


## Trainee Challenge stage 1: cycle

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 26 July 2019

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- [Edward's Trust](#)
- [Step One](#)
- [Praxis](#)
- [Coffee4Craig](#)
- [The Friary](#)

Sarah Hamilton, Scarlett Kates, Rebecca Hawes and Caroline Green took on 'The Friar Tuck' a 50 mile cycle around South-East Nottingham whilst I took on 'The Sheriff' a 125 mile cycle.

Before signing up to the [trainee challenge](#) I had only cycled around 4 miles so had to build myself up to the big goal of 125 miles. Even though you know all the warnings and everyone tells you about it, you just don't realise how saddle sore you can get even with padded shorts! However there is one huge advantage to all of this, I got to eat and drink whatever I wanted for the entire time I was training.

Finally the big day arrived, the weather was pretty much perfect and I took my place on the start line at around 6:30 a.m. with an aim of just getting round the circuit in under the 10 hour limit and not falling off my bike.

The ride started well, though it was a bit surreal seeing so many bikes and bright jerseys in one place. Everyone was in good spirits which really helps with keeping your own mood up when you still have such a long ride ahead of you. As the miles passed by I still felt pretty good and managed to do a solid 40 mile stint before needing to take a bit of a break at one of the feed stations that was provided on the route. It was another odd experience to see so many bikes lying around the feed station with people stretching and taking a rest before all getting back onto the route.

After setting off again I had my first experience of riding with a pack of people behind me using me as their 'wind break' to make their life easier. It was pretty daunting to see the rider behind you only a few inches away from your back wheel with another 15 or so riders behind him, all in matching jerseys knowing exactly what they are supposed to do. Then when they finally overtook it seemed that a few of them needed to learn the meaning of personal space as their handlebars pretty much scraped my own.

When I finally reached the final feed station of the day with only 15 miles left of the ride and got off my bike the aching started in my neck and shoulders. Even with all of the aches I knew I had one final big hill to do and then it was all either downhill or flat after that. It seemed everyone knew this and the mood was good with everyone chatting away and getting ready for the final stretch. I set off with my music playing ready to get across the finish line and to the first bit of solid food that I saw (energy gels and protein bars are fine but after 8 hours of the things I just wanted some chips...). I got to the start of the final hill and just about managed to drag myself up to the top with only a few swear words muttered under my breath.

Finally the gentle ride to the finish line could start. However at this point I noticed that if I ramped it up a little bit more I could finish in less than 9 hours. This gave me my second wind and I managed to get a little more life out of my legs for the final 8 miles. I managed to get through the city traffic and passed by the Nottingham Forest Football Stadium and started to recognise the final few minutes back to the

start line. I finally crossed the line after 8 hours and 46 minutes in the saddle. With a huge sense of relief I made a bee line for the others and the nearest pub before heading home to bed.

It was a massive achievement by everyone who took part in the ride and it is great to see their efforts bring in so much money for such deserving charities. If you would like to donate then please do so through our [Local Giving Page](#).

## Contact

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