

ROAD

CAPTAIN

COURSE

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Phoenix, AZ 85027

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Road Captain Course Components

Road Captain Course
Introduction

Road Captain
Guidelines

Road Captain
Quiz
&
Answers

Teacher's Outline
Road Captain
Guidelines

Certificate

Road Captain

John Doe

Rocker

(Gold on White)

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ROAD CAPTAIN COURSE

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INTRODUCTION

These are a set of guidelines to help aid in training a group to ride safely as a team. These guidelines are intended to be used in conjunction with the GWRRA Team Riding Manual. It seems like everywhere you go, each group appears to ride a little different. It is our hope that this set of guidelines will help in teaching techniques that may become used universally. If someone in Virginia participates in a ride in Arizona or Maine, they will fit in with the way each group rides, because each group rides the same.

The Road Captain Course is designed for all who want to participate. The person who really wants to be a group leader will benefit the most, but encourage the co-riders and riders who are not interested in being leaders to take this course. Everyone will learn something that will be useful. The co-rider can help by pointing at an object in the road so the next bike may be able to avoid that object, or give a hand signal for single file formation, etc.

When teaching these guidelines, find a nice day that you can find 5 or 6 hours teaching and practicing these guidelines. Each student shall receive a copy of the Introduction for Students, Road Captain Guidelines, Hand Signals, and Terms that they can keep. The classroom portion of this can be done in a couple of hours. After all is said and discussed in the classroom, there is a quiz that should be given. Make enough copies of the quiz for everyone. This quiz is not to be used to grade the student, and you should not have them sign or write their name on their quiz. The quiz is strictly used as a tool to insure that the material has been covered and understood. If you find that a lot of people missed the same question, then you may wish to re-discuss the topic in question.

After the classroom portion is done, then divide into small manageable groups and plan a short ride. It is very important that each group has at least one "Road Captain," or at least an experienced rider. Since you will not have qualified "Road Captains" for your first class ride, you may wish to hold that class for 3 - 5 of your experienced riders. Then, when you hold future classes, you will have qualified "Road Captains" to help you with the group rides after the classroom session. Have each of the riders switch positions after awhile so that each rider has a chance to lead the group in the "lead" position and in the "drag" position. **Make it very clear that each participant is responsible for the safety and control of their own bike.**

Your next regularly scheduled meeting may be a good time to present each person who participated in the course with a Road Captain rocker, which can be worn under his or her Chapter patch. Some Chapters may also want to present a certificate of completion with the rocker.

These guidelines are broken into 22 segments, in the approximate order that they will happen. Each segment should be talked about before going on to the next. Do this in an open discussion type setting. You may find different points of view on some of the segments, and you may find yourself agreeing with some of these other ways; but keep in mind that these are tried and tested ways that work. Also, keep in mind that we are trying to keep a format that all GWRRA groups will use in the same way.

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**Teachers Outline
ROAD CAPTAIN GUIDELINES**

References herein made to **Lead** correlate to Team Point
in the Team Riding Manual and
references to **Drag** correlate to Team Captain.

<p>Try to arrive at the meeting place early, with a full fuel tank. The person who sets up the ride is usually the Trip Coordinator and, in most cases, also the Drag of Group #1 unless he/she gives up that responsibility.</p> <p><u>Important point.</u></p> <p>Ensure you discuss the fact that there are <u>TWO ROAD CAPTAINS</u>, the Lead and the Drag. This demonstrates teamwork between the Lead & Drag in <u>guiding</u> the group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive early. • Gas up before the ride. • Discuss differences and importance of the following positions: • <u>Trip Coordinator:</u> Ride Coordinator (Person who set up trip) • <u>Chapter Educator:</u> or officer helping guide the discussion. • <u>Lead:</u> (First bike in the group) one of the TWO acting Road Captains in a group). • <u>Drag:</u> (Last bike in the group; One of the TWO acting Road Captains in a group). • The person who sets up the ride may be the best one that knows the route and may be a good choice to take the Lead position.
<p>As participants begin to arrive, get them in place, keeping in mid that some folks may not have CB capability. If there are 3-wheelers (trikes), place them at the rear of the group (in front of Drag); they can stop faster, bikes with a trailer or sidecar can take longer to stop and may go near the front of the group.</p> <p><u>Important point.</u></p> <p>Placement of bikes with no CB. Very important! Here is where hand signals (discussed now or later) play a very important part. <u>Single file, Staggered, Hazard.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss placement strategy of non-CB bikes. • Place bikes with without a CB between two bikes that do have a CB. • Trikes, trailers and sidecars should be spaced as if they were in single file.
<p>If more than 5 bikes show up, ask if there is another Lea/Drag on site, and get them to begin setting up another group. The ideal group size is 3-5 bikes.</p> <p><u>Important points.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There must be a <u>Lead (Road Captain)</u> and a <u>Drag (Road Captain)</u>. • 3 to 5 bikes are ideal. Road Captains Choice. Remember that these are <u>Guidelines</u>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For each group, there must be a <u>Lead and Drag</u>. • A group of 3 to 5 bikes is IDEAL. • Cars entering or exiting a highway may be more inclined to <u>cut through</u> a larger group, as will other aggressive drivers.

<p>Send some time looking at the bikes that are going to be in your group, keeping an eye out for any obvious safety problems. Get your group members to assist, as additional eyes will see more than just one pair.</p> <p><u>Important point.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The T-Clock inspection should have <u>weeded out</u> any bikes with safety or major defects. Don't let them ride with you; <u>do not endanger the group!</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bikes with marginal tires should be placed in the back of a group in case they have a problem. • While on a ride, if someone develops a brake problem, place them at the front of the group (just behind the Lead.) If their brakes should fail, they won't run into anyone in the group. • Be tactful!
<p>At about 5 minutes prior to the announced departure time, begin to get your group to mount up so that all groups can leave at the appointed time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage all groups about 5 minutes before departure time. • Have each group leave about 1 minute apart. • If after leaving, one group comes up on another group, slow down and keep a good distance between groups.
<p>Choose your Drag/Lead early and discuss the route that you will be taking the kind of terrain that the group will be riding through, etc. Make sure that all members of your group know the route. If you know the route in advance, you might draw up a map and make copies for all group members.</p>	<p>Discuss:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rest stops 2. Speed 3. Any known road construction 4. Weather 5. Personal needs (Diabetics, bladder problems, etc.)

