GWRRA TEAM RIDING MANUAL

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Gold Wing Road Riders Association

Team Riding Manual

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INTRODUCTION

The Gold Wing Road Riders Association is a touring motorcycle organization comprised of people from all walks of life that share at least two common interests - the HONDA GOLD WING, and eating. When a group of GWRRA members gather together, someone will usually suggest a group ride to a favorite eating place. (It's a known fact that Wing Riders are THE authority on great places to eat!)

The fun, pleasure, and the enjoyment of riding your Gold Wing in a group with other GWRRA friends is an important part of what GWRRA is all about. It's also fun! If you have never ridden with a group before, you don't know what you're missing. However, any kind of group riding is as different from individual riding, as night is from day.

Whether you ride as an individual or in a group, in order to survive on the open road, your motorcycle riding habits and techniques must be constantly thought of as "defensive." When you ride in a group, your actions not only affect you, but the other riders as well. Therefore it is important torecognize and remember that group riding is a "TEAM" effort. To be safe, you must rely on the cooperation of all riders in that group, if you are new to this form of riding, study the enclosed techniques before your first group ride. You will find that a group ride can be most enjoyable. If you are an experienced group rider, we hope this handbook will be a refresher on some of the basics.

The group riding procedures set forth in this handbook are developed from years of experience of many MSF (Motorcycle Safety Foundation) instructors and riders like yourself. These procedures have been proven to be effective and safe.

The subject matter of this handbook deals with "Team Riding." Two other types of riding styles (in groups) are called "Mass Riding" and "Leisure Riding." Mass Riding is a group going down the road doing its own thing, with no one paying any attention to the group as a whole. Leisure Riding is traveling with a group of people you know and some ground rules have been set and everyone agrees to abide by them. It is generally considered a little more safer than Mass riding, because the bikes travel down the road maintaining at least two seconds between each other. But, and this is an important "but," the individuals are primarily responsible for themselves. There is no "formation" or "team" techniques to Leisure Riding.

Please study the following techniques... talk about them with each other, and practice them on your next group ride. If everyone learns and uses these procedures, you and the rest of us, will be safer and more comfortable with any GWRRA group ride

Planning a TEAM RIDE

Any project that is done well, is usually well planned. A good team ride is planned well from the very beginning. All participants should be aware where they are going and how they are going to get there. The following considerations are the bare-bones minimum in planning a successful team ride.

1. Choose the destination and the routes to and from.
2. Prepare a map for each rider in the group. A.A.A. (American Automobile Association) "Strip" maps are excellent. Identify all points of interest along the route.
3. Plan your teams. Consider who will be Team Captain and Team Point.
4. Discuss and agree on the speed that the group will travel. (More friends are lost over this one subject).
5. Plan "pit" stops, photo opportunities, meals and other breaks. Consider parking requirements.
6. Consider each bike size and gas requirements. Speed and mileage must be determined by the smallest bike of the group.

Before the TEAM RIDE begins

1. Every rider should start with a full fuel tank. Most Gold Wings burn approximately the same amount of fuel, however, plan fuel stops which will allow a comfortable margin for a bike that may over consume. If smaller bikes with less Fuel capacity are included in the group, fuel stops must be planned within their ranges.

2. Everyone should take a minute and check their machines for proper operating conditions. Better still, use the MSF list (see Appendix A). Perhaps a special person (a Safety Specialists or MSF instructor) in the group will help perform the checks. It is not uncommon that some one else will find unsafe conditions that you may have overlooked.

3. Everyone should carry essential tools, spares, equipment, and a first aid kit. Also consider special conditions; if traveling in the summer, carry water; if appropriate, carry rain gear; if cold, carry "warmies."

4. Memorize the Group Riding Hand Signals. (included elsewhere in this brochure)

5. Everyone should take a minute and study the route

map so all will know where the group is going. Ask questions if anything is unclear.

6. Know the ride schedule, be on time, fueled up and ready to go!

TEAM RIDING Techniques and Procedures

Any group ride with more than 5 motorcycles may have a negative impact on safety and traffic flow. Consequently, it has been found that the safest group ride is one where the group is divided into manageable "Teams." Each team rides apart from the other teams in the group. This allows better assimilation of the group(s) into the flow of traffic. Have you ever tried to pass a group of 25 motorcycles? A team consisting of 5 motorcycles is more easily dealt with by other motorists.

