

Central Oregon Harley Owners Group

Chapter #2980

Road Captain Orientation

Central Oregon Harley Owners Group (COHOG) is pleased to offer our COHOG Road Captain (RC) orientation for new and returning Road Captains. Our desire is to educate all Road Captains on the proper and safe way to conduct a group ride.

This class is intended to establish consistent practices and a baseline knowledge level for all COHOG Road Captains. Once this baseline is achieved, we recognize that flexibility brings fun and new ideas to our rides.

The class is divided into four areas:

1. Standards and Responsibilities – What are the expectations?
2. Planning and the way we ride.
3. Riding Practices – What are the keys to having a safe ride?
4. Incident Management – How to handle things when they do not go as planned.

SECTION 1 STANDARDS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The COHOG Chapter believes in and maintains minimum standards for all Road Captains assuring that our Chapter has qualified Road Captains.

ROAD CAPTAIN STANDARDS

For a COHOG member to qualify as a Road Captain they must meet the following standards:

1. Desires to actively participate, take a leadership role, and have fun – safely!
2. Has been a member of COHOG and a national HOG member for a minimum of one year. Exceptions to this requirement can be made by the consent of the COHOG Director and Safety Officer.
3. Hold a current motorcycle endorsement from the state in which the member resides.
4. Hold proof of current insurance covering their motorcycle.
5. It is recommended that all Road Captains complete a minimum of one state government agency or Motorcycle Safety Foundation approved intermediate or higher level motorcycle skills course.

ROAD CAPTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Safety first – Your Safety

- As a Road captain, you **ARE NOT** responsible for other rider's safety, only your own.
- As a Road Captain, you **ARE** responsible for organizing and/or leading a group ride.

Safety Leadership

- Road Captains:
 - Set example for other riders by demonstrating good group riding skills.
 - Make it clear that all riders are responsible for their own safety.
 - Control "Group Pack" mentality and ride with the group not as an individual rider.
 - Are responsible for dealing with any unsafe acts or practices by individual riders. Be willing to discuss hazardous riding behavior with the rider(s) involved. This is for the individual and group's safety.
 - Learn the skills of maneuvering a group safely.
 - Learn the skills to manage safely the scene of an accident/incident.

Performance Standards

- We expect Road Captains of the COHOG Chapter to participate in the fulfillment of the responsibilities of the Road captains of the COHOG Chapter. Those responsibilities include the following:
 - Assist the sponsoring dealer and Chapter Director in upholding the "Annual Charter for H.O.G. Chapters".
 - Plan routes for chapter rides.
 - Assist in keeping the chapter informed of all H.O.G. programs.
 - Actively participate in educating Chapter members about group riding techniques.
 - Communicate and inform Chapter members of any hand signals used by the Chapter on group rides.
 - Actively work as a guide for organized Chapter rides.
 - Assist in obtaining signed release forms for Chapter rides.
 - Pursue additional training to improve Group Ride leadership skills.
 - Adhere to safe group riding practices as formulated by the COHOG Chapter.

Remember you are ambassadors of the COHOG Chapter. Members look to us for correct information and group riding practices. We are what the public sees when we are on a ride. What you do and say reflects on all Road Captains and the Chapter – ride with responsibility.

SECTION 2 – PLANNING

The key to any successful endeavor is planning and preparation. The better you know your route, the safer and more successful the ride will be – so pre-ride it. Take other RC's with you when you pre-ride – learning how to work as a team creates confidence in the group. This increased confidence in each RC will be evident to those riding with us. They will be less likely

to exhibit poor group riding practices like rushing to keep up, being nervous about getting left behind, falling into the pack mentality, etc. if we don't exhibit these poor behaviors and practices. The more fun we are having, the more fun everyone will have and all riders will get there safely with some great stories to tell.

