

VCC - SUNDAY CLUB RUNS GUIDANCE FOR RIDERS

1. Mission Statement

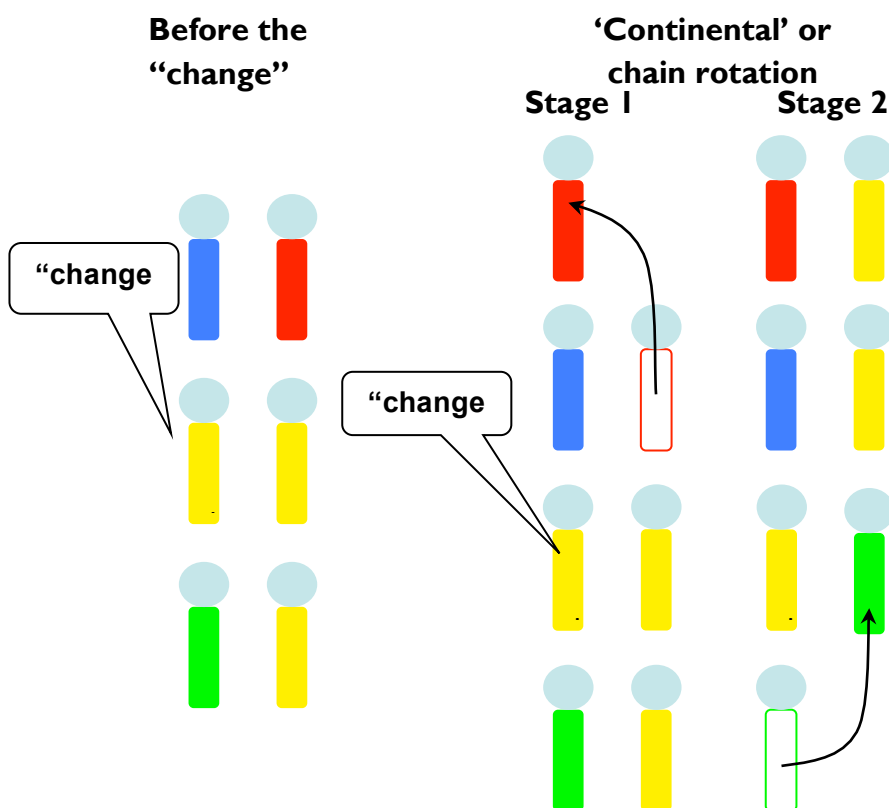
To deliver a safe and satisfying ride for riders within each group that conforms to the published formula of that group and allows for progression if required.

2. New members

2.1 New members are required to attend an introductory/safety briefing on a Monday club night. Also an introductory ride either on a Saturday or with a specified club run group on a Sunday.

3. Riding style - Riding for Safety (rules of the road)

3.1 Riders should rotate frequently (Continental style), ride together and wait, or slow, at top of hills.



3.2 Riders will conform to etiquette rules* eg Highway Code and calling out or pointing to potholes, safe consideration and practice and listen to the rider in front (see also section 8).

- 3.3 Riders should notify the Leader if they wish to split, or to go faster at the end of the ride into town (leader stays with main group until he/she specifies an end point). Example locations could be Wheathampstead or Gaddesden Lane, Redbourn.
- 3.4 Riders will ride as a tight group, 2 abreast, but will single-out when asked by the Leader or as demanded by road conditions. Front Inner rider speeds up, outer ride slots in behind.
- 3.5 On a hill, the Leader can suggest that riders take it at their own pace for training purposes, and meet at top.
- 3.6 Leader can suggest a faster pace on a safe flat section to improve speed skills for 2-3 miles.
- 3.7 All groups (except by agreement, Fast group) will ride at pace of slowest rider, regrouping at safe location after the top of hills etc.
- 3.8 A rider may be asked to move to another group (faster or slower) if their pace is considered unsuitable for the group they are currently with.
- 3.9 Riders may swap groups at the café stop but should advise their respective Leaders.
- 3.10 Riders should advise the Leader if they decide to leave the group for any reason.
- 3.11 Riders may be asked to leave the group if poor riding standards persist, if they consistently fail to follow the guidance of the Leader, or their behaviour or riding style is considered unsafe to other members of the group or other road users.
- 3.12 If a rider has a puncture or mechanical problem, the group will wait nearby in a safe location, unless the Leader advises otherwise.

Out of common courtesy and respect for the club and its members can we please request that 2nd Claim members avoid wearing their 1st Claim club kit on the Sunday club runs. Remember that the VCC kit is of top quality and is available at a very reasonable price :) Else, something more neutral would be more appropriate.

