

Thinking of Riding Enduros – A Beginners Guide

1. What is Enduro?

An enduro is similar to a car rally on motorcycles but is mostly over very rough terrain. Enduro riding takes several forms with the original format being Time Card events. However, nowadays the majority of events are either Hare and Hounds or Cross Country. Other types include Extreme and Sprint and All Terrain Rallies. This article primarily focuses on Time Card and H&H Events.

2. Classes

There are classes for all abilities of riders. If you are new to sport and have not done much off-road riding, you would normally enter the beginners, novice, or sportsman class. As you get used to the sport, you can progress to Clubman, Expert and finally Championship. There are also various classes for veteran riders who are over 40 and over 50. Some events include a Ladies Class and a Youth Class. For 2024, a youth rider can now enter certain timecard events from the age of 14. For youth riders there are restrictions on machine capacity, plus the event must be on private ground and the route must not include public roads or byways.

If you already ride Motocross, check out the event entry requirements to see what class you should ride in. For example, some local centre events require MX Expert Riders to ride in the Championship Class and top MX Juniors to ride Expert. This guidance does not apply to British Championship Gradings.

3. Time Card enduros

A time card enduro is generally an off road event held over rough terrain. A lap of the course can vary considerably in length. However, most events are under a 20 mile lap. The number of laps completed will be based on the riding ability of the class you have entered.

If it is an event with a lap of 15 to 20 miles or less, there may only be one Time Control in the start finish area. However, some events have a number of time-controls each lap.

3.1 Riding Number and Time Schedule

From the event programme or list of riders you can find out your riding number and start time. The programmed time you have between time controls are the 'check times'. These may be emailed to you via Sport80 the day before the event, posted on a Club Facebook page or available on a notice board at the event sign-on.

Example below: Riding No 180 Start Time 10:00am

Example Sportsman		
Time Control	Schedule allowed between time checks	Comments
TC1	60	Includes special test
TC2	60	Includes special test
TC3	45	Test by passed
TC4	35	Test by passed
Total Riding Time	200 mins	

3.2 Filling in your time card – you need to use a Biro

Fill in your Number, Class, Start time and Name



DISS MCC

NO 180	CLASS Sportsman
START TIME 10:00	NAME John Novice

CHECK NO.	ALLOWANCE FOR CHECK	TIME DUE IN CHECK	OFFICIAL TIME IN	POINTS
1	60	11:00		
2	60	12:00		
3	45	12:45		
4	35	13:20		
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
12				
13				
14				
15				

PLEASE USE BIRO TO WRITE ON THIS TIMECARD

Enter your due time at each check point e.g. 10.00 start + 60 mins = 11.00 at first control

The officials use these boxes

3.3 Scrutineering

Prior to putting your bike into the pit area, you need to get it scrutineered. Time card enduros normally require lights to be fitted. Make sure you have a helmet which has an approved ACU Gold Sticker.

3.4 Refuelling areas and pits

You can refuel your machine and service your bike in designated areas, normally this is on the approach to time controls. Refuelling areas like time controls are normally marked out with blue tape which means 'Walking Speed'. The penalty for exceeding this can be up to disqualification from the event. You must re-fuel on an environmental mat which should be the width and length of the bike.

3.5 Start line

- a) When you present your bike to the start line at your booked start time, the start marshal will advise you when to start. If you start your machine early you will receive 60 points penalty.
- b) You are then required to start your bike's engine within one minute of your start time and then cross a 20-metre line under power, otherwise there is a penalty of 20 points.
- c) If your bike does not start within one minute of your booked start time, clear the start control 20 metre line and then try and get your bike started.
- d) If you turn up to the start line late, for example 2 minutes, you must start 2 minutes late and stay 2 minutes late at the next time control.

3.6 Time controls

You then ride the course to the first time control or refuelling area, whatever comes first. Time controls are identified by a white flag 200 metres from the control and two yellow flags 20 metres from the control point. You need to book into the time control (which is just beyond the yellow flags) at your allocated time. A rider is deemed to have entered the time check when the front tyre of their machine has crossed an imaginary line between the two yellow flags. If you book in early or late you will receive a penalty (60 points per minute early or late).

3.7 Special Tests

As several riders will clean the checks without incurring a time penalty, a special test (a defined section of track) is laid out with a separate start and finish line. Special tests typically are between 1 mile and 3 miles in length and normally can be inspected on foot either the day before an event or on the day of the event. You will be timed to the nearest 1/100 of a second over this section of track. Make sure your riding numbers are readable and clean, so they can be read by the timing personnel. There may be more than one special test per

event. At some events there may be transponder timing. If so, make sure you have your transponder fitted otherwise no time will be registered.

3.8 Calculation of time penalties

The key principle is for each full minute late or early at a time check – you will receive a 60 second penalty.

a) Booking in late

If you are due at a time control at 10:30am and you arrive at 10.32am, you have lost 2 minutes (120 seconds) and you need to stay 2 minutes late for all other checks. If you lose further time, let's say another 3 minutes, you must book into subsequent controls 5 minutes late (your penalties would now be 300 seconds).

b) Booking in early

Other than the last time control of the day, you must not book in early as the penalty is 60 seconds for every minute. Example, you book into a time control 1 minute early - 10:29am instead of 10:30am, you would receive 60 second penalty. If you then decide to return to your normal booked time at the next check point, you will then get penalised a further minute (60 seconds) for booking in late. Total penalties 120 seconds.

