

# *Trip Leader Manual*

## *Chapter 3*

### Section 2: Guidelines for Bicycle Day

### Rides

# Planning a ride



Choose a route with low traffic levels, good road surface and wide shoulders— avoid heavily trafficked roads and intersections. If you aren't acquainted with the roads, drive them or ride them beforehand.

Consider what traffic conditions will be like at the day and time the ride will take place.

Schedule the ride with enough daylight hours for the slowest rider to finish and/or to accommodate repairs.

Require lights and reflectors if riding after dark.

# Planning a ride continued



- Prefer clockwise routes to avoid as many left turns as possible.
- Plan for frequent rest/food/water/toilet stops en route.
- Provide a legible and accurate map and/or cue sheet with distances given; include emergency contact numbers on the map.

# Planning a ride continued



- Choose a starting point with ample parking and get permission to use if it's not public property.
- Accurately classify and promote your trip with regard to skill level and difficulty.
- Please do not schedule a day ride on budget tour days.

# At the Start



Welcome everyone and let them know that safe riding is our primary concern.

- Talk about group riding etiquette.
- Distribute maps.
- Insist that all traffic laws be obeyed

## *At the Start continued*



- Helmets must be properly worn whenever on a bike.  
Level on head (not “easter bonnet” angle). All 4 straps from shell tight and meet under ear. Snug under chin.
- Warn participants that they should not try to ride beyond their ability or fitness level.
- Since the leader cannot be everywhere, riders should be reminded to be responsible for each other.
- Remind riders that the leader needs to know about any incidents that occur.

## *At the Start continued*



- Do Not leave maps for latecomers. Unfortunately, doing so leads them to think they are “on the trip” when they are not.
- Never start a ride if dangerous conditions or weather is imminent, such as thunderstorms or icy roads

# Pre-Ride Equipment Check



Observe participant's equipment for obvious problems.

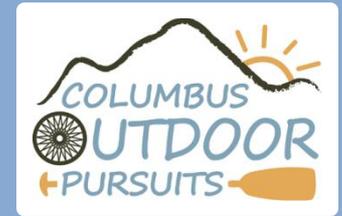
Problems to Look For and Helpful Advice to Give:

- Tires: Casing – no cracks, no sidewall bulges, and no cords exposed; are pumped up, bead seated evenly all around
- Wheels: Rim in good shape and true (not rubbing brake pads). No missing or broken spokes. Wheel spins freely on axle, but not loose.

# *Pre-Ride Equipment Check continued*



- Quick Release: Clamped on tight enough; NOT screwed on.
- Brakes: Thumb clearance when hand levers squeezed. Pads not worn too much. Cable not frayed. Brake block lever release closed. Both pads contact rim at about the same time.
- Crank: Arms tight on spindle (when pushed/pulled sideways). Spindle not loose in the bottom bracket shell.
- Stem & Handlebar: In line with front wheel. Stem tight inside the steering tube. Handlebar clamped tightly in stem.



## *Pre-Ride Equipment Check continued*

- Gears: Many do not know how to shift. You may be able to teach some quickly in the parking lot, or on the road. Others, you may have to, for that day, put the bike in some appropriate gear for them.
- Seat Height: Many will have the seat too low. Advise them to raise it about a 1/4 inch at a time, and get used to that setting before raising it more toward the correct height.

# Ride Leader's Tool List



- On bike: Tire levers, patch kit, spare tubes, small screwdriver, small crescent wrench, needle nose pliers, boots (e.g. duct tape on pencil), metric hex wrench set, spoke wrench, chain tool, master link, brake wrench (for side pulls), shifting cable, pocketknife, Shrader-Presta adapter, rags, frame pump.

## *Ride Leader's Tool List continued*



- In Car if you motor to the ride start: floor pump, more wrenches and screwdrivers, headset wrench, water bottles, helmet pads, chain lube

# During the ride



- Never confront drivers of motor vehicles; if being harassed, get full description of vehicle and driver and report the incident to the proper authorities ASAP. Don't forget to fill out a COP Incident Report too!
- Instruct riders stopping for repairs or other reasons to get fully off the road.

## *During the ride continued*



Encourage participants who experience physical problems that may impair their ability to ride safely (such as severe dehydration, heat stress, hypothermia, etc.) to seek other modes of transportation back to the start. If you are not 100% confident they are competent to ride back alone, send a buddy or two, or the entire group. If they went alone, be sure to check later that they did indeed get back.

## *During the ride continued*



- Tactfully coach riders who do not follow the “Rules of the Road” about their transgressions. Remind them they should announce road hazards and signal and verbalize their moves (slowing, stopping, turning, etc.).
- Be watchful for potential equipment related safety problems such as loose clothing that could get caught in a wheel.

# After the Ride



- If possible, make certain that all riders are accounted for, especially in more remote areas.

*“You can ride your bike without an organization, but without the organization to provide the structure, there is no ride (organized tour)” -  
Julia Schmitt, COP Member*