



**ALICE
SPRINGS
CYCLING
CLUB**

Bunch Etiquette

The Alice Springs riding community is a diverse mix of people with differing levels of skill and fitness. The information provided here is to ensure those who ride with the ASCC bunches have a safe and enjoyable ride. The following guidelines will ensure that this happens

Obey all road rules and traffic lights.

Average speeds

If the posted average speed is too slow and you cannot, or do not wish to ride at that speed, please consider riding in a faster bunch or on your own.

If you feel the posted bunch speed may be too fast, still consider coming along. Riding in the bunch allows you to benefit from drafting, meaning you can travel at a higher speed than you could whilst riding on your own. *However if you do a turn on the front and struggle to maintain the speed, take a shorter turn and pull off rather than persisting at the slower speed and frustrating your fellow riders.* No regular riders will begrudge you for having a turn on the front, however short!

The average speed for the Saturday Century is 30-32km/hr.

The average speed for the Tuesday and Thursday Hills Rides is around 40km/hr for the gallop into town and is largely downhill.

Bunch Structure

In Central Australia, like most bunches, we ride two abreast in column but swap off the front using a 'rolling turns' concept. Rather than the two riders on the front peeling off on either side of the bunch and making their way to the rear, the left side rider calls the right side rider through when they have finished their turn. The right side rider then moves forward and across assuming the left side rider position with the rider to their rear riding forward to take the right hand position. The rationale for this technique is to maintain a compact bunch size increasing the safety of those riding in the bunch.

There are certain circumstance and locations where it is safer or more considerate to ride single file. For example often the bunch will ride single file whilst rolling through the gap in heavy traffic.

General Riding Conduct

Whilst on the front try to maintain the advertised ride speed, keep the pace consistent and smooth. Avoid surging off the front at any time; the only exception to this would be if you choose to contest the designated sprint.

Do not half-wheel your partner. An easy way to achieve this is to keep handlebars side by side.

Avoid sudden braking and if getting out of the saddle maintain your speed as you do, avoiding throwing your bike back.

Whilst riding, it is the responsibility of the two leading riders to point out obstacles (objects, holes and debris). This should be passed along the bunch using hand signals to point out their location. The riders in the rest of the bunch rely on those on the front to be their eyes and trust them to point out those obstacles. **It is the responsibility of all members of the bunch to continue pointing out the obstacles along the bunch.**

Whilst in the bunch follow the wheel in front, avoid overlapping or leaving a large gap. Overlapping puts you at risk of a crash if the person in front suddenly changes direction. Leaving a gap increases the work you have to do, thus mitigating the benefit of being in a bunch. Keep your line whilst riding, avoiding sudden and unpredictable movement of your bike. This includes sudden braking or changing direction.

If you are confident removing clothing (arm warmers, gilet), eating, or doing anything else that requires you to take both hands off the handlebars whilst riding, wait until you move to the rear of the bunch. Ride slightly off the back before you remove your hands. This allows you to do what you need to do without putting any other riders at risk if you do come down.

Riding with Tri-bars is discouraged in the ASCC bunches, if you decide to ride a bike with them attached we ask you not to use them *at all* whilst riding in the bunch. Do not get annoyed if people have words to you about this.

Mechanicals

The bunch will wait for riders with mechanical problems or punctures. This assumes riders turn up with a mechanically sound, well running bike with appropriate tools and spares. Please oil your chain. There nothing more annoying than a squeaky chain in the bunch, apart from half-wheeling.

Sprints

There are designated sprint locations on most rides, some are fixed on regular ride routes (Tues and Thursday Hills rides), others are determined prior to setting off and will be identified prior (Saturday Century Ride). *At the end of a sprint, all riders must stop at the end of the spring point and wait for all other riders to catch up before continuing.*

There may be circumstances where we decide that due to similar levels of fitness and ability, the bunch may be more combative with a faster average speed. This would be determined prior to, or at a minimum, established during the ride with all members of the bunch consenting. Normal etiquette with regard to stopping and waiting for mechanicals and after sprints would still apply.

Kit

Please consider your fellows riders, whilst there is no specific request to ride in particular kits (club kit is always encouraged), please ensure that what ever you do wear is clean, laundered, and in good condition (No see-through nicks please). Oh and socks. Please wear socks, while most sock heights are tolerated, just wear some. If not, the Tri Club have bunches that you can ride with!