<u>LWA Virtual Rides</u> (rev. 04.17.2021)

The following is an overview of what is needed in order to participate in a virtual (online) ride with some of your fellow LWA members. This document will include the following topics.

1. What you need to participate in a virtual ride. This is a summary of your options for the hardware and software that is required in order for you to participate in a LWA virtual ride. If you have a smart trainer, and are already riding virtually, you can probably skip most of this. It does, however, have some information specific to the Rouvy application that we used throughout the winter of 2020/21, which you might want to read if you are not familiar with Rouvy.

2. How to post a virtual ride on Meetup. When posting an actual, in-person ride on Meetup, there is certain information that is necessary, such as the location, time, etc. Some of this is the same when you post a virtual ride, but there are some differences, described here.

3. How to use Discord on a virtual ride. How to connect in order to have a conversation with the other riders who are participating.

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<u>Rouvy</u>

Rouvy is the application that a few of us used during the winter of 2020/21 to participate in virtual group rides. There are numerous others, such as Zwift, some of which could be substituted for Rouvy if you and some other riders use that application. Some of the reasons why we chose Rouvy is because they offer real video routes, they have avatars of you and other riders that you can see along the course, and it has lots of routes to choose from. As of April 2021, a subscription to Rouvy costs $15 per month and $144 per year. There is also a 14 day free trial period.

<u>Computer or other device</u>

Currently, Rouvy can be used with desktop computers, either Windows or Mac, tablets, and smart phones. More information can be found on the Rouvy website.

More detailed information about Rouvy can be found at https://rouvy.com/en/how-it-works.

<u>Microphone</u>

In order to participate in a Discord conversation while riding, you'll need either the built-in microphone of your device or an outboard microphone if needed.

<u>Trainer</u>

Here is where this gets a bit more complicated. The best functionality is generally obtained with the use of a smart trainer, but you can participate in group virtual rides with a dumb trainer and send data to the computer via a speed/cadence or power sensor. You may already have one of these on your bike. You'll also need a usb ant+ dongle so

that your device can receive the signal. An alternative may be to connect via bluetooth.

A very good summary of the possible hardware options can be found in this article that originally appeared in Cycling News in February of 2021. Although the title says Zwift, note that only a small part of the discussion concerns Zwift, with most of it being about the various hardware options. This is a very good place to start.

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Cheapest Zwift[*] setup: Where to find turbo trainers in stock, the best deals and a guide on how to get onto Zwift

By Josh Croxton February 05, 2021

Today's best turbo trainer deals and our guide to the cheapest Zwift setup will get you spinning indoors without emptying your bank account

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2. How to post a virtual ride on Meetup.

When posting an actual, in-person ride on Meetup, there is certain information that is necessary, such as the location, time, etc. Some of this is the same when you post a virtual ride, but there are some differences. To begin with, specify the ride as an online event. Below is the body of a hypothetical sample post that covers all of the important details.

Details:

If you have previously participated in virtual rides using Rouvy and Discord, you know what to do. If you are new to this, then your first step should be "LWA Virtual Rides".   (This will link to the document, once it has been posted to the website.)

Today's ride uses the Rouvy route named "TdS 2019 Schallenberg", part of a Tour de Suisse stage. Launch the Rouvy application and search for this route. After entering the ride, choose the warmup option. This will put your avatar on the start line so that you can wait for the other riders to join you. You'll see a list of them on the left side of the screen. When everyone is ready, the ride host will announce the start of the ride, just as they would on an in-person ride.

If you plan to connect to the other riders using Discord, you should join the LWA Discord room at https://discord.gg/5hFczJU54Z. Click on the voice channel "LWA Ride #1" to join the chat. It is important to do this before joining the Rouvy ride, as Rouvy only runs in full screen mode.

3. How to use Discord on a virtual ride.

The following is a guide that explains how to connect to Discord in order to have a conversation with the other riders who are participating.

Discord is an application that was initially created to allow video gamers to communicate with each other, but it works very well for conversation during virtual group rides. You can download the application (free), or just run Discord in your browser. I've done it both ways, and it functions fine either way on my Mac mini, but your experience may indicate a preference for one or the other.

Before using Discord on a ride, you need to select a username and register an account. Go to discordapp.com and do the following:

1. Click **Open Discord** in your browser and allow use of the microphone if prompted.
2. Enter the username you want to use and click the arrow.

3. Complete the Captcha as directed.
4. A popup will appear and give you the option to Get Started with **creating** a **new** server, or skipping ahead to finish **creating** your **account**. The LWA server has already been created, so you should just finish creating your account.

To connect with Discord for the first time, just follow this link: https://discord.gg/5hFczJU54Z   This will open a browser tab that includes the LWA virtual rides area. If you have downloaded the application, you will see an option to open the application.

Either way, you'll see your username and icon down at the bottom left. To enter the chat, click on "LWA ride #1" (there is only one chat room at the time this was written), and you'll see your icon and username enter the chat area. When you talk, you'll see a green circle light up around the icon.