MEETING PLANS & IDEAS: CYCLING

**OBJECTIVES**
This month’s activities should:

- Show Scouts how to ride safely.
- Teach cycling first aid.
- Teach Scouts how to maintain and repair their bikes.
- Show Scouts how to plan rides and routes.
- Teach good cycling nutrition.
- Introduce Scouts to cycling organizations.
- Teach about cycling gear and clothing.

**LEADERSHIP PLANNING**
As a leadership team, you may want to discuss the following items when choosing cycling as your program feature during your planning meetings.

- Do we know an accomplished adult cyclist who is also a good Scouter?
- Where are the local bicycle stores?
- What bike organizations and clubs exist in our community?
- Do our members all have bikes and helmets? If not, how can we help them get equipped?
- What cycling skills do our members already have, and what do they lack?
- Does our community have a bike route map?
- What are the best bike trails near us?
- What are the best-organized bike events and programs in our community?
- What kind of cycling will be most interesting to our members?

**PREOPENING IDEAS**

*Preopening Ideas on Troop Program Resources*

- As Scouts arrive, show YouTube videos of Danny MacAskill trick riding.
- Watch a YouTube video about a major cycling event like RAGBRAI or Race Across America. Inspect bicycles and bike clothing. Have arriving Scouts report on training rides they’ve taken.
- Inspect helmets, gear, and clothing. If the main event will be an organized bike club ride or fundraiser, distribute registration forms.
- Have Scouts ride to the meeting by bike for final inspection.

**OPENING IDEAS**

*Opening Ideas on Troop Program Resources*
GROUP INSTRUCTION IDEAS

Bicycle Basics

• Discuss cycling safety and traffic rules, and introduce these topics:
  — Bike types and parts
  — Bike clothing and helmets
  — Bike training and nutritional needs

Route Planning

• Introduce bicycle route maps.
• Demonstrate websites for bike riders.
• Demonstrate online route map creation.

Riding Skills Demonstration

• Explain skills to be demonstrated later in the meeting.
• Explain the route to be covered on evaluation rides.
• Assign riders to leaders for evaluation and assemble at the starting line.

Main Event Final Preparation

• Finalize the route for the main event.
• Discuss transportation to and from starting line.
• Discuss support arrangements.
• Hold a final inspection of bikes, clothing, and gear.

SKILLS INSTRUCTION IDEAS

Bicycle Basics

- Learn how to change tires and tubes.
- Learn how to adjust brakes, seat, and stem tube.
- Learn skills for short-distance street riding.
- Discuss a training regimen for a 50-mile ride.
- Discuss nutritional requirements for a 50-mile ride.
- Discuss clothing for a 50-mile ride.
- Discuss gear storage systems for road bikes.
- Practice using toe clips or clipless pedals and shoes.
- Discuss clothing needs for long-distance touring.
- Discuss gear needs for long-distance touring.

Route Planning

- Discuss safe cycling route criteria and streets to avoid.
- Brainstorm most common dangers for city cyclists.
- Demonstrate signals for turns and stopping.
- Discuss other defensive riding techniques.
Discuss teaching drafting technique and sharing of the lead position.
Discuss techniques to avoid seat and neck pain and injury.
Walk through route planning for a 50-mile ride.

- Explain long-distance route criteria and route-elevation profiles.
- Discuss long-hill climbing and descent techniques.
- Discuss endurance nutrition and hydration.
- Walk through route planning for a week-long tour.

Riding Skills Demonstration

- Cover these skills that will be used in evaluation rides:
  - Staying in the bike lane
  - Turning, stopping, and passing signals and alerts
  - Maintaining safe speeds for conditions

- Cover these skills that will be used in evaluation rides:
  - Drafting in group of fast riders
  - Signaling to other group members
  - Taking the lead position
  - Obeying traffic signs and signals

- Cover these skills that will be used in evaluation rides:
  - Packing camping gear on bike
  - Riding at night using lights
  - Obeying traffic signs and signals
  - Riding bikes, fully loaded with gear, up and down a steep hill

Main Event Final Preparation

- Discuss the benefits of bike commuting to and from school.
- Discuss the health benefits of biking.
- Show resources available for more biking information.
- Discuss setting goals for long-term cycling.

- Discuss year-round biking as a better transportation alternative.
- Discuss winter-weather bike lighting, gear, and clothing.
- Discuss summer recreational biking opportunities.

- Discuss competitive bicycle racing organizations and events.
- Discuss noncompetitive bicycle clubs, touring groups, and events.
- Discuss bicycle vacation touring as a great way to stay fit on vacation.
- Discuss advanced-level bikes and equipment; if possible, visit a well-stocked bike shop.

BREAKOUT GROUP IDEAS

Getting Ready for the Main Event

- Study safety rules and your city/state traffic laws, and practice riding an obstacle course.
- Prepare for route planning using Internet resources.
• Practice riding skills, and review traffic rules.
• Study final route alternatives for the main event.
• Finalize route map for main event.
• Write personal and group goals for future biking activity.
• Menu Planning (if applicable)
• Duty Roster Planning (if applicable)
• Patrols discuss what special items they will need for the main event.

Preparation for the meeting’s game or challenge

GAME AND CHALLENGE IDEAS

Library of Games and Challenges on Troop Program Resources

• Have a tire-changing speed competition.
• Run a short bicycle race or obstacle course.
• Run a group trivia competition on safety and traffic rules.
• Hold a riding-skills competition.
• Hold a traffic-rules testing game.
• Take evaluation rides from the meeting place, testing the skills covered earlier. Score groups and individuals and note needed improvements.

CLOSING IDEAS

• Leader’s Minutes
• Ceremony

– Back to top of page –