

Critical Mass Austin 3/31/23 Recap of Events

On 4/5/23, a Social Cycling Austin Ride Leader (Female 1 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/9-Year Member, CMATx Organizer-Ride Leader), announced responsibility for bringing Critical Mass Austin Tx (CMATx) riders to our meeting location on a public Facebook post created by a Social Cycling Austin Admin (Male 1 Social Cycling Austin Admin-Leader/14-Year Member, CMATx Organizer). Our ride leader was forced to alter our pre-planned route to reduce the threat to public safety caused by the barrage of physical attacks and harassment from the individuals invading as part of CMATx.

- A CMATx rider placed himself and his bike less than a foot in front of our female ride leader, physically blocking her from proceeding for almost 2 minutes until several of our riders intervened with requests that he allow her to proceed. (Male 2 Social Cycling Austin/3-Year Member, CMATx Rider)
- Blocking all roads in intersections to prevent our group and all motorists from proceeding (e.g., Haskell & Chicon; Holly & Waller); ((Male 3 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/10-Year Member, CMATx Rider), (Male 2 Social Cycling Austin/3-Year Member, CMATx Rider), and others that arrived with CMATx)
- Riding erratically and dangerously close to the ride leader which compelled several of our riders to create a buffer to protect her from falling or being crashed into. (Two incidents involving Male 3 Social Cycling Austin Rider Leader/10-Year Member, CMATx Rider)
- Attempting to overtake the direction of our route by calling opposite directional turns
- Yelling obscenities at our riders including “F*CK RBA” and “You’re not my f*cking mom!”
- Aggressively swerving between our riders, riding into on-coming traffic, playing “chicken” with oncoming motorists by abruptly swerving into the oncoming lane
- Doing “tricks” in the middle of the densely packed mass causing at least one crash and several near misses
- Expressing unprovoked aggression toward motorists (e.g., Yelling at a motorist while repeatedly hitting the side of their car)

The hostile behavior from the CMATx riders caused many of our regular riders to leave the ride to avoid crashes, verbal confrontations, and physical fights. Meanwhile, the CMATx riders continued the harassment and followed us to our after-party where we coordinated music and free-to-borrow skates for members of the community. We were forced to take on unusual additional responsibilities.

- Created a physical buffer between the DJ equipment and one of the CMATx riders who was moving recklessly and erratically near the equipment. Multiple requests to give space were ignored, the individual continued to remove the buffer, and it had to be replaced at least seven times.
- Two women endured repeated, physical restraint in the form of “bear hugs” from a male CMATx rider despite repeated requests for no physical contact. (Male 2 Social Cycling Austin/3-Year Member, CMATx Rider)
- Provided assistance to a woman who was “creeped out” by male that arrived with CMATx. He invaded her personal space by unexpectedly placing himself on the ground under her leg that was propped up on a stool
- Fulfilled multiple requests from female riders to be escorted to their vehicles out of safety concerns related to CMATx riders that were hanging out in the parking lot
- Organizers were compelled to escort our male riders to their vehicles to help prevent incitement of violence from CMATx riders that were hanging out in the parking lot
- Organizers picked up four bags of discarded trash at the end spot when there is usually less than half a bag