Not every ride is the same. Some rides need to be well scripted for every move the group makes while other rides are known for having no obvious script. Some are in good weather, some not. Despite all the variables there are some things that need to be done regardless of the ride. These include anticipating any situations that could occur given the variables involved; do your best to have a plan B. The following are the basics we follow on how to start a successful ride and we expect these guidelines to be followed.

Ride Planning Basics

- Determine your starting and ending locations.
- Create a map of the route using web sites or a printed road map of the area of the ride.
 - Some available web sites include: <https://rideplanner.harley-davidson.com/ride-planner/rideplanner.jsp>; www.mapquest.com; www.maps.com; www.randmcnally.com; www.google.com.
- Use a GPS if available but don't rely on it, you still need tank directions.
- Pre-ride all routes; this is key to a well-planned ride.
- Evaluate the route for any safety concerns such as left turns at unprotected intersections or turns onto roadways with blind corners.
- Provide a description of the route including any available information on road conditions.
- Write down and share with the riders the stops you intend to make for: gas, breaks, food, etc.
- Plan for what may happen – the weather turns, alternate routes, emergency locations (fire stations, hospitals, parks, etc.).
- Create a script for the riders meeting.

It is important for all of the Road Captains (Lead, Mid, Sweep) to know the route, so that they can anticipate potential problem areas, lane changes, exits, turns, etc.

“THE WAY WE RIDE”

Group riding is controlled by the Lead Road Captain (LRC). If the LRC rides like they are riding solo, it makes for an uncomfortable ride for all of those behind the LRC. On a group ride, there are three key positions you may fill as a Road Captain (Lead, Middle, Sweep). It is recommended that you practice each of these positions. There is no experience like being in front of a group of motorcycles and having a train of lights behind you. When in the back you have the opportunity to see the group moving as a formation up a pair of hairpin corners, as

well as some awkward movements of the formation. When riding in a group as the sweep, you need to be ready to assume the leadership if the group gets broken-up.

After some time, you will find your comfortable position; some always want to be out front and proud, others seek the rear position enjoying the bikes out in front, and the rest just get into the group, riding and having fun. It is highly recommended that you practice all three positions and not get complacent with just riding in one position all the time. You may be requested to ride in any of the three positions at any time a situation comes up. Being prepared is the best protection for all riding on the group ride.

Road Captain Riding Positions

Lead Road Captain (LRC) – The LRC is often, but not necessarily the ride organizer who is responsible for determining the route, stopping points, fuel and meal stops. The LRC, with input from the other road captains is also responsible for overall ride safety. Under some circumstances the LRC may have to curtail a ride due to safety factors. Some of these factors include an unsafe rider, unsafe bike, deteriorating weather or other conditions.

It is important to anticipate the route ahead and remember that you are leading a group of bikes in a long tail behind you. Make all lane changes well ahead to avoid placing trailing riders in a hazardous situation. Anticipate and perform hand signals sufficiently ahead of the need in order for the information to reach the trailing riders. Be aware of off-ramps and on-ramps where traffic merging can require sudden braking or lane changes. Watch well ahead of your group to avoid these issues.

If the Middle or Sweep Road Captain is flashing their lights, you should pull the group off the road at the first available safe location.

The LRC needs to know the route! Again, **PRE-RIDE IT!**

Lead Road Captain

- Ride for the Chapter
- Remember you are leading a group of riders of all ability
- Anticipate, plan, and adjust for the group constantly
- Be aware of the conditions on the ride and the riders. There may be a need for additional breaks. Hot weather means making sure that everyone is adequately hydrated and possibly making more stops for water. Cold weather can also mean more stops for warmth. See how many riders have heated gear. Are there riders that may be exposed to potential hypothermia and whose riding may become impaired due to the cold.
- Neither put either themselves or Chapter members in risky situations.
- Monitor traffic ahead, to the sides, and behind the group.
- Monitor the group behind.

- Look for traps and be aware of hazards.
- Scan for communications from other RC's either by hand signals or headlights.
- Use a CB radio if you and other RC's have them. This can greatly aid communication of information and assist in executing maneuvers. The COHOG group generally monitors CB channel 18.
- Stay flexible and change route if conditions dictate.
- Maintain situational awareness.