TEAM MANAGEMENT

Each team should have a Team Captain and a Team Point. The Team Point rides in the front of the formation, and the Team Captain rides in the back.

They should be equipped with functioning C.B. radios. Their responsibility is to maneuver the team, in formation, safely through traffic, as a unit. The Team Captain and the Team Point have joint responsibility for the team safety.

A GOOD TEAM MEMBER...

1. Assumes a responsibility to ride with, and work with, the other team members for the safety and protection of the whole team while on the road, and especially, while in traffic.

2.Maintains steady speed and spacing. Yo-Yoing or straggling disrupts the rhythm and efforts of the other team members, and destroys the main purpose of riding as a group.

3. Stays alert and announces to the other team members any obstacle, condition or potential situation which could become hazardous to the team. The lives of other people are in the hands of each team member.

4.Will maintain a safe riding distance, depending on road conditions.

"HOLES" left in the formation invites aggressive motorists driving at faster speeds to cut into the formation, tailgating your teammate in front. This is very dangerous. Each team member must protect the other.

REMEMBER: Pace yourself I second stagger, and 2 seconds following distance behind the bike directly in front of you. ***However, during darkness or inclement weather, a 2 second stagger and a 4 second following distance should be maintained to provide an extra margin of safety. (See Figure 1)***

TEAM SEPARATION

Each team should be separated on the highway by no less than 20 0 yards, preferably 40 0 yards. This will allow sufficient room for other vehicles to pass a team.

FORMATION

Each team member travels in a staggered formation with-in a car lane. The Team Point rides in the front of the group, in the left tire track of the lane. The next team member positions their bike one second behind and in the right tire track of the same lane, etc, etc., until all bikes have been positioned. **(FIGURE 1)**

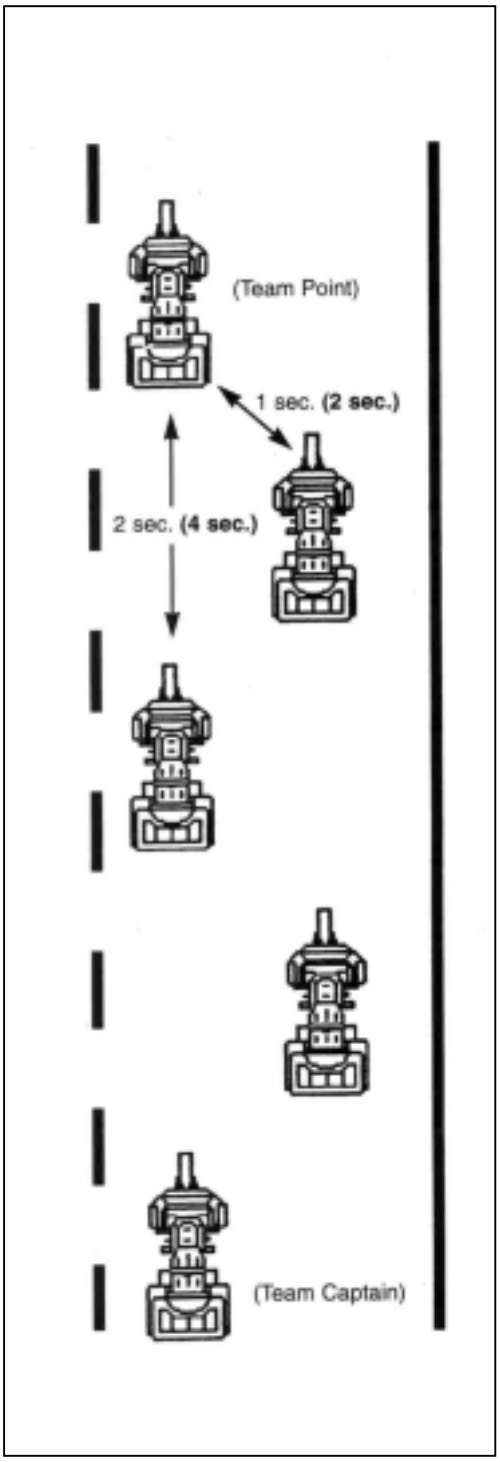

Figure 1
Staggered Formation

SOLO RIDERS

Anyone not wishing to Team Ride should separate themselves to a safe distance from the teams and meet at the acknowledged destination or break point.

