



Red Knights Motorcycle Club

Hamilton Chapter



Group Riding Rules

Introduction

Group riding requires some special skills and a willingness to co-operate instead of competing. Performed correctly, riding in a large group can be a lot of fun; however, if done incorrectly, a group ride can be dangerous for the riders as well as the public.

The main point to remember as an individual riding within a group is that you have to relinquish a little freedom and accept more responsibility for yourself, for the benefit of the group as a whole. It takes only one rider acting as an individual to destroy the whole concept of a group.

Safety, bike riding, socializing and providing a positive image of bike riders are the main aims for the Red Knights. Socializing can be done prior to, at rest stops, and at the end of rides. Safety, riding skills and the representation of our Club are performed on the road. Our actions will be interpreted by the public, though be it just or unjust, as a “typical biker image” if we do not act responsibly. Therefore it is imperative that when riding as a group, or individually with colours, that we exercise foresight and consideration.

Key Appointments

Road Captain

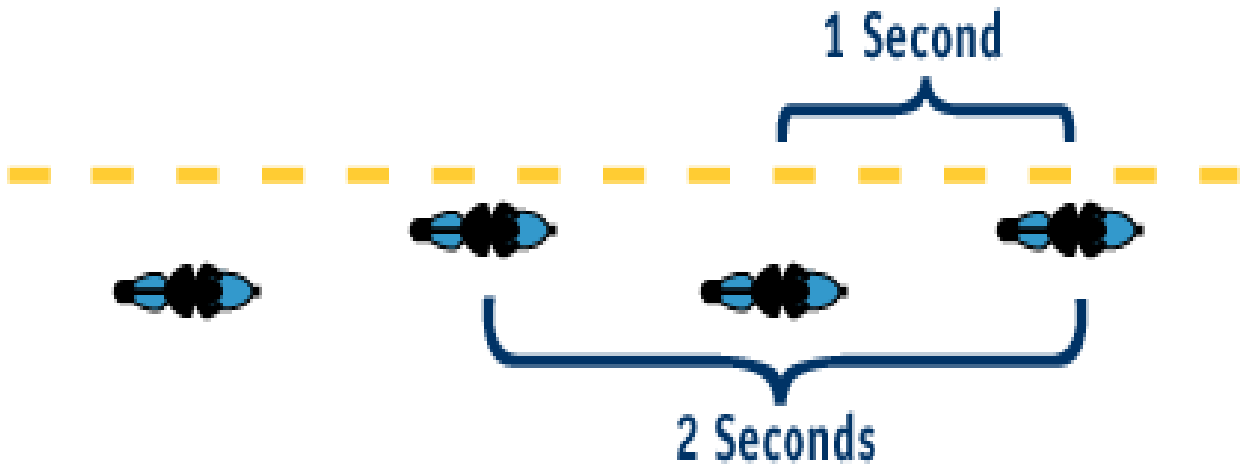
The Road Captain leads the group ride. He must be aware of the length of the columns, and must gage the passing of merges, highway entrances and exits, etc in order to allow for maximum safety and keeping the group together. He must make sure that he leaves enough time/space for the formation to get into the appropriate lanes before exits, etc. All directions come from the Road Captain. The Road Captain makes all decisions regarding lane changes, stopping for breaks and fuel, closing of gaps, turning off at exits, any concerns of what lays ahead, accepting/rejecting radioed messages from other individuals, and so on. No individual will assert himself independently without direction from the Road Captain to do so.

Tail Gunner

The Tail Gunner serves as the eyes of the Road Captain. He watches the formation, and informs the Road Captain of any potential problems within the group. He watches other vehicles, and informs the Road Captain (and anyone else with radios) of hazardous conditions approaching from the rear, such as vehicles trying to cut into the formation and trucks passing with potentially dangerous wind blasts. He will watch for merging lanes, and will move into a merging lane (or stay in a merging lane just vacated by the group) in order to “close the door” on other vehicles that may otherwise find themselves trying to merge into the formation. At the Road Captain’s request, the Tail Gunner changes lanes before the formation, to secure the lane so the formation can move into it.

General Rules

1. All riders taking part in a Red Knights Motorcycle Club ride must conform to the Provincial or State laws in effect where they are riding.
2. Group riders will use one lane in a staggered formation. The leader (Road Captain) rides to the left side of the lane, while the second rider stays a little behind and to the right side of the lane, one (1) second behind the leader. The third rider will take a position to the left side of the lane, two (2) seconds behind the leader. The fourth rider would be to the right of the lane and two (2) seconds behind the second rider. (see illustration)



Note: How to Use the Two Second Rule for Distance

To maintain a safe distance (two seconds) simply pick a stationary object (fence post, hydro pole, painted road markings, etc). Immediately as the motorcycle directly in front of you passes the marked you selected, then start counting, one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two.....you should now be at that selected mark.

3. While group riding there are a series of standard hand signals given by the Road Captain which are used to denote various instructions to the riders. Each rider in succession is to repeat the hand signal for the benefit of the riders behind him. This will ensure all riders in the group see and understand the signals as given by the Road Captain.

