

Chapter Educators

Last month Gayle and I returned from Tulsa, OK after attending Wing Ding 31. If you've never attended a Wing Ding, there are vendors galore, two wheeled, and three wheeled Goldwings everywhere you look. Don't know the specific number of attendees, but they estimate well over 5,000 Goldwing motorcycles were present. It was great fun just to watch all the motorcycles as they passed by. However, it wasn't so much fun looking at the riders of those Goldwings.

I was stunned at the large percentage of riders and co-riders who didn't have their helmets on, or those who were wearing short pants, flip flops, no eye protection or even no shirts at all. I know it's a rider's "right" to ride within what the law allows, but why would you purposely increase your odds of injury by simply not wearing any protective gear what-so-ever? After witnessing those events, I thought this to be a good time to revisit the GWRRA Rider Education Program.

The GWRRA Rider Education Program (REP) is intended to make the motorcycle environment safer by reducing injuries and fatalities and increasing motorcyclist skills and awareness. The REP does not propose to have all the answers. However, GWRRