

ROAD CAPTAIN TRAINING MANUAL



EL CAJON H.O.G. CHAPTER
#0211

RIDE SAFE - HAVE FUN

DISCLAIMER

Every effort has been made to ensure the information contained within this handbook is current and accurate. However, neither the El Cajon H.O.G. Chapter, El Cajon Harley Davidson, nor the Harley-Davidson Motor Company makes any claims as to the accuracy of the information published.

Introduction

Congratulations! By deciding to become a Road Captain you have volunteered for the most important position within the El Cajon HOG Chapter. At El Cajon HOG we just want to “Ride and Have Fun”. In order to have fun riding in a group, we have to be safe and that means having good, well-qualified Road Captains. You have already demonstrated that you have good riding skills or you would not have been selected as a Road Captain Candidate. This manual and your subsequent training will insure that you develop the other skills necessary to become a competent and fully qualified Road Captain.

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1. Objectives

As a Road Captain, you should have three basic objectives;

1. Provide for the safety and welfare of all individuals within the group, and any surrounding motorists, bicyclists or pedestrians.
2. Lead the group to its destination in a well organized, disciplined, and safe manner.
3. Avoid creating or exacerbating hazardous situations.

2. Road Captain Qualifications

2.1. Road Captain Candidate Pre-requisites

Road Captain candidates shall meet the following requirements;

1. Carry current motorcycle liability insurance.
2. Posses a valid California driver with motorcycle endorsement.
3. Be sponsored by a current Road Captain or a current Chapter Officer.

2.2. Road Captain Qualifications

Once an individual has been accepted as a Road Captain Candidate, he or she must demonstrate the following skills to become a fully qualified Road Captain;

1. Demonstrate the skills necessary to act as a Road Captain including the following;
 - a. Attend at least one skills class.
 - b. Follow the sweep during a group ride.
 - c. Sweep group ride with a Road Captain observing.
 - d. Follow the lead during a group ride.
 - e. Lead group ride with Road Captain observing.
 - f. Notice/Discuss unsafe/improper group riding techniques.
 - g. Accomplish a lane change from the sweep position.
 - h. Plan the route for one ride and conduct the pre-ride brief.
 - i. Attend two rider Zone classes.
 - j. Staging of groups.
 - k. Negotiate a group through an urban environment.
 - l. Demonstrate/discuss proper acceleration technique and good speed control.
 - m. Execute proper lane changes in both urban and highway environments.
 - n. Demonstrate/discuss the ability to recognize the experience/riding capabilities of the entire group.
 - o. Demonstrate knowledge of the proper use of hand signals.
2. Demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the *El Cajon HOG Group Riding Handbook* and the *Road Captains Training Manual* by either written or oral examination.

3. Have approval of the Head Road Captain and the Director.

3. Road Captain Responsibilities

As an El Cajon HOG Road Captain, you may be asked to perform several duties during a chapter ride. These duties include but are not limited to pre-ride briefings and inspections, being assigned to lead a ride, to sweep a ride or any mid sweep positions as designated by the Head Road Captain.

As an El Cajon HOG Road Captain, it is highly recommended that you bring the following items with you to all rides:

- a. First Aid kit
- b. Cell phone with numbers of other road captains on the ride
- c. Tool kit

3.1. Leading a Ride. As a RC assigned to lead a ride, you will:

- 3.1.1. Be in charge of the group until final destination has been reached.
- 3.1.2. Responsible for ensuring the safety of the group.
- 3.1.3. Conduct the pre-ride brief for all riders.
- 3.1.4. Change route as actual road/weather conditions dictates.
- 3.1.5. Will lead at a pace that is appropriate for the road and traffic conditions.

3.2. Sweeping a Ride. As a RC assigned to sweep the group or groups, you will:

- 3.2.1. Will be observant of any hazardous conditions or conduct and will inform the Lead Road Captain at the earliest safe opportunity.
- 3.2.2. In the event the group becomes split and there are no other Road Captains in the group, the Sweep will use his/her best judgment to determine which position (Lead or Sweep) to ride.

3.3. Other Duties. If assigned to ride within the group and your section becomes separated from the main body, you will assume the lead position of that section until your section rejoins the main body.

4. Safety Equipment

Although a first aid kit is highly recommended for a Road Captain, all riders should be encouraged to carry a first aid kit. HOG has an excellent kit, compact and contains the necessary items to perform first aid.

4.1. First Aid Kit

At a minimum, all Road Captains should carry a well stocked first aid kit consisting of at least the following;

- a. Sterile gauze squares.
- b. Antiseptic wipes for cleaning wounds.
- c. Clean Water.
- d. Rolled gauze, sufficient for administering minor first aid.
- e. Anti-Bacterial ointment.

4.2. Tool Kit

Although Road Captains are not mechanics, all Road Captains should carry a basic tool kit to assist others who may need to make minor repairs.

5. Road Captains' Pre-ride Briefing

All of the Road Captains for each ride will meet at least 30 minutes prior to departure for a Road Captains briefing conducted by the Head Road Captain or his/her designee.

