



Audax Australia Cycling Club – Clarification of Ride Rules concerning events with multiple length options

Kerri-Ann Smith, President, May 2012

Recent conversations that I have had with Club Members indicate that there are some incorrect applications of Audax Australia Ride Rules when events with multiple length options are run.

It appears that riders have been allowed to change ride distance after commencing the event. A quick look at the Ride Rules shows that this is not allowed. Ride Rule 7 (3) is clear:

“If two or more rides of different distances are being run together, the rider must specify which distance they are entering for and cannot subsequently choose a different distance after the start of the ride.”

A rider cannot change distances during the ride. There are no circumstances where this is permitted: not coming back from injury, not mechanical failure, not difficult conditions. Riders should recognise that a Ride Organiser simply does not have the power to grant such a request.

Some have suggested Ride Rule 9(2) allows a Ride Organiser to approve a rider changing to a shorter course part way through a ride, citing for example fatigue or harder conditions than expected. This is a misinterpretation of this Rule which states:

“An organiser may change the course before or during a ride if it is necessary for safety reasons or to deal with unforeseen circumstances. Where it is necessary to shorten the course, riders will be deemed to have entered a ride of the shortened distance. “

Rule 9(2) ONLY applies in exceptional circumstances. In this case, it is the **course followed by all riders that changes, NOT the length or course of a ride followed by an individual rider or group of riders.**

A course might be changed for good reason on the day of the event or in the days or weeks leading to it. A few examples – landslides or floods causing major road blocks, detours or road damage; a major vehicle accident that closes the road; or a major public event in the area that causes serious traffic safety concerns. A course should not be changed because the weather is tough, riders are tired or are unlikely to complete the chosen distance within the allocated time.

Riding the event in the conditions that prevail is what randonneuring is all about – training and preparing body, mind and bike to be ready for and to do long, and at times difficult, rides. I feel strongly that we, as individual riders and as a Club, need to maintain the standards of determination, perseverance, fortitude and ‘audaciousness’ that distinguish our chosen form of cycling. At times, that may mean we have to DNF...

In summary – an individual or group of individuals cannot change to a different length ride after starting. Their course cannot be ‘changed’ from a longer to shorter ride (or vice versa) because conditions were harder than expected or a rider wasn’t up to it on the day, or conversely was feeling better than they expected.

That said, there is nothing to prevent a Ride Organiser from allowing someone to change the distance of the event they wish to enter up until the start of the ride – if it suits the Ride Organiser administratively and logistically – BUT the rider must decide which distance they are doing before they receive the brevet card and pedal off AND the rules DO NOT ALLOW a Ride Organiser to grant a request to switch distances part way through a ride.

See the Rules: <http://www.audax.org.au/public/images/stories/Documents/riderulebversion.pdf>