

CHINOOK WINGS

Presentation
of
GOLD WING TOUR ASSOCIATION
RIDER EDUCATION PROGRAM
GROUP RIDING GUIDE

April 9, 2007



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Acknowledgments: This Group Riding Guide, is help new or potential GWTA members become acquainted with our present riding procedures. Some of the enclosed information has been obtained from the Motorcycle Safety Foundation and from various articles written by other motorcyclists.

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The following are suggestions only, not to be considered rules. They are guidelines and not mandatory in order to be members of GWTA, however, the more we as a group think and ride alike, the safer and more fun the rides will be.

Riding in a group is strictly voluntary and should be done only if you feel comfortable with your motorcycle and the riding habits of your particular riding group.

It is recommended that a good quality helmet, eye protection, boots, gloves and protective clothing be worn at all times, by all riding. Also, that the motorcycle be in a safe condition.

I. "Group Leaders" and "Back Doors"

A. Responsibility of Group Leaders:

1. Leadership of the group while in transit
2. Be firm and decisive
3. Explain routes to predetermined destinations (see Ride Organizers)
4. If distance dictates, select some rest stops and stick to the plan
5. Explain the formations to be used during transit; staggered formation should be used for nearly all the group rides.
6. Try to find out the riding skill level of the group members you are leading, so that you do not attempt to lead beyond their ability.
7. Explain the two-second rule and the necessity to keep closed up.
8. Explain the lane numbers (lane #1 is the fastest or left lane)
9. The Group Leaders should select their own Back Doors.
10. Maintain the integrity of the group
11. If the Back Door advises that one of the group is having a problem and is leaving the group, the Group Leader should bring the group to a safe place to pull off and wait for the Back Door to report.
12. Recognize and obey all vehicle code rules and regulations. (Watch speed limits).
13. Slow down if necessary, when the Back Door tells you part of the group didn't make the light, etc.
14. Lane Changes (2 lane - 2 way traffic): If it looks like it is going to be a long drawn out process to get all of the bikes in your group around a vehicle, consider slowing down instead and keep your group intact.
15. Lane Changes (highway with at least 2 lanes for your direction): The Group Leader will inform the Rear Bike of the need to move into another lane and the number of the lane to move into. At the first opportunity, the Rear Bike moves into the new lane, preventing any traffic from trying to pass the team in that lane. The Rear Bike informs the Group Leader when the lane is "secure" and the Group Leader will then announce over the CB to all bikes in his group "Let's all move to the #___ lane, NOW!" The Group Leader hesitates before saying NOW, allowing each bike a few moments to look for themselves, that it is safe to move over. Then all the bikes will signal and follow the bike in front of them into the new lane. This method is used, as not all bikes are equipped with CBs and wouldn't otherwise know that the group is moving to a different lane. This is a better method than a simple free for all and certainly looks better.
16. Keep in mind that the Group Leader's job is not to be a tourist, but to maintain the group in a safe manner. If you want to just enjoy the ride, don't volunteer to be the leader!
17. If there is more than one (1) group, use group # when using the CB

18. You and/or your co-rider should point at any hazards you may see on the road for the bikes behind you, even if you have already said something about it on the CB

B. Back Door (Tail End Charlie)

1. Probably the most misunderstood and underrated job in the group rides.
2. The Lead Bike leads the group, but the Rear Bike controls the group.
3. Responsibility:
 - a. Again, the safety of the group and to maintain the integrity of the group.
 - b. Be the "eyes" of the leader and the "voice" when necessary. (Example: "Rider #3, close it up please"; vehicle passing on right; etc.)
 - c. Advise the Group Leader, if part of the group gets stuck by a light, another vehicle cuts into the group, etc., then also let him know when the group is back together again.
 - d. Assist in most, if not all lane changes. Note: Never attempt to hold back other traffic to enable the group to change lanes...it's unsafe, not wise and illegal.
 - e. To assist in lane changes at the discretion of the leader.
 - f. Watch for any hazards or problems with any of the group's motorcycles.
 - g. Assist any rider in the group that needs to pull over. Advise the Group Leader and pull over with the other rider.
 - h. If a member of the group goes down, transmit "BIKE DOWN! BIKE DOWN!" on the CB and stop ASAP to help and/or direct traffic away from the accident.
 - i. If any member indicates by voice or action/attitude that they don't wish to or are unable to follow the rules of the group, the Group Leader/Back Door, has the responsibility and duty to remind that member of group safety. (See Pre-ride, paragraph C)
4. The bottom line is "Safety First" and we should all assume the responsibility for the safety of fellow group members.

II. Defensive Riding Practices

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A. Group Riding Techniques

1. Pre-ride

- a. Always arrive on time, or earlier if possible. Think about this, someone has planned a route, the stops, everything, and here you are late, and the parking lot is empty. The ride meeting is over, you know nothing about where they were going, or what route. If you want to be included, then get there on time.
- b. We suggest that you always wear protective clothing and helmet.

- c. Group riding is disciplined riding and if following the rules of the group is not for you, then don't get in the group and meet everyone later at the destination. For those who do enjoy group riding, one slack rider, who does not keep the proper distance, either too close, or too far, can spoil their day. Remember the two second rule, explained elsewhere.
- d. The size of the groups will differ due to various conditions and will be determined during the Pre-Ride meeting. The quantity of willing Group Leaders will sometimes determine the amount of groups. Ideal group size for most rides will be from 3 to 7 bikes. The larger the group, the more care must be taken and usually, the more risk there will be.
- e. Positioning: The Ride Organizer should have all Group Leaders pull to an area where their groups will be able to form-up behind them. Riders without CB=s probably should be placed directly in front of the ABack Door@, giving them more opportunity to notice the turn signals of the bikes in front of them. If you have a "preferred riding location", like being on the inside or outside of the lanes, let the Group Leader know, during the pre-ride discussions.
- f. Examples:
 - i. Seven bikes show up for a ride. The Ride Organizer says "OK, lets have our pre-ride meeting". He/she asks who has CB's. There are five bikes with CB's. The Ride Organizer wants to be the Group Leader and has a CB (his/her number will be #1). He picks someone else, with a CB, to be his Back Door (his/her number will be #7). The two bikes without CB's are placed in front of the Rear Bike and their numbers are 5 & 6. The other three bikes are #'s 2, 3 & 4. The #3 bike had informed the Leader that he has a fear of heights and does not want to ride on the outside edge. That is why the Leader placed him in the #3 position. The Ride Organizer will then inform the group of the various other information needed for the ride, that was discussed earlier.
 - ii. If the Ride Organizer does not want to be the Group Leader, then the Rider Education Director, Ride Coordinator or the Chapter Director, if they are there and have CBs, would take the role of lead bike, following the Ride Organizer's directions.
- g. It's best to keep the groups an odd number. The Group Leader is always in the left tire track and this would put the Back Door bike also in the left tire track. This way they both have a similar view of the next lane.
- h. If you are pulling a trailer, see that section.
- i. If your gas tank is smaller than the other bikes in your group, let the Group Leader know how many miles you can go before needing to gas up.