6. Riders' Pre-ride Briefing

Prior to each ride, the Lead Rider or designee will conduct a briefing for the entire group. During this briefing the Lead Rider will review the route to the final destination and any pertinent road conditions. This should be done as expeditiously as possible. The following talking points shall be covered prior to every ride;

1. Staggered Riding – Alternating lane positions, 2 second interval to the rider in front of you, 1 second to the rider in the alternate track.
2. Stop Signs – Double up, proceed through as pairs and then separate back into staggered position.
3. Stop Lights – Stop if light turns red, regardless of position in the group. Proceed on green or when safe.
4. Lane Changes – Pass signal back, do not move, Sweep will move to block lane, once the lane is secured, Lead Rider will move, move only after the rider in front of you does.
5. Passing Traffic – Single up while passing, use your own judgment. Return to your own lane as soon as possible, leaving room for any rider behind you to get in.
6. Filling in a gap: if a gap occurs in the group while riding in staggered formation, the gap should remain until the following occurs:
 - a. The group reforms after a stopping at a stop sign or light.
 - b. The group transitions from single file to staggered formation.
7. Hand Signals
ALL HAND SIGNALS ARE TO BE PASSED BACK QUICKLY.
 - a. Single file.
 - b. Staggered.

- c. Slow down.
 - d. Speed up.
 - e. Left turn
 - f. Right turn
 - g. Obstacle left
 - h. Obstacle right
8. Emergency/Breakdown Events Procedure – If you are behind the event and can pass safely, keep moving cautiously. The Sweep Rider will stop and determine what is needed.

7. Riding Formations

The basic formation for all rides is the staggered formation. Road conditions will dictate when the Lead Road Captain will place the group in a single file formation. In some instances, the group may ride in a parade (side by side) formation. These instances must be clearly identified during the pre-ride brief.

8. Traffic Lanes

The group will stay in a single traffic lane whenever possible. In an urban environment, the Lead Road Captain should consider the distance to the next turn on the ride route and the direction of that turn when deciding which lane to utilize.

9. Lane Changes

A lane change refers to maneuvering the group into a new travel lane where the direction of traffic in the new lane is the same direction of travel of the group. Lane changes may be performed for a wide variety of reasons including passing slower traffic, maneuvering the group into a lane where the traffic speed is the same as the group wishes to travel or in preparation for turning onto an intersecting roadway or exiting a freeway. Lane changes should be kept to a minimum and, whenever possible, should be thought out in advance.

Lane Changes – Pass signal back, do not move, Sweep will move to block lane, once the lane is secured, Lead Rider will move, move only after the rider in front of you does.

NOTE: IF A LANE CHANGE IS REQUIRED AND THE TRAFFIC DOES NOT PERMIT A LANE CHANGE WITH THE SWEEP RIDER BLOCKING, THE LEAD ROAD CAPTAIN MAY INITIATE THE CHANGE WITHOUT WAITING FOR THE SWEEP RIDER. ALL SUBSEQUENT RIDERS SHALL THEN

**FOLLOW INTO THE NEW TRAVEL LANE, AS IT IS SAFE DO SO,
ALLOWING SPACE FOR OTHER VEHICLES/RIDERS AND THEN REFORM.**

10. Passing

Passing refers to maneuvering the group into a traffic lane where the direction of travel is in the opposite direction the group is riding. Passing will only be done on two lane roads (roads which have a single travel lane in each direction).

WARNING: PASSING MAY ONLY BE DONE WHERE SAFE AND LEGAL TO DO SO!

When the group encounters slower moving traffic and the Lead Road Captain determines there is sufficient room for the group to start passing safely, the Lead Road Captain shall maneuver into the oncoming traffic lane and accelerate past the slower traffic.

Each subsequent rider, in turn, should also maneuver into the oncoming traffic lane and accelerate past the slower traffic, then return to the initial traffic lane making sure there is sufficient room for the rider behind them to move into the lane.

11. Mentors

Each candidate will be assigned a mentor from the cadre of qualified Road Captains.

The mentor is responsible for training Road Captain Candidates and ensuring that he or she is familiar with the Road Captain Training Manual as well as the El Cajon HOG Group Riding Handbook.

12. Practical Exercise/Test

13.1. Practical Exercises

Upon becoming familiar with the contents of the Road Captain Training Manual, the candidate will undergo testing and practical exercises as determined by the Head Road Captain and the Chapter Director. These exercises will be overseen by the candidates mentor or any other qualified road captain.

13.2. Practical Test

At the completion of training, prior to receiving a Road Captain patch and becoming fully qualified as a Road Captain, the Road Captain Candidate will undergo a practical exercise whereby he or she will plan and lead a ride acting as Lead for the ride. The qualified Road Captains on the ride will evaluate the Candidate based on the following criteria;

1. Route plan.
2. Pre-ride briefing.
3. Acceleration from a stop.
4. Urban driving.
5. Freeway driving.
6. Lane changes.
7. Hand signals.
8. Traffic lane selection.
9. Passing.

13. Final Approval

Once the Candidate has completed the practical exercise, final approval to become a fully qualified Road Captain resides with the Head Road Captain. In addition to successfully completing the objective training, the Head Road Captain, with input from the cadre of qualified Road Captains, will take into account the candidates ability to think clearly and make good decisions, and if he or she finds the candidate capable, then the Head Road Captain will award the Candidate his or her Road Captain patch and vest making the candidate a fully qualified Road Captain.

The Road Captain patch will be awarded to the candidate at a monthly Chapter meeting.

14. Maintaining Qualifications

To maintain active Road Captain status each Road Captain is required to plan a ride once a year and attend at least one function a month, be it ride, Road Captain meeting or other Road Captain duty.