



OK, this week, the full training series begins which means it's time for the full length e-mails!-)

I do have a LOT of news to share today and it's already past breakfast so let's get right to the important news...

This is our first ride of the series and it's close to town so we usually get 1,100 or more riders show up for the ride. Those of you who weren't among the 325 riders who rode last Saturday also need to get your rider number to place on your helmet (on the front or left side) and new riders need to get used to the sign-in process so PLEASE arrive early and allow extra time to get ready for our first ride - please... If you don't come this week, don't worry, you will get your rider number when you come to your first ride.

Today's note has several safety/courtesy tips. I know that there is a lot of material here but PLEASE read all of these and please be prepared to practice these at this week's ride and at all of our rides. They will make you a safer rider and increase your enjoyment of every ride you do. There is a lot for our beginners to practice and I have collected the most useful and important tips in today's note.

I will be sending a focus note tomorrow night about the training ride details. It will cover if you need to RSVP (no), how do you sign in and out, how do we start our riders, what do the Ride Marshals do, etc. PLEASE hold your questions about the ride. The focus note should cover everything you want to know about the actual ride day experience and what you need to do. We'll have volunteers to help you sign in as well. **The key is to arrive early** to allow time to sign in, get your bike ready, etc.

Today's note covers the following topics:

- **Safety Corner - Feedback from Beginner Rides**
- **Training Ride #1 – Katy Rhodes Stadium, North**
- **Training Series Support - Sun & Ski Sports**
- **Safety Corner - Group Rides, Drafting & Pacelines, Helmet Fit Tips**
- **Last Minute Reminders**

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**Safety Corner - Feedback from Beginner Ride**

We had 325 riders for our beginner ride last Saturday. We got some great feedback from several experienced riders and our SAG drivers. Most of the feedback made the same points - a very common point that I need to share with new riders a few times until we get more

experience.

Marathon Ride Marshal, Terry Krysl wrote: "From the Ready2Roll training ride this weekend, a couple of safety and training items stand out - properly fitting one's helmet and cycling cadence. Below are links to helpful videos and articles on the subjects.

#### **Fitting one's helmet**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-DYW9XPke1s>
- <http://www.ndhealth.gov/injury/publications/Easy%20Steps%20to%20Properly%20Fit%20A%20Bicycle%20Helmet.pdf>

#### **Cycling cadence**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7VMPcf7VcXQ>
- [www.bikeradar.com/us/gear/article/technique-cadence-matters-16394/](http://www.bikeradar.com/us/gear/article/technique-cadence-matters-16394/)

The ride marshals were checking helmets before the training ride and the newbies especially needed some guidance.

The other key tip is to please remember to ride single file on two lane roads and be aware of traffic.

I had several reports that some of our riders were riding 2 abreast and taking the entire lane and holding up traffic on the road. Some riders also disregarded coaching from Medics and Ride Marshals to ride single file. I know that this was a mentor ride so there is a tendency to ride next to a rider to talk and learn but one critical lesson we need to work on is to ride single file approximately 18" from the right side of the lane if there is not a safe shoulder to ride on.

When there is no traffic or riders approaching from behind, it may be OK to ride two abreast but you should still stay to the right and, if riders call as they approach or vehicles are approaching, one rider should note to the other that they are going to move in front or behind the other rider into single file to allow a safe pass. See more about passing below.

This is an important skill to practice over our entire series because you will be passing a lot of riders and probably also be getting passed a lot on the BP MS150. We want all our riders to practice and learn to make passing safe, effective and even fun. This will make a huge difference in your enjoyment of the ride as well as every rider you pass or who passes you.

Here are a few more brief but important reminders:

- Come to a full stop at each stop sign! The only exception is intersections controlled by police officer

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**Training Ride #1 – Katy, Rhodes Stadium – North – 8:00 am – 16, 26 or 44 miles**

This week, we kick off the season with a variation on one of our classic rides - Katy north (and west) to Dewberry Farm and back. We open the series near town where we have plenty of parking as most of you have probably not set up a carpool yet. I'll talk more about carpools this weekend in an e-mail note.

Note that we are not starting at Katy Mills as we have done for several years. The traffic later in the morning has gotten heavier and the Katy PD has been working with us to move our starts north of I-10. Rhodes Stadium became available for this Saturday so we moved our start and created a new route for this week.

The route offers options of 16, 26 or 44 miles. The route is an out & back and the routes will have 1, 2 or 3 rest stops respectively. Most of the ride is on local roads without a shoulder so you will need to ride single file. We will have Ride Marshals and conscientious riders reminding you to ride "Single File". Please honor these requests so that we are welcome to come back. More on this below.

