



2024
Flyers®

DARK HORSE FLYERS CYCLING CLUB

RIDE GUIDE

TOPICS

- Dark Horse Flyers Cycling Club: Who We Are
- Dark Horse Flyers Cycling Club: Mission Statement
- Dark Horse Flyers Cycling Club: Values
- How We Ride
 - Before the Ride
 - Meeting Locations
 - Preparing to Ride
 - During the Ride
 - Communication
 - Pacelines
 - Other Stuff
 - Group Selection
 - Hand Signals
 - Lane Positioning
 - Safety
- Incidents, Insurance, Respect



WHO WE ARE

Dark Horse Flyers Cycling Club is Toronto's friendliest cycling club, both on and off the bike.

**TRUE
SPORT**
LIVES HERE

In February 2017, we signed up to **True Sport**—a growing Movement of Canadians who believe that sport has the power to shape character and express values, promote inclusion and inspire excellence. Part of a nationwide effort committed to making sport the best it can be. (truesportpur.ca)



The Club is a Supporter of **Cycle Toronto**—a member-supported organization that advocates for a healthy, safe, cycling-friendly city for all. "Toronto is healthy, safe and livable, and the city is recognized as a leading urban centre, where multiple modes of transportation are not just accepted but are actively promoted." (cycleto.ca)



MISSION STATEMENT

To encourage friendly participation, awareness and facilitation of cycling activities in downtown Toronto by:

- Providing a safe, inclusive, social and fun group riding environment for all levels and abilities;
- Respecting the rules of the road, including respect for all road users while advocating for road safety and cycling infrastructure as ambassadors of the sport;
- Fostering cycling education, etiquette and skill development in a courteous manner through respect for fellow riders and ride leaders;
- Encouraging growth of the sport through community awareness and involvement in cycling/club activities and where applicable supporting charity rides and related cycling charitable initiatives.



VALUES

Camaraderie • Safety • Fun • Inclusion • Community

Our goal is to bring cyclists together to ride, admire scenery, dodge streetcar tracks, share advice and talk about our favourite route segments over post-ride coffee or beer.





2024
Flyers®

DHFcc RIDE GUIDE

HOW WE RIDE

BEFORE THE RIDE

- Know the route and the stops.
- Ride with GPS account is available to all Members.
(ridewithgps.com/clubs/1338-dark-horse-flyers-cycling-club).
This gives members access to paid features like: turn-by-turn navigation on the mobile app; offline maps on the mobile app; estimated time; advanced turn notifications; print PDF map and cue sheets.
- Understand the Club's Policies, Risk Management Plan and emergency protocols posted on our website.
- Have a (fully charged) cellphone for emergencies—ID and credit card don't hurt either.
- In order to keep our club insurance valid, non-club members cannot participate in club rides. ■

Pro Tip: Emergency \$20 bill often comes in handy and can buy delicious, energy-packed butter tarts.



BEFORE THE RIDE – MEETING LOCATIONS

- Monday, Wednesday and Friday 4F – DH Canary (5:45am / 6:30am)
- Monday and Thursday 3T – DH Canary (6:30am)
- Monday Mixed Surface Rides – DH Canary (6:00pm)
- Tuesday Nuke Rides – DH East (6:00pm)
- Wednesday MTB Rides* – Pottery Road Trail head (6:30pm)
- Wednesday East Hills Ride – DH Canary (6:30pm)
- Biweekly weekday evening Skills sessions (to be scheduled)
- Thursday West Hills Ride – Princes' Gates/CNE (6:30am)
 - rolling pick-up Queensway at Colborne Lodge (6:50ish)
- Weekend Mixed Surface (CX/Gravel) and MTB rides (TBD)
- Monthly Sunday destination rides >

* Trail rides depend on light and trail conditions. Check the calendar.



BEFORE THE RIDE – MEETING LOCATIONS

- Saturday Rides* – DH Canary
 - early morning “Cheerio” (6:30/7:00am)
 - Social | Intermediate A/B | Advanced A/B
 - Note:** Advanced A ride is a DROP ride
 - routes change and distances increase every three weeks
- Sunday Kleinburg/Apple Orchard** – DH Spadina
- Sunday Leisure Ride – Roadkit (9:00am)
 - rolling pick-up Princes’ Gates/CNE (9:15ish)
 - rolling pick-up Queensway at Colborne Lodge (9:25ish)

... and more! (see our Ride Board and the App for details) ■

* Saturday Advanced rides depart at 8am. Social and Intermediate depart at 9am in early spring and late fall. June through September all Saturday rides have an 8am start time.

