

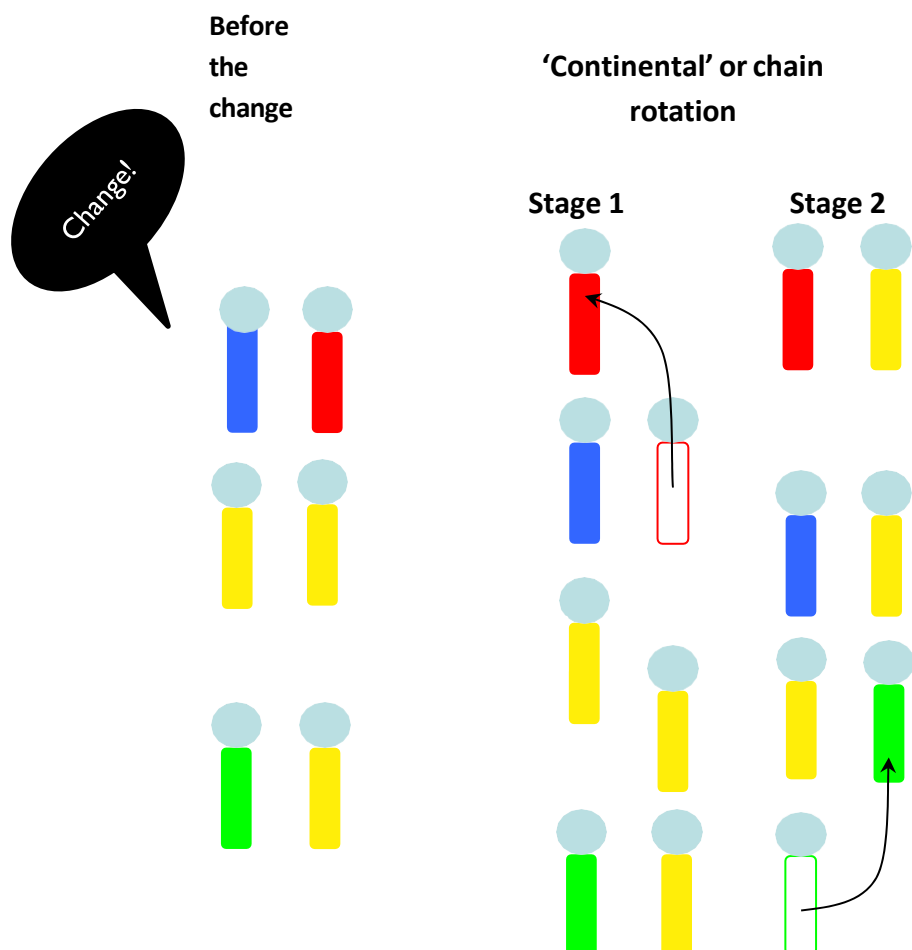


VCC GROUP RIDING

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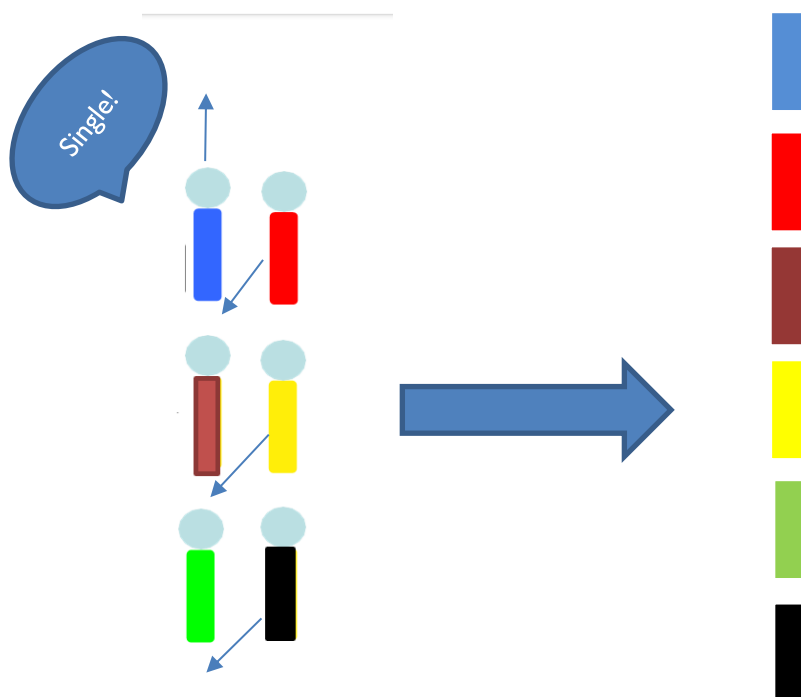
1. Group Riding with Rotation

All groups except 'Socials' who do not practice rotation.