Middle Road Captain (MRC)

- Watch traffic around the middle of the group.
- Look for cars that want to move through the group.
- Know the route and be prepared to take over the lead if the group becomes separated.
- Have the skills to provide feedback to new riders in an objective manner.
- Are willing to fill in Leadership roles on a ride as needed.

NOTE: All Middle RC's should line up in the left slot riding position.

Sweep Road Captain (SRC)

The SRC brings up the rear of the group and communicates with the LRC and MRC on any lane changes along the route. The SRC monitors traffic behind the group and assists the LRC when changing lanes. The SRC can clear a lane if traffic allows, creating safe lane changes for the group. The SRC, along with the other RC's is responsible for evaluation of the ride safety and alerting the LRC of any unsafe conditions or riders. In the event of a road incident, the SRC will most often be the 1st on the scene and will manage the incident area.

If you see a significant safety concern as the SRC, signal the LRC to pull over by flashing your headlight or communicate using the predetermined method (CB Radio, etc.). The LRC, MRC and the SRC should have an understanding of how communications needs to occur.

The SRC should utilize the full lane to make their bike visible to the LRC if possible. Typically, the SRC will trail a little more than two seconds behind the last bike in order to improve visibility.

Sweep Road Captain

- Anticipates the LRC actions and reacts appropriately.
- Assists in lane changes by clearing the lane as promptly as safety allows.
- Evaluates the riders, and provides feedback to the LRC.
- Deal with a road incidents and needs to be able to take charge.
- Stays flexible and maintains situational awareness.
- Carries the group's sign in sheets and waivers.

Communication Skills

Diplomacy is essential in speaking with a rider in the group. Some of us are better at this than others. Be sensitive to what your skill level is in this regard and work to improve it by observing other Road Captains and discussing with them how to approach fellow riders. Take another RC with you when approaching a fellow rider. It helps to lead with a concern for the safety of the rider you are addressing and for the group. Then explain the problem in the least judgmental way possible. Remember you were a new rider once. Don't talk down to the fellow rider.

Section 3 – Ride Practices

This is what we do to offer a consistent satisfying fun ride. The group has changed some practices and we've found that if we do the following we've done the best to start out on the right foot.

All Road Captains working the day's ride need to be at the ride meeting location at least 30 minutes prior to the posted start time.

Pre-Ride RC Meeting:

- 30 minutes prior to posted start time, call all RC's over and hold an RC meeting to go over the ride. Answer any questions that the RC's may have about the day's route.
- This is done before other group members arrive so the RC's can give their full attention to starting the ride with confidence of a good start to the day.

Location of Line Up:

- Bikes line up in the designated parking lot but not blocking the entrance to Wild Horse HD.

As Members Arrive:

- The RC gives signals to the arriving member to where they need the member to line up.
- On large rides, have a few RC's positioned to assist in guiding the members to position in the line up.

Sign-in Ride Sheets and Waivers:

- An RC should be designated to ensure that all non COHOG members have signed the sign-in sheet and a waiver prior to the ride start.

Hold the riders meeting – a suggested script

- The LRC introduces themselves and the other RC's along with what position they will be riding in. Also, include a description of what type of bike they are riding.
- Ask "Is there anyone who isn't a **CURRENT PAID COHOG MEMBER ON THE RIDE** that hasn't signed a waiver?" (If so, have them sign a waiver)

- Reinforce and clearly state that – **EVERY RIDER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN SAFETY. PLEASE RIDE YOUR RIDE AND RESPECT THE RIDE OF OTHERS.**
- Are fuel tanks full and bladders empty?
- Verbally explain the destination and route. Hand out route maps if available. Indicate where stops will be made.
- Review group safety essentials:
 - Obey all traffic laws.
 - Riding formations – Brief description
 - Ride in staggered formation – explain/demonstrate
 - Fill gaps by moving up – explain/demonstrate
 - Two second rule – explain/demonstrate
 - Basic hand signals – explain/demonstrate
- Cookie crumb – explain/demonstrate
- Discuss how the group will line up by experience and skills.
 - Riders that are new to COHOG rides or riders that are less experienced are asked to ride as close to the front of the group as possible.
 - Reintroduce the MRC if appropriate.

