

# The Safety Corner

## Keep group rides fun and friendly with simple rules

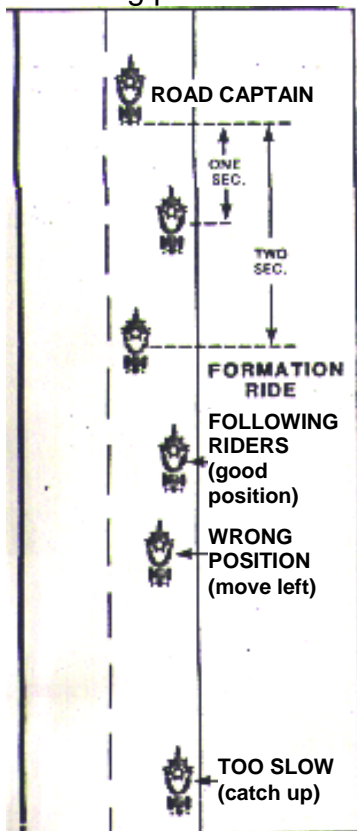
One of the great joys of group riding is the fun people who really enjoy motorcycles can have when they get together.

But the good times, and good company, can quickly disappear if the group doesn't set up and stick to some basic rules. Nothing fancy, just a few notes so that everyone's "playing from the same sheet of music".

Provided below are five suggestions for Good Group Manners. They're based on a very unscientific survey of group and lone wolf riders, and we pass them along as food for thought.

### #1 - Design flaws travel in-groups.

A group of touring motorcycles rolling down the highway is very easy for other motorists to spot. Unfortunately, so are any mistakes that group makes. Crazy bikers wandering all over the road is not the impression we want to make with the non-biking public.



ROAD FORMATION

The most common and the safest way for any group to ride is in the staggered formation. It takes very little practice and gives each bike plenty of room to move around in case of emergency.

The accepted way for groups to ride is a staggered formation, with a two-second interval between bikes in the same lane, and a one-second interval with the bikes alongside. This gives each bike room to maneuver, and allows for a better view of what's going on ahead.

**#2 - Dance with the guy what brung you.** The middle of a group ride is not the best time to express your rugged individuality. Good group riders do not suddenly pull out of formation into a rest stop nor do they make unexpected turns onto "interesting" but unscheduled roads. This tends to confuse riders following behind, and may seriously worry or annoy those up ahead. Group riding, by definition, requires that you be with the group.

**#3 - Never mud wrestle with a pig; it gets you all dirty and the pig probably likes it.**

It is a fact of life that there is someone in every group who will dislike everything you do. There is no point in arguing with these folks, because they are professional complainers and you are a rank amateur. Just keep your cool, and try to remember all the sterling qualities that made you want them in your group in the first place.

**#4 - It ain't over 'till the fat lady sings.**

Whether you're riding for a day or for two weeks, there is a time when the day's ride is officially over. It can miles covered for the day or a specific destination. Everyone in the group should know when that time is, and have some say in choosing it. Towards the end of a long ride some folks get just a little irritable. It's easier when everyone knows there's only 32 miles to go and then they can relax.

**#5 - Remember that God didn't send a committee to save the world.**

Majority rule will take care of most things, but there may come a time when the group can't make up its mind. When decision by one person must be made, that person should be the ride leader. No election, no debate. It's that simple - he's in charge and he makes the final decision. If you don't like his decision, you be the ride leader next time.