

# The Self Marshalling System explained

On most of its rides, this Club uses the Self Marshalling System (SMS) to ensure the ride flows smoothly and all riders arrive at the desired destination.

## Definitions

*Ride Leader (RL)* – is the person who is in the front of the group, ‘leading’ the ride. The RL knows the route of the ride and sets the ride pace. No rider should pass the RL. Most often the RL will wear a distinctive vest.

*Tail end Charlie (TEC)* – is always at the rear of the group, can sometimes be in a car. Most often the TEC will also wear a distinctive vest.

*Corner Marker (CM)* – the rider on the corner indicating a change in direction to the oncoming riders.

## What the Ride Leader should do

When the RL approaches a change of direction in the route at an intersection or roundabout, the RL will indicate with his/her left arm for the rider immediately behind to stop and mark the corner. That rider now becomes a CM. This process repeats at each direction change.

## What the Corner Marker should do

1. The CM will then indicate by hand to the following riders which direction they should take to follow the RL.
2. The CM must ensure that he/she is readily visible to the oncoming riders
3. The CM must not leave the corner until TEC approaches and indicates that the CM can depart in front of TEC.

## How it goes wrong

By far the two most common problems are:-

1. The CM is not easily visible to oncoming riders and some or all following riders go the wrong way. *CM's should not stop in shadows, behind trees, where other vehicles can obstruct them or anywhere else where they are not easily seen.*
2. The CM leaves the corner before the TEC arrives. If there has been a breakdown or accident there might be a considerable delay until the TEC arrives. *CM's must not leave the corner until the TEC arrives.*

## Note

1. CM's should always ensure they stop in a safe position. Park as far to the left as possible or mount the curb or median strip if able.
2. If there is no CM at an intersection or roundabout, riders should go straight ahead.
3. A rider should mark a corner at a change of direction even if the RL does not indicate to do so.
4. The RL and TEC should exchange mobile phone numbers and try to get in contact if a

problem or a delay occurs

## **Summary**

The self marshalling system relies on all corner markers doing their job correctly. Just one errant corner marker and the whole system breaks down. The self marshalling system is like a chain with the corner markers being the links. One faulty link and the chain breaks.

**Graham Boulter**  
**Club Captain**