



GWRRA Rider Education



NATIONAL RIDER EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

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ST. PATRICK'S DAY



Usually in Ohio, we have our last big snow on or by St. Patrick's Day. With the amount of snow we have had all winter and the amount dumped on many of the states in mid-February, I hope we are done. Perhaps the luck of the Irish will be with us all and we will have an early warm spring.



CAN'T WAIT TO RIDE



This is the time of the year I keep a cleared path to the Gold Wings just incase we have a sunshine day. If the weatherman says "warm and sunny", I am out to check air pressure, warm up the engine and I hope the weatherman is right for once. If the weather is a go, I check the shock pressure and do the rest of my inspection. This will not take long; I look it over with regularity before and after my ride.

If you put on new tires at the end of last year's riding season or first thing after the winter rest, please be careful those first 200 or 300 miles. The cold

roads, new tires and road debris can change your traction. I did hear a member say he runs his tires 5 to 7 lbs low in cold weather. The explanation that I got, I will not repeat. The Engineer's from the motorcycle manufacture's and the tire manufactures spend a lot of time and money to give the proper air pressure in the tires. This will ensure the motorcycle perform and handle as it was designed, in all weather conditions. When bad conditions exist such as cold or wet, we have learned thru the Rider Education Program to adjust our riding accordingly.



WINTER STORING

Do you store your helmet and gear indoors or with the motorcycle? If you store in the cold, it is a good idea to bring it in and warm it up.

Check to see if any varmints found the mints you left in the pocket or made a bed in you helmet.

INSIDE

1. St. Patrick's Day greeting, Can't Wait to Ride, Winter Storing
2. Winter Storing cont., Making a List for the Dealer, GWRRA Message Board Topics, Trailering
3. Trailering cont., Reflective Materials, SMSA News around the Country.
4. SMSA News continued

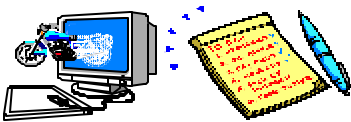
(Winter Storing continued)

We keep our bikes in a well-used garage and I still like to take a peak into the air cleaner to see if there has been some winter storage from any varmints. This is due to a prior experience.

Try things on, we sometimes find winter shrinkage after all the holidays and food gatherings. In addition, the helmet might be loose. Some of us are starting to have less hair to fill it.

When we have all this done and the sun pops out, we are ready to get out and enjoy.

MAKE A LIST

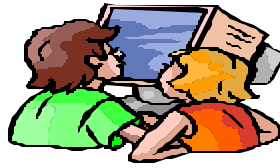


You have made an appointment for service on your Gold Wing. You have a strange noise or you want to ask a service manager/mechanic about your Gold Wing. More often than I want to admit, I get sidetrack tire kicking with the sales person or to other folks, possibly perusing new members, I forget about that noise or item I wanted to ask about until I am almost back to the house. There is a form available you can download from the computer. This will help with any questions you have. (Hope you remember to take it with you) Check the boxes that pertain to your question.

There are eleven checks for the engine, eleven for noise and vibration, three for transmission, ten for brakes, two for steering and handling and a list of vehicles sounds like buzzing, grinding knocking and thumping to name a few. If you have, the senior moments occur as I do; you will find this list helpful. It is like a t-clock for the mechanic to try and understand what you mean when you state, "the thing on the right has been clicking". I found this interesting download at - <http://www.ahm-ownerlink.com/>.

You have to log in with your name and a password of your choice. Then go to service. This site you can also register your own Gold Wing by the

VIN number. There are many items, about your Gold Wing, you can check out. This site can be helpful to maintain your records for service you do or have had done.



Topics At

The rider Education Message Board

We all know how to get to the home page at

<http://www.gwrra.org/>

Once you are at the home page Click on the Message Board in the menu bar on top.

When the next menu comes up, scroll down to Main Topics and select Rider Education.

From there you can select any topic you wish to view, add comments to Maybe you wish to insert a new question or an opinion of your own.

Some of the topics offered here are of great value. Some questions can pertain to many members. The message board can be a tool used by Chapter Rider Educators. You can give or receive questions and answers that can be used for a Chapter talk or newsletter articles.

Remember that a lot of the information is opinions and if you use a topic, please let it be known where it was found. Some topics listed at this time are:

[Trike Course](#)

[Experienced Rider Course - SW Michigan](#)

TIP OF THE DAY

[Green Valley, AZ - Closest Basic MSF Course](#)

[State Rallies](#)

[2X4 program](#)

[Let's talk helmets](#)

[Armored Riding Jacket](#)

[First Aid Kits](#)

[The dreaded helmet drop](#)

[Rider Training.](#)

[Food For Thought...](#)

[Basic MSF Course](#)

[Ideas needed for Riding in Different Elements](#)

[Educator Article Source - websites](#)

[Graphic content- Why safety gear??](#)

Topics change so check the message board often.

