



Road Ride Leader (RRL) Guidance

It is very much appreciated that you are or are becoming a Road Ride Leader. These few notes will hopefully help to guide you in the role, please ask if you have any further questions.

1. PLANNING A RIDE

- a) Plan the route and stick to it. Riders find comfort in committing to a pre-planned route. Only alter the route in exceptional circumstances.
- b) Post up the ride on the Road Biking section of the forum preferably two days in advance
 - i) detail the meeting place, the day and time
 - ii) explain the route, the approximate ride distance and the average speed of the ride
 - iii) detail any big climbs, especially if this combined with distance might make it tricky for someone stepping up a group
 - iv) mention any weather concerns including the need for rear lights and appropriate clothing, food and fluid for the ride, spare tubes and levers and the mandatory helmet.
 - v) mention that no-one is left behind on the ride.
 - vi) if the RRL cannot take the ride, it is the RRL's responsibility to identify and engage cover.

2. BEFORE SETTING OFF

- a) **ROUTE** - make sure you know the route clearly, with map or garmin (a map of the route is useful to give to another RRL if group splits)
- b) **MEETING** - aim to be at the meeting point ahead of others to be able to chat with those joining your group, find out who is in your group and their names
- c) **BRIEFING** - give a short briefing about where it's going and how flat / hilly the route is to those that haven't seen it on the forum – check if any riders are stepping up from one of the other groups
 - i) **DEVELOPMENT GROUP** – provide an **extended** briefing to include :-
'shouts', riding in twos, riding discipline, spelling up, looking after each other, staying together, communication. Emphasise the importance of SBC's Code of Conduct.
All new riders to the Club are required to take their first ride in the Development group.
This gives them an opportunity to learn our club calls and also for the RRL to assess the new rider's skills in group riding.
- d) **EXPECTED HAZARDS** - warn of known hazards at start and along the way, such as steep descents, dangerous junctions etc
- e) **RULES OF THE ROAD** - remind all riders of the need to comply with the Highway Code and to make their own decisions at junctions and hazards; it's not the RRL's duty to decide for others when to go.
- f) **HEADCOUNT** - remember to take a headcount at start and at regular intervals
- g) **GROUP SIZE** - maximum 16, if 17 then you must split the group. Leave a good gap between groups on the road to allow vehicles to pass and pull in between groups. Appoint a Ride Leader of split off group and ensure they know the route.
- h) **UNDER 18** – RRLs should acquaint themselves with the Club Policy for accompanying those under 18 years old on a club ride.



3. DURING THE RIDE

- a) Stick to the advertised distance. The distance may be shortened due to weather, etc at the discretion of the RRL. The advertised distance should only be exceeded in the most exceptional of circumstances (e.g. road closure, exhausted riders/less hilly route, etc).
- b) **RIDING DISCIPLINE**
 - i) ride in twos and stay compact
 - ii) maintain a steady speed which suits all riders in the group
 - iii) carry out regular checks to ensure that all in the group are content with speed
 - iv) do NOT permit half-wheeling, springing-off the front of the group or racing
 - v) ensure that the front two riders spell-up at regular intervals
 - vi) RRLs have the discretion to allow individual riders in the group to make their own way up a climb or down a descent, re-grouping at the top of the climb or at the foot of the descent is essential
 - vii) a 'habble' is permissible at the end of a ride but only within the last mile or so of a ride.
- c) **COMMUNICATION** - encourage good communication about hazards using hand and vocal signals. Front of group needs to communicate with the back of the group once across a junction to ensure group back together before pressing on. RRLs to encourage the riders to shout out if the pace is too fast.
- d) **FOOD & DRINK** - stops for refuelling are important as some riders cannot drink / eat on the move
- e) **FATIGUE** - encourage riders to eat before hungry, drink before thirsty, but if it's too late and someone is exhausted / has 'bonked', then suggest gels, sharing others' food if theirs is finished, shelter in the middle of the pack as the least energy is required here
- f) **MECHANICAL EVENTS** – in the event of a puncture or 'mechanical' the whole group MUST stop and wait. Assistance should be offered to fix the fault by someone in the group (can help to speed things up!). If there is a mechanical issue which is not resolvable the rider must NOT be left unless a clear plan for their return is known. The group will stay with the breakdown until the RRL is satisfied that the broken bike and rider have a clear and safe plan for being recovered. Additionally, the RRL must assess, after a short period of group waiting, whether continued waiting is detrimental to some of the group (possible hypothermia, etc) and then decide whether to send a sub-group on with a temporary RRL.
- g) **TRAFFIC** – in the event of a 'tail' of traffic behind the group, do not be tempted to 'wave them through' as it could embroil club members in legal argument in the event of an accident.
- h) **ACCIDENTS** – in the event of an accident, the group will stop and render first aid assistance as appropriate. RRL should be carrying a club-supplied first aid kit which is then available for anyone to use. The RRL will be responsible for arranging the emergency service(s) as required.
- i) **WEATHER** - be aware that in fog it could be very difficult for a vehicle to pass the group as the driver cannot see ahead to see that it is safe to overtake. If visibility is down to 100 metres then riders should split into groups of 4 and ride single file to give vehicles the chance to overtake. In freezing conditions consider altering the route to stay on main gritted roads when roads are icy and adapt route as necessary along the way.

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