

# **Capitol Cruisers Ride Safety Briefing**

## **Ride Captain Responsibilities**

Make every attempt to pre-ride the route, but especially on roads that you don't frequently travel.

If possible, have route sheets available for all riders. At a minimum, have at least one extra for another leader if the group needs to be separated into smaller groups.

Before the pre-ride briefing, confirm bikes are fueled up and do a visual check of tires. Be aware of any riders that have limited experience.

At briefing, go over the following hand signals: Stop, Slow Down, and Pull Off. In addition, point out any particular sections of the route which may require special attention. Also, make riders aware of approximate time/distance between pit stops.

Place less experienced riders immediately behind the leader, with an experienced (sweep) rider at the tail end of the group.

Allow adequate time for turn signals to be passed along the line. If you are not sure if an upcoming turn is correct, go past it and turn around at the first safe area.

Do not go through stop signs until all riders in the back have caught up.

At red lights, if there are more than five riders, have the third rider (or fifth or seventh if it is a large group) be responsible for waving her hand over her head (the Pull Off signal) to indicate that someone did not make it through a red light. The Pull Off signal can also be used for any reason to indicate the leader needs to pull off the road. Acknowledge that you received the signal and then pull off the road at the first safe area.

On major highways, try to allow enough time when changing lanes so cars do not break up the group. The last (sweep) rider should try to "take" the lane first before other riders change lanes.

## **Sweep Rider Responsibilities**

Generally, the sweep rider keeps an eye on the group ahead. If lane changes are coming up, the sweep rider should try to "take" the lane first before other riders pull out.

The sweep rider should note which riders are lagging too far behind. At a stop, the sweep rider should suggest to lagging riders to keep the formation tighter.

If there's an emergency and a rider needs to stop, the sweep rider stops with that person. Once the nature of the problem is determined, the sweep rider may leave to catch the group to inform the leader of the situation. However, once notifying the group, the sweep rider returns to the stopped rider and stays until the situation is resolved.

## Rider Responsibilities

Arrive on time, already fueled up and your tires at correct pressure and with sufficient treadwear.

Generally, you should ride in the most safe lane position at any one time, depending on the surrounding conditions which may necessitate an increased space cushion or maneuvering room.

On divided highways or in town, a staggered formation with 2 seconds of spacing between the motorcycle directly in front and 1 second of spacing between the adjacent motorcycle helps keep the group compact. Once on two lane roads, the formation will become more fluid with riders in single file.

Be attentive at all times of goings-on around you, especially those of bikes in front of you. It's important never to "daydream" just because you are not the ride leader. You are responsible for the control of your bike and to maintain a safe cushion of maneuverability at all times.

Do not run a yellow or red light in order to stay with the rest of the group. The ride leader will find a safe spot to pull over and allow riders to catch up.

Go through stop signs two at a time. The person on the right should make sure the person on the left "clears" her bike. Both riders should still make sure there is no oncoming traffic.

Remember: Be aware of what is happening in the space surrounding your motorcycle, put the bike where others can't touch you and have no surprises.

Have fun!

## HAND SIGNALS

*(reprinted with permission from the Motorcycle Safety Foundation)*

**STOP:** arm extended straight down, palm facing back.



**SLOW DOWN:** arm extended straight out, palm facing down, signal using up and down motion



**PULL OFF:** arm positioned out to left, then swing up toward shoulder and across top of helmet



*For other common hand signals, see the MSF\_Group\_Ride.pdf.*