2. Starting The Ride:

- a. Follow the directions of the Group Leader. You have chosen to participate in the ride so when the Group Leader requests you line up at a certain location in preparation for departure, do it. You should have discussed any of your little quirks at the riders meeting. If you have a fear of riding in the right hand side of the lane, let the Group Leader know and he will place you accordingly. If you are pulling a trailer, he may want all trailers together in one group, or one trailer per group.
- b. Gas and relief stops: remember the first rule of group riding, start with a full tank and an empty bladder. If you join the group at an intermediate stop, gas when the group does, so that 30 minutes after the group gases up, you won't have to yell over the CB, "I need gas".
- c. Be ready to go when the group departs. Do all the necessary things right after you stop, don't wait until the last minute. If you want to gossip with someone, go ahead and put the helmet on and visit, but be ready to jump on the bike when the trail boss yells "Head 'em up and move 'em out".
- d. If you want to ride fast, leave first. If you want to ride slow, leave last. Do not start out in a group and then shoot out of formation and zoom down the road. You have just shown your disregard for the group's safety and ticked several people off.

3. During The Ride:

- a. Advise the leader and Back Door if you are having any kind of problem and especially if you need to leave the group for any reason. Do not pull out of the group, without warning them!
- b. Headlights should be on low beam if you're not in the #1 or #2 slot.
- c. Never over ride your own, or your machine's ability. Remember, you are responsible for your own actions!
- d. Don't be over confident. Safety will be your primary concern for the entire ride. Remember our previous discussion of group riding. Do not let anyone else do your riding for you. Do not create an unsafe condition.
- e. **The two second rule:** The leader starts out in the lane's left track. The **second bike** is in the right track of the same lane and is **only one second behind the leader**. Then the **third rider** will be in the **left track of the lane, two seconds behind the leader**. The fourth rider is in the right track of the lane, two seconds behind the second bike, and so on down the line. Maintaining this formation, and these distances will discourage other vehicle from cutting into the group. However, if a vehicle does try to cut in between riders in the group, back off and let them in. Safety of the group, is the first concern.

Note: One of the reasons a group needs to ride in this close of a formation, is that when you are riding on a multi-lane highway, to keep at least one (1) motorcycle of the group in the other vehicles side view mirrors. This way the vehicle next to the group will not think that he can move into your lane, when in fact, there is another motorcycle, that is not in his mirrors, already there. This can happen when the group is spread out more than the two (2) second rule.

- f. It is illegal and very dangerous to move into single file and ride the right shoulder in order to allow another vehicle to pass you. If a vehicle attempts to pass you, you may have no choice but to do this. Keep in mind, that if another vehicle is coming at you, it may cause the vehicle passing you to push you all the way off the road. It could also cause a chain reaction with other vehicles also passing you at the same time. It'd be better to pull off the road at the first safe spot and wait it out, or pick up the group's speed.
- g. Don't center your focus on the bike in front of you - that's called tunnel vision. Scan instead, just like you do when riding alone.
- h. The distance between two or more groups can vary depending on the type of roads, intensity of traffic, and many other factors. The groups should not ride so close to the preceding group that in fact they become one large group. There should be enough room between groups that it is obvious to other vehicles they can pass a group safely.
- i. If the group comes upon a motorcyclist or anyone stranded by the road, the Group Leader should let the Back Door know so he can stop to see if assistance is needed. Here again, the group should find a safe place to wait for a report from the Back Door. (The universal HELP SIGN for a motorcyclist needing help, is a helmet by the side of the road as you approach.)

4. Lane Changing and Passing

- a. Use your mirrors consistently, but never rely on them. Glance over your shoulder to confirm what you think your mirror shows you.
- b. After making your lane change, always resume the same position you occupy in the group. The same rule applies when you are passing.
- c. Car lanes on one-way, multi-lane highways, are numbered from left to right. The Group Leader and the Rear Bike direct the team of their lane changes by referring to the lane number when lane changes are desired.
- d. When passing a vehicle on a two lane, two-way road, each team member should pass in order and in turn. The Group Leader should accelerate far enough ahead of the passed vehicle to allow room for the rest of the team to pass and the Rear Bike should inform the Group Leader when he's around and back in formation. It really feels good to be a part of a group that can react as one unit when space permits, or snake around a slow moving car like a living thing. But remember, each rider is to pass at their own risk as traffic permits!

- e. Lane changes by the group on highways with two or more lanes going in the same direction should be made by the Rear Bike first, after the Group Leader requests a lane change and then advises the Leader that the lane is "secure". The Leader then announces over the CB to all bikes in his group, "Let's all move to the # ____ lane, NOW!". The Group Leader hesitates, before saying NOW, giving you a chance to look over your shoulder, to see for yourself, that it is clear to move to the new lane. Then all the other bikes are to signal and follow the bike in front of them. This is especially important when every bike does not have a CB.
- f. On some occasions, depending mostly on traffic, the Group Leader or the Rear Bike might decide it to be safer or easier to change lanes from the front. If that is the case, the Group Leader will announce the decision to do this on the CB
- g. Wait to return to the original lane, until the Group Leader decides when it is best to do so, but never before you think it is safe!
- h. There will be times when, due to heavy traffic and/or the group waited too long to change lanes for an off-ramp, that each rider will have to move from one lane to another as an individual, not as a group member. The Group Leader should tell the group over the CB, if possible, that the lane change has to be done **"on your own"**. Be very careful, this can be dangerous.
- i. Entering a crowded highway could also be a reason to enter **"on your own"** and the Back Door should advise the Group Leader when the group is back together again.

