



## CHESHIRE COBBLED CLASSIC 2019

### Rider Information Pack



Thank you for entering the Cheshire Cobbled Classic.

## 1. ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

**Start Date and Time:** Sunday 16 June 2019. Registration/sign-on from 0800. Start times 0830-0835.

**Event Type:** Cycle Sportive (non-competitive).

**Venue:** Lyme Park, Disley, Stockport, Cheshire SK12 2NR. Tel: 01663 762023.

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lyme-park/>

**Event Website:** <http://cycleclassics.co.uk/cheshire-cobbled-classic-sportive/>

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/cheshirecobbledclassic>

**Emergency Mobile Number:** 07708 648106 (Medical & Mechanical). Also printed on rider numbers.

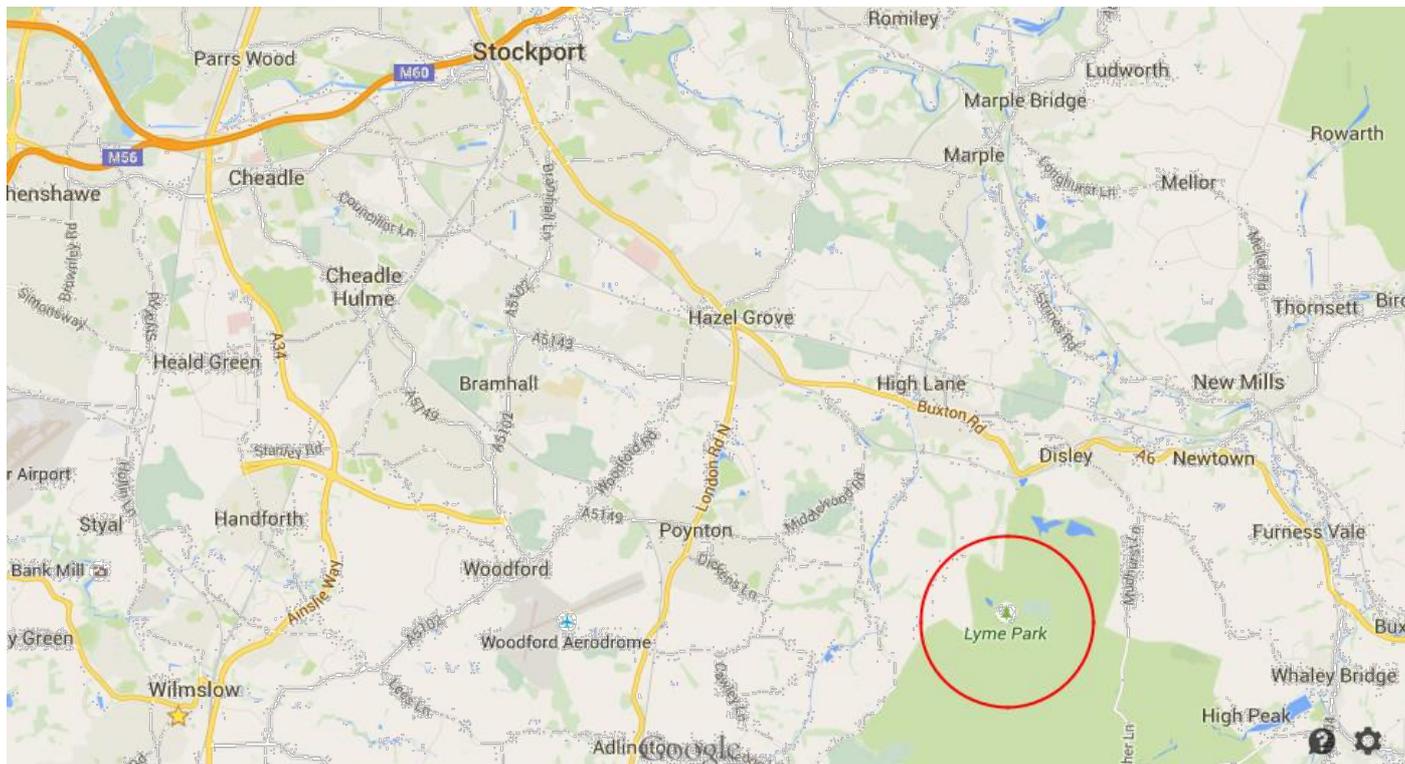
### Getting There

Lyme Park is circled in Red on the map below. Wherever possible, we would like to encourage local cyclists to ride to the start in Lyme Park.