RIDER EDUCATION TRAILERING



BY

Dick McKecknie
Chapter Educator
Chapter M, Ohio

Honey, I can't get all these crafts in the saddlebag and still carry my clothes!!! Does that phrase ring true? Well there is a cure for this, and it isn't to leave her at home!!!

Soon after the Gold Wing hit the streets, alternative loading (that's the buzzword for trailers) became quite popular. I am sure that the Gold Wing crowd was not the first to pull a trailer with a motorcycle, but the majority of motorcycles I see with a tail are Gold Wings.

Back in the early days the fancy color matched streamlined beauties of today did not exist. You made your own from kits available at various retail stores and put a cargo top from Sears on it for protection of your goodies. These trailers had leaf springs for suspension and were very harsh riding for anything delicate.

(Trailer continued)



I bought enough lantern mantles to open up a shop, because every time I broke camp and set up again, my mantles in my Coleman were powder. As entrepreneurs looked into the motorcycle trailer business, sophisticated suspensions started cropping up and today there are some very good trailers on the market. I am not going to go into the ones I think are good, bad or other wise.

I am however going to talk about loads and tongue weight. Tongue weight is very important when pulling a trailer. What is tongue weight? It is the weight of the tongue of the trailer puts on the ball/link of the hitch. How much should it be? All the experts say 7 to 12 per cent of the total weight of the trailer. Well, how do I know what my trailer weighs? The manufacturer of the trailer supplies that information with the Bill of Sale.

When you load the trailer, weigh each bag or item you place in the trailer and add it to the weight of the empty trailer. If the tongue weight is too light, it can push up on the ball when stopping and decouple from the hitch. If the tongue weight is too heavy, the trailer will put too much “down force”, on the hitch, unloading weight from the front motorcycle wheel, causing longer stopping distances. As we know, **70% of our stopping power** is the front brake.

Where you place items in the trailer is also important. The heavy seldom-used items go at the bottom and over the wheels and axles. The items used most often and lighter items go to the front of the trailer and behind the low heavy stuff. Some trailers are outfitted with a cooler in the tongue. When you weigh the tongue, make sure you have the cooler loaded before you weigh the complete package. To measure tongue weight, you can use a bathroom scale or a hanging fish scale. Whatever method you use, make sure the trailer tongue is on the same level as your hitch when the bike is off the center stand. If you use a bathroom scale, cut a piece PVC pipe to the proper length, to hold the tongue, at the proper height. The hanging fish

scale can be held at the required height with the bike on the side stand.

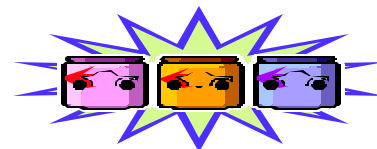
If you are going to pull a trailer, you need a hitch of some kind. There are many out there and if you read the different message boards, you can really get confused as to who makes the best one. I will not recommend any of them. As far as I am concerned, each of the reputable vendors have a viable product and they are usually covered for liability. However, when you do install a hitch on your motorcycle, purchase a trailer and start traveling, you will probably never leave home without the tail again.

Now that you have that baby loaded and put the tongue on the ball, and the trailer axis is level with the bike axles, you have to hook up the safety chains. Yes, most states require safety chains on **ALL** trailers. These chains must be strong enough to hold the weight of anyone stepping on them when connected to the bike and trailer. They should be long enough to allow the trailer to turn without binding and short enough so they do not drag on the ground. They must be crossed under the tongue in the event the trailer becomes uncoupled from the ball. The chains will catch the tongue and keep it from gouging into the pavement as well as keep it connected to the bike. A simple way to shorten a chain that may be too long is to twist it a few turns. Remember most insurance companies include the trailer under the bike’s liability coverage. If they become separated, the trailer may no longer be covered and the damage it does while it is coming to rest is your responsibility, not the insurance company.

When pulling a trailer, you will find your acceleration and stopping are effected. The more the trailer weighs the more noticeable it becomes. You will have to learn just how much this affects your riding style. The old do-it-yourself models bounced a lot on bumps. The lighter the trailer, the more it will move around on the ruts from the big trucks. You will have to make wider turns and take a longer distance to pass other slower road users. Without going into the specific

dynamics of a trailer, you will have to select slower speeds when negotiating curves. Most trailers do not have brakes, so if the trailer and bike get out of alignment when stopping, the trailer will push the back of the bike even more.

CAN YOU BE SEEN



WHAT COLOR DO YOU WANT?

