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CLUB
CYCLISTE
BEACONSFIELD

CCB HANDBOOK

Version: 2015

CCB Handbook

The 2015 version replaces all other previous versions.

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7. THE LAST WORD

I. Introduction

This handbook explains how the Club Cycliste Beaconsfield or Beaconsfield Cycling Club (CCB) is organized and how its activities work. It also contains individual sections on how we ride and includes tips on how to improve both individual and group riding techniques.

Club or group riding requires specific skills.

The information included in this handbook is intended to help you master those skills to make club riding a more enjoyable experience.

II. Mission Statement

The CCB is a volunteer run organization that brings together adult recreational road cycling enthusiasts who aim to ride in a safe and social setting.

iii: History of Handbook

The history of the handbook goes back a couple of decades. Decent information on cycling was virtually impossible to come by back then. Most members never saw dedicated cycling magazines. Over the course of a few seasons I wrote a series of unrelated articles on cycling technique that I thought might be helpful for club members. This was back in the days when the Freewheel existed only as a paper document that was mailed to every club household. One of the many downsides of that format was that new members did not have easy access to older articles. With the volume of new members joining and general club turnover, after only a few years there might be over 200 members who had not seen any given article.

At that point it was decided to make a collection of these articles and publish them in a booklet which would be given to all new members as they joined. The CCB Technical Handbook was born. Joan Socher was instrumental in adding diagrams and formatting the whole affair in what were the early days of desktop publishing when the tools available were nothing like the ones we have today.

Shortly thereafter, Linda Houle and Julie Tessier greatly expanded the Handbook by adding some very useful articles on how the club was structured and how activities were organized with an eye towards helping all members take fullest advantage and get the most enjoyment possible out of the club. The CCB Technical Handbook had become the CCB Club Handbook. If I recall correctly, Stan Mclean was in large part responsible for formatting that version.

Later on, when the club's website came along under Laurent Fraser, the Handbook was converted into a format that allowed it to be put on the web for all to access. New sections were added containing the entire highway code and club bylaws. At this stage a French translation was provided by Pierre Dussault, Solange Péladeau, Pierre and Claudette Durand.

Along the way, with all of the changes in format and manipulations by tools that were not always user friendly or even really up to the task, ever greater cut & paste and transcription errors crept in. But the largest problem with the Handbook went back to its very creation: the technical articles at the core of it were never written to be published as a coherent whole. There was repetition, inconsistency as well as glaring gaps. The order the articles were in was not even particularly good in logical terms, often having been dictated by decisions made to fit long dead formats.

Despite these problems, we have been told by many new members the Handbook has been very useful over the years. The ultimate compliment was paid to the club over the handbook by the several clubs who later told us they based their riding protocol, training programs, even their entire clubs on it! Despite this, a recent read of the Handbook showing it to be a deeply flawed document. Besides the errors cited above, there were large amounts of outdated (the "new" 7 and 8 speed cluster available) and erroneous information, especially with respect to club activities (telling people to go to a meeting point we have not used in quite a while).

Over the past few years there has been talk on and off about updating the handbook. In particular, Nick Van Haeften spent quite a bit of time on it. However, this spring we realized the huge amount of information on the web and the existence of the club website would make this a particularly timely and effective moment to update. Rather than trying to maintain information that was now readily available elsewhere, and rather than trying to include sections that should really have their own areas on our site,

we saw that if we simply deleted the incorrect and extraneous stuff it would be reasonably easy to update the essential info. We were in essence getting the Handbook back to its origins: some technical articles and a guide to understanding and enjoying club. A game of ping pong editing between myself and Linda Houle resulted in the document you see here.

So now we present the new CCB Club Handbook, faithful to the original concept but far more logical, coherent and readable. I think all members will find something of value in it. May it serve us as well, and as long, as the original!

Ray Deslauriers

1: HOW THE CLUB OPERATES

The club is composed of the membership, the Executive and the various committee members or activity directors. The club is a volunteer-run organization and all members are invited to be involved in some capacity.

A. The Executive

The executive is made up of elected or acclaimed volunteers who serve a two-year term. They plan, coordinate or manage the various activities of the club. The cycling season runs from April to October. Our fiscal year runs from January 1st through to December 31st. Elections occur at the Annual General Meeting held in the fall.

B. The Riding Groups

Riding groups are assembled informally, and can include up to 12 riders of similar ability. We are slowly moving towards recommending groups of 8 riders in busy metropolitan areas such as Montreal, Laval and Hudson. The larger the group the more difficult it is for cars to pass us on the road.

The length and intensity of the rides vary with each group. We have "Easy Riders" who like to take the time to look around and enjoy the beautiful countryside, "Fast Riders" who ride at fast speeds and "Performance Riders" who lean more towards precision pack riding (riding as a tight group at a challenging but steady pace with the goal of improving their technical group riding ability as well as their endurance over long riding distances).

Ride distances range from 30 km to 160 km in distance. The time it takes to complete these rides depends on the speed of the group, but can take anywhere from less than 2 hours to 8 hours. There is one short, 10 to 20 minutes, Dépanneur stop half way through the ride. The longer rides may include additional short stops.

Cyclists ride together, either single file, or if roads and regulations permit, in a double line formation or peloton. Speed groups range from an average of 23 km/hr to over 35 km/hr. For the first few rides of the season, these groups will include one or two group leaders. During the cycling season, members may ride in the same group from week to week, or they may decide to ride with different groups.

C. Group Leaders

From April to the end of June, experienced members act as group leaders during the formal rides of the season. They share their cycling experience and their knowledge of the rules of the Club with the riders in their groups. The group leaders keep their groups a safe size (8 to 12 riders) and help them to ride safely and effectively as a group. While it is up to each individual cyclist to have an enjoyable and safe ride, the leaders will provide useful tips and advice, and their instructions should be followed.

We recommend to all new members that they get out early in the season to take advantage of these group led rides. They will help the new member find their ideal riding pace and provide helpful advice towards finding an appropriate group to ride with.

Note there are no group leaders during informal Saturday or weeknight rides. New members can join these informal rides if they are comfortable with group riding and know what average speed they can ride at.

D. Communication

The club uses different means to communicate with its members. Along with short announcements prior to the rides there are weekly emails sent to members to remind them of them of future activities.

i. The Website

Our major means of communication is the website. The touring schedule is prepared by the Touring committee, and includes a wide variety of rides, varying in distances, difficulty, locations etc. The calendar and maps of the routes are available on the website. Our ride schedule or calendar is prepared well in advance of the season so changes may occur. If a ride is changed or an event is cancelled the information will be posted on the homepage of the website.

Our website also includes the directions to the appropriate parking lot, the maps for the scheduled ride, the start time, and any registration information for the various events, a photo gallery, a blog and a forum with a bulletin board for cycling related items for sale.

ii. Freewheel

The Freewheel is the CCB electronic newsletter or blog. It allows members to communicate items of interest to their fellow riders. All CCB members are encouraged to submit articles, etc. to the Freewheel. Members have used it to recount particularly interesting adventures on a memorable ride, great recipes, or to offer training suggestions.

iii. Directory

A directory containing the contact info of all members is posted on a secure area of the CCB website. This is a great tool for contacting people in the Club. It is for club members only, and cannot be used to solicit business.

2: CLUB ACTIVITIES

The following chapters cover "rules" and etiquette to be respected for CCB group rides. Respect and consideration for your fellow cyclist and for the other vehicles on the road are the guiding principles.

A. The Rides

Cyclists must be aware that all CCB rides are on public roads, and they must be prepared to share the roads with other types of traffic.

i. Sunday Rides

Every Sunday morning (see the Calendar for start times) the membership meets at the designated parking lot. All pertinent information regarding the start location can be found on the website. For local rides the starting point is in Kirkland at the Riocan shopping center on Chemin Ste. Marie. We park in the area between the Colisee cinema and what was the Bureau En Gros store).

