

# **Education in the Ottawa Bicycle Club**

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# Group Riding Policies

## 1. Introduction

Ottawa Bicycle Club group rides are organized in packs of about six to twelve cyclists grouped according to speed, distance, ability, and interest of the participants. Riding in a pack allows riders to meet and converse with other riders, saves energy (particularly when riding into the wind), and it is easier for the tour leader to guide and direct riders. And, if you suffer a flat tire or any other problem, you will have other riders in your pack able and willing to help you.

## 2. Bicycles and Equipment

### Bicycles

Road and hybrid bikes, typically with tires up to about 32 mm (1¼") wide, are best-suited to club tours, although some members use mountain bikes. Mountain bikes, with wider and softer tires, offer more rolling resistance, and hence require more effort for the same distance. While a road bike is more suited to touring, more important is your selection of a group whose speed you can match without tiring.

### Maintenance

Bicycles should be in good condition—check tires and brakes. Remember, if a mechanical failure occurs, the rest of the pack is placed at risk. Carry a pump, a spare tube, and a basic tool kit to remove and replace the wheel, tire and tube, and for minor adjustments.

### Equipment

Carry sufficient food and water. Ensure that you are adequately prepared for hot, cold or wet weather. Also carry a road map of the area you'll be riding in.

### Kickstands

You should not have a kickstand on your bike when participating in OBC group rides. No matter what position these may take on your bike, they still protrude out from your rear wheel. Here again, you are riding in a very tight and close pack and there is a great risk of the bike behind you touching your kickstand. Once it is caught in the spokes, disaster follows. It is a "rule" that must be adhered to.

### Aero Bars

Aero bars are a great asset when riding time trials or when riding on your own and looking for improved speed. However, their use is not permitted in OBC group rides. It is not necessary to remove them from your bikes but to simply just not use them. When riding in an OBC group you are riding in a very tight and close pack. The requirement to react quickly to any given situation is impeded by the increased time to reach your brakes from the aero bars plus you do not have the same control that you would with your hands in the normal position on your handlebars. Some riders think that it is okay to use them if you are in the front or rear position in the pack. Not so! You may still be required to stop or react suddenly in either of these positions. The safety of the entire group should be the concern of every rider.

## 3. Basic Information about Group Riding

### New or Inexperienced Riders

If you have no experience riding in a group, you will be expected to take the free group riding techniques training program. You should join the Ramblers group for your first ride.

## Why we ride two abreast

The default formation is double file, changing to single file if traffic and road conditions dictate, provided that doing so does not imperil the safety of the pack. Riding double file is generally safer and is the traditional format for cycling groups - it permits easy conversation with other riders, uses the road space efficiently, and minimizes the overall size of each pack. To share the work riders change positions in the pack (rotation) so that each rider takes only a short turn at the front, followed by a longer opportunity to draft behind other riders.

## Stay with the Pack

When you join a pack it is your responsibility to stay with the pack until the end of the tour, or until you advise the pack leader that you are leaving.

## Pack Members Responsibilities

It is important that you become familiar with the terminology and techniques of group riding. This will enable you to be an effective member of the “team,” know what to do, and know what the other riders are, or should be, doing.

## Sunday Tour Pack Speeds.

For Sunday tours, riders form groups according to their expected speeds. These range from easy riding Ramblers to the fast Sportif groups. Riders self-select which group to ride with. Sportif groups are performance-oriented so riders in these groups are expected to be fit, experienced, and self-sufficient. The other groups are more social or recreational in nature, and any rider experiencing difficulty will get support from other riders.

## Meals on the Tour

Lunch breaks vary from group to group. Some groups stop for lunch at restaurants and spend an hour or so there, while others catch a quick snack at a convenience store and are on their bikes again promptly. If you have a preference, it’s a good idea to check with the leader before you start out. If you do go to a pub or a restaurant, remember that they are businesses and understandably won’t take too kindly to a bunch of cyclists bringing in their own food and drink. On the other hand, businesses are usually quite happy to fill the water bottles of good customers.

## 4. Group Riding Terminology

### Groups and Packs

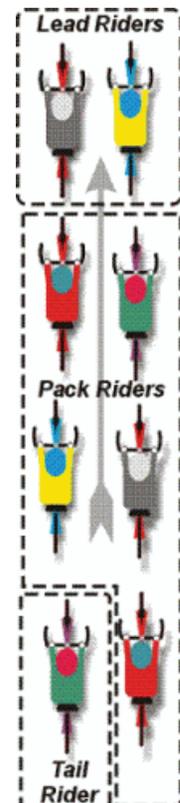
A group is several cyclists who wish to travel at about the same speed. If necessary, groups will be divided into smaller packs of six to twelve riders. Larger packs are difficult to manage; smaller packs will lead to early fatigue.

### Tour Leader

The tour leader organizes the tour and is responsible for the route, making announcements and giving directions at the start of the tour.

### Pack Leader

The pack leader is responsible for knowing the route, enforcing the group speed, and ensuring each rider follows the OBC touring rules and group riding techniques. The pack leader calls changes in formation; that is, from double to single file and vice-versa. If the pace is too fast, inform the pack leader who will reduce the speed. The leader must know how many riders are in the pack to ensure that no one goes missing.



