

Send the competitors packing.

Advice from fellow competitor and multisport/adventure racer, Steve Gurney.

Wow! 7 days of adventure biking, and your mother, husband, wife, slave won't be there to bring your lunch if you forget it. So what should you pack?

It's tempting to throw in a heap of extras for every contingency, but for 3 reasons that's not such a good idea.

1/ You're only allowed to use the one 110 litre Marmot Gear bag that they supply you.



2/ Keeping it simple, minimal but adaptable keeps your headspace focussed on racing.

3/ There will be mountain bike mechanics available everyday.

4/ Contrary to my opening paragraph... apparently, your mother WILL be available for 2 days to wash your soiled undies if you have pre-booked laundry service.

That being said, we need to remember that The Pioneer traverses down and amongst New Zealand's most significant mountain range, the magnificent Southern Alps. Mountain weather is notoriously changeable, and with surprisingly quick changes too. Even though it's unlikely, we've had snow in January / February. On the other hand, nor-westers hot enough to fry an egg on your face are likely too. So to avoid being caught with egg on your face, or worse... hospital staff *IN* your face, plan, and be prepared for all possibilities.

Following below is my packing list. You might have better and additional ideas, so use it as a guide:

Riding packing list:

COMPULSORY GEAR you must wear/carry every day while riding:

- **A Helmet**
- **Warm hat**
- **Windproof jacket**
- **Tool kit** – 1 per team. Must contain two spare tubes (if using tubeless ensure sealant is refreshed and carry at least 1 tube as an emergency back-up), a bike pump, a multi-tool, tyre levers, patch kit and a chain breaker (that you know how to use). A speed link/spare chain link is also useful, but make sure it's the right one for your chain (10 speed or 11 speed)
- **First Aid kit** – 1 per team. Including bandages, plasters, tape, gauze, whistle and two survival blankets. We also recommend carrying pain relief medication (e.g. Panadol) for headaches, sunscreen and electrolyte replacement powder (e.g. Gastrolyte) for cramps, along with other medications you might need (e.g. prescription or hay fever medication)

***A Gear check will be carried out initially at Athlete Registration, on both your mandatory basic gear and your mandatory emergency gear. Random checks will be made at the start chute each morning and at any time during the race.*

EMERGENCY GEAR that may be required on certain days at Race Organiser's discretion for bad weather:

- **Thermal /warm torso layer** - merino wool, fleece or polypropylene
- **Thermal / warm tights** - merino wool, fleece or polypropylene tights.
- **Full fingered gloves**
- **Waterproof jacket** - with tape sealed seams

Personal riding gear:

- Riding jersey and pants, at least 3 sets
- Riding shoes
- Socks
- Wind proof cycle vest
- Short fingered gloves
- Drink bottles or bladder / camel-back
- Arm warmers, (easily pulled down or removed whilst riding for cold starts, and as thermal regulators during the ride. Also good sun protection if light coloured and thin)
- Sun glasses
- Anti-Chafe cream (GurneyGoo is perfect), especially if raining!
- Sunscreen (remember back of your neck and back of your legs.....we're riding south)
- Your favourite race foods (can't always rely on aid stations having food you like)
- Spare thermals in case first set is wet from previous day

Extra ideas:

- Tyre boot for slashed side-walls. A tyre boot is for a temporary field repair to a cut tyre wall, to get you home. It's a patch of rubber (can buy or make your own out of an old tyre) that is about 5cm x 4 cm and 2 mm thick, that covers the hole or cut in a side wall of a tyre, to stop the new tube you put in from bulging out.
- Puncture repair patches if you're using tubes; there are a lot of sharp spanyard prickles
- CO2 inflators

Camp Packing List:

- Dinner suit.... or casual clothing for daily dinner, lounging and daily awards in the social lounge
- Clean underwear for each day in camp.... Saddle/crotch hygiene is critical. Avoid synthetic. Merino or cotton is great!

If it's hot:

- Jandals, (there could be prickles)
- Lightweight long sleeved shirt for camp (stop the sun-burn and keep the sandflies at bay)
- Pants, shorts or lightweight long pants to keep the sun off
- Sun hat

It it's cold. Whilst unlikely, it's possible we can get a surprise cold snap/snow, so pack for each extreme:

- Down Jacket (can also wear it in sleeping bag if it's a cold night)
- Raincoat and over trousers
- Warm thermal tops and pants (don't bring cotton to the mountains)
- Wooly hat and gloves
- Warm socks and crocs or running shoes (shoes that are waterproof).

Sleeping:

- Sleeping bag. Whilst it's likely to be hot summer nights, pack a warmish one in case we get a cold snap.....then again, I guess if you get cold you could always tent hop and get cosy with your team-mate... Nah!
- It's likely to be hot weather, so get one of those light silk sleeping bag liners, so you can discard sleeping bag.
- Mattress. Either a blow-up single airbed or self-inflating thermarest. Could be rough ground so get a fat one..... but then again, after looking at the course maps... you'll sleep like the dead each night! Remember your mattress needs to fit in your Marmot bag.
- Ear plugs and eye mask if you're a light sleeper. There will be riders getting up at night for a pee.
- Pillow - there won't be room in your bag for a pillow, so try a blow-up one, or using your sleeping bag storage bag stuffed full of clothing or your down jacket works well.

Camp misc:

- Head lamp and batteries
- Toothbrush
- Soap
- Towel
- Medications, own first aid kit
- Compact mirror....as no mirrors at camp!
- Recovery protein powder drink etc
- Money, NZ cash or eftpos card for each night's vendors and for bike mechanic
- Cell phone / i-pod and ear phones for relaxing, social media.
- Bathing suit (or that day's dirty riding bibs!), bound to find swimming holes!

Notes:

It's often good to have a warm-down walk after each day's racing to pump out lactate via your lymph system. May need a pair of shoes for this and a jacket in case it rains.

Spares and misc:

There will be bike mechanics with spares for you to buy, but you might consider some basics if you have them, such as:

- Spare tyres, tubes
- Spare derailleur
- Spare chain
- Big bottle of chain lube (one Squirt one is provided in your race pack)
- Spare sealant for tubeless tyres (Stans etc)
- Set of allen keys for adjustments

Bag that goes direct to Queenstown (or could be your bike box)

- Smart casual clothing (or sponsor's clothing) for the Awards party in Queenstown
- Pants that give you some groin room to walk like a cowboy (you might be a little saddle sore by then)