The group may ride **singly** if circumstances or the Highway Code demands (e.g. narrow road). The “single” call is normally given by the Leader but may be given by other experienced riders when necessary. Typically, the inside lead rider pulls ahead creating a gap and the outside riders drop in behind the rider they were next to. It should not be called where it might cause a hazard to the group such as when approaching a junction.





2. Bike Specification & Equipment

- Cycles must be in a roadworthy condition. Please check your tyres for gashes before each ride, ensure brakes are in good working order (and brake blocks are not worn if you use caliper brakes), check your spokes are not loose, and complete other checks on your bike. We recommend you have your bike serviced at least once per year.
- You must ride a standard, drop handlebar road bike on club runs. No straight handlebars, fixed wheels, MTB, ebikes* or tri-bars are permitted. Applications to vary these requirements will be considered by the Runs Secretary only in special circumstances e.g. medical, and will be guided by consideration of group safety and consistency of riding.
- Mudguards must be fitted in wet conditions. The minimum requirement is for a rear mudguard where the tail extends below the level of the axle. An extended mud flap is recommended as an added courtesy to fellow riders. See more details [here](#).
- Riders should carry spare tubes, tyre levers, pump etc. See VCC website: '[In my saddlebag](#)'.
- Helmets must be worn.
- No earphones are permitted.

*Are allowed in the Social group (non-rotation riding) with agreement of the [Club runs Secretary](#).

3. Standards & Protocol

- Follow directly in line with the wheel in front, one wheel diameter behind. This keeps the group tight and allows safe passage for passing vehicles.
- Ride no more than two abreast. *Do not bunch at junctions* and single out when asked to by the Leader. *Front rider speeds up creating a gap for the outer rider to drop in.*
- Ride together as a group and follow the rotation practice (the Leader or front rider may call "change").
- Follow the Highway Code at all times. Remember we share the road with others.



- Avoid braking sharply.
- Do not weave. Keep parallel and reasonably close distance to the adjacent rider and do not get too close to the middle of the road.
- Follow and pass on calls from the group Leader.
- Call out and point to potholes or other hazards.
- When encountering horses, single out, slow right down and call out in good time "good morning" or similar, to let both the horse and rider know we are approaching. Then pass calmly, leaving as much room as possible.
- Advise if a rider is off the back of the group.
- Do not ride ahead of the group, except when the Leader has indicated this is acceptable (e.g. stiff up-hills).
- All groups will ride at the pace of the slowest rider except when the Leader has indicated otherwise (e.g. stiff up-hill.)
- If a rider has a puncture or mechanical problem, the group will wait off-road in a safe location, unless the Leader advises otherwise.
- Riders should notify the Leader if they wish to leave the group during a ride.
- Riders are encouraged to wear the club kit. Second Claim Riders should not wear the kit of their First Claim Club whilst riding with VCC.

4. Ride Groups

Ability: The speed a rider should be capable of when riding solo, in reasonable conditions.

Pace: Speed quoted is an approximate group average over several rides with good weather conditions; lower speed will apply on more hilly routes, in poor conditions and during winter months.

Distance: Maximum to be expected each week, but this may vary depending on the season and conditions.



SOCIALS

Ability: 24 miles in 2 hours.

Pace: Average 12 mph.

Distance: 50 miles

Note: This group does not practice rider rotation.

SOCIALS+

Ability: 26 miles in 2 hrs.

Pace: Average of 13 mph

Distance: 50 miles

INTERS

Ability: 28 miles in 2hrs

Pace: Average of 14 mph

Distance: 55 miles

INTERS+

Ability: 30 miles in 2 hrs.

Pace: Average of 15 mph

Distance: 60 miles

MODS

Ability: 32 miles in 2 hrs.

