Class 7 - Climbing and Descending

• Basic Climbing
  - Start in a lower gear to avoid exhaustion during the climb.
  - Shift before it gets steep. Once you are pushing hard, the derailleurs have trouble shifting
    • Accelerate briefly, then back off pedaling pressure.
    • Easier to shift rear cassette down then front when pedaling easier.
    • Be wary of dropped chain - stop immediately.
  - If you have to stop on hill, apply brakes as you put foot down.

• Seated Climbing
  - Hands widely spaced on bar top or brake hoods. Don’t climb in drops - breathing more important than wind resistance.
  - Use cadence of 60-80 RPM vs. 80-100 on flats.
  - Relax upper body, back straight, loose grip on bars.
  - Breathe deeply.
  - Tips to try when tired - both stretch out the legs further.
    • Slide back in saddle.
    • Drop your heels
More Climbing Techniques

• Standing (out of the saddle)
  - Good for power but uses more energy! For short or steep hills.
  - Usually shift up 1 or 2 gears
  - Keep hands on brake levers.
  - Keep weight over rear wheel, don’t lean forward too much.
  - Bike will sway side to side, but keep going straight up the hill.
  - For stretching, try to learn to stand “easy” and not accelerate.

• Tip: Stand on short, steep parts of a climb and return to seat on shallower parts.
  - Good mix of efforts.
  - Less gear changes.

• Endless (or unknown) Climbs
  - Pace yourself. You will make better time if you ride slow and steady instead of stopping.
  - Climb seated. Stand occasionally to stretch legs, back, and get your butt off the saddle.
  - Concentrate on your breathing.

• As you get stronger and learn the hills, you can push more on climbs.

• Two quotes from Tour de France winners:
  - “Ride Lots”
  - “It doesn’t get easier, it just gets faster.”
Descending Technique

Good Stuff from Earlier Classes
(These points should already make sense)

• Look up the road (and around the corners). Plan ahead. (class 2)

• Be comfortable moving hands on handlebars. (class 2)
  - Ability to move between drops and brake hoods important to staying relaxed and for braking leverage.
  - Get into drops for more security - front of handlebars and braking leverage.

• Use the Ready body position. (class 6)
  - Small bumps won’t bother you.
  - You’ll be ready to use the brakes.

• Good Braking Technique. (class 6)
  - Remember that the front brake has more power.
  - Brakes less effective, but well set-up bikes & modern brakes work very well.
  - Get low when braking, and be sensitive to rear wheel skidding as an indicator.
Descending Technique

New Information

• You don’t have to pedal!
  - We paid for it on the uphill, so enjoy!
  - Pedal some to get blood in your legs and stay loose.

• Don’t ride your brakes.
  - Rim Brakes and tire/tube heating
  - Try applying them, then get off.

• Corners (not yet discussed, but same as corners on the flat).
  - Look around the corner.
  - Brake before turns, not during.
  - Inside pedal up. Put weight on outside (down) pedal.
  - Lean the bike, don’t steer it.
  - Practice corners on flats.
More Descending

**Descending with Other Cyclists**
- Don’t follow too closely.
  - Watch the road, not the rider.
- Don’t point out hazards unless totally confident
  - Call out hazards if desired
  - Don’t expect others to point them out.
- Leave room for others to pass when you can.
- Pass others on straights.
  Don’t surprise them.
  - Call out, and wait for them to acknowledge.

**Descending with Cars**
- Use the road you need when narrow and curvy.
- Ride predictably.
- In traffic - take the lane
  - When you’re at their speed, you are traffic!
  - Don’t follow too closely - see enough road surface to avoid hazards.
- Descending slower than Cars
  - Control the situation. Let traffic by only when safe.
  - Pick a good straightaway. Don’t let them force you into a bad location.
  - Once you choose place, brake enough to let them by easily
Rural Riding - Things to bring

(discuss this slide the week before the Rural Ride)

• Learn to be self sufficient. Even if you can call for help, it will take a while to get there.

• Take a little extra time checking out the bike before the ride.

• Some things to consider bringing:
  - Extra Food and Water
  - Clothing for the worst possible condition
  - Friends!
  - Map/Knowledge of the area

• More complete tool set
  - Learn to use what you have
  - Learn what tools fix your bike
  - Some extra tools and supplies to consider bringing:
    • tire boot or spare tire
    • Pump instead of or in addition to CO2.
    • Chain tool
    • Spoke Wrench