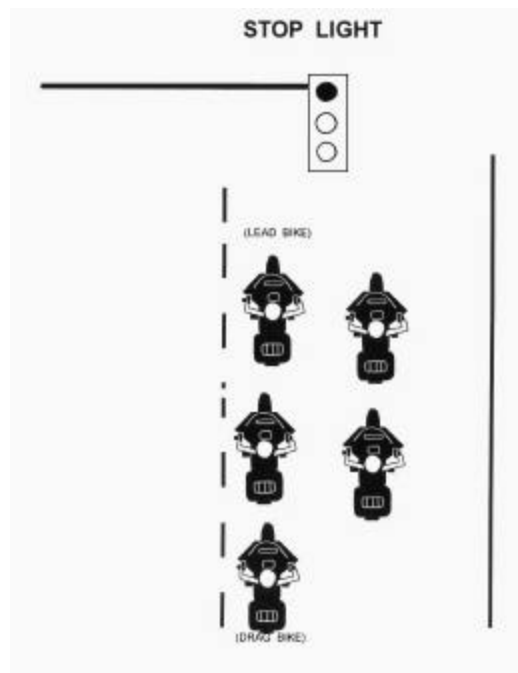
<p>If the ride will be going through the kind of terrain that some people may have trouble with, ask other Road Captains if they would volunteer to Lead/Drag a slower group. This group may choose to leave a little earlier than the other groups, or later. Be sure that the slower group is aware of scheduled stops, so that everyone will have a chance to get together for lunch, etc.</p>	<p>What are the advantages & disadvantages of this group going out first/last?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination • Time • Weather
<p>If your group has a bike without a CB, go over the hand signals with this person. Make sure that this person, and all other group members, know the route and approximate length of time between breaks.</p> <p><u>Important points.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Important. <u>Everyone should learn the first three hand signals.</u> (Single file, staggered file, hazard). Successful implementation of the Road Captain Course is based on three hand signals and everyone using them. Have the students turn to the Hand Signals and demonstrate the <u>first three</u>. • Lead initiates the hand signal and the hand signal is <u>passed back through the group</u>. Co-riders should give the hand signals also. <u>A hazard can be signaled by anyone in the group.</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>All</u> persons in the group should know the hand signals for <u>necessary</u> communication!! • See Hand Signals Attachment • Even if everyone has a CB, a hand signal should be used for Single File, Staggered File and Road Hazard. • The reason is that some people have their radio louder than the CB and don't always hear each command, or the CB is busy and hand signal is the only way. • Discuss proper passing of hand signals through the entire group. • Lead initiates the hand signal; Second bike repeats hand signal; third bike repeats hand signal; Fourth bike repeats, etc. • The Drag can confirm to Lead when hand signal makes it to the back of group. This also confirms that each rider got the message. • Let your group know whether they will be <u>starting</u> in a Single File or Staggered File formation.

Lead should start out slow, allowing time for all group members to get out onto the road and into position. Then, increase speed to cruising speed (per designated speed limits). And, when stopped at a stop light, have everyone double up side-by-side.

Important points.

- **Only the Lead bike should use the high beam.** Others in the group with high beams (or modulators on) will inhibit the driver in front of them of being able to concentrate on their driving and scanning.
- Don't believe it, try it! Be courteous to your fellow riders/co-riders!
- If the group gets temporarily split, don't forget the first bike in the new split is the temporary **Lead**.
- As the **Lead** passes information back through the group by hand signal, the **Drag** should acknowledge when he receives the information, or clears a light, passes a hazard, etc.
- Motorcycles should double up at stop signs or traffic lights, side-by-side. (May not be legal in all states. Check your local laws). **See Diagram**

- The Lead bike should have high beams on during the daytime for better visibility to on-coming traffic.
- Discuss communications the Lead or Drag may transmit, such as group out safely & together, increase speed, group is split, and discuss needed actions.
- If the Lead should mention a road hazard or vehicle approaching from left/right, the Drag should confirm when he has passed that hazard or vehicle. This lets the Lead know the group is together and okay.
- When traveling through an area with many stop lights, the Drag should -- as a courtesy -- let the Lead know that the group is through each light (mostly in congested areas).
- When stopped at a stop light, have everyone double up, side-by-side.
- **See Diagram**



Where road conditions permit, ride in the staggered formation. However, if your travel route takes you onto narrower roads or road conditions that indicate the need, call for a single file formation -- both by CB and by hand signal.

Important points.

- Lead will **always** initiate the hand signals for single file or staggered file formation.
- **Drag** can request **Lead** to issue a hand signal. For example, being passed by an 18-wheeler, the group should go to a single file formation to avoid wind blast and get the maximum space cushion. **Drag** to **Lead**, *go to single file please, 18-wheeler passing in the left lane.* **Lead** signal single file and move to the right track.
- Anyone can point out a hazard or initiate a signal for a hazard.
- Everyone should use hand signals!

- This should always be done by the Lead; however, the Drag may need to request a single file formation of the Lead.
- Suggest that hand signals be used even if everyone has a CB.

ROAD CAPTAIN COURSE HAND SIGNALS

Hand signals for communicating while riding:

<p>HAZARD IN ROAD Point immediately with emphasis. (Sometimes this must be done with right arm.)</p> 	<p>SINGLE FILE Arm and index finger extended straight up.</p> 	<p>STAGGERED FILE Arm extended straight up with "horns" sign.</p> 	
<p>STOP (Slow Down): Arm extended straight down, palm back. Animal or physical hazard in road, point to hazard.</p> 	<p>SPEED UP: Arm down to side, fist clenched with twisting motion as if turning throttle.</p> 	<p>FOLLOW ME: Arm extended straight up from shoulder, palm forward.</p> 	<p>PULL OFF: Arm positioned as for right turn, forearm swung toward shoulder.</p> 
<p>TURN SIGNALS (Accelerator left on): Open and close hand with fingers and thumb extended.</p> 	<p>HEADLIGHT: Tap on top of head, open palm down.</p> 	<p>FUEL: Arm out to side, upper arm about 45 degrees below horizontal, forearm pointing to tank with forefinger extended.</p> 	<p>FOOD, COFFEE STOP: Fingers closed, thumb to mouth.</p> 
<p>COMFORT STOP: Upper arm extended horizontally, forearm straight up, fist clenched with short up and down motion.</p> 	<p>YOU LEAD: Arm extended (palm forward) down. Begin behind hip and swing forward in an arc away from body about 45 degrees from vertical. COME ALONGSIDE: Same motion, but stop at side and point to position for other cycle.</p> 		

Once on the road, assume the standard staggered formation for **Lead** and **Drag**. **Lead** bike is always in the left track of the lane you are traveling in.

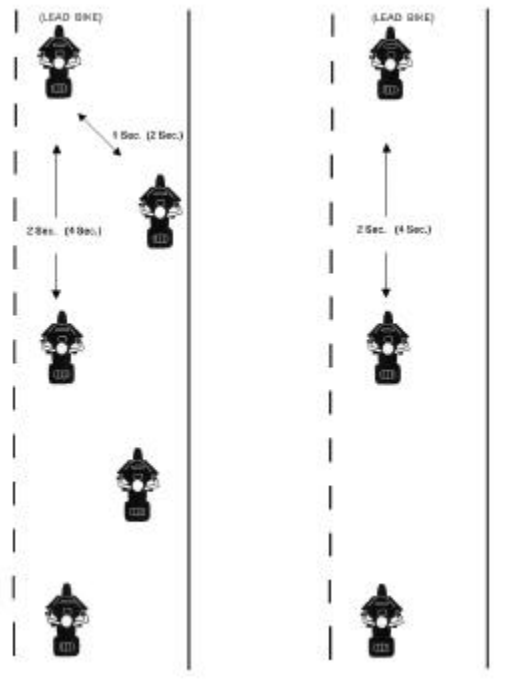
Important points.