5. Twisties

- a. On mountain type roadways and curvy roads, ride single file and each rider use the "line" that is most comfortable. Allow the bike in front of you a little more room (12 seconds), but remain as a group. Resume the staggered formation, when the road straightens out. ***Do not try to out ride your riding skills.*** If the bike in front of you is dragging his foot pegs in the curves, do so, but only if you feel confident. The bike probably just needs more air in its suspension anyway. In any group of riders there will always be a varying degree of riding skills. If you are new at group riding, ask someone who has been riding behind you how you have been doing. Hopefully, you'll get an honest answer. Like anything else it takes practice to watch the motorcycle in front of you, the one in front of him, the one behind you and the one behind that one. You will soon get so that you are watching every bike, from the Group Leader to Tail End Charlie.
- b. When not familiar with the road, Slow Down. Speed is still the #1 cause for motorcycle collisions as is drivers error.
- c. The three (3) second rule (or more) applies, even if the Group Leader forgets to mention it. (The three second rule means 1 2 seconds between each and every motorcycle.)

- d. You should know about counter steering, If you have taken an MSF course. That is, to initiate a right turn, push on the right grip. To turn left, push on the left grip. The key is to use counter steering, or "push steering" all the time whenever you ride.

6. Intersections

- a. When approaching a vehicle facing toward you that is attempting to turn left, assume that driver does not see you and will turn directly into your path.
- b. When first in line at a signal controlled intersection without a left turn arrow, don't wait at the white line. Move forward on the green signal to the approximate center of the intersection and halt with your left turn signal activated and wait until the left turn movement can safely be completed. This will allow many of the (if not the whole) group to complete a turn at the same time and is not illegal.
- c. When stopping at a traffic light or stop sign, catch up to the unit to your front and wait side-by-side. Bike on left is always first to commence moving.
- d. When entering a through street, or highway, or turning at an intersection, the Group Leader should accelerate slowly until informed, by the Rear Door, that the group is together

7. Stops and Final Destination

- a. Keep the same position during transit and after stopping for gas, etc. Re-take that previous position so you are aware of the bikes around you.
- b. If the Team Leader or the Rear Bike approaches you at a stop or final destination, remember, they have the group's best interest at heart, or better yet our safety. Listen to what they have to say, you may be in their place one day, and you'll want others to listen to you. Of course, they will be the very example of tact and diplomacy, when they critique your riding skills. But listen, it just might save your life and the lives of others

8. Parking

- a. When entering parking areas, go to single file and slowly follow the leader to the designated parking area. Be alert! Don't just park anywhere! If possible, back into your spot, side by side. If the leader does not feel that there is enough room for all bikes, he will then tell you to find your own spot. Do so carefully, especially on dirt. Watch out for cars backing up. Remember, most of our bikes are quiet. Try to keep the group together in an orderly fashion. It really looks good when a neat formation of motorcycles comes down the highway, exits in an orderly fashion, and parks all in a row. Spectators stop and watch an orderly group enter a parking lot, close up, and park; you can see the admiration on their faces. It makes you proud to be a part of that group of motorcyclists.
- b. If (Heaven forbid) you lose control of your motorcycle while halted and it begins to fall over, don't attempt to hold it up when it goes past center. It's

better to hurt your bike than yourself. The co-rider should keep their feet in while the bike is falling and not try to step off, which would take away any chance for the rider to save it.

III. Ride Organizers (for each specific ride)

Ideas and locations for rides come from you, the Chapter Member. Everyone has a favorite ride. Share it! Remember, the Ride Organizers do not have to be a Group Leader on their ride. Your chapter should have a ride meeting prior to riding season, to schedule most of the activities and prepare a ride calendar. This gives the members an opportunity to plan ahead for the season. It also gives other chapters the opportunity to participate in your rides and events.

There could be multiple groups, Group Leaders and Back Doors, but only one Ride Organizer per ride.

1. The Ride Organizers route the rides.
2. When necessary, they will make maps and alternate routes.
3. Note: Alternate Route: This takes a little more work for you, but gives several rewards. You can have a quick, straight route for those that just want to get from point to point. You can have a scenic and a challenging route for those who enjoy the challenge offered and for those who like to take their time and enjoy the scenery. Were the routes checked shortly before the event so that construction, washouts, or other unplanned obstacles could be avoided?
4. When reservations to restaurants and lodging are necessary, the Ride Organizers make sure these are completed.
5. The Ride Organizers will usually go out with group #1, (unless they are pulling a trailer), to be sure all is in order at the destination in question. It is suggested those pulling trailers be in the last group.
6. Unless the ride is a Mystery Ride, everyone should be told the destination.
7. The Group Leaders are only an extension of the Ride Organizers.
8. Be sure to tell the time the meeting will take place, as well as the time of departure.

IV. Chapter Ride Coordinators

1. Along with the Chapter Rider Education Directors, observe and oversee the Group Leaders, Back Doors and all of the groups in general.
2. Aids the Ride Organizers whenever possible.
3. Compiles the Chapter Ride Calendar

V. Trailers

1. If there are more bikes pulling trailers than there are groups, the trailers should form their own group. They should anyway, if there are at least three bikes pulling trailers and at least three that aren't.

2. It is the Group Leaders option to have a bike pulling a trailer as his Tail End Charlie, assuming that he also has a CB
3. Remember, bikes pulling trailers take the curves and turns differently than bikes without trailers. The same is true when it comes to braking.
4. It is illegal in some states for any vehicle pulling a trailer to ride in any lane other than the right hand lane of two (2) lanes or greater highways, except to pass another vehicle.