## Lead Riders

These are the two riders in front. The lead riders are responsible for calling out turns and stops, and warning of bad road conditions. The inside rider (closest to the curb or shoulder), is responsible for maintaining the speed within the pack. The outside rider is responsible for signalling oncoming traffic, and for signalling that it is safe for a following car to pass. The outside rider also decides when the pack is to rotate. Pack Riders - These are the riders behind the leaders and ahead of the rear riders. Each pack rider is responsible for passing on information from the lead riders to the riders behind.

## Tail Rider

The tail rider is the last rider on the outside. The tail rider is responsible for signalling vehicles approaching from the rear and for initiating left turns and lane changes. The tail rider should also ensure that nobody is left behind—if riders are at risk of being dropped, the pack leader should be advised so that the speed may be adjusted.

## Rotation

Rotation is the process of changing the lead riders so that all riders share the work—it's about 30% harder "pulling" in front than drafting behind another rider. Riders change positions in the pack so that each rider takes only a short turn at the front, followed by a longer opportunity to draft behind other riders.

## 5. Group Manoeuvres

### Starting

When starting a ride or restarting en-route, after red lights, stop signs, mechanical problems etc. the group leader will announce that the group is starting. All riders will move off together as one unit and when it is clear that all riders are in formation, the speed can increase.

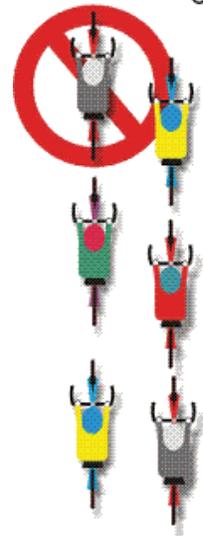
### Formation

Ride side-by-side with your wheels level to your neighbour's. Try not to pull ahead (known as "half-wheeling"). Follow the rider in front, but with a slight offset to provide extra braking distance in an emergency. Do not make sudden changes in speed or direction without warning following riders. Always have your hands close to your brakes so that you can react quickly.

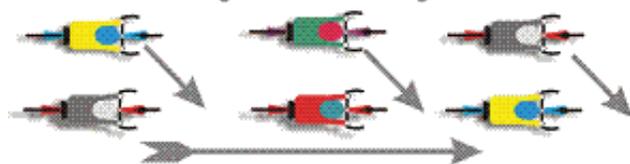
### Single file

Traffic and road conditions dictate when to ride single file. If motorists are experiencing difficulty passing the pack because of heavy and continuous traffic in the opposite direction, the pack leader will decide whether conditions merit changing to single file. The key factor is the width of the roadway or lane. It may be safer to hold up traffic if there is insufficient width for it to pass comfortably. Riding single file may not benefit either cyclists or motorists—it doubles the length of the pack and this could make passing more hazardous because of poor sight distances. Although it is important to try to accommodate the needs of other road users, riders' safety must never be compromised purely for the convenience of motorists. When single file is called, the inside riders put a bike length between them and the bike in front. The outside riders then move in ahead of the rider on the right. As soon as the heavy traffic has passed the pack should revert to double file.

Half-wheeling

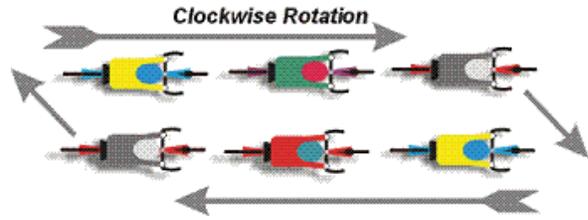


Moving from Double to Single File



## Rotating

The lead riders should rotate frequently to avoid fatigue. If you are tired, rotate through the front quickly. If you feel comfortable in front then spend a little more time there, but remember your partner! The pack rotates clockwise when the outside lead rider calls “ROTATE”. He or she accelerates slightly to move up and across in front of the inside rider. Inside lead rider calls “CLEAR” when the outside rider is clear to come across to the inside position. Outside riders move up one place and inside riders back one place. The inside rear rider moves over to become the tail rider.



## Hazards

The lead riders call out hazards such as bumps, gravel, and road kill. Point out the position of the hazard so that following riders know on which side to pass. Following riders give this information to the riders behind.

## Right turn

Lead riders call for the turn. The tail rider should signal the turn. Stop if required then proceed as traffic permits. If it is not necessary to stop, coast through the turn with right pedal up.

## Left turn

Lead riders call for the turn. The tail rider determines when it is safe to take or cross the lane, signals the turn to following traffic, and instructs the rest of the pack to move across the lane. Riders move across the lane from rear to front. This manoeuvre is repeated as necessary for multi-lane roads. Stop if required then proceed as traffic permits. If it is not necessary to stop, coast through the turn with left pedal up.

## Uphill

Gear down and proceed uphill. Riders should adjust their speed to that of the slowest rider to maintain formation. If the formation breaks up on longer hills, riders should stop at the top of the hill to regroup. Do not leave slower riders behind—if they are slower, they may have difficulty catching up.

## Downhill

The lead riders must continue to pedal— following riders will tend to catch up because of the benefits of drafting.

## Following Vehicles, Oncoming Vehicles

The tail rider indicates when a vehicle is overtaking or slowing down to follow the pack (call out “CAR PASSING” or “CAR BACK”). If there is also an approaching vehicle, the lead rider calls out “CAR UP”. If it is dangerous for the vehicle to pass, the tail rider should attempt to hold it back. When the lead rider signals the way is clear ahead, the tail rider may signal to the motorist to pass, but only if absolutely certain that passing is safe; otherwise, it is best left to the judgement of the motorist.

