

Deveron Cycling Club – Club Run Rules and Etiquette

A Club run provides the opportunity to have fun and at the same time improve confidence and develop group riding skills.

Below are some expectations/guidance for members whilst participating in any Club run.

Vehicles Overtaking the Group - Do not "wave through" a following vehicle that is waiting to overtake, let the driver make this decision. This will avoid the risk of the individual/Club being held responsible if the overtaking results in any form of accident.

Next of Kin – The Club recommends that all members carry emergency contact details with them at all times when participating in any Club activity. Please also ensure that the Club Treasurer is informed of any changes to emergency contact details.

Helmets – Whilst the wearing of helmets is not a legal requirement, riders are strongly encouraged to do so. Riders must also come equipped wearing suitable clothing for the weather conditions which can change during the course of a ride.

Bike Condition – Bikes should be well maintained and in a roadworthy condition at all times. Riders are responsible for their own bike and carrying appropriate spares (inner tubes, pump and tools) for roadside maintenance as required. Working front and rear lights should be used when conditions dictate.

Mudguards - The use of mudguards is encouraged, particularly over the winter months when road conditions are wet/dirty. If you choose not to fit mudguards (not all bikes are suitable for this) then please be mindful when riding in front of others.

Food/Drink - The majority of Club runs will involve a café stop at some point but riders must ensure they carry sufficient food/drink for the ride.

Groupings

A Club run will attract a number of riders with different abilities and desires. In order to cater for everyone's wishes, a number of different groups will exist which may depart at different times and run at different paces.

First of all you must pick the correct group to go with. If you are new then it is better to pick a slower paced group so you can then gauge where you should be. Club runs are there to maintain fitness and to be enjoyed, but are not races. All members of the group have a responsibility to keep the run safe, keep the group together and moving smoothly.

During the first half of a club run - please resist the temptation to breakout of the group. It is much more effective and better for morale for the group as a whole to keep together and maintain a common pace and stay together.

The second half - most riders will begin to tire during the second hour. This is where the group should be supporting the weaker riders and the stronger riders should start to do the bulk of the turns at the front. But the pace should be kept steady so that all riders can keep up.

Deveron Cycling Club – Club Run Rules and Etiquette

The last 5 miles - by this point (normally the old Portsoy road), the end is in sight (normally the Boyndie Centre) and for the stronger riders to begin to wind up the pace and get on the big ring. This is an acceptable practice and one that is satisfying if you have managed to stay with the group for the whole ride.

General

- a) It is best that the group rides in pairs two abreast when on roads that are not too narrow or busy. You do not have to single out every time a car appears behind you. If you are on a wide highway and you are bunched closely together then let the car choose their time to overtake. Cars will give a group that is doubled up more space than a single line which is spread out.
- b) Keep close to the person beside you and keep your wheels in line. Keep about a foot away from the cyclist in front of you with your wheel slightly to the side to avoid the touching of wheels. Never allow your front wheel to get in front of the rear wheel of the rider in front. It takes only a slight swerve by the rider in front and it is very easy to take your own front wheel out and bring you crashing to the ground.
- c) Avoid braking suddenly when there is a cyclist behind you as this will cause a reaction throughout the group and possibly a crash.
- d) At times riders elect to stand up to stretch or maintain their personal comfort. This is acceptable but please ensure you maintain a constant speed when doing so.
- e) Keep your eyes on the road ahead and not the wheel in front of you.
- f) Do not let gaps appear in the group as this will cause the group to split. Shout 'easy' to slow up the group if it is going too fast. It is important to hold a wheel properly as this will save you 25% more effort.
- g) It is inevitable that the group will split on hills. It is safer to descend in a single line which is spread out a bit. Stronger climbers will always get to the top first. What is important is that you regroup after and continue. If you don't wait for the weaker riders, then they will be chasing the group for quite a while and thus making themselves even weaker.
- h) Do not attack the group and take off on your own especially if you have been letting the stronger cyclists pull you along. This is really bad form and it disrupts the pace of the group. If you do this then you can consider yourself to no longer be part of the club run. If you feel strong then get to the front and take a turn.
- i) Stay with your group. If you think it is too slow for you and then go off on your own then you are no longer part of the club run. If a faster group comes through then jump on the back of it if you wish, but please tell someone in your group.
- j) Passing Other riders – At times there will be a need to overtake other riders, please make your intentions known so other riders are aware and always pass on the right side of any riders, a

Deveron Cycling Club – Club Run Rules and Etiquette

simple call such as “coming through on the right” is all that is required. Please do not undertake a rider on the left.

