

# Sun City West Cyclists

## Riding Agreements, Policies and Expectations

Our club's purpose is to provide fun, exercise and fellowship through the activity of cycling. Safety is our number one priority.

There is a daily club ride leaving from Echo Mesa parking lot each weekday morning. The start time varies by month. You can find the ride start times posted on our website at [bicycle.scwclubs.com](http://bicycle.scwclubs.com). We strongly encourage you to become familiar with the web site.

A few minutes before each ride we organize ourselves into smaller riding groups of 8 or less riders. Riding speed for the groups are as follows:

Fast group: 15 to 21 mph  
Half Fast group: 14 to 17 mph  
Moderate group: 12 to 15 mph  
Slow group 12 and under mph

When there are 10 or more riders in a group we divide into 2 or more smaller groups of 8 or fewer riders. We do this because we think it's safer.

Daily rides are one hour in duration with a 5 minute rest stop after 30 minutes. All rides then return to Echo mesa for coffee and socializing on the Echo Mesa patio. On Mondays, in addition to the regular 1 hr ride, there is the option of a long ride of 2 to 3 hrs.

In addition to the daily rides we have a monthly "out to dinner" social night. We have twice monthly Saturday breakfast rides, and a monthly off campus ride. Once you have joined the club you will be put on the distribution list to receive email updates on these and other activities.

## Safe Riding Agreements

Our safe riding agreements have evolved over the years based on discussions and agreements reached at our regular club meetings. As a member of the club we agree to abide by these agreements because the

behavior of each rider in a group affects the safety of all.

Helmets are required. Rear view mirrors are recommended.

It is the official policy of the club that we obey all traffic laws. That includes coming to a full stop at stop signs. If you choose not to come to a full, one foot down, stop you are accepting the risk of a \$200+ traffic fine. At the very least you must come to a near stop that allows for a thorough check for oncoming traffic before proceeding. All must understand that the rider in front of you may come to a sudden stop **AND** be prepared for that.

We have agreed that we ride as individuals not as a pack of riders. That is,. we are each responsible to check for traffic and make our own decisions at intersections regarding whether or not it is safe to proceed. For this reason we do not yell "clear" at intersections. It is **not** the ride leaders responsibility to get all riders in a group safely through and intersection. It **is** the leaders responsibility for leaders to wait for the all riders to catch up to the group if some of the riders are delayed at an intersection. Once all riders have rejoined the group riders at the rear should shout "all here" letting the leader know it's ok to proceed.

We use both voice and hand signals when turning, slowing, stopping and to indicate road hazards ahead. Rear end bike accidents are among the most common. Stopping abruptly in a group without yelling "stopping" is a hazard for all.

When cars are stopped at an intersection ahead of us we do not pass them on the right. Instead we bunch up behind them and follow them through the intersection then resume single file as soon as possible on the other side. This prevents cars from turning right in front of you or in to you.

Our preferred riding form is single file, leaving at least one and preferably two bike lengths between riders. Single file is considered mandatory on the busy main roads in our community. If you want to ride 2 abreast on a back street to talk to another rider we move back into single file when someone calls "car back". There will be plenty of time to socialize before rides, at the break and after the rides. Our most important safety rule is **pay attention to your riding and the road ahead.**

3 abreast riding is both illegal and frowned upon. Riding with earbuds or no handed riding in a group of riders is not accepted.

We don't pass other riders on the right and we don't pass the leader at an intersection. The exception to this rule is when riding single file and the leader waves up the rider behind to take the lead and then allows the other riders to move through on the right so that he can take up a position in the back of the line.

If during a ride you decide to "peel off" from the ride to go straight home or where ever, you should notify members of the group of you intention and move to the rear of the group to peel off to go your own way. This prevents unexpected surprise moves for the other riders as well as avoiding confusion for car drivers.

### **Taking the Lane:**

There are some riding situations when it is advisable for the group to take control of the lane by moving into the center of the lane.

When approaching a Left turn, riders in the back of the group should move to take the lane when traffic allows and tell the riders in front that they have the lane.

When waiting for traffic to clear at a stop sign or stop light we bunch up and take the lane to prevent traffic from coming up on our left side before we have cleared the intersection.

When there is a road hazard ahead that prevents riding on the the right side of the lane the group takes control of the lane to prevent being squeezed into the hazard.

### **Tips for leading a ride:**

When leading a pace line ( a line of single file riders ) and you would like to change leaders, the leader points to the center of the lane and moves to

the left. Then they wave the group through on their right side while moving to the back of the line. If there is a car back the riders should make room for the former leader to move into the line. The new leader should continue the same pace during the lead change. If they decide to pick up the pace it should be done gradually.

Always use voice and hand signals for turns, slowing, stopping and road hazards.

When leaving an intersection or making a turn, accelerate gradually to allow the rest of the group to catch up before proceeding at the desired pace.

When a car approaches from a side street, give them a friendly wave. The motion captures their eye as well as building good will.

Leaders should encourage new riders and riders unfamiliar with the route to lead while following behind them to call out the turns and to act as a mentor. The best way to learn the route is to lead it a few times.

**Again, Welcome to our club! Have fun! and Be Careful Out There!**