## Separation between Packs

To assist motorists to pass safely, we must ensure that there is enough distance between packs to allow a motor vehicle to pass and return to the lane. This both optimizes the safety of the pack and acknowledges the rights of other road users. To avoid the formation of a large unmanageable group, two packs should not join up.

## Passing

When approaching a single rider or slower group from the rear, check that the way is clear, call out “PASSING”, and then pass, allowing plenty of room. Do not cut in front of the riders you have passed. If there is oncoming

traffic and the lane is not wide enough for both packs side by side, the pack leader should either wait until it is clear or change to single file and then pass. If there is following traffic, the tail rider should indicate that the group is going to cross the centre line (left turn signal), and signal the following vehicle to wait. The leader of the front pack should assist the pack behind to pass, if necessary by slowing the pace a little.

## Stopping

Lead riders will call “STOPPING”. Gear down, stop pedalling, and brake gently. Move completely off the road when stopping to chat, fix a flat, etc.

## Slowing

Lead rider or group rider calls “SLOWING”. Stop pedalling and prepare to brake. Riders slow in order from rear to front to avoid catching the rider ahead.

# 6. Road Safety

## Traffic Laws, Safe Riding Practices

It is in our own interest to obey traffic laws and follow the rules of the road. It only takes a few inconsiderate cyclists to create a negative perception of cyclists among the general public. Never ride through red lights. There are not many traffic lights on tour routes. If you are at the back of a pack when the light changes to red, please stop. Pack leaders are expected to stop the pack on the other side and wait for riders to get through the lights. Keep out of right turn lanes when going straight or turning left. Don’t pass stationary vehicles on the right side.

## Safety and Helmets

As a rider on a club tour, you are responsible for your own safety, and you are also responsible for the safety of the group as a whole. While Ontario law requires cyclists under 18 years of age to wear a helmet and the OBC, by virtue of its risk management agreement with the Ontario Cycling Association, requires helmet use by its adult riders as well, do not think of it as a panacea—it is more important to avoid injuries by riding in a safe manner and by encouraging riders around you to do likewise. If you are concerned with the riding habits of another rider, discuss the matter with the pack leader or take your concerns to the Touring Director.

## Courtesy and Co-operation

Please be courteous to other road users—our safety is enhanced if we can minimize motorist frustration. Cooperation with both motorists and other members of the community is essential. It is in our own interest to maintain the good reputation of the OBC.

## Decision matrix for two abreast cycling:

Riding double file is safer, more enjoyable, and more efficient than riding single file. It is the default mode for group riding. There are some circumstances when changing to single file is justified; this matrix provides guidance in making that decision.

Roads with two or more lanes in the direction of travel:			
QUESTION		DECISION	RATIONALE
Is the right lane wide enough to share so that a passing vehicle can pass safely without crossing the lane line and without crowding the cyclists?	no →	double file	Passing vehicles should use the next lane if the right lane is not wide enough to share safely
yes ↓			
Is the road so busy that all lanes would be full if the cyclists were not there?	no →	double file	Passing vehicles can use the next lane to avoid inconvenience to the cyclists
yes →		single file	Assist other road users without compromising your own safety

Roads with only one lane in the direction of travel:			
QUESTION		DECISION	RATIONALE
Is the lane wide enough to share so that a passing vehicle can pass safely without crossing the yellow line and without crowding the cyclists?	no →	double file	Passing vehicles should use the other lane if the lane is not wide enough to share safely. In particular, riding single file in narrow lanes at locations of inadequate visibility encourages unsafe passing
yes ↓			
Is there a significant volume of following traffic?	no →	double file	If there are not many vehicles passing there cannot be many who will be inconvenienced
yes ↓			
Is there a significant volume of oncoming traffic?	no →	double file	If there are not many oncoming vehicles there cannot be many passing vehicles who will be inconvenienced
yes ↓			
Is the inconvenience to the motorists who have to wait before passing greater than the inconvenience to the cyclists if they ride single file?	no →	double file	The inconvenience should be shared equitably
yes →		single file	Show courtesy to others when it does not compromise your own safety

## Railway Crossing Guidelines

Taken from Ontario Ministry of Transportation Cycling Skills



Railway and streetcar tracks are dangerous. Crossing at the wrong angle, they can spill you and damage your bicycle wheels. Always cross the tracks at right angles. Plan your crossing well ahead of time, slow down and put yourself into the best road position to make a right-angle crossing.

If the tracks are at an angle to the road, you may need a full lane. Use hand signals to slow traffic behind you and give you room to cross the tracks safely. Go slowly and stand on the pedals when crossing over particularly bumpy tracks.

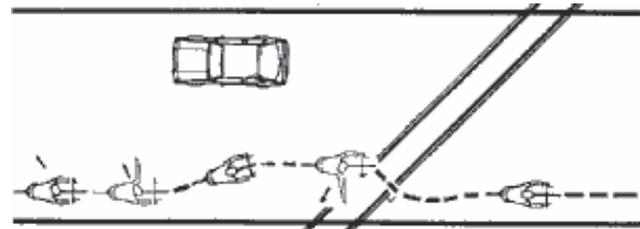
If it is too difficult to cross the tracks safely, dismount and walk your bike across instead. Even at slow speeds diagonal tracks can spill you.