** Sunday ride departs at 9am in early spring and late fall and goes to Kleinburg. June through September it has an 8am start time and visits the Apple Orchard.



BEFORE THE RIDE – GROUP SELECTION

RIDE LEVEL	AVERAGE* SUSTAINED PACE	DISTANCE OVER THE SEASON
Social	23–30km/h	30–80km
Intermediate B	26–33km/h	60–120km
Intermediate A	30–35km/h	60–120km
Advanced B	32–37km/h	100–180km
Advanced A	35–40km/h	100–180km

* Average perceived sustainable pace on the flats (not related to Strava average speed or the inflated Zwift stats).

Unsure where you fit in? Begin your first ride (or first few) a level down from where you'd like to be. ■



BEFORE THE RIDE – WEATHER POLICY

Our Ride Leaders do their best to announce ride cancellations via the App and the Ride Board two (2) hours before the ride start. Please be aware that club rides will be cancelled as an insured and sanctioned ride due to weather if:

- It is raining at the start of the ride.
- There is a forecast of 70% POP or more of rain or lightning/thunderstorms.
- Extremely high winds or gusts (40km/h+) on the day of the ride.
- The temperature (humidex value) is above 40°C.
- If the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) is at 7 or above.

[Note: Rides are on 'Weather Watch' if the POP is 50% or higher; if winds are above 30km/h; if the humidex is above 35°C; and if the AQHI is between 4-6.] ■

A cancelled ride does not mean you cannot ride, it just means that we do not recommend you ride and that Ride Leaders will not be credited or attending in that capacity. For safety reasons we cannot sanction it.



BEFORE THE RIDE – CYCLE CLUB APP

1. Download Cycle Club App

Cycle Club App is available for both iOS and Android. Alternatively, you may use the App in your web browser at cycleclubapp.com.

2. Sign Up or Sign In

If you're new to Cycle Club App, follow the steps to sign up and create your profile. Remember to use the same email you used to register for the club. If you have an existing account, just sign in.

3. Join the Club

Click the "+" to find your club and search for Dark Horse Flyers Cycling Club. If your email is recognized by the club's member list, you will gain access.

4. Get Started

Once you're granted access to the club, you can view and attend events, get notifications such as ride updates, cancellations, and more. ■



BEFORE THE RIDE – PREPARING TO RIDE

- We do our best to limit groups to 16 riders or less, ideally groups of 6–12. Ride Leaders will split the group, if necessary.
- Unsure where you fit in? Begin in a slower/easier group.
- Most hazards can be pointed out to avoid unnecessary yelling in the group. Lead riders (riders at the front of the pack) should guide the group smoothly around obstacles—not with a sudden swerve or bunny hop. When in doubt, follow the line of the rider ahead.
- Verbal communications from the back of the pack need to be relayed up to the front from the riders ahead (e.g. “Gap” / “Split” / “Car Back” / “Mechanical”).
- All participants are expected to know the route.
- Each rider should start the day with adequate food and drink.
- The first part of the ride should be a warm-up. Riders on the front should enforce that. >



BEFORE THE RIDE – PREPARING TO RIDE

- Faster groups on the same route should depart first to avoid one group having to pass another on the road.
- All riders should be self-sufficient—with enough food and drink* for the ride; should know the route; and should carry a flat fix kit** (whether you know how to use it or not).
- For early/late season rides, all riders need functioning lights.

(By law, lights are to be turned on thirty minutes before sunset and are to remain on thirty minutes after sunrise.) ■



* We recommend a drink with electrolytes and portable food like bars, gels, or real food like a banana, PB+J sandwich, fig bars, etc.

** Flat fix kit should include: spare tube, CO₂ cartridge and air chuck inflator (or portable pump), tire levers, multi-tool, patch kit (optional).



