

Being A Good Team Member

By Jim & Karen Roberson

As we begin a new riding season, we thought it appropriate that this month's article should deal with being a good team member when riding together as a group. Being a good team member allows for more fun on the ride because you will know what others in the group are doing and by doing this the ride becomes safer and more enjoyable.

What are the characteristics of a good team member? In the GWRRA *Team Riding Manual* the following characteristics are very important.

1. Assumes a responsibility to ride with and work with the other team members for the safety and protection of the whole team while on the road, and especially, while in traffic.
2. Maintains steady speed and spacing. Yo-Yoing or straggling behind disrupts the rhythm and efforts of the other team members, and reduces the benefits of riding as a team.
3. Stays alert and announces to the other team members any obstacle, condition or potential situation which could become hazardous to the team or a team member.
4. Will be aware of the other team members and maintain the formation (staggered) and a safe riding distance (spacing) between team members. Spacing will be determined by the road, weather conditions, and visibility.

"HOLES" left in the formation (large spacing gaps between team members) invites aggressive motorists driving at faster speeds to cut into the formation, which may result in tailgating our teammate ahead of us. This creates a very dangerous situation. Each team member must protect the other by maintaining the appropriate spacing.

REMEMBER: *Pace yourself 1-second stagger, and 2-seconds following distance behind the bike directly in front of you. However, during darkness or inclement weather, a 2-second stagger and a 4-second following distance should be maintained to provide an extra margin of safety.*

Each team should be separated on the expressway or highway by no less than 15 seconds allowing sufficient room for other vehicles to safely pass a team. Distances between teams traveling on two-lane roads may need to be greater.

Each team travels in a staggered formation within a car lane. The Lead rides at the front of the group, in the left track of the lane. The next team member positions their bike one second behind and in the right tire track of the same lane, the next team member is in the left track two seconds behind the Lead and one second behind the #2 bike in the right track, etc., etc., until all bikes have been positioned.

Anyone not wishing to Team Ride should separate themselves to a safe distance from the teams and meet at the acknowledged destination or break point.

Next month we will go over more information on riding in a group. In the meantime, Ride Safe!