



TT Racing for Dummies 😊



SDCC issue Time Trial Bike

Fun facts

1. It's not only a race. Whilst placings are hard-won, it's not win-or-lose. More than anything it's a race against yourself, and your closest rivals week on week. It's also super intense training and a great way to learn pacing. TT racing is the essence of grass-roots sport.
2. You don't need a TT bike, aero helmet, and all the gear. (See point 1.) They may make you a bit faster and are great to have especially if you are competing for top placings in the TT bike categories, but you can have just as much fun on a road bike. ([Type 2 fun](#) of course.) One member turns up on a MTB sometimes just for lulz. If you do go all aero-geek there is a constant trade in second hand gear and it's usually had an easy life. The national "10" championships was recently won on a bike costing under £1,000. The road bike category is open to road bikes without tri bars. One a bike has tri bars, it counts as a TT bike.
3. You don't need to be fast to join in. All are welcome. You need a functional bike with front and rear lights, and a helmet.
4. There are often age group categories or handicaps to ensure a chance for as many riders as possible.
5. You are not allowed to draft another rider, get a handslings/tow from a car.
6. Courses tend to be standard distances, out and back. 10,25,50 miles are most common. There are some odd distances and also super endurance events of 100 miles, 12 and 24 hours.
7. Courses were known by code names eg BS33R. We don't use code names for club events but open events still do. The historical reason for this is that TT racing is rooted in the period where road racing was banned. Code names were used to keep the locations secret, and races started at 5am. For reasons of discretion



rather than safety everyone wore black. Thankfully we've moved on now. The CTT website will show you the course on a map, and you can wear club colours.

Types of event

Broadly speaking, TTs fall in to two categories – club events and open events.

Club events (such as the [IDCA TT series](#)) are open to members of the organizing clubs. They are normally cheap to enter, informal and sociable. You can enter on the line or in advance. There is no prize money only glory. Often there is a road bike category. The distances tend to be shorter, typically about 10 miles with the odd five miler and a few longer events.

Open events are open to members of all clubs affiliated to CTT (Cycling Time Trials). SDCC are. Entries normally close on Tuesdays slightly less than two weeks before the event. They cost a bit more to enter and typically have better facilities such as headquarters in a village hall, hot drinks and lots of cake. Open events are rarely shorter than ten miles apart from hill climbs.

Open events normally have prizes, normally small amounts of cash. Top pros might just about break even on entry fees so don't expect to make a fortune. Some are on super-fast dragstrip courses, out and back on a dual carriageway, others are on more "sporting" courses similar to the events we hold locally, especially early in the season. You can see a map of each course as you browse them on the CTT website. There is a special season long competition for sporting courses called [SPOCO East](#).

You enter events online here: <https://www.cyclingtimetrials.org.uk/> . You need to register with CTT before you can enter. It's dead simple and free. When you look for events you can filter by district. Unsurprisingly we are in the "East" district but "London East" and "London North" events are often pretty nearby.