

# Rules of the Road

## Introduction

More than anything, safety has to be key when out cycling together on club runs. Group cycling can be a safer experience than cycling alone but part of that safety has to come from the interaction between the cyclists involved.

Here are some tips (in point form) on how to keep our club runs safe:

### 1. Stay in a neat group

In general we form a group made up of two lines. These lines need to be neat and harmonious. It's not difficult to keep things well organised and it makes it safer (and easier) for everyone.

**1.01** When sitting behind another cyclist, a rider's front wheel should be within about 10cm left or right (we recommend more than 10cm behind) of the back wheel ahead of the rider.

**1.02** A rider's bicycle must not move to a position where the rider is longitudinally 'behind' but laterally 'between' two other cyclists.

**1.03** A rider must move with the rest of the group following whatever direction (usually clockwise) the 'Run Skipper' directs the group to.

**1.04** When turning a corner, a rider must leave space for the person beside him/her.

**1.05** Riders must remain in formation at all times unless directed by the 'Run Skipper'. This includes stopping at road junctions, going uphill etc.

**1.06** If a rider wishes to 'peel off' and do his/her 'own thing', he/she must inform the 'Run Skipper' he/she is turning well in advance of making the movement.

**1.07** A rider must not cycle in the gutter. He/She must hold a position out from the side, into the road.

**1.08** A rider is obliged to inform his/her fellow riders about holes, obstructions, deep puddles or anything he/she feels would be in their best interests to know.

**1.09** Riders must pass information back to those further back in the group to make sure they are aware of any obstructions etc. covered in the previous point.

**1.10** A rider must avoid braking suddenly or making any sudden movements (this includes accelerations).

**1.11** Riders must signal clearly.

**1.12** At the front of the group, riders must pedal downhill rather than freewheel.

**1.13** If the pace is too high for a rider, he/she should let the 'Run Skipper' know.

**1.14** If a rider is struggling, he/she must stay within the formation of the group and keep moving round unless instructed to by the 'Run Skipper'.

## 2. You are 'traffic'

If a motorist attempts to bully or intimidate a rider, he/she should continue to hold his/her line, act in an obvious logical manner and signal clearly. Riders have a right to use the road – motorists have a right to use the road – motorists don't have the right to stop riders using the road.

The public road is not just for cars and motorised traffic. It's also not just for bikes. Please share it, be thoughtful with other traffic (vehicular and non-vehicular) and do the best to get along.

A rider should familiarise him/herself with the [highway code](#). It's not there to stifle a rider's fun, it's there to aid safety. Pay particular attention to [these sections](#). Adhere to the law.

## 3. Hints, Tips and General Pointers

**3.1** A rider should be self-sufficient, bring his/her own spare tube(s) and the means to fit it/them. Nobody is obliged to give a rider their tube – they may need it themselves.

**3.2** Riders should carry an Allen key or two (possibly as part of a multitool) and any other tools he/she may require to make adjustments to his/her bicycle.

**3.3** Riders should keep their bicycles in a good state of repair - working brakes, tyres unworn and at correct pressure etc.

**3.4** A rider with a bicycle deemed to be 'in a dangerous state of disrepair' by the 'Run Skipper' may be dismissed from the group for the day.

## 4. Old Bleach rules

**4.1** All riders on our club runs must wear a helmet during club runs.

**4.2** Headphones must not be worn during club runs.

**4.3** Riders must not smoke while cycling during club runs.

**4.4** During winter months conditions make it necessary for all riders to have a rear mudguard fitted during club runs.

**4.5** Whatever problem(s) a rider may have with another group member, it must be left behind when on the road. We have to look after one another as best we can.

**4.6** Riders must keep both hands on the bars whenever possible and never take both hands off the bars.

**4.7** It is a rider's personal responsibility to ensure he/she is physically capable of partaking in a club run fitting into the parameters (distance, pace etc.) described on [www.oldbleach.co.uk](http://www.oldbleach.co.uk).

## **5. The 'Run Skipper'**

**5.1** The 'Run Skipper' is a member of the club who will identify him or herself at the start of each club run. Most of the time, but not always, the 'Run Skipper' will be the person in the group with a whistle. He or she is also likely to have been the person who mapped out the route for the club run and will direct the group round said route.

**5.2** The 'Run Skipper' has the right to tell a rider to leave the group for the day if he or she has reason to believe the aforementioned rider is putting other members of the group in danger or acting in a manner not in line with the club's code of practice. If the 'Run Skipper' requests someone leave the group and that rider believes he/she has been unfairly treated, he/she has the right to an investigation of events by a club panel.

**5.3** The 'Run Skipper' cannot ban anyone from future runs. The 'Run Skipper' may make an official complaint to the committee and the committee will make a decision based upon its findings. The rider/riders under accusation have the right to a hearing.

**5.4** The 'Run Skipper' should inform the riders of upcoming turns onto different roads in good time for the group to signal and make that movement without danger. If the 'Run Skipper' is at the back of the group, tells the rider ahead of him/her and they do not relay this information forward, causing an incident, this is not the 'Run Skipper's' fault. Nor is it the 'Run Skipper's' fault if the riders do not hear/ignore the information or accidentally turn the wrong direction. If the 'Run Skipper' is at the front and makes a hand signal to direct the riders, this is acceptable instead of a vocal direction although a vocal direction is always recommended whenever possible.

**5.5** The 'Run Skipper' is not liable for the safety of any riders. All adult riders are responsible only for their own safety but should endeavour to look after one another.

**5.6** If a rider wishes to make changes to pre-arranged plans he/she must inform the 'Run Skipper' (and receive confirmation of this) an appropriate amount of time in advance.

**5.7** If the 'Run Skipper' acts in a manner the other members of the group find inappropriate and/or detrimental to the club, the riders can request an investigation of the 'Run Skipper's' practice. In the event of the committee finding the 'Run Skipper's' activities inappropriate and/or detrimental, the committee can suspend the 'Run Skipper' from 'leading' club runs for a period they deem appropriate. In extreme cases, the committee can suspend, or even dismiss, the 'Run Skipper' from all club activities.

## **Summary**

Most 'accidents' do not happen accidentally – they're a result of negligence or downright foolishness and can be avoided by riding in a disciplined manner with good communication. We're not perfect, we will make mistakes but keep your wits about you and even those 'mistakes' shouldn't manifest themselves as crashes.

When you are out in a group, other people put a share of their safety in your hands. Please look after one another.

None of this is meant to spoil anyone's enjoyment; Quite the opposite. It is here to create a safe environment we can have fun in. Broken collarbones etc. are not fun. Nor are they a 'badge of honour', 'rite of passage' or inevitable result of cycling. Most injuries can be easily avoided by not acting in a foolhardy manner.

## Addendum: Terminology

- ❑ 'The club' refers to Old Bleach Cycle Club.
  
- ❑ A 'club run' is a regularly held event where the members of 'the club' go for a cycle together in a group.
  
- ❑ 'The committee' is an elected body consisting of a chair, secretary, treasurer, safeguarding officer and public relations officer/assistant secretary.
  
- ❑ A 'rider' is an individual cyclist who forms part of the larger group out on an Old Bleach Cycle Club 'club run'. 'Riders' refers to two or more such individuals.
  
- ❑ 'The group' refers to the collection of 'riders' involved in an Old Bleach Cycle Club 'club run'.

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