Comments

All of these guidelines are meant to make your ride more pleasant and safer. Any time we put more than one motorcycle in close proximity to another, we have just increased the risk factor. We live in a very structured society. Rules should not be anything new to any of us. They make moving the herd just a little easier. If it takes your co-rider, or your rider a little longer to get his/her stuff together all in one bag, edge him or her on with a gentle nudge "get your helmet on and let's get ready to go". There are other phrases that can be more explicit, but do so at your own risk. After all of this, it does not mean that you cannot participate in Chapter rides if you do not like group riding. Leave ahead of the group and do your own thing, start after the group has left and sight see to your hearts content. You know the destination, you know the speed your co-rider likes best. Do it the way you will enjoy it the most.

VI. THE CB RADIO

A. CB Chatter

1. Don't interfere with information being passed on between the Group Leader and Back Door.
2. If you wish to converse with a fellow rider, call them by name, "Hey Harry, this is Jack" or whatever the handle might be.
3. Limiting the use of the CB for idle chatter is particularly critical during departures and arrivals. There is a tendency for riders to be tense during the takeoffs and somewhat lax during arrivals. Experience has shown that these are the times that unfortunate incidents tend to occur. Be Alert!
4. CB Etiquette: Motorcycle CBs are notoriously under powered. If you can "reach out" for a mile you are really lucky. The CB has become an inter-bike method of communication; they work well for short distance talking. However anyone with a decent mobile radio will "walk all over you" if they are close by. A base station will "blow your windows out", even if you don't have any windows. Around town they can become a real nuisance what with big base stations blasting away.
5. For good to excellent communication while driving down the highway, CBs can't be beat; they're better than hand signals. The dealer installed models, fit right in that little nook or cranny, and integrate right along with the radio, tape player and intercom.

B. CB Setup:

1. On the Gold Wing, most installations are handled at the dealership. But no one checks the SWR (that's one of those neat little CB terms that means Standing-Wave-Ratio). On most auto or home installations, a ratio of 1:1 is ideal. However, on a motorcycle most of your communications are completed within 200-300 hundred yards of each other and a ratio that flat causes the radio to over-modulate (garble your speech). So, we adjust the antenna to about 1:1.5 to 1:2 SWR, and try it out. In most cases, it actually makes everything sound a lot better.
2. Now we have the thing all set up. It worked in your garage, between some "good buddy" in your neighborhood who gave you a radio check and certified that you were "hitting him with 10 pounds", or something like that. So, just how do we communicate? No, riding down the road, we don't ask for a break on the channel when riding motorcycles. First of all, you'll be lucky if anyone other than the group you are riding with even hears you. Go up on channel 19 sometime and listen to the intellectual conversations between some of the "good buddies". One theory is when you give some one a CB radio their IQ drops at least 50 points, effective with them plugging it in. Not so with a motorcycle CB When no one in your group is talking, just call out a name, "Hey Joe, you by the channel?" If Joe has his turned on, he'll reply back with something.

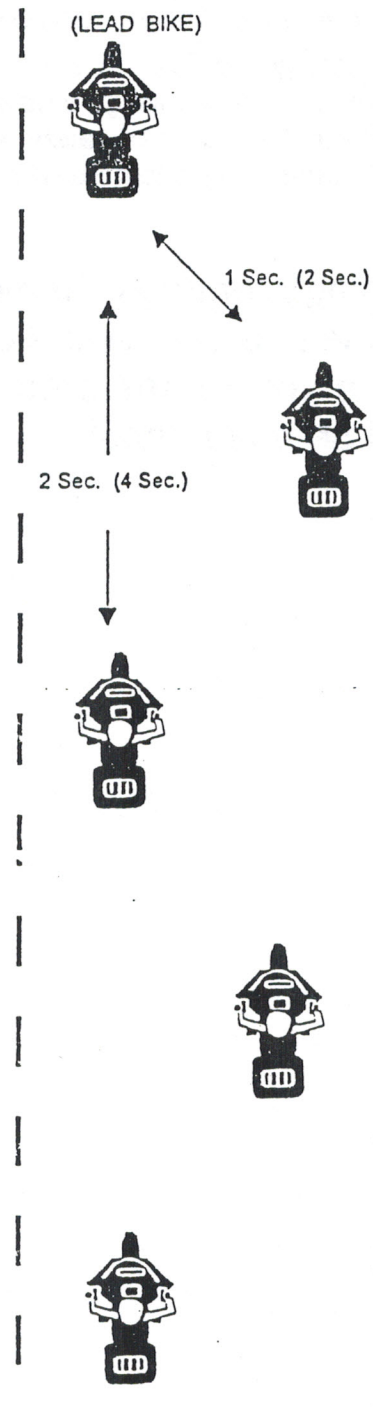
C. To Transmit:

1. First key the mike. *But wait just a second or two* for the radio to come up to power. It's not like a telephone with a two way conversation. They call the CB a two way radio, but it only works one way at a time. So, key the mike, pause, now in a normal tone, or better yet, lower (deepen) your voice just a hair, and talk plainly. Enunciation is the key to good clear radio speech - just like the man on the five o'clock news. Speak slowly and plainly, use simple terms that are easily understood. Remember there's wind noise to contend with, especially with open face helmets. Your passenger, just may be talking at the same time, and you know your priority. Hold the key for just a second when you are finished, then release it. Don't try to "quick key", or key just as soon as someone else lets off their key. Allow a little time in between transmissions. When two people are conversing, don't try to jump in with some smart comment, most of the time you will "double" with them and nobody understands anybody.
2. Try listening to other people, using the helmet speakers and then with the fairing mounted speakers. I find that the fairing speakers are far superior, when I am wearing my open face helmet. After all, these speakers are about 5 times larger than those little bitty ones in your helmet.
3. The microphone in a full face helmet is usually the best, after all, you don't have the wind noise quite as much as with an open face helmet.
4. Try talking to the bike right ahead of you, and then the farthest bike away. You may be surprised to find out that the guy who is the farthest away hears you the best.

5. Don't try to talk over a real powerful station that is talking at the same time. It just does not work. Physics and all that stuff. One problem is called skip, or DX in radio lingo, these are really powerful stations transmitting hundreds of miles. To cut them out, just turn up your squelch, that's the other knob on your radio. Some times you hear DX, some times you don't. It has to do with sun spots and weather conditions. The squelch control cuts out all of the low powered noise.
6. Normally, in a group ride there are times like first starting out and coming to rest at a gas or food break, we give up the CB to the Group Leader and his Tail End Charlie. It's just a matter of safety. After all, we are coming to a stop and we can take the helmet off and talk like real people.