### **Directions to Rhodes Stadium (from in town)**

Take I-10 to the Katy Fort Bend exit (742) which is just past the Grand Parkway. and make a LEFT turn on Katy Ft Bend Rd. Continue about a mile on the Frontage to Katy-Fort Bend Rd. Turn LEFT and drive about ½ mile. Just after passing Colonial Parkway on the right, you will see the entry to Rhodes Stadium on the left. The entry will be unlocked for us at 6:00 am and the porta-lets will arrive about 6:15.

There will be plenty of room for us on the east side of the stadium. We'll be lining up to depart out the east gate about 7:45 so you need to arrive at 7:00-7:15 to have time to park, sign in, get your rider number, etc. PLEASE arrive no later than 7:00 am this week since we have extra work to get you your helmet number.

**A big THANKS to Sun & Ski Sports for providing tech support!!!.** They will be rolling out the red carpet for us this week. Be sure to thank them for their support all season!

**ALL Riders Need to Sign in and Sign out** - There will be a master list split into 10 shorter lists at the sign-in tables. Please initial in before you ride and initial out when you are finished so we know you made it home. The lists will be split up as follows:

A – B  
C – D  
E – G  
H – K  
L – N  
O – R  
S – T  
U – Z

The sign-in lists will be straight ahead as you enter the parking lot on the perimeter sidewalk around the stadium. The porta-lets will also be nearby. There will be a long line at the peak

time so please arrive early this week so you have time to sign in and get ready before the ride.

### **IMPORTANT Ride Details**

We have lined up quite a few officers from the local PDs. They will be covering all the significant intersections we pass through. Please obey them and be prepared to stop as you approach each intersection.

This is our opportunity to demonstrate that most cyclists are very considerate. PLEASE ride single file and be considerate of local traffic or we will not be welcome back.

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### **Training Series Sponsor - Sun & Ski Sports**

Sun & Ski Sports is proud to provide technical support for our 2015 Ready2Roll Cycling Training Series. They will be providing full bike maintenance support before and during each training ride.

Sun & Ski Sports is a full service bike shop that offers bike sales, apparel, parts and accessories, bike repair and custom bike fittings. They outfit customers with quality merchandise, exceptional service and outstanding values. All employees are knowledgeable of the products and help provide the best possible fit.

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### **Safety Corner 2 - Group Rides, Drafting & Pacelines, Helmet Tips**

This week, we officially start training to ride to Austin. Our training series is designed to help you get into shape to ride and, equally important, train you how to ride safely and courteously.

Towards this end, I will include a regular Safety Corner focusing on a topic/technique that will help ensure you get to Austin with your skin and all your bones intact. These tips are for your health. PLEASE read them and practice the exercises we will be promoting!

If some of you experienced riders want to contribute a safety tip/topic, please feel free to drop me a well written note for future use. All contributors will be noted and thanked profusely.

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Please remember these key tips about a group ride.

### **Do's**

- Ride smoothly and predictably - DON'T make sudden stops, changes in speed or turns
- Communicate - BOTH ways, call hazards, call when passing and listen to others
- Ride your ride at your pace
- Listen and respect the Ride Marshals, Medics and law enforcement officers directing us - they are looking out for our safety

- Ride single file or maximum 2 abreast if on a wide shoulder or a road that is closed to regular vehicular traffic
- If riding two abreast, please pay attention and, if riders approach to pass, gradually go to single file to allow a safe pass
- Enjoy the ride - Remember that this is a fund-raiser to find a cure for MS, not a race!

### **Don'ts**

- Ride to the left of the center stripe (short passing is OK as if you were a car but don't ride there)
- Pass on the right
- Overlap the wheel of the rider in front of you
- Ride in pacelines (unless you are very experienced with the general process and the specific group you're are riding with)
- Wear headphones (any type) or talk on your cellphone while riding

I will come back to many of these in detail over and over until we are all familiar with the fundamentals of safe riding.

### **Passing - This is IMPORTANT!**

We will practice the tips below over and over and I will be giving you feedback. After a few weeks, this will become second nature but please read the tips below and practice them as well as observing other riders doing the same. Be sure to communicate effectively and say "THANKS!" to show your appreciation for other riders who do the same.

Over the years, I have noticed a fairly regular issue in our rides and have observed several mishaps when a newer rider is startled during a pass and jerks causing them to lose control of their bike. In most cases, the rider recovers but I have seen a few where the rider did take a spill. These accidents can be avoided by exercising a little rider etiquette. Here are some details about how to make a safe, courteous pass.

Passing on a bicycle is a two-way event. The passer and the passee both have a few simple responsibilities that will make the pass safe and friendly.

