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Subject: 2019 Ride Feedback & Safety/Courtesy Tips #1
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Good morning everyone!

This is our first Monday after our first beginner ride so it's time for our first Monday ride feedback and safety/courtesy tips note.

On Saturday, about 310 newbies and veterans enjoyed what is the best morning for Beginner Ride 1 anyone can remember! The weather made a liar out of me – we had a beautiful, sunny start followed by alternating sun and clouds and a return to full sun by the end of the ride.

We do have some great feedback/tips to help us get better but, overall, we had a very safe and courteous group who were patient, sensible, and enjoyed a very safe and fun first ride.

We'll start with a few safety notes, then share some observations and tips suggested by a few of our excellent Ride Marshals.

Crossing Over the Yellow Line

Several SAG drivers and riders reported seeing some riders moving across the yellow lane into the oncoming lane to pass or because several riders were riding two abreast.

Never, never, never should you cross the yellow line into the oncoming lane. I did say NEVER, didn't I?

Riders should always ride as far to the right as practicable. Pulling out to pass should be the exception and be as brief as possible. Riders may ride two abreast (maximum), if they are on quiet roads with very little traffic and they should switch to single file, quickly, safely and predictably, if riders, or traffic is approaching. Riders who don't have enough common sense to know when to go single file should not ride two, or more abreast – it makes the road unsafe for them and other riders and angers local drivers.

If you need to pass, let the riders ahead know you are approaching as soon as you are in audible range (bark out: "Rider approaching"). Then, call again when you are close to start your pass. If the riders are two, or more abreast, ask them, courteously, to please move to single file so you can make a safe pass. When they are single file, and the road behind is clear and it's safe to pull out, make a safe pass, then pull over to the right.

We'll share a special topic note entirely about passing and being passed in two weeks – just before Ride 1. We'll focus on this a lot at the beginning of the season as it makes us all much better riders (safer and more courteous) and improves the rider experience for everyone.

No Headphones!

NO HEADPHONES:

We didn't have any reports of seeing our riders wearing headphones and that's a good thing. Headphones prevent you from effectively hearing riders approaching and passing as well as local traffic and other communication needs. We're training you to be safe and courteous in a group ride and headphones and the private, isolated world they create, make you oblivious and unsafe at a group ride. **Headphones are not permitted at Ready2Roll Cycling rides – period.**

A speaker on your bike is permitted, as long as the volume is at a level which permits you to easily hear traffic, riders approaching/passing, officer instructions, etc. We don't have a specific decibel level but, if we have reports of a rider not hearing other riders, traffic, etc., then the speaker is too loud and you will need to lower it or turn it off.

Consider Using a Mirror

If it's hard for you to clearly hear riders approaching and/or you are a visual person (like me), you may want to try using a mirror mounted on your helmet or handlebars. It should be on the left side (passing on the right is unsafe) so you can see approaching riders and traffic.

Many riders say that the mirror really helps them be more aware of what is going on behind and reduces the need to turn around as they are constantly aware of what is going on behind them.

Helmet Fit

Many new riders probably don't realize that proper helmet fit is key to enjoying the protection offered by this critical safety gear. If your helmet is not in the right position, and/or if it's not properly secured, it may offer little to no protection, if you fall.

For example, on Saturday at least half a dozen riders had their helmets sitting too far back on their head. As you know, we like to see helmets directly above the eyebrows, with the helmet sitting down in front covering the rest. Here's a short video about this and other aspects of helmet fit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IyhYrITHDgw>

Before all our rides, our wonderful team of Ride Marshals will be roaming the crowd looking for helmets that need adjusting. If they offer assistance, please accept willingly and graciously, then, gratefully thank them for possibly saving your life!

Seat Height/Bike Fit

It's easy to have your seat in the wrong position. I helped two riders whose seats were too low. That meant that they weren't getting full leg extension. Seats at incorrect heights can aggravate your legs and knees, aside from not enabling you to maximize the power of each pedal stroke.

Here's an article from roadcyclinguk.com about seat height that might help riders get started towards a good fit...

<https://roadcyclinguk.com/how-to/technique/beginners-guide-how-to-set-your-saddle-height-on-a-road-bike.html> Whether you're on the right or left side of the road, you want to get maximum power from your pedal stroke!

Shifting Gears

Several riders weren't familiar with their gears. Anyone who fits this description should use these beginner rides (and days in between) to practice with those gears so that when we encounter those four letter cycling words (h*ll, w*nd) they'll be prepared to shift quickly.

Here's an article about shifting gears...

<https://www.cyclingweekly.com/news/product-news/using-bikes-gears-efficiently-148101>

Cadence

Cadence refers to the rate you pedal in revolutions per minute. Understanding how cadence works and figuring out what is optimal for you is one of the most critical

Cadence works and figuring out what is optimal for you, is one of the most critical components in enjoying a long, effective, efficient, and injury free life of cycling.

One new rider was “pushing a big gear” on Saturday. In other words, he was pedaling in a very high (more powerful) gear. This leads to a slower cadence (RPM of the pedals) and on a long ride will wear on the leg muscles. Working those gears and using a higher cadence (80-90 RPM) will let you pedal farther.

Cyclist shift to maintain a consistent and optimal cycling cadence of between 80 to 100 revolutions per minute. Each rider’s optimal cadence will vary depending on their condition and the type of build/muscles. If you have access to a spinning bike or bike trainer, or a way to experiment with gearing and cadence, this will be very useful to understand now and tweak as you get stronger through the training series.

This article discusses cadence and goes on to suggest some workouts to improve it <https://blog.wahoofitness.com/cycling-cadence-what-is-it-how-to-improve-yours/>

Sign-in Reminders

Sign-in went very well, especially since this was our first ride of the year. We will get even better over the next few weeks and here are a few reminders to help you sign- in effectively and help us collect the information we need after each ride.

- Remember to look for your sign-in line. The master list is divided into 8 sub-lists: A-B, C-D, E-G, H-K, L-N, O-R, S-T, U-Z
- The first time you show up this season, you will be issued a rider number to place on the center of the front of your helmet. Before doing this, please print your number, very neatly, in the left-hand “Rider#” column on the sign-in sheet. (Please skip the leading zero – i.e., “123”, not “0123”)
- Before the ride, initial in in the “Started” column.
- After you finish, initial out in the “Finished” column

(We change the pen color while you are riding so it’s very easy to visually see who is finished and who is not)

If you forget to initial out, we will give you time to get home and may call to make sure you are safe – at 2:00 am Sunday morning!

OK, those are the high points for today. Volunteers for this week’s ride will receive their duties/details Tuesday and everyone will receive the Wednesday weekly ride note on Wednesday (Duh...).

Please be sure to read this note, and if needed, several times, so we all get a little better, a little safer, and a little more courteous for our next ride. We start out the year ahead of the curve and end the season near perfection – with the help of each and every one of you!

Thank you!

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