Where tracks run parallel to the direction of vehicle travel, lane changing and left turns become extremely hazardous. Wait for breaks in traffic and cross the tracks at right angles. At tracked intersections where traffic is heavy and you want to turn left, walk your bike in the crosswalk.

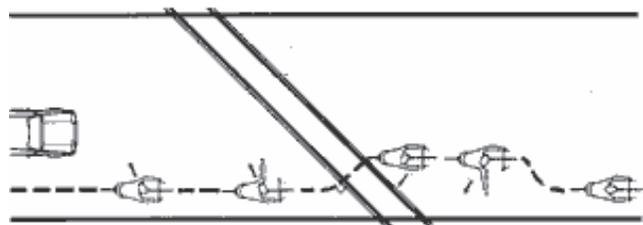
While these MOT guidelines are for a single cyclist, for the purpose of our group rides, there are 3 additional important points to remember.

1. The front riders must call out well in advance and use the appropriate behind-the-back hand signal when the group is approaching tracks.
2. The group must slow down. Although this is important when you know that the tracks are at a bad angle, it is just important if the tracks are perpendicular. Until you are almost on top of the tracks, you don't know

Shoulder check. Signal and shoulder check. Move left. Cross at right angle.  
Shoulder check, signal, shoulder check. Move back by curb



Put yourself in the right position to cross the tracks well ahead of time. Shoulder check. Signal to drivers behind and shoulder check. Cross at right angles. Shoulder check. Signal and shoulder check. Move back by curb.



the condition of the road surface around the tracks and will not be able to react appropriately if you are approaching too fast.

3. Spread out allowing the other riders in the group to approach the tracks slowly and at a wide enough angle to cross them safely.

Once everyone has crossed safely, you can regroup and resume your ride and your previous speed.

# Riding Clinics

## 1. Introduction to Group Riding Clinic

Ottawa Bicycle Club members without experience riding in an organized pack **must attend a group riding clinic before participating in club rides**. The clinics, held on selected **Saturday and Sunday mornings from April to June**, are led by experienced instructors who teach participants group riding techniques that help build confidence in riding with a group and in traffic. You do not need to preregister for the group riding clinic.

### What happens at a group riding clinic?

Participants and instructors meet **at 9:30 a.m.** in front of the Museum at the Experimental Farm on the NCC Driveway, 200 metres west of the Prince of Wales Drive traffic circle. The session, **which lasts about 2 hours and takes place entirely outdoors**, generally unfolds as follows:

- **“Ground school”**: Learn and discuss the basics of pack riding, including terminology, group manoeuvres, safety, hand and voice signals, rotations, group dynamics, bicycle care and maintenance, etc.
- **Off-bike simulation**: Rehearse pack riding techniques on foot.
- **On-road practice**: Saddle up and apply your new group riding skills on the quiet roads of the Experimental Farm.
- **Optional tour**: Take a 20-km group ride on city streets under the guidance of the instructors. Refreshment stop included.

### How do I prepare for a clinic?

- **Be an OBC member**. The fastest and easiest way is to complete your application on-line. For insurance reasons, non-members cannot take part in an OBC group riding clinic.
- **Bring your bicycle and make sure it is in good shape** - brakes and shifters working, tires inflated, spare tube or patch kit available, water bottle topped up, kickstand removed.
- **Dress for the season**. It can be chilly in the first few weeks of the clinic schedule, so be sure to dress appropriately.

### Is there more information?

- **Clinic dates**: Please check the OBC Calendar or the Group Riding Clinic Schedule.
- **Group riding**: Check out the Group Riding Techniques page or read The Spokesperson newsletter in the early part of the season.

## 2. Advanced Skills Clinic

### Description

This eight-week clinic is aimed at riders who want to develop the skills needed to ride safely in a group with a high level of skill and fun. The sessions take place on Monday evenings from 6:30 to 8pm during May and June. The curriculum is adapted from the CCA “Learn to Race” manual. Although this is not promoted as a “learn to race” course, the skills are the same required to be a competent racing cyclist.

Being a better rider does not mean being a faster rider. For students who have already taken the group riding clinic and/or have significant experience riding in groups, this advanced clinic will help them improve the skills they already have, and develop additional skills and confidence to enjoy safe cycling at a level they may not have thought possible.

The course is not for beginners; riders without sufficient experience should take the introductory Group Riding Clinic first, go on club rides, and come back the following year for the advanced clinic.

Although the OBC does not promote this as a “learn to race” course, the curriculum has been adapted from Cycling Canada’s “Learn to Race” manual and continuously developed over more than 25 years by OBC coaches. The skills are the same required by a competent racing cyclist and many students do go on from this clinic to become successful racers.

This clinic has been extremely well supported every year by its volunteer coaches, many of whom have or have had successful racing careers, and most of whom have decades of experience teaching these skills. Former students are nearly unanimous in their praise of what they have learned from the clinic so early registration is recommended as there is a limit to the number of students who can be accommodated.

