



Northern Sydney Cycling Club Guide to Rider Etiquette

As the club evolves with the enrolment of new members, and more and more riders are turning up on regular rides, we have decided to outline a **Guide to Rider Etiquette** for use by all Northern Sydney Cycling Club members.

As in any sport or recreation, practice makes perfect and while NSCC does not sanction any bunch rides we do want to look out for the safety of our members and provide suggestions to make your next "bunchy" a safe and enjoyable one.

Here are some key guidelines we would like ALL members to abide by in addition to the assumption that ALL riders are expected to observe all road rules at all times.

Bunch Riding

The Correct Formation (Figure A)

Riders should pair off in 2 x 2 formation and **never overlap the wheel in front**. Try to maintain a 30 – 60cm gap from the wheel directly in front of you. Your front wheel should line up perfectly with the rider in front as illustrated below.



Figure A

The reason you **do not offset yourself** from the person in front is that you will not stray from the parallel line of riders and cause a flow on effect down the line. Eventually your bunch will be 3 or 4 riders wide without you knowing it! (Figure B)

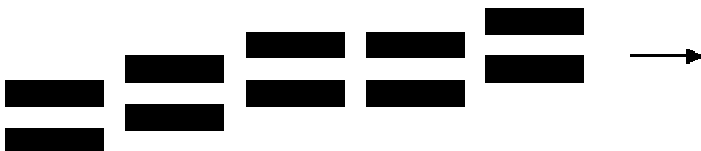


Figure B

Lead Riders

The 2 riders on the front of the bunch have a huge responsibility. They must set the pace, call all road obstacles and warn the bunch of any traffic changes.

All riders are expected to point out potholes with their hand and announce "**holes**"/obstacles where practical. This also applies to directional changes. Call "**turning left/right**" All calls should be relayed down the line. When approaching a set of traffic lights, it is the lead riders responsibility and decision to make the call. All riders need to be prepared to slow or stop when approaching lights, roundabouts and intersections You will hear either "**lights..... stopping**" or "**rolling**". All calls should be relayed down the line.

DO NOT make the decision to stop in a hurry. This will cause "panic braking" down the line and often result in a crash.

When entering a round about or an intersection, it is the lead riders' responsibility to call "**clear**" or "**cars up**" and make the call "**stopping**" or proceed through. All calls should be relayed down the line.

Tail End Riders

The last 2 riders in the bunch also have an enormous responsibility. They are responsible for the safety of the bunch from cars approaching from behind, and they will make the decision to change lanes when safe.

The last 2 riders must also indicate this to the bunch by calling “*cars bac k*” when a car approaches; or “*over*” when the lane is clear of oncoming traffic.

Riders at the front **must not make any lane change** unless the riders at the rear have indicated it is safe to do so.

Tail end riders must also pay attention to flat tyres, dropped riders etc so as to ensure the bunch stops and everyone is aware of who is missing from the group.

Holding The Wheel

While riding, avoid focussing directly on the wheel in front. Rather, focus on the rider. This will give you peripheral vision of both the wheel and any activity further up the bunch.

Half Wheeling

“*Half Wheeling*” is an expression used when your riding partner inches gradually ahead of you in a bunch situation and continues to do it when you draw level. The key indicator is speed. You will notice that the speed continues to increase regardless of how many times you draw level. Bunch speed should remain constant at all times.

Often the rider is unaware they are doing it but it is very frustrating for you and the riders behind. In a bunch it can cause changes in pace and frustration to the riders immediately behind.

If this happens to you, it is ok to tell the rider to “stop half wheeling” and agree to set a constant speed.

Position on the Road

Remember that you are billboard for the club, its sponsors and more importantly, cycling in general. If you want other road users to respect you, show them respect first.

While **it is legal to ride 2 abreast** on any standard road within 1.5m from the kerb, we advise riders to use commonsense and exercise caution and courtesy out on the road. When possible on a tight road, riders MAY switch to single file but this has greater purpose in a smaller bunch (up to 6 people) – as it simply serves to make the bunch longer – and not necessarily safer! Stay 2 abreast unless it is obvious this would assist the bunch.

Parked Cars

It is also common practice that riders will **stay as far left as possible and is safe**. When approaching parked cars and road narrows, riders should clearly move right and stay right until the obstacles are no longer in your path. **Do not swing in and out of parked car spaces** in an attempt to “clear” the right hand lane. This will cause confusion to both fellow riders and motorists.

General Rider Etiquette

Spares

Riders should carry enough spares to be able to complete the ride in safety. This includes spare tubes, tyre levers, a pump, mobile telephone, money, food, water, and identification.

Lights

Particularly in winter, riders are required by law use bright front and rear lights when required. It is suggested that halogen lights are used where possible. 1 x LED is often not enough.

Hills

While this doesn't happen on a lot of club rides outside NSCC, NSCC riders in a defined group are typically courteous enough to wait at the top of hills for slower riders. In situations where riders take an unusual amount of time to reach the top of the hill, it is suggested that at least one rider in the group investigates to determine whether additional assistance is needed. Slower riders should also make contact with at least one rider from the main group if they intend to turn off or change their course before reaching the top of the hill.