



Elkhart
INDIAN MOTORCYCLE

IMRG Chapter #1986 Group Ride Policy

Ride planning and scheduling

The Chapter rides are planned and chaired by the Group Members and supported by the Activities Officer along with the Road Captains. The rides are normally chosen and scheduled at least 1 month in advance.

All members are encouraged to make suggestions for the rides to any committee member or Road Captain.

If you have a destination in mind for the group and need help planning a ride for the first time or mapping a route, it will be the pleasure of our Road Captains to assist you.

A Road Captain can also “Lead the Ride” with you in the Shotgun position if you are not comfortable leading.

Road Captains

Road Captains are responsible for assisting individual Chapter rides.

Prior to all rides, they “Pre-Ride” the route, check it for unsafe conditions, and ensure the destination is suitable.

The Chairperson (member) is responsible to make any arrangements necessary for a large group at the destination.

Before the ride departs the starting point, the Road Captains prepare each group by conducting a pre-ride briefing during which they go over

a ride checklist, explain the planned route and provide any other information pertinent to the ride.

Each ride has at least two Road Captains: A Lead Captain and a Sweep Road Captain. Other Road Captains may be present and will ride within the group.

All ride participants are expected to follow directions, instructions and decisions of the Road Captains.

When a large group of bikes is divided into smaller groups, each group will have a lead and a sweep Road Captain.

For information on becoming a Road Captain, please contact the Safety Officer or any Chapter committee member.

Ride Participation

The Chapter expects all riders to ride safely and ride within their individual experience and comfort level at all times.

Each member, guest rider or passenger must sign a ride waiver prior to the ride.

New riders should learn the fundamental skills of motorcycle riding and gain some experience before joining a group ride.

Those riders who have never participated in a group ride are welcomed and encouraged to ride at the rear, just ahead of the "Rear Sweep Road Captain" to gain group ride experience in the observance of safety.

Group riding

There are four components to a safe and enjoyable group ride:

- Personal preparation
- Group preparation
- The ride
- Emergencies

Personal Preparation

You are individually responsible for making sure you and your bike are ready and safe for every ride.

Check yourself

Make sure you are alert, feeling well, and appropriately dressed. You should be physically and mentally prepared to make the ride. AVOID alcohol, and stress prior to riding. If you are tired, not feeling well, or just ‘not up to par’, it may be wise to stay home and ride another day. It is advisable to wear reflective clothing at night and bring a rain suit whenever rain is a possibility.

Any Chapter member operating a motorcycle on a Chapter ride must be properly licensed and insured to operate a motorcycle.

Check your motorcycle and equipment

Any motorcycle used in a Chapter ride event or other activity must be properly registered, inspected and insured. Check your motorcycle operations prior to riding. A helpful guide is to use the T-CLOCS method:

T – Tires and wheels

C – Cables and controls

L – Lights and turn signals

O – Oil and fuel

C – Chassis

S – Side (kick) stand and secure loose nuts and bolts.

Fill your gas tank and empty your bladder

All members should begin the ride with a full tank of gas. All rides are planned with ample gas stops taking into consideration the smallest tank in the group. The start of a ride will not be delayed waiting for someone to “get a quick fill-up”, or relieve themselves. Be considerate of the others in the group and take care of your personal business well before the departure time.

Make sure you arrive for the ride before the designated meeting time.

Not only is it fun to socialize prior to the ride, the Road Captains will make announcements and give the pre-ride briefing during this time. If you arrive at the last minute, you may miss important information about the ride.

Group Preparation

Rides will leave promptly at the scheduled departure time in order to arrive at the destination on time. During this time you are encouraged to sign in for the ride, sign the release forms (if necessary) and listen to the pre-ride briefing.

Guests and release forms

Every guest must sign an ‘Event Release Form’ for the ride.

The pre-ride briefing

The Road Captain will give a pre-ride briefing covering the route, the Chapter riding rules and any other information concerning the ride. Listen closely and feel free to ask questions.

The ride

Riding with a group can be fun and exciting, but only when everyone in the group observes the same rules. When riding with the Chapter, everyone is expected to observe the following rules.

The ride “Chairperson” or “Sponsoring Member” and Lead Road Captain will leave first from the starting point and is followed by all other bikes, which fall into the staggered formation as soon as possible. The Sweep Road Captain will follow the group at the rear.

This stagger formation leaves the area beside your motorcycle open for you to swerve into if needed to avoid a hazard. Everyone should be watching out for the safety of other riders, but it is your responsibility to stay out of the safety zone beside the rider staggered in front of you. As we all know, the rear tire always wins when a rear tire and a front tire contact.

If you have to slow quickly, try to maintain your position in the lane, if it is safe to do so, because the staggered rider behind you may not slow as quickly and may need to borrow the lane beside you for a moment. Do not make a habit of using the safety zone beside the staggered rider in front of you. Some riders may run over a hazard instead of swerving because they didn’t want to risk clipping the rider behind them – they should feel confident that the safety zone would be clear when they need it.