## **The Curriculum Details**

Week 1 – Introduction, video, traffic safety issues and assessing risk, Q & A

Week 2 – Bicycle Safety Checks, bike fit, agility drills

Week 3 – Agility drills, braking, pedalling, bumping, wheel touching, cornering

Week 4 – Cornering side-by-side, keeping a straight line, single-file, single echelon, double echelon

Week 5 – sprinting, group sprinting and coming off a wheel

Week 6 – taking a feed, hill climbing, descending, changing gears

Week 7 – echelons on rolling terrain, controlling speed, sitting on

Week 8 – putting it together – a ride in the park

## **3. Youth Program**

The OBC Youth Program for children aged 5 to 16 offers learning events to support road cycling, mountain biking, and cyclocross. We encourage our riders to try each of the three cycling disciplines in order to develop an appreciation for the differences and to improve overall bike handling skills.

Athletes are divided into groups based on age and ability. Emphasis is placed on skills development. The program is suitable for a wide range of cycling abilities and interests, from casual riding to racing.

The program adheres to the National Coaching Certification Program Long Term Athlete Development principles and Cycling Canada Coaching Guidelines.

The program focuses on cycling safety in order to protect our children and to develop responsible members of the cycling community.

# Cycling and the Law

Ontario and City of Ottawa

## 1. Collisions

The law requires every operator of a vehicle to identify him or herself to the other driver and to report the collision to the police if there are injuries or damages in excess of \$1,000.

If you are involved in a collision:

- Give your name, address and phone number to the other driver(s).
- Get the other driver(s) name, address, phone number, vehicle particulars and insurance company and policy number.
- Call the police if there are injuries.
- Settle damages between yourselves, but only if damages are minor (less than \$1,000). Keep in mind that “no fault” insurance in Ontario means you can’t make a claim against the other driver’s insurance, but you can still sue the driver personally.
- Call the police if the damages exceed \$1,000. The police may ask you to come to the station to make a report. Explain that getting to the nearest station may not be feasible because you are on a bicycle.
- Obtain names of any witnesses that may be available. If anyone has stopped to help at the collision, ask for their name(s) and telephone number(s).
- Write out a short paragraph describing what happened if the police will not be responding to the scene. Have everyone involved sign it. Keep this for future reference.

## 2. Equipment

According to the *Highway Traffic Act*, your bicycle must be equipped with:

- A bell or horn in good working order
- At least one braking system on the rear wheel capable of skidding that wheel on dry, level pavement
- A white front light (visible from a distance of at least 150 metres)
- A red rear light or red rear reflector
- Two strips of white reflective tape on front forks (each strip to be 125mm by 25mm)
- Two strips of red reflective tape on rear forks

These lighting requirements are mandatory if you are riding between half an hour before sunset and half an hour after sunrise, or anytime visibility has been reduced to the point where you cannot see 150m ahead.

## 3. Helmets

Bicycle helmets must be worn by all cyclists under the age of 18. Look for the CSA or CPSC certification in the helmet before you buy or wear it.

- To provide maximum protection, the helmet should fit level and square on the head, and the front should cover the forehead.
- It should sit snugly on and not slip when the head is moved around, even before the chin strap is fastened.
- The straps should be adjusted to meet just below the ear, and fastened comfortably. For more information, contact Ottawa at 613-580-6744.

## 4. Rules of the pathways

Bicycles are permitted on mixed-use pathways, but cyclists should follow these guidelines:

- Keep to the right of the yellow centre line (where one exists)
- Pass other users only when it is safe to do so

- Use your bell or voice to warn others when you are passing e.g., “Passing on your left!”
- Ride at a suitable speed for a mixed-use pathway (recommended speed of no more than 20 km/hr)
- Be cautious at night, especially along pathways that are not lit. Ride more slowly, especially around dark curves, and stay visible by dressing brightly and using bicycle lights.

## 5. Rules of the road

Cyclists must identify themselves when stopped by police for a contravention of the *Highway Traffic Act* or municipal by-law regulating traffic. You just need to provide your correct name and address.

Cyclists are required to ride as close as practicable (i.e. no closer than 1.0 metre) to the right curb of the roadway, except when:

- Travelling at the normal speed of traffic
- Avoiding hazardous conditions
- The roadway is too narrow for a bicycle and a motor vehicle to travel safely side-by-side
- Riding alongside another cyclist in a manner that does not impede the normal movement of traffic
- Preparing to make a left turn, passing another vehicle, or using a one-way street (in which case riding alongside the left curb is permitted)

Cycling on the sidewalk is prohibited by the City of Ottawa Traffic and Parking By-law except where it is permitted by official or authorized signs.

## **Group Leader Documents**

# 1. OBC GROUP RIDING CLINIC INSTRUCTORS' NOTES

## Saturday Clinics

- Meet in front of the Museum (Driveway side) at the Experimental Farm
- Instructors should arrive 15 minutes early to deal with administrative matters
- Pick up package from the ticket booth off the parking lot at the back of Museum

## Prior to start

- Hand out OBC membership application forms to non-members. They may pay you or commit to taking the fee to the OBC office.
- Have all the applicants sign in on the registration sheet in the package.
- Hand out material – “**OBC Group Riding Techniques**”. Note: Ask participants to put the material aside for later reference after they have become more familiar with these “Techniques”.
- Let everyone know about regular Sunday rides and Tuesday night rides and the Saturday ride program
- Invite them to repeat the class if they wish
- Move to parking lot opposite the Museum

## Schedule (approximately 2 hours)

- discussion
- simulation in group
- practice around the grounds
- short ride

## Introduction - 15 minutes

- refer to OBC Group Riding Techniques, Introduction heading or use point form
- efficiency – saves energy – wind protection
- experience gained of riding in traffic
- social and education
- support for equipment failure, illness, etc.
- organize packs by speed and destination
- riders self-select which group to join. Remind them to be conservative in the group selection for their first club ride.
- formation – default is double file
- stay with group / notify if leaving
- notify group leader if anyone is falling off the back
- lunch stops –some riders bring food, some buy at the lunch stop. Respect owners / don't take own food in restaurant

## Terminology - 10 minutes

- use notes on Group Riding Techniques – Terminology heading
- form group in pairs on foot
- use notes on Group Riding Techniques – Terminology heading
- advise all participants that they will at some point in the ride be in these various positions and therefore they should know what is expected of them.