About 15 minutes before the start time, we split up into our riding groups (groups are divided by average riding speed). Usually brief club announcements are made, and groups leave promptly at the scheduled time.

ii. Drive and Cycles

The "Drive and Cycle" rides are a chance for members to see other parts of the countryside, and to experience different terrains and conditions. Start locations and route maps are posted online. Typically the start point is 1 to 2 hours away from downtown Montreal.

iii. Off Island starts

Several times during the season we start our rides from the parking lot of the Hudson Inn off highway 40 at Exit 17 for Highway 20, or a designated parking lot in Chateauguay or in St. Lazare. These are only 20 minutes from the West Island parking lot so they are considered as "Off-Island" starts. This allows us to get out onto nice country roads faster.

iv. Informal Rides

During the season we have informal rides and typically they occur on Saturdays. There is no set destination or map for these informal rides. These rides usually start from the Riocan centre in Kirkland, or what we refer to as the Colisee parking lot, and the riders then decide where they want to go. They vary in distance from 60 to 100 km. The start time for these rides is typically the same time as a local ride would be.

Informal rides also occur on days when there is a drive and cycle planned. If you find yourself under time constraints and cannot attend the scheduled drive and cycle, you can show up at the Colisee parking lot for an informal ride. There may not be a large group in attendance but you may find other rides if you are willing to ride at their pace.

Please note there are no group leaders for these informal rides.

v. Weeknight rides

Tuesday and Thursday evenings the club meets for informal evening rides which begin in May (see the club calendar for precise dates and times) and run until September. We meet at a parking lot on the MacDonald Campus of McGill University in Saint Anne de Bellevue (in front of the Centennial Center). Distances range from 35 km to 60 km. Maps are not provided.

These rides are an excellent opportunity for members to get a shorter and more intense mid-week ride.

vi. Weekend Getaways

Every year, CCB plans at least one weekend away. These weekends combine beautiful scenery, great cycling, comfortable surroundings, great food, and some of the best socializing around. All members are welcome to register for the weekends. Previous weekends have been in Stowe Vermont, Auburn New York, Wilmington New York and St. Casimir Quebec.

Note: Weekends often fill up quickly due to the limited availability of rooms. Register early. Information can be found online.

B. Other Cycling events

i. Century or 100 km or 100 mile challenge

The CCB typically schedules a Century Challenge late in the season. This is a 100 mile or 160km ride. It is not only a challenge worth striving towards, but also an achievement to be proud of. In recent years we have added a shorter route or 100 km (metric century) to this event.

ii. New Members' Clinic

In order to ride safely with the club, new members must take one outdoor new member clinic. The CCB helmet sticker is mandatory to ride with a group. New members will obtain their helmet sticker after they have successfully completed this outdoor new members' clinic.

These clinics are aimed at all riders, from the novice who wishes to be shown how to best use their bike, to the experienced rider. The goal is to show all new members our club's protocol for group riding, and show the basics of group technique for those who are not experienced. They are also useful for returning members who want to hone their skills or learn some advanced techniques. The clinic schedule is published on the calendar.

iii. Clothing

The CCB makes available to its members a line of clothing, including jerseys, cycling shorts and sometimes jackets and bibs. These are available to all club members while quantities last. The contacts for purchasing club clothing are found on the website.

iv. Social Events

The club organizes many social events every season, some are after scheduled rides, like the Tailgate parties, and others like the End of Season party are just for the fun of it.

At the beginning of the cycling season, the club organizes an informal social event like a pizza party. This is a great opportunity to meet club members.

In the summer, after a Sunday ride, a picnic or brunch may be scheduled. The club handles the food or subsidizes the meal.

After the local Sunday rides many club members meet up at the local Tim Hortons before heading home.

At the end of the season, the club organizes a party or dinner. This provides an opportunity to dress up for some fine dining.

v. Club Member discounts at local bike shops

Many local bike shops offer discounts to club members. See the website for details. You must show your membership card in order to obtain these discounts.

vi. Note Concerning Time trials

The CCB no longer offers timed events such as time trials. After consulting with police, lawyers, the Quebec Cycling Federation and insurance agents, the club's executive decided to discontinue all timed events. If you are interested in doing time trials please consult the Quebec Cycling Federation website for more information.

Our cycling focus is mid to long distance group riding.

3: PREPARING FOR THE RIDE

It is **each member's responsibility** to ensure that he or she is prepared for CCB activities.

Almost all, if not all, CCB members ride racing bikes during our club rides. Mountain or hybrid bikes are not appropriate, as they are not comfortable, for the mid to long distance rides that we do.

A. Before each ride:

- Ensure that your bike is in good condition, and that it is the right bike for you and the activity you intend to participate in. It should fit you properly in order to avoid injury. Tires should be properly inflated (under-inflated lead to more flat tires and the chain lubed or oiled).
- Make sure you know the basic road side repairs required for your machine (fixing flats, adjusting your chain, etc.) and make sure you have the right tools with you.
- Make sure you have eaten properly before starting out, and make sure you have food with you for the ride itself.
- Don't forget to bring 1 or 2 water bottles.
- Carry first aid/emergency essentials.
- Carry valid identification (I.D.), your current membership card, and Medicare card. Note: for all rides crossing the border: You must have a valid ID such as a passport or enhanced driver's license.
- For rides into the United States, please ensure you have appropriate medical insurance (not all plans have U.S. coverage - double check)
- Carry enough money for snacks along the way as well as a cab ride home in case of a breakdown. (CAA apparently provides some road side assistance for cyclists now so if you are a member bring your CAA membership card).
- Put your first name on your helmet, especially early in the season.
- Ensure your CCB helmet sticker is on your helmet.
- Arrive at least **15 minutes** before the scheduled starting time.

B. Picking Your Group

Deciding what group to ride with may require some trial and error. Start with the slower groups and move up as you get stronger, more proficient and more confident. If you need help deciding, ask a group leader or a member of the executive for advice. Once you have found some people you like to ride with, get to know them and form a core group that meets regularly each Sunday and/or Tuesday/Thursday (or any other time you care to get together!).

Groups are divided by average speeds. The CCB uses "Average speed" to identify the groups. The actual rolling speed is probably higher than the noted average speed of the group. The 25-27 km/hr group will leave the parking lot and roll at speeds well above 30km/hr during the ride. When stops and slow-downs are taken into account the

group will return at the end of the ride with an average of 25 to 27 km/hr. This can be confusing to new members at the beginning of the year. It is a good idea when joining a group to ask them what they think the rolling speed will be. Keep in mind that the type of ride will also impact the average speed. It is easier to maintain a high rolling speed on a flat ride than it is on a hilly ride.

For the faster groups (30km average and up), there are no formal group leaders in these faster groups even at the beginning of the season. This group is self-policing, so a new rider should be prepared to accept comments and criticism from other riders and react accordingly. Anyone who wants to ride with these faster groups should read Chapter 6 on Group Riding Skills very carefully and be comfortable with group riding.

Members are asked to be reasonable with assessing their abilities. Please do not ride with a group that is too far above your level of experience or skill. While riding with better riders is a great way to improve, remember that the step up must be reasonable. Your knowledge, skills and reflexes may not allow you to integrate quickly and safely enough into the group. When you wish to join a new group here's a tip: start by staying at the back and getting out of everyone's way until you've figured out how things work and be open to suggestions, riding tips and constructive criticism.

C. Eating and drinking during the ride

It is important during the ride to eat and drink as you go instead of when you are hungry or thirsty. If you drink when you are thirsty you are already dehydrated. If you only eat when you are hungry you won't have time to digest the food to help you maintain your effort.