The passer should:

- Call "Approaching rider" as you get close (within 10-20 yards)
- Check the road behind to ensure no approaching vehicles
- Move over to allow enough room, speed up just a little and start the pass
- Call "Passing on left" as you pull near the rider

Adjust your volume for the weather - if it's calm, you don't need to shout, if it's windy, you will need to raise your voice

- Allow plenty of room before pulling back in to the right

The passee should:

- Be aware of approaching riders (listen, NO headphones!)
- Acknowledge calls to pass - saying "Thank You" is a GREAT way to do this!

- Maintain a steady speed and line - don't suddenly slow down or speed up as you are being passed and don't jerk your handle bars.

The process for multiple riders passing is similar with a few extra variations

The passers should do all the above plus:

- Call "Rider(s) Up, slowing!" as they approach
- Double check for approaching traffic - allow more room for multiple riders to pass
- Consolidate to single file if not already there
- The lead rider should call: "Passing on left, 7 riders" or something similar to let the passees know what to expect
- The last rider should call: "Last rider" so the group knows you are all past
- Allow extra room before pulling back in so the your line doesn't cut off the passees
- Maintain a steady speed, don't speed up until the entire group has passed - your group may feel pressured to pass when it is not safe in order to avoid falling behind

The passees should do all the above plus:

- Smoothly consolidate to single file when a group approaches (the lead rider should call "Slowing, Single file")

Ignoring the "Riders approaching" call and not allowing room for riders to pass is not a good way to make friends!

- Listen for the first and last passers so they know what to expect.

Note that the passers have the responsibility to ease up as they approach and wait for safe conditions to pass. The passees have the responsibility to listen, hold a steady speed and line, and go to single file to make room for the passers to get around.

I expect to see you all practicing these tips - they make a huge difference in how much we all enjoy the ride. I also expect to hear a LOT of communicating and "Thank you's" out on the roads this week and for the next three months!

Here is one more group riding tip. A question I received about pacelines.

Q: I've completed several MS150s but never a part of a team. While there have been large groups about, I've never been part of one. The extent of my drafting experience is limited to a group of 3 - and then only sporadically. Will this be covered in the next beginning ride?

A: We recommend against pacelines which is "aggressive" drafting in order to increase speed (unless you are very experienced and know your paceline riders well)

On the other hand, there is an opportunity to ride in a group and practice gentle drafting which does make your work quite a bit easier, especially on windy days. This also makes the ride a lot more fun since it is possible, and probable to meet and visit with other great riders as you go.

The key things to remember are:

1. Allow at least 12-24" between front/back wheels
2. NEVER overlap wheels!
3. Communicate with your group - call hazards, car back, slowing, stopping, turning, standing, etc...
4. Ride steady and predictable
5. Don't ride above your ability - pull off and let the group go if the pace feels too fast

Here are a few more linear thoughts on this topic:

- If a group has trained together, cycling etiquette says to let the slowest rider set the pace
- The ride is supposed to be fun and it is definitely more fun with a group of friends
- Friends DON'T let friends ride alone!

Hope this makes sense Save this note as it will make a lot more sense as you get more experienced

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#### **- Last Minute Reminders:**

- Put your clothing/eqpt out Friday night (include water bottles!)
- You must have completed your annual enrollment before you ride - NO EXCEPTIONS  
(If you are getting this note directly from me (no one forwarded it to you), you have completed the annual enrollment)
- Arrive on time, no, make that EARLY - no later than 7:00 this week!  
We always have a LARGE crowd for this ride so if you arrive late, you will miss the start and may be behind our support team and on your own if you have any mechanical difficulty.

#### **The Return of the Cycling Garage Sale!**

There are still quite a few new and gently used items – jerseys, jackets, shoes, a bike rack, etc. Be sure to arrive early enough to check out the great selection and GREAT prices!

I will be posting each e-mail note shortly after sending on the Communications page of the Ready2Roll Cycling website so, if you can't get to your inbox or my notes are being eaten by your dog, you can always go to [www.ready2rollcycling.com](http://www.ready2rollcycling.com) and find the notes online – click the Communications tab on the red bar at the top and look at the weekly note archive on the Houston page.

While you are on this page, note that the weekly ride maps will also be posted shortly before the ride date as well as GPX files. Those of you with GPS computers for your bike may be able to download these into your GPS to guide you on the route. Thanks to Bob Perchonok for making all the weekly GPX files!

OK, that wraps it up for today. I will be sending a detailed note about the ride sign-in and start tomorrow night as well as any late, breaking news I need to cover this Friday.

I'll see many of you this Saturday...

**Steve Moskowitz**

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