For those coming from further afield, by car, the approach is via the entrance to Lyme Park in Disley on the A6, either SE from the M60 at Stockport via Hazel Grove, or NW from Buxton. (The M56 and M60 can be accessed from the M6 at junction 20/20A of the M6 from both the North and the South). Please be aware that there may be roadworks on the A6 at Hazel Grove, possibly with temporary traffic lights installed. This shouldn't cause too much delay early on Sunday morning but longer delays can occur at busier times. We strongly encourage car sharing wherever possible.

Disley Rail Station is right next the entrance to Lyme Park but the first train from Manchester does not get in until 0849; even this option requires two changes. While we are keen to encourage the use of public transport, the train does not seem in this case to be a viable option.

**Parking & Event HQ:** The event HQ and start and finish areas are located near the main carpark in Lyme Park. Enter via the National Trust Admissions Hut on the main driveway just off the A6 in Disley. There is parking in the park and parking signs/marshals will direct you to the relevant areas. Registration will take place near the start. The principal parking area for the event is approximately 200 yards SW of the main car park/Information Kiosk. There are approximately 150 free spaces available. As part of British Cycling's partnership with the National Trust, you will be able to use the park and its facilities free of charge for the whole day (including the excellent children's adventure playground for those bringing family). Please note that there will be an additional charge for entrance to Lyme Hall.



Good luck & see you at the event!

The Event Organisers.

Email: [info@cycleclassics.co.uk](mailto:info@cycleclassics.co.uk)

## ROUTE INFORMATION

The Lapierre 'Cheshire Cobbled Classic' is a very tough 107km (67-mile) sportive, inspired by the Tour of Flanders - the Belgian one-day Classic, which is the most popular one-day race in the world after Paris-Roubaix, which attracts millions of spectators. The Cheshire Cobbled Classic features eight cobbled sectors, including five cobbled climbs that exceed 20% in gradient. The most notable of these is the frighteningly steep *Corkscrew*, a twisting, snaking cobbled road whose 45% maximum gradient makes it the steepest climb in the country (see photo below).



The other major cobbled climbs are Start Lane (after just 9km), Woodbrook Road (at 70km), Swiss Hill (72km) and Beeston Brow (92km).



The eastern half of the Cheshire Cobbled Classic is located within the Peak District National Park and takes in the spectacular Goyt Valley and the Fernilee and Errwood reservoirs. The route contains a significant amount of climbing - roughly 1700m in total - and the event builds to a climax with a rapid succession of cobbled climbs, including the iconic Swiss Hill, a 25% climb in Alderley Edge, which is used by Team Sky to prepare specifically for the Tour of Flanders. The profile of Swiss Hill can be viewed [here](#).

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The route of the Cheshire Cobbled Classic has been constructed with the primary aim of linking together all of the best cobbled roads that still exist in Cheshire, including some iconic (and infamous) cobbled climbs such as Swiss Hill and the Corkscrew. In order to best connect these sectors together it has sometimes been necessary to pass over some rough (and occasionally brutal) terrain through some of the lonely back-roads of the Peak District. In this respect, the Cheshire Cobbled Classic is unlike some of the other sportives that take place in the area, which take in longer, better-known and less steep climbs, such as the Cat and Fiddle. The climbs in the Cheshire Cobbled Classic can be savage, uneven, twisting, and it is sometimes difficult to get into a steady climbing rhythm. Cycling Weekly rated the Cheshire Cobbled Classic the *second-hardest* sportive in the country - behind only the Fred Whitton Challenge, which, at 112 miles, is almost twice as long, with over twice the total amount of climbing. This really emphasizes the challenge of the Cheshire Cobbled Classic, which, while only 67 miles long, is an extremely tough day in the saddle and should not be underestimated.

Further details and photographs of the route can be found on the event webpage: <http://cycleclassics.co.uk/cheshire-cobbled-classic-sportive/>

Additional information and latest updates are available on the event Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/cheshirecobbledclassic>

All of the roads used on the route are relatively traffic-free, and encounters with A-roads are kept to an absolute minimum. A broom wagon and two medical support vehicles will be provided. The feed stations have public toilets. Mechanic services for minor repairs and punctures will be provided at the start, at feed stations, and there will also be a mobile mechanic in addition to the broom wagon. Riders are expected to be self-sufficient, however, and it is recommended, given the very rough nature of some of the roads, to carry *at least two* extra inner tubes and a small pump/gas bottles.

