

Cleveland Wheelers Cycling Club

Group Riding

These are basic rules to be observed when riding in a group so that the ride is safe and enjoyable.

- When riding with the club, please remember you are representing the Cleveland Wheelers and need to conduct yourself accordingly. Bad riding could get the club a bad name. Be courteous at all times, do not respond to, shout or wave abuse at motorists at any time, even if they are in the wrong. Stick to the guidelines below and remember that riding in a neat orderly fashion makes the group look more professional.
- A club run is not a race, it's a group ride. Do not attack off the front to show how strong you are.
- Strava - Chasing Strava segments on a club run is not permitted as it disrupts the group. The only exception being major climbs if there are any, and the final burn up if this is agreed as part of the run. Please keep Strava segments to your own training sessions.
- Ride in pairs. Do not "half wheel" your partner. That is riding slightly faster than your partner so that your wheel is slightly ahead of theirs. This results in the speed gradually increasing and leads to disorganisation of the group.
- The gap between a rear wheel and the front wheel of the following rider should be small, up to about a metre, depending on the following rider's competence. This is important as it keeps the group compact and makes it easier for traffic to overtake the group. Ride slightly to one side of the wheel you are following so that you have a view ahead and in case the rider ahead slows unexpectedly. Otherwise do not overlap the wheel in front. When getting out of the saddle make it a smooth transition so that the bike doesn't thrust back towards the following rider. Keep your riding smooth at all times.
- There should be no gaps in a group. If there is a space in front of you, fill it - even if this means you have to talk to someone other than your mate. Similarly, if there is a gap on your inside, move over to fill that space.
- Although the urge to be first to the top of a major climb is irresistible it should be firmly resisted on every little pimple; this is annoying as it disturbs the rhythm of the group, drops out riders who may be at their limit and causes the group to become disorganised and more difficult for traffic to overtake.
- On descents stick to your lines. Keep to the left and overtake on the right. Allow plenty of room when overtaking. Remember we are not riding on closed roads.
- Riders on the front should shout and point out any hazards (pot holes, debris, parked cars, pedestrians, etc). The warnings should be passed back through the group so that all riders are aware of the danger. Never swerve suddenly or brake sharply in a group. Ride straight over the hazard if necessary rather than braking or swerving. The front riders should also shout back at a junction to indicate whether the way is clear or not and wait for the whole group to cross the junction.
- The group should always wait for riders who have a problem be it mechanical or otherwise. If it is a mechanical problem that cannot be resolved it is up to the rider concerned to find their way home.
- The group should collectively ensure that no-one is left behind and that anybody who is dropped has no health problems, knows where they are, and is able to get home. Riders towards the rear have a responsibility to keep the rest of the group informed about riders who have any problem.
- The average speed of each club run is decided at the start. If there is a fast group it is restricted to riders who are experienced at riding fast in a group and capable of taking their turn at the front. If you begin to struggle consider cutting it short and getting advice if needed. You may want to consider moving up or down the ability groups on your following run out.

Safety and dealing with other road users

- Observe all aspects of the Highway Code and always ride on the left hand side of the road. See rules for cyclists 59 to 82. Pay particular attention to rule 66. **Never** ride more than two abreast.
- Ride in twos in tight formation so that traffic can pass more easily. Shout “car back” to indicate traffic behind and close any gaps to make the group as compact as possible. Do not automatically single out because this makes the group twice as long and harder for traffic to overtake safely. On narrow single track roads it may be necessary to single out on a straight section when it is safe for a vehicle to pass. The riders to the outside should then drop in behind the rider on their inside.
- When passing horses **ALWAYS** shout “Bike!” or other such warning in good time to make the rider and horse aware that you are approaching from behind. If a horse appears startled always be prepared to slow or stop if necessary. Give horses plenty of room and take into account other traffic.
- Give pedestrians and other cyclists plenty of room and shout a warning if necessary.

General Points

- The Cleveland Wheelers **strongly** recommend you always wear a helmet and appropriate clothing for the time of year.
- Between 1st October and 31st March the Cleveland Wheelers request you have mudguards fitted. This not only keeps your bike clean and helps prevent damage but it prevents road grime from flicking up into the following rider's eyes and mouth. We do not expect everyone to own a fully kitted out winter bike, but various retro fit mudguards can be fitted to race bikes. Riders without mudguards must ride at the back of the group during this period.
- Inappropriate language – the club run is for everyone including children, so no swearing please.
- No littering! If you have brought it to the club run take it home, unless you can dispose of it properly en-route.
- **Always** keep a well maintained bike (gears, brakes, tyres, chain etc).
- **Always** carry at least two spare inner tubes, tyre levers, pump, phone, emergency contact details and some ID.
- Other tools such as allen keys, a chain tool and a magic link are desirable.
- In winter and poor visibility always have front and rear lights. The Cleveland Wheelers recommends two front and two rear for in case one fails. Always wear some form of reflective gear and don't forget the importance of being seen from the side! Keep hold of those wheel reflectors that came fitted to your new bike and use them on your winter bike.

A Finer Point - Peeling Off

Riding in pairs it's unreasonable to expect the front two do all the work while those behind derive the benefit of the shelter they provide. Of course the leading riders may decide that they want to stay there but if they decide to have a rest, this is the accepted way to do it: -

- The rider on the right pulls in front of the rider on his left and the rider behind him moves up to the front followed by the riders on the right all moving up one place to fill the gap in front of them. The effect is that the riders all move round in an anti clockwise direction.
- **The points described here are firstly to keep you safe and secondly to maximise the enjoyment for you and your fellow riders. Most importantly though, enjoy the riding. Have fun but be safe and considerate.**

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