

# **Louisville Bicycle Club Instructions and Guidelines for Ride Captains**

The Touring Program promotes an apprenticeship program for the Louisville Bicycle Club (LBC) members who want to become Ride Captains and lead touring rides. If you are nervous about the responsibility or would just feel better with someone “sharing the load,” the Touring Committee will provide an “old-timer” to assist in the preparation and leading of a club ride.

For help establishing a route, contact one of the Touring Committee members regarding the Touring Library. The Touring Library is a file of past rides organized by starting points and distance, and is constantly being updated.

## **A. GETTING READY**

1. Sign up to lead a ride: Contact the VP of Touring, any of the Touring Committee members or the club’s internet web page (<http://www.louisvillebicycleclub.org/calendar/>) to sign-up to lead a ride. Ride schedules are prepared two months at a time, and finalized two weeks in advance. In other words, the March/April ride schedule is finalized around February 14<sup>th</sup>, the May/June ride schedule is finalized around April 15<sup>th</sup>, etc. You’ll need to provide the route distance(s), difficulty rating (see below), starting point and any special directions for getting there, and your name and phone number. So, it’s good to have your routes sketched out ahead of time. Also, always include a shorter route for less experienced riders (~15 to 25 miles long).

2. Lay out your route(s): Pay special attention to high traffic areas, hazards, railroads, etc., and distances between rest stops. Try to minimize the chances of encountering problems during the ride.

Keep in mind the type of ride you are having. A ride that could have inexperienced riders should stay away from high traffic or congested roadways. A ride of more advanced level (high mileage) has a little more leeway due to rider experience.

3. Prepare cue sheets: Type up the list of turns, including the mileage at the turn, which direction to turn (ie R for right, L for left, S for straight, X for cross), and the name of the road on which to turn, for each of your routes (see example included). Cue sheets should also identify any hazards and rest stops.

Make approximately 50 copies of each route to make sure all riders get a cue sheet. Some riders like to take several copies in case they lose one.

4. Mark the routes: At a minimum, mark the turns on your shortest route. Marking a route means spray painting a symbol on the road marking where, and in which direction, to turn. A couple of marks should be provided on the right hand side of the road far enough before the intersection/turn so that riders will notice them and have time to react (one at ~50 feet before the turn and another ~ 20 feet before the turn). Also, one mark after the turn, for confirmation, will calm nervous riders. White or yellow paint should be used since these are the colors most easily seen against the dark color of the pavement. Make sure your symbol is large (~12 inches wide and long), and distinct. Many of the club’s rides use the same roads and, as a result, many of the intersections have multiple markings on the road. Yours need to be distinctive from all the others so that riders do not get confused about which direction to turn. Generally, there are lots of squares and circles used, so try to use something different (ie triangles, puppy paws, numbers, etc).

5. Make copies of the Sign-up sheets and Release Forms: Make enough copies of the Sign-up and Release Forms (see copies included) for each route and ~100 riders. At least one Sign-up sheet should be

prepared (fill-in your name as ride-captain, the date of the ride and the mileage for the given route) for each of your routes.

6. Identify ride captains for all routes: Since you can only ride one of your routes, you need to identify ride captain(s) for the routes you are not going to ride. This will involve calling some of the other ride captains to volunteer. This should be done before the day of the ride.
7. Verify Route: Drive the scheduled route(s) within one week of the ride start date to identify any hazards or route changes. Make any necessary changes or additions to the cue sheet to reflect road hazards or construction.

## **B. DAY OF RIDE**

1. Go/No Go: The ride captain is **always** the ultimate authority on whether to cancel a ride or not. The ride captain is responsible for evaluation of road and other conditions that may be detrimental to the health or safety of participants. Common sense should be used in addressing such situations. In general, rides should be cancelled when lightning is in the area, roads are slick due to rain, snow or ice, or extreme temperatures (ie below 32 degrees with wind chill or above 95 degrees with heat index). Options may be used to delay cancellation of any event including, but not limited to, delaying the start of the event for an announced period of time.

Unless it is extremely cold or raining, the ride captain should be at the starting point at the scheduled time to announce if the ride is going to be canceled. Some riders will invariably show up when weather conditions are "borderline."

2. Arrival Time: Plan on arriving at the starting point 30 minutes before the scheduled start time.
3. Announcements: Announcements should begin about 5 to 10 minutes after the scheduled start time to allow those running late to arrive and get ready.
  - Gather the group shortly after the scheduled start time.
  - Introduce yourself as the ride captain to those present.
  - Make sure that **ALL** ride participants sign the Waiver & Liability Form. Signing the Mileage Sign-Up Sheet is optional since this form is only used to determine year-end mileage awards. However, it is imperative that at the beginning of each ride, **ALL** participants, both LBC members and non-members, riders and non-riders, sign the Waiver and Liability Form. Participants who are minors require the consent and signature of a parent or guardian.
  - Make sure all riders have a helmet. Anyone who does not have a helmet is not allowed to officially ride with the club and should be strongly discouraged if they attempt to ride anyway.
  - Ask if there are any new riders, ask them their name, and welcome them to the ride/club.
  - Introduce any club officers present and ask if they have any announcements.
  - Announce upcoming events.
  - Describe the route (hilly or flat, mileage, problem areas, easily missed turns, other hazards), route markings if any, and anything special that will occur when everyone returns.
  - If there are multiple routes, introduce the ride leaders for the routes you are not riding/sweeping, and ask for a show of hands for who is riding each route.
  - Go over safety tips for the ride (how to handle gravel, dogs, railroad tracks, etc) and ask if everyone has checked their tire pressure and brakes.

- Remind all riders to obey all traffic laws.
- Start the ride.

The ride captain should “sweep” the route that he/she is riding. Sweeping generally means riding with the least experienced rider(s) to ensure that they complete the route safely. It does not mean that you have to ride with the slowest riders, since on occasion, the slowest riders are actually very experienced riders. Discretion should always be used and it is never wise to leave a rider by himself/herself.

### **EMERGENCY SITUATIONS:**

An emergency is defined as any circumstance that threatens the well-being of one or more participants. Examples would include, but are not limited to, any time emergency assistance (police, fire, EMT, etc) is summoned and/or participants require professional medical attention at a hospital or clinic. Should the Club require an impromptu spokesperson in such a circumstance, a single individual should assume this role. The sequence for determining that individual is: a Club Executive Board member currently in office, the Ride Captain, a former Club Executive Board member, a representative chosen from those present. The spokesperson should report all emergency situations to the Club President, or other Executive Board member, as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the situation so that appropriate liability insurance forms may be filed if applicable.

### **C. AFTER THE RIDE**

After the ride, the Waiver & Liability Form and Sign-Up Sheet should be sent to the statistician. The statistician will retain the documents from the previous and current calendar years.

Also, try to forward a copy to the VP of Touring so the ride can be entered in the Touring Library for future use by other ride captains.