



Patriots Motorcycle Club
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Riding SOP

1. Road Captain

The Road Captain is responsible for the planning and conduct of club rides. This includes routes, formations, speed, fuel and rest stops, navigation, and safety. The Road Captain may prohibit another rider (member or guest) from riding in formation with the club if in his judgment the rider presents a risk to him/her self or to other riders. The Road Captain may also disallow a rider from joining a ride based on the mechanical condition of the rider's motorcycle if it presents a hazard or could impede the progress of the formation. The Road Captain may appoint assistants to include road guards and rear guard whenever necessary to assist in managing a ride.

2. Rear Guard

The rear guard's main duty occurs during lane changes. Upon receiving the signal for a lane change, the rear guard should move into the lane as soon as it is safe to do so and block any other traffic from moving into the lane from behind the formation. This will allow the formation to safely complete the lane change.

3. Lights

Only the Road Captain, President, and rear guard or other assistants will have auxiliary lights/fog lights turned on in formation. All other bikes in the formation should turn off accessory lights.

4. Formations

- a. **Standard formation** is two columns abreast. Hand signal: Left arm extended up with 1st and 2nd fingers extended.

Order:

Road Captain (L) & President (R) in first row.
Board members
Patch holders
Prospects
Hang-arounds
Other guests
Rear guard
Cages (if applicable)

- b. **Staggered formation** may be used for twisting roads. Left bike takes the lead in each row. You should be 1 second behind bike in the adjacent column and 2

seconds behind bile in front of you. Hand signal: left arm extended up with first finger and little finger extended; bend wrist back and forth.

- c. **Single column formation** used on narrow roads or in hazardous conditions. Left bike takes the lead in each row. Hand signal: Left arm extended up with first finger extended.

Always pull up into a tight two column formation at stops.

When **negotiating sharp curves** at high speeds, such as at highway interchanges riders may back off to create staggered or single file lines at their own discretion without waiting for a lead signal. Don't exceed your comfort zone.

If a **rider pulls out of formation**, move up to fill the empty slot in your column. In case of an emergency or mechanical problem a rider should signal his intentions and then pull out of the formation onto the shoulder of the road. All other bikes will follow the Road Captain to a location where the entire formation can safely pull over. Only the rear guard or chase vehicle will pull off with the bike having problems.

If the **formation gets split** due to a traffic light or other obstacle, the lead group will slow down so that the trail group can catch up. If a cage breaks into the formation, the lead riders will slow down to encourage the cage to change lanes and leave the formation. When traveling on highways it may be necessary to let cages split into the formation to enter the highway if they are running out of ramp or to let them exit if they are in an inside lane. If this is the case, back off and give them room, we don't want them to panic and do something that could injure themselves, or worse, one of our riders.

The Road Captain and lead bikes should avoid quick accelerations following stops or sharp curves to prevent a **rubber-band or Yo-Yo effect**.

5. Lane Changes

When changing lanes the Road Captain will signal the lane change. Riders will pass the signal back to the rear guard, but maintain their position. The rear guard will secure the lane. After the lane is secured, the Road Captain or President will initiate the lane change depending if the move is to the left or right from front to rear. Use caution to make sure a cage two lanes over hasn't moved into the same lane in front of the rear guard. Also if the bike next to you is moving first, allow him to establish his track before you move next to him. Be aware that in some cases such as heavy traffic or short on-ramps there may not be sufficient room to wait for the rear guard to secure the lane.

6. Hand & Arm Signals

Pass hand and arm signals back through formation. You can also use turn signals in addition to hand & arm signals. Point out road hazards with left hand or feet. Tap top of head or helmet to alert riders of police or emergency vehicles. If you need to make a pit stop point to your tank; other riders will pass the signal to the front. A thumbs up means OK or I understand.

7. Intersections

In order to maintain a tight formation, the lead bikes may stop at an intersection and then the entire formation will proceed through the intersection as a group. Technically, the formation will be running the stop sign, so we will use caution to make sure there are no police in the immediate area. If traffic dictates, a road guard may post to stop cross traffic. Cages will normally wait until all bikes have maneuvered through the intersection before proceeding. Also it may be necessary for trailing bikes to run yellow lights in order to get the entire formation across intersections. Always use extreme caution. If it is not safe to cross, then stop. Also make sure you don't "gun it" to get across the intersection when the bike in front of you is stopping.

8. Road Guards

At times when the formation is entering the road from a parking lot or going through a four-way stop it may be conducive to post a road guard to block traffic until all bikes have passed. The road guard should preferably be a patch holder or if necessary a prospect. Hang-arounds and guests should not be expected to serve as road guards. Road guards should normally come from the rear of the formation up to the post and then return to their position after all bikes have passed. During parades or special rides, permanent road guard duties may be assigned. Be aware that blocking traffic is technically illegal, so use your discretion if there are police around before you stop traffic.

9. Highway Travel

Under most circumstance, the Road Captain will set a highway speed of between 70 and 75 mph, unless traffic, road conditions or law enforcement give reason to slow down to the posted speed limit or below. Lane choice on multilane highways is at the discretion of the Road Captain. The outside lane is usually the most dangerous due to entering and exiting traffic it should be avoided whenever possible. The inside lane or a middle lane will normally be the lane of choice depending on traffic flow, shoulders and medians. Lane changes may be necessary to pass slow moving vehicles. Try to give large trucks as much room as possible in case of excessive turbulence or items falling off of or out of their trailers.

10. Parking

When entering a parking lot, follow the lead bike (Road Captain or President). They will attempt to find parking that will accommodate the entire group. If you cannot park with the group then locate the next closest space to park.

11. Being Prepared

Make sure you have a full tank of gas and you bike is in running order before you arrive at the clubhouse or other meeting point. As KSU time approaches, finish your food and drinks, visit the restroom, and have you co-rider and gear ready. During rest stops, get your business done as quickly as possible so that the group isn't waiting on you.