- **Hint: The diagrams explain spacing very well. Use them!**
- Demonstrate how to count to two. (One-one thousand, two-one thousand).
- Ensure everyone understands staggered file spacing (one second between bikes) and single file spacing (two seconds between bikes).
- Ensure everyone understands adverse weather spacing (4 second gap).

IMPORTANT

- See Diagram

- Note this Lead position also applies when traveling in a passing lane.
- Discuss staggered formation and spacing:
 - 1 second / 2 second
 - Discuss staggered formation and spacing:
 - 2 second / 4 second
 - If using a single file formation, the Lead may use the center track of the lane.
 - You will find that even in a single file formation, most riders will stay slightly staggered. This is okay as long as they are 2 to 4 seconds behind the bike in front of them.
 - Sometimes you may need to go to single file for a brief moment to pass a bicycle or pedestrian. All bikes should follow in the same track as the Lead.
- See Diagram

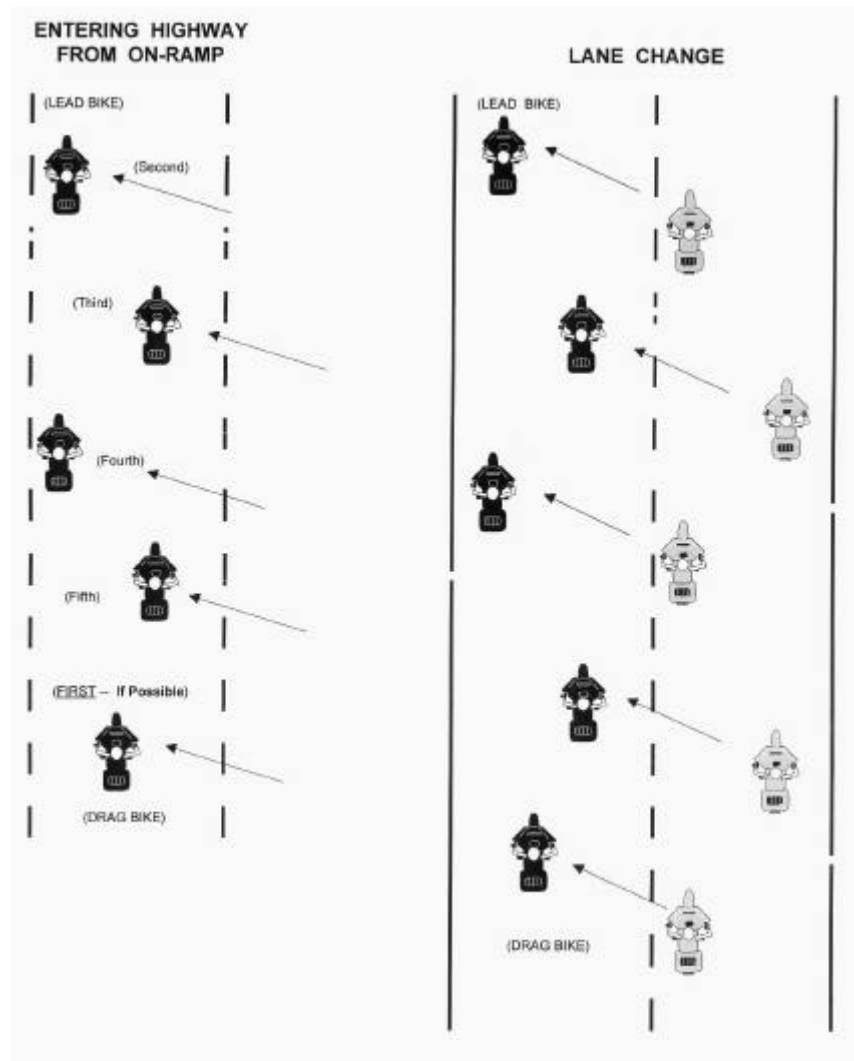


When you have a choice of several lanes, **Lead** should plan lane changes in advance. Conditions will occur that call for immediate action; but most of the time, you can tell that you will want or need another lane.

Important points

- **Hint: Correct on-ramp diagram. Lead first, Drag is last.** Use the diagrams to explain movement.
- When entering traffic from an on-ramp, you should enter as quickly and safely as possible. Don't try to get fancy, just get out safely.
- Don't attempt to block a lane with your motorcycle. It is probably illegal and certainly is dangerous. **Drag** is last out!
- **See Diagrams**

- Plan ahead.
- Don't wait until the last minute.
- Make it flow smoothly when entering traffic from an on-ramp.
- When entering traffic you should merge as quickly as safely as possible.
- **Everyone Be Alert!**
- **See Diagram**



Lead should call the **Drag** and ask him/her to **secure the left/right lane**. **Drag** will move to the requested lane and call back that the lane is secured. At that time, the **Lead** will announce to the group to **Look left/right and move left/right**. The **Drag** should check to see that all members have checked left/right over their shoulder before making the lane change. All group members should be encouraged to move as a unit, and move with the bike directly in front of them. This makes for a safer and smoother lane change by the group. An individual bike diving across lanes can cause the remainder of the group to have to brake or swerve.

Important points.

- **Hint:** Don't read the words like left/right. Use left or right, he or she. Less confusing and the students will understand you much better. For example, Look left and move left.
- Everyone will have a different dialogue when they are the Leader or Drag. Emphasize that after the Drag has announced the lane is secure; the Lead will then announce to the group when to change lanes. Don't hesitate too long after the lane is secure to announce when the group should change lanes.
- Everyone must use their turn signals and do a head check. If the Drag observes some of the riders are not doing this, the next lane change, the Drag should remind everyone. For example, Everyone use their turn signals and do a head check.
- Riders without a CB will not know what is happening if turn signals are not used.
- There are two basic staggered lane change techniques. One for normal traffic where everyone changes lanes as a unit and one for heavy traffic conditions where everyone changes lanes separately from front to rear.

- Maintain consistency in dialogue between Lead and Drag when requesting lane changes.
- Clear and understandable communications are important to the group's safety. Consistency can only help in this respect.
- The Lead should be consistent in dialogue when telling the group to change lanes (i.e., Look left and move left).
- Everyone should use their Turn Signals for lane changes and make a Head Check before moving into the desired lane.

The recommended sequence when changing lanes as a unit is:

1. Lead: Drag, secure the left lane please.
2. Drag: Left lane is secure. (Short pause).
3. Lead: Everyone look left. (Short pause).
4. Lead: Everyone move left! (Everyone moves as a unit).

The recommended sequence when changing lanes in heavy traffic is:

1. Lead: Drag, secure the left lane please.
2. Drag: There is a red van in the lane. It will be safe to move after the red van has passed you. Do a head check before changing lanes. (Everyone changes lanes separately starting from the rear to the front)!