Fall in line toward the back half of the group if you want to have a greater space between yourself and the bike in front, are unsure of group riding etiquette, or are new to the group. The front 1/3 of the group usually tends to ride more tightly than the back of the group. Ride within your ability and confidence.

When riding in adverse or limited visibility conditions (such as night, rain, fog, etc.) reduce speed and increase the spacing to 3 or 4 seconds.

If the staggered pattern is disrupted, or when a bike drops out of the ride and creates a gap, the following bikes are asked to stay in your lane and maintain your position. You can then move forward and fill the gap at the next stop.

When approaching a tight curve, allow additional space to the bikes in front of you so that all riders can use the full width of the lane to corner safely. On 'twisty' roads, we will usually revert to single file formation.

Do not pass any rider in front of you whichever part of the lane they are in, and do not ride directly beside another rider, in their 'safety zone'.

Overtaking other riders will not normally be necessary and you should maintain the same position within the group for the entire leg of the ride. If overtaking is necessary, normal overtaking rules apply. Use indicators and never overtake within the same lane.

Your eyes should be watching a few bikes up the road from you (4 seconds ahead) not fixed on the bike in front of you.

Safety Spacing Guidelines

One second rule: The bike in the lane to your left or right should not be less than one second ahead of you.

Two-second rule: Maintain at least two seconds between you and the rider in front of you.

Four-second rule: Look ahead four seconds at your immediate path of travel to give yourself more time to react to a hazard.

Twelve-second rule: Look ahead at your anticipated path of travel. Twelve seconds is about one city block.

Ride within your ability and comfort level

Riding within your ability and comfort level is very important for the safety of the group. If your preference is to ride at a slower pace or at larger bike-to-bike spacing than the majority of the group, please ride close to the back of the group.

If at any time you feel that the ride has exceeded your riding ability or comfort level, or you have safety concerns, you should consider pulling off to the side of the road at a safe place. The Sweep Road Captain will stop with you. You can then decide whether to continue the ride or not.

Ride consistently

Maintain a consistent and safe gap (a minimum of 2 seconds) to the bike directly in front of you (the bike in your part of the lane). Frequent changes in the distance between you and the rider in front, for no apparent reason, may frustrate both the rider in front and especially the riders behind you. This causes significant variations in the distance and will be exaggerated for the group riders that follow you. This then tends to break up the group continuity. Try and keep the group tight without crowding each other. Stay close enough while in the city and through intersections and traffic lights so the group doesn't become separated. Remember, some riders may not know where they are going and could end up 'leading' the remainder of the group with no idea how to reach their destination.

Obey all laws (speed limits, stop signs, stop lights, etc). Expect the rider ahead of you to make a FULL stop. Do not block vehicles which have the right-of-way. It is illegal and dangerous.

Never overtake the Lead Road Captain

Ride in staggered formation with approximately a 2 second spacing. The staggered formation gives you and the riders in front and behind you an extra margin for safety.

The bikes form two columns, with the Leader (Chairperson or Lead Road Captain at the preference of the Chairperson) at the head of the left column. The second bike (Shotgun Position taken by Chairperson or Lead Road Captain) will head up the right column and ride approximately one second behind the Lead. The other riders follow the bike directly in front of them by two seconds, which puts them one second behind the diagonal bike in front of them. By using the two-second spacing, the distance of the gap will increase with speed. When riding in adverse or limited visibility conditions (such as night, rain, fog, etc.) reduce speed and increase the spacing to 3 or 4 seconds.

Use hand and foot signals

The Road Captain will use hand and foot signals to indicate a change of course, hazards or other information to the group. Each rider uses the same signal to pass the information back through the group. If you are new to group riding, only pass the signals back if you are comfortable with taking your hands off the controls. See the list of common hand signals used by the Chapter.

Keep the group together without heroics

Often the group will get separated by a stop-light, traffic congestion, etc. It is not necessary or advisable to take heroic or exceptional steps to regroup. In the event the group is separated, the Lead Road Captain will adjust the ride (either by slowing down or stopping at a safe location) until the ride is regrouped. In some circumstance, this may take several miles...BE PATIENT. Do not ride beyond your limits or break any laws while trying to regroup.

Corner marking

If the Group becomes separated and you are the LAST BIKE IN THE FRONT GROUP and the group makes a turn off the road being traveled, STOP AT THE TURN AND WAIT FOR THE OTHERS BEHIND YOU (but only if it is safe to do so). You will become the 'Corner Marker'. As the rear group approaches, attract their attention so they can

follow you and catch up with the group. Do not leave until you are sure the following group has seen the turning point. If you find yourself leading a separated part of the group, watch for a member of the group (the corner marker) stopped at an intersection trying to get your attention. Follow the corner marker until everyone catches up with the group. If you do not see a corner marker or are not sure of the route, keep going straight on the road being traveled. If you are still not confident of the route, pull over in a safe place. Everyone behind you will pull over and the Sweep Road Captain will either choose someone to lead or lead the group until it catches up with the group ahead.