Move the group Out

- Promptly after the riders meeting go to your bike, pulling it forward and wait for the Sweep to give you the signal to move out.
- Proceed with caution

Riding Formations and Hand Signals

Staggered Formation

The COHOG rides are in a staggered formation.

“Riding formations are for your safety as well as the safety of the group. When a group is riding in a staggered formation, it takes up less space on the highway than a single file line, is easier for other motorists to see and, by protecting its lane, is less likely to be separated by other traffic. Larger groups should divide up into smaller, more manageable groups, ideally five to seven riders.

Your staggered formation can be tight or loose, depending on traffic conditions. During heavy urban/city traffic, a tight staggered formation usually works best to keep other traffic from cutting into your group, although keep in mind that safety comes before integrity of the group.

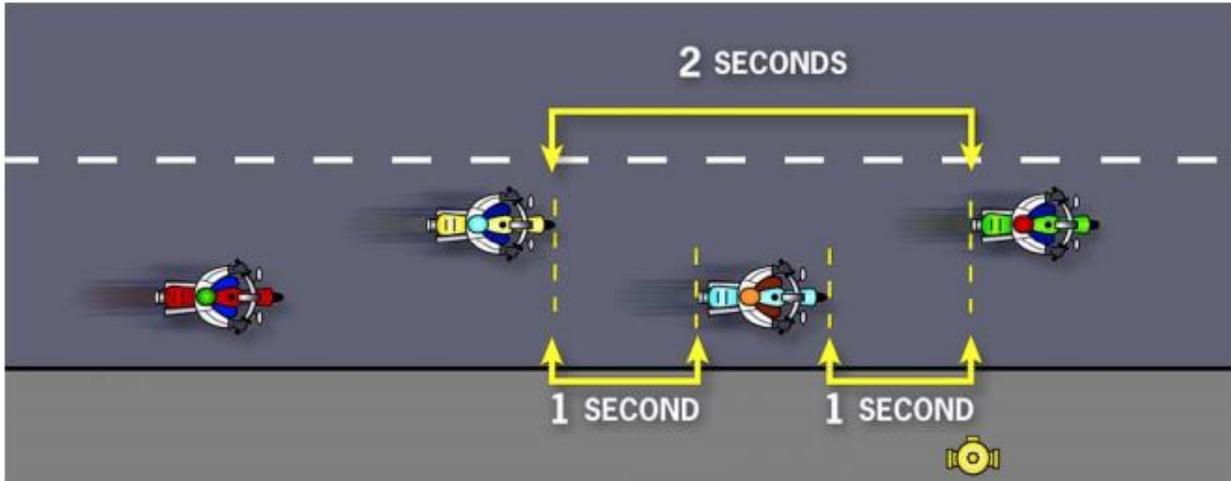


Figure 1. Staggered Formation

A staggered formation is the best way to keep ranks close and still maintain an adequate space cushion both in front of and behind each rider. A space cushion will give each rider plenty of room to maneuver and still maintain the riding formation. On a sunny day on dry roads, a minimum space cushion is considered to be a two-second following distance between each rider and the rider directly in front (See Figure 1). During inclement weather, it is advisable to increase the following distance by adding more space between the riders in the group.

In a staggered formation, the RC rides in the left third of the lane, while the next rider stays at least one second behind in the right third of the lane. The rest of the group follows this pattern. (See figure 1).

If your pattern is correct, the third rider is two seconds behind the RC, but only one second behind the second rider. If there are Trikes or sidecars in the group, those machines should ride in the center of the lane keeping at least a two-second following distance within the group to maintain their space cushion.”