<p>Keep the length of a ride down to a reasonable time between breaks. Remember, your co-rider may tire before you do.</p> <p><u>Important point</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just remember if someone has to go to go, they have got to go! Smaller bike, smaller tanks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider fuel tank capacity of the bikes in your group. • Consider any physical or health needs of participants. • Consider the needs of children.
<p>Keep to the right lane at all times, unless passing or conditions in the right lane warrant staying in the left lane, such as on/off ramps of interstate highways. On divided highways (with 3 lanes on your side), you might want to stay in the center lane, versus constantly changing lanes.</p> <p><u>Important point</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the choice of the Lead. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In heavier traffic, keep your groups small and CB clear.
<p>If you notice that the group is spreading out, or getting sloppy in the formation, don't hesitate to tell the group to close it up or to get the formation back into proper alignment. This is especially true for the Drag, because he/she has the best view of the group. Remember that the group's safety is as much a concern of the Drag as it is the Lead.</p> <p><u>Important point</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drag can see this, don't let it happen. If someone continues to do this, privately talk to him or her at the next stop. A <u>wide</u> gap invites trouble. Get with the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A spread-out group invites another vehicle to possibly split the group. • The rider creating the gap causes himself or herself, and the riders behind, to constantly speed up to catch up, and to slow down to properly space again.

When pulling off the road or preparing to stop, find an area that will accommodate the entire group. Pull into the area, ride to the end, and swing the front of your bike out. Then back up to the curb. All bikes should follow suit. This makes for a neat formation when parked and leaves more room for the other groups or for non-riders to park. Always remember that we want to make a good impression on the general public, and not hogging all available parking spaces is just one more way to do this.

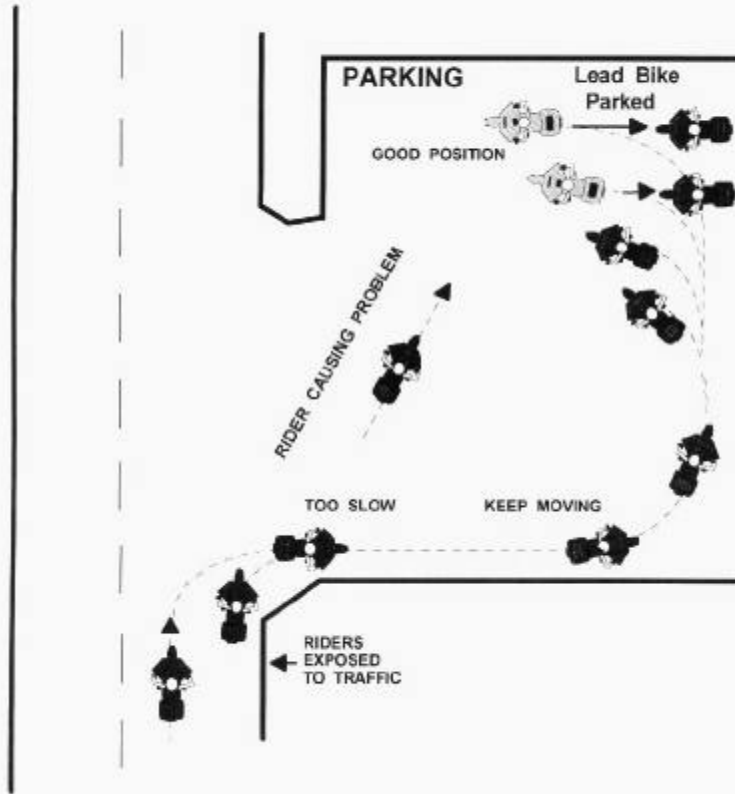
Important points

- Have everyone study the diagram! Explain the diagram thoroughly.
- Follow the leader. (Remember that game?) Hint: When the first bike stops, wait for the second bike to pull along side and stop before backing up the first bike. That way, two bikes in motion side-by-side don't disorient the rider backing up. Same with the second, third bike, etc.

- Two bikes to on parking space is okay.
- Try to get all bikes off the street as quickly as possible.

SEE DIAGRAM

PARKING LOT / PULL OFF



<p>When heading back from a ride, there are times when a bike (or group of bikes) will split off from the main group. This split should come <u>before</u> the turn so that you do not have bikes breaking out of formation at an intersection, where other drivers might get confused and pull out in front of one of us. If you know that you will be leaving the group during the ride, position yourself at the rear of the group. As the split is made, make sure that the Lead knows who his Drag is.</p> <p><u>Important point</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the group splits, there may be a new Drag. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bike/group that will split may drop back or change lanes just prior to the split. • Make your intentions known to other drivers. Don't <u>assume</u> they know what you are doing.
<p>If you find your group behind a slow moving vehicle on a narrow two-lane road, you may need to pass the vehicle individually. The Lead should announce this fact to the group. Once you are around the vehicle, you should keep in contact with the rest of the group, informing them about passing lanes and traffic condition. Once the group has gotten around the vehicle, the Drag should inform the Lead of that fact.</p> <p><u>Important points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normally you will be in single file formation. • Everyone is responsible for his or her own actions. Don't be a lemming. • Hint: After you have passed the slow moving vehicle, don't slack off on the throttle. Leave enough room for other riders following you to safely pass and move back into the right lane. <u>Don't leave other riders hanging out in traffic.</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do <u>not</u> blindly follow the bike in front of you. • Make your choices wisely because <u>only you are responsible for your actions.</u> <p>See Diagram</p>

SINGLE LANE PASS



<p>When traveling through towns, the group may get broken up at traffic lights. The Lead may pull over to wait if an area is available. If not, continue on at a reduced rate of speed and keep in touch with the stragglers, letting them know where you are. This is especially important if there is a turn to be made before the group gets back together.</p> <p><u>Important points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditions, such as heavy traffic, adverse road or weather, may <u>require</u> you to keep the group small. • There will be a new temporary Lead and Drag because of the group getting split. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a turn is made and you are not sure the group(s) behind will make the turn -- or you are out of CB range -- you may stop, continue slow, or leave a person behind to show the following group(s) where to turn.
<p>We all enjoy the fellowship of our Chapter members, and enjoy talking to them during rides. You have to keep in mind that the Lead and Drag need to be able to pass on safety information to the group. Keep conversation short, to keep the airway clear. This is especially true when there is more than one group. Everyone should keep conversation to an absolute minimum.</p> <p><u>Important points.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Clearly</u> identify your group when using the CB. For example, Lead says Group one Drag, secure the left lane please. Drag answers Group one, left lane is secure. Look left, move left. • Everyone is on the ride to enjoy themselves. Unless in heavy traffic, don't restrict use of the CB by any members of the group. • Friends for fun, safety & knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask that stories be told before or after the ride. • Keeping the CB airway clear for important information is all-important. • This is particularly important in city or heavy traffic, where situations and hazards can occur in an instant. • If there is more than one group, <u>all groups should be on the same CB channel.</u> • If you are on 2 or 3 channels, this can be confusing as to who is where. • If a person talks to someone (in their group or another group) on another channel, they could miss important information. • Groups 2, 3, 4, etc., can pick up valuable information by listening to the first group.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This guide may seem cumbersome at first glance. However, the GWRRA Chapters that initiated (and still use) this training have an excellent record for safety on the road. Compliments are heard wherever they go regarding the professional look that is projected. Let's continue the tradition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RIDE SAFE • RIDE SMART

