

Safety Tips

Collaborative Group Riding

When you ride in a group it is unquestionably your first priority to take care of yourself – to ride within your limits and the limits of your bike, regardless of what the rest of the group does. That’s often been described as “Riding your own ride”.

But you **ARE** in a group and that means some new responsibilities and behaviors apply. You ride at the speed the group rides, you stay in the lanes chosen by the lead bike. You stop when and where the group stops. Sounds a lot like you are riding THEIR ride as much as your own, doesn’t it?

In business, management has recently come to realize that “team work” is not always the best way to get things done. Sometimes it is better to work as a group of collaborators than as a team. A motorcycle drill team is a clear example of team work – everybody is expected to do no more nor less than what is required by the boss to get the job done. Independent thought is valued, but only to the extent that it contributes to the team doing its job.

When riding in a group there is certainly some team work going on, but each and every person in that group is expected to “ride their own ride”. Doesn’t that sound just a little bit different to you than each person being expected to do whatever it takes to make the team effort successful?

In collaborative efforts the assumption is that each individual is expert/proficient in some specialty while generally being able to function in team efforts. That is a very subtle difference in attitude. For example, in a collaborative effort, it is not unusual to find debate about what should be done next as each individual contributes based on their expertise. What IS unusual in a collaborative effort is that there is any rancor in these debates [well, there are sometimes rather harsh arguments, but the point is that each member is heard and contributes based on their specialty.] Each member RESPECTS the expertise of the other members and will generally defer gracefully to that expertise. Further, in a collaborative effort the group will do what the lead bike tells them to do *unless there is a good reason not to*.

The result is that almost invariably you have the best of the best from the best.

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