loss, damages, injury or death that may be sustained, and the Rider will participate in the Ride in accordance with the text above entirely at their own risk.

£150 WHICH INCLUDES:

Basic camping at the three CPs on route

The Finisher's Party (bed, dinner, and breakfast) at The Seaview Hotel in John O'Groats on the evening of 24 August 2021

Our Organiser's Liability Insurance²

Note you'll still need to source your own SPOT tracker and pay ~£20 to register it on MAPprogress and you'll need to be averaging ~200km/day to make the party.

Successful applicants will be asked to accept their place by paying the entry fee by midnight 9th February.

Applications cannot be transferred to another rider, deferred to a later date, or refunded.

1. Includes bed in shared room (allocated first-come first-served), a two-course meal, and breakfast the next day.

2. Note this insurance is for The Racing Collective officials; you still need your own cycle insurance as set out in the Rider Contract.

TIMING

At the start and end of each of the 4 stages riders must:

- TAKE A PHOTO WITH THEIR PHONE
- TIMESTAMP IT USING AN APP
- POST IT TO INSTAGRAM INCLUDING '@THERACINGCOLLECTIVE' AND USING THE CORRECT HASHTAG (SPECIFIC TO THAT STAGE)

These timestamps will be used to determine the times for each stage; the lowest aggregate time over the 4 stages 'wins'... nothing.

- To avoid stress at the start of each stage, riders starting the stage at 8am are permitted to take and post their starting photo up to 20 minutes before the start of the stage; these riders will be given an 8am start time.
- If you fail to reach a checkpoint before the designated start time of the next stage, you can continue but you will not feature in the General Classification. Riders who finish the route, but outside GC, will be recorded as a Finisher

To timestamp a photo³ download an app like 'Timestamp Photo and Video Free' for Android or iPhone and set the settings as follows:

It would be preferred if date and time format to:

dd MMM yyyy

hh:mm:ss

E.g. this would give the format: **20 Aug 2021 23:59:02**

Make sure the complete timestamp is visible even when the photo is cropped for posting on Instagram.

Note the timestamp refers to when the photo was taken, not when it was posted, nonetheless when you start or end a stage you are encouraged to post as soon as you can to keep it entertaining for ride followers / commentators.

TRACKING - TRANSMITTING YOUR LIVE LOCATION

You will need a SPOT tracker for the event; these can be hired if you don't own one. We will be using the MAProgress.com tracking site with your tracker.

In addition to the entry fee, riders must pay the MAProgress tracking fee (expected to be ~£20 if using your own tracker with active share page (e.g. findmespot or MapShare page)). More details about tracking will be released to successful applicants down the line (see Key Dates section).

VALIDATION - PROOF YOU FOLLOWED THE ROUTE

In addition to live tracking via MAProgress, you must record your daily tracks on your navigation device and submit them to The Racing Collective, plus any accompanying explanations if necessary, within 5 days after the Finisher's Party. A track from your navigation device is required as the resolution (not to say the reliability) of the track from MAProgress is not sufficient.

3. Every rider is required to submit a timestamped photo as part of the application process (details are provided in the online application form (see Application Process section for link) so read these instructions carefully)

7. NEXT OF KIN

All riders are required to give details of their next of kin, so that they can be contacted in the case of any incidents or accidents involving riders.

Riders must discuss their entry into the ride with their next of kin prior to entry and make them aware of the risks you are voluntarily taking by entering the ride.

In the event of an incident we will notify next of kin as soon as possible and provide them with as much information as we can.

8. MEDIA AGREEMENT

The rider agrees to yield the commercial rights of all the media they collect on the ride to The Racing Collective.

If a rider wishes to use their participation in the ride including media captured therein to promote any commercial organisation (including their own), either directly or through a third party, then they must make this clear when submitting their entry.

We welcome interest from third-party media who wish to document the ride (either in full, or restricted to a certain stage or geography) or a particular rider(s), but this will need written permission from The Racing Collective ahead of the ride.

This year the ride will be followed by a media car, plus potentially some independent photographers and volunteers collecting stories at CPs. We will also be sharing photos and stories from the riders' WhatsApp group⁴ and hope to be covered by Dotwatcher.cc who will issue regular updates.

The Racing Collective will primarily be making updates through Instagram: @theracingcollective

But you can also follow our other channels:

Facebook

Twitter

Strava

YouTube

4. This group is for sharing photos/stories that we can use to help give dotwatchers more of an insight into what riders are going through. It should not be used to share information which will help other riders.

Entries will be accepted from 00:01am on 1 January to midday (GMT) on 8 January 2021 via the application form link on the #GBDURO21 webpage.

- The field will be restricted in numbers to keep it personal/ manageable, and we are aiming for a 50:50 male:female ratio⁵
- Selection will be based on merit⁶ rather than first-come first-served. However, in a case where two applicants are deemed indistinguishable on merit, the rider who submitted their application first will be selected
- The questions in the application form will require you to jump through a few hoops... you are recommended to skim through the questions/tasks straight away so you have an idea of how long it will take you
- Your answers should not be shared with fellow riders etc
- Qualifying rides include any big one-day gravel races or ultras e.g. the Transcontinental, TransAtlanticWay, HT550, CTR, AZTR, ACT5, French Divide, and so on
- It is free to submit an application, only successful applicants will be asked to pay the entry fee
- Applicants will be told by the end of January 2021 whether they were successful or not
- No feedback will be provided on why applicants weren't successful so please don't ask. However we will keep a record of who applied which will help your case if you chose to apply in future years
- The route is publicly available on <https://www.gbdivide.net/> but the specific #GBDURO21 stages will only be released to successful applicants

GOOD LUCK!

5. See FAQ section for more details on this.

6. See the FAQ section for more details on rough selection criteria e.g. applicants who have helped out on previous The Racing Collective rides will be favoured.

How much time do I need to book off work?

We'll meet for beers on the beach near Land's End on the afternoon before the start, go for a pub meal and bivvy out, before the start at 8am the next day. It's not essential you're there to meet up before the start but it would be nice so you'll most likely need to take Friday 13 August 2021 off.

The ride will finish on the evening of Tuesday 24 August 2021 but it is sensible to build in a couple of days contingency, plus the train ride home and general physical recovery is likely to take some time. With that in mind we recommend taking two weeks off to complete this.

*Hint: if your job doesn't give you very many days off, try asking for unpaid leave *comes highly recommended**

If I'm feeling good can I rush to the end and leave before the Finisher's Party?

That's not what this ride is about. What makes GBDURO special is the timeout at the checkpoints to bond with fellow riders. This year riders cannot start the next stage before the time/dates shown in the Key Dates section. Please bear this in mind when deciding whether to enter.

If I miss a stage start can I carry on?

Yes although you will not be recorded in GC.

Why 'no-fly'?

The writing has been on the wall for decades but we've buried our heads in the sand and hoped that climate change is made up, a fiction that those in the pay of the oil giants have unmasked.

But, the body of evidence is conclusive; temperatures will keep on rising until we reach net-zero emissions and we are starting to feel the impacts of extreme weather.

Flying is incompatible with a net-zero carbon budget (1 tCO₂ per person per year) so we are drawing a line in the sand. As bikepackers, leave-no-

trace ethics are part of our DNA; so are solving seemingly unsurpassable problems, and doing things that others (initially) think are crazy. With that in mind we want to hear stories of riders travelling far and wide in a sustainable way. For a more in-depth discussion on this issue click [here](#).

How hard will it be?

You'll need to do ~200km/day carrying your own stuff and navigating your way through small lanes/fast doubletrack/the rough stuff/the odd hikeabike/gates/moors/forests/mountains/etc. Riding the WalesDURO, EngDURO, or ScotDURO routes will give you a flavour (see [Trials](#) webpage).

If I fall behind schedule on the ride can I cut the route short to get to the CPs/finish on time?

The short answer is...no. If you fail to complete the route you must scratch.

The longer answer is...not everyone will make the Finisher's Party and that is OK. If the wheels come off, so to speak, keep bugging on and complete the route in your own time; it is this battle with oneself that makes ultracycling so captivating. However if you are forced to scratch and are prepared to jump on a train/hitch to get to the finish of course we'd be delighted to see you.

Why are the numbers of riders restricted and why aim for a 50:50 male:female ratio?

We are a very small team organising the ride in parallel with full time work. With more people comes more responsibility, more stress, more risk, more impact, more visibility. Plus we want GBDURO to feel special and that sense of community is more likely to flourish in a small group. With regards to the 50:50 split, half the world's population are women, yet men currently dominate bikepacking start lines and we want to change that. If your gut instinct is to ask "why?" this probably isn't the ride for you.

How will riders be selected?

Riders must demonstrate they understand the basics of the ride and the ethos that underpins self-supported riding. Beyond that we're on the lookout for riders who tick one of the following boxes:

- **We are looking for people with a 'can do' mindset; what they lack in bikepacking experience, they make up for through their resourceful and optimistic attitude**
- **We are looking for the best bike riders in all of the land backed by race results**
- **We are looking for those who give back e.g.**
 - Riders who can demonstrate they have given back to the bikepacking community for no commercial gain e.g. by volunteering at events etc
 - Riders who are actively trying to reduce their own environmental impact, or working on societal solutions to climate breakdown
 - Riders who have helped shape The Racing Collective since it began in December 2016
- **We are looking for people who can tell a good story**

Will there be a waiting list in case of rider dropouts?

To be decided but if this is the case you will be informed by end of January.

Do you need volunteers?

It would be useful to have one or two volunteers at the end of each stage to collect stories. We will collect your appetite and CP preference for this during the entry procedure if you fail to be allocated a place. Rest assured, your answers to this will not influence the selection process.

Can I use an e-bike/Recumbent/Tandem?

No, we want people to be riding roughly the same kind of bike.

What bike shall I ride?

Ride whatever you want but a gravel/adventure bike with aero bars and minimum 35mm tyres is recommended.

What's the route like?

Fun. Embrace the uncertainty.

Where are the CPs? Are there any cut-off times?

There are three CPs en route, all of which are campsites. They are located in mid-Wales, North England, and the Highlands. This will give the pack a chance to regroup. Exact locations and details will be revealed down the line.

Can I book accommodation?

No accommodation should be booked in advance of the start of each stage. Sleeping inside at commercial premises is discouraged.

Can I ride with others?

As a solo rider, you can ride with another rider for a few hours over the course of a stage. But if you are together for more than that then you run the risk of being removed from the General Classification. We won't warn you of this so be vigilant.

Can I transfer my entry if I can't ride?

No. Applications cannot be transferred to another rider, deferred to a later date, or refunded.

WTF is the 'charity shop neon' dress code all about?

Charity shop neon is about reflecting the ethos of this ride... i.e. not taking life too seriously, being bright, brash and dressing as you see fit.

For all enquiries before, during, and after #GBDURO21 please use:

GreatBritishDURO@gmail.com

Please avoid social media messages concerning #GBDURO21 to either The Racing Collective or personal accounts of The Racing Collective committee. All ride enquiries should be made using this official email address.



#GBDURO21