The event will have a Belgian theme, given that it is inspired by the Tour of Flanders, with a variety of Belgian foods and chocolates at the feed stations, and a glass of Belgian beer (Leffe) provided for every rider at the finish. In addition, everyone who completes the course will be presented with a genuine Kerridge sandstone cobble, extracted from the same quarry that provided the cobbles for the roads along which the event route passes. These cobbles are quite heavy (up to around 5kg each!) and if you want to take one home with you, it might be easier to transport it in a car rather than in a jersey pocket!

You can sign up for the Cheshire Cobbled Classic using British Cycling's online entry system via the event webpage at <http://cycleclassics.co.uk/cheshire-cobbled-classic-sportive/> right up until the event itself.

## COBBLED AND UNPAVED SECTORS

START (0 km)	Lyme Park			
<b>Sector 10</b> (9km)	<b>Start Lane</b>	300m	30% max.	Cobbles
<b>Sector 9</b> (16km)	<b>Fernilee Reservoir</b>	1800m	Flat	Hard-packed stones/ gravel
<b>Sector 8</b> (24km)	<b>The Corkscrew</b>	200m	45% max.	Cobbles
<b>Sector 7</b> (25km)	<b>Bank Clough Farm</b>	600m	Flat -5%	Gravel (descent)
<b>FEED 1 (38km)</b>	The Robin Hood Inn			
<b>Sector 6</b> (65km)	<b>Horseshoe Lane</b>	200m	Flat	Cobbles
<b>Sector 5</b> (66km)	<b>Woodbrook Road</b>	300m	20% max.	Cobbles
<b>Sector 4</b> (68km)	<b>Swiss Hill</b>	600m	25% max.	Cobbles
<b>FEED 2 (97km)</b>	The Robin Hood Inn			
<b>Sector 3</b> (98km)	<b>Jumper Lane</b>	2000m	25% max.	Broken tarmac/gravel
<b>Sector 2</b> (102km)	<b>Beeston Brow</b>	300m	20% max.	Cobbles (irregular)
<b>Sector 1</b> (106km)	<b>Lyme Park</b>	1800m	10% max.	Gravel

FINISH (107km)	Lyme Park
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There are six principal climbs on the route:

1. At 20km: **Pym Chair**. Fernilee Reservoir - Pym Chair (250m-470m) +**220m** elevation gain. 2.5km long.
2. At 25km: **Jenkin Chapel**. Bank Clough Farm - Pym Chair via Jenkin Chapel (290m-470m) +**180m**. 2.1km long.

The above two climbs average over 10% for long stretches.

3. At 31km: **Bakestonedale**. Kettleshulme - Bakestonedale Road (240m-350m) +**110m**. 2.8km long.
4. At 34km: **Pike Road**. Pike Road - Ewrin Road (280m-400m) +**120m**. 3.8km long.
5. and 6: At 35km and 90km: **Kerridge**. Bollington (180m-250m) +**70m**. 2.0km long. Taken in both directions

A GPX file is available on the event website <http://cycleclassics.co.uk/cheshire-cobbled-classic-sportive/cheshire-cobbled-classic-sportive-course-details/>

Although the route will be very well signposted, we urge all riders to both familiarize themselves with the course, and download the GPX file if they have a Garmin-like device, in order to reduce the probability of going off-course. In addition you are **strongly advised** to print out the two 1:50 000 OS maps (attached as pdf files to your Rider's Pack email, and also available on the event website) and take them with you on the ride (perhaps in a Ziploc sandwich bag to keep them dry). We will only cancel/reschedule the event if the weather is very poor indeed.

Please note that the gravel track at Bank Clough Farm, which serves as the descent of the Corkscrew, is on private land, and the inclusion of the Corkscrew in the Lapierre Cheshire Cobbled Classic depends on the owners' consenting to our using this track. Please endeavour to ride sensibly and safely on this descent, and reduce speed to a minimum. The descent is only a few hundred metres long; taking care on this section of the course will not slow you down very much overall. There are plenty of other sectors on the route where you can safely ride as hard as you like!

Cycling Weekly's Insider's Guide to the 2014 Cheshire Cobbled Classic is available by clicking on the image below. Please note that the route has changed slightly since 2014 with the new start in Lyme Park.