DURING THE RIDE – COMMUNICATION

- Communication is key in a group ride setting.
- Riders must communicate both verbally and with hand signals.
- All riders are expected to communicate hazards to others.
 - Lead riders need to point out hazards before they're on top of them. The earlier, the better.
 - **Note:** Riders should not be taking their hands off their handlebars to point out a hazard if they are uncomfortable doing so and risk crashing themselves.
- Remind those who are not pointing out hazards to do so.
 - Mid-pack riders need to relay the hand signal/verbal communication whether they can see it or not.
- Riders at the back of the pack should shoulder check and shout "Clear*" before changing lanes (e.g. when crossing over to make a left turn or pass another rider). >

* The term is a simple "Clear" not "Clear Back" which is easily and potentially dangerously confused with "Car Back."

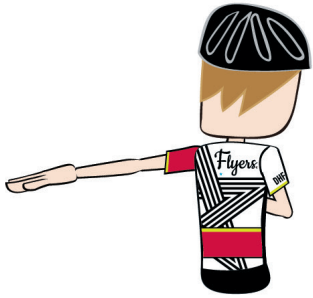


DURING THE RIDE – COMMUNICATION

- All riders should find a safe spot to regroup off the road after splits, sprints, climbs, descents.
- All riders should look back frequently (when safe to do so) to ensure that the group is together. It is everyone's responsibility to keep the pack together and communicate gaps or struggling/dropped riders.
- If the call of "All on" is made when the group is re-assembled, it does not mean there should be a sudden increase in the pace.
- Riders that don't know the route can be dangerous on the front.
- Lead riders need to go deliberately slow off a light/start to avoid splits within the group and the back of the pack having to chase.
- Safe Socializing is strongly encouraged—it's what makes the DHFcc who we are. ■



DURING THE RIDE – HAND SIGNALS



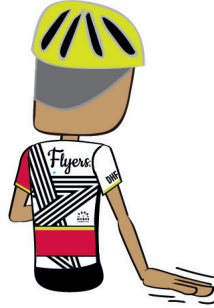
LEFT TURN

Arm out straight, pointing in direction of turn.



STOP

Hand down by your side, palm flat, fingers splayed.



SLOW

Wave/pulse one hand as if patting an invisible dog.



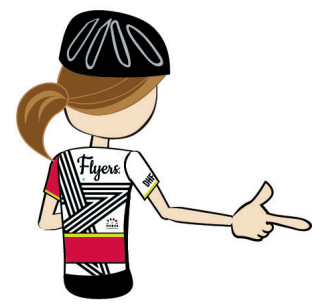
RIGHT TURN

Arm out straight, pointing in direction of turn.



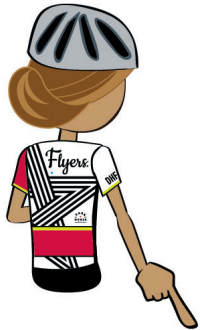
TRACKS

Two fingers waved or held behind your back indicates upcoming train or streetcar tracks.



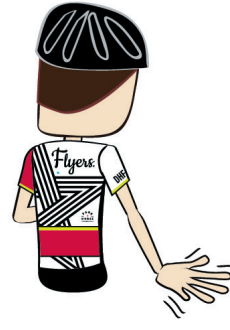
MOVING IN

Let the rider on your right know you're moving over into their single lane.



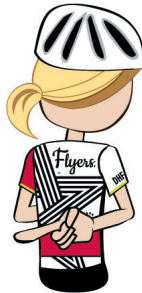
HAZARD

Pointing to pothole or hazard that needs to be avoided. Often accompanied with a call of "Hole."



GLASS OR LOOSE GRAVEL

Indicate glass or loose gravel by shaking your hand on the side where the hazard is.



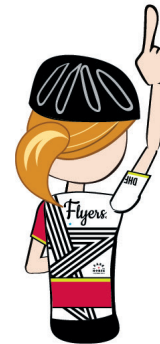
OBSTRUCTION

Alert everyone to get over by pointing the direction to move behind your back.



ROTATE

A circular whirl of the finger/wrist indicating it's time for the group to rotate and for the next rider to take a pull.



SINGLE FILE

One finger raised above the head to alert the group to switch to single file.