Quote from the Riders Edge/MSF Guide to Group Riding

NOTE: Our policy is to break up into groups of 10 or fewer riders whenever possible.

Single File Formation

In certain situations, it is safer for the group to ride in single file. The single file formation is best used when more room to maneuver might be needed such as on narrow and/or curvy roadways, in poor visibility, at tollbooths, on roadways with bad surfaces, when entering a traffic circle or roundabout, or in any other situation where more space cushion is needed. By riding single file, each rider in the group can more freely use the entire lane and choose their line through a turn. As with any riding formation, keeping an adequate space cushion between riders and adjusting it to suit changing needs is important.

- This allows the rider to enjoy group riding without having to be in a staggered formation all of the time.

The LRC should plan ahead for changes and signal early so 'the signal gets back' to the rest of the group in plenty of time.

Hand Signals

Commonly used Hand Signals

- Single File
- Staggered Formation
- Right Turn
- Left Turn
- Stop
- Slow Down
- Speed Up
- Follow me/Move them out
- Road Hazard

Hand signals need to be held up long enough that the following riders are certain to see them and pass them on. On single file and double file hand signals, rotate your wrist but not wave it around.

Hand signals are ONLY initiated by the LRC! Make sure when passing them back that you look in the mirror to see that the rider behind you has passed the signal back.





Right turn
Arm out, bent at 90° angle, fist clinched.



Left turn
Arm and hand extending left, palm facing down



Stop
Arm extended straight down, palm facing back.



Slow Down
Arm extended straight out, palm facing down, swing down to your side.



Speed Up
Arm extended straight out, palm facing up, swing upward.



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



Follow Me
Arm extended straight up from shoulder, palm forward.

Freeway/Highway Maneuvers

Merging into moving Traffic

COHOG Chapter policy is to enter freeways in a staggered formation. The Lead Road Captain should exercise judgement and appropriate behavior to maintain the slowest reasonable entry speed based on conditions of the particular freeway entry. You should consider the amount of traffic, the length of the ramp, the entry lane and other conditions while merging. Any Middle Road Captain and Sweep Road Captain should be extra aware and merge in an appropriate manner.

The Lead Road Captain needs to use as much of the merge lane as possible and avoid the temptation to merge as soon as possible. LRC should also make sure to avoid accelerating to freeway speeds too fast.

A Left lane change starts when the LRC determines the group can safely merge into the Left lane and turns on their Left Turn Signal and looks for the Sweep Road Captain to “clear” the lane if traffic allows. When the LRC sees the SRC has cleared the lane or traffic makes this impossible, the LRC indicates a Left lane change with a Hand Signal and only then moves into the left lane.

A Right lane change starts when the LRC determines the group can safely merge into the right lane and turns on their Right Turn Signal and looks for the Sweep Road Captain to “clear” the lane if traffic allows. When the LRC sees the SRC has cleared the lane or traffic makes this impossible, the LRC indicates a Right Lane change with a Hand Signal and only then moves into the Right lane.

The Middle Road Captain should hold their position unless it is unsafe to do so until the LRC has completed their Hand Signals.

Both merging quickly and speeding up encourage the following tail to hurry and catch up and can create very hazardous situations. Improper merging can also create the “Rubber Band Effect” that will be covered later.

To reduce this, effect the LRC needs to enter at freeway speeds, but then reduce speed to less than the limit as long as they do not create a safety hazard. Riding at less than the speed limit allows the trailing riders to “Catch Up” without exceeding the speed limit or taking unnecessary chances with their safety.

Merging is one of the most difficult things with a group: it requires discipline and control to avoid the temptation to jump in and get rolling with traffic.

Exiting a Highway

COHOG policy is to exit freeways in a staggered formation. Again, each rider should exercise caution to maintain adequate spacing to avoid any hazardous situations if they

should occur. The LRC should use the furthest part of the lane, signal early, exit smoothly and ease off the throttle.

