

2020 Ride Feedback & Safety/Courtesy Tips #3

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Good morning riders – Happy Monday!

This past Saturday was certainly a day about more...

It was especially a day about **more weather than we expected!** First of all, those forecasts all partly cloudy to overcast were definitely wrong as we had our 4th beautiful morning of the seas and quickly it warmed up for a very comfortable day for cycling. Then, as you added more laps your ride, you discovered that we were also seeing **more wind than forecast** so **each successive loop got more difficult due to riding more miles, into stronger wind!**

We're really pleased and proud of our riders as we had less SAG rides needing to be SA back to the start. We thought that given the tough stretch into the wind on the first half of the loop, certainly more people might just need a ride but no, you all did excellent. This tells us that you are getting more fit and stronger as we get more miles under our belts and more experience riding (single file) with others and finding the right gear (more on this later).

Many of you also commented that you really appreciated the fact that our pure loop route, which combined the start/finish with RS2, allowed you more opportunity to stop and shed clothing after your first lap.

As we developed the routes this year and adjusted for local road work, we realized that we need to consider some loop options for the early rides. Now that we completed two rides based on the loop concept, we saw the flexibility these loops, plus safe shortcuts, gave you to tailor your distance. This made Rides 1 and 2 more useful for each rider and we'll definitely continue to offer more of these loop routes, when the routes and roads allow.

The other side of More is Less...

We were also very **pleased to see many less riders riding two, or more abreast**. Thank you for reading our ride notes last week (69% open rate) and listening to, and honoring, our directive that this would be a single file ride. We will continue to remind you about this as we can still improve but we clearly made a lot of progress and this had a positive impact on riding, passing, and safety. Riding single file, except when it is safe to pass, was just smart and helped to improve the safety of yourself and everyone else on the ride. Thank you and please keep it up!

Lesson Learned – Late Laggards Lose Leverage...

We want to share two brief situations from Saturday's ride that are lessons-learned for everyone.

The first comes from a rider who pulled up about 8:30 am, as the last waves were starting. Remember our rides begin at 8:00 am. The rider signed-in and then came up to us. They were asking which way to go because there were no riders around to guide the way. This has happened before but this week, since we were doing repeats of the loop, they simply began their way on the loop. Keep in mind that this rider was starting behind everyone and technically, now ahead of everyone – certainly everyone who rode their speed. We saw the rider after the ride, totally worn out from working very hard, alone, into the wind, along that really tough first half of the loop. They had planned to do at least 2 loops, maybe 3 with the shortcut but after one loop, they were worn out – just sayin'...

The second story came from an experienced rider who realized, after fighting the wind on the 6 miles to Simonton that they would be late for an afternoon appointment if they kept heading into the wind so, they rode the first six miles back to the start, alone. Fortunately, there was a shoulder they had a lane but it was a bit bumpy and this led to the lost phone that appeared at the Info Center later. It's a good thing the phone ended up in a spot that someone else quickly found it.

What these two riders had in common is they decided to arrive late, or had created their own

what these two riders had in common is they decided to arrive late, or had created their own route. Each week we have a very good SAG support team and we must get them on the road the 99+% of the riders who arrive on time, follow instructions and the well-marked routes.

We recommend, repeatedly, that you please arrive early enough to line up by 7:45 and head c with the groups beginning at 8:00 am. Some of you will leave in a wave later than 8:00 but you need to be lined up as we provide important pre-ride announcements, road condition tips, etc. Please arrive on time so you don't miss the start and get behind our support team.

Two other points to mention. When a rider arrives late and is behind the support team, they v likely will not have signage on the route or even SAG support. Ready2Roll Cycling just doesn't have the resources to support one-off's and we ask you to please arrive on time and begin wit group. The other point to mention is we cannot have riders creating their own routes to accommodate their needs. It can create a burden to our support team, distract other riders to follow you thinking the route actually goes your way, and finally, as we saw this past Saturday, place everyone in danger by having riders on both sides of the roadway. Please, be creative & make your own routes.

Pedaling Properly

Two weeks ago, we shared several tips about cadence and shifting gears. We explained that cadence is the rate (in revolutions per minute) that you pedal and while we are each built diffe we all want to experiment to find our optimal cadence (usually in the 80-100 range on flat road. This balances our power and effort required to pedal so we can ride long distances with optim effort. It also helps us to avoid overstressing our knees and other key joints. Shifting your gear adjusts the effort needed and your natural pedaling cadence.

Our Ride Marshals and a few SAG volunteers still reported seeing more than a few riders real struggling to pedal into the wind with their chain on the larger ring in the front so we're running repeat of the cadence/using gears tips. This will really help you become a more efficient, more effective, and safer rider as you won't get so worn out on the ride.