Please bring food for the ride. You need to keep in mind that it should be in a form that fits in your jersey pocket, easy to reach and easy to digest. Power or protein bars work for some and not for others. Some riders bring dried fruit and nuts but find that this is hard to eat on the go. Bagel bits with cream cheese or bits of a peanut butter sandwich may sound great but on a July ride can be a bit messy in your back pocket. The best thing to do is experiment and find out what works best for you. The Dépanneur stop is typically half way and you will likely need to eat before the stop. Also, you cannot always depend on the Dépanneur to have healthy snack choices.

4: EQUIPMENT

A. Helmets

A helmet is mandatory. All club members must wear a helmet on all club rides. The helmet must meet industry standards and, for adequate protection, it is important that the helmet be properly fitted. The lifespan of a helmet is between 3 and 5 years. Please make sure your helmet can adequately protect you in the event of a fall.

B. Clothing

Gloves - Cycling gloves provide a better grip on the handlebars, absorb sweat, reduce numbness, and protect your hands in case of a fall. They should be considered essential equipment.

Shoes - Stiff soles transmit more power to the pedal and, after a little getting used to, reduce foot discomfort. Cleated shoes facilitate a much more efficient pedal stroke.

Shorts - Padded cycling shorts fit snugly and reduce chaffing.

Jersey - Absorbs sweat and has rear pockets which can store food, maps, etc., within easy reach. Cotton t-shirts are not recommended as they do not wick away moisture. Loose fitting clothing can also be distracting to the cyclist behind you as it can flap around in the wind.

Cold weather head gear - For cold weather riding, do not forsake your helmet in favor of a tuque or head band. This is a gamble many riders take and it is unnecessary. Lightweight cross-country skiing balaclavas and some models of earmuffs fit easily under helmets with no need for readjustment. If you want to wear something bulkier, it is often simply a matter of removing some sizing pads from inside the helmet itself to maintain a perfect fit.

Tights are very useful in cold weather. You should protect your fragile joints when the temperature is the least bit chilly. In general, you should wear Lycra tights if the temperature is much below 15 degrees (Celsius) and wool ones below 10 degrees (Celsius). Cold morning starts turn into warm days so layering your clothing is a good idea. Whatever layer you take off try to plan ahead and make sure it can be stored in your jersey pocket.

C. Bike Accessories

Bottles: It is vital that you have a sufficient supply of liquids for your ride. At least one water bottle (most people really need two) in an appropriate bottle mount is a requirement for any club ride. Hydration packs (small back packs with hoses that come

out at the front strap) are also very effective specially for members who feel they are not comfortable taking their hands off their handlebars to reach down to grab a water bottle.

Small Seat bag: Useful for carrying spares, tools, etc. On club rides a small seat bag should be quite sufficient. Saddle bags are unnecessary and cumbersome. Handlebar bags are good from a storage point of view but, as they put the weight too high up and forward of the steering axis, they can affect handling of the bike and so are not recommended.

Tool kit: As a minimum you should have 2 spare inner tubes, a patch kit, tire levers, a decent frame pump and knowledge of how to put it all to use. The next things to add are some basic tools, such as Allen wrenches in appropriate sizes and screwdrivers. Finally, if you want to be even more ambitious, add a spoke wrench and a chain tool. Some of these are available in compact, folding multi-tool form, which makes carrying them very easy. Anything else is not really worth bothering with for the regular rides.

If riding week nights, small lights, (white in front and red in the back) for your bike are useful and mandatory in Quebec according to the Highway code. It is always a good idea to be more visible to cars at dusk.

D. CCB Equipment Regulations

Certain pieces of equipment are hazardous in group riding situations. Even required equipment can be a hazard if poorly fitted. The CCB has used the rulings of various international cycling bodies to guide it in determining the following guidelines and regulations:

i. Banned Equipment:

- Disc wheels - bike becomes unstable in a crosswind.
- 3 and 4 spoke aero wheels - potential danger in a crash.
- Cow horn or bull horn handlebars - bike is harder to control, brake levers are not within quick reach if a quick stop is required.
- Aerobars, including clip-on bars, make a bike harder to control riding in a pack, brake levers are not within quick reach if a quick stop is required.

Aerobars can make solo riding easier, particularly into the wind, by making a rider more aerodynamic. This is clearest in a time trial where having aerobars can shave seconds, even minutes off a time trial result. However, they are illegal for use in any mass start event at any level for the following reasons: by shifting the rider's weight forward and putting his arms closer together, they severely restrict the control the rider has over his bicycle. They also slow his reaction time by putting him in a position that makes rapid breaking impossible. Even when a rider is not on them, the extra weight of the clip-on high up on the bike and forward of the steering axis still renders the bike's handling more sluggish and difficult and the bars themselves can be a severe hazard to other riders in the

case of a crash.

The benefits of aerobars are greatly mitigated by the type of group riding the CCB does. The advantage the bars give to a solo time trialist is much reduced in a pack situation where drafting lessens their effectiveness. In addition, the handling problems associated with them puts everyone at risk. Under no circumstance should a cyclist use aerobars when riding in a pack. Even when at the front of the group, quick reaction time and good bike handling are vital to the safety of those following. The good approach is probably to purchase clip-on bars that can be used for time trialing and solo riding and removed for group rides.

ii. Equipment Not Recommended for CCB rides:

- Handlebar bags - bike becomes harder to control.
Pannier bags - bike is less stable in crosswinds, bags are vulnerable to snagging on fellow riders.
- Kickstands - Potential impaling danger in a crash.
- Knobby tires - too much work ...also makes you sound like a 16 wheeler (scares riders in front of you).
- Under-inflated tires (Under-inflated tires are a higher risk for flats). The tire pressure indicated on the side wall is the maximum recommended pressure by the manufacturer. You need to take into account your weight and the road conditions. For a small person (under 60 kg) 120 psi on our Quebec roads will be extremely uncomfortable.

5: INDIVIDUAL RIDING SKILLS

A. Pedaling Cadence

The most basic of riding skills is of course, pedaling. You might think it crazy that pedaling must be taught, but the fact is that most people do not begin with a very efficient style, and this makes riding much harder work.

One of the key aspects of pedaling is cadence, which is measured in number of pedal revolutions per minute. You should aim to have a cadence of between 85 and 100 rpm, at which point you are getting the most result for your effort. When doing this, you should be lightly turning over a fairly easy gear, not pushing a hard one. Eventually, this will help you to ride for hours without undue fatigue.

B. Pedal stroke

To achieve usefully high cadences, you must work a bit on having a smooth pedal stroke - turning in circles rather than just pumping up and down. You will know you are smooth when you can maintain high cadences (90+ rpm) without bouncing around on your seat. When practicing turning circles you should concentrate on the full rotation of your pedal stroke, especially the back part when your foot is moving back up. Make sure you don't work against yourself by weighting the pedal that is trying to come up, keep your weight on the seat and not the pedal on the side that is moving up.

You should also strive for consistency. Some riders spend a lot of time alternating between coasting and pedaling. This is undesirable for a couple of reasons. First, it is inefficient from an energy use point of view; second, the uneven speed will make group riding very difficult for those behind you. Often uneven pedaling is a sign that you are either using too hard a gear, and your muscles need a rest, or you are not pedaling "round" enough, and need a break from bouncing around. In the first case, you need to select an easier gear, in the second case a slightly harder gear may help. Try and catch yourself when you coast, and keep pedalling at all times.

