

HIGHFIELDS ROLLERS CYCLING CLUB

Ride Captain Instructions



Introduction

Thank you for volunteering to be a Ride Captain. The Club owes its gratitude to everyone who volunteers as rider leaders because without them the activities of the Group would involve greater risk, and make operation of the Club difficult. As a ride leader you must be familiar with the following:

HRCC 'Bunch Riding and Etiquette' booklet.

Transport Operations (Road Use Management – Road Rules) Regulation 2009, Part 15, Additional rules for bicycle riders.

See the publications in References for further detailed information.

Responsibilities Of The Captain

As a ride captain you have several responsibilities to the club and to your fellow riders as leader. These responsibilities are:

- Announce yourself as the ride captain and immediately identify new riders (see below on welcoming new riders)
 - Have new riders pair off with a Group member.
 - Mention one topic from the HRCG 'Bunch Riding and Etiquette' booklet.
- Ensure that all riders have signed the Activity Book.
- Ensure the use of approved, securely fitted, road helmets. Ask riders without helmets to wear one.
- For rides to unusual destinations, ensure that sufficient HRCC members are thoroughly familiar with the route to provide guidance if needed.
- Have a basic tool kit available for riders use; tyre levers, patch kit, pump or other inflation means, Allen keys, etc.
- Carry a First Aid Kit and know how to use the items contained in it.
- Carry spare tubes, and mobile telephone.
- Remind riders to be courteous to motorist and to obey all traffic laws, this includes Stop signs in rural areas, and traffic signal lights.
- Remind riders that when 'Car back' is called on narrow roads, or beside unbroken centre lines, all riders should form a single line.
- Remind riders that when 'Car up' is called on single lane roads, all riders should form a single line. (see Highfields Rollers Cycling Club Inc, Bunch Riding Rules and Etiquette, for more details about the calls to be used in bunch rides.
- Also have riders indicate road hazards they come upon. This gives riders behind them ample warning.

The Pre-Ride Announcement

Introduction

Introduce yourself, and identify your 'sweeps' (an experienced rider who rides at the back of the bunch to assist with warnings and if riders have difficulty such as a mechanical problem), 'co captains', and other helpers. If the ride will be breaking into two or more groups, explain who will be leading each group.

If you don't already have someone to ride sweep, you may want to ask if anyone wants to volunteer.

If the group is small, and it is appropriate, you can also ask the riders to introduce themselves.

Remind riders that the club (and the law) requires you to wear an approved bicycle helmet.

Remind riders to make sure your bike is in good condition before every ride.

Let the group know that you will have inflation equipment, spare tube, patch kit, tire levers, and a full water bottle available for anyone in distress. Encourage riders to carry adequate equipment for their own use.

Remind the group to, 'eat before you're hungry', 'drink before you're thirsty'.

Welcome To New Riders

Ask if there are any riders who have never been on an HRCC ride and, if so, welcome them to the group.

Encourage the regular riders to check in with the newcomers during the ride and ensure that they're doing all right. In a group that rides together regularly, a new rider, shy or not, may not feel welcome if the regulars spend the entire ride talking among themselves.

Ask a regular rider to buddy up with the new rider. This ensures the new rider will not get lost, or left behind, and will return safely.

Pace Of The Ride

Announce the pace and explain what it means.

Ensure The Ride Will Stick Together

Remind all riders that HRCC rides stick together, and regroup at the top of hills if the bunch spreads out.

The Route

Briefly describe the ride, including food and rest stops, difficult hills, unusual or dangerous conditions, the first regrouping point, and hazards and tricky turns before that point.

Ride Safely

Talk about safe riding, and remind riders that each person is responsible for his or her own safety. They may have heard it all before, so say it some amusing or vivid way that they can't forget. You might emphasize that riding like lemmings is not a good idea. Or that just because the rider ahead of you made it through an intersection without being run over doesn't mean you can, too. Or that cars kill cyclists one at a time. You get the idea.

You can't teach safe cycling in the three minutes you have before people stop listening, so vary your safety announcement to fit the hazards of the ride. If you lead rides regularly, rotate topics from time to time. Point out the safety tips that you copied onto the back of your map or cue sheet, or that you provided on a separate sheet.

Obey Queensland Road Rules

Under the Queensland Road Rules, bicycles are legally considered vehicles. By law cyclists must obey all the general road rules. As a legitimate road user, a cyclist has the same rights and responsibilities as other road users. The club expects that you will as ride captain encourage our riders to do the right thing in obeying the road rules and set the example.

Caution riders are not to run stop lights or stop signs out of fear of being left behind.

Use hand and voice signals when turning or stopping.

Ride with traffic. Motorists don't look for bicycles going the wrong way.

Don't wear headphones while you're cycling. It's dangerous.

