

Hever Castle Festival of Endurance

90K Cycle Sportive

The inaugural Festival of Endurance (FOE) 90K cycle sportive is a wonderful amalgam of a number of recognised local cycling route classics. The circuit takes in 6 category 5 climbs and scales a massive 1,187m of ascent. The first 12K and the last 32K follow the existing Bastion (full iron distance triathlon) 60K loop but everything else is virgin FOE territory.

On exiting Hever Castle, participants take a left turn and pass the Henry VIII pub before descending to the bus stop t-junction at the bottom of Uckfield Lane and the first of the 6 climbs. Straight into it as they say! Right at the top of the 2K hill and pass the Kentish Horse before coming to the Queen's Arms after a further 1K. A careful left here and pretty much straight to Hartfield on the Hartfield Road with a bit of undulation en route.

Pass through the village of Hartfield and continue on past Jib Jacks hill on your left heading towards Coleman's Hatch and Forest Row. At Coleman's Hatch turn left and follow the minor road up the 2nd category climb to Wych Cross. Turn left at the lights here and then after 100m turn right across the traffic and follow the A275 towards Lewis. Stunning views of the South Downs will present themselves as you crest the top of the hill (you are at your high point of the Ashdown Forest on your route South here) and you will then commence a steady and glorious descent on good roads down toward the River Ouse.

As you enter the village of Sheffield Green just after 27K turn left off the A275 and follow the minor road into the village of Fletching where you'll find your first feed station in the village hall opposite the Award Winning pub called the Griffin Inn. On exiting the high street turn right down the narrow Mill Lane for 2K (bear with this as gives you a better crossing point of the A272 in Newick), crossover the River Ouse and then turn right at the junction in the village of Newick onto Newick Hill Rd. When you get to the busy A272 turn left into the centre of the village and then turn right just before the village green down a minor road signposted to Barcombe.

At just over 40K you will come to the village of Barcombe Cross where you will turn left at the roundabout and head towards Barcombe Mills and re-cross the River Ouse. At 44K you have reached your most southerly point, turn left here onto the A26 heading towards Tunbridge Wells for 6K. At the next roundabout turn left onto the A22 heading towards East Grinstead and stay on this widest of A roads for the next 5K taking around Uckfield and into the outskirts of the village of Maresfield. At the second roundabout take the 1st left into Maresfield Village and then head north on Straight Half Mile Rd for 2K before turning right on the B2026 (signposted to Hartfield) and beginning your 3rd category climb which will take you up onto the Ashdown Forest (eastern end this time). At the high point, just past King's Standing Car Park on your right, take the right turn signposted to Groombridge and after 400m you will come to the 2nd feed station on your route at Black Hill Car Park, before enjoying a long blast down hill as you exit the forest. Its not quite all plain sailing as you will have to negotiate your 4th category climb for descending down into the village of Groombridge. Groombridge Hill at 72K presents you with your stiffest and 5th category climb as you head north before regaining the A264 at the farm shop where you turn left.

SPORTIVE HEVER 90K CYCLE



Stay on the A264 for 100m before regaining the B2188 and heading downhill through the village of Fordcombe on your way to the River Medway. As you climb away from the river you meet your final short and sharp category climb before levelling out and heading into the village of Penshurst. Left in Penshurst, up a short hill and then left down Station Hill will see you onto the B2026 with a left turn and your run in back to Hever Castle. At 87K in the village of Bough Beech continue straight on at the railway bridge (don't go over it) taking the minor road signposted to Hever. At Hever Castle make sure you go back in the entrance that you came out of which is next to the church and opposite the pub.

NB. Don't forget to hand in your tracking device at the timing tent when you get back to the event village before heading off to the Car Park.

Start Time: 0800-1000

Cut of Time: 9 hours (must cycle at 10km/h including stops)