Once you have attained your ideal cadence, use your gears to maintain it. Shift as often as you have to in order to keep your cadence up and effort as constant as possible over changes in terrain, wind, etc. Most beginners do not shift nearly often enough, forcing their legs to work outside their most efficient range of rpm. Though shifting to a harder gear sometimes seems restful, remember to move to an easier gear if your legs get too tired, and maintain your cadence. It is easier on your legs that way. The closer your gears are spaced, the more easily you can accommodate even small changes in conditions. Of course, if they are tightly space, the overall range cannot be as wide for the same number of gears. That's why the old 10-speed was replaced by the 20 or 22 speed. You can now have wide range and close spacing.

C. Riding in a Straight Line

Now that you can pedal smoothly down the road, it's time to ask yourself "Why am I wandering all over the road?" A good line is vital for group riding. To ride safely with the club, you should aim to be one of those riders who is dead smooth and rides in a perfectly straight line.

Almost all beginners, and even riders who ride thousands of miles a year solo, struggle with this. You should practice riding along a painted line on the road, (preferably not the center one), and try not to deviate more than a couple of inches. It may seem impossible at first, but if you practice it will quickly become second nature. Just keep looking straight ahead up the road and not down at the line. Learn to stay alert but relaxed. Practice holding a straight line when you shift, drink, accelerate, or look behind you for traffic. Some people swerve several feet which can be potentially dangerous to the group.

D. Braking

Sudden braking in a group is the cause of some accidents as is swerving outside your line into someone else's. We do not brake suddenly or swerve for squirrels or any other item smaller than the bike. Cars that cut us off are a big cause for sudden braking. Always use caution when a car is beside the pack. If the leaders in the front of the pack are doing their job right – they are ensuring that you won't have to swerve for a pothole or other obstacle.

We are responsible for our own safety. Never cross an intersection if there are oncoming cars.

Braking can become more efficient and safe with a little technique. In cycling, it is the front wheel that does the majority of the braking. Even if you apply both brakes evenly, the deceleration will shift your weight towards the front wheel and reduce the traction and effectiveness of the rear brake. What you want to do during sudden braking is avoid too much weight shifting forward, which causes your rear wheel to skid or even make you go over the handlebars. You should always lower your center of gravity to increase stability, and shift your weight back to maintain traction on the rear wheel. This is something to practice when you are by yourself. Start with moderate slowing and work up to sudden stops. You should be comfortable how your bike responds in a panic stop situation. Many people actually cause themselves to fall with their poor braking technique, rather than being felled by the obstacle they are trying to avoid.

Try not to brake suddenly in a group. The overuse of brakes causes many falls in a group. Have a light touch on the brakes so as not to cause a pile-up behind you.

When in a group, control speed by "feathering" the brakes, using mostly the back one, while actually continuing to pedal (i.e. avoid coasting). You will maintain better control over you bike this way.

E. Cornering

When cornering, there are several basic principles to remember:

- Do your slowing down before the turn, not once you are in it. This makes your bike much easier to control.
- Keep your center of gravity as low as possible when you turn. This means you should move off the top portion of your handlebars onto the drops before you engage the turn. Also, in tight turns stop pedaling and keep your inside pedal up so as not to strike it on the ground as you lean.
- One advanced cornering technique consists of transferring your weight forward and to the outside pedal, particularly on rough surfaces.
- Because of the natural tendency to steer your bike in the direction you are looking, when you are making a fast tight turn, fix your gaze well forward and on the line you have picked rather than looking to the outside. This will make tight turning much easier and more natural.
- If cornering in a pack remember to keep your line and don't veer into the line of the person beside you.
- Follow the cyclist in front of you, even if you think they are making a wrong turn. It is preferable to make the turn, ask the group to stop, check the map and resume. Please do not decide to go in another direction. It is too confusing for the people behind you when some turn and some go forward.

F. Avoiding Obstacles

If you encounter sand, gravel, a manhole cover, wet painted markings on the road (don't underestimate how slippery these last two can be) or anything that could cause a loss of traction in the middle of a turn, try and do your actual turning before and after the obstacle. Keep a straight line while going through the hazard. This same advice applies when facing a slippery surface on a straight section of road. You should be safe as long as you don't turn or make any sudden weight shifts. And keep pedaling, as a driven wheel has much more traction.

Railway tracks deserve special caution. Besides having some pretty rough gaps, many tracks pose the added danger of not being exactly perpendicular to the road. This can knock your front wheel out from under you. To guard against this, slow down, check for traffic, and position yourself so that you can take a line which will allow you to turn into the tracks head on while leaving enough room to still be on the correct side of the road beyond them. The CCB asks that you cross tracks in single file and try to avoid going into the oncoming lane.

G. Hills

Probably the single thing that discourages new (and not so new) cyclists is hills, as they can result in the disintegration of the group. Many club members find themselves in a situation where they can easily ride with a certain group on the flat roads, but they can't keep up on the climbs, and either end up riding alone or with a slower group. Even people who stay with their group often find the hills more difficult than they have to be. Most people don't realize that climbing is not just a matter of strength. Improvement is possible by using the proper hill climbing technique. You can learn to climb better while working less hard.

The first rule of climbing is to efficiently manage your energy. Staying seated as long as possible conserves energy as does choosing a gear that will allow you to maintain a cadence of around 80-rpm. Also, shifting to an easier gear early to avoid bogging down, but not so early as to lose momentum, saves energy (and helps avoid injury). If you cannot maintain a reasonable cadence up hills you may need to have your bike's gearing modified. Don't blow your legs out trying to push too high a gear up a hill - get a lower gear!

The ideal climbing pace is one that is a sufficiently high workload to get to the top quickly and even achieve some training effect, but not so high that you cannot hold it all the way. The first few times you may think you are at a comfortable pace, but you suddenly blow up before the top. Don't get discouraged, re-adjust your pace next time. One of the keys to good climbing is to know your capacities, and how to read the signals your body is giving you so that you can ride within and at the edge of your limits.

The secret to smooth, easy climbing is to apply power to the pedals for as close as possible to a full 360 degrees. As well as pushing down you should be pulling back and up, and pushing over the top of the pedal. To achieve the maximum benefit you will need a shoe/pedal combination that clips together. Keep your upper body and arms relaxed with your hands on the brake hoods. Concentrate on breathing smoothly and deeply, trying to get in rhythm with your pedal stroke. Establishing a rhythm is probably the most important part of climbing.

When you can no longer apply enough power to maintain your cadence, it is time to stand. You may also want to stand occasionally on long climbs even when you don't have to, if only to stretch your legs. When you move to a standing style, do so smoothly, keeping pressure on the pedals. Many people stop pedaling to stand up and lose a lot of valuable momentum. Another common mistake is to use your weight improperly, leaving it over the pedal that is trying to come up. You should shift your weight from side to side to aid the pedal going down. With your hands on the brake hoods, you should use your arm and shoulder opposite the leg you are pushing with to pull on the bar and provide more power. The bike should rock about 6 to 8 inches side to side at the handlebars while keeping the wheels straight and your hips and shoulders square. When standing you may find you can shift up one gear and still maintain the same cadence as you had when sitting.

Weight is another factor to consider when climbing. Don't get paranoid about your bike's weight, but try and remove as much excess weight as you can. And don't believe the cliché that only flyweights can be good climbers. What is important is your power/weight ratio, not your absolute weight.

Some concentration and a little attention to basic technique can make the most discouraging hill just a great challenge to be met and overcome.

Please be conscious of a few things while climbing. Faster riders will want to pass slower riders safely. Please do not go more than 3 wide across the road. Once you have passed a slower rider, move to the right in front of them as quickly as possible so that someone faster than you can proceed to pass.

Another factor to keep in mind when moving from a sitting to standing position, is that your bike may slow down slightly. If someone is immediately behind you they may not appreciate your bike slowing down. Have a look behind you if you are about to stand to make sure you have enough room to safely do so.

