



Jon's Coaching Tips

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EXPLANATION OF MOST COMMON HAND SIGNALS

(No, not the hand signals you thinking of!)

Whilst riding in a bunch, it is imperative that a rider warns the other cyclists about road and traffic hazards, anticipated moves, or position changing. Although you are at the disadvantage of having to break the wind in front of the bunch, you also hold the distinct advantage of seeing things way ahead. The riders behind you depend on you giving them the necessary signals that will avoid mishaps such as crashes, punctures and equipment damage. These are some of the more common hand signals which you will most likely come across whilst riding in a peloton:

- Pointing down at the ground (left or right) would indicate danger on the appropriate side. Move in the opposite direction to avoid hazards. Hazards would include potholes, cateyes (NB), painted lines (very slippery in wet weather), stones etc. Remember, it doesn't have to be a large stone or boulder for you to indicate danger. Rather be safe than sorry - indicate any potential dangers. Make sure you also call out loud any obstacles in the road so people can hear you and take note of the problem. Your calling out should be clear ie "HOLE LEFT" - make sure the Peloton can hear you. When the Peloton is large it is important that these signs are echoed down the Peloton, don't presume that the people behind you have heard or seen what you have, repeat it to them.
- Patting the bum. Patting the left 'cheek' with left hand would indicate to all riders following your wheel that there is something hazardous on the left and to move over to the right. This could be due to a parked car up ahead, slow riders which are going to be passed, a big patch of gravel or dangerous road ahead. Patting the right bum cheek with right hand indicates that the cyclist has riders must move over to the left.
- Finger or hand up in the air - indicates that a rider has punctured or incurred some or other mechanical trouble that will result in him/her having to stop. When riding in a bunch, you can't just pull your brakes and come to a screeching halt. Keep rolling and hold your line until everyone behind has passed, then pull off to the side.
- Arm out with forearm at 90degrees towards the sky, hand up with all finger extended/or with a fist. Indicates that the group must slow down to stop - traffic lights or stop street or anything else that would bring the group to a stop. If it is traffic lights call out "LIGHTS" loudly to get everyone's attention.
- Hand left or right with fingers normally extended shaking back and forth - indicates loose gravel or small stones in the path. Very common at intersection. Slow down and try and avoid 'infected' area. Cornering should be done at slower speeds.
- A 2-fingered downward point moving laterally, would indicate railway tracks ahead. The direction of the hand should indicate the angle at which the railway tracks cross the path. Be extremely cautious when crossing them and also go over the tracks at a 90degree angle, even if this means going wide and then cutting across to achieve this angle.

Practice SAFE Riding

Never assume the rider behind you has seen the danger ahead. Use LOUD VOCAL warnings for potholes and other obstacles in or on the road - believe me, people appreciate it.

GOLDEN RULE - if the entire group can't make it through an intersection, **NOBODY** goes. It only takes one silly person for a tragedy.