

GROUP RIDE ETIQUETTE AND PACELINE BASICS

Primary Objectives: BE SAFE, BE SMOOTH

Always stay cool, calm and relaxed. Be predictable. Pedal Smooth. Ride in a straight line. The benefit of a paceline is to allow faster speeds and at the same time allows riders to rest while drafting in the slipstream of others.

Safety:

- ✓ Obey the rules of the road and adhere to all traffic laws.
- ✓ Ride no more than two (2) abreast and single paceline in traffic.
- ✓ DO NOT ride along the center line of the road!!
- ✓ Stay completely out of the road when stopped or waiting.
- ✓ DO NOT ride in aero bars while in a group or paceline.

Communicate:

- ✓ Use hand signals to indicate turns (left and right), stopping and slowing.
- ✓ Use verbal warnings. This includes warnings for turns, stopping and slowing.
- ✓ Point out and announce hazards in the road. This includes holes, bumps, road kill, gravel, sand, pedestrians, cars, etc, anything disruptive to a cyclist.

Group Ride Basics:

Paceline - a string of riders who alternate turns riding at the front, pulling then resting by sitting in, drafting in the slip stream of the other riders.

Drafting – riding a slipstream, or pocket of moving air, created by the rider in front. This enables the second rider to maintain speed with less effort.

NO SUDDEN MOVEMENTS

- ✓ Riders need to ride straight steadily and smooth. Your riding affects all other riders in the group, so be consistent safe and predictable
- ✓ Always be aware of what is happening around you.
- ✓ If you brush shoulders, hands, or bars with another rider, do not panic. Stay relaxed and allow your upper body to absorb any bumps.
- ✓ DO NOT slam on the brakes. Slowly, smoothly and calmly slide out of the paceline. Once you are clear, then slowly decelerate before stopping off the side of the road. If you are at the back, calmly let others know you have had a mishap.
- ✓ ALWAYS be considerate to other cyclists and motorists. Your actions reflect up the club, your sponsors and the cycling community as a whole.

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Drafting:

- ✓ Ride a comfortable distance behind the wheel in front of you. Begin riding 2-3 feet away and work up to closer distances as you start to feel more comfortable. Practice helps!!
- ✓ Do not fixate on the wheel in front of you. Look beyond the rider directly in front of you to see what is up the road. Be aware of what is in front of you
- ✓ Do not overlap wheels. If you touch wheels, the rider behind should smoothly and calmly slow down. The rider in front should maintain his line and pedaling.
- ✓ DO NOT slam on brakes. If you roll up on the rider in front of you, easy pedal and smoothly ease to one side. Allow the wind to slow you down.
- ✓ Avoid gaps. If a gap does open, smoothly and slowly accelerate to close it.
- ✓ DO NOT "Attack" to close a gap. This creates more gaps with the riders behind you. If a rider opens a gap and cannot close it (he's "cooked") then smoothly and slowly accelerate around him to close the gap.
- ✓ DO NOT sling/rock your bike back when going from a sitting to a standing position (ex. on a hill). Many riders do not notice this, but when most riders quickly stand to accelerate, they throw their bike back possibly causing the rider behind them to react. When standing, put extra pressure on the pedals and stand up slowly. On the flip side, when approaching a hill, be aware of the rider in front of you and anticipate any slight loss of momentum from the rider in front of you.
- ✓ When riding downhill, do not slam on the brakes. Slowly and smoothly move to either side of the rider in front of you and allow the wind to help maintain your speed. Allow a little more room for reaction time due to the higher speeds.

Passing and Pulling:

- ✓ Generally, the lead rider will pull off to the left. There are some exceptions to this rule, but this is typically limited to experienced riders in echelons during windy conditions.
- ✓ DO NOT accelerate when taking the lead!! The lead rider should pull off to the side and smoothly decrease speed. The second rider should maintain the speed of the group. If the speed is to be increased, do so slowly and smoothly.
- ✓ Allow the rider to regroup at the back and benefit from the draft. Remember, he just did a pull and is probably a little tired. If you surge, the rider pulling off or even the group may take exception to the acceleration.
- ✓ When pulling at the front, maintain the speed of the group. Do not stay on the front so long that you decrease the speed of the group.

REMEMBER - BE SAFE, BE SMOOTH

Gently Borrowed Text from Jackson Metro Cyclist 2003.