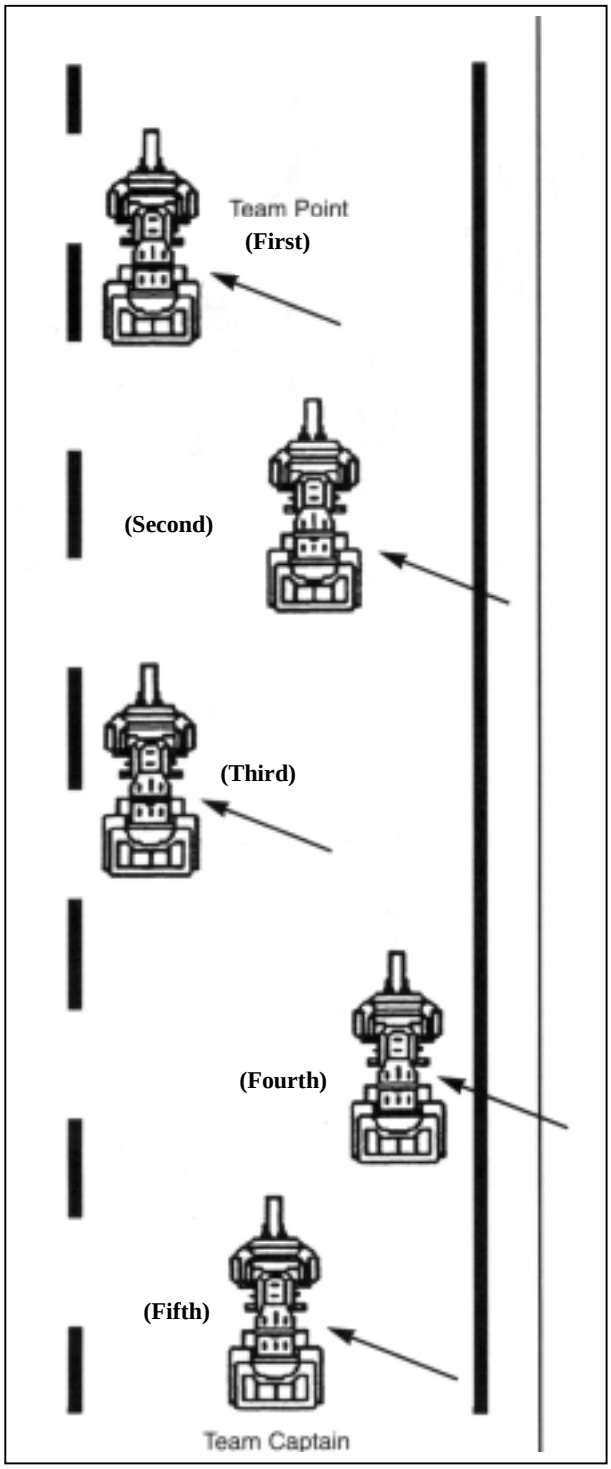

Figure 2
Entering Traffic

ENTERING TRAFFIC

When entering traffic from a parking lot or rest area, the Team Point moves into the traffic first. When entering traffic, you should enter as ***quickly and safely*** as possible. Don' t try to get *fancy, just get out safely*. **Don't attempt to block a lane with your motorcycle.** It is probably illegal and certainly is dangerous. Form your team after you are safely on the highway. **(FIGURE 2)**

PASSING TRAFFIC (FIGURE 3)

When passing a vehicle on a two lane, “single” road, each team member should pass, SINGLE FILE, in order. Allow plenty of space to safely pull in behind the rider in front. The Team Point will make the first decision to pass and will notify all team members by C.B. and hand signals to assume a single file formation. The Team Captain will reposition to the center of the lane and block following traffic from attempting to move up the right side of the single file formation.

