

How to safely render assistance when a mechanical breakdown occurs.

Group riding is great but sometimes the ride is interrupted by a shout of “mechanical” from someone in the group. The problem is usually a flat tire, dropped chain or even a broken spoke. As considerate cyclists and human beings we naturally want to help our colleague experiencing a mechanical breakdown. Our first instinct is to immediately stop, no matter where we are, and render assistance. This is **WRONG!** The worst thing we can do is have all the riders stop at the point of the affected rider and gawk. By bunching up on the roadside, the idled riders create a very dangerous situation with any following car traffic.

What is the **RIGHT** thing to do? Ideally, the entire group should slow down and keep riding until a safe stopping point is reached. The disabled rider should call out the mechanical problem and then slow down and carefully move to the right side, thus allowing other riders pass. The ride leader should ask one or two mechanically minded riders in the group to walk back to the disabled rider and render assistance. The balance of the group should continue to the next convenient “regrouping” site and wait for the riders left behind.

We are all curious and want to help our fellow cyclists, but we must do so safely. Stay aware of where you are regarding road traffic. Be observant and remember, none of us are indestructible!