DOUBLE FILE

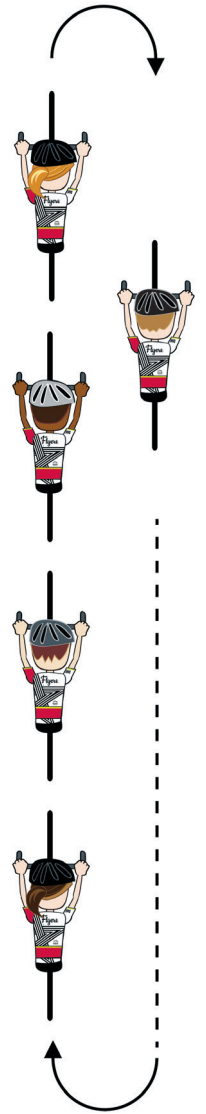
Two fingers raised above the head to let the group know to double up.



DURING THE RIDE – PACELINES

SINGLE PACELINE

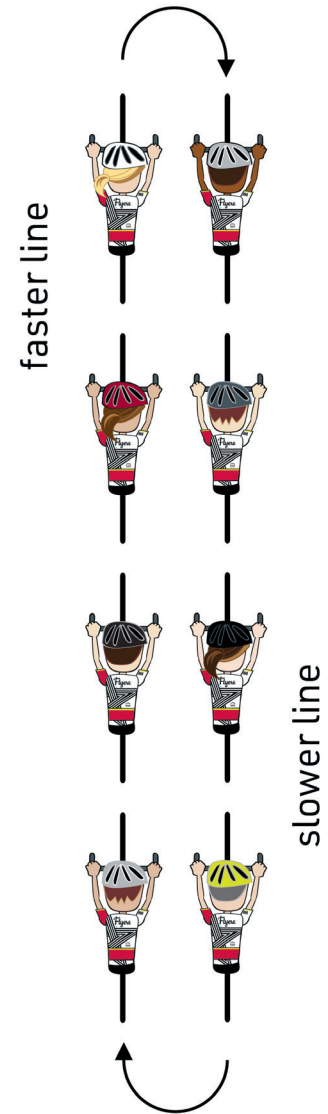
- Used anytime the road narrows to a single lane whether by road design or parked cars.
- When switching from a double to single paceline, the left rider should tuck in safely ahead of the right rider all the way down the line.
- Rotations happen in a clockwise manner as per the Highway Traffic Act which specifies passing on the left.
- Riders should be 1–3' apart (fore/aft). >



DURING THE RIDE – PACELINES

SOCIAL PACELINE

- Club's preferred/suggested paceline.
- Riders are two-abreast at all times.
- When rotating, the lead rider in the slower line should yell "Clear" when it safe for the left rider to move into position in front of their wheel and "Last wheel" to the back right rider about to switch lines.
- Practice smooth rotations; no surging.
- Rotations happen in a clockwise manner as per the Highway Traffic Act which specifies passing on the left.
- Riders should be 1–3' apart (fore/aft and bar-to-bar). >



DURING THE RIDE – PACELINES

- Riders not participating in the rotation should sit a full bike length back and call out to the riders ahead that they are not pulling through.

ROTATING PACELINES

- Constant rotations—for Intermediate and Advanced groups. >



DURING THE RIDE – PACELINES

REGIONAL BY-LAWS

- Groups riding single-file is preferred when traffic is heavy on multi-lane roads; when traffic is approaching from behind; on hills; and on narrow roads. The Highway Traffic Act (HTA) does not state one can or cannot ride two-abreast. It only states one should ride as far to the right as practically possible. The Ministry of Transportation Ontario (MTO) also recommends riding at least 1m away from the white line or the curb, so drivers know you're taking the lane. In many regions (GTA, Halton, Durham, York, Vaughan) a rotating paceline is accepted as riders are continuously overtaking/passing each other. Peel Region (Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga) requests a single-file. ■



DURING THE RIDE – LANE POSITIONING

- “Tight and to the Right” is the motto.
- We want to project an organized, lawful club—we’re likely to get more respect from drivers that way.

BUT:

The law is “slower traffic must give way to faster traffic when safe and practicable.”