Embarrassing Moments: Remember, if your co-rider is talking to you on the intercom and either of you press the transmit buttons, everyone in the group will hear what is being said. That could be a big oops!

STAGGERED FILE FORMATION

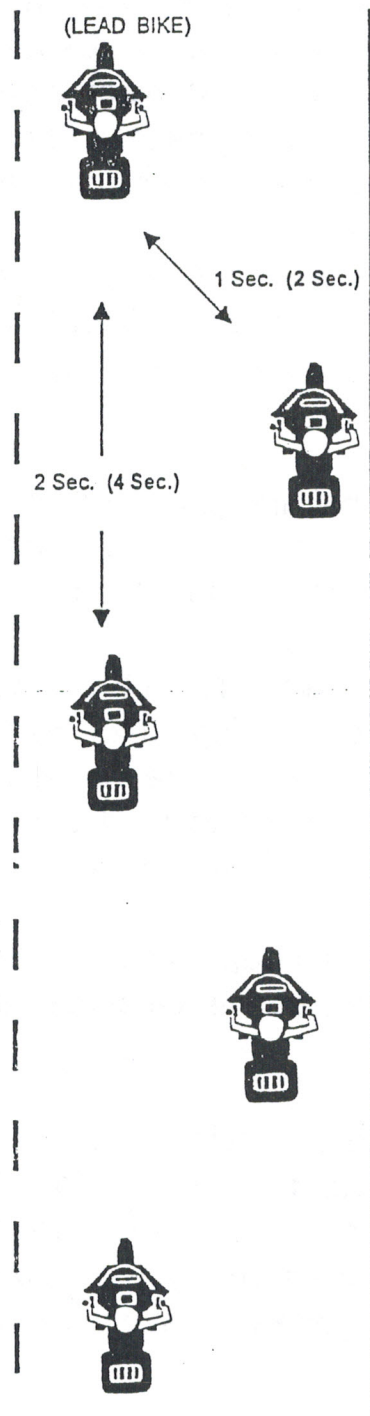


ROAD CAPTAIN GUIDELINES

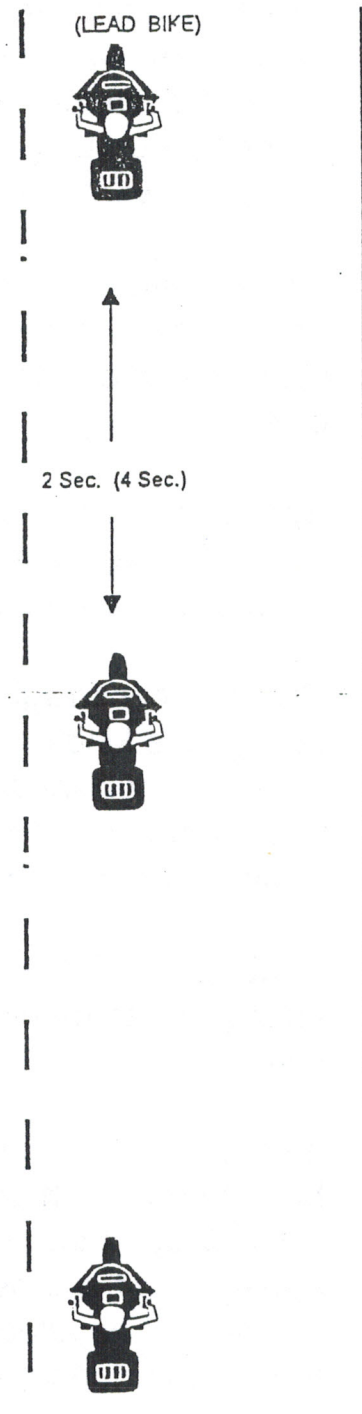
1. Try to arrive at the meeting place early, with a full fuel tank. The person who sets up the ride is usually the *Trip Coordinator* and, in most cases, also the *Drag* of Group #1--unless he/she gives up that responsibility.
2. As participants begin to arrive, get them in place, keeping in mind that some folks may not have CB capability. If there are bikes with a trailer and/or sidecar or there are three-wheelers (trikes), place them at the rear of the group (in front of Drag); they sometimes take turns and curves slower than other bikes and may need more room to maneuver.
3. If more than 5 bikes show up, ask if there is another *Lead/Drag* on site, and get them to begin setting up another group. Look for the Road Captain rocker under the Chapter patch. The "ideal" group size is 3-5 bikes.
4. Spend some time looking at the bikes that are going to be in your group, keeping an eye out for any obvious safety problems. Get your group members to assist, as additional eyes will see more than just one pair.
5. Choose your *Drag/Lead* early and discuss the route that you will be taking, the kind of terrain that you will be running; the kind of terrain that the group will be riding through, etc. Make sure that all members of your group know the route. If you know the route in advance, you might draw up a map and make copies for all group members.
6. At about 5 minutes prior to the announced departure time, begin to get your group to mount up so that all groups can leave at the appointed time.
7. If the ride will be going through the kind of terrain that some people may have trouble with, ask other *Road Captains* if they would volunteer to *Lead/Drag* a slower group. This group may choose to leave a little earlier than the other groups, or later. Be sure that the slower group is aware of scheduled stops, so that everyone will have a chance to get together for lunch, etc.

8. If your group has a bike with no CB, go over the hand signals with this person. Make sure that this person, and all other group members, know the route and approximate length of time between breaks.
9. Once on the road, assume the standard staggered file formation positions for **Lead and Drag**. **Lead** bike is always in the left track of the lane you are traveling in.