Changing Lanes and Passing

In the COHOG Chapter, our practice is to have the SRC “Clear the Lane” when possible by moving to the lane to be occupied by the group prior to the LRC hand signal so that adequate space is available for a safe lane change. When the LRC signals for a lane change by turning on their Left/Right turn signal, the trailing bikes should pass this signal back and wait for the LRC to move into the new lane. A good Sweep will know or see the need for a lane change and move into this lane before the LRC signals for a lane change. When the LRC sees, or recognizes the sweep has cleared the lane; then the LRC can signal the group with a left-hand signal and moves to the new lane, the trailing bikes move over to the new lane.

The process followed is the same as merging into the left or right lane as described above. A proficient sweep is thinking ahead of time for the LRC, making the ride flow with ease of teamwork.

Passing on a 2 Lane Highway

On a two-lane Highway, when passing slower traffic such as construction or farm vehicles, the group shall pass one at a time. Be courteous and safe by only using marked passing zones. The LRC signals for the group to form in the “Single File Formation” before initiating the passing maneuver.

“The LRC should signal their intentions first and then pull out when it is safe and legal. After completing the pass, the LRC should return to the left lane position and continue at passing speed to leave room for the next rider. The next rider should move up to the passing position and watch for a safe chance to pass. After passing, this rider should return to the right position and open up room for the next rider. The rest of the group should follow the same pattern.”

Quote from the Rider’s Edge/MSF Guide to Group Riding

As the LRC, you need to always remember the length of the “Tail” behind you and allow plenty of time and distance for the entire group to complete the pass.

You will need several miles before your next turn to move a group in a passing maneuver. If passing at 55 MPH and it takes 19 seconds to pass, you have covered 1048 ft. or 1/5 of a mile. Adding in delays between riders for oncoming vehicles and decision time of when to pass may result in only two or three riders passing per mile. Ten riders may need 4 miles or more for all to pass. In heavy traffic, it could take even longer. You need to weigh this prior to making the first pass and decide if the group really needs to pass. If your next turn is less than ten miles, there is little to gain by passing.

Reducing the “Rubber Band Effect”

Reducing the “Rubber Band Effect” is principally an issue of speed and time. This effect occurs when the lead bike, and then succeeding bikes accelerate before the training bikes begin to accelerate. The increased speed and time advantage create an increasing gap between all of the bikes.

The LRC is the one that controls the amount of “rubber banding” that occurs. If you are “Off to the Races” on the ramp and immediately over to the left lane, blasting for sweet freedom, then the end of your group is lost. If you’re the ride leader, you need to remember that the end of your group “tail” started a lot later and may have been cut off by other traffic. It may take them a while to catch up to the group. Do them a favor and let them know that they won’t be left behind (during the riders meeting) and by controlling your speed. Because they are able to see the group ahead, they don’t need to take chances or ride at excessive speeds just so they can stay with you. A couple of minutes riding at less than the speed limit can make a world of difference to your fellow riders and the end of the tail.

Another place the “Rubber Banding” happens is at intersections like 4 way stops, so wait for your Sweep RC. Remember to pull away in a controlled manner but not too fast or others will do the same causing the rubber band effect. WATCH YOUR MIRRORS to see if the group is with you. Slow down until your sweep is with you and then proceed at posted speed.

Also, in your Pre-Ride meeting inform the riders of exit numbers and that you will regroup before continuing further. Nobody is going to be left behind because we ride with a sweep on all COHOG rides.

Moving through Intersections

The first two pairs of riders set the method of moving through the intersection for the rest of the group. Remember that the “Left” bike always goes first. Make sure you do it correctly-the group has eyes.

Protected Intersections – Green Turn Arrow Present

“When making a left turn at a protected intersection, where traffic turning left has its own green turn signal arrow, tighten the formation to allow as many riders as possible to pass quickly through the intersection. Do not ride side-by-side; the group should make the turn single file or in a tight, staggered formation. Use the same procedure for right turns and remember to respect the rights of other roadway users.”