- Sometimes, pavement/road conditions are very rough on the right hand of the lane making riding there not “safe or practicable.” >

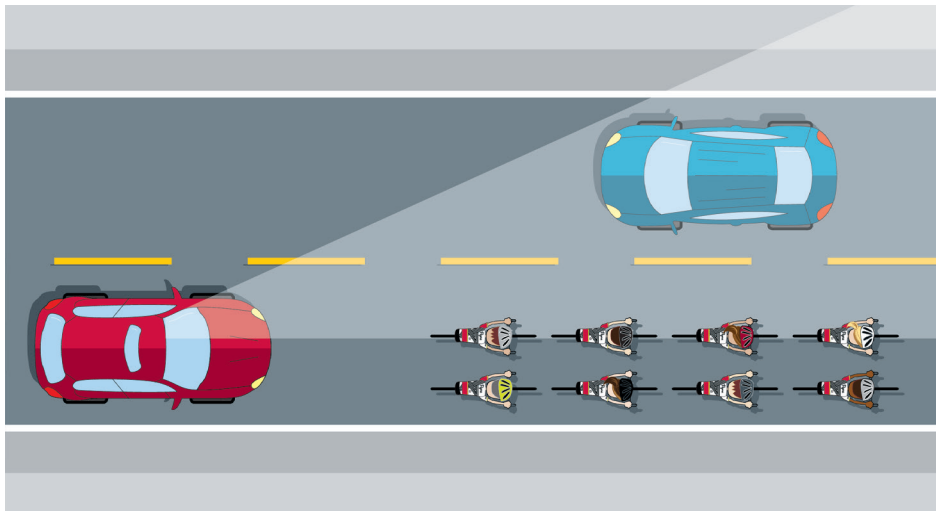


Illustration demonstrates trying to keep the drivers' sight line clear so they can see when it is safe to pass. Groups should ride 1m from the 'rideable' right side of the road. The rideable part of the road does not include curbs, sewers, gravel or uneven pavement.



DURING THE RIDE – LANE POSITIONING

- When road surface is very rough on the right (e.g. Bayview Ave), the paceline should ride towards the centre of the lane.
 - Make sure to check your blind-spot for passing vehicles before moving the paceline over.
 - Ensure that riders on the left hand side of the paceline are cognizant that if they don't move over, they're forcing the right hand side of the line onto bad road surface.
 - Ideally we ride 1 m from the curb and 0.5–1 m from the dotted yellow line. ■



For the most part, we opt to use roadways rather than heavily used paths. If you choose to ride on a multi-use path, remember that you are sharing the path with others. Reduce your speed where appropriate and when passing other path users, ring your bell or call out "Passing on your left" to alert them. Many paths may post speed limits (usually 20km/hr) which must be adhered to.



DURING THE RIDE – OTHER STUFF

- Stop Signs—come to a full stop.
- We operate as a single vehicle at stops.
- Emergency Vehicles: Pull over to the right and stop.
- Mechanicals: Get the group off the road ASAP.
- Follow the “eight-second rule:” if the countdown timer is estimated to reach seven by the time the group is at the line, the group should stop; if it’s at nine or above the group continues through the light.
- Lead riders are the ones to make the decision on whether the group will be stopping. They are required to make the decision. If there is doubt about the group’s ability to stop, ride through.
- No swarming at stops/lights—the group should maintain their single or double line formation and not spread out wide across the width of the lane. >



