



Solent Pirates

Youth Cycling Club

Winter Kit Bag

Here are some suggestions for packing that all important kit bag and getting the right clothes on for winter riding. You don't need to spend a fortune and may well have all this stuff lying around the house in various shades and sizes.

All we would say is that cycling is an outdoor sport and if we stop for the British weather we will not be very good cyclists, however nothing is more miserable than riding around freezing cold and soaking wet.

If riders arrive on a cold and wet day with inappropriate clothing we will not let them ride!

Kit Elements: from head to toe

Rule One: Please avoid cotton in favour of wicking or breathable materials!

Head

- Helmet. As always make sure it is in good condition and fits very well. See our separate guide on the website.
- Under helmet skull cap or headband. Most cyclists will wear something under their helmets on cold days. Whatever you wear must mean the helmet fits correctly over the top.
- Glasses or eye protection. Some riders like to wear clear or tinted eye protection to stop water and dirt from getting in their eyes. This is only really needed if you ride on wet days and in closer and generally faster groups.

Neck

- Younger riders may find it comfortable to wear neck warmers on cold days. These are not so good for more energetic and faster riders as they tend to overheat and become uncomfortable.

Upper Body

- Layers as always are best, even for young riders. A thin wicking base layer is great and many kids will have these for school sports. On top of this a thicker fleece can be worn followed by a winter jacket of some sort. We will have a winter jacket in a club design. Riders who like speed will want to ensure these layers are close fitting and don't flap! Otherwise anything will do the trick.
- Waterproof & windproof jacket. The winter jacket may be waterproof, but if it isn't, riders should have one to slip on to keep warm and dry at various times. Anything light will do and

there are good cycling specific ones around but also consider the good old and cheap pakamac style.

Lower Body

- Many riders will already wear cycling specific shorts and these can simply be supplemented by leg warmers or over leggings. Either way these must be a tight but flexible fit and not risk getting caught in chains and pedals. Legs generally stay warm with cycling so layers are not so normal or needed.

Feet

- Winter cycling and feet don't go well together so be warned! Unlike walking or running, the feet are quite static and subject to wind chill. Get some very good socks, preferably wool or thermal synthetic material. Shoes will plainly have to fit over the top and not crush the feet.
- Shoe covers are very normal with adult riders in the winter and protect from cold and wet. However adult riders generally ride for much longer periods, use 'clip in' pedals and can get well fitting covers. This is more difficult for young riders although it is quite possible to simply use a woollen sock that fits tightly over the shoe and cut a cleat hole (only for young riders using clip in pedals).

Hands

- This will stop young riders quicker than just about anything else in the winter. Please send riders with long fingered gloves. The rules are simple, they must keep hands warm and allow safe operation of the bike i.e. ski mitts will do the former but not the latter.

Here are two companies that sell specific kids cycle clothing but please raid those cupboards before you look here as some of the kit is expensive.

<http://www.parker-international.co.uk/g/16/Cycle-Clothing-Kids.html>

<http://www.justjuniorcyclewear.co.uk/shop/index.php/categories/view/8>

The Kit Bag

Some riders may find this useful as a reminder to pack a bag before each session. Work on the basis it is better to bring too much and take it home again than not have enough and suffer in the cold!

- A complete change of warm clothes for after the session, including a hat, shoes and socks.
- Supplementary clothing to add to your riding kit if you get cold or wet during the session.
- A towel and wash stuff in case you decide to warm up with a shower (if available).
- Healthy and energy boosting snacks although this should not just be processed sugar and needs to be relatively small. Bananas, other fresh and dried fruit and nuts are great.
- Water and possibly a hot drink for the end of the session.