Quote from the Rider’s Edge/MSF Guide to Group Riding

NOTE: If the group becomes separated when moving through the intersection, COHOG Chapter policy is to use the “cookie crumb” which is discussed later to regroup.

Unprotected Intersections – No Green Turn Arrow Present or Blinking Yellow Arrow

In unprotected intersections that have No Green Turn Arrow or Blinking Yellow Arrow, riders should proceed with caution in single file. Each rider should act as an individual, only making the turn when it is safe and legal. While awaiting your turn, remember to check your mirrors, as other motorists maybe expecting you to ride as a group. The most important thing is to make the turn safely. The group can re-form after everyone has ridden safely through the intersection.

The LRC will need to be cognizant of what is occurring behind them. If the trailing bikes are delayed in making the turn and they have to “catch-up”, they will have to exceed the speed limit if the LRC has not reduced speed to less than the speed limit.

Two Way Stop Intersections

At two way stop intersections, the bike on the left moves first. The bike on the right only moves after the lead bike on the left has started to move. The group re-joins and reestablishes the previous ride position which was present before the two way stop intersection.

Yield Intersections

“At Yield intersections be safe and cautious. Turn your head to check for traffic before merging. Respect the law, other members of your group and other roadway users. Put safety and operating within the law ahead of trying to stay in formation. The group can reestablish its formation later.”

Quote from the Rider’s Edge/MSF Guide to Group Riding

Construction Zones and Rough or Hazardous Roads

“You may encounter differing types of road hazards or sever roadway conditions while on a group ride. When entering construction zones, it is best to ride single file, reduce speed, and increase you space cushion. This will allow riders to adjust lane positions and respond to the roadway conditions more freely.”

Quote from the Rider’s Edge/MSF Guide to Group Riding

The LRC should give the “Slow Down” hand signal, then the “Single File” hand signal, prior to entering the construction zone and slow to the designated speed, or less if appropriate based on the conditions. The presence of roadway hazards, the clarity of the route and traffic signage should dictate the speed of the group.

The “Cookie Crumb”

It is essential for all group riders to know how to execute the “Cookie Crumb”.

Our intent is to never leave anyone behind and the “cookie crumb” is our primary tool for making sure everyone will finish the ride with the rest of the group. Road Captains must not only know how to perform it, but must know how to explain it clearly so that riders understand and remember.

Explaining the Cookie Crumb

- At the point when you look in your mirrors and do not see the rest of the group, you just became the Crumb of the Cookie! Remain calm, enjoy the ride and stay alert.
- Your job as the “Cookie Crumb” starts when you see the turn signals for an upcoming turn.
- Find a safe spot just before approaching the turn which will be visible to the rest of the group behind you and park. Wait for the bikes behind you to catch up. What is an adequate time? If you have been watching your mirrors, you have an idea how long the group behind you has been missing. This will give you an idea of how long to wait.
- When you see them approaching wave to let them know that you see them approaching. Then pull out safely making the turn and leading the group down the road until you join up with the rest of the riders.
- Just continue down the road until you catch up to the rest of the group or until you can see a new “Cookie Crumb”. The rule of thumb is to always stay on the current road at the next intersection unless you see a new “Cookie Crumb” waiting for you.

Short Version – Check your mirrors. If no one is behind you, just before the next planned turn, wait in a safe spot.

If you are leading and no one is behind you, be aware – slow down or stop in a visible safe location and wait for the rest of the group.

Parking the Group

Evaluate the number of bikes in the group and the amount of traffic and choose an appropriate location.

Parking lots (Stores, Schools, etc.) – Avoid the “land rush” stampede. Choose an area with adequate parking for the number of bikes on the ride. Lead the group into the parking areas in single file.