H. Going the Distance

Some new members are a little intimidated by the ride distances they see on our schedule. Fortunately, endurance is the component of fitness that is the easiest to improve and which shows the greatest gains. The CCB group riding style, for most of its groups, encourages the rider to have good endurance at a steady pace. CCB schedules weekly rides with increasing distances that improve stamina if you simply come out regularly.

Trying to improve your endurance with one increasingly long ride per week is possible, but is an inefficient and difficult proposition. You will improve much more quickly if you can add at least a second ride midweek (Tuesday or Thursday night for instance). Many club members ride 3 to 4 times per week, which is probably the optimal frequency for increasing endurance. This does not mean you have to ride for many hours several times a week. Short rides during the week combined with a longer ride on the weekend will make it easy to keep up with the club rides.

More is not always better. Riding hard every day is not recommended. Try to alternate rest or easy days with the hard ones. Rest is as important as work for training.

Even if you are not aiming to achieve great speed, you will probably be better off making one of your shorter rides higher in intensity. This will increase your speed even on your long rides, and prepare you if there is the need to speed up for a short period of time during your event. If you always ride at the same speed, you tend to plateau and are vulnerable to being tired out by even a short sprint. (e.g. to catch the group that left just a little too quickly for you).

Just as at the start of every year some new members are intimidated by the prospect of long rides with the club mid-season, at the end of every season those new members who came out regularly are thrilled that they managed to easily do rides they thought impossible only a few months earlier!

6: GROUP RIDING SKILLS

The main activity of the CCB is group riding. Group riding has many benefits besides the obvious ones of charming company and witty conversation. The goal of group riding is to move the group along in a paceline with everyone wasting as little energy as possible. There are important performance advantages to be gained. Done properly, drafting in a pack can save a significant amount of effort (over 30%) compared to riding alone. In a group, the lead rider pushes against the air, letting others ride in his or her draft more easily until their turn comes. To gain this advantage, you must ride closely to the person in front of you, ideally somewhere between 6 inches (or less!) and 2 feet.

This section will cover how you can ride as a group both closely and safely, and how to work together so that everyone in the group has an easy and enjoyable time.

One important note: not everyone is comfortable with riding closely to the person in front or having someone close behind. We use this technique because it makes riding more efficient and enjoyable. If riding closely stresses the rider out, it is not worth it. If someone is not comfortable riding in a tight group they should ride with others who feel the same way and form their own group where everyone is at ease. As long as you ride safely and with consideration for other users of the road you are welcome in the CCB.

A. What to do at the Front of the Group

Most of our riding is done single file. The cyclist at the front of the line leads the pack. This is the best formation to use on narrow and busy roads. The rider at the front has to watch the road and point out obstacles moving smoothly around them.

When there are no obstacles, the leader must ride as straight a line as possible, keeping the tempo smooth and constant, so that others can follow. There is no point pulling at the front if there is no one on your wheel or if they have to waste effort sprinting to keep up. The leader must not slam the brakes, but should use them gently. The line needs to keep as far to the right of the road as possible. At least one foot of road should be left on the inside of the line so as not to crowd the group into the shoulder. Don't stand up when you are at the front as this will throw your bike backwards into the rider behind you. And never stop pedalling at the front even when going down a hill as the air drag will slow you down faster than those behind, and they may run into you.

How long you should stay at the front depends on the speed of the group. Don't stay so long that your speed drops and you begin to slow the group. At a leisurely pace, relays may last for several minutes while in a fast breakaway they may only last a few seconds.

B. Rotating

When it is time to rotate and you are riding single file, check for traffic, announce or motion to those behind that you are rotating (so they do not think you are swerving around an obstacle and decide to follow you), and then move to the left, (toward the traffic lane). Slow your pace slightly to let the riders pass you. Be careful not to slow your pace to the point that you will have to sprint to catch up at the back, wasting effort. When the other cyclists have passed you, move to the right behind the last rider. Take advantage of this time at the back to stretch, stand, eat and drink, until the next rider gets in behind you. This is the safest place to do this as a dropped bottle or wobble will not affect the group.

When your turn comes to take the lead again, maintain the tempo. Resist the urge to accelerate suddenly as this would only create a gap and force those behind you to waste effort. If you want to up the tempo do so gradually. If you are tired, try to maintain the tempo but take a shorter pull. This will train your body to work at the same level as the others and, after a few rides, you should be noticeably stronger than if you took a normal length relay but dropped the speed down.

Be realistic when you take the lead. Set a pace others can follow. And realize that the ride is considerably longer than one turn at the front. Don't do your Pro Racer imitation for 45 seconds, forcing the others to work hard only to drop off the back later and make the group wait for you. A few misjudgments through inexperience are easily forgivable, but if your regular pattern is to sprint and die, don't wonder why no one hangs around with you in the parking lot after the ride. Conversely, if you've been saving your strength a bit too much by letting others do most of the pulling, don't show off by sprinting near the end of the ride, or on the last hill. That little trick is generally not appreciated by those who have been doing the work and there is probably nothing you can do to be more unpopular.

C. Tips for managing the pace

A couple more tips for when you are up front: first, slow the pace a bit over rough roads. The people behind cannot see the road as well and may not be able to keep up a high speed as they bounce around blindly. Second, after a corner, an intersection or railroad tracks, or anything that slows the group down, remember that the back of the group tends to slow down more than the front (referred to as the "accordion effect") so take it easy for a few seconds so that everyone can close formation, or re-group, before gradually resuming full speed. Being at the front gives you some advantages and it is very unsportsmanlike to take advantage of road hazards, turns, etc. to get away from those behind, forcing them to work harder to catch up.

It cannot be emphasized enough how the safety of the group depends upon the smoothness and alertness of those at the front. Those at the front should look well ahead down the road, alert people of upcoming problems, and plan the safest route. Remember that those behind you can only see a few feet of road ahead. Also consider that the group will tend to snake from side to side and that the back of the pack may be riding a line several feet over from the one you are taking. That accounts for all the

swearing behind you 5 seconds after you passed a full 6 inches beside that huge pothole. Also, don't be surprised if someone in the middle of the pack slams on the brakes and causes a pile up when that police car or Doberman that you have been watching suddenly pops into the range of vision of the riders behind you.

D. Following the Leader of the Paceline

Should you always follow the leader of the paceline?

Yes. When the rider ahead of you decides to stop at a light, intersection, to yield the right of way to someone else, etc., those behind must absolutely stop. There is no room for those behind to make an independent decision. There are very good reasons for this: first, there is a danger of bikes colliding with each other since those ahead are not expecting to be passed; secondly, and much more seriously, traffic will see the leaders yielding and proceed, and the riders who have decided to overtake the leaders will make themselves vulnerable to a danger they might not have seen.

No. Don't follow riders in the group blindly. Every rider is responsible for his or her own safety at all times. For example, when the rider in front of you chooses to cross an intersection or some other obstacle, you must look out for yourself. Check to ensure that you are indeed clear to proceed safely, even if someone else has yelled "clear". If you decide that you cannot proceed safely, make sure to signal your intentions to stop to those behind.

To summarize: You should never pass a rider in front of you who has judged it unsafe to proceed. Even when the person in front of you proceeds, you must still check and decide if it is safe for you to continue. What might have been a safe margin for clearing an oncoming car at the front of the group may no longer be enough time when the middle and back of the group reaches an intersection.

E. What to do when in the Group

When you are following another rider, you should leave a gap of approximately one bike length. As your skills and confidence grow you should begin to close the gap and ride possibly within 6 inches of the cyclist in front of you. Always try to keep an even gap - don't yo-yo back and forth. Stay relaxed. Spinning a moderate gear quickly makes it easier to maintain an even gap than does pushing a large gear. And lightly feathering your back brake will help you maintain control.