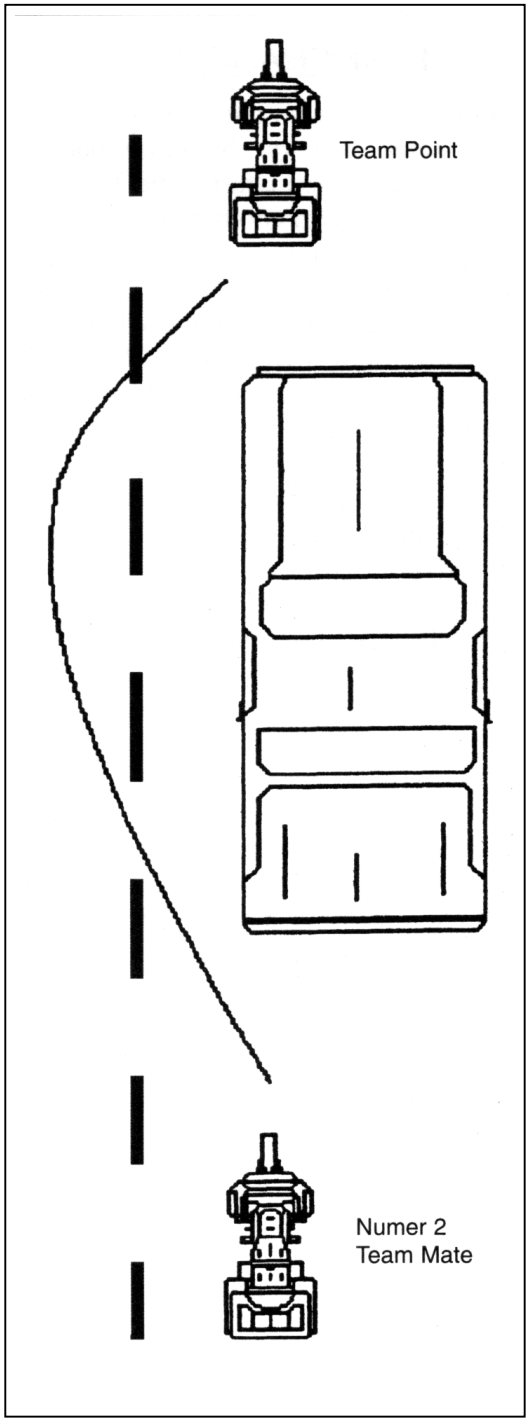

Figure 3
Passing Traffic (Two-Way)

The Team Point, after passing the vehicle in front, should accelerate far enough ahead to make room for the rest of the team to reform in the normal staggered configuration. Single file formation prior to passing provides riders minimum maneuverability and maximum visibility of approaching traffic. Using the C.B., the Team Captain informs the Team Point when the entire team has safely passed.

For Team Riding purposes, traffic lanes on multi-lane highways are numbered from your bike' s position, left to right, the Number One lane is to your extreme left... the lane closest to the divider and closest to on-coming traffic. The lane adjoining it on its right is the Number Two lane, the next is Number Three, etc. The Team Point and the Team Captain will refer to lane number when change is necessary for the team. (FIGURE 4)

LANE CHANGES

Lane changes by the team on highways with two or more lanes going in the same direction should be made as a unit. Using the C.B., the Team Point informs the Team Captain of the need to move the team into another lane, and the number of the lane into which the team should move. Only the Team Captain should acknowledge this C.B. transmission. In light traffic, the Team Captain will announce when it is safe to make the lane change. Riders without a C.B. should be alert and observe the hand signals of the other team members.

Each member of the team, after making a head check (physically turning the head around and looking beside and behind) to confirm the lane is indeed secure, moves into the new lane as a unit maintaining a safe time and space cushion following the Team Point.

The change from the old lane to the new lane in heavy traffic begins after the Team Captain has announced over the C.B. that it is safe to do so. At that point, the Team makes head checks, and each rider, in succession, FROM THE REAR TO THE FRONT, following the Team Captain' s lead, will transition to the new lane when it is clear. The Team Point is the last to move into the new lane thereby keeping the teams integrity. This will protect the team during heavy traffic where vehicles could break up and/ or endanger the formation. Each team member may have to drop back a little from the team to maintain a safe time and space cushion. (FIGURE 4)

With practice and experience, the team will be able to transition from one lane to another as a team, demonstrating superb Cold Wing handling.

