CHAPTER
ROAD CAPTAINS
REFERENCE GUIDE *

* NON OFFICIAL VERSION
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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Preface

As defined in the H.O.G. Chapter Charter, Head Road Captains and Road Captains are discretionary officers. The official duties and responsibilities of the Road Captains shall include:

Leading, Assisting, Planning and Organizing Closed and Open H.O.G. Chapter rides.

1.2 Objective of this Reference Guide

This Reference Guide is designed as a guiding tool for current and aspiring Road Captains.

It contains the objectives, responsibilities, ride position descriptions, and training objectives for Road Captains.

The overall mission of Road Captains is to pursue the safety and enjoyment for H.O.G. Chapter Members, Prospects and Ladies of Harley during rides.

This Reference Guide helps the Head Road Captains and Road Captains in pursuing this overall mission.

1.3 Responsibilities of Road Captains

As a Road Captain, there are a lot of responsibilities that come with the position, some of which are listed below:

1.- Be proactive
2.- Plan routes and pre-ride the routes whenever possible
3.- Meet and communicate with other riders before and during the ride
4.- Be a positive, enthusiastic and helpful mentor to other riders
5.- Create a fun and safe environment for riding
6.- Look at rides through the eyes of all riders, new and experienced
7.- Understand that there are different riding styles
8.- When working to correct or modify improper or unsafe riding in groups, do so as privately and quietly as possible
9.- Be a role model for newer riders
Section 2: Training and Qualifications

The purpose of Road Captain training is to provide specific group riding experience, leadership and evaluation of each Road Captain in an effort to improve and maintain each person’s knowledge, skill level and experience.

The program will consist of: riding skill assessment, encouraging rider assertiveness, reviewing group rider concepts and Road Captain riding positions. Open road riding and the discussion of riding scenarios will be part of the training. Ideally, training and group riding exercises will be conducted throughout the year.

2.1 Road Captain Qualifications

All Road Captains (current and prospective) will have:

- A valid driver’s license with a motorcycle endorsement if required
- Current motorcycle liability insurance.
- Current International and Local Chapter H.O.G. memberships.
- Be nominated by a current Road Captain, Primary Officer and/or H.O.G. Manager
- Have a mentor who is a current Road Captain – the mentor may be chosen by the prospective Road Captain or assigned by the Head Road Captain, Primary Officer and/or H.O.G. Manager
- Be approved by the Head Road Captain, Primary Officer and/or H.O.G. Manager
2.2 Road Captain Proficiencies

All current Road Captains will be expected to have completed the training or have the proficiencies listed below:

- While not requiring it, we strongly recommend that all Road Captains have a current certification in First Aid/CPR.

- Will be able to use all of the current Chapter hand signals.

- Will demonstrate the skills necessary to act as a Lead Road Captain, including:
  
  - Plan the route for a ride
  - Place Organize riders into groups according to ability or special needs
  - Recognize and adjust the ride to the experience and skill level of the entire group being led
  - Negotiate a group through an urban environment
  - Show proper acceleration and slowing technique
  - Execute lane changes in urban and highway environments
  - Exhibit the proper technique for passing other vehicles on both two lane and multi-lane roads

- Will demonstrate the skills needed to ride as Sweep Road Captain (including lane changes).

- During a group ride, can recognize improper riding techniques.

- Can conduct the pre-ride meeting, including completing of the Pre-ride Checklist.

- Be aware of changes in road conditions or weather and change ride plans as needed.

2.3 Expectations of Road Captains

- Road Captains will be active participants in group rides.

- Road Captains will attend and complete courses in First Aid/CPR.
2.4 Becoming a Road Captain

Chapter Members wishing to become Road Captains may do so if they choose.

Applicants for Road Captain are required to have been an active member participating in group rides for a minimum of 1 riding season.

This requirement may be waved based on the individuals riding experience.

The training and experiences of Road Captains produce better riders in general and Road Captains provide a valuable service to the chapter.

If you are interested in becoming a Road Captain do the following:

· Contact or ask the Head Road Captain, Primary Officers of the Chapter and/or H.O.G. Manager or a current Road Captain to sponsor you as a prospective Road Captain or inform the Head Road Captain, Primary Officers of the Chapter and/or H.O.G. Manager of your interest.

