

Drop Off Marker System - Lead & Tail rider basic principles.

Riding in convoy and stopping on the road to allow riders to re-group are two practices that should be avoided when riding in group and a well established method exists that makes both unnecessary. This is the Leader and Tail rider system.

The basis of the system is that the Leader (usually the ride organiser) stays at the front of the group and the Tail Rider at the rear as the names suggest. Whenever there is a deviation from the obvious straight ahead route, the rider travelling behind the leader pulls over in a visible and safe position to point all bikes in the correct direction. This bike is called the marker, and when the Tail Rider comes along the marker rejoins the route in front of the Tail Rider if safe to do so, otherwise rejoin behind and overtake tail rider when safe.. As the journey continues each rider will in turn become the rider behind the leader, and therefore become a marker prior to rejoining in front of the Tail rider.

By following this basic system each and every rider regardless of ability within the group may ride their own ride, without the risk of getting lost. There is never a need to ride in convoy with all bikes in sight of each other. However, each rider should ensure that the following rider is usually still visible so that this means that there is no need to stop to allow riders to regroup or for anyone in the group to "play catch up" with the bike in front.

When behind the Leader

Be prepared to stop and act as the marker when indicated to do so by the Leader ,however if you are the second bike behind the leader and you realise that the bike in front has not marked a change in direction when indicated to do so by the leader, then mark it yourself. Each rider should try to ensure that the following rider is visible most of the time. (If not he/she should slow down or stop somewhere safe.) In this way, the group will soon be brought to a halt in the case of a problem. The lead rider will retrace the route if he runs out of markers.

When you are the Marker

Never compromise your personal safety or the safety of others by stopping in a dangerous location. No one in the group wants to get lost, but that is preferable to putting yourself at risk. The lead rider will know the route and indicate to you to stop where he considers it to be safe.

1. When the Leader signals for you to stop, do so only where you are safe and visible to the following rider.
2. It is your decision where to stop, but remember that to be an effective marker you need to be visible to the following bikes and point out the direction to follow.
- 3 Do not move until the Tail Rider appears If the Tail rider fails to appear, still do not move. If something has gone wrong, someone will return for you.
REMEMBER. You are all that's going to help the following bikes find the correct route
- 4.If you see other riders from the group take the wrong direction do not attempt to chase after them. Wait until they and/or the Leader returns to the junction you are marking.
- 5.Make sure that what appears to be the last bike is really the Tail Rider; who will slow down as he/she approaches to enable you to pull out safely in front. He may "toot" or give you a headlamp flash to assist his identification