

## MCC Group Ride Etiquette

### MCC Group Ride Etiquette: A few starting points

- Be considerate to your fellow riders.
- Be polite to cars, fall into a single line when someone announces "Car back!" or "Car up!" Signal defects in the road which could cause harm to your fellow riders. If you are in the front, you are the eyes of the entire group.
- Have fun.

Before the ride:

- Check your equipment before you arrive at group rides, making sure your bike is working properly and that you have drink, food, repair items for your bike.
- Arrive to the group ride with plenty of time to get ready (we suggest 15 min. early)
- Determine the best group for your abilities A, B, C, or D. Group leaders will try to keep individual groups to less than 15 people.

### General definitions of the group levels

- A-Ride – This is the fastest group. Some of these riders race, others are just out for a spirited ride; most use this as a training ride. In some cases, the A riders may wait for "dropped" riders, but new riders to the group should carefully check with the group on planned distance and pace prior to departing. (Many of these riders have stiff necks, preventing them from turning to see behind them!)
- B-Ride – Comprised of riders who are not as focused or as competitive as the A ride. Generally, the group is comprised of people who like riding fast in a group, but do not adhere to a strict training / race objective. The group may still cover 50 miles on a long evening group ride. At times A-level riders may join the Bs for a "restful" ride. "A" riders should not force the pace to the detriment of the rest of this group.
- C-Ride – Experienced riders and/or ambitious novices who want to learn new routes, enjoy good company and occasional conversation, and can handle long rides, but not breakneck speeds. A large range of abilities is characteristic of the C rides, and therefore regroupings is the norm. C rides will involve waiting at multiple times for all riders to catch back up. If you don't want to wait, move to the Bs! B-riders looking for a more restful ride should not force the pace to the detriment of the regular rest of the group.
- D-Ride – Our "beginner" group. This group is appropriate for riders who are new to road cycling or who are interested in learning how to ride in a relaxed group. It's the perfect environment to learn basic group riding skills and safety. Participants are encouraged to

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ask any questions of group leaders around any issues in road cycling. Length and routes for this group will be decided based upon turnout, assessing the skill and interest level of the group. More advanced riders are welcome to ride with the D group, but must not force the pace to the detriment of the rest of the group.

### How to ride in a paceline

Ride in the paceline as if in a team time trial (ride for the betterment of the group).

- Only go the pace of the slowest rider.
- Everyone should come to the front and rotate off to the left. (More pointers can be found at Planet Ultra on the Internet (visit - [www.planetultra.com/training/rbr/paceline.html](http://www.planetultra.com/training/rbr/paceline.html)).
- Stronger riders take longer “pulls” (1-3 minutes max). Slower riders take shorter pulls (10-20 seconds). **Remember:** leading the paceline is not an exercise in “macho,” but rather to serve the group. Burning yourself out in front does not help the group.
- Return to the back as quickly as possible. This minimizes the time that a rider spends out in traffic and reduces the effort made by the group to cut through the wind. Soft pedal as the group moves past you on the right and watch for the end of the line, accelerating slightly as you anticipate the last rider, slipping right in behind that rider.
- Where possible, the pace line should stay to the right of the white line, with enough room for the leader to come off the front and stay to the right of the white line on their return to the back. This keeps riders and cars separated.
- Half wheeling: Many group ride accidents occur as a result of the front wheel being half way across the rear wheel of the forward rider. If the forward rider swerves, the person in back will crash. To avoid this dangerous situation, the rider in the back owns the responsibility, and should only “half wheel” when absolutely forced to do so.

**Remember:** Town line sprints, breakaways and other competitive riding can be fun and help make the group ride exciting. Groups can do these things while still being considerate of the entire group.