

Ride Leader Role

1. Maintain the speed guidelines of the group. This involves both pulling back riders who exceed the group speeds and, allowing riders who fall behind the group to drop back to following groups. In a pace line, leaders need to be aware if the speed has exceeded the guidelines, and slow the pace themselves when they are in the outside line. This works really well, more so in a smaller group. This can be hard to do in a large group and perhaps a senior rider in a different line to the leader can be co-opted to assist. This is with the exception of group 4 who will need to work to the weakest rider, provided the average speed is still maintained at 26kph.
2. Encourage participation of ALL riders. The rides are developmental, so riders should be encouraged to work through the entire ride where able. This will ensure that riders work in the most appropriate group and contribute to the group. They should not be encouraged to sit on the group for long periods of time. This is also in keeping with developing riders to move up in the groups if they wish.
3. Maintain an awareness of the group. They should position themselves within the group so as to maintain contact with the majority of the riders. This may mean during the hills, sitting towards the rear of the front riders to allow contact with riders at the back end. The leaders may need to position themselves closer to the back than the front. Riders appearing likely to miss the 2 min cut off need to be encouraged to take a short cut, and/or inform the ride leader that they are taking a shortcut OR wait for the next group.
4. Groups need to maintain a minimum distance (e.g. 300m min). At no time should groups combine or overtake each other. It is the responsibility of the following group to maintain a distance.
5. Use discretion to divide groups. Numbers greater than 20, (a) increase the unruliness of a group, (b) increase the likelihood of accidents and (c) decrease training opportunities for each rider. Groups can be split at the ride leaders discretion to create two pace lines travelling at a safe distance and allowing for safe passing of motorists.
6. Ride leaders can enlist the assistance of other riders if necessary, but should not give control of the group to another rider except if absolutely necessary (injury or mechanical failure). If the ride leader asks another rider to sweep the group or take a lead, it is courtesy to wait for that rider.
7. Where a rider punctures, they can be picked up by the next group. Ride leaders are responsible for the behaviour of the entire group so should not stay back with an individual. It may be appropriate to ask another rider to remain with the punctured rider if they are a novice.
8. Ride leaders need to maintain their own fitness and only lead groups they are capable of controlling. ie they should be able to bridge gaps to bring the pace down if necessary and should not be dropped on the ride.
9. Be consistent with safety messages. Regardless of who the rule breaker is and their position within the club.
10. Rider leaders can use regroup points to highlight group ride etiquette rules that occur during the ride. i.e. if a rider has moved to the front of the paceline and no-one has come through, then it may be a sign that you are going too fast.
11. Group 4 ride is really a developmental ride so they often will require extra guidance and tuition throughout the ride. At the start, leaders may wish to highlight a skill area that he/she will focus on and give feedback at regroup points. I know there are some leaders who do not like to do this. But as it is a developmental ride, we need to try and improve the skills of these riders.

12. Leaders need to know if riders leave the route/take a shortcut. This is where our riders need to be educated. Most are good at this already.

13. Set an example regarding safety. (But none of us are perfect and we all make discretions, as long as it is not too often!)

14. If leaders observe unsafe actions, tactfully suggest to the riders to ride safe.

15. New riders in a group should have a buddy assigned to them at the start of a ride. This person points out the course if necessary and basically is at least one person who the new rider can talk to! I have seen new riders on a ride at the front and not know where to go.

16. Ride leaders do not necessarily have to ride at the front for much of the course. It is appropriate to lead the group at the start until the paceline starts. Sometimes the leader may need to go to the front when there is a single line in order to slow the pace down.

17. Leaders need to be aware that they are dealing with adults most of the time. Treat them accordingly. Suggestions to riders can be made by being cool and calm, calls etc are non emotive. We want to ensure that we are friendly.