GOLD WING ROAD RIDERS ASSOCIATION

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION ROAD CAPTAIN COURSE

Has successfully completed both classroom and road testing for the position of

ROAD CAPTAIN

Chapter Director

Date

Chapter Educator

GOLD WING ROAD RIDERS ASSOCIATION

VIRGINIA CHAPTER U

**CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION
ROAD CAPTAIN COURSE**

JOHN DOE

Has successfully completed both classroom and road testing for the position of

ROAD CAPTAIN

Chapter Director

Date

Chapter Educator

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ROAD CAPTAIN QUIZ

(Circle the correct answer)

1. Who is the Trip Coordinator for each ride?
 - A) The Chapter Director or Chapter Educator
 - B) The Chapter Ride Coordinator
 - C) The person who set up the ride.
 - D) Could be any of the above

2. What is the ideal size of a group?
 - A) 3 to 5 bikes
 - B) 5 to 7 bikes
 - C) 7 to 9 bikes
 - D) 9 to 11 bikes

3. What is the best location of trikes?
 - A) In the front of the group
 - B) In the middle of the group
 - C) At the rear of the group
 - D) In a separate group

4. Who selects the **Drag** for each group?
 - A) The Chapter Director
 - B) The Chapter Educator
 - C) The Rider Leader
 - D) The individual group leaders

5. If you should find a bike with marginal tread on its tires, and that bike's rider still want to ride, where should this person be placed in the group?
 - A) In the front of the group
 - B) At the rear of the group
 - C) In the middle of the group
 - D) In a separate

6. Someone develops a brake problem and must continue with the group for a while, where should this person be placed in the group?
 - A) At the rear of the group, just in front of the Drag
 - B) At the front of the group, just behind the Lead
 - C) In a separate group
 - D) In the position of the Lead or Drag

7. How do you place bikes with no CB capability?

- A) Directly behind Lead
 - B) Directly in front of Drag
 - C) Spaced throughout the group, with radios in front & behind
 - D) In a separate group
8. Who is responsible for maintaining the spacing of the group during a ride?
- A) Only the Lead
 - B) Either the ride Lead or the Drag
 - C) Both the Lead & Drag, but primarily the Drag
 - D) Any one in the group
9. When do you, as Lead, call for a single file?
- A) Only on secondary roads
 - B) Whenever you deem it best for your group
 - C) When entering a major highway
 - D) When coming into a break area
10. How do you tell members of your group, that don't have CBs, about changes?
- A) By announcing it over the CB and giving the correct hand signal, which is passed back through the group.
 - B) By asking each member with a CB to pass it along
 - C) By pulling over and telling everyone what you want
 - D) By telling only those with CBs, and hoping that the other(s) will follow suit.
11. When any of your group is going to split off from the group, how should this be accomplished?
- A) By wishing them a safe trip home
 - B) By slowing down as you approach their turn off
 - C) By having them separate from the group well ahead of their turn
 - D) None of the above
12. How do you handle the problem of those riders who have difficulty with certain types of terrain?
- A) Ask them to ride as a scout
 - B) Put them at the rear of the group
 - C) Suggest that they not come on the ride
 - D) Ask other Road Captains or Group Leaders if they would lead a slow group

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ROAD CAPTAIN COURSE INTRODUCTION FOR STUDENTS

These are a set of guidelines to help in training a group to ride safely as a team. These guidelines are intended to be used in conjunction with the GWRRA Team Riding Manual. It seems like everywhere you go, each group appears to ride a little differently. It is our hope that these guidelines will help in teaching techniques that may become used universally. If someone in Virginia participates in a ride in Arizona or Maine, they will fit in with the way each group rides because each group rides the same.

The Road Captain Course is designed for all that want to participate. The person who really wants to be a group leader will benefit the most, but we highly encourage the co-rider and riders who are not interested in being leaders to take this course. Everyone will learn something that will be useful. The co-rider can help by pointing at an object in the road so that the next bike may be able to avoid that object, or give a hand signal for file formation, etc.

This course is divided into two sections. The first section is a classroom session where we will discuss these guidelines and theories. The second session is the road portion of the course, which consists of a short ride that will allow us to apply and practice the theories learned in class.

If you will put to use the principals taught in the Road Captain Course, you would find that in time, they would become second nature to you. Some riders have commented that, even when there are only two or three bikes, they ride this way because it has become so automatic.

ROAD CAPTAIN GUIDELINES

1. Try to arrive at the meeting place early, with a full fuel tank. The person who sets up the ride is usually the **Trip Coordinator** and, in most cases, also the **Drag** of Group #1 -- unless he/she gives up that responsibility.
2. As participants begin to arrive, get them in place, keeping in mind that some folks may not have CB capability. If there are trikes, place them at the rear of the group (in front of **Drag**); place bikes with a trailer and/or sidecar near the front of a group as they talk longer to stop and may need more room to maneuver.
3. If more than 5 bikes show up, ask if there is another **Lead/Drag** on site, and get them to begin setting up another group. The ideal group size is 3-5 bikes.
4. Spend some time looking at the bikes that are going to be in your group, keeping an eye out for any obvious safety problems. Get you group members to assist, as additional eyes will see more than just one pair.
5. Choose your **Drag/Lead** early and discuss the route that you will be taking, the kind of terrain that you will be running, the kind of terrain that the group will be riding through, etc. Make sure that all members of your group know the route. If you know the route in advance, you might draw up a map and make copies for all group members.
6. At about 5 minutes prior to the announced departure time, begin to your group to mount up so that all groups can leave at the appointed time.
7. If the ride will be going through the kind of terrain that some people may have trouble with, ask other **Road Captains** if they would volunteer to **Lead/Drag** a slower group. This group may choose to leave a little earlier than the other groups, or later. Be sure that the slower group is aware of scheduled stops, so that everyone will have a chance to get together for lunch, etc.
8. If your group has a bike with no CB, go over the hand signals with this person. Make sure that this person, and all other group members, know the route and approximate length of time between breaks.
9. **Lead** should start out slow, allowing time for all group members to get out onto the road and into position. Then, increase speed to cruising speed (per designated speed limits).