## Group Manoeuvres - 15 minutes

- simulation on foot (split into two groups if numbers warrant it). Use notes in Group Riding Techniques, Group Manoeuvres heading
- get group to go through manoeuvres on foot following instructions called out by instructor
- practice rotation (use clockwise system)
- practice singling up and back to double
- practice turns

## Safety and Courtesy - 15 minutes

- discussion, use notes in Group Riding Techniques – Safety and Courtesy heading

- emphasis on cycling is NOT DANGEROUS / nor is two abreast
- we ride vehicular style (i.e. as we would driving a car)
- correct lanes for destination, left turn from left turn lane, we get there early; no passing on right of motor vehicles
- ride away from curb or edge of pavement
- follow rules of the road, yield right of way
- we stop for all red lights
- we frequently do rolling stops at stop signs – explain 2 way vs. 4 way
- ride straight line / be aware of person behind you (touching a rear wheel is the most common cause of group accidents)
- control of following motor vehicle traffic maintaining position
- no squeezing dangerously to the right
- spread out before railway crossing / try to cross at a right angle to the tracks
- responsible for own safety: helmet recommended but not panacea
- know your own rights / respect those of other road users
- courtesy yes, but not at the expense of safety

### **Practice ride on Farm roads - 20 minutes**

- practice starting off in twos
- practice turns
- practice rotations
- practice singling up

### **Bike and equipment - 10 minutes**

- discussion using a bicycle as a prop - Use notes in Group Riding Techniques
- types of bikes / fitting bike to rider (saddle height etc) and bike check, brakes etc.
- where to position hands near brakes
- tires – slicks vs. knobbies, fenders good on wet roads
- minimum legal lighting on evening rides
- maintenance - clean and lubricate drive-train
- tools – pump, puncture kit, tire levers, allen keys, etc.
- food and drink, clothing, shoes
- use small saddle bags, side panniers not recommended
- first aid kit (band-aids, bandage, antiseptic swabs, antihistamine for bee stings)
- OHIP card and ID and emergency number to call in case of accident
- bikes not to be equipped with Kick Stands
- aero bars may be on bikes but not to be used during group rides

### **Optional tour – approximately 20 km Route map is in kit**

## 2. OBC Guidelines on Dealing with Motorists or Police

The Ottawa Bicycle Club strives to ensure that groups ride responsibly by obeying the Highway Traffic Act, keeping in a tight double file, pulling over to let traffic pass if it gets really backed up behind, and being courteous to motorists. At the same time, incidents involving motorists or police can happen.

### Motorists

- Most of the time, problems with motorists during a club ride involve a drive-by incident and you are not confronted by the motorists. Examples of non-confrontational incidents:
  1. Motorist cuts off the group when passing.
  2. Motorist makes an unsafe pass due to oncoming traffic.
  3. Motorist's passenger hangs out the window yelling obscenities or telling the group to ride single file.
  4. Motorist leans on the horn while following the group and slows right down in front after passing the group.
- At other times, a motorist may stop and get out of the car and show a more confrontational attitude.

### Stay calm

- When having to deal with motorists as the result of an incident, the only spokesperson for the group should be the Group Leader. Other riders, whether directly involved or not, should stand nearby but let the Group Leader do the talking.
- It is important at all times to keep a cool head. Remember, you are the image of our club. As heated as the moment may be, stay calm.
- When dealing with a motorist who gets out of the car, be cautious. Here again, the Group Leader should be the spokesperson for the group.
- Generally, the best course of action is to lead the group around the motorist and immediately phone 911.
  1. If the motorist is calm and appears only to want to talk about double-file or other issues, the Group Leader should also speak to the person in a calm and courteous way. Advise the motorist that double file is permitted in Ontario under the Highway Traffic Act and is the preferred method for a safe group ride. An option is to offer to have someone from OBC or even the Ottawa Police Service (OPS) contact the motorist regarding our practices and our rights to the road.
  2. If the motorist is unreasonably confrontational, consider the possibility that the person may be on alcohol or drugs, or violent. If making the 911 call, report on which you think it is: aggressiveness, or violence, in itself is a serious call that the police will respond to as quickly as possible.
  3. Inform the confrontational motorist that you will not have any discussion until the police arrive.

### Take information and report

- For all of these types of incidents, try to get the license number and a description of the vehicle (and driver, if possible). It is advisable to pull the group over for a few minutes to make notes. If the incident was extremely dangerous to the group, call 911 immediately.
- This information should be passed on to the Touring Director or club office. You may choose to report this incident to the police yourself before relaying the information to the OBC. The OPS phone number is 613-236-1222 X 7300, or simply dial 311.

