

## RULES OF THE FVUMC SPIRITUAL SPINNERS WEEKLY RIDES

Please read through the following tips and guidelines for our weekly rides as we are not able to review these before every ride:

- The purpose of these rides is to get people comfortable riding in a group. This is not about speed, but about learning technique, etiquette, and group riding dynamics.
- Do not be embarrassed to ask that the group slow down (see the first point).
- Each rider is responsible for the safety and well being of the entire group.
- **Stay between six inches and three feet from the wheel in front of you.** The riders in the middle of the line are only working about 60% as hard as the rider in the front, and the rider at the back of the line is only working about 70 to 80% as hard as the rider in front. The farther back from the rider in front of you that you are, the less benefit you get from the draft. Once you get more than about 5 feet behind, you get almost no benefit, and you will have a difficult time catching back up with the group.
- Never overlap your front wheel with the rear wheel of the rider in front of you.
- Point out all road hazards to the riders behind you.
- **Everyone (not just the rider in front) signal all turns and stops.**
- When coming to a left turn, the rider at the rear should call out when it is clear to change lanes ("clear back").
- If you see that the rider behind you has fallen off the group, call out to the rider(s) in front that we have dropped a rider ("riders dropped" or "riders off").
- If you are in the lead and riders have fallen off, slow the pace until they have caught back on. Then, increase the pace slowly and gradually, but at a slightly lower effort level than before.
- If you have fallen off the group and have caught back up, let the rider(s) in front know that you are back on ("I'm back" or "I'm on"). The riders in front should pass the word up the line ("we're together", "they're on". *"gruppo compatto"*, etc).
- **When a rider in front of you (or behind you) gives a verbal warning, pass the warning down (or up) the line. Do not assume that because you heard the warning that everyone behind you (or in front of you) heard it.**
- **Pay attention and be ready to react to what the group is doing.** The group should be moving as one unit and not like an accordion or slinky.
- Keep the work level constant. Speed will go up on descents and down on ascents, but the work remains the same.
- Changes in speed should be smooth and gradual.
- Keep your cadence high and respond quickly to any change in pace of the rider(s) in front of you. If you wait until you are five or six feet behind before you react, it will be difficult to catch back on, not only for you, but for everyone who is behind you. Just as with the car, you cannot accelerate in a high gear. Unless your cadence is already above 80 rpm, accelerate by pedaling faster, and not by shifting to a higher gear.
- **Do not let a gap of more than five feet grow in front of you.** If you cannot keep up with the pace, tell the riders in front to slow down (see the first point), but just as importantly, be sure that you are doing what you can to try to keep up. Do not coast and do not use your brakes when a gap is forming in front of you.
- When coming to a stop, shift to a lower gear before you stop. This makes it much easier to get back up to speed when the group restarts.
- If you are on the front of the line, do not coast. You are blocking the wind of the riders behind you, so they will coast faster than you do.
- Do not slow down without signaling.

- Do not slow down unless the rider in front has slowed.
- **Hold your line. Do not weave and do not cut in and out of the line.**
- **Avoid distractions.** For the safety of all riders we ask that NO Ipods or MP3 players are used during the FVUMC Spiritual Spinners rides.
- Stay relaxed. The hands, arms, shoulders, and neck should be relaxed. Tensing the muscles is not only tiring, it makes it more difficult to maintain control of the bike.
- If one rider in the group has a mechanical problem, the entire group stops until the problem is resolved.
- If you have aero bars, do not use them unless you are on the front of the line, and even then, it is better not to use aero bars on group rides.
- Have fun. Do not worry about how far we have gone or how fast we are going. Do not even look at your computer until we finish the ride.