

Road Captain Guide

Overview

What is a Road Captain?

- The leader of a group of motorcyclists on a ride
- Educates on the fundamentals of group riding
- Promotes safe riding practices
- Tour guide

What are your responsibilities as a Road Captain?

- Must have a motorcycle endorsement
- Insure safe travel between points
- Insure that riders operate their motorcycles in a safe manner
- Maintain control of the group – resolves problems promptly and tactfully
- Enforces H.O.G. and Chapter policies on riding (e.g. alcohol policy)
- Oversees accident scenes
- Makes sure sweep is briefed on route and plan for the day

What are your responsibilities as a Sweep?

- Same as Road Captain plus:
 - Help riders with any problems while on the ride
 - Manages group separation – know the route!
 - Supports the Road Captain
 - Capable of being Road Captain in the event the Road Captain is no longer able

Road Captain Essentials

- Camera, First aid kit, cell phone, notepad, pen(s), basic toolkit
- Road Captain Notebook
 - Route map, road maps, Harley-Davidson touring handbook
 - Trip itinerary with hotel information
 - All release and injury report forms
 - Rider and emergency contact info or sign-in sheet
 - Your personal info
 - Pre-ride briefing sheet and this guide

Promote the Ride

- Send the Ride Template to the Activities officer to get into Calendar
- Conduct rider meetings for extended rides to get riders involved
- Create an Event in Facebook and post information about the ride as the date approaches

- Post Ride Template onto Bulletin board.

Route Assessment

Review intended route

- Adjust start times and route accordingly for rides going to a rally or festival
- Determine rest, fuel, food and point of interest stops
- Plan fuel stops to accommodate smallest tank
 - If riders bikes are not known plan for Sportsters
- Identify potential problem areas (e.g. congestion, rush hour)
- Road construction and detours
- Poor parking at intended stops
- Review weather reports before ride and monitor weather during ride
- Use map software to create a map with directions for posting to the website, Facebook, etc.
- Decide if biker games are appropriate
- Pre-ride if possible

Day of Ride

Assess the group noting the motorcycles, riders, and passengers

- Show up at least 30 minutes early
- Make sure everyone signs in to verify membership

Motorcycles

- Note the bikes with small fuel capacity
- Motorcycles with potential for mechanical failure or safety problems

Riders

- Meet them!
- Try to identify new or inexperienced riders before the pre-ride briefing
- Determine the riders experience level
- Personal knowledge
- Other Road Captains experience with the rider
- Ask during the pre-ride briefing

Passengers

- Riders with little experience having passengers

Pre-Ride Briefing

- Verify all the legal forms are signed
- Explain the ride, destination, stops and any technical portions
- Explain the biker games that will be played if applicable
- Identify the sweep and all other Road Captains
- **Use the Pre-Ride Briefing Worksheet!!!**

Forming the group

- If possible, separate riders by type of riding to be done (fast riders, scenic riders, inexperienced group riders, etc.)
- Perform a bike count and a passenger count (Don't leave anybody behind!)
- Consider Breaking up large groups into flights of 5 to 7 bikes, if possible.

Riding

- Pull out from the staging area when all riders are ready, preferably with a right turn or at a light
- Maintain a steady speed to prevent yo-yoing within the group, use cruise control whenever possible
- Never make erratic or sudden moves or stops
- Try to cross grated bridges in single file
- Obey all traffic laws and traffic control devices
- Note white vs. yellow speed limit signs
- Be alert and signal the group when road hazards are encountered
- Be aware of what is happening within the group
- Note if there has been a separation for an extended period of time
 - Find a safe place to pull the group off the road
 - Send a scout back to investigate and return to the Road Captain and inform
 - Decide whether to wait, continue to next stop or cancel
- Rely on the sweep and the other Road Captains
- If you miss a turn or get lost, continue riding until you find a safe location to pull the group over. Inform the group, assess the situation on how to get back on route then inform the riders of the plan.
- When passing ensure there is a safe distance between the group and oncoming traffic.
 - Ensure riders know the rules and what to expect in a passing sequence
 - Look as far down road as possible and be aware of lane collapse
 - No bumper diving!
- Riders that leave the group can rejoin at next scheduled stop. Riders are not permitted to rejoin a moving group
- Keep group tight in traffic to avoid fragmentation
- Single file in tight turns, cyclists, vehicles parked on shoulders, hazard situations, passing

Stops

- Try to park all bikes together
- Right turn into and out of the stop area is preferred to avoid oncoming traffic
- Avoid gravel, dirt or hills
- On hills back into stall
- Conduct a bike count and wait for any stragglers
- Identify and remedy any problems during the ride
- Ask other road captains, safety officer, or primary chapter officer for help in dealing with problems if necessary

Ride Cancellation

When do we ride?

- We **do not** ride in snow or ice
- We **do** ride in rain or cold
- If no one has arrived for a ride the captain and sweep are free to go 30 minutes after the scheduled start time
- Ask the group if they want to continue on the planned ride in the rain or would prefer a shorter alternate ride for lunch (such as Maltby Café, Sultan Bakery, or Gordy's)
- Do everything possible to avoid canceling the ride

How do I cancel a ride?

- Contact the Membership officer (membership@eshog.com) and the Web Master (webmaster@eshog.com) ASAP after deciding to cancel a ride.
- If you cannot cancel a ride by 6 PM the day before a ride then you must be at the ride start location (ride or drive) to inform group members of the cancellation; remain for 30 minutes after the scheduled start time

Liability

What is it?

- Responsibility for an action
- Places blame

Who is liable?

- Road Captain
- Safety Officer
- Director

How to avoid legal problems

- Get waivers from all non-chapter riders (No waiver- No Ride)
- Get waivers for all minors with parent or legal guardian's signature
- Ride and perform Road Captain duties as reviewed in this document
- Complete Injury Report Forms promptly
- Keep problem riders from riding within the group

HOG insurance

- Will cover you as long as you are acting within the scope of your duties
- Obey all traffic laws and traffic control devices
- Does not cover punitive damages (Meant to be paid by an individual as punishment for negligence)

After ride reports

- Gather all injury reports, minor and adult waivers, membership enrollment forms, and the list of participating riders
- Submit all forms to the Chapter Secretary

Tools

GPS

- Trip entry
- Upcoming turns (Alan's 3 mile rule)
- Rerouting
- Hotels, restaurants, gas stations, ATMs, banks, etc.
- H-D dealerships

CB

- Communications with Sweep
- Riders can anticipate upcoming hazards, group separation, etc.

Summary

Being a Road Captain is exciting, fun and rewarding but it's more than a patch!

- Be a leader – be respectful and leave your biases at home.
- Don't bring your personal issues with you. They are distractions. Focus.
- You are the decision maker and have final say so make sure you're willing to make the hard calls regarding group conflict and rider safety.
 - No alcohol – no exceptions. Dismiss riders that disobey this rule.
 - Keep an eye out for careless riders or inexperienced riders possibly putting the group at risk
 - No attitudes
 - Don't be wishy washy – make a decision and stick to it.
 - Get input and support from your Sweep and other Road Captains on the ride
- You are responsible for everyone's safety so ride smart, think ahead, look ahead, be alert at all times.
- If you're tired – stop! Don't push it and possibly jeopardize the safety of others. Safety is the #1 priority and not being the tough guy or gal!
- Be prepared for the worst and expect the unexpected.
- Make sure you're mentally capable of dealing with potential illness or accidents. Everyone will look to you for leadership.
- Extreme heat, cold, thunderstorms, rain– you must be capable of riding in all these conditions comfortably and possibly all in the same day!