### Police

- If your group is stopped by the police, immediately have your riders pull right off the road onto the shoulder.
- The Group leader will talk with the police officer(s) on behalf of the group, again being calm, courteous and diplomatic.
- Ask the police officer(s) for identification – name and badge number.
- If necessary, advise the police officer(s) that the OPS is aware of and agrees with our group riding practices.

- If you are told by the officer(s) to ride single file and you don't feel that it is necessarily safer to do so, advise them that you are concerned about the safety of your riders and would ride double file as permitted by the Highway Traffic Act.
- If told by the police officer(s) not to ride double file, do not object any further and proceed in single file.
- If you are in Quebec, be aware that Quebec laws are different from Ontario and much more restrictive to cyclists on the road:
  1. You are not permitted to ride double file
  2. If there is an on-road cycle lane, cyclists must use it.
- If the police have stopped you due to a public complaint, inquire as to the nature of the complaint and ask who (which rider) the complaint was against. Whatever the complaint, every rider in the group could not be an offender so the complaint should be specifically directed at 1 or more riders.
- Be sure to report police intervention as the result of a public complaint to the Touring Director or the OBC office. You may also choose to report to the OPS yourself as well upon your return from the ride. The OPS phone number is 613-236-1222 X 7300, or simply dial 311.

## 3. OBC GROUP LEADERS GUIDELINES

### Preparation

- Ensure that you are familiar with the document OBC Group Riding Techniques, available as a handout or on the OBC Website. Familiarize yourself with the rules of the road as they apply to cyclists. Most of the rules are the same as those for motor vehicles.
- Arrive 15-20 minutes before departure time. Advise the Tour Leader that you are prepared to lead a group, sign in and get a map. Maps are now available for Group Leaders in printed form from the OBC Office or downloadable from the OBC Website. Be prepared to introduce yourself to new members. Be familiar with the official route.

### Items for Group Leaders

If you are going to volunteer regularly, you can obtain the following items from the club office for use during the riding season:

- Bicycle mounted map holders
- Road rash kit

### Before the ride

- Assemble your group. Announce the destination, the distance, the speed range, and discuss what the group's plans might be for lunch. Then, separate the riders into groups of between six and twelve with an even number in each pack if possible. If there is a shortage of regular leaders, select an experienced rider to lead another group - do not exceed the limit of twelve riders per pack.
- Check out your riders. Make sure everyone is properly equipped with spare tube or tire, pump, full water bottle, and food. Check that bikes are mechanically fit, and that riders are physically fit. This applies especially to Rambler Leaders who will have many new riders in their groups. Discourage anyone from riding who is not prepared for the ride. Remind riders to inform the group leader when someone is leaving the group.
- Check that all riders have experience in riding in a group or have taken the Group Riding Techniques Course. Assign an experienced rider or yourself to new group riders through a rotation. Welcome riders who are new to the group. Remember that newer riders may not have the snazzy equipment and clothing of some long-time riders - but that does not mean that they are unable to join in and enjoy club riding.
- Ensure that all riders are OBC (or OCA affiliate) members.
- Stress the points that everyone should keep in mind to ensure a safe and enjoyable ride:
  1. Avoid braking suddenly
  2. Identify major hazards
  3. Be predictable

### Departure

Leave when ready, in order of speed of the groups (at Billings Bridge by order of lamp posts - 6, 5, e, 2 then 3). Leave promptly so as not to delay the following groups.

### On the road

- Ensure that the group is riding at a steady pace in double file as soon as possible after departure. Do not allow the group to break up at traffic lights or on hills. Wait after lights and hills if riders are delayed. Make sure the group follows the club riding conventions and obeys the rules of the road. Don't cut inside stopped vehicles at traffic lights. Don't ride on shoulders unless you know from previous experience that the shoulder provides a continuous route that does not diverge at turnoffs. Emphasize that safety is the responsibility of each individual rider. Call rotations if the front riders are staying there too long. Speak to the group about general things and privately to individuals.
- Be familiar with the route. Announce turns to the lead riders before they get there, particularly left turns so the lane can be taken well in advance of the intersection.
- Keep the pace steady and within the limits defined for the group. DO NOT ALLOW THE GROUP, OR

ANYONE IN IT, TO RIDE FASTER THAN THE ADVERTISED SPEED FOR YOUR GROUP CLASS. Allow for variations due to the wind, hills and fitness levels. Ensure all changes to the official tour route and destination are group decisions.

- Encourage “rogue” riders who repeatedly leave and then rejoin the group when they feel like it, to either stay with your group or leave it. Don’t let riders drop off the back. Slow the pace if necessary. If riders are unable to keep up, have them turn back. Make sure they know the way.
- Good Group Leaders have a number of techniques to keep the group together, e.g., rather than have fatigued riders lag behind, it is usually more advisable to have them stay out of the rotations and maintain the 2nd or 3rd position in the inside line while other riders rotate around them. This is usually the position with the best drafting (less tiring) and allows you to see them constantly and how they are doing.
- Stop for mechanical breakdowns. If a bike cannot be fixed, make arrangements for the rider to get to a phone to call for assistance. Do not leave anyone stranded.
- DO NOT ALLOW ANY RIDER TO BE DROPPED FROM THE GROUP.

