

Rider training (May 2008)

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) has training programs above and beyond just the Basic Rider Course (BRC) and Experience Rider Course (ERC), which most of us are already familiar with. Thanks to the popularity of “trikes,” motorcycle sidecars, and now three-wheeled vehicles like the BRP Can-Am Spyder, MSF has developed the 3BRC, or 3-Track Basic Rider Course.



Other products from the MSF include training modules that one can purchase and use to host an event, allowing the motorcycle enthusiast to offer safety programs that can be taught by anyone. These include “Riding Straight” (a curriculum that addresses the importance of riding unimpaired by alcohol or other drugs), the “Intersection” program (which stresses ten things all car and truck drivers should know about motorcycles and how to avoid crashing into them!), and the “Guide to Group Riding” (a kit that I have ordered an plan on presenting to any interested member of East Coast HOG). For more information, visit them at www.msf-usa.org or call (800) 446-9227.



Another option is the Rider’s Edge program administered by the Harley-Davidson Academy of Motorcycling. Rider’s Edge instructors are dedicated enthusiasts who have received certification from the MSF, as well as additional training from Harley-Davidson. Go to www.ridersedge.com to learn more about their New Rider, Skilled Rider, and Group Riding courses.



Yet another option is the Total Control Advanced Riding Clinic, much of which is based on the best-selling book by National Champion Lee Parks. Although geared towards members of the military, classes are taught at locations all across the United States. Whether you ride a sport bike, cruiser, or other type of motorcycle, this course enables the rider to take his/her riding to the next level in a controlled, safe environment. Cornering and braking skills are the focus of the Total Control curriculum, so check it out at www.totalcontroltraining.net.



Finally, there is Jim Ford’s Rider Workshop, which was featured in Motorcycle Consumer News in the article “Zen Riding” by Moshe K. Levy. Each workshop has a minimum of three riders and a maximum of five riders, conducted most weekends starting from Thurmont, MD during the riding season. Jim Ford is a highly-trained aircraft pilot with over 16 years and 300,000 miles worth of motorcycling experience, leading weekend rides through the mountains of the mid-Atlantic on his 2- and 3-day courses. Workshop tour schedules and other information are provided at www.ridersworkshop.com, or if you want to hear about the course first-hand, just ask Neil Mitchell, a recent graduate who is featured on their web site!

-- Greg Drake
Chapter Safety Officer