

Richmond Area Bicycling Association

RIDE LEADER GUIDELINES

1. If you are doing a new route, you may want to physically check it within two weeks of riding it in order to avoid surprises such as unpaved sections, construction, or bridges being out. Prepare a map and/or cue sheet, unless you intend to have the group stay together for the entire ride, and get a sign up sheet and accident report form from your Ride Captain and bring them to the ride. If you don't have the latter, see item 8.
2. Determine if and where, food, water and toilet facilities are available, and plan a store or rest stop as close to the mid-point of the route as possible. During cold weather rides should start later; during hot weather rides should start earlier.
3. Arrive at the starting point at least 20 minutes prior to the advertised time, and proceed to have riders sign the sign-up sheet. If, for some reason, the ride leader is not going to ride, an experienced rider who is a RABA member, and who agrees to do so, should be designated as the ride leader, and that fact announced to the riders on the ride.
4. Prior to starting the ride, introduce any new riders, and have all others introduce themselves. It is extremely important that new riders be made to feel welcome, and get a good first impression of RABA. At this time, the ride leader should mention any problems (such as RR crossings) and points of interest along the route that they are aware of, rest or store stops they intend to stop at, and remind everyone to obey all traffic laws. Should a rider be present who is not wearing a helmet, quietly and privately inform them that RABA strongly encourages the wearing of helmets, but do not attempt to exclude them from the ride.
5. Try to start the ride as close to the announced starting time as possible, leaving the sign up sheet and extra maps under your windshield wiper so that late arrivals will know the route as they attempt to catch up or ride the route in reverse in order to join the group. Note how many riders are on the ride so you can do head counts along the way to determine if everyone is still with you.
6. You should have a spare tube and pump on your bicycle, and might want to carry minimal first aid supplies, such as band-aids, gauze pads, and antiseptic cream with you. Although they do not always work in remote areas, a cell phone may come in handy in calling for help if a rider is injured, or in reporting a road rage incident. In either case, 911 should be dialed, since such calls are logged in by the dispatcher, and their disposition must also be recorded. If you have no cell phone, or it doesn't work, go to the nearest home along the route and ask their permission to call 911. If possible, leave someone with an injured rider. If not, return to the injured rider immediately after calling for help. In order to give good directions to the police or rescue squad, you should be aware of where you are at all times so you can accurately describe your location.
7. Early in the ride, determine who the slowest riders are and keep an eye on them, waiting for them at turns, or designating an experienced rider to do so. If they do not show up after you have waited for them a reasonable period of time, you should go back and see if they are having a problem you can help with. If you have experienced riders who are riding slower than the advertised pace, they may thank you for waiting and tell you that it's OK to go ahead and not wait for them, in which case you should do so, if you are sure they know the route. Any riders that turn back or take short cuts away from the announced route should inform the ride leader that they are doing so. There is no problem with the front end of the ride riding faster than the ride's advertised pace, but the ride leader should not be doing so unless he's got an experienced rider keeping an eye on the rear end of the ride.
8. At the end of the ride, the ride leader should see that all riders are in. If they are not, after a reasonable period of time, the ride leader should drive out the route to see if they are having a problem he can help with, or bring them in, if necessary. Once all riders are in, the mileages on the sign-up sheet can be completed, or adjusted, and the ride leader can print any illegible names in order to assist the statistician in crediting the proper riders. If there has been a serious accident, the accident report should be completed and submitted, along with the sign-up sheet, to the Ride Captain. If you do not have an accident report form, write down the Who, What, Where, and When details and report them to your Ride Captain, or to the RABA Treasurer, as soon as possible.

The Ashland Breakfast Club Ride (ABC Ride)

Since this ride is often the first contact a new or novice rider has with RABA, the ride leader has even more of an ambassadorial function than they do on a regular ride. They should be on hand, with sign-up sheets and maps, ten minutes prior to the advertised start of the ride, remain on hand all through the half hour starting period, and then are free to ride anytime after that, leaving the sign-up sheets and maps under their windshield wiper for any late comers or mileage adjustments.

During this period they should be on the lookout for new or novice riders, give them a map and try to introduce and hook them up with a rider or group that appears to be closest to their speed. If no one is available, it is the ride leader's responsibility to accompany these riders to Ashland (and back, if no one can be found there to accompany them back). It is extremely important that the ride leader go out of their way to make new riders feel welcome and to help them have a good experience. Whoever is accompanying them should make sure they know how to shift, should review the basic rules of riding etiquette, and should not push too fast a pace or encourage them to do an extension, unless they strongly want to. If they are not RABA members, either give them a link to the RABA web site and the on-line membership application or a membership application from one of the Ride Captains or the Membership Director. If none are present, get their mailing or e-mail address so membership information can be sent to them.

At the end of the ride, the ride leader is free to leave without waiting for all riders to be in, and can either turn the sign-up sheets (and completed accident report form, if one was necessary) over to a Ride Captain or can hold them for a week or two, or can mail them either to the Statistician or to one of the Ride Captains.