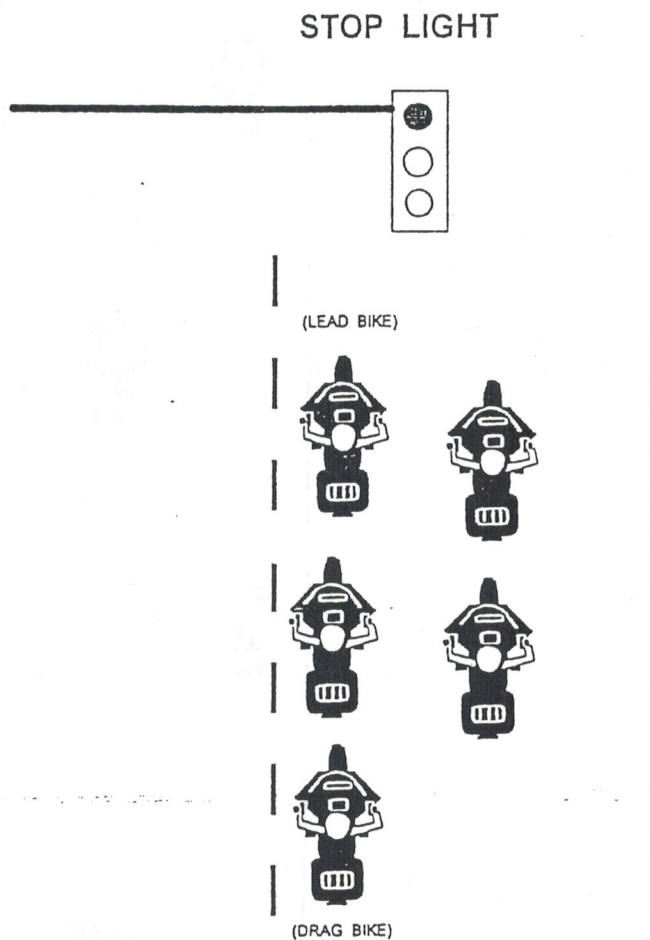
STAGGERED FILE FORMATION



SINGLE FILE FORMATION



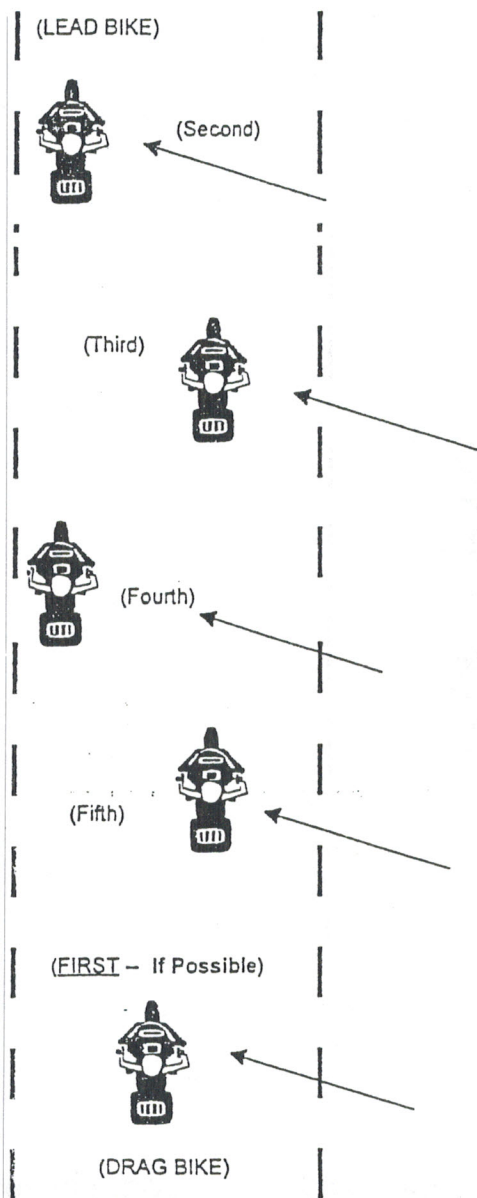
10. **Lead** should start out slow, allowing time for all group members to get out onto the road and into position. Then, increase speed to cruising speed (per designated speed limits). And, when stopped at a stop light, have everyone double up, side-by-side.



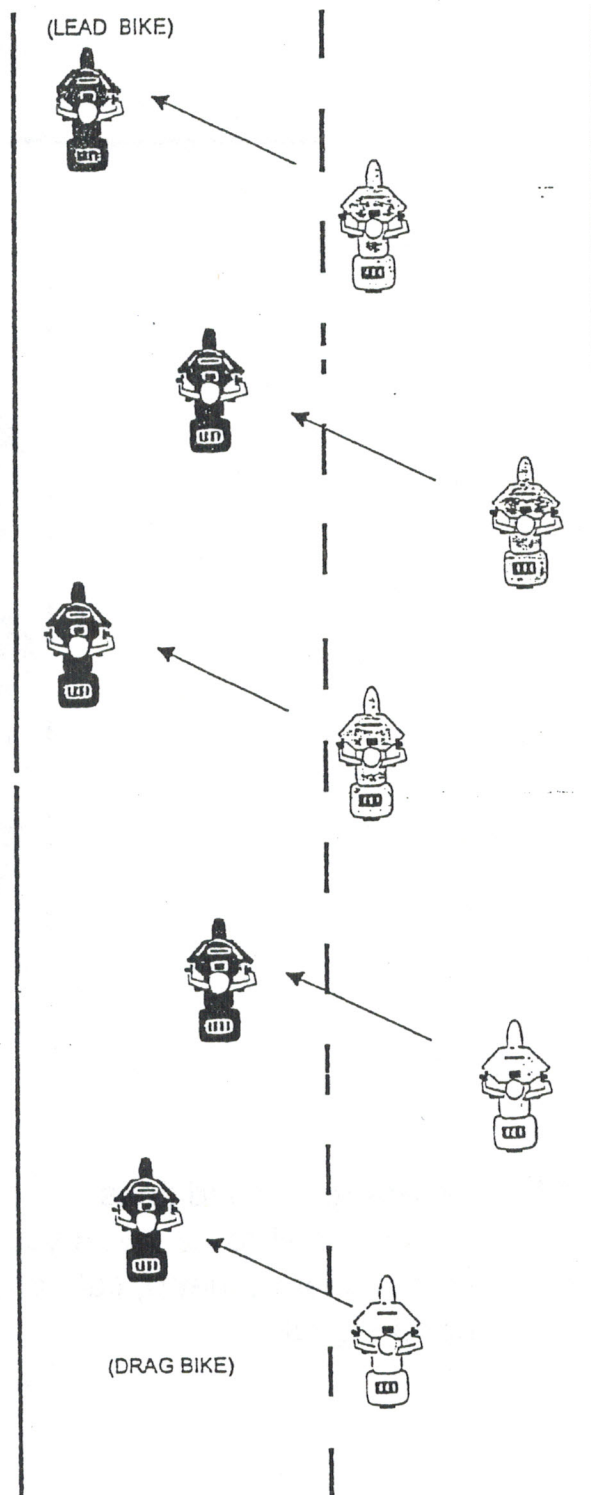
11. Where road conditions permit, ride in the staggered formation. However, if your travel route takes you onto narrower roads or road conditions that indicate a need, call for a single file formation--both by CB and by hand signal.