Pull side-by-side at stops, start together with the left column bikes accelerating faster. This helps move the group through the stops quickly and gets as many bikes through the stop light as possible. At the start, the bikes leave with the left bike accelerating faster to re-establish the staggered formation.

Negotiate intersections as an individual

Act as an individual when proceeding through an intersection. It is your responsibility to insure that you safely have the right-of-way. If it is not safe for you to proceed, then wait until it is... no exceptions. Never blindly follow the bike in front of you through an intersection, especially when making a right turn or at 4 way stops.

Never assume the other stopped vehicles will let you ride through with the group. It only takes one impatient driver to ruin your day.

The group will reform after the intersection.

When turning in an intersection, use a single file or tight stagger formation, never turn side by side.

Yield to cars (especially at entrance ramps and lane changes)

When a car needs to enter from an entrance ramp or is signaling to break into the group, "Yield and given them plenty of room". Remember: "Just because you have the right-of-way doesn't mean you are going to get

it"! Generally speaking, a car will not want to ride in the middle of a group of motorcycles and will get out of the group as quickly as possible.

Signal all turns and lane changes with signal lights and hand signals; make visual checks before you move. The Road Captain will signal for turns and lane changes. You, in turn, make the same signal to pass it back through the group and to signal any other vehicles near you.

Before making a turn or lane change and after you have signaled for an appropriate amount of time, look with your head, (not just your mirror) to see if you have clear space. If so, then make the turn or lane change. Never move without looking.

The ride officially ends on arrival at the destination

You can return home at any time and by any route you choose. If you are unsure how to get back home, ask a Road Captain for directions.

Drinking and Riding never mix. This is especially true when participating in a group ride.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency requiring a stop, observe the following procedures so that the emergency may be resolved in the safest manner possible. Remember, we do not want a group of motorcycles on the side of the road in an unsafe manner under any circumstances.

There are 2 types of emergency stops: Mechanical or personal (non-life threatening) and accidents.

Mechanical or personal emergency:

Problem bike and sweep stops – All others continue

If a bike encounters a mechanical or rider problem that requires a stop, it should signal and stop in as safe a place as possible, preferably well off the road. All other bikes are to continue with the Lead Road Captain to avoid having a group of motorcycles on the side of the road. The Road Captains will have radio communication to ensure they are aware of the problem.

Only the Sweep Road Captain stops to help

It is the Sweep Road Captain's responsibility to stop and assist the problem bike. The Lead Road Captain will lead the group to a safe location, or continue on the planned route.

The Sweep Road Captain will have a mobile phone and will also carry first aid kits.

The Road Captains use their mobile phone or radios to communicate when necessary. They also carry small first aid kits.

Accidents:

The Sweep Road Captain is in charge and will work with the other Road Captains to determine who needs to stay to accomplish the following:

- Insure everyone stops in a safe location
- Notify the authorities by calling 911
- Render aid to injured persons. Remember, except in extreme cases where a rider is not breathing and CPR is required, DO NOT move an injured person or remove their helmet. Trained emergency response personnel should do this.

Maintain the accident scene and control traffic until the authorities arrive, including getting the names, telephone numbers and addresses of witnesses, and taking pictures of the accident scene without photos of the injured rider.

Towing

When you need a tow you are responsible to arrange for a tow.

Maps and Arraignments.

Route Maps for any Chapter Rides should be made available by the Chairperson to the Road Captains for the Pre-Ride no later than 2 weeks prior to the scheduled ride.

Map information should include Starting Point, Street / Road or Hwy names, with reference to turning directions (example left turn at Sample Street or Right Turn at CR10) and approximate distance in between those turns.

Also, the name, address and phone number of the destination with any special parking instructions.

If you need assistance with mapping your ride, an experienced Road Captain will be assigned to help you “No Sweat”.

When the Pre- Ridden route is approved by the Road Captains, enough copies of the Route Map should be available for participants on the day of the ride.

GUIDE TO: **MOTORCYCLE HAND SIGNALS**



Left turn
Arm and hand extending left, palm facing down



Right turn
Arm out, bent at 90° angle, fist clenched.



Stop
Arm extended straight down, palm facing back.



Speed Up
Arm extended straight out, palm facing up, swing upward.



Slow Down
Arm extended straight out, palm facing down, swing down to your side.



Single File
Arm and index finger extended straight up.



You Lead/Come
Arm extended upward 45°, palm forward pointing with index finger, swing in arc from back to front.



Hazard in Roadway
On the left, point with left hand; on the right, point with right foot.



Pull Off
Arm positioned as for right turn, forearm swung toward shoulder.



Cops Ahead
Tap on top of helmet with open palm down.



Fuel
Arm out to side pointing to tank with finger extended.



COP RIGHT FREAKIN' THERE!
Furiously tapping top of helmet.