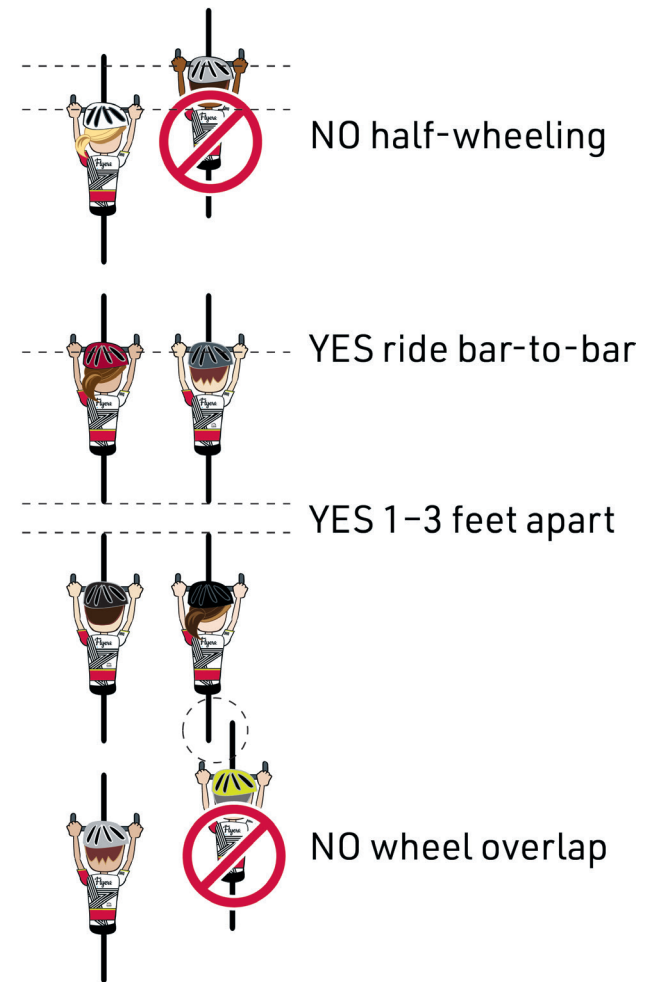
DURING THE RIDE – OTHER STUFF

- Buses: DO NOT share a lane with a bus which is stopped for passengers. Either:
 - Stop behind the bus and wait.
 - Perform a complete lane change and pass on the left with the whole paceline **ONLY** if it is safe to do so.
 - Never play leap-frog with a bus.
- Buses, streetcars and pedestrians always have the right of way.
- Ride at least one metre from parked cars.
 - Angry Motorists: Your Ride Leaders are the voice responsible for communicating with angry motorists. No other group riders should engage with them. Ride Leaders should diffuse the situation in a courteous manner. No ride participants should 'flip the bird' at other road users. >



DURING THE RIDE – OTHER STUFF

- Filtering at Lights: Use your judgment, but there's no point in a group filtering to the front alongside traffic only to hold others up—it is bad etiquette. The group should hold their position within the line.
- Sprints may not go through traffic lights or stop signs.
- Passing (on sprints/descents) should happen on the left.
- Riders should be aware of their speed and position relative to the other riders to avoid half-wheeling* or overlapping wheels. >



DO NOTS

* The term riding "bar-to-bar" is preferred over half-wheeling as its easier to understand.



DURING THE RIDE – OTHER STUFF

- No rider will be left behind due to ability unless the ride has been clearly designated as a DROP ride.
- If a rider is getting dropped, at least two riders will drop back and stay with them through the completion of the ride.
- Ride Leaders may suggest a rider join a different level of ride.
- Any rider deciding to leave the ride should notify the Ride Leader. ■



DURING THE RIDE – SAFETY

- Tracks can be slippery—wet or dry. Call out “Tracks” and use a hand signal to warn the riders behind you. Cross the tracks as close to perpendicular as possible.
- When in doubt, dismount and walk your bike. This goes for all metal surfaces (bridges, sewers, service covers...) which become slippery as ice, particularly when wet.
- Rim brakes work less effectively when wet, especially during the initial exposure to wet conditions. Dry brakes by ‘feathering’ (applying them lightly) before you need to stop or slow down. ■





Ride as much
or as little, or
as long or as
short as you feel.
But ride.

Eddy Merckx

INCIDENTS

- Crashes are an unfortunate part of cycling/group riding.
- The OC's Sport Injury Report Form is used to report injuries of members while participating in OC sanctioned activities. All injuries must be reported within five (5) days of the initial incident: bit.ly/ontariocycling_sport-injury-report-form
- Please take note of the time and location, light, weather and road conditions and collect witness contact information.
- The Ride Leader must ensure they know the affected members' name in order for the Board to provide the right paperwork to be filed for insurance purposes.
- DO NOT attempt to treat a serious medical emergency on site unless you are suitably qualified/trained. >



INCIDENTS

- Know when to call 9-1-1.
- If a rider drops off due to a mechanical or health issue or accident, at least two riders will drop back and stay with them to assist, if necessary.
- If a rider cannot continue on a ride due to a mechanical or health issue or accident, the Club will reimburse for an Uber or Taxi to get them home safely, if necessary and within reason.
- Concussions: see the Concussion Policy document on our website.
- If you need to report a dangerous or unlawful driver:
tps.ca/services/online-reporting/
 - Requires plate number and description of vehicle (colour, make, number of passengers...)
 - Location and description of incident are also required.
If someone took a photo, include it. ■