12. When you have a choice of several lanes, *Lead* should plan lane changes in advance. Conditions will occur that call for immediate action; but most of the time, you can tell that you will want--or need--another lane.

ENTERING HIGHWAY FROM ON-RAMP



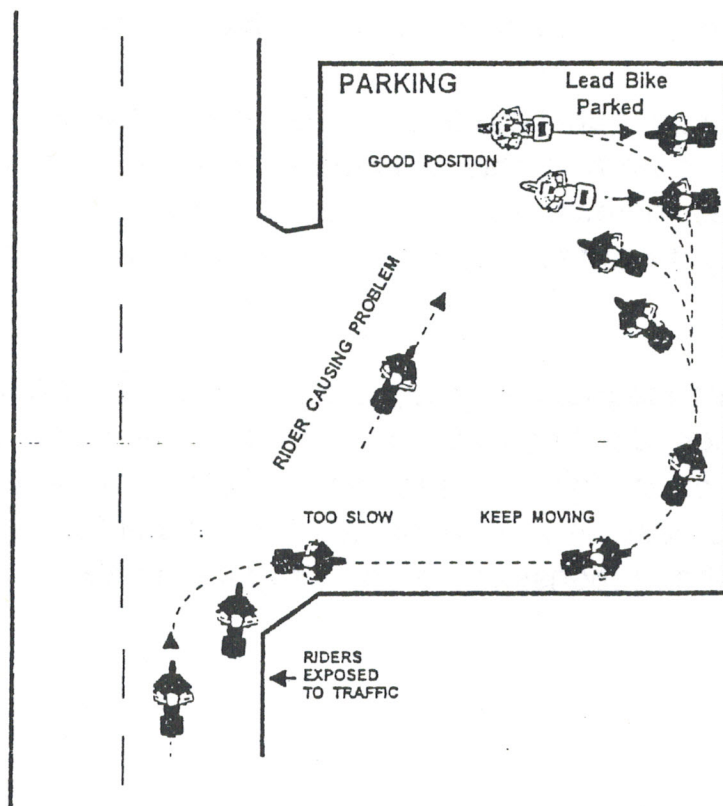
LANE CHANGE



13. *Lead* should call the *Drag* and ask him/her to "*secure the left/right lane.*" *Drag* will move to the requested lane and call back that "*the lane is secured.*" At that time, the *Lead* will announce to the group to "*look left/right and move left/right.*" The *Drag* should check to see that all members are looking left/right over their shoulder before making the lane change. All group members should be encouraged to move as a unit, and move with the bike directly in front of them. This makes for a safer and smoother lane change by the group. An individual bike "diving" across lanes can cause the remainder of the group to have to break or swerve.
14. Keep the length of a ride down to a reasonable time between breaks. Remember, your co-rider may tire before you do.
15. Keep to the right lane at all times, unless passing or conditions in the right lane warrant staying in the left lane, such as on/off ramps of interstate highways. On divided highways (with 3 lanes on your side), you might want to stay in the center lane, versus constantly changing lanes.
16. If you notice that the group is spreading out, or getting sloppy in the formation, don't hesitate to tell the group to close it up or to get the formation straight. This is especially true for the *Drag*, because he/she has the best view of the group. Remember that the group's safety is as much the responsibility of the *Drag* as the *Lead*.

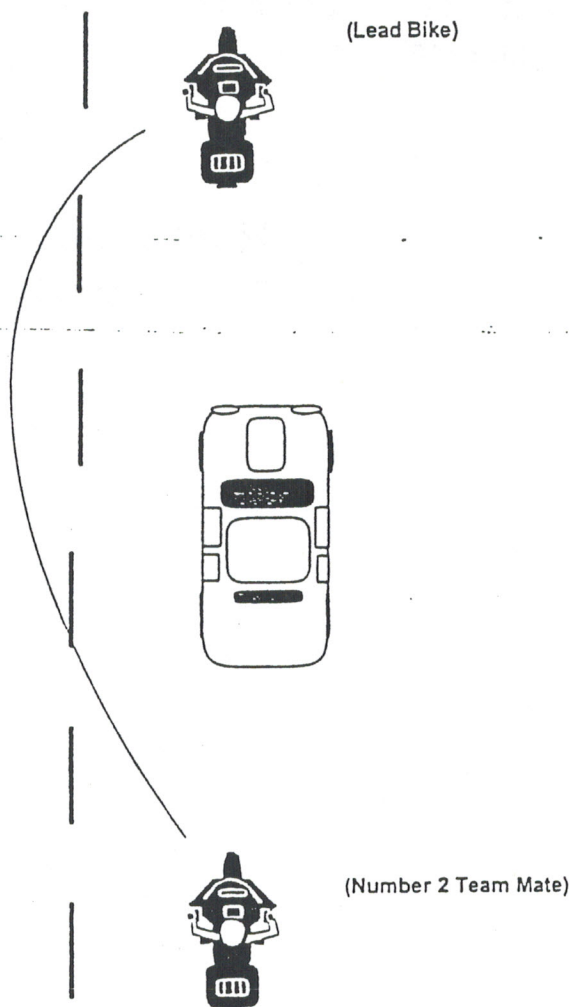
17. When pulling off of the road or preparing to stop, find an area that will accommodate the entire group. Pull into the area, ride to the end, and swing the front of your bike out. Then back up to the curb. All bikes should follow suit. This makes for a neat formation when parked and leaves more room for other groups, or for non-riders to park. Always remember that we want to make a good impression on the general public, and not hogging all available parking spaces is just one more way to do this.