It is important to follow the line of the rider ahead. Beginners to group riding, along with some seasoned club members as well, have a tendency to "out-rig" or pull to the side of the line of the rider in front, in order to see the road ahead or because they just are not comfortable riding close to the rider in front of them. This presents several problems. The rider behind you is deprived of your draft if they wish to follow the leader's correct line. In addition it makes the group wider, encroaching more into the roadway we must share with cars. For those further back it creates havoc as it may be impossible to figure

out where the proper line is and the group may spread out even more. Out-rigging rather than trusting the rider ahead and following their wheel is one of the worst habits in group riding.

F. Crossing intersections

i. Red Lights

We must stop if a traffic light is red for us and wait until the light turns green before proceeding through the intersection. Off the island of Montreal, where right hand turns are permitted on red lights, it is still a good idea to slow down first to ensure it is safe to turn right on a red light. We should never risk the safety of the group behind us by crossing an intersection when the traffic light does not permit us to do so. It is also against the law. If part of the group makes it across the intersection they should pull over, somewhere safe and off the road, and wait for the rest of the group to rejoin them.

ii: Stop Signs

The highway code in Quebec states that bikes must stop at stop signs. It is a well-known fact that cyclists often disrespect this law. Some cyclists make a small effort by making an “American” or “Idaho” stop. At least appearing to slow down and looking both ways before crossing the intersection. If there is a car already at the intersection, and they have the right of way, we must stop to let the car go. However, many car drivers graciously wave us through the intersection but do not proceed until you are sure they have “graciously” waving and not using their hands for sending a completely different message.

Please keep in mind that we are out riding our bikes for fun. For the few seconds it takes to let a car go, it is much safer to have a car in front of you than it is to have a car trying to pass you on the road because you would not let them through the intersection.

When it comes to collisions between bikes and cars, cars win hands down.

G. Cardinal rules of group riding

- Never let your front wheel overlap the rear wheel of the rider ahead. If they turn suddenly you will be taken down.
- Never stop pedaling. You are more in control of your bike when pedaling than when coasting. You may need this control to suddenly avoid something.
- Don't just stare at the wheel ahead of you. Focus higher up on the seat or on the riders back, or look around him to see if you can see the road ahead.
- If you are tired let the group know. The best place to be is actually in the middle of the pack. Dropping to the back of the group and staying there sometimes requires more effort if the group is yo-yoing.
- Keep an eye on your fellow riders. You may notice that one of your group of fellow cyclists is getting tired. The first signs of exhaustion may be subtle as in

someone pedals and coasts or you may see changes in personality. A person who is normally pleasant may become a little cranky, or someone who is very outgoing may become withdrawn. Talk to the person and ask if they have been eating. At this stage a little food and water is probably all that is necessary to put things right. If exhaustion increases, a rider may be unable to keep a straight line, or start "yo-yoing". Since an exhausted person often loses their sense of judgment, it is up to you to look out for them. Tell the rider to take it easy, don't take pulls or, if they do, make them short. They should also be placed somewhere in the pack where they can be protected from the wind or you may need to ask the group to slow down a little (or a lot) to avoid a mishap. It may even be necessary to break up the group to allow the faster riders to get back quickly and safely while a smaller group sacrifices their ride to make sure the tired rider gets back safely to the parking lot. This brings up an important point. Cycling is not like running or cross-country skiing: you cannot push yourself to near exhaustion without endangering the safety of those around you. It is simply not acceptable to do so when cycling in a group. An exhausted rider is a dangerous group rider.

- Never leave a tired rider alone unless you are confident that the rider can get home under his or her own power. If not, a volunteer from the group should accompany them back to the parking lot.

H. Obstacles

Each rider should point at or call out obstacles in the road, like major holes or cracks, as soon as they come into view, or as soon as the riders in front of you indicate it. This allows those behind you to be prepared. When you are in the front it is okay to make a small course correction to avoid a hole (preferably while still pointing it out to those behind you) but is not advisable to swerve or slow suddenly. Accidents are more often caused by sudden moves than by hitting an obstacle. It is a hard reflex to counter, but unless it's a real wheel eater, you're often better off riding through it rather than reacting suddenly and causing a pile-up. To do so, grip the bars firmly, stand on the pedals with the crank arms parallel to the ground, keeping your center of gravity low and your elbows and knees relaxed to absorb the shock. You will be amazed at how easily you move over most obstacles. You should call out the hole to those behind you as you will have a hard time pointing it out. If you don't feel comfortable taking a hand off your bike to point out an obstacle, call it out, making sure you're loud enough to be heard.

Train Tracks require special attention. Groups must be single file when crossing railway tracks to avoid taking over too much of the road. All riders must remain within their single lane. You should never cross the yellow line in the center of the road.

I. Communicating in the group

When there are pedestrians, slower cyclists, or cars parked on the side of the road, the leader should call out the situation well in advance and each rider should indicate to the one behind him to move over by putting his or her right hand behind his back and

motioning him over.

Once we are out of concentrated traffic, we tend to forget about cars. We should remain alert and if we are on a very narrow road, when a car approaches from ahead, the leader should call out "car up" to prevent anyone from suddenly moving into its path. When a car approaches from behind, the riders at the back should yell "car back" and the group should respond by squeezing over to the right as far as possible, even going single file if necessary in order to let the car pass.

When slowing down, warn those behind by putting your hand back with your palm flat. When stopping, you should also do this and call out your intention. This will prevent you from being run down from behind. When overtaking other cyclists, club riders or not, be aware that they might not know you are there. Alert them to your presence and please do not scream at them as this may startle them into your path. As we do as car drivers, always overtake on the left side. Never pass someone on their right.

It is critical to always communicate throughout the ride, but bear in mind that constant yelling dilutes the effect and may result in your group mates paying less attention to your warnings.

The following are some of the CCBer's most common terms used when giving warnings during a group ride. Remember that you must communicate your intentions at all times while being considerate towards your fellow riders and you must ensure that you can be understood (i.e. that you communicate loudly and clearly enough). If you have time and are able to point at an obstacle or a turn to avoid yelling, by all means do so and others will appreciate your keeping the peace. However, efficient and safe communication comes first. Also, while everyone is required to communicate in the group, the responsibility for the rider's safety rests with that rider - pay attention to what's going on around you and be prepared no matter what. Here are some of the more common terms:

The club has members who speak many different languages. We try to use the same terminology. Whatever you decide to use, please keep it simple so that you will be understood.

"Heads up": Look up and around you. Someone has likely seen an obstacle ahead that is not covered by another term. Do not use this term to describe something far down on the road. The signal box which is at helmet height on the bike path on rue des Anciens Combattants in Ste Anne de Bellevue is a good example of when we would use this.

"Hole": There is a hole in the road and in the pack's path; do your best to avoid it. Take notice of the riders around you and, if you cannot safely avoid the hole, ride through it. It helps if they tell you what side it is on. In Quebec we only say hole when it is big enough to be dangerous to the rider.

"Gravel": There is gravel in the path of the group. Do not call out gravel that is off the

road or on a side street.

"Right: turn". Upcoming right turn

"Left turn": Upcoming left turn

"Car up": On a narrow road, there is a vehicle in the oncoming lane that may present a problem to the group, such as when there is already a car passing from behind the group. Do not call out all oncoming vehicles.

"Car back: There is a vehicle behind the group that can be expected to pass.

"Car right": There is a stopped or parked car on the right side of the road that required the group to move over.

"Rider on the right": There is a cyclist on the right hand side of the road that the group will be passing.

"Jogger on the right": There is a jogger on the right hand side of the road that the group will be passing. Note that joggers usually travel against the flow of traffic.

"Stop" or "Stop sign": There is a stop sign on the pack's route that requires the group to, stop or at least slow down. Remember that it is each individual rider's responsibility to ensure his or her own safety at stop signs.