- k) Half-wheeling is the phrase given to riding half a wheel in front of your mate on the front in an attempt to encourage them to ride quicker and quicker. This is bad form, but usually a sub-conscious act. So if your mate is doing it to you then tell them (politely the first time). If you see it happening to somebody else then point it out. And at the end of the day if your mate keeps doing it to you then just let them go – he/she will look daft 5m in front of you and soon get the message.
- l) While riding in twos is usually reasonable safe and allows conversation between riders, sometimes the roads are so narrow that we have to move into single file. The recommended technique for achieving this is to allow the rider who is already riding in the required line to maintain a steady pace and move to the front. The rider who has to change his line must slow slightly and drop in behind. Usually this means that the inside rider maintains his pace and goes to the front and the rider on the outside drops behind.
- m) Please don't be tempted to sprint ahead from the outside position. This only causes the group to be riding at different speeds and can be quite disruptive. The effects can sometimes take a mile for the group to reform into a compact formation and while this happens, the weaker riders are left trying to catch-up with the faster riders thus making them more tired and more likely to be dropped again on the next climb.
- n) Always stop and help anyone with mechanicals or punctures.
- o) Do not turn round when cycling with someone behind you. You may lose concentration then crash. Best practice is to put your hand on your partner's shoulder then turn round.
- p) Do not use your mobile whilst cycling nor wear headphones.
- q) Do not litter. When out on a club run you are representing and promoting the club and littering will not put the club in a favourable light. If you deliberately drop litter then the run will halt and you will be asked to pick it up. There are occasions when you may accidentally drop litter but please make an effort to stop and pick it up. Refusals to do so will result in you being told to leave the run.
- r) Do not get involved in road rage with motorists. Cars are bigger than you and they could hurt other members of the club.
- s) Do not shout or swear at any members of the club during a run.

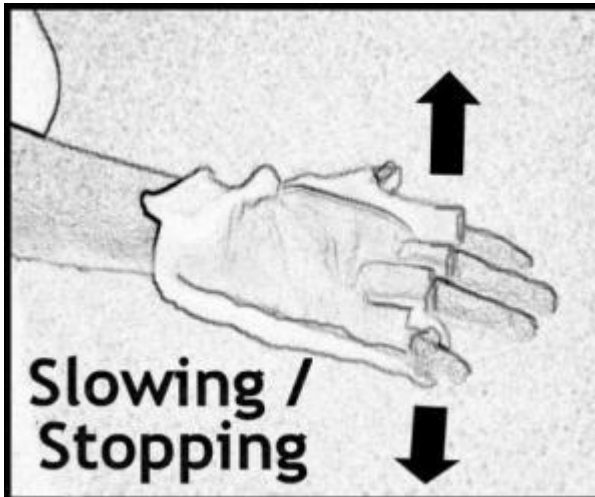
Deveron Cycling Club – Club Run Rules and Etiquette

Communication

When out on the road, communication is one of the keys to the safety of all riders in a group. Sometimes a shout is necessary but often a rider at the front of a group will be facing away from those behind and will use hand signals to indicate hazards or recommended actions to those behind. Knowing what signals to use and what they mean is essential when riding in any group. Make the signals with plenty notice and not at the last second.