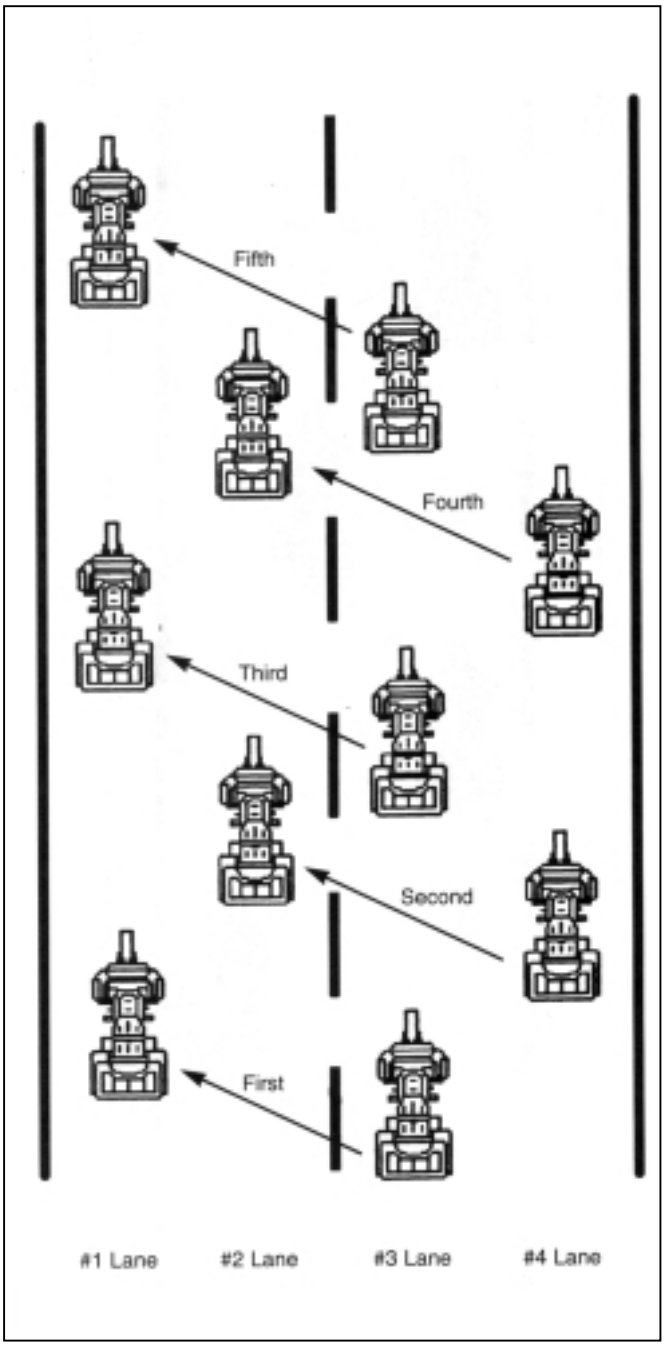

Figure 4
Lane Change (Multi-lane Highway)