Please take time to read these again and either during the week, or next week, practice them. learning we want you to take from this is to experiment with different gears and see how easy, hard it is to maintain different speeds in different gears. This is important at all times but is especially important when working very hard, into the wind, or up a hill. By the middle of the season, if you experiment effectively, you should be able to quickly shift into the optimal gear t deal with different riding conditions.

Cadence and Using Gears

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 components in enjoying a long, effective, efficient, and injury free life of cycling.

We had our usual ride observations of several riders “pushing a big gear” on Saturday. In other words, they were 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 your leg muscles. Working those gears and using a higher cadence (80-90 RPM) will let you pedal farther with less effort.

Cyclists 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/>

Here is some really great info about using your gears...

- <https://www.bicycling.com/training/a20004265/how-to-shift/> - very good general info from Bicycling Magazine
- <https://www.cyclingweekly.com/news/latest-news/using-bikes-gears-efficiently-148101> - more technical, details
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5O1LEjNW5Bw> – Very thorough video

Let me explain that if you read 100% of the vast info online about using your gears, you will have learned and understood about 10% of what you need to know about gears. **90% of what you need to know about using gears is learned on your bike, on the road, into the wind, and and down hills.** If you don’t use the early rides to experiment with using gears, you won’t understand how to know how to easily find the right gear, as we get into the hills (in two weeks).

Sign-in Reminders

Sign-in is going very smoothly but this week, since it’s a partner ride, there will be two totally separate sign-in areas and we still have a number of riders who have not checked into their first ride so here is a repeat overview of our weekly ride sign-in/sign-out process...

Here are a few reminders to help you sign-in effectively and help us collect the information we need at each ride.

- Remember to look for your sign-in list. The master rider list is divided into 8 alphabetical 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.
- 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, after the ride, it’s very easy to visually 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!
- **This Saturday (Feb 22), be sure to look for the Ready2Roll Cycling vertical banner our sign-in tables** with the very distinctive “A-B, C-D”, etc. signs so you come to the right sign-in area.

If you missed the tips and links in the earlier Ride Feedback/Safety Tips notes or any of other special notes and tips we have been sharing, please see the next tip to learn how find it...

Ready2Roll Cycling Website – More than Just a Pretty Face

Be honest – how many of you have been to www.Ready2RollCycling.com? If you haven’t been there yet, you are depriving yourself of a lot of useful stuff.

We won’t go into a lot of detail but here are a few things you will find on our site:

- FAQ’s with almost all of our most asked questions answered – good reading!
- Calendar with all our upcoming rides. They include planned mileages plus the start location and address, so you can add each ride to your calendar and really be ready to roll on time!
- Great gallery of photos from past rides – you might be in there.
- Classifieds sections to find carpools, buy/sell bikes and cycling equipment, let riders know about drop-in rides you are planning, etc.
- Link to Volunteer – if you missed the volunteer options when you enrolled (you can sign family and friends too).
- Communications Page containing:
 - Archive of rider tips and safety/Courtesy info (such as the tips on cadence noted above)

- Ride maps for each route. These are usually posted the Wednesday before each r

We won't belabor the point. We are putting a lot of useful stuff on the site, but it's up to you to advantage.

Please Be Our Friend!

We use Facebook as another communication source to share information, photos, etc., and as you to please "Like Us" as well as share your comments.

Final Point – Who is the Odd Man (or Woman) Out?

We have some good news and some bad news from our website host...

- The good news is that the read rate (the number of you who open/read our emails) for the weekly ride notes (Wed & Fri) is up to 69% vs. an industry (Health & Fitness) average of around 16%. We're 4 times better than average!
- The bad news is **the open rate for the special topics and feedback/courtesy/safety notes is down under 60%** (not including the jersey reminder as we expect a lower open on the 2nd and 3rd reminders).

We can't force you to read the email but you are missing out on a lot of value you could be gain from your participation in the Ready2Roll Cycling Training Series. You may miss certain rides to last-minute changes or miss bonus activities – it boggles our mind that some riders show up each week late, in the wrong place or overlook other key details, which are in the notes we se

Unfortunately, telling you all this is of limited value since you are the 59-69% of our riders who the note but, if you know or run into riders who appear to be missing a lot of the details we are sharing, please ask them to start reading their emails...

OK, we've covered some useful things today – please read this note a few times and, if you missed some of the earlier tips and info, please take a look at the emails archived on the Ready2RollCycling.com Communications page and you can get up to speed very quickly.

Thank you for your support – watch for Wednesday's note about our upcoming Saturday ride.

Steve, Marshall, Jan & Robbie...

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