"Slowing": The rider who shouts this intends to slow down, usually in preparation for stopping, turning or avoiding an obstacle.

"Stopping": The rider intends to stop.

"Pedal!": The rider calling this is likely having trouble keeping an adequate distance from the rider in front who is coasting or slowing down. If you hear this make sure you keep you cadence up.

"Speed Bump": The group need to prepare themselves to go over a speed bump in the road. Not all speed bumps are created equally and some definitely require you to keep both hands on your handlebars. Call out the speed bumps well before you go over them.

J. Corners in a Group

When approaching a corner, the lead rider should call out the direction and severity of the turn ahead of time then pick a safe, smooth line through the corner and stick to it. Don't change your line in the middle of a turn or pick a line which risks running the rest of your group off the road. As always, the lead rider should behave as if everyone behind is blind to what is coming up and take responsibility for getting them through

safely. When you are not in the lead, you should follow the cornering line of the paceline ahead as closely as possible. It is very dangerous for people to pick different lines through corners. It is quite unpredictable and takes up too much of the road. And no using your brakes! It is much harder to control a bike in a turn while braking. Slow down before the turn.

When coming out of a turn, or after any obstacle that reduces speed for that matter, anticipate a slight acceleration on the part of the group. By being ready for it, you can avoid losing the draft and falling behind.

K. Hills in a Group

What about riding on hills? When approaching a hill, you should either pass the relay just before the base of the hill or at the top, never in the middle. The leader should concentrate on maintaining a smooth steady effort up the hill, not necessarily a steady speed, while keeping his line and not wandering all over the road.

You can expect stronger riders to pass on your left. Riders should not pass on the right.

If you are a weaker rider, riders in the back will want to pass, so try to get over to the right as soon as a gap is available to you.

Please do not cross over the center line when passing cyclists on a hill. Ask the rider in front to squeeze right.

On the downhill you should spread out and leave more room between you and the bike in front. This does not mean spreading out across the road it just means the paceline gets a bit longer. The leader should get as aerodynamic as possible and keep pedalling. Riders behind will have to ride the brakes very lightly or sit up a bit in the airstream to avoid overtaking the rider in front. Keep it smooth and predictable, and tighten up the group again at the bottom. For more on hills, refer to the Chapter on Individual Riding Skills.

Groups should reform either at the top of the hill or at the bottom of the descent if it is too cold to wait at the top.

L. Navigating in the Group

Our Sunday rides often require reading and following a map in unfamiliar territory. One cause of crashes is indecision or confusion regarding when and where to turn. If you know there is a turn coming up, try to be at the front to call it out ahead of time. If you cannot be on the front and you have time, make sure everyone knows about the upcoming turn by shouting a warning up the paceline.

If there is confusion and disagreement then the leader should slow or stop the group to check the map before the turn or intersection. The most dangerous scenario is one of

indecision and conflicting instructions which results in some riders turning and others going straight. This can lead to a nasty crash, usually at an intersection where car traffic is present to finish off what your club mates have started.

Whenever possible, riders at the front should point in the direction they intend to turn well beforehand. Even a turn we take every single ride may catch a rider, whose attention is elsewhere, by surprise. It is good if others pass this signal down the line.

M. Group Riding Ethics

Now for some words on riding ethics. Keep the groups a reasonable size. The CCB chooses to limit the number of riders per group to 12. Some groups even prefer 6 to 8 riders because they find that this size is ideal for our battered and crowded roads.

Keep an eye out for your fellow rider. If someone is suddenly missing, the group should wait or go back. If a rider has a flat or a mechanical problem and cannot continue with the group, the group should be sure that he or she is in a position to resolve the problem before leaving the rider behind.

Conversely, if you decide to leave or drop out of a group, let the others know before dropping off so they don't go looking for you. If you are having a problem, and you can manage on your own, let the group know so that the rest can continue with their ride.

Sometimes the most efficient way of moving along may not be the most obvious one. In fact, sometimes the best way to keep a high average speed is to stop completely. Many of the groups are composed of people that are well enough matched to work in a paceline on the flats but are of different levels when it comes to hill climbing or pulling solo into the wind. The typical scenario is the group will split up on a climb and even if efforts are made to regroup, it just never comes back together. The reason is usually the following: the stronger climbers get to the top of the hill first and then slow up a little to "wait" for the stragglers. The poorer climbers get to the top and then have to chase to close the ever-increasing gap. Weaker cyclists may be slower to recuperate from the climb, perhaps less strong pulling into the wind, and may have trouble closing the gap. The leaders continue at their "slowed" pace, but the others continue to drop further behind. And this leads to the worst case scenario: the lead group is needling along, no longer working at their proper rhythm while the stragglers are killing themselves behind. Even if things do eventually join up, it is just a matter of time before the stronger people have to slow down to avoid dropping the now exhausted ex-chasers. A much better strategy is for the leaders to stop just past the top of the hill and wait. Have a drink, stretch your back, etc. Once the others have joined give them a minute for a drink and some recovery time. Then everyone can immediately resume the original pace. If you don't want to stop, you can always go back and do part of the hill again while you wait.

Finally, don't be shy to tell group members when they are out of line or doing something dangerous. By not telling a poor rider what he or she is doing wrong, you are endangering everyone in the group, compromising everyone's enjoyment. You are also

not helping the bad rider to improve. If someone simply cannot ride safely in your group, you should demand that they drop out or at least stay at the back, out of harm's way. Group riding can be efficient and challenging, but mostly, it can be fun. And after all, that is what CCB is all about. So keep these tips in mind and enjoy your ride!

N. Double Pacelines

The Double Paceline is a formation used when the law permits us typically off the Island of Montreal when riding on quiet country roads. Two lines ride side by side about one foot apart. The advantage of this formation is that it allows conversation and makes the group more compact. The challenge is getting two new riders to the front to give the leaders a break without getting in the way of traffic. One form of rotation we no longer recommend is when the two leaders move over at the same time: the leader of the left line moves to the left, and leader of the right line moves over to the right. We ended up with a group of riders 4 abreast, making it difficult for cars to pass. Not only is this extremely hazardous, it is also illegal. This rotation method has been replaced with a couple of alternatives.

i. Double Click Rotation

This one works better for a more relaxed tempo ride. We begin riding in a conventional double paceline, the two leaders take a regular pull at the front, but when it's time to rotate, the lead person on the outside pulls ahead and over to the inside. The rider who was following the lead rider in the left lane moves up to the front spot but continues to move up so that they can then move over to replace the leader.

The timing of the change is determined by the two lead riders who may simply begin the rotation by mutual agreement or who may yell "rotating" as a warning to those behind.

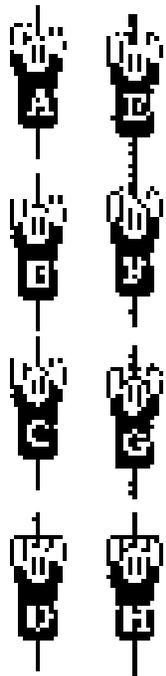
Please see the diagram below as you read along.

1. Riders A and E are the lead riders in the group and decide to rotate.
2. Rider A pulls ahead and over in front of Rider E.
3. Rider B, originally behind A, moves up and over in front of Rider A.
4. Rider C, originally behind Rider B, moves up and gets beside Rider B.

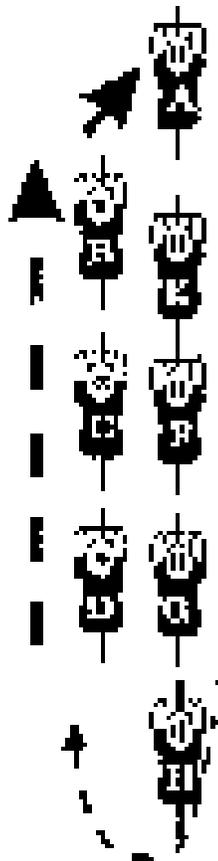
Voila...! Riders C and B are now the new lead riders.