## Problems

- In case of accident or injury, ensure that medical attention is obtained. Follow incident checklist. Designate a rider to look after the injured rider and bicycle. Report to the Touring Director on returning.
- In case of disagreement with other road users, be courteous but stand your ground. Emphasize that cyclists are entitled to use the roads in safety, which may sometimes cause delay to other road users. As Group Leader you should be the spokesperson for the group in order to avoid any heated discussions by other group riders. If a police officer should interfere with the safe riding practices, discuss the matter calmly. Stress that your primary concern is cyclists’ safety. If the officer does not acknowledge your position, or directs you to ride in a manner you consider to be unsafe or unjustified, do so under protest. Once again, as Group Leader you should be the spokesperson for the group in order to avoid any heated discussions by other group riders. Record the officer’s number and report to the Touring Director on returning. See the OBC Guidelines on Dealing with Motorists or Police.
- Do not compromise the safety of the group merely to avoid inconvenience to other road users - but equally as important do try to accommodate other road users.

## 4. Incident Report Form

The current Incident Report Form is available on the OBC website under “Education, Group Leader Documents”.

1. Download the pdf to your computer
2. Print the document
3. Fill out the form
4. Obtain required signatures
5. Return to OBC Club Office



# SPORT INJURY REPORT FORM

This form should be completed by a club official at the time of an accident, injury or other incident during a club sponsored, organized and/or supervised activity.

SUBMIT COMPLETED FORM TO:  
ONTARIO CYCLING ASSOCIATION

2-2015 Pan Am Boulevard  
Milton, ON L9T 8Y9 Fax-1-855-488-0812

## SECTION A: PERSON INJURED

CYCLIST  SPECTATOR  COACH  VOLUNTEER

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact#: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ YEAR OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

EXPLAIN EXACTLY HOW INCIDENT/ACCIDENT OCCURRED: Name/Trail/ Location of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Time of Injury: \_\_\_\_\_

SPORT DISCIPLINE:  Cyclo Cross  Cross Country  Down Hill Racing  Road  Track  Para Athletes Other \_\_\_\_\_

ENVIRONMENT: LIGHT CONDITIONS:  Dawn  Dusk  Lit Dark Road  Daylight  Unlit Dark Road

SURFACE:  Paved  Unpaved  Dirt  Wood If other, pls specify \_\_\_\_\_

WEATHER CONDITIONS:  Dry  Snow/Slush  Icy  Wet  Muddy If other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

FORM COMPLETED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ CONTACT #: \_\_\_\_\_

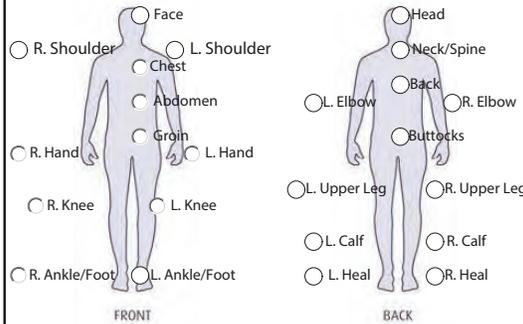
WITNESS NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ WITNESS PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

## PLEASE COMPLETE SECTION "A" ABOVE IN FULL AND AS MUCH OF SECTION "B" BELOW AS POSSIBLE

## SECTION B: DETAILS OF INJURY

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE:  1  2 - 3  4 - 9  10+ TYPE OF ACTIVITY:  Training  Practice  Competition  Recreation

BODY PART(S) INJURED: Please fill in circles located over the injury site(s).



If other, pls.specify \_\_\_\_\_

INJURY CLASSIFICATION:  New Injury  Acute Injury  Overuse  
 Recurrence of previous injury  Complication of Prior Injury  
 Recurrent Injury Non-Sport  Previous injury this year  Other

NATURE OF INJURY:  Sprain/Strain  Fracture  Dislocation  
 Contusion  Skin Injury  Laceration  Head Injury

All loss of consciousness or fainting requires IMMEDIATE medical follow-up

SUBJECT INVOLVED:  Male  Female

Height (cm): \_\_\_\_\_ Weight (kg): \_\_\_\_\_

CAUSE OF INJURY (Collision):  Fixed Object (i.e. tree)  Other Cyclist  
 Moving Vehicle  Parked Vehicle  Pedestrian/Spectator  Other

CAUSE OF INJURY (Non-collision):  Bike Malfunction  Washout  
 Loss of Control  Terrain (Roots/Rocks)  Ran off Road/Trail  Fell Over

INJURED PERSON'S ACTION PRE-INJURY:  Entering Traffic  
 Making Right Turn  Making Left Turn  Going Straight  
 Starting in Traffic  Changing Lanes  Avoiding Object  
 Merging/ Overtaking/ Passing  Jumping  Other

INITIAL TREATMENT:  RICE (Rest, Immobilize, Cold, Elevate)  Dressing  
 Wrapping/ Taping  Manual Therapy  Sling/Splint  CPR  
 Stretch/ Exercises  None Given - Referred Elsewhere  Other

CARE:  EMS Care On-site  Hospital Care  Family Physician  
 On-site Only  Refused Care  Self Transport to Hospital

FOLLOW UP: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Injury: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Date: \_\_\_\_\_

All information collected on this form of a personal nature is strictly confidential and will not be disclosed to a third party.

Please return completed form to Ontario Cycling, 2-2015 Pan Am Boulevard, Milton, ON L9T 8Y9 or fax to: 1-855-488-0812