10. Where road conditions permit, ride in the staggered formation. However, if your travel route takes you onto narrower roads or road conditions that indicate a need, call for single file formation, both by CB and by hand signal.
11. Once on the road, assume the standard staggered file formation positions for **Lead** and **Drag**. **Lead** bike is always in the left track of the lane you are traveling in.
12. When you have a choice of several lanes, **Lead** should plan lane changes in advance. Conditions will occur that call for immediate action.
13. **Lead** should call the **Drag** and ask him/her to **secure the left/right lane**. **Drag** will move to the requested lane and call back that **the lane is secured**. At that time, the **Lead** will announce to the group to **look left/right and move left/right**. The **Drag** should check to see that all members are looking left/right over their shoulder before making the lane change. All group members should be encouraged to move as a unit, and move with the bike directly in front of them. This makes for a safer and smoother lane change by the group. An individual bike diving across lanes can cause the remainder of the group to have to break or swerve.
14. Keep the length of a ride down to a reasonable time between breaks. Remember, your co-rider may tire before you do.
15. Keep to the right lane at all times, unless passing or conditions in the right lane warrant staying in the left lane, such as on/off ramps of interstate highways. On divided highways (with 3 lanes on your side), you may want to stay in the center lane, versus constantly changing lanes.
16. If you notice the group is spreading out, or getting sloppy in the formation, don't hesitate to tell the group to close it up or to get the formation straight. This is especially true for the **Drag**, because he/she has the best view of the group. Remember that the group's safety is as much the concern of the **Drag** as the **Lead**.
17. When pulling off of the road or preparing to stop, find an area that will accommodate the entire group. Pull into the area, ride to the end, and swing the front of your bike out. Then back up to the curb. All bikes should follow suit. This makes for a neat formation when parked and leaves more room for other groups, or for non-riders to park. Always remember that we want

to make a good impression on the general public, and not hogging all available parking spaces is just one more way to do this.

18. When heading back from a ride, there are times when a bike (or group of bikes) will split off from the main group. This split should come before the turn so that you do not have bikes breaking out of formation at an intersection, where other drivers might get confused and pull out in front of one of us. If you know that you will be leaving the group during the ride, position yourself at the rear of the group. As the split is made, make sure that the **Lead** knows who his **Drag** is.
19. If you find your group behind a slow moving vehicle on a narrow two-lane road, you may need to pass the vehicle individually. The **Lead** should announce this fact to the group. Once you are around the vehicle, you should keep in contact with the rest of the group, informing them about passing lanes and traffic conditions. Once the group has gotten around the vehicle, the **Drag** should inform the **Lead** of that fact.
20. When traveling through towns, the group may be broken up at traffic lights. The **Lead** may pull over to wait, if an area is available. If not, continue on at a reduced rate of speed and keep in touch with the stragglers, letting them know where you are. This is especially important if there is a turn to be made before the group gets back together.
21. We all enjoy the fellowship of our Chapter members, and enjoy talking to them during rides. You have to keep in mind that the **Lead** and **Drag** need to be able to pass on safety information to the group. Keep conversation short to keep the airway clear. This is especially true when there is more than one group. Everyone should keep conversation to an absolute minimum.
22. This guide may seem cumbersome at first glance. However, the GWRRA Chapters that use this training have an excellent record for safety on the road. Compliments are heard, wherever they go, regarding the professional look that is projected. Let's continue the tradition.
23. **Make it clear to all participants, each person is responsible for the safety and operation of their own bike. Never become a lemming, RIDE YOUR OWN BIKE!**

**RIDE SAFE,
RIDE SMART!**

ROAD CAPTAIN COURSE TERMS

Trip Coordinator

Lead

Drag

Single File

Staggered File

Road Kill/Pot Hole/Object Left/Center/Right Tract

Move Out (Lead to Group)

Group All Together and Moving As A Unit (Drag to Lead)

Secure Right/Left Lane (Lead to Drag)

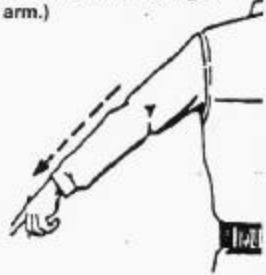


Lane Secured. . . . (Drag to Lead)

Look Left/Right and Move Left/Right (Lead to Group)

Group out Safely and Together (Drag to Lead)

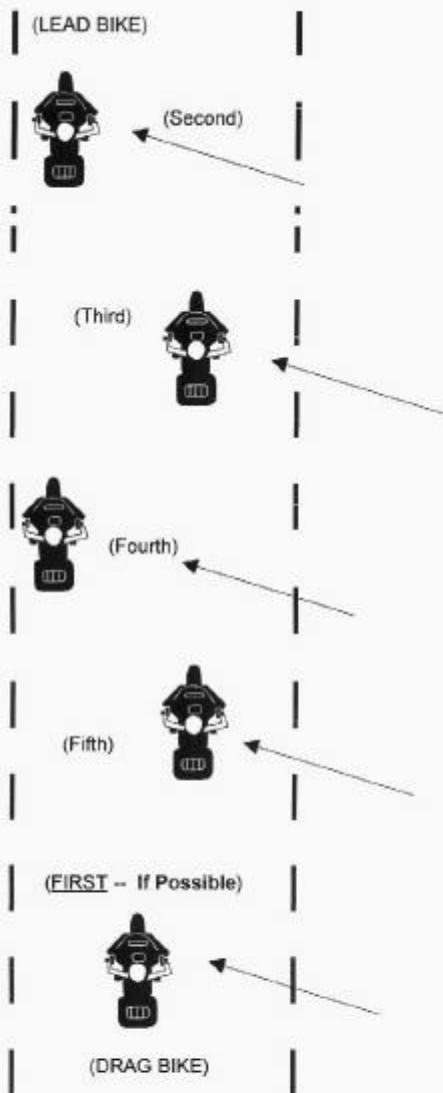
ROAD CAPTAIN COURSE HAND SIGNALS

Hand signals for communicating while riding:

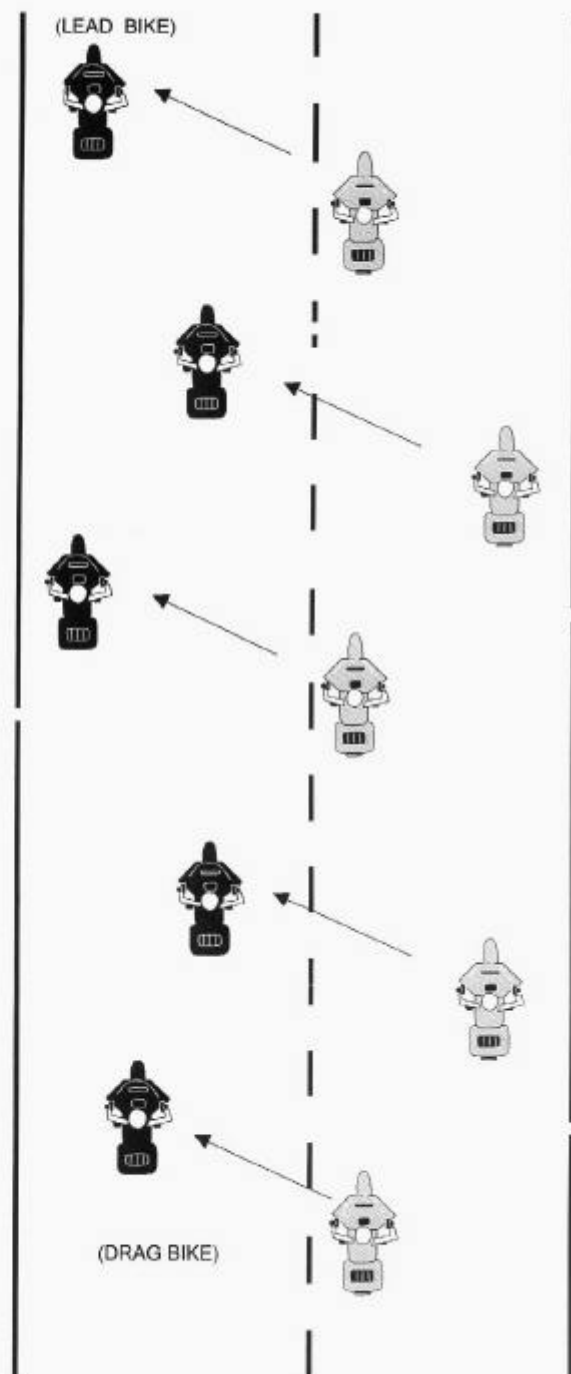
<p>HAZARD IN ROAD</p> <p>Point immediately with emphasis. (Sometimes this must be done with right arm.)</p> 	<p>SINGLE FILE</p> <p>Arm and index finger extended straight up.</p> 	<p>STAGGERED FILE</p> <p>Arm extended straight up with "rams horn" sign.</p> 
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<p>STOP (Slow Down):</p> <p>Arm extended straight down, palm back. Animal or physical hazard in road, point to hazard.</p> 	<p>SPEED UP:</p> <p>Arm down to side, fist clenched with twisting motion as if turning throttle.</p> 	<p>FOLLOW ME:</p> <p>Arm extended straight up from shoulder, palm forward.</p> 	<p>PULL OFF:</p> <p>Arm positioned as for right turn, forearm swung toward shoulder.</p> 
<p>TURN SIGNALS (Accidentally left on):</p> <p>Open and close hand with fingers and thumb extended.</p> 	<p>HEADLIGHT:</p> <p>Tap on top of head, open palm down.</p> 	<p>FUEL:</p> <p>Arm out to side, upper arm about 45 degrees below horizontal, forearm pointing to tank with forefinger extended.</p> 	<p>FOOD, COFFEE STOP:</p> <p>Fingers closed, thumb to mouth.</p> 
<p>COMFORT STOP:</p> <p>Upper arm extended horizontally, forearm straight up, fist clenched with short up and down motion.</p> 	<p>YOU LEAD: Arm extended (palm forward) down. Begin behind hip and swing forward in an arc away from body about 45 degrees from vertical.</p> <p>COME ALONGSIDE: Same motion, but stop at side and point to position for other cycle.</p> 		

