

Being A Good Team Member Part 3

By Jim & Karen Roberson

This is the third and last in our series of articles on being a good team member. In the first article we described some of the characteristics of being a good team member; next we covered techniques for riding in a group. This article is on communication, encountering obstacles, lane changing and other things encountered on a group ride.

Most important is the need for effective communication particularly between the lead and the drag. These riders control the group and need to keep the rest of the group informed. The Team Riding Manual says "Members of the team can never be "over informed"". This goes for bumps in the road, upcoming turns, necessary route changes, other riders personal needs, etc.

We know that the lead and drag need to coordinate lane changes with the drag securing the new lane and notifying the lead that the lane has been secured and providing any necessary traffic information. The lead must also notify the team in advance of an upcoming turn, exit, etc. by announcing the turn or exit well in advance of the event. This is especially important if there is more than one team in the overall group and there is traffic between the lead group and the other groups. This way there are no surprises for the rest of the riders.

When approaching a hill with limited sight distance, the lead should announce single file and starting with the lead, each rider will transition to the center of the lane (increasing the spacing to allow for a minimum 2 second following distance to the preceding bike, until the group reaches the top of the hill and can see the oncoming traffic. The lead will then give the signal to resume staggered formation. The same process should occur when entering a town with on street parking.

When encountering an obstacle such as a pothole or rocks in the road the lead should announce the obstacle and its relative location on the road. This again helps the other riders.

I will end this article with a quote from the Team Riding Manual. *Finally, an important part of any team ride is consideration. Have consideration for all members of all teams. Always give consideration to the other vehicles on the road. Even more important, have consideration for your own safety and the team. Have consideration for your own capabilities, skills, health, physical fitness, and feelings. Never drive beyond your comfort level! Enjoy your Team Riding. ..and be careful!*