DRUID DRIBBLE
Edition 1 Volume 7 – Topic: Etiquette

OK, where does one begin. First off, I think we all roll our eyes when someone speaks of "common sense". What is common sense to one doesn't necessarily translate as common sense to another. Want easy proof? Just look at the state of our political parties. So, let's look at this through the lens of group riding. Instead of "common sense", let's look at this as "common courtesy". I will emphasize that this is a two-way deal.

Starting off, let's hit at the very beginning of a ride… KSU. The intent here is to depart on schedule as there are a number of second and third order of effects that hinge on leaving on time. Caliente H.O.G. follows National H.O.G. and H-D guidance along with a mix of best practices. Simple stuff that gets so maligned in execution. There are items that occur behind the scenes that most riders take for granted. When you get there, you sign in as the RC team needs to verify that you are an H.O.G. member in good standing. If your membership has lapsed or you are not a member, there is additional paperwork that must be completed. Not difficult but it takes time. This is not "optional". It must be done based on the liability insurance we carry from H.O.G..

Once that is completed, the LRC will give an overall brief of the ride. This includes a basic safety brief. If everyone is there on time, does the sign in plus the occasional "guest" paperwork, we can get out…start to finish…in 15 or so minutes. However, nothing is ever "perfect" on any ride as there are those folks who feel that the KSU really doesn't apply to them. This is one of those "effects". So they cruise in a couple minutes before we depart and now the whole process comes to a screeching halt. The RC has to pull out the sign in sheets, the new folks have to get an abbreviated safety brief and all this occurs as everyone is sitting there, ready to go, sweating… Now one of the just arrived folks has to run inside to Caliente or McD to use the bathroom. Yet another "effect" that reflects the inconsiderate attitude being thrust in the face of those who arrived on time and were ready to ride.

Now everyone who was courteous and arrived well ahead of the KSU hard time, are now overheating (sweating), or in cooler weather, have started sweating in their cold wx riding gear which will affect them on the ride as now they start getting cold. Still more "effects".

Realize we have an unofficial, secondary motto of "live to ride, ride to eat". With few exceptions, we routinely have a meal component built into the ride. The RC team has made arrangements with these restaurants to accommodate us. That requires us to be on time. The RC team has taken this into account in the route selection and how long it will take us to arrive. The KSU reflects this effort. We show up late at a restaurant, they will remember and the next time we would like to eat there, they tend to not be so accommodating. All this because someone couldn't get their butt out of bed and be on time. Yet another "effect".

We also harp on riders showing up with a "full tank and an empty bladder". Rides are researched out to go roughly 100 miles or roughly 90 minutes before we hit a gas station. It has been that way with us since day one and is a common denominator amongst all motorcycle clubs. The RC team also chugged down that last cup of coffee before leaving their house and their internal "venting" clock is clicking…just like yours. Additionally, the V-Rod and Sportster series of bikes have a smaller capacity gas tank thus limiting their range. Add a second passenger, wind, high speed, and their range is even less. As another "effect", to show up with less than a full tank is just plain inconsiderate of a rider. You have had weeks of knowledge of a specific ride and thus all that time planning out your schedule to prepare for the ride. To make matters worse, these inconsiderate riders get indignant if the group gets pissed as they expect everyone to wait for them to get fuel.

So now we get to a gas stop. We brief for any passengers to hop off and immediately knock out any bathroom visit and/or purchase of a beverage/snack. This lets the operator of the bike to gas up and then move the bike to the area where the LRC has parked. They then can hit the "facilities" themselves. Most passengers tend to "identify as female" and the RC team understands that female bathroom facilities are at times limited and are usually set up for one person at a time. Conversely, many of the male facilities will take two or more. Get in and then get out. The attitude of "I'm going to wait for my husband/boyfriend/significant other to finish gassing up and we will go in together" is incredibly inconsiderate to the rest of the group. As is the mantra of "Let's see what trinkets they have that I can buy to get a head start on my Christmas shopping". You want to shop, do it on your time. Of course, you can always tap out and then shop to your heart's content. That Rattlesnake head paperweight might not ever be seen again… This is yet another "effect" the RC Team has to occasionally deal with. Understand that once you have finished in the gas station, you will have a reasonable amount of time to adjust your clothing (add/subtract) and finish your beverage. This is built into the ride plan. Gas stops however shouldn't take much more than 15 or so minutes under most conditions, but we play the cards we are dealt when we arrive at the gas stop. Before leaving, the RC team will ***attempt*** to confirm numbers. A decently large group may force the RC team to take off their boots to have the extra digits to facilitate the count but sometimes that "piggy that went to the market" gets overlooked. That's why we all park together. If you push a nonconformist attitude and parked on the other side of the gas station and get left behind, so sad and it sucks to be you. We don't deliberately leave anyone behind, but the ride isn't about you, it is about **ALL** of us. No one wants to be standing in the hot sun waiting for that inconsiderate rider. Thus an "effect" that should not occur.

DRUID DRIBBLE
Edition 1 Volume 7 – Topic: Etiquette

Another boogeyman here that can be an “effect”… There are a number of riders who use tobacco products. By and large, your call up until the time you ride with a group. We have had riders pull out something to smoke, light up and everyone behind them has to smell all their second had smoke. No bueno for the non-smokers. The ash gets flicked and where does it go…they get done and flick out the butt and where does it go…right into the riders behind them. Same issue with those who chew. You spit and where does it go? I applaud our H.O.G. group as this almost never occurs anymore and is limited to the new riders or guest riders or those that have never ridden in a group. Rare but it is an inconsiderate “effect” that must be addressed.

Like at a gas stop, when we arrive at a restaurant or other destination, we like for everyone to park as a group. First off, it is less likely that any vandalism will occur within a group of bikes by outsiders. You park by yourself; you take on more risk. We normally like to get a picture of the group in front of the destination so not having to hunt everyone down is a courtesy to everyone. Secondly, once we are done and are ready to leave, we can get a decent headcount. The RC team understands that some folks will “tap out” at the that time or will inform the RC team that they will “tap out” on the route back vice going all the way back to the dealership. No sweat.

So where do we stand? Common sense or common courtesy? I’d like to think it is a bit of both. But consider that as a rider, you start getting inconvenienced with a number of negative “effects”, you will start looking for another group to ride with. By and large, we as the Caliente H.O.G. Chapter are incredibly friendly, helpful, and will move heaven and earth to be safe and great riders. To be a positive factor of what is right with H.O.G., the Chapter, and the Dealership. Showing up for a ride to be with friends and enjoying what only two or three wheels can provide is a powerful thing. See you on the road. Regards, F2