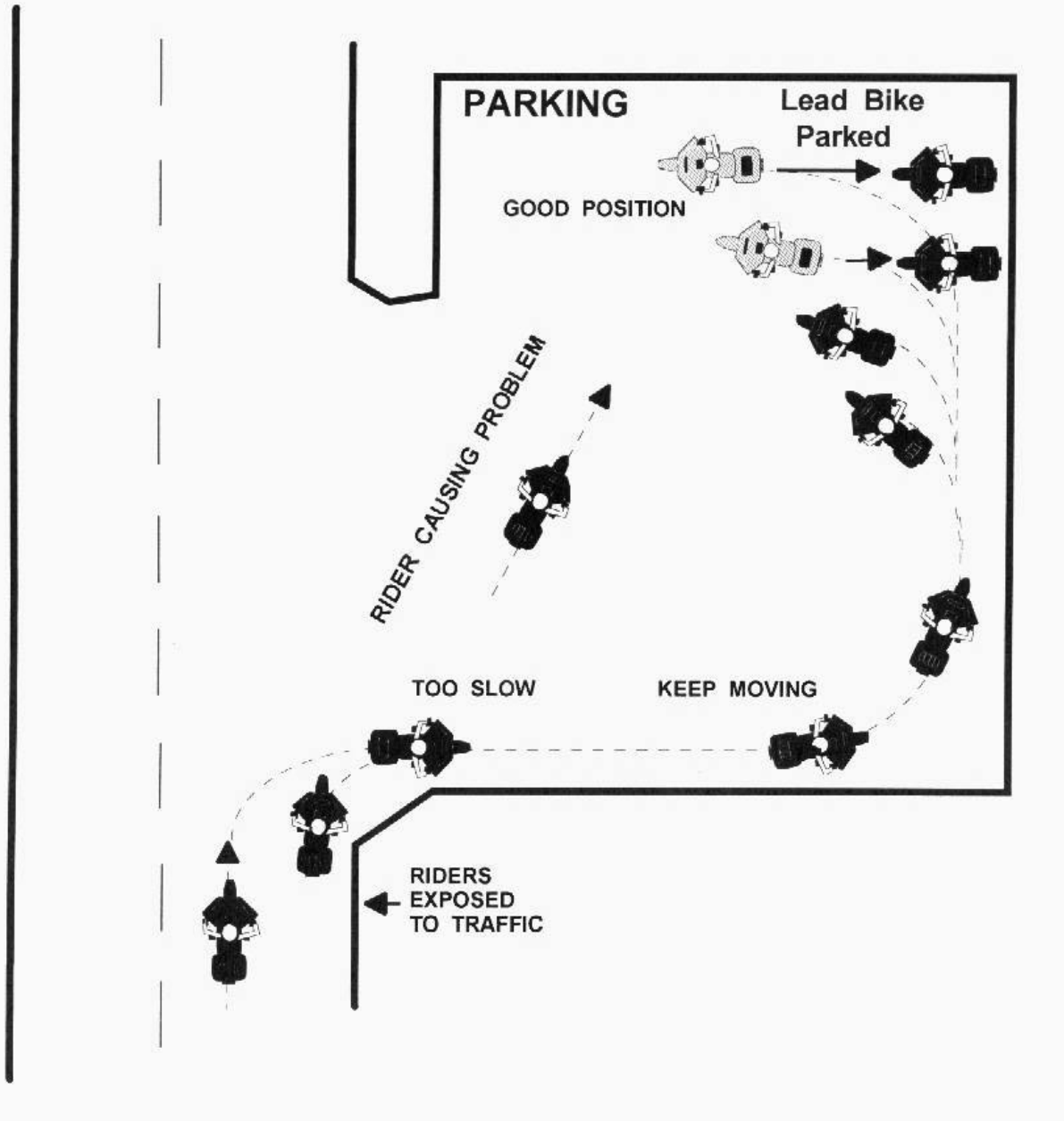
ENTERING HIGHWAY FROM ON-RAMP



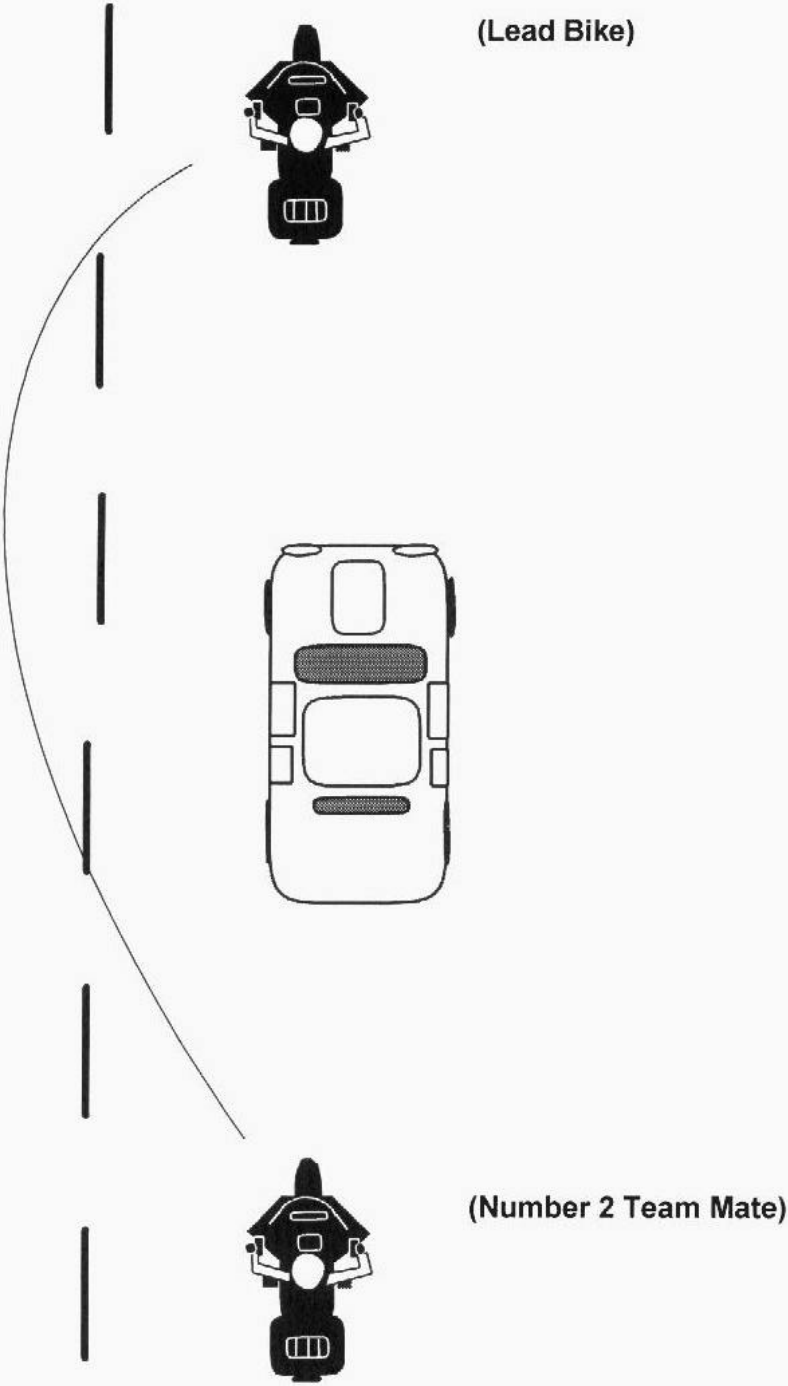
LANE CHANGE

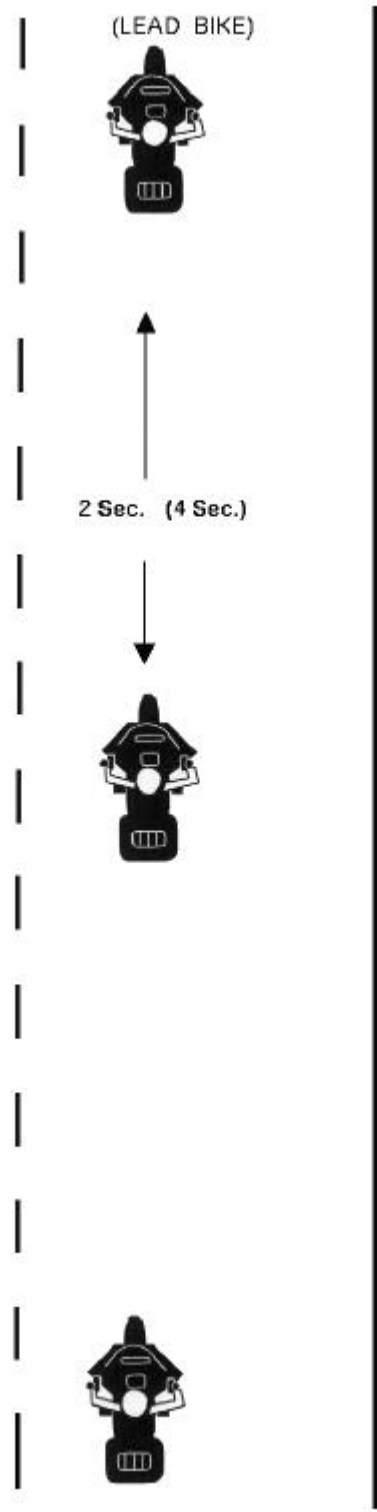
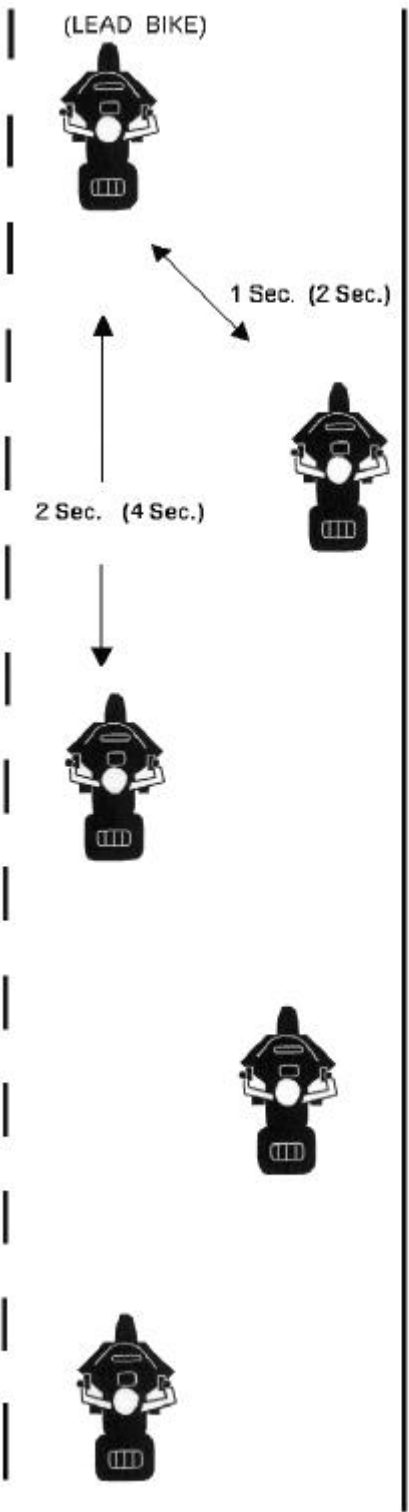


PARKING LOT / PULL OFF



SINGLE LANE PASS





STOP LIGHT



(LEAD BIKE)



(DRAG BIKE)

GOLD WING ROAD RIDERS ASSOCIATION

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION ROAD CAPTAIN COURSE

Has successfully completed both classroom and road testing for the position of

ROAD CAPTAIN

Chapter Director

Date

Chapter Educator