Some of the cyclist specific rules are:

When riding at night, or in conditions with reduced visibility, you must display on your bicycle, or your person:

A flashing or steady white light that is clearly visible for at least 200 metres from the front of the bicycle.

A flashing or steady red light that is clearly visible for at least 200 metres from the rear of the bicycle.

A red reflector on the rear of the bicycle that is clearly visible for at least 50 metres from the rear of the bicycle when shone upon by a vehicle's headlights on low beam.

It is also a good idea to wear high visibility or reflective clothing and safety vests to increase visibility.

We recommend that your 'sweeper' during bunch rides should wear a high visibility vest if available.

Important Road Rules

Riders should also be aware that having a bell on their bicycle is a requirement of the Rules.

Riding alongside another rider often causes confusion. It is often thought that bicycle riders are allowed to ride two abreast. This is technically correct (but we suggest not compulsory). The rule is really in two parts, the first part is how many riders you can ride alongside, and the second is about how far away you can ride –

The rider of a ... bicycle must not ride on a road that is not a multi-lane road alongside more than 1 other rider, unless [the rider is overtaking other riders].

If the rider of a ... bicycle is riding on a road that is not a multi-lane road alongside another rider, or in a marked lane alongside another rider in the marked lane, the rider must ride not over 1.5m from the other rider.

Watch Out For Hazards

Make eye contact with drivers so you know that they've seen you.

Cross railroad tracks at a 90° angle.

Look ahead for road hazards (glass, potholes, wide cracks, metal grates, gravel, and so on), and point them out to other riders. This is extra important when the road is wet.

Check for traffic yourself. Scan the road in front of you, behind you, and around you.

Watch for car doors opening in your path.

Use voice and hand signals to communicate with other riders, especially when you're riding close together.

Be Courteous

Ask riders to be courteous. Drivers who are impressed with the courtesy of a group of cyclists will be more inclined to treat other cyclists with respect.

Take a full lane when safety dictates. If you're delaying five or more vehicles, pull off the road at the next turnout to allow them to pass.

If you stop for any reason, move yourself and your bicycle completely off the road or track.

On multi-use tracks and footpaths, yield to pedestrians. Slow down when other people are present, and slow to a walking pace if safety dictates.

Pass on the right, and use a bell or your voice to alert others that you're passing. A simple on shout of 'passing' is more than sufficient.

Group Riding Techniques

For the benefit of new riders, mention group riding techniques, including:

Riding single-file in traffic

Make it clear that riders are not to block traffic by riding two or more abreast.

When there's traffic behind you, ride single-file so cars can pass.

Limit pace lines to eight or fewer.

Riding on left half of tracks

If you'll be riding on trails, remind riders to stay on the left half of the track and to be considerate of other track users.

Hand signals

Remind riders to use hand signals for turning or stopping. It's also a good idea to point out road hazards. Proper hand signals are always given using your right arm. Your right arm straight out means you're turning right, right arm bent at the elbow and straight up means you are turning right and left arm bent at the elbow and straight down means you are stopping.

Voice signals

Give riders a quick overview of voice signals: 'Car up / back / left / right,' 'Passing' to indicate that you're passing another rider or a pedestrian, 'Glass / pothole / etc.' to indicate road hazards (combined with hand signals as appropriate). Emphasize that 'Car back' means a car is coming from behind, so riders should start riding single file.

Remind riders that 'Clear' is a subjective and temporary condition, so riders should always look for themselves.

Watch Out For Other Cyclists

Remind riders to watch out for one another. On a group ride, they're much more likely to have an accident with one another than they are with a car.

Special Equipment Required (Lights?)

Remind riders about any special equipment that's required for the ride (for example, lights or lunches).

Keep The Ride Leader Informed

Ask riders to pass the word if someone leaves or breaks down, and to notify you if they're planning to leave the ride before the end.

Ask If Anyone Has A First-Aid Kit, Or Mobile Telephone

Ask if anyone else has a first-aid kit, first-aid training, or a mobile telephone.

After-Ride Refreshments

If you're going somewhere after the ride for a meal or a snack, tell everyone where you're going now. You probably won't get a chance after the ride because everyone will scatter to the four winds.

QUESTIONS?

Ask if there are any questions. Encourage riders to ask questions if they are unsure of any riding technique or the road rules.

References

Publications

Highfields Rollers Cycling Club Inc, Etiquette Guidelines By-law 2012 – Bunch Riding Rules and Etiquette, Highfields, 2011

Department of Transport and Main Roads, Queensland Road Rules for cyclists, Brisbane, May 2011.

Legislation

Transport Operations (Road Use Management – Road Rules) Regulation 2009 s 151

Transport Operations (Road Use Management – Road Rules) Regulation 2009 pt 15

Additional rules for bicycle riders.

Available at

<http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/T/TrantOpRURR09.pdf>

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