

Road Captain and Ride Lead/Sweep Guide  
HOG Indianapolis Chapter No. 1



# **Road Captain and Ride Lead/Sweep Guide**

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# Road Captain and Ride Lead/Sweep Guide

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### Section 1: Overview

Riding is about having fun and enjoying the ride. One of our mottos is "it's about the journey, not the destination." One of the ways to insure that everybody has fun is to provide a safe riding experience. Ultimately, what Road Captains and Ride Leads/Sweeps provide is structure and leadership to help ensure that experience. This is meant as a guide and therefore subject to change at any time by a committee of any of the following: Chapter Manager, Director, Assistant Director, Head Road Captain, Safety Officer, Activities Officer as deemed necessary.

Among other things, Road Captains and Ride Leads/Sweeps must lead by example. They do this by:

- Demonstrating safe riding techniques in their own riding
- Be knowledgeable about the route; have a map, written directions, etc if needed
- Exhibiting safe habits such as hand signals, head turn, maintaining speed, not going too fast
- Wearing appropriate clothing: boots, long pants, gloves
- Bringing appropriate gear: rain apparel, sun and clear glasses, basic tool kit, extra layers; water for hydration, sunscreen, etc.
- Dealing with issues in a calm, non-confrontational manner
- Maintaining calm and clarity in an emergency situation

#### Qualifications:

- Have attended the annual Ride Lead and Sweep Meeting
- Have adequate riding experience
- Suggested to have completed an advanced or experienced riding course
- Radio communication is recommended, in lieu of the Ride Lead having radio communication an experienced Lead and Second tandem (second with radio communication) is acceptable in order to communicate with Sweep(s)
- Check out, carry and return First Aid Kit (available for check-out from Parts Dept Manager)
- Be able to perform the following
  - complete and submit the Ride Plan on the Chapter website
  - conduct a pre-ride meeting covering safety, route, ride conditions, ride formation, hand signals, etc. to the extent these items are not addressed by another officer (i.e. safety officer and/or activities director)
  - lead or sweep a ride as needed
  - collect ride documentation (releases, passports, etc.) if not done by another officer
  - administer basic First Aid (not necessarily certified)

As Ride Leads and Sweeps you are not officers of the Chapter per se, but make no mistake, you are ambassadors of the Chapter. This will be especially important with new Chapter members, those considering becoming Chapter members, or newer riders.

Along these lines, you are a member of one of the best HOG Chapters in the country and should be proud of it. Therefore would like to see all Road Captains/Ride Leads and Sweeps wearing their Chapter vests on Chapter rides.

### Section 2: Leading

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The Road Captain or Ride Lead in the group ride has the most responsibility for the overall ride. He or she will set the pace, act as a navigator and is the one who has to make decisions regarding road conditions and possible change of route.

- Come prepared to the ride. Know the route. Hopefully, the lead will have pre-ridden it although at times this will not be possible.
- Be prepared to do a pre-ride briefing. The Road Captain or Ride Lead will likely be sharing this duty with the Safety Officer and the Activities Officer, but if they are absent, it is the responsibility of the Road Captain to do it. There is a checklist to assist in this duty.
- Large rides may be broken into groups as deemed necessary.
- Lead takes the left front of the column
- Ride in staggered formation; 2 seconds behind bike directly in front, 1 second behind bike at diagonal. Trikes ride in center with 2 second separation.
- Use hand signals in addition to electronic signals
- Vacant spot in formation is taken by next bike moving diagonally; do not pass another bike in the same lane
- Maintain your pace, group pace is set by the lead. Be aware of the group and pay attention to slowest/least experienced rider(s) in the group to ensure that there is minimal rubber banding, lagging, etc.
- Ride Lead/Second must stay in radio communication with Sweep(s).
- If the group is separated at a light or other reason, Sweep should let you know. Ride at a slow steady pace until the rest of the group has a chance to catch up. If there is a great deal of separation and it is SAFE TO DO SO, pull over and wait for the group to catch up.
- Signal single file if conditions warrant: bicyclist on side of road, pedestrian, stopped vehicle, narrow road, lots of twisty roads, etc.
- Be aware of road conditions: wet leaves, sand or gravel in road, especially turns, potholes, etc. Ride accordingly.
- When passing on a multi lane highway;
  - Ride Lead/Second must radio sweep to take the lane you want to move into.
  - When Sweep has lane and all other traffic has cleared, signal and move, group should follow.
  - Sweep should radio lead/second when past vehicle, then Ride Lead can move back into original lane, group should follow
- When passing on a single lane highway, pass when safe to do so. Each member of the group needs to pass when it is individually safe to do so. Ride Lead may indicate road is clear with a "come on" hand signal if there is no oncoming traffic at all. Otherwise, let next rider judge on an individual basis.

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### Section 3: Sweeping

Riding Sweep is a key component of group riding. The Sweep will likely be in position to know if there is an issue with any of the other group riders and is in a better position to know if anyone in the group is having trouble or is riding in an unsafe manner.