The LRC parks nearest the intended exit (even if this means you are not the first to the restroom). Lead the following bikes through the parking area in a way that allows:

- Bikes should get off of the street as soon as possible and avoid exposing the other bikes to vehicular traffic.
- Creating an orderly parking process. Lead the bikes around the perimeter of the intended parking locations.

Parking on a Street—avoid a busy street if at all possible and use a side street. The LRC should lead the bikes by the parking locations and use the furthest location to park their bike. If properly executed, the trailing riders will all have locations to park their bike.

Gas Stations –

- If the gas stop is principally for bikes with smaller tanks – lead the group around the perimeter for the parking area as you would for other off street locations and allow the bike needing fuel to break off to the gas pumps.
- If the gas stop is for all bikes in the group – proceed to the furthest open gas pump and begin fueling. After fueling, proceed to the parking location nearest to the intended exit.

Section 4 – Incident Management

Incidents or Mechanical Difficulties – No Rider Injuries

- If a mechanical breakdown occurs and the motorcycle is disabled on the roadway, only the minimum number of Road Captains and riders needed should remain at the scene. All others should continue on the ride.
- Typically, the Sweep will stay with the disabled motorcycle and rider and help render assistance in getting the motorcycle removed to a repair shop. If the motorcycle cannot be moved out of the roadway, traffic control is the priority to alert other motorists.
- If the rider of the disabled bike is comfortable waiting for service at a safe location, the Road Captains may continue on with the ride. All riders that are HOG members have extended service have towing service.

Traffic Incidents – Injuries Involved

If an incident involving injuries has occurred, several actions need to be taken:

- The LRC and the MRC should take the bulk of the group to a safe location away from the scene of the accident.
- The SRC should take control of the accident scene, first making sure that traffic control is implemented to reduce the risk of further injuries. Those direction traffic, ideally two or more, need to remain calm, find a safe location, and use flares or signal such as hands and arms or bright clothing to communicate with vehicle drivers. They should slow traffic and direct it in a way that removes the risk of further injuries.
- Determine if there are injuries and who will assist the injured. Ideally, any person who has first aid training. Avoid moving any injured person unless necessary to prevent further injury. Unknown injuries could be made more severe by moving the victim.
- Maintain control of the scene, including onlookers and any well-meaning “helpers”. If assistance is needed and someone says they have first aid training or other training, you must use your good judgement and assess the situation.
- If injuries are severe enough to warrant medical emergency assistance, 911 should be called as soon as that determination has been made. Designate someone to call 911 and have them stay on the phone providing all requested information.

- Comfort the victim(s) to the extent possible and treat life threatening bleeding or shock as needed. Remember that you cannot save lives other than in a very limited set of injuries.

Post incident Management

Once the scene is controlled and appropriate resources marshalled. It is important to preserve and document the causes of the incident. Any witnesses need to avoid speculation and record the facts of the situation as they remember them. You should separate witnesses to prevent allegations of corroboration. The only thing needed is the facts and it is important to limit discussion and documentation to the facts.

Record the time, location, road intersections, vehicle descriptions and license plate numbers, names and contact information, injuries to the people, damage to the vehicles, any police officer present, ambulance service, hospital and any other pertinent information.

The COHOG Director and Safety Office need to be contacted as soon as possible with this information.

What We Do Not Do

- Block traffic at intersections or perform any type of traffic control function other than when there has been an incident and safety calls for alerting drivers of hazardous conditions.
- Speed or ride aggressively
- Ride like fools
- Speak ill of other riders regardless of brand or affiliations.

What We Do

- We know and obey all traffic laws
- We set a good example
- We encourage others to participate
- We take care of ourselves so that we can take care of others
- We treat others as we would like to be treated
- We anticipate, Plan and Adjust – then Repeat

“A group ride is one of the great on-roadway motorcycling experiences. Taking part in a group ride is a great way to share the fun and camaraderie of motorcycling.”

Quote from the Rider’s Edge/MSF Guide to Group Riding

RIDE SAFE – HAVE FUN – ENJOY THE JOURNEY