



CLUB RULES & ETIQUETTE

Rules and Etiquette for Riding in Lola Group Rides

Lola Cycling Club (“LCC”) has members with skill levels that vary from beginners to those training for the Ironman World Championships. We want our group rides to be fun no matter what your training ambitions are. All riders do so at their own risk, but experience shows that adherence to these basic rules and etiquette will result in the safest possible environment in which we can all enjoy our cycling. The rules and etiquette articulated below incorporate long-standing practices and will be familiar to all experienced riders. Whilst they have been drawn up to help members who have never ridden in a group, we would like everyone to make a point of reading and adhering to these basic principles. We have taken the opportunity to also include items of general advice that may help new or relatively inexperienced cyclists.

Safety and Risk Management

All riders take part in the group runs at their own risk. Those risks can never be totally eliminated but can be minimised by following the basic rules and guidance found below. Senior LCC members and designated road captains will be happy to offer general advice and to help clarify any of the basic rules or etiquette of the LCC. They will politely point out any deviations to the rider(s) concerned and seek compliance. If they believe that a rider’s conduct is putting others at risk they have the authority to exclude the offender from the group ride and will subsequently report the circumstances to the designated road captains who will then address the matter directly with the person concerned. For expats, or tourists, consider your own insurance needs (all Dutchies are mandated to have this insurance). In particular ensure that you have Third Party (Public Liability) insurance that covers you whilst cycling.

Road Captains /Senior LCC Members

Four road captains will be selected every year (for a one year term) by Lola to help the LCC keep its group rides organized and safe. The criteria for these captains will be:

- Nice/Courteous/Fun/Social;
- Available (for most Mon/Weds/Sat/Sun rides)
- Strong physical fitness and bike handling ability

These volunteers will be providing a service to our community and so should be treated with kindness (like buying them a beer from time to time). In exchange for performing these functions, they will receive an LCC kit and a free espresso on the day of the ride(s). When no road captains are available, senior LCC members will be designated to perform the function and act as navigators.



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Warning Calls When Riding in a Group

These calls and signals are universal to all experienced cyclists – please use them at the appropriate times. While we use English to communicate in our group chats and online, we primarily use Dutch for our road calls (to keep balance in the Force).

- “Tegen” (pronounced “Tay-Hen”) There is a cyclist/pedestrian coming in the opposite direction (i.e. coming toward the group);
- “Voor” There is a cyclist/pedestrian going in the same direction as the group but at a slower pace (i.e. you are passing them);
- “Car up” There is a vehicle coming towards the front of the group.
- “Car back” There is a vehicle coming from the behind the group.
- “Vrij” (Clear) or “Auto” (Car) This call lets following riders know at junctions, when the group is joining or crossing another road, whether or not the road is still clear. If the group cannot stay together the first ones across ride slowly until the others catch up.
- Directions: Straight = “rechtdoor”; Right turn = “rechts” (pronounced rex); Left turn = “links”.
- “Single file” A call from the group leader when the road is busy and the group is unable to ride 2 abreast safely. This call must be relayed backward by everyone to ensure that the move to single file is executed quickly and safely. The standard procedure is for the outside rider to drop back behind the inside rider. The call “single file” alerts everyone to the need to slow up and create spaces.
- “Paal” Any pole, stake or other standing object in the road that could cause a rider to crash. If possible indicate where it is so that following riders can steer away from it and not into it. Use pointing indicators for all other obstacles in the road (such as holes, medians, etc.).
- Ringing the bell – In Holland, most cyclists have bells on their road bikes (strange but essential). Use the bell as a general warning to other cyclists (commuting or racing) and pedestrians. Always try and pass on the outside. If you don’t have a bell, let the others in the group know that you are passing by swinging your right arm to indicate that something is coming that might be in the way.
- “WHOA!” or [Right Hand moving in an up and down action] for breaking in a group ride. If you notice that the group is breaking ahead, rather than breaking formation for a look, yell “WHOA!” so that everyone behind you knows that the group is slowing down. If there is time, also put your right hand down behind you palm flat. If you brake without letting those behind know your intention they can easily run into you. If everyone pulls out of formation each time the group breaks, crashes will result from oncoming traffic.
- “Puncture” Let the others know and they will wait while you repair it. (Road captains or senior LCC members will help you).
- “Paard” The group is about to pass horses and special care is needed. Pass as widely as possible. Make sure that both the horse and rider are aware of your presence and **if you are approaching from behind call out**. Keep



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pedalling slowly as you pass to keep noise from your freewheel and gears to a minimum. Pay attention to any request by the horse rider – they know the temperament of the horse and its likely reaction to a group of brightly clad cyclists.