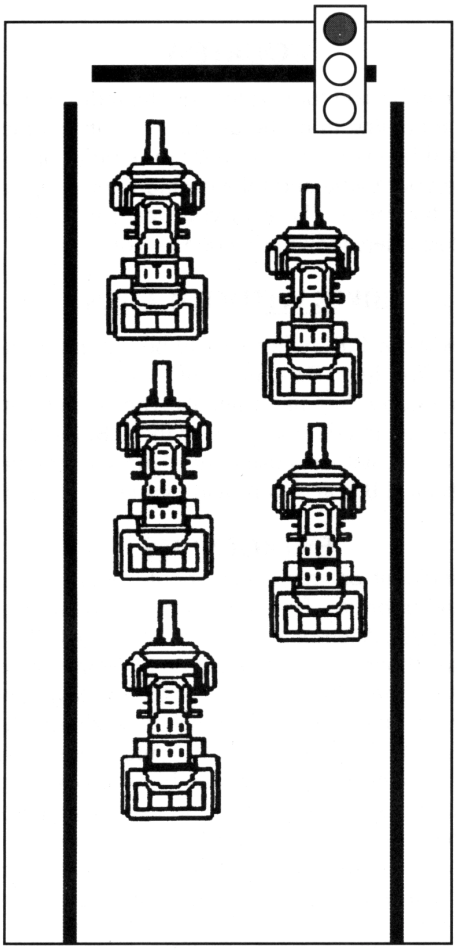

Figure 5
Stopping at a Traffic Light

STOPPING AT A TRAFFIC LIGHT

When it is necessary for the team to stop at an intersection or a traffic signal, all team members should assume a position of almost two abreast. Each rider should still have a slight " space" safety advantage of the staggered formation. This " compressed" staggered formation will help keep the line of traffic behind the team as short as possible. While waiting for the signal to change, each rider in the compressed formation should wait directly behind the rider in front. **(FIGURE 5)**

LEAVING A TRAFFIC LIGHT

When the team leaves the " compressed" formation at a traffic light, the # 2 bike, which is stopped slightly behind and to the right of the Team Point, will move out only after the Team Point has traveled far enough forward so that any sudden sideways movement will not result in a collision.

The other team members start, in turn, and in the same manner, leaving the Team Captain the last to move. When the team moves from a stopped position, the Team Point should accelerate at a rate that will allow all team members to get re-grouped as soon as possible. Each team member should do so quickly but safely. The Team Captain will inform the Team Point when all bikes are through the light, so riding speed can be attained. No rider should accelerate next to, or past any team member who is in front, either while traveling or while stopped. This can lead to a very dangerous situation.

TURNING AT AN INTERSECTION

Each team member stays in their respective lane position throughout the are of the turn unless a single-file formation has been signaled by the Team Point.

NARROWING HIGHWAY

When approaching a narrow portion of the highway, such as a construction zone or bridge, the Team Point will announce " single file" on the C.B. in addition to giving the appropriate hand signal. All bikes in the group should, after individual signaling to the riders behind, transition from the staggered formation to single file.

HILLS

If a hill is encountered such that it is impossible to see oncoming traffic, the Team Point will give C.B. and hand signal for single file. Starting with the Team Point, each rider will transition to the center of the lane, until the group reaches the top of the hill and can see the oncoming traffic. The Team Point will then give the signals to resume staggered formation.

CURVES

When a team enters a curve, the entire team will automatically transition into a single-file-pick-your-own-lane for three reasons:

1) Increased visibility through the curve.
2) Provide a safe area to the right of the center lane for avoidance of any oncoming vehicle which may stray across the road.
3) Most debris is along the " outside" edge of the road.

CHANGE OF SPEED

When it becomes necessary to slow or accelerate the team' s speed, the Team Point will call for and give the appropriate hand signal. This signal, and all other hand signals should be passed on by every member of the team.

OBSTACLE

Any team member who observes a pothole or other obstacle in the road should use the appropriate hand signal to alert the following team members of the obstacle.

PARKED CARS

When entering a town where cars are parked along the side of the street, the Team Point may signal for single-file. The team should then transition to the left portion of the lane and proceed very carefully, being alert for children, " toys," or animals that may appear from between parked cars.

Also, watch vehicle tail lights, front wheels, and drivers for " hints" that a vehicle is going to back up, stop or its driver might be opening his door to get out of his vehicle.

ENTERING A PARKING LOT...

the team should assume a single file formation behind the Team Point. If necessary, the Team Point will " loop" the parking lot seeking an area large enough for the whole team to park side by side. All team members should remain in single file at or near the entrance until the Team Point locates suitable space for all.

If the Team Point determines there is insufficient space for all team members to park at one location, each team member should seek their own parking spot.

BE INFORMED

Members of the team can never be " over informed." Captains and Team Points should informed about the destination, change in plans, etc.

Team should always keep their teams tion, routes, possible problems,

C.B. RADIOS

C.B. radio channel utilization for motorcycles varies state by state throughout the country. The entire group should be briefed on what channel will be used, and any alternates, before a ride begins. The C.B. is a very useful and important tool in group rides. In addition to information regarding road surfaces, hazards, pit stops, etc., the C.B. provides effective group coordination between the teams, and communications between all Team Points and Team Captains.