NB. 1. Social inters, Inters, Mods, Mods Plus and Rapides are likely to ride steeper hills at own pace and regroup at top. 2. Mods Plus, Rapides and Fast groups likely to incorporate speed play. 3. Sociables will not practice rotation riding.

* Etiquette rules:

As a minimum, the main 'rules' of riding should be:

- a. follow directly in line with the wheel in front, one wheel diameter behind, to keep the group tight and allow safe passage for passing vehicles
- b. avoid braking sharply
- c. point *and* call out potholes or other obstructions
- d. ride no more than 2 abreast, and single out when asked by Leader; do not ride ahead of group
- e. ride together as a group, and follow the rotation practice
- f. advise if a rider is off the back
- g. do not weave, keep a constant, parallel (do not half-wheel) and reasonably close distance to adjacent rider and do not get too close to middle of road
- h. follow and pass on instructions from the group Leader
- i. cycle must be in a roadworthy condition, with mudguards in wet conditions; riders without these may be asked to ride at the rear of the group. An extended *rear* mud flap is an added courtesy to other riders. Bikes fitted with tri-bars and the wearing of head phones should not be used on club runs. Riders should carry spare tube/appropriate tools
- j. we recommend you wear a helmet
- k. riders are encouraged to wear their club kit
- l. follow the highway code at all times, remember we share the road with others
- m. Second Claim members should not wear the kit of their First Claim club whilst riding on a VCC club run.

4. Ride categories – purpose and definitions

- 4.1 Pace: Speed quoted is an approximate average over several rides with good weather conditions, riding in a group; lower speed will apply on more hilly routes or in poor conditions.
- 4.2 Distance is a maximum to be expected each week.
- 4.3 Ability: A gauge as advice to riders new to the Club/group, indicating what a rider should be capable of when riding solo, in reasonable conditions.

4.1 SOCIAL

Aim: A social and relaxed ride. An ideal introduction to road cycling; the returning rider, or for those who just want to enjoy the countryside in good company and keep fit.

Ability: 22 miles in 2 hours.



Pace: Average 11-13 mph over distances of up to 50 miles.

Notes: This group will not ordinarily practice rider rotation, although other aspects of riding style (especially safety) will apply (see above).

4.2 YOUTHS

Aim: To introduce younger club members to group riding.

Ability: 28 miles in 2 hrs.

Pace: Average of 13-15 mph over distances of up to 50 miles at a moderate pace. A group to prepare youngsters for the faster groups. 14 mph over 50 miles, steady speed on flat with no wind 15mph.

4.3 SOCIAL INTERS

Aim: Reasonably paced consistent ride for general fitness. Introducing rotation in readiness for the Inters.

Ability: 28 miles in 2 hrs.

Pace: Average of 13-15 mph over distances of up to 50 miles at a moderate pace. A group for bridging the gap between the Social and Inters. 15 mph over 50 miles, steady speed on flat with no wind 15mph.

4.4 INTERMEDIATES

Aim: Reasonably paced consistent ride for general fitness.

Ability: 30 miles in 2 hrs.

Pace: Average of 14-16 mph over distances of up to 60 miles at a moderate pace. A group for bridging the gap between the Sociables and Mods. 15 mph over 50 miles, steady speed on flat with no wind 16mph.

4.5 MODS

Aim: A more challenging but still reasonable pace, suitable for most fit cyclists. Is suitable for riders progressing from the Intermediate group; is good preparation for sportive events.

Expect to average 15-18 mph over distances of up to 60 miles with one or more intense efforts when planned by the Leader. This will be followed by “wait ups” where the group will reassemble.

Ability: 32 miles in 2 hrs.

Pace: 16.5 mph over 60 miles, steady speed on flat with no wind 18mph.

4.6 MODS PLUS

Aim: A stretching ride for experienced riders. A faster pace, suitable for fitter riders and regular sportive entrants. Good training and preparation for events and progression to Fast group.

Riders should expect to average 16-19 mph over distances of up to 65 miles with some more intense efforts when planned by run leader. Typically these will be on longer hills, and at suitable locations en route. This will be followed by “wait ups” where the group will reassemble.

Ability: 34 miles in 2 hrs.

Pace: 17.5 mph over 65 miles, steady speed on flat with no wind 20mph.

4.7 RAPIDES

A group designed to help those aspiring to the Fast group. Pace is appx 1mph faster than Mods Plus.

4.8 FAST

Aim: Hard riding for competitive and experienced riders.

Riders should expect to average 18-21 mph over distances of up to 70 miles with frequent intense efforts, especially on hills and at suitable locations on route. This is a group for club riders who enjoy competitive, hard riding. Good race training.

Ability: 38 miles in 2 hours.

Pace: 19 mph over 70 miles, steady speed on flat with no wind 23mph.