INCIDENTS – SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION

Thinking and Remembering	Physical	Emotional	Sleep
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confusion• Clouded or foggy mindset• Seeming stunned or dazed• Temporary memory loss regarding the event of the injury• Difficulty concentrating• Difficulty remembering or recalling events• Slowed reaction times	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Neck pain, headache, or pressure within the head• Fatigue, low energy, or feeling “foggy”• Short-term loss of responsiveness• Dizziness or loss of balance• Double or blurred vision, or “seeing stars”• Ringing in the ears• Nausea or vomiting• Mumbled or indistinct speech• Sensitivity to light and/or noise• Not feeling “right”• Seizure or convulsion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Irritability• Sadness or depression• Heightened emotions• Nervousness or anxiety• Personality changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drowsiness• Sleeping more or less than usual• Difficulty sleeping

Source: Canadian Red Cross, “Comprehensive Guide for First Aid & CPR”



INCIDENTS – CONCUSSION POLICY (VERY BRIEF SUMMARY)

- If a rider has a suspected concussion, the Ride Leader must notify the Board and other Ride Leaders.
- If the rider is unconscious, call 911 and remain with them until EMS arrives.
- If they are conscious, they are immediately removed from the ride. Arrange a ride home for them and remain with them until they can be taken home. Encourage them to consult a physician.
- Participants are encourage to consult a physician for medical clearance before returning to riding.
- Download our full Concussion Policy here:
darkhorseflyers.ca/s/DHFcc_ConcussionPolicy.pdf ■



INSURANCE

- Members are covered while participating at an approved event (sanctioned ride) or activity including direct travel to and from any venue for the purposes of participating in the event.
- All Club Members are covered by General Liability Insurance. Designed to protect a person against legal responsibility arising out of a negligent act or failure to act as a prudent person would have acted to which results in bodily injury or property damage to another party.
- Sports Accident Insurance is structured to provide a core level of coverage and benefits (loss of limbs, fracture, dislocation, tendon severance of limbs, loss of eye sight, speech, and many other miscellaneous conditions and even accidental bodily injury or death sustained by a member due to external causes beyond the member's control). >



INSURANCE

- This coverage is secondary to any other health care plan(s).
- A sanctioned event is defined as an organized group ride which is documented prior to the date of the event and on file with the OC. Participants in the ride must be on the member list file with the insured.
- If an incident and/or accident occurs, it must be documented and recorded immediately.
- If there is personal injury or property damage the Board and OC must be notified immediately.
- No coverage is provided for alcohol/narcotic related injuries. If a ride finishes with alcohol consumption, the ride is considered officially ended and is no longer a sanctioned ride.
- Full insurance summary: ontariocycling.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2023-Insurance-Program-Summary-Update.pdf



INSURANCE

COVERAGE FOR INDIVIDUAL TRAINING RIDES

Members are offered a Personal Accident Extension Program.

For OCA Members looking to have their non-club training activities covered, members have the option to purchase into the “Personal Accident Extension Program” for an additional fee to extend the Sport Accident coverage.

More information (scroll down to the Insurance section):

ontariocycling.org/membership/ ■



RESPECT

- Your Ride Leader(s) are the “Host” of the ride, representing the Club and deserve respect.
- There is simply no place for individuals who do not embody our Mission and Who We Are and do not follow the Club’s Policies.
- Our Ride Leaders are entitled to enforce: 1) our Mission and Who We Are; 2) Rules of the Road; 3) the Club’s Risk Management Plan; 4) the Club’s Ride Guidelines; and 5) a general social/fun atmosphere.
- Ride Leaders have the right to ask offending riders to leave the ride and will report them to the Board (hello@darkhorseflyers.ca) after the ride. ■



THANK YOU

Designed by Ange Bradfield, Dragonfly Design

TITLE SPONSOR



CARBON FIBER SPONSOR



TITANIUM SPONSOR



BIKE SHOP PARTNER



STEEL SPONSORS



St. Lawrence Dental

ALLOY SPONSORS



CLUB CHARITY



Questions or comments? Reach us at hello@darkhorseflyers.ca | darkhorseflyers.ca

2024
Flyers®