Any time you are " off the radio," it is best to inform the Team Point and Team Captain... BE ALERT FOR HAND SIG NALS. Team members should refrain from monopolizing the radio channels or excessive idle chatter.

TRANSMITTING

Listen before you push that transmitter button. Don' t " step on" and block another rider' s transmission. Important group and team safety information could be blocked in this manner.

VOICE TECHNIOUE

Some C.B. radio installations, radio signal propagation, and certain microphones can distort voices. Some C.B. operators seem to think that if they yell, their transmission will be heard better, and farther! That is absolutely not true.

In fact, yelling into the microphone, will cause further distortion of the voice and make it almost impossible to understand. Speak into the microphone slowly and distinctly with normal volume.

MALFUNCTIONING C.B.

If your C.B. is malfunctioning, do not transmit. If you art the Team Point or the Team Captain, give up that position to another qualified rider. A bad C.B. transmitter is worse than none at all.

COURTESY

Much can be said for courtesy on the radio. Simple courtesy, like refraining from the use of profanity on the C.B. is appreciated by everyone. Contrary to popular opinion, it is OK to use your name and bike position when you communicate on the radio. Those in your team who are not frequent group riders may not recognize your voice.

BIKES WITHOUT C.B.'s

Bikes without C.B. radios should be put in the middle of each team. The Team Captain should brief all riders with out a C.B. on group riding hand signals. The Team Captain and the Team Point, in addition to using the C.B. for information and instruction, will also use hand signals for the benefit of bikes without C.B.' s and to provide visual confirmation.

EMERGENCIES

If an accident or emergency should occur, consider all options and priorities. First, treat the injured (you have had first aid right!). Attempt to contact help, by C.B., cellular phone, pay phone, or send some one for help. Stay with the injured. If no one is hurt, try to clear the roadway, and make sure everyone knows what is going on. Additionally, on an accident scene, someone should monitor oncoming traffic, in both directions. Every team should work out in advance, a procedural plan to be followed in case of an emergency. If some one disappears from a formation, gets injured or sick, the entire group may choose (depending upon their " Plan For Emergency") to continue to an appropriate place, stop and wait until that rider and bike is taken care of. The Team Captain will stop with the bike in trouble and communicate with the Team Point.

CONSIDERATION

Finally, an important part of any group riding is consideration. Have consideration for all members of all groups. Always give consideration to the other vehicles on the road. Even more important, have consideration for your own safety, the team and the group. Have consideration for your own capabilities, skills, health, physical fitness, and feelings. Never drive beyond your comfort level! Enjoy your Team Riding... and be careful!

GWRRA Group Riding Hand Signals In Photos

These are the standard GWRRA signals for use in communicating with motorcycles not equipped with CB radios which are following the Team Point.

Following bikes should acknowledge comprehension by a head nod or flick of their dimmer switch.

To gain the attention of the Team Point, following bikes should flash their headlights. The Team Point can then nod acknowledgement, or give the " Come Alongside" signal when safe, so the following rider can signal his or her needs,

Most signals are left-handed so the

"Follow Me"

Arm extended straight from shoulder. Palm forward.

"Speed Up"

Arm down to side. Fist clenched. Twist as if turning throttle.

"Stop or Slow"

Arm extended straight down. Palm back.

"You Lead"

Arm extended down. Palm forward. Swing forward from hip in arc.

"Hazard In Road"

Point immediately with emphasis. Sometimes done with right arm.

"Single File"

Arm and index finger extended straight up.

"Double File"

Arm extended straight up. First and fourth finger form "ram's horn" sign.

"Check Headlight"

Tap on top of head with open hand, palm down.

"Need Fuel Stop"

Arm out to side. Point to fuel tank.

"Need Food, Coffee Stop"

Arm out to side. Fingers closed. Thumb to mouth.

"Turn Signals Left On"

Repeatedly open and close hand with hand with thumb and fingers extended.

"Come Alongside"

Same as "You Lead", but ending with alongside pointing motion.

"Pull Off"

Arm positioned as for right turn. Forearm then swung toward shoulder.

"Need Comfort Stop"

Upper arm extended. Forearm straight up and down. Fist clenched. Short up-and-down motion (like pulling a toilet chain.)