Do you like reflective products? Anything that helps you or your motorcycle to be seen can save your life.

One way we have increased being seen at night is adding the 1/8 inch reflective white tape on our antennas. You would not believe how much it stands out at night. It is neat to see four or five gold wings ahead with the antennas shinning down the road. The white tape blends in with the chrome antenna during the daytime. I found a computer site that has some good-looking reflective products at reasonable prices.

<http://www.reflectivedecals.com/>

Linda thinks I went a little over taping on our pick-up. You can see it whether the lights are on or off.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

SMSA

State Motorcycle Safety Administration

This article is from the SMSA Leading Edge newsletter for winter 2002. The Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) has created a new curriculum for the Basic Riding Course (BRC). A new ERC class is coming.

California – expects to train over 40,000 students this year. They

continue to grow and report successes in each region.

Connecticut – has just completed a twelve-month pilot test of the Basic Riding Course (BRC). Over 60 BRC's have been conducted during this pilot. They have made modifications and plan to fully implement Connecticut's BRC in 2003.

Florida – has implemented the BRC and is happy with the new curriculum.

Georgia - continues to field test the BRC and developing classroom and range material as well as Rider/Coach training material.

Idaho – is recovering from hosting the last SMSA Conference, Idaho is now focused on instructor-centered activities for its year-end wrap up. They have not converted to the BRC, but has experienced an increase in training by almost 10%.

Illinois – their training is up 6.6%. The BRC has been piloted at four sites and intend to go to the BRC in 2003. Instructors are positive about the conversion.

Kansas – is doing the BRC. There have not been any negative comments about the switch from instructors or students....No news is good news, right?

Maine – has not implemented the BRC as of yet. They will begin implementation in the spring of 2003.

Maryland – has implemented the BRC and is considering developing a "template" for classroom use to assist new Rider/Coaches and older Coaches that have difficulty creating and using student-centered activities.

Massachusetts – started the 2002 season with the BRC. They have converted all but one of their ranges to the BRC. The last range to be converted is used for military personnel only and will probably be converted over for the next season

Michigan – has made the transition to the BRC; they are training "up to" 72 people in the classroom at one time.

The students are then farmed out to different sites for range training.

Minnesota – training numbers are up and they will be making many changes for next year. All of their courses will run through the college and university system.

Montana – the changeover to the BRC was started in July 2001. Spring of 2002 all sites and instructors were updated to the BRC. Some experienced instructors still find it hard to transition to the new format. It does take time to get used to it, and let it work. They are awaiting the expected "new ERC". (Experience Riding Course)

Nevada – has shown increases in numbers trained, and has added two training ranges to help with the overload of student registrations. They have completed their transition to the BRC.

New Jersey – has conducted several "pilot" BRC classes this year. They were held at the state run facility in Sea Girt. The Coaches were all part of New Jersey's implementation team and the state is currently studying the results to determine if it will move ahead with running BRC's statewide. So far, the team is impressed with the new learning style and the effects on the students.

New York – has fully implemented the BRC statewide and has completed six Rider/Coach Prep Courses. As expected, some of the converted instructors have not fully grasped the concept of "the less you talk the more the participants practice, the better they do." They are in the process of adding short segments to the Rider/Coach Prep Curriculum.

North Carolina – has implemented the BRC and is happy with the new curriculum.

North Dakota – was able to conduct the motorcycle training classes of the BRC and ERC to over 900 students this past summer. This is an increase of 300 students from the year before. North Dakota has a short training

season so this is an exceptional increase.

Ohio – has almost doubled training figures in the last five years with a 20% increase this year. Some sites have a two-year waiting list to take the course.

Pennsylvania – has fully implemented the BRC statewide and the instructors really enjoy it. They feel it is an improvement, and lets them teach in a more professional manner.

South Carolina – is in the process of developing a training system that will begin initial implementation January 2003.

South Dakota – following the Learning Center in Sioux Falls this past July, South Dakota made the switch to the BRC at the majority of their sites. The remaining sites will make the change in the spring. Thus far, the converted sites have reported positive experiences. The written test results have been outstanding.

Texas – has registered a 29% student growth rate, expecting to train over 20,000 riders this year. They're working on conversion to the BRC and developing a compact range to use at some of their sites.

Utah – Utah's training numbers are remaining high, with a similar number of students trained this year, as compared to last year.

Vermont – has not, as of yet, implemented the BRC at any site. Anticipates a phase in of the BRC beginning 2003.

Virginia – has implemented the new BRC with minimal difficulty.

Washington – is working hard on internal documents to enhance its successful program.

West Virginia – just began with MSF as contract provider for their rider education and training program as well as new state administrator.