Again, it is desirable for the person on the inside being overtaken at the front to yell "clear" when it is safe for the outside rider to move over to the inside line. This will help them avoid overshooting and creating a gap, or cutting in too soon and taking out the inside rider. The advantage of this formation is the following: We get two fresh leaders every rotation (unlike the single step shuffle where only one of the two changes at a time), we still get to talk for a while to the person beside (unlike the continuous shuffle where you are in continuous motion), and we never end up more than two abreast (unlike the double outside rotation where we end up four abreast).

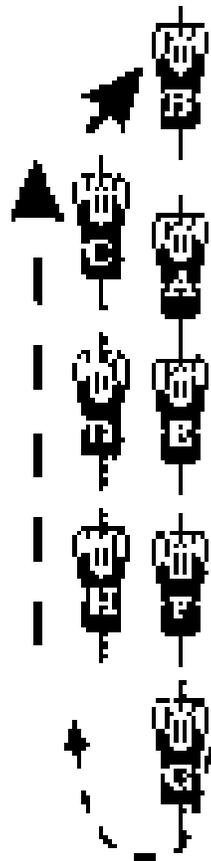
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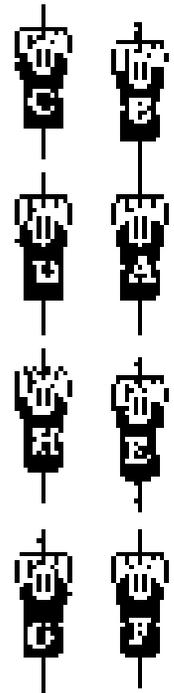
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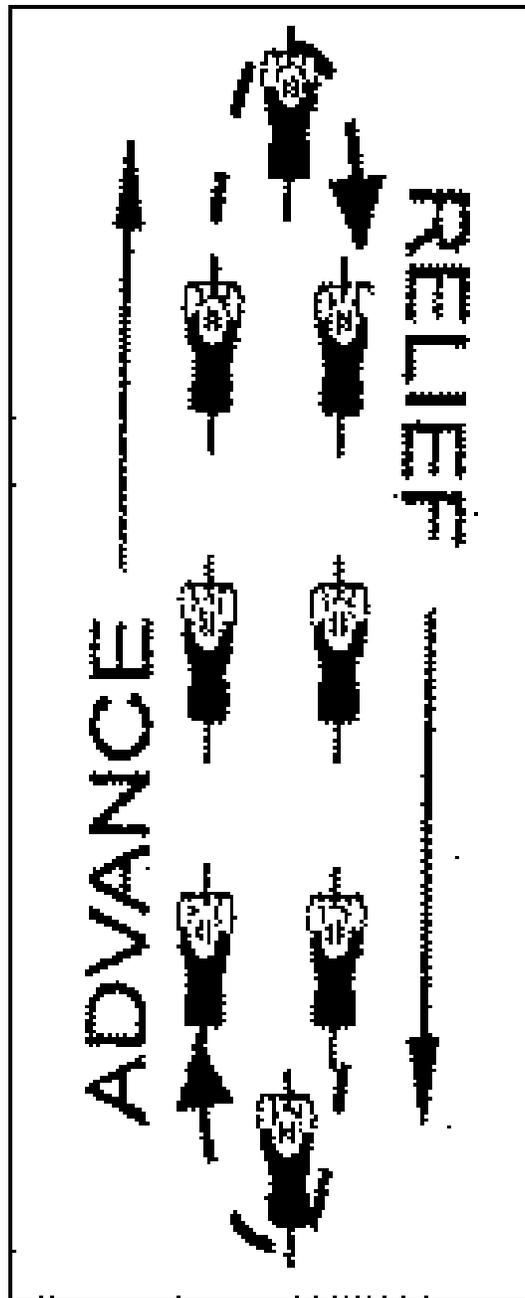


ii. Continuous Rotation

One form of the Double Paceline is the Shuffle (see below) or Continuous Rotation where riders pull off the front as soon as the previous leader has dropped back past them. Ideally the second rider should yell "clear" as soon as the leader is clear to pull over. This all leads to having two lines of cyclists, one moving towards the front, the advance line, and another going slightly slower and moving toward the back, the relief line. The key to getting this working properly is not staying at the head of the advance line for too long before moving over to the relief line. Later on you should be sure to move on to the back of the advance line without leaving a large gap in front of you. Always make sure there is no one else coming up behind before moving over. Since the pull lasts only a few seconds, the effort can be more intense. The speeds you reach in such a group can be exhilarating but it takes good bike handlers to pull it off safely. Which of the two columns moves up and, which drops back will vary depending on the direction of the wind. You want the line moving up to be sheltered from the wind, and the line dropping back to be bearing the brunt of it.

One thing to watch out for is an unintentional speeding up of the group as the new leaders move to the front. It is important for the new leaders to re-establish the original tempo once they settle in at the front. The only speeding up should happen at the back when a rider moves from the relief to the advance line. This slightly higher speed acquired at the back of the advance line, about 1 or 2kph faster than the relief line, is all that is needed to take the rider to the front and around where they then slow down to match the pace of the relief line.

Tip: Here's one way to help make rotating pacelines a lot safer. No one seems to have much trouble following another rider closely in the advance line. Things get a little more dicey in the relief line where people are easing up and speeds can vary. This is when incidents may occur. Therefore, a good habit to get into in any paceline riding is to leave approximately a half or an entire bike length gap when following in the relief line. This will make it easier to adjust safely to speed changes that often occur there. The slight loss of drafting efficiency is less critical in the relief line as you are easing off anyway and there are usually several people ahead in the line. There is another advantage to this technique. If the group must suddenly go single file it is easier to make room for the people from the advance line.



O. Co-existing with traffic

As members of the CCB, we should make every effort possible to remain on good terms with other road users. It is easy when you are having a good time, to forget that our packs can cause a significant inconvenience to others.

The most basic thing we can do is to make sure to allow bigger and faster vehicles to pass us by squeezing over to the right side of the road. Too often groups block the road for long periods of time for no good reason, causing traffic to back up and irritation to grow, sometimes resulting in disagreeable exchanges. Further, as cyclists, we must remember that we are subject to the same laws and regulations as other vehicles. For example, when one of our groups encounters a four way stop sign, and a car arrives at another corner at the same time, we should respect the motorist's right to proceed on his turn, not force him to wait until the entire club has passed through the sign.

Finally, there is little that you can do that is more annoying or dangerous than standing around the side of the road. An essential rule to remember is "OFF YOUR BIKE = OFF THE ROAD". When you stop, especially as a group, make sure that you move your entire bike off the road and out of the way.

Not all motorists are disagreeable, and it is to our advantage to acknowledge those who are considerate of us with a wave and a smile. Our collective safety, not to mention the reputation of the club, depends on the courtesy of motorists so we should make an effort to preserve their good opinion.

7: THE LAST WORD

There are many other factors that come into play to make riding with the CCB an enjoyable experience. Choosing the right bike, with the right handlebars or seat, or finding the right position on the bike for the kind of riding we do are all important. You can find a lot of information on cycling related web sites ask fellow club riders for their opinions or ask your favorite cycling shop.

The CCB is all about group riding over mid to long distances in a pleasant environment.

The hardest thing for club members is to find a group of riders they are comfortable riding with. Once that is done the season becomes an enjoyable one.

For any questions regarding the club, please send an email to Info@clubcycliste.com.