

Ride Leader Guidelines

Take With You:

1. Sign-up sheet and pencil or pen. Maps or other directions for riders.
2. Repair equipment, such as patch kit, pump, spare tire, tools. Basic first aid equipment, such as band-aids, first aid cream, aspirin, etc.

Prepare for the Ride:

1. Be familiar with the ride route. Make note of potential hazards: heavy traffic, construction, etc.
2. Prepare maps or directions so riders can follow the route. Include appropriate regroup points along the route. Remember that Leisure and Social riders will require more regroup and rest stops while Brisk and Strenuous Riders will not.

Day of the Ride:

1. Arrive at the meeting point twenty to thirty minutes early. If you must cancel, have someone at the meeting point to inform riders that the ride is canceled or hand out the route sheets or map and appoint a substitute ride leader.
2. Introduce yourself, give a brief description of the ride, review the pace and difficulty. Distribute maps or directions and make sure they are clear. Review known hazards on the route.
3. Have riders sign in. Ask riders to note whether they are SBTC members or not. On beginner rides, have riders inspect their own bikes for any mechanical problems.
4. Remind riders that bicycles are vehicles, and are expected to follow all traffic regulations. This means stopping at stop-signs and red lights, using hand signals, and riding single-file on the right side of the road. Emphasize safety. Advise riders to point out hazards to others, and use voice signals when appropriate (car-back, passing on your left, etc).
5. Choose assistant to ride sweep (at the end of group). Make sure that the sweep rider has accurate headcount, to keep track of the riders. Have riders inform you if they leave early.

During the Ride:

1. Follow route plan. Lead the ride as written in newsletter. If you change route or regroup points, make certain that all riders are aware of the change. Do not change pacing or difficulty, unless all riders agree. If your class of ride waits for stragglers, wait for them. Suggest that faster riders go ahead but meet with the group periodically; optionally suggest a longer and/or more difficult route for the faster riders.
2. Enforce good riding practice. Be polite but firm. You may ask someone to leave the ride, if necessary.
3. Keep track of all riders. If there is a physical or mechanical problem, solve it before continuing the ride. DO NOT EVER ABANDON A RIDER. Get medical help if necessary.

After the Ride:

1. Account for all riders. Thank them, and ask for comments on the ride.
2. Fill out ride report and turn in at General Meeting.

Suggestions for Ride Leaders:

If you think about why you get together with others to ride your bike, you will have a pretty good idea about why other people are attracted to group riding. If you think about the qualities you like in a ride leader, you will have some good notions about what others would hope to get from you. There are some general aspects of ride leadership, which when kept in mind, can make for a more enjoyable experience.

Socialization:

People ride in a group to be with other people. Give some consideration to how you can promote the social aspects of the ride. Simply asking people to introduce themselves can go a long way in the regard. Rest and lunch stops often encourage socialization.

Safety:

Consider some of the more relevant safety concerns to the particular ride you are leading. Mention heavy traffic, steep descents, or some other aspect of group riding such as pointing out road hazards before you start the ride. Try to set the tone for a safe ride, without making a lecture of it. Answer questions as they come up. Lead by example (e.g., by stopping at stop signs and crosswalks).

Preparation:

Know your route well enough to be able to convey to others what they need to know. Maps or route descriptions are always helpful. If you plan to cancel if it is raining, the time to so state is in your ride description for the newsletter. Think ahead about the small details such as making sure you have a pen for signing people in. If you are unsure about any details, contact someone ahead of time who can advise you (such as the ride coordinator for the ride series you are leading).

Being in Charge:

People will naturally look to you for direction and guidance when needs or problems arise. Disasters can be avoided if problems are spotted early. Keep the status of the group as a whole in your awareness. Know if people are lagging behind or experiencing mechanical problems. Exercise judgement when decisions need to be made. The safety of the group should be your highest concern. This may require that you ask people to modify their behavior or even that they abandon the ride. Often times, simply checking with a person who is having difficulty can promote their taking appropriate action to resolve the problem. Being in charge doesn't mean being overbearing or dictatorial.

Feel Appreciated:

Ride leading is the backbone of the club. It is your willingness to lead a ride that supports and promotes our primary purpose: bike riding. Always remember that people appreciate what you do.