Remember - A rider may pass the final time check of the day early, without penalty.

3.9 Results

At the end of the day, the rider with the lowest number of penalties is declared the winner in each class.

3.10 A good tip - Enduros are about stamina and fitness, you do not have to go quick on the early laps, check out any route hazards and save your energy until later in the day.

Examples of Penalties Up to and including disqualification (the full list is in the ACU Handbook Standing Enduro Regulations)

- Exceeding walking pace in blue tape 'Walking Speed' areas.
- Altering the course or not following the intended course / passing through gates of arrows.
- Course cutting, not following marked route or driving in opposite direction of route.
- Practising on the course prior to the event.
- Inspecting a Special Test with any wheeled vehicle (including mountain bike, electric bikes, e-scooters).
- Being accompanied anywhere on the course or accepting outside assistance other than allowed in Standing Regulations.
- Exceeding noise level limit.
- Change of machine during event.

- Changing tyres except at the final time check of the day, or in a multi-day event where a work area is provided.
- Non-use of Environmental Mat for the rider concerned.

PENALTY POINTS (Full list in ACU Standing Enduro Regulations)

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| • Starting engine before starting signal is given | • 60 seconds |
| • Not starting engine and crossing 20m line within one minute of starting signal | • 20 seconds |
| • For every minute late at the start line | • 60 seconds |
| • For each full minute late or early at time check | • 60 seconds |
| • Overshooting a time check more than 2 metres past the officials | • 60 seconds |
| • Loss of timecard/route card | • 60 seconds |

4. Hare and Hounds/Cross Country enduros

These are short course off road events in which the aim is to complete as many laps as possible in a set time, usually two or three hours, so it's about fitness and endurance. Riders are normally started in groups of up to 40 at 30 second intervals. Your time will be recorded on each lap normally by a transponder which is fitted to the machine or in some cases you may be required to wear a transponder wrist band. With some timing systems, you have to stop at the control point and register your time using the wrist band. Additionally, some events are still run with manual time and lap recording so maintaining clean riding numbers and riding at walking pace through the lap scoring area may be required. The results are based on the number of laps achieved and the fastest lap time. Fitness and pacing yourself is the key.

5. Two-Person Team Enduros

These events normally consist of a team of two riders. Before the event entry opens, decide on your partner as their name normally needs to be registered in Sport80 Event Entry Database to secure and match both up to your team entry. If you have not got a partner, contact the organisers to see whether they can find you a suitable partner to team up with. You can team up with a rider in a different class – e.g. a Championship rider can ride with an Expert or even a Clubman, but you would both have to compete in the class of the highest graded rider, in this case the Championship class.

Each rider is required to complete a timed session, normally 30 minutes. Team Rider 1 would start the session at say 10:00am and then ride for 30 minutes and book into the first control at 10:30am. Once Rider 1 has booked into the time control, the rider then passes

the timecard over to their partner, who then completes the next session between 10:30am and 11:00am.

Normally events are 4 hours with each rider getting 2 hours riding with each session separated by a 30-minute break – potentially less demanding than a solo Hare and Hounds event. In each timed session you need to ride as many laps as possible and book into the time control as near to your booked time as possible. If you are early or late, you get penalised.

The penalty at these events will vary according to the length of the course. For example, a 6 minute course will normally have a 1/6 of a lap penalty for being early or late. In the event of a tie, (two teams on the same number of laps) results are determined by either a special test or the rider's fastest lap of the day or of a defined session.

The complicated bit: The key is knowing whether you have sufficient time to go out and ride another lap before handing over to your partner. If you sit at a time control for too long waiting for your time to come up e.g. 5 minutes, you probably wasted some competitive riding time. Equally if you book into the time control 5 minutes late, you would be eating into your partner's riding time. Get the balance right!

The fastest rider in your team needs ideally to ride the last timed session of the event as in this session you will not impact on your partner's time. Obviously, (if it's a 1/6 lap penalty per minute late) don't come in 6 minutes late as you would have lost a whole lap in penalties. If you arrive at the time control 5 minutes late, you will have still gained.

The bottom line is to try it out and get some experience.

Often the quickest team of riders may not win these events. It's a combination of speed plus using your head to work out whether you should do another lap or pit and changeover with your partner.

Class	Team No	No	Name	Machine	START	TC1	TC2	TC3	TC4	TC5	TC6	TC7	FINISH
Championship	1	1	[REDACTED]	450 GasGas	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	12:00	12:30	13:00	13:30	14:00
Championship	1	101	[REDACTED]	350 KTM									

In the example above, Rider 1 would start their timed session at 10:00, 11.00, 12.00 and 13.00. Rider 2 would start their session at 10:30, 11.30, 12.30 and 13.30. Only one rider from a team is permitted on a course at once.