Below are the various hand signals;

Fuel - arm out to side pointing to tank with finger extended



Refreshment Stop - fingers closed, thumb to mouth



Comfort Stop - forearm extended, fist clenched with short up and down motion



Often during the meeting, **hand signals** are reviewed so that you can communicate with the other riders during the ride. Hand signals are a useful tool to keep the group aware and cohesive on the roadway. Your group is free to determine its own set of signals, but here's a review of some commonly used ones:

Hand Signals

Stop - arm extended straight down, palm facing back



Slow Down - arm extended straight out, palm facing down



Speed Up - arm extended straight out, palm facing up



Follow Me - arm extended straight up from shoulder, palm forward



You Lead/Come - arm extended upward 45 degrees, palm forward pointing with index finger; swing in arc from back to front



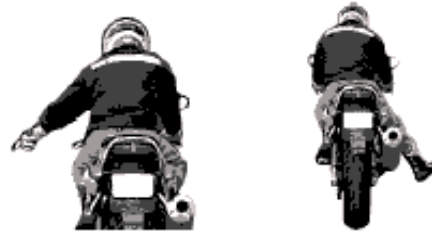
Single File - arm and index finger extended straight up

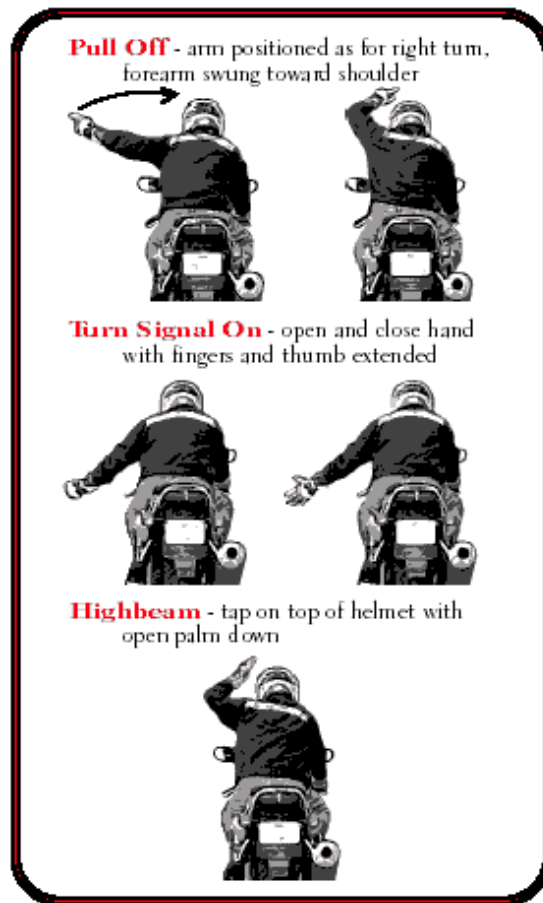


Double File - arm with index and middle finger extended straight up



Hazard in Roadway - on the right, point with right foot; on the left, point with left hand





4. Single file will be assumed upon command of the Road Captain (i.e. curves, tight turns, or secondary roads).
5. Riders should not ride in the passing lane of a four lane highway unless using it for passing purposes.
6. Riders must always be conscious of other vehicles wishing to pass or pull into their group, and be prepared to let them do so.
7. Riders passing other vehicles on a two lane highway must pass one at a time and allow the vehicle a reasonable space before pulling in front of them.
8. Check the space behind. Let the Tail Gunner set the pace. Use your mirrors and shoulder checks. If he or she falls behind, slow down the pace.
9. Inexperienced riders should be directly behind the Road Captain or the Lead Rider.
10. Riders not intending to ride the full route must inform the Road Captain before the start of the ride.

11. If the ride is pulled off the road, both riders and motorcycles must keep as far off the road as possible.
12. In the case of a rider pulling over, the Tail Gunner will also pull over to assist. The remainder of the group will continue. If the Tail Gunner has a C.B. radio, he will inform the Road Captain of the current status. If it is in the opinion of the Road Captain that the group should also pull over, they will do so at the first safe area.
13. For long distance riding or in the event of a large number of riders (at the discretion of the Road Captain) it may be advisable to split the group into two, or more sections.
14. It is every rider's responsibility to be aware of potential hazards and notify other riders behind them by radio, hand signals, or tapping their brake lights.
15. At stop signs, lights, etc, the staggered formation shall double up and proceed in pairs, then resume staggered formation thus limiting time lag and possible traffic hazards.
16. When riding on four lane highways, and the Road Captain decides to pass a slow vehicle, he will inform the Tail Gunner by radio (if so equipped) of his intentions. The Tail Gunner will then wait for an appropriate break in the traffic and then pull out to act as a block. The group will then pull out and pass as quickly as safety permits.
17. The Road Captain has a great responsibility for the group's safety as well as its effect on vehicular traffic (i.e. not letting the group get boxed in, or passing a tractor trailer too slowly, etc). However it is everyone's responsibility to exercise good judgment and common sense for the safety of all riders.
18. Channel 15 for C.B. radios, is the designated channel for use by all clubs in Ontario. The Road Captain may use his/her discretion to designate an alternate channel before each ride if necessary. The placement of riders with C.B. radios will be at the discretion of the Road Captain to ensure the maximum benefit to the group.
19. For rides of great length or complexity, the Road Captain shall provide maps for riders in case the group gets separated.
20. When parking in a public lot, all bikes will be parked in such a manner as to cause as little inconvenience to the public as possible. Preferably angled and maintaining riding position within the group.
21. If in the opinion of the Road Captain a hazard exists to the parked bikes, or the public, he shall designate as many persons as required to stand watch.
22. If in the opinion of the Road Captain a rider poses a hazard to himself or others, for whatever reason, he may ask that rider to leave the group.

In summary, recognition and enforcement of these Group Riding Rules will ensure that all riders have a safe and enjoyable ride.