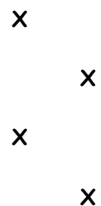


La Crosse Area Chapter H.O.G.® Group Riding Protocol

We utilize the following points in an effort to make group riding a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone. Each individual rider is responsible for their **own safety** on every ride. Road Captains will develop safe routes and conduct rides as safely as possible. However, it is **your** ride. If you are uncomfortable on any ride, then you need to make an adjustment. The adjustment may be a different lane position or a different location in the group. If you are uncomfortable on the ride, talk with a Road Captain. All of the Chapter Road Captains are experienced riders and are there to help you enjoy your ride. Remember, group riding is not just following a leader; each rider must think about what they are doing and practice the *S.E.E.* (Search, Evaluate, Execute) principles of riding. Equally important is the fact all riders must look out for one another. Group rides are fun and very safe when all riders practice a few basic points:

1. Arrive at the meeting point with a fully fueled bike. Fuel stops will be a planned part of the ride but they are usually well into the ride.
2. A Road Captain should occupy first (lead) and last (sweep) positions on a ride. If these officers are not present, then the ride leader becomes the Road Captain for the ride and should designate who occupies the lead and sweep positions.
3. Before departing, the lead Road Captain will conduct a briefing describing the route, ride formation, hand signals, destination, and rest or fuel stops. If you have any questions about the ride, route or stops, please ask.
4. If you plan to leave a ride before the completion or before return advise the Road Captain. Otherwise we will assume you are experiencing troubles and be looking for you.
5. When merging onto the I system, the Road Captain will maintain a speed of approximately 55 mph until all riders are caught up into tight formation.
6. When on 2 lane roads the group will pause at stop signs to insure everyone is present. If a group gets separated at a stoplight the first group will pull over when and where safe to wait until the remainder of the group catches up. Remember the route from the ride briefing.
7. The staggered formation is the standard group riding formation for the LaCrosse Chapter. Staggered formation is the best way to keep the ranks close while maintaining an adequate space cushion. The staggered formation should appear as follows with a minimum of a 2 second gap between the bikes in line and a minimum 1 second gap to the bikes in offset:



8. The exception to the staggered formation is a rider on a trike or bike with sidecar within the formation. The trike or sidecar combination is afforded the entire lane width. When

following a trike or sidecar combination maintain the recommended 2 second following distance for safety.

9. Staggered formation is maintained on road trips as much as is possible. Formations are for the safety of all riders. The group assumes a single file profile when:
 - a. Avoiding road hazards (potholes, sand, gravel, road kill, debris, etc.)
 - b. Cornering (dependant upon speed, road type, curvature)
 - c. Passing
 - d. As signaled by the Road Captain
10. If a gap occurs in the formation, move directly forward to fill the gap. Please do not weave to fill in an open position.
11. Talk to the Road Captain before the ride if you have a preference in riding position either centerline or shoulder, or if you prefer to ride in front, middle or rear of the group.
12. When stopping at intersections close up formation and proceed when legal and safe to do so. Reestablish the space cushion once well clear of the intersection.
13. Hand signals are initiated by the Road Captain and copied back through the formation by each rider. Passengers should translate light signals (directional) back through the formation.
14. The Road Captain identifies road hazards by pointing. The pointing should be translated back through the group
15. There is a tendency on group rides to experience the "rubber band effect". At its worst it is the almost constant speeding up and slowing down to maintain proper formation spacing. This effect can be minimized by following these practices:
 - a. Change speed gradually
 - b. Look high, pay attention, be aware of changing conditions and terrain, anticipate upcoming speed changes and begin to initiate them. Be proactive, not reactive
 - c. Do not attempt to maintain the one second between bikes when in single file on curvy roads, or when it would require rapid acceleration
16. Length of ride between breaks is generally determined by weather, fuel needs, and discretion of the Road Captain. A good rule of thumb is approximately an hour of ride time. If you have fuel concerns make sure to inform the Road Captain to avoid problems on the ride.
17. It is not necessary for you to maintain your exact position in formation when resuming a ride. Look around you so you know who is riding around you in case that person pulls off or has mechanical difficulty.
18. La Crosse Area HOG recognizes the position of National HOG, the Motorcycle Safety Foundation and the American Motorcycle Association regarding the wearing of helmets and other protective clothing and equipment. La Crosse Area HOG is strongly committed to the philosophy that on all matters related to personal safety, it is the individual rider who should decide what to wear and when.

19. La Crosse Area HOG endorses the philosophy of riding responsibly and has adopted a no alcohol policy on all Chapter rides.
20. If other riders, etc. wave at you or let you know they endorse your passion for the world's greatest motorcycle, the open road and the associated lifestyle, feel free to return the endorsement!
21. Above all, Ride Safe, Ride Straight, Have Fun.



Double File

Index and little finger pointing up. Stagger riders - normally at two second intervals between riders in the same track. May also be index and middle finger as in the V for victory sign.



Gas Stop

Left finger pointing at gas tank. Time for a gas stop (or any other necessity while you're at it). May be used to inform other's in your group you're running low on fuel.



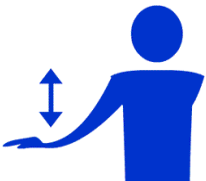
Road Hazard

Hazard on left side a single finger pointing down. Hazard on right side, right leg extended outward toward road surface. Watch for road hazard - pot hole, dead animal, etc.



Single File

Single finger pointing up. Spread out and form a single column of riders. Used frequently when additional maneuvering may be required - (twisty roads, bad surface conditions, etc).



Slow Down

Hand parallel to ground and moved up and down. May also be used to warn of a hazard (slow or stopped traffic, bad road, etc.)



Stop

Open hand pointed down.