



Paceline, June 1, 2018

Dear club,

'Is anybody interested in a slow D ride at 4:00, or maybe 4:30 if the wind is too strong? Let me know.'

Look gang, it's great to test the waters and try to offer rides that others are interested in doing, but the club is not a person. It's more like a slow, lumbering beast that pays attention fitfully, and you're expecting a lot if you expect to get clear signals back about a possible ride you might (or might not) put on a little later in the day. It's probably best to set out the ride you want to do, in some specificity, with no ifs, buts or maybes: 'I'll lead a mid-category C ride from Silver Dipper at 5:30 pm, and plan to ride about 40 miles.' If you develop a reputation as a solid leader, and you give at least 2 hours notice before your ride (preferably 4), somebody will most likely show up to ride with you. It's magic!

If you want more rides that leave at 6:00 pm because it's hard to make the 5:30 ones, then try leading one at that time. Advertise it in advance, plan it well, and perhaps ask an experienced leader to lead with you (that allows you a role model and some support to figure out what ride leaders do, plus gives you the option of one person leading, the other sweeping, or one subbing for the other if one of you has to miss the ride). Same thing, you want to lead a ride from Teays River Brewery on the south side, give it a try: investigate how you can safely start and finish from this location (9th Street just south of Armstrong Park), plot a good ride, and see how it goes. This goes for any locale you like, for whatever reason: the Teays River folks want us to buy their beer and wear their T shirts, and maybe you'd like to go in and drink a cold pint and eat something after your ride. Or maybe Fort Ouatenon, Clegg Garden, Mayflower Mill, Purdue West or one of the churches off of 231 strike you as fun or convenient. The point is, "if you build it, they will come." Put on the rides you want to ride.

We're making some changes in nomenclature and timing. Instead of having S/N rides, we are going to have a new category called "F" rides. The idea is that A rides = 19+ mph, B = 17-19, C = 15-17, D = 13-15, E = 11 - 13, and F = 9-11. Not everyone who wants to ride slowly is a novice or a senior! We're trying to offer a wide range of riding experiences that lots of

people will enjoy—and people may ride at a leisurely pace for lots of reasons--they only have a mountain bike, or they're 13 years old and haven't ever ridden any distance before, or they like to look at the scenery and talk as they ride.... Also, the All Club Rides from Kalberer on Thursdays are moving from 5:30 to 5:45, in response to many who lobbied for later starts because they find it hard to make it to earlier rides.

There are lots of skills that go into riding well. I watched a 15 minute video on shifting gears that Melissa posted on the club Facebook page, and thought to myself “that’s a really good mini-lesson in the usual, predictable issues and problems we all encounter with shifting gears in certain situations (going up hill, when your drive train is under load, or you’ve mistimed a crucial shift or thrown a chain). I’ve thought about doing a session on gear shifting on a hill climb ride (most of the rides I lead that involve going up hills), but this video is something you can watch and absorb while you’re cleaning your kitchen up or drinking a cup of coffee. And you can watch it a few times if you want to! Here’s the address for this video from Ask Gearist: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGWxxloWQP8&feature=youtu.be>

A weekend of hard riding at the Horsey Hundred reminded me of the importance not just of knowing how and when to shift gears, but how to descend steep hills, how to manage hydration and nutrition to deal with extremely hot, humid conditions, and how to pace yourself so you get through a long, arduous day. We had a great session on changing tubes at the end of one of the Women’s Rides, and everybody got to change a tube and put a rear wheel back on the bike—a skill that is essential for anyone who rides (and on the next Women’s Ride, sure enough, somebody had a flat, and we got to try those skills out in the wild!)

Whatever your goals—riding Dirty Kanza, doing the RAIN ride, riding your first metric or full century, becoming stronger and developing your endurance, riding a little faster, having leisurely conversational rides with friends—work on those essential skills (gear shifting, hydration & nutrition, pacing yourself, dealing with flats—and be responsible for making your riding experiences what you want them to be.

- Pat Boling