Please be courteous to other road users along the route of the Cheshire Cobbled Classic (walkers, runners, horse riders and drivers). Last year the police received complaints of abusive language towards members of the public in the Alderley Edge area. Often other road users are unaware of the details of rights of way, land access and so forth and may sometimes, in good faith, mistakenly believe that cyclists may not be permitted on certain parts of the course. Please be tolerant and do not enter into arguments with other members of the public during the event.

## 2. WHAT TO BRING AND CHOICE OF EQUIPMENT

- ID in case of an incident.
- Food and energy drink (although there will be food available at the start, and at two feed stations *en route*). There is a Waitrose in Whaley Bridge at 70km should you require extra sustenance!
- Money/credit card.
- Mobile phone (emergency contact number is printed on your rider number).
- Basic tool, ideally with a chain-splitter.
- Pump, tyre levers and **at least two** spare inner tubes.
- Helmet (mandatory).
- GPX device or mobile phone with maps.
- Printed 1:50 000 Ordnance Survey maps (route highlighted in pink - attached to Rider's Pack email).

Given that the road contains cobbled and unpaved sectors, there is a slightly increased risk of punctures. We therefore suggest thicker, reinforced, wider tyres (25-28mm ideally), paired with wheels that are not too rigid. Old-fashioned boxed rims (e.g. Mavic Open Pro) are ideal. Vittoria produce a tyre that is specially designed for cobbles with extra grip, and these are the preferred choice of many professionals in the Tour of Flanders and Paris-Roubaix: <http://www.vittoria.com/tire/pave-cg/>. These measures will also provide a less jarring ride over the rougher roads. You might wish to double-wrap your handlebars with tape, but this is not strictly necessary. A full-carbon frame is a perfectly good choice but other materials such as steel would be equally good. If you are worried about damaging an expensive bike on the rougher unpaved roads or cobbles, however, you may prefer to bring a training/winter bike, or a cyclo-cross bike. A mountain bike will handle the unpaved and cobbled sectors with ease, but will of course be considerably slower on normal tarmac roads (which comprise the majority of the route). Please make sure that your bike is in good condition, cleaned, and that you have carried out the standard safety checks before your ride. Pay particular attention to the condition of your tyres. It is not a good idea to ride this event with old or even slightly worn or nicked tyres. The most important factor in avoiding

punctures, however, is not holding the bars too rigidly over the cobbled and unpaved sectors. In addition, absorbing shocks by bending your knees and lifting yourself slightly above your saddle ('hovering') will greatly reduce the probability of frustrating punctures. There are some very helpful tips from British Cycling on choice of equipment for riding on cobbles on this webpage:

<http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/insightzone/techniques/pedalling/article/izn20130412-Riding-the-Cobbles-0>

### 3. MEDICAL SUPPORT

There will be two mobile support vehicles circulating around the course. In the event of an incident on the route, for minor issues call the main event mobile number 07708 648106 (printed on every rider's number) and help will be arranged. For more serious incidents call 999 immediately. It is essential that all riders carry a (charged) mobile phone during the ride for this eventuality, with the above two mobile numbers pre-entered. Please note that mobile reception can be patchy in the Peak District, depending on the network, particularly in secluded valleys.

### 4. MECHANICAL SUPPORT

Riders must largely be self-sufficient in the case of minor mechanical incidents such as punctures, and should carry at least two spare inner tubes, tyre levers and a working pump, together with a simple multi-tool, ideally including a chain-splitter. For more serious mechanical failures, there will be a broom wagon/mobile mechanic van that will be able to provide assistance. If a serious mechanical incident occurs, riders are advised to call (or preferably text - to prevent the line being engaged) the event mechanical number 07708 648106, and await assistance. Please note that the broom wagon advances behind the last rider, and it may take up to an hour for it to arrive, depending on the location on the course. The mobile mechanic may be able to attend more rapidly, but immediate response is not guaranteed.

### 5. HQ FACILITIES

There is parking at the venue. Please follow the signs and marshals to the event parking location, approximately 200 yards SW of the main car park, next to the Start/Finish arch. Please DO NOT use the main car park. Public toilets are located in the Timber Yard and there are toilets at the sign-on area. Please note that there are **no changing rooms or showers** available for public use in Lyme Park. There will be a range of food and drinks available to buy before and after the event provided by the venue staff (coffee and snacks).