Finally

Let others know if you are unable to keep up, have a problem or have decided to leave the group. Always pass the instructions along; if a rider cannot keep up, the leader needs to know. **For Beginners, while the LCC is inclusive, out of respect for the others, we request that only those who can maintain a minimum pace of 25 KPH by themselves join our group rides (our average social pace is between 28-31 KPH).**

General Etiquette

- **Ride steadily.** Keep a steady line and constant speed while in a group. Any sudden change is magnified as it reaches riders at the back and can result in people getting dropped (which ultimately slows the average pace down as time is needed for regrouping).
- **Ride directly behind the rider in front of you.** There is a temptation to ride slightly to the side of the rider in front of you so that you can see past. Please deny this temptation. In larger group rides, this will have a knock on “echelon” effect which will result in LCC riders riding in the oncoming traffic lane. This is one of the most common and dangerous occurrences on our rides. Road captains and senior LCC members will be instructed to keep our lines straight and safe. If the rider in front of you is observing the rules and etiquette found in this document, you have no need to look past her/him.
- **Designated Competitive Zones.** You can race to your heart’s content in organised competitive events at the SPARTAAN (or elsewhere) but in general, we prefer a steady pace in our group rides. If you wish to go fast, please join the fast group. If you join one of the social group rides, do not overtake the rider/riders at the head of the group (unless they ask you to contribute to the pace making).
- **Ride two abreast** where it is safe to do so but always be prepared to go to single file when necessary. Ride immediately behind the rider in front – do not overlap either forwards or sideways. Overlapping forwards gives you no chance to avoid the rider in front if he swerves or falls, and overlapping sideways results in the group presenting a three abreast profile. Never ride more than two abreast.
- **On the weekend rides** everyone is expected to work at the front.
 - There is no such thing as a “protected rider” in the LCC. If you are riding at the front, the expectation is that you will contribute. If you are not feeling strong enough to contribute to the pace making, etiquette dictates that you stay at the back and out of the rotation. If you have removed yourself from the rotation, etiquette dictates that



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you don't contest any of the designated competitive zones (since you haven't done any of the work up until then).

- If no road captain is present, a senior LCC member should be designated as "navigator" and will perform the function of the road captain on the ride.
- Treat members of the group and other road users with courtesy (**or in other words, don't be a dick**). Acknowledge courteous behaviour from commuting cyclists, etc. Remember that you are riding with Lola, and that we want to be seen as active and responsible members of The Hague community. Consider yourself to be our goodwill ambassadors (especially when riding in LCC kit).
- React to bad driving incidents with a smile and a thumbs up. Remember a road rage motorist has a one ton weapon!
- Ride with the group which best suits your ability. It is usually better (and less embarrassing) to start low and build up. If in doubt road captains and senior club members will be happy to advise. It is sometimes nice to try an easier group, especially if you are just starting out. It is considered bad manners to hold back a strong group when an easier group is available.

Helpful Hints for New Cyclists (and a useful reminder for the more experienced)

- If you do not currently exercise regularly and/or are in any doubt as to your health or physical fitness to cycle, please consult your doctor before starting. Some general fitness is necessary so you might find it useful to try a short ride on your own, to check your fitness and familiarity with the bike, before joining a group. Staff at Lola will be more than happy to provide you with general tips on routes or bike maintenance.
- Carry personal details – name, address, contact phone number and some money. Carry drinks and food, even on short rides. The food can be some form of high energy bar to get you to the next café stop. If you have problems or decide to leave the group then please inform fellow group members.
- Wear cycle-specific clothing if possible as it provides a better level of comfort and practicality. Carry a waterproof jacket, not only for the rain but also to give an extra layer if you have to stop with a puncture and cool down. An LCC jersey will help to publicise the club and also make you very visible 😊
- Carry enough tools to get you out of everyday problems like punctures or loose parts (handlebars, saddle). It's easier to change an inner tube than it is to repair a puncture at the roadside (especially if it's cold or wet). Carry two spare inner tubes, tyre levers, a pump and allen keys to fit as the minimum.
- **Helmets are compulsory on LCC rides.** If you don't have one, we'll loan you one for the ride in question.
- Keep your bike in good condition and replace any worn out parts. The group will help if something goes wrong but will not be best pleased if the problem was caused by poor maintenance. Keep a close check on your tyres which should be fully inflated, especially the one on the back wheel as it's always



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out of sight. Look for bulges or cuts as well as the actual tread depth and pattern.

- Riding on Tri-bars is not permitted on LCC rides for safety reasons.

These rules are not set in stone and may be subject to change. It is all about being sensible and aware whilst riding on the road. Our LCC rides attract a lot of riders and so these rules set out the bare minimum of what is required. Remember, you are responsible for your own safety and take part in activities at your own risk.

Have fun out there! ☺