5. Leader's style

Leader's role:

The Leader will plan and follow a suitable route, give assertive directions and advice to riders, ensuring appropriate road safety behaviour and courtesy to other road users.

- 5.1 Calls out rotation changes, is assertive re route directions and giving guidance to other riders re safety and etiquette. Will advise if a rider is too slow, too fast, or is unsafe. Will ensure pace is consistent, ensuring front riders retain required pace. Keeps an eye out for riders who are struggling.
- 5.2 Leader will need to be prepared to move up towards the front of the group in certain situations in order to ensure control is maintained. Eg if approaching a difficult set of junctions.
- 5.3 At start, leader will brief the group on the destination, any hazards en-route, and any other special riding plans or tips. Will also welcome and support new riders.
- 5.4 Leader will plan to get riders back to St Albans by 13:00.
- 5.5 **Deputy (or agreed volunteer on the day):** Will look out for riders who may be struggling, and give guidance and coaching to other riders. Will keep an eye to new riders. Will lead a split group if more than 12 riders, keeping suitable distance behind front group; having checked route prior to riding.
- 5.6 **Inclement weather.** Continuous heavy rain or ice forecast, leaders may choose not to lead.

6. The Café Stop

- 6.1 The destination for the ride is *emailed to all and published on the website*. It is the target of each runs leader to get his/her group to the Café Stop at 11:00 give or take a few minutes. Riders are urged to familiarise themselves with the destination prior to riding.
- 6.2 The Café Stop is a vital safety feature and ideal social opportunity for all members.
- 6.3 As a safety feature it is important for all riders to top up their carbohydrate stores after 2 hours (This is a British Cycling mandatory safety ruling see BC website) but must do so within 40 miles. This avoids certain loss of concentration (typically on hills) and is a courtesy to fellow riders. An alternate strategy is for riders to carry food with them if they intend not to stop or not to eat at the Café (but avoid consumption on the premises).

7. Departure arrangements

- 7.1 To ensure an organised and informed departure on club runs, the following arrangements will apply:

7.2 Riders assemble on wide pavement area adjacent to roundabout (Catherine Street/St Peters Street junction) from 08.45 as per the 'DEPART PLAN'.

7.3 nb: do not obstruct pedestrian access or entrance to shops

7.4 Riders meet their group and Leader at 08.55 (see below)

7.5 Groups depart at 0900.

Runs meeting points:

- Socials - by lamp post
- Youths – by telecoms cabinet
- Social Inters – outside Dolice Italia
- Inters - outside Tanning Shop
- Mods – outside right of Veer Dhara
- Mods Plus - outside left of Veer Dhara
- Rapides – outside Café Roma.
- Fast- outside Subway

7.6 If there is no leader for a given group, riders would be expected to ride with the next group down eg if no Social Inters group leader, riders would ride with Youths or Socials at that groups pace.

7.7 In the case of inclement weather groups may be without a Leader. In such cases, members should expect to combine into groups according to the number of people who have turned up for a ride, and for groups to be prepared to find their own way to the cafe venue.

7.8 Inclement weather applies to ice, and when there is heavy rain with no prospect of drier weather arriving by 10 am.

8. Advice for progression to a faster group

8.1 Riders should, as a minimum, be capable of staying at the front of the group they are leaving and be one of the first to reach the top of hills.

8.2 When joining a faster group a rider should be encouraged to stay in the group and participate in rotation and not drop to the back. The leader will be aware and call for a shorter change to conserve the new member's strength. This will avoid a 'Man Off' situation.

9. Instructions you'll hear while riding on a club run

Instruction	What it means
"Car up"	A car is <u>behind</u> the group and waiting to pass. <u>Await</u> instruction for your club run leader on whether to go single file.
"Car down"	A car is coming <u>towards</u> the group. <u>Await</u> instruction for your club run leader on whether to go single file.
"Single out"	Move into single file. Front inner rider speeds up creating a gap for the outer rider to drop in.
"Hole"	There's a pothole or bad road surface that you should avoid. Riders will point down, calling 'HOLE' left, middle or right.
"Easy"	Slow down, prepare to stop. Usually given on the approach to a junction.
"Gravel"	There's gravel or loose road surface, you should slow down, point down and call 'GRAVEL'.
"Clear left" or "Clear right"	There's no traffic coming from the left (right) and it's safe to proceed. Usually given after an "easy" instruction. But NEVER rely solely on the instructions of others – you must always check yourself whether it is clear to proceed.
"Change"	Rider(s) at the front of the group come off the front according to the rotation style of the group. <i>See 3.1</i>
"Stopping"	The group is going to stop.
"Steady"	Slow the pace by 1mph. (Called by the leader)
" Man Off"	A rider or riders have been dropped. Slow down to allow them to catch up and ride at a 'steady' pace.

Note: All these calls must be relayed up and down the group