### 6. PRE-RIDE

**Registration:** Open from 8:00am.

On signing on you will receive your number, which you should affix to your bars using the cable tie provided. There is no need to do anything other than sign your name on the sign-on sheet at the registration desks and then make your way to the start area roughly 200 yards away. Everything will be clearly signposted and marshalled on the day of the event. Our aim is that riders can sign on, make their way to the start line and start with minimal delay. We understand, as riders ourselves, how frustration it can be to have to wait in long queues, both at registration, and at the start itself.

**Rider Briefing:** A safety briefing will be given to riders immediately before the start, reminding them of the main safety issues discussed in this pack. This should last less than two minutes.

### 7. START

Riders should begin assembling behind the Start at around 8.20am. The start will be open from 0830 until 0845. Riders will be set off in groups of one-minute intervals.

### 7. DURING THE RIDE

#### Signage

The signs are A3 and A4-sized and have fluorescent yellow backgrounds with black arrows or 'CAUTION' warnings, etc. Unpaved sector numbers have white signs (see below). All signs bear the LAPIERRE logo. Ignore signs of different colours or those without the LAPIERRE logo.



The route has been chosen to maximize the safety of the roads used, and to minimize the number of large junctions/traffic lights/roundabouts. The route is roughly a clockwise loop, although there is a short section immediately before and after The Corkscrew loop, which features a contraflow to and from the highest point on the course, Pym Chair. As a result you may occasionally see riders coming past you in the opposite direction at some point between the 21-25km marks. Do not be put off by this. The route will be very clearly signposted and there should not be any ambiguity.

Please pay particular attention to the road immediately before and after the Corkscrew, which is quite steep and narrow in places, and make sure that you **KEEP LEFT!**

Of course, the best way to make absolutely certain that there will be no confusion with the route is to download the GPX file and print out and carry the attached OS course maps with you (see below)!  
**Hazards**

There are five principal types of hazard on this route:

- a) Crossing 'A'-roads, and turning right across traffic onto or off 'A'-roads.
- b) Entering unpaved/cobbled sectors, if this involves crossing traffic (esp. 'A'-roads).
- c) Leaving unpaved/cobbled sectors and re-joining normal roads.
- d) The unpaved/cobbled sectors themselves.
- e) Narrow roads with blind bends.

The main areas where caution is required are below, in the order in which they are encountered along the route. Of these only two (**B, C, E** - asterisked and in bold below) require extreme caution:

- A. Start and exit of Lyme Park via main drive and Red Lane Admissions hut. There may be a few cars on the main drive. The exit point onto Red Lane by the Admissions Hut will be marshalled. CAUTION.
- B. \*\*Steep, narrow twisting descent after left turn off Higher Lane through Holme Wood down to Todd Brook (after approximately 7km). Blind bend. KEEP LEFT! EXTREME CAUTION REQUIRED.\*\* [2016 NOTE: This section of the route is likely to be eliminated due to deterioration of the road surface - pending final inspection before the event. If so, the route will make a short diversion, continuing south on Higher Lane to the T-junction, and then turning left into Ketteshulme and approaching the Start Lane cobbled sector from the south. Signage on the day will take precedence over maps/GPX for this sector.]**
- C. Approach to Sector 12 ('Start Lane' cobbled section). Blind bend. KEEP LEFT! Caution required.

- D. Right turn onto A5004 at Whaley Bridge.
- E. Left turn onto A5004 at Fernilee.
- F. **\*\*Right turn off A5004 onto road leading down to Sector 11 along the east side of Fernilee Reservoir.  
EXTREME CAUTION REQUIRED.\*\***
- G. The dismantled railway track along the eastern side of Fernilee Reservoir is closed to vehicles, but there may be the odd dog-walker/runner. Slow down if necessary, and make your presence known.
- H. **\*\*CONTRAFLOW from Pym Chair to the base of Sector 10 (The Corkscrew cobbled climb) - approx. 1500m. Narrow road with blind bend. KEEP LEFT! This sector will be marshalled. EXTREME CAUTION.\*\***
- I. The descent of the Corkscrew (Sector 6) is a gravel road. Not too steep, but caution required.
- J. **\*\*The end of this gravel road comes out at the base of the Corkscrew. CONTRAFLOW back up to Pym Chair- approx. 1500m. KEEP LEFT! EXTREME CAUTION.\*\***
- K. Pike Road/Ewrin Lane approach to Lamaload Reservoir is narrow and descends moderately steeply in places with tight turns. KEEP LEFT! CAUTION!
- L. The course crosses itself between the steep Woodbrook Road and Swiss Hill cobbled climbs (these are only 2km apart). This should not cause any confusion with signage, and operated successfully last year.
- M. Roundabout (A523) just west of Bollington. Caution required.
- N. Descent to junction of Kerridge Road with B5470 south of Bollington is steep and narrow in places.
- O. Return to Lyme Park via West Park Gate. **Several dog-walkers/runners on Bridleway.** There may be a few cars on the main drive through the park close to the Finish area. CAUTION!

