

PACELINE ETIQUETTE

The Primary Objectives in paceline riding is to be: SAFE, SMOOTH, PREDICTABLE and act as a SAFETY WATCH FOR HAZZARDS. The benefit of a paceline is to allow faster speeds and at the same time allows riders to rest while drafting in the slip stream of others yet still gain the auto traffic benefit of the more visible "safety in numbers".

Safety:

Obey the rules of the road! Adhere to all traffic laws. Communicate clearly so others following know your next move, hazard or safety challenge. Stay as far to the right hand side of the road as safely possible. Stay completely out of the road when stopped or waiting. DO NOT ride in only aero bars while in a paceline.

Communicate:

Use hand signals to indicate turns (left and right), stopping and slowing (rearward flat hand) or even turning around (swirl a left hand downward counterclockwise circle). Use verbal warnings too. This includes warnings for turning, stopping, slowing, debris or dogs. "Car Up" – To warn of approaching vehicles. "Car Back" or "Coming Around" – To warn of passing vehicles. "On your left" - When overtaking an unsuspecting cyclists. Point out and announce hazards in the road. This includes holes, bumps, road kill, gravel, sand, pedestrians, cars, etc. Anything disruptive to cyclists.

Drafting:

Ride a comfortable distance behind the wheel in front of you. Begin riding 2-3 feet away and work up to closer distances as you start to feel more comfortable. Practice helps. Experienced riders will ride within 12 inches of each other's wheels. Do not fixate on the wheel in front of you. Look beyond the rider directly in front of you to see what is up the road. Be aware of what is in front of you!! Do not overlap wheels. If you touch wheels, the rider behind should smoothly and calmly slow down. The rider in front should maintain his line and pedaling. DO NOT slam on brakes! If a dog confronts the group and road is not carrying auto traffic, split wide of the group so dogs can be avoided. If you roll up on the rider in front of you, smoothly ease to one side with light pedaling. Allow the wind to slow you down. Avoid gaps. If a gap does open, smoothly and slowly accelerate to close it. DO NOT "Attack" to close a gap. This creates more gaps with the riders behind you. If a rider opens a gap and cannot close it (he's "cooked") then smoothly and slowly accelerate around him to close the gap. DO NOT sling/rock your bike back when going from a sitting to a standing position (ex. on a hill). Many riders do not notice this, but when most riders quickly stand to accelerate, they throw their bike back possibly causing the rider behind them to react. When standing, put extra pressure on the pedals and stand up slowly. On the flip side, when approaching a hill, be aware of the rider in front of you and anticipate any slight loss of momentum from the rider in front of you. When riding downhill, do not slam on the brakes. Slowly and smoothly move to either side of the rider in front of you and allow the wind to help maintain your

speed. Allow a little more room for reaction time due to the higher speeds. If you have a mishap (flat tire, mechanical, etc.) stay relaxed. DO NOT slam on the brakes. Slowly, smoothly and calmly slide out of the paceline. Once you are clear, and then slowly decelerate before stopping off the side of the road. If you are at the back, calmly let others know you have had a mishap.

Passing and Pulling: •

Generally, the lead rider will pull off to the left. The exception is the right side of a dual paceline. DO NOT accelerate when taking the lead!! The lead rider should pull off to the side and smoothly decrease speed. The second rider should maintain the speed of the group. If the speed is to be increased, do so slowly and smoothly. When pulling at the front, maintain the average speed of the group. Do not stay on the front so long that you decrease the speed of the group. Keep the pace steady! DO NOT over exert yourself at the front (<80% max reserves)! Stronger riders should pull longer, weaker riders should pull shorter. Do not be embarrassed to simply pull through immediately. When the lead rider pulls off, slowly move to the back of the group, but maintain some speed and do not stop pedaling. Stay close to the group as you drift back, this will help shield the other riders from the wind. When you are beside the last rider in the line, smoothly pick up your speed and move over behind his wheel. DO NOT ride to the front of the paceline and pull out in 2nd or 3rd position from the front opening gaps for the riders behind you. When riding downhill, lead rider should not stop pedaling, but maintain effort, not speed. DO NOT sit on the back the entire time only to “attack” or accelerate as you take a pull or at the next big hill. Truly noble paceline etiquette includes the effort to retain a longer term average group pace. This is inclusive to stronger riders having taken a pull, to fall back and pick up riders they just dropped, if those riders were with the paceline for a large percentage of the ride. This protocol tends to keep an average reasonable for all. No one new to the area or without a route map should ever be dropped and left to finish the ride by them-selves.