· Find a Road Captain mentor from those who are current. You may choose a mentor or you may be assigned a mentor by the Head Road Captain, Primary Officers of the Chapter and/or H.O.G. Manager.

· The Head Road Captain, Primary Officers of the Chapter and/or H.O.G. Manager will either approve your choice for a mentor or assign one at their discretion. A mentor must be a Road Captain that has been acting in that capacity for a period of no less than 1 riding season.

· Once a mentor has been assigned, you are now considered a “Probationary” Road Captain.

· With your mentor, plan a group Chapter rides of 25-40 miles that requires one to two hours to complete. The route should include varied roadways and intersections. There should be one or two stops in the ride.

The plan itself will include:

- A detailed map and written directions for the ride
- To avoid surprises, you should pre-ride the ride whenever possible
- Plan to conduct the pre-ride meeting and choose a sweep for your ride – the sweep must should be a current Road Captain if at all possible

· With your mentor, learn about the roles of the LEAD and SWEEP in group rides and practice them in group training rides.

· With your mentor, you will continue to plan and co-lead rides, acting in the
capacity of both lead and sweep.

- When your mentor feels that you are proficient in all the areas required to LEAD and SWEEP a Chapter ride, they will inform the Head Road Captain that you are ready for a final evaluation.

- The Head Road Captain; Primary Officers and/or H.O.G. Manager must participate in the final evaluation ride that you lead. This is the “final exam” of your probationary period.

- Final approval of new Road Captains will be made by the Head Road Captain, Primary Officers of the Chapter and/or H.O.G. Manager in consultation with other Road Captains, Primary Officers and/or H.O.G. Manager

Section 3: Road Captain Job Description

3.1 Head Road Captain

3.1.1 Duties

- In conjunction with the Primary Officers of the Chapter and/or H.O.G. Manager, ensure the Chapter has an adequate number of qualified Road Captains to provide a safe and enjoyable riding environment on group rides.

- Provide leadership and direction to all Road Captains.

- Maintain open communication with all Road Captains and with the Primary Officers of the Chapter.

3.1.2 Responsibilities:

- Attend Primary Officers’ meetings, providing input into future rides and events.

- Screen all Road Captains for proficiency on all Road Captain Qualifications.

- Develop and maintain adequate training tools for all Road Captains.
3.2 Road Captain

3.2.1 Duties:

The principal duty of the Road Captain is to lead, assist, plan and organize open and closed H.O.G. Chapter rides.

3.2.2 Responsibilities:

· Following the guidelines above, keep current on all qualifications and proficiencies

· “Keep your eyes open” concerning the riding, aptitudes and attitudes of other riders in a group – when necessary, speak to other riders in a quiet and private manner

3.2.2.1 Before a ride, the Road Captain shall:

· Arrive at the departure site fully fueled and at least 15-30 minutes prior to the listed departure time for the ride

· Be well rested

· Be familiar with the intended route, having pre-ridden the route if possible

· Actively participate in the pre-ride discussion with the Lead Road Captain for that ride

· Be prepared for any emergency that may occur on the ride, for example, every Road Captain should carry a basic First Aid kit in/on their bike.

3.2.2.2 During a ride, the Road Captain shall:

· Perform the duties of the group riding position (Lead or Sweep) to the best of his ability while ensuring the safety and welfare of all individuals within the group, as well as surrounding motorists, pedestrians and cyclists

· Maintain a “Safety First” attitude at all times
3.2.1.3 After a ride, the Road Captain shall:

Contribute to the continual improvement of all future rides with the (Lead and Sweep) about the quality of the ride and their effectiveness in the ride.

Section 4: Riding Positions for Road Captains

There are two riding positions for Road Captains within a group ride.

They are: Lead and Sweep.

Each of those roles has a specific position in the group and specific responsibilities.

4.1 Lead Riding Position

In a staggered riding formation, the Lead Road Captain is positioned at the front of the group in the right 1/3 of the lane.

This position is maintained throughout the ride except when the group forms a single file formation.

In the event that a rider on trike rig or a sidecar rig is the Lead, that rider should ride in the middle of the road.

4.1.1 General responsibilities:

- Determine the route for the ride. Make a map and/or write directions for the ride. Whenever possible, pre-ride the route for the ride. Make any changes to the map or directions that are needed.

