



## Paceline Riding 101 Clinic With Coach Sarah Dunlap

1. **Starting Safely:** It is important that you start off smoothly, without causing a pause in the spacing of the group.
  - Stand over your top tube. *NEVER* start seated.
  - Clip in on one side, and put the pedal at the 12:05 position (just forward of the top.)
  - As you *gently* push off with the foot on the ground, push down on the foot that's clipped in to generate enough speed to get your pedals around, clip in, and find your saddle, and try not to coast.
  
2. **Stopping Safely:** Remember: The safety of the group depends on your stopping smoothly and safely.
  - **SIGNAL and say, "Stopping!"**
  - Plan your stop ahead of time so you can stop at a predictable pace.
  - Keep your line!
  - Use both brakes smoothly and evenly.
  - Unclip your foot.
  - Lift your rear out of the saddle and over the top tube. (Never stop in the saddle.)
  - Come to a complete stop while smoothly setting down your foot. (Do NOT use your foot on the ground as a brake!)
  
3. **Cornering Safely:** The riders behind you must be able to predict where YOU are going, in order to choose their own line.
  - Brake smoothly to slow down to a safe cornering speed BEFORE you get to the corner.
  - Smooth braking around the corner!
  - Choose your line and stick to it.
  - Accelerate smoothly out of the corner (Don't stand and hammer unless you are in a race!)
  
4. **Retrieving your Water Bottle Safely:** You MUST be able to handle your water bottle (and snacks) without looking or letting your bike waver, to ride safely in a paceline! Practice, practice, practice!
  
5. **Paceline Signals:** The riders behind you need to know what's coming up. Use your voice, AND hand signals.
  - **"SLOWING!"** When the paceline slows, make sure you warn the people behind you.

- **“Standing!/ Sitting!”** If you need to stand, warn the people behind you, since your bike will move differently during the transition from sitting to standing and vice versa.
  - **“Stopping!”** explained above.
  - **Left Turn/ Right Turn:** Signal and use your voice.
  - **“CAR!”** Say, “Car! And then where the car is: Left, Right, Up, Back.
  - **“On Your Left!”** VERY important when riding on the multi-use trails, or when overtaking a lone rider or another group of riders. Paceline leader: Make sure you warn the person how many bikes are coming up behind them.
  - **“Gravel!”** (Or pothole, or banana peel, or water bottle, etc.) Point out the obstacle and announce it. DO NOT turn your head to get a closer look. Stay steady, looking ahead, and keep a line that avoids the obstacle. DO NOT take your hands off the handlebars if there is a chance you may hit the obstacle. (Use your voice only.)
6. **Paceline Riding:** It is important to ride steadily, use hand and voice signals, and avoid sudden movements, so you can earn the trust of the other riders in the group. If you are not 100% steady, stay at the very back of the paceline and be prepared to let people into the paceline in front of you.
- **Paceline Leader:** Your job is to keep a steady pace that *everyone* in the group can keep up with. DO NOT go to the front and hammer! You also need to keep a keen eye out for obstacles, cars, etc.
  - **Paceline Spacing:** You will get the benefit of drafting (up to 30% less effort!) and keep yourself safe, with correct spacing. 1-3 feet between your front tire and the back tire of the person ahead of you, and slightly off to the side so you can see the road ahead of you is ideal. Stay alert for changes due to slowing, standing, etc.
  - **NO Half-wheeling!** NEVER allow your wheel to overlap the wheel in front of you. VERY dangerous!
  - **Single-file, please.** Even though the pros (and many others) like to ride 2-abreast or more, keep the public happy and avoid a ticket by ALWAYS riding single file when on a public road.
  - **Paceline Rotation:** To keep the speed up and everyone fresh, you can rotate the paceline. The person in front rides steadily for 1+ minutes, dropping off to the left (when it is safe to do so) and letting the entire paceline go by, before joining the back. If you do not wish to “Take a Pull” at the front, remain in the back and allow the rider who dropped off the front to join the line in front of you. (Use your voice!) DO NOT do rotations on busy or narrow roads.
  - **Always think for yourself!** Look ahead on the road. Make your own decision to cross a busy highway, etc. Avoid Group-Think and stay safe!
  - **Stop at ALL red lights and stop signs, and put your foot down.** It’s the law! Stay single file when you stop.



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