PARKING LOT / PULL OFF



18. When heading back from a ride, there are times when a bike (or group of bikes) will split off from the main group. This split should come before the turn so that you do not have bikes breaking out of formation at an intersection, where other drivers might get confused and pull out in front of one of us. If you know that you will be leaving the group during the ride, position yourself at the rear of the group. As the split is made, make sure that the **Lead** knows who his **Drag** is.
19. If you find your group behind a slow moving vehicle on a narrow two-lane road, you may need to pass the vehicle individually. The **Lead** should announce this fact to the group. Once you are around the vehicle, you should keep in contact with the rest of the group, informing them about passing lanes and traffic conditions. Once the group has gotten around the vehicle, the **Drag** should inform the **Lead** of that fact.

SINGLE LANE PASS



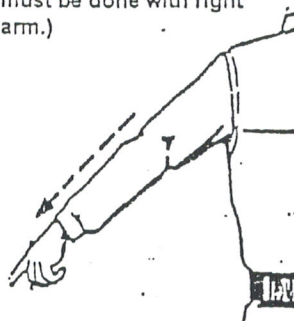

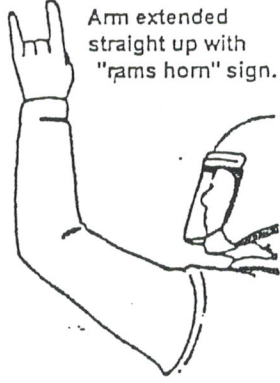
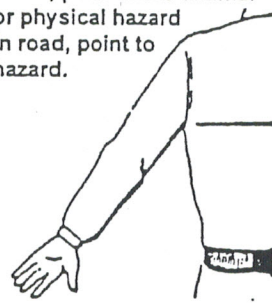
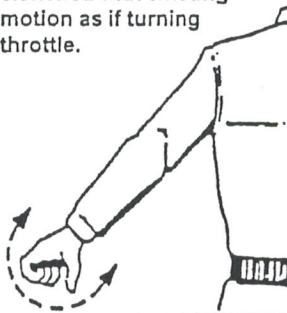
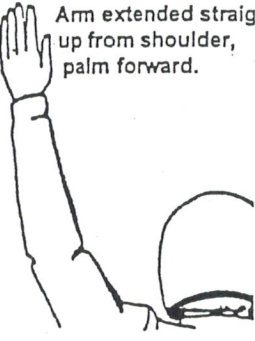
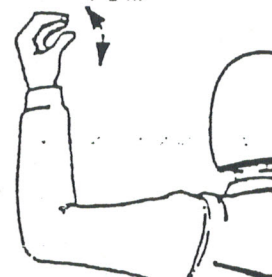
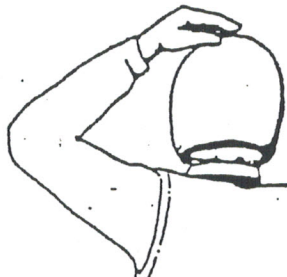
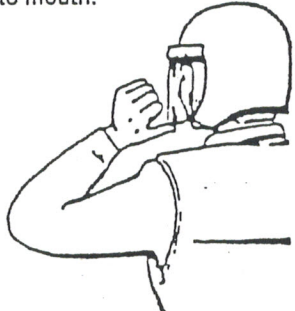
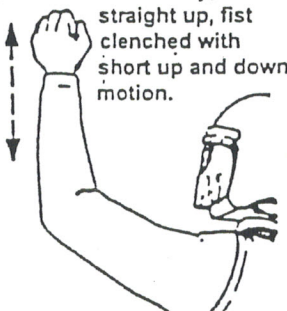
20. When traveling through towns, the group may get broken up at traffic lights. The **Lead** may pull over to wait, if an area is available. If not, continue on at a reduced rate of speed and keep in touch with the stragglers, letting them know where you are. This is especially important if there is a turn to be made before the group gets back together.
21. We all enjoy the fellowship of our Chapter members, and enjoy talking to them during rides. You have to keep in mind that the **Lead** and **Drag** need to be able to pass on safety information to the group. Keep conversation short to keep the airway clear. This is especially true when there is more than one group. Everyone should keep conversation to an absolute minimum.
22. This guide may seem cumbersome at first glance. However, the GWRRA Chapter that initiated (and still uses) this training has an excellent record for safety on the road. Compliments are heard, wherever they go, regarding the professional look that is projected. Let's continue the tradition.

**Ride Safe,
Ride Smart!**

ROAD CAPTAIN COURSE

HAND SIGNALS

Hand signals for communicating while riding:

<p>HAZARD IN ROAD</p> <p>Point immediately with emphasis. (Sometimes this must be done with right arm.)</p> 	<p>SINGLE FILE</p> <p>Arm and index finger extended straight up.</p> 	<p>STAGGERED FILE</p> <p>Arm extended straight up with "rams horn" sign.</p> 	
<p>STOP (Slow Down):</p> <p>Arm extended straight down, palm back. Animal or physical hazard in road, point to hazard.</p> 	<p>SPEED UP:</p> <p>Arm down to side, fist clenched with twisting motion as if turning throttle.</p> 	<p>FOLLOW ME:</p> <p>Arm extended straight up from shoulder, palm forward.</p> 	<p>PULL OFF:</p> <p>Arm positioned as for right turn, forearm swung toward shoulder.</p> 
<p>TURN SIGNALS (Accidentally left on):</p> <p>Open and close hand with fingers and thumb extended.</p> 	<p>HEADLIGHT:</p> <p>Tap on top of head, open palm down.</p> 	<p>FUEL:</p> <p>Arm out to side, upper arm about 45 degrees below horizontal, forearm pointing to tank with forefinger extended.</p> 	<p>FOOD, COFFEE STOP:</p> <p>Fingers closed, thumb to mouth.</p> 
<p>COMFORT STOP:</p> <p>Upper arm extended horizontally, forearm straight up, fist clenched with short up and down motion.</p> 	<p>YOU LEAD: Arm extended (palm forward) down. Begin behind hip and swing forward in an arc away from body about 45 degrees from vertical.</p> <p>COME ALONGSIDE: Same motion, but stop at side and point to position for other cycle.</p> 