- Lead the group from the starting point to the designated destination.

- Manage all aspects of the ride.

- Give direction to all Road Captains in order to maintain a safe and enjoyable ride for everyone.

- While riding, communicate your intentions to the group with the hand signals used by the chapter.
4.1.2 Specific Duties:

· On the day of the ride, assemble all Road Captains for a pre-ride discussion at least 15-30 minutes prior to departure time. The more riders expected for a ride, the earlier this process should begin.

· Conduct a pre-ride discussion with the Road Captains to finalize the details of the ride. During that discussion, designate riding positions to all the Road Captains.

· Assemble the entire group at least 10-15 minutes prior to the departure time for the ride. Proceed through each item on the Pre-ride Check List.

Hand out maps or direction for the ride. That sheet should contain cell numbers for all the Lead and Head Road Captains. Announce the departure time, the “Five Minute Call”.

· Line the bikes up with the Lead bike at the head of the formation.

· With everyone mounted, the Lead’s raised hand indicates that all bikes should fire and be ready for departure.

· When all are ready, move the group onto the roadway.

· Gradually increase speed consistent with speed limit and traffic flow.

· Be sure to always use the chapter hand signals. as necessary.

4.2 “Sweep” Riding Position

The Sweep position is the last position in the group.

This position is maintained throughout the ride unless otherwise directed by the Lead.

If a motorcycle should join the group, the Sweep will retain the last position in the group.
4.2.1 Specific duties:

- Actively participate in the pre-ride discussion.

- At the direction of the Lead and immediately after the “five minute call” the Sweep should move to the entry point of the group to the open road. Once there, the Sweep should facilitate the movement of the group onto the road.

- When the group has moved by, the Sweep should fall into line at the rear of the group.

- If an individual rider in the group pulls out of the group and gives the thumbs down signal, the Sweep will also pull out to assess the situation. The Sweep will give assistance to the rider and return to the group when possible.

- In concert with the Lead, the Sweep will protect the group from the rear during lane changes.

4.3 Supplies for Emergency Situations

- The cell phone numbers of Road Captains and Primary Officers

- Emergency numbers for police in the area

- A basic First Aid kit

- A cell phone

- A camera (the one in your cell phone is acceptable)

- Copies of the following forms:
  
  Event Release Form
  Adult Release Form
  Minor Release Form

Completed paperwork is to submitted to the Chapter Secretary at the next available opportunity.
Section 5: Road Captain References

5.1 Pre-Ride Briefing

Prior to each ride, the Road Captains will conduct a briefing for the entire group. During this briefing the Road Captain will review the route to the final destination, planned stops as applicable, procedure for return ride (i.e. on your own, organized groups, and routes home if needed) and if necessary, break the riders into groups for safety. Road Captains and Sweeps will be identified for each group. The Road Captain shall conduct the pre-ride brief utilizing the briefing sheet. The briefing should be done as expeditiously as possible.

The following talking points should be covered prior to every ride:

- **Introductions** - Introduce Road Captains and assigned positions for ride.
- **Route** - Explain route for the ride (distribute maps and directions if needed).
- **Alcohol** – If you drink, you do not ride with us. (max 2 beers with meal)
- **Staggered Riding** – 1 sec interval minimum, alternating lane positions, 2 sec interval to rider directly behind.
- **Stop Signs** – Double up, proceed through as pairs and then return to normal staggered formation.
- **Stop Lights** – Stop if the light turns red, regardless of your position in the group. Proceed on green when the way is clear.
- **Lane Changes** – Pass signal back, each rider is ultimately responsible for their own safety. If possible, on multiple lane highways, the Lead and Sweep should secure the lane will coordinate lane changes.
- **Passing Traffic** – Single up while passing, use your own judgment to initiate the pass. The Road Captain in the passing lane indicates no oncoming traffic and. Return return to your own lane and proper formation as soon as possible. Warning: Passing may only be done where legal to do so!
- **Special Considerations** - Any personal needs, place in the formation, etc.
- **Release Forms** – Non-Member guests and minors are required to fill out a release form.
- **Groups** – Rider placement. Try to limit groups to 7-8 bikes.
- **Tanks Full/Bladders Empty** - Sorry, but we need to ask that!
- **Identify riders who are First Aid certified**