Each of the cobbled sectors is potentially hazardous, especially if wet. There are some great tips from British Cycling about how to ride cobbles on this webpage:

<http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/insightzone/techniques/pedalling/article/izn20130412-Riding-the-Cobbles-0>,

and from Rapha at <http://road.cc/content/news/3065-how-ride-belgian-cobbles-video-tips-rapha-condor>

For anyone who has not yet experienced riding on cobbles, two bloggers from British Cycling recount their experiences on the cobbles of the Tour of Flanders and Paris-Roubaix here:

<http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/sportives/article/sp20140416--Oisin-s-blog--Tour-of-Flanders-0>

<http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/sportives/article/sp20140507--Blog--Madeleine-rides-Roubaix-0>

If this is your first time on cobbles, take it steady and feel your way in gradually. Again, try not to hold onto the bars too tightly and let the bike bounce.

One excellent way to tackle the Lapierre Cheshire Cobbled Classic is to ride with a small group of people who are of a similar ability to you; a group of four to five is perfect. Riding with people you know provides an enjoyable social experience, and many riders and clubs enter as groups. You can then take the cobbled sectors at your own pace and regroup at the top of the climbs. This enables the group to maintain a brisk pace on the normal and flatter paved roads, and then for everyone to really challenge themselves on the harder cobbled climbs without feeling that they are going to get dropped by the other riders, or that they are holding anyone back.

## 9. POST-RIDE

After crossing the finish line and passing the 'FINISH' banner, you should ensure that you do not impede the riders who are finishing behind you. If you do not finish the course or do not wish to return to the finish area, please let the organiser know by text message on 07708 648106 so that we do not have to send out a search party to look for you!

The National Trust café in the Timber Yard has good coffee and can also provide a range of foods.

## 11. DOS AND DON'TS

Do:

- Follow the Highway Code and be safe. This ride is non-competitive - therefore NOT a race. Please ensure you act accordingly when participating. Feel free to ride hard when it is safe to do so, but if vehicles, horses or runners/walkers are present please be extra careful and considerate to them. Some parts of the Tour of the Black Country use bridle paths which may sometimes be used by pedestrians and horses. It is essential that riders behave themselves in such circumstances. Our ability to run this event safely depends on riders being sensible and courteous to those with whom we share the roads and bridleways. Again, please be courteous to residents in the Alderley Edge area.
- Wear a helmet.
- Carry a phone.
- Make sure you are aware in advance of the areas of the course which have been highlighted above as requiring special caution and SLOW DOWN. Come to a complete stop if necessary.

**Don't:**

- Cross the dashed white lines in the middle of the road. This, regrettably, happens all too often - in sportives as well as races. There is plenty of opportunity to ride hard and fast without subjecting oneself and others to unnecessary risks.
- Ride in large groups more than two-abreast.
- Impede traffic flow.
- Behave in a manner that may offend others.
- Drop litter.



## 12. SPONSORS/EVENT PARTNERS

The Lapierre Cheshire Cobbled Classic is organized by Cycle Classics, who put on the [Lapierre Tour of the Black Country](#) (a Paris-Roubaix-inspired sportive featuring 19 unpaved/cobbled sectors and a velodrome finish), and the Strade-Bianche-themed [Lapierre White Roads Classic](#), which features 17 long white gravel/chalk sectors.

Please also support the sponsors and event partners who facilitate this event:

Photos: [www.sportivephoto.com](http://www.sportivephoto.com) and Henry Iddon [www.henryiddon.com](http://www.henryiddon.com)

Tyres and Wheels: Vittoria <https://www.facebook.com/VittoriaUK>  
Champagne and Beer: [www.thechampagnecompany.com](http://www.thechampagnecompany.com)