Shown below are some of the most commonly-used signals and what they mean:

HAND SIGNALS ON THE ROAD



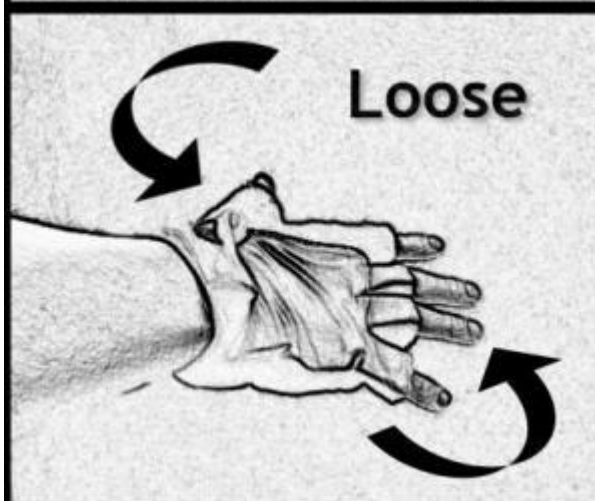
SLOWING / STOPPING

A flat hand motioned up and down by a rider indicates slowing or stopping for an obstacle or hazard ahead. This is also used for approaching horses who may startle at a bunch of cyclists approaching quickly.



HOLE/COVER

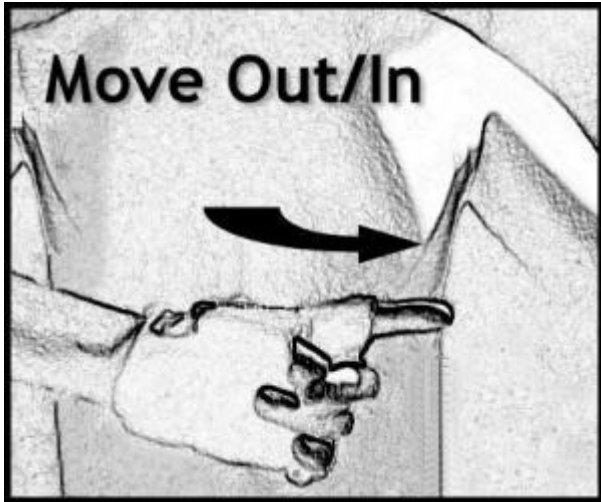
A finger pointing at the road indicates a pothole, cover or fixed hazard on the road surface. Used with or without a shout of 'hole' or 'cover'.



LOOSE

A flat hand with fingers spread that is waved over the road surface - with or without a shout of 'loose' - indicates a loose surface (ie gravel, mud etc) that could cause loss of traction.

Deveron Cycling Club – Club Run Rules and Etiquette



MOVE OUT/IN

A rider pointing or waving behind their back is indicating that riders behind should move out (or if mirrored, in) to avoid a pedestrian, parked vehicle, slower cyclist, on-coming vehicle crossing white lines etc.

SHOUTS

It is always a good idea to 'shout out' hazards as well as indicating them. Often a rider at the back of a group will shout out '**TAIL**' to warn the group of traffic coming up behind the group and '**CAR UP**' when a vehicle behind a group is coming through.

Similarly, '**HEAD**' or '**NOSE**' indicates to a group that a car is approaching in the opposite direction and riders (particularly on narrow roads) may need to keep tight on their side of the road.

As indicated above **LOOSE** is a shout indicating a loose surface such as gravel, broken tarmac, chippings or any surface that might cause loss of traction in dry weather.

'**STEADY**' or '**EASY**' is a warning for everyone to slow down – it could be a Give Way, a road junction with car coming, a vehicle in front slowing down or just the ride leader giving stragglers or those left behind at a junction the chance to re-join the pack etc.

When turning at a T junction, '**CLEAR**' is an indication that the road is **completely** clear in both directions. If riders are turning left, '**CLEAR RIGHT**' indicates that there are no vehicles approaching from the right of the junction so a left turn is possible. BUT PLEASE NOTE: A shout of 'clear' is never ever a justification for not checking and pulling out. It is every rider's responsibility to ensure the road is clear for them. These shouts are for assistance and smooth flow NOT guidance as to what you should or shouldn't do. Cars can come round corners quickly and clear one minute might be busy when you reach the junction. '**STOP**' is a command to stop at the junction because of traffic or hazards.

'**PUNCTURE**' and '**MECHANICAL**' are two other obvious but extremely important shouts, either to warn riders behind you that you are likely to slow or to warn riders in front that you are going off the back with a problem.