Pace: Average of 16 mph

Distance: 64 miles

MODS+

Ability: 34 miles in 2 hrs

Pace: Average of 17 mph

Distance: 68 miles

RAPIDES

Ability: 36 miles in 2 hrs

Pace: Average of 18 mph

Distance: 72 miles

FAST

Ability: 39 miles in 2 hrs

Pace: Average of 19 mph

Distance: 78 miles

FAST+

Ability: 39+ miles in 2 hrs

Pace: No set pace

Distance: 78+ miles



5. Sunday Club Runs

Leader's role:

- The Leader will plan and follow a suitable route to the destination published in the weekly comms, give directions and advice to riders, ensuring appropriate road safety behaviour. This is to include setting a good example by conducting themselves with respect and courtesy for their fellow club members, other road users and the general public.
- At the start, the leader will brief the group on destination, any hazards en route, and any other special riding plans or tips. Will also welcome and support new riders.
- The leader calls out rotation changes, advises if a rider is too slow, too fast, or is unsafe, and ensures the pace is correct for the group and consistent. They will also keep an eye out for riders who are struggling.
- The leader may need to move up towards the front of the group in certain situations in order to ensure control is maintained e.g. if approaching a difficult junction.
- The leader will plan to get riders back to St Albans by approximately 13:30.
- Group size is limited to 10 for safety reasons. If more than 10 wish to ride in a Group, and there is no designated second leader, any other rider who has trained as a leader may lead some of the Group (up to a maximum of 10 riders) either to the designated destination (running suitably distanced) or to an alternative destination of their choice. If there is no trained leader for the surplus riders, the Group should decide with the Runs Leader how to organise themselves, such that up to 10 ride the Club run and the remainder form an unofficial (non VCC) impromptu ride.

The Café Stop:

- The destination and leader for the ride is published in the weekly comms and on the website. It is the target of the leader to get the group to the Café Stop at 11:00 give or take a few minutes. Riders are urged to familiarise themselves with the destination and a route prior to riding in case they need to ride home alone.



- The Café Stop is a vital safety feature, it is important for all riders to top up their carbohydrate stores after 2 hours (this is a British Cycling requirement) and must do so within 40 miles. This avoids loss of concentration 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 please avoid consuming own food on the Café premises).

Departure arrangements:

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

- Riders assemble on the pavement area in front of the Alban Arena from 08.45. Do not ride on the pavements or obstruct pedestrian access.
- Riders meet their group and leader at 08.55 (see below).
- Groups depart, fastest first, from 09.00.



Runs meeting points:



If there is no leader for a given group, riders should ride with the next group down at that group's speed (subject to numbers and available leaders).

Alternatively, they can form an impromptu ride, with no Run leader, where those involved choose to ride together to and from a destination of their choice and at a speed of their choice. Impromptu rides are not official club rides.

In the case of inclement weather e.g. ice or heavy rain, groups may be without a Leader. As above, members should form into Impromptu ride groups, according to the number of people who have turned up. They should then ride at the pace of the slower group members and find their own way to and from the cafe venue.



6. Calls/Group Communication

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

Call	What it means
"Change"	Rider(s) at the front of the group come off the front using the rotation system. Leader or front rider may call change.
"Easy"	A situation could be about to happen (junction coming up etc.). Be prepared to slow, divert or stop.
"Steady"	Slow the pace by 1 mph (called by leader).
"Single"	Move into single file. Front inner rider speeds up creating a gap for outer rider to drop in.
"Hole" or "Bump"	There's a pothole, bump or bad road surface that you should avoid. Riders will point down and call "hole" or "bump" to the left, middle or right.
"Gravel"	There's gravel or loose road surface, you should point down call 'gravel' and slow down.
"Car front"	A car is coming towards the group. Await instruction from your leader on whether to single out.
"Car back"	A car is behind the group and waiting to pass. Await instruction for your leader on whether to single out.
"Car through"	Car is coming past, up the line.
"Car left" or "Car right"	If an approaching vehicle might affect riders behind you (especially called at junctions).
"On the left"	Parked car, pedestrian or other obstruction on the left.
"Clear left" or "Clear right"	There's no traffic coming from the left or right and it's safe to proceed. Usually given after an "easy" instruction. But NEVER rely solely on the call of others – you must always check yourself whether it is clear to proceed. Never call "clear" unless certain.
"One off", "Two off" etc.	Rider(s) off the back of the group
"All up?"	Called by leader or by front riders to check if riders off have caught up. Riders in group pass the question back and pass the answer "Yes" or "No" forward.



"Mechanical" or "Puncture"	Group stops off the road at first safe place, whilst one or two go to help.
Left hand behind back	Parked car or obstruction on left, maneuver right.
Right hand behind Back	Keep to the left (e.g. vehicle approaching).
Shaky hand	Uneven surface or lots of potholes.