Appendix A

T-CLOCK ITEM	WHAT TO CHECK	WHAT TO LOOK FOR	CHECKLIST	
T -- TIRES & WHEELS				
Tires	**Condition**	Tread depth, wear, weathering evenly seated, bulges, imbedded objects.	Front	Rear
	Air Pressure	Check when cold, adjust to load/speed.	Front	Rear
Wheels	**Spokes**	Bent, broken, missing, tension, check at top of wheel "ring" OK--"thud", loose spoke.	Front	Rear
	Cast	Cracks, dents.	Front	Rear
	Rims	Out of round/true = 5 mm. Spin wheel, index against stationary pointer.	Front	Rear
	Bearings	Grab top and bottom of tire and flex: Grab top and bottom of tire and flex: No growl when spinning..	Front	Rear
	Seals	Cracked, cut or torn, excessive grease on outside, reddish-brown around outside	Front	Rear
C--CONTROLS				
Levers	**Condition**	Broken, bent, cracked, mounts tight ball ends on handlebar lever.	Front	Rear
	Pivots	Lubricated.		
Cables	**Condition**	Fraying, kinks, lubrication: ends and length		
	Routing	No interference or pulling steering head, suspension, no sharp angles, wire looms in place		
Hoses	**Condition**	Cuts, cracks, leaks, bulges, chaffing deterioration..		
	Routing	No interference or pulling steering head, suspension, no sharp angles, wire looms in place		
Throttle	**Operation**	Moves freely, snaps closed, no revving...		
L -- LIGHTS				
Battery	**Condition**	Terminals, clean and tight, electrolyte level, held down securely		
	Vent Tube	Not kinked, routed properly, not plugged.		
Lenses	**Condition**	Cracked, broken, secure, mounted excessive condensation.		
Reflectors	**Condition**	Cracked, broken, secure, mounted.		
Wiring	**Condition**	Fraying, chaffing , insulation.		
	Routing	Pinched, no interference or pulling at steering head or suspension, wire looms and ties in place, connectors tight, clean		
Headlamp	**Condition**	Cracks, reflector, mounting and adjustment system		
	Aim	Height and right/left		

Appendix A (continued)

T-CLOCK ITEM	WHAT TO CHECK	WHAT TO LOOK FOR	CHECKLIST	
O -- OIL				
Levels	**Engine Oil**	Check warm on center stand, dip stick, sight glass		
	Hypoid gear Oil	Transmission, rear drive, shaft.		
	Hydraulic Fluid	Brakes, clutch, reservoir or sight glass		
	Coolant	Reservoir and/or coolant recovery tank - cool only		
	Fuel	Tank or gauge.		
Leaks	**Engine Oil**	Gaskets, housings, seals.		
	Hypoid Gear	Gaskets, seals, breathers.		
	Hydraulic Fluid	Hoses, master cylinders, calipers.		
	Coolant	Radiator, hoses, tanks, fittings, pipes		
	Fuel	Lines, fuel taps, carbs.		
C--CHASSIS				
Frame	**Condition**	Cracks at gussetts, accessory mounts, look for paint lifting .		
	Steering Head Bearings	No detent or tight spots through full travel, raise front wheel check for play by pulling/pushing forks.		
	Swing Arm Bushings/ Bearings	Raise rear wheel, check for play by pushing/pulling swing arm.		
Suspension	**Forks**	Smooth travel, equal air pressure/damping anti-dive settings.	Left	Right
	Shock(s)	Smooth travel, equal pre-load/air pressure/damping settings, link age moves freely and is lubricated.	Left	Right
Chain or Belt	**Tension**	Check at tightest point.		
	Lubrication	Side plates when hot. *Note:* Do not lubricate belts.		
	Sprockets	Teeth not hooked, securely mounted.		
Fasteners	**Threaded**	Tight, missing bolts, nuts.		
	Clips	Broken, missing		
	Cotter Pins	Broken, missing .		
K -- KICKSTAND				
Centerstand	**Condition**	Cracks, bent.		
	Retention	Springs in place, tension to hold position.		
Sidestand	**Condition**	Cracks, bent, (safety cut-off switch or pad if equipped).		
	Retention	Springs in place, tension to hold position.		