- Sweep is always last in the group
- Stays in communication with ride lead/second; communicates to ride lead/second that all riders have cleared the light or intersection.
- Advises if group gets separated. Advises Ride Lead/Second that group is close or has reconnected with lead group.
- Relays to Ride Lead/Second any traffic issues coming up from behind (i.e. ambulance, police, fire, etc).
- Sweep stops with any rider that pulls off to do discovery
- Sweep advises Road Captain/Ride Lead of anyone riding in an unsafe manner, also advises if he/she feels a rider is riding beyond their abilities.
- Captures left lane when requested by lead in multi lane passing situation; captures previous lane when safe to do so
- Stops with two others in accident scenario
- Sweep carries a First Aid Kit. It will need to be signed out at the beginning of the ride and returned at the end. They are available for check-out from the Parts Dept Manager.
- Recommend a "substitute" Sweep rides near the Sweep in the group in case they are needed (group rider pulls off and needs assistance, mechanical issue, accident, etc)

In a perfect scenario, there will be enough experienced Road Captains/Ride Leads that one can ride Second to the lead, meaning in the second position, so that he can assist the Ride Lead with radio communications, ride leading responsibilities or take over lead if conditions require it. If there are enough experienced Ride Leads/Sweeps one can ride forward of the Sweep, meaning second to last. This is helpful in an accident scenario or if the group is irretrievably split as the Second can take lead and still have a Sweep.

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### Section 4: Accidents

Nobody wants to see this happen which is why we practice safe riding techniques. However, on occasion, even the most experienced of us can have a mishap. If this should happen:

- Whoever is behind the rider involved in the accident will likely stop. The Sweep needs to stop and make sure that the situation is not made more dangerous by many riders stopping and creating an even greater road hazard.
  - Direct all but two riders to continue on up with the forward group. Radio the ride lead/second and let him know there has been an accident. The ride lead and group will find a place to SAFELY stop and await further information.
  - One rider that stays behind will help direct traffic around the accident scene. If other groups in the ride are behind they need to be directed to continue on and rendezvous with the lead group.
  - One rider will dial 911 if the situation warrants
  - Sweep or another person with first aid experience will administer first aid if needed
  - Once situation is stabilized, one rider needs to ride to the forward group with information and status report. Ride Lead at that time will likely continue to destination as planned unless situation warrants otherwise.
  - A word about first aid:
    - In general, perform ABC, airway, breathing, circulation; remove any airway obstructions, perform mouth to mouth if victim is not breathing, perform CPR if there is no pulse (carotid check).
    - Use direct pressure to stop bleeding; no tourniquets unless a limb is severed.
    - DO NOT remove helmet unless necessary to provide breathing to non-breathing victim. Spinal injury could result or be exacerbated.
    - In general, our first aid will consist of stabilize and wait for trained medical personnel.
  - Most likely injuries will be broken bones, lacerations, concussions. Shock is very likely even if injuries are slight. Keep victim lying on their back and keep warm.
  - After victim is transported, make arrangements for his/her bike to be towed. If there is no injury but the bike can no longer be ridden, make arrangements for transport of both bike and rider(s).
  - Accident report needs to be completed immediately by Road Captain, Ride Lead or Safety Officer on the scene and submitted to Director and Secretary.
  - Bottom line: NO RIDER IS LEFT BEHIND!

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### Section 5: Paperwork

Completion of paperwork, while no one's favorite duty, is a necessary component of our group rides for legal, insurance, and record keeping reasons. The Road Captain/Ride Lead will likely share some of this duty with Head Road Captain, Safety Officer and Activities Officer, however it is important that it be done before the ride commences. Therefore:

#### Chapter Rides

- All riders and passengers who are current Chapter members need to sign off next to their name on the current member list. If for whatever reason their name is not on the list, they will need to sign a waiver. Membership officer will check into why their name is not on the list and that will be rectified, but the waiver must be signed
- If there is a minor accompanying us on the ride, that minor's legal guardian, not grandparent, uncle, or second cousin (unless they are also the legal guardian) must sign the minor child's waiver. If this hasn't been done prior to the ride, that minor is not allowed to come.
- In addition, if the minor is 12 years or older, they must also sign a separate minor waiver. This means that there are 2 pieces of paper requiring signatures if the minor is 12 or older.

#### Non Chapter Rides, Charity rides

- All participants, regardless of Chapter membership, must sign a waiver. For most of these rides, a registration table will be set up and volunteers will be making sure waivers are signed

#### Pre Ride Briefing

- Not really paperwork per se, but there is a checklist/cheat sheet for a pre-ride briefing
- Disseminate maps and ride information including directions if needed or desired

#### Accidents

- Road Captain, Ride Lead or Safety Officer on the scene needs to fill out accident report and submit to Director and Secretary to be forwarded to National HOG.

#### Additional

- Our Activities Officer has included a form attached to the Chapter membership list that will track the number of chapter miles in a given ride. Please keep track of total miles and number of riders.

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## Section 6: Forms

- CHAPTER EVENT RELEASE FORM FOR ADULTS
- CHAPTER EVENT RELEASE FORM FOR MINORS
- MINOR'S ASSUMPTION OF RISK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
- INJURY REPORT FORM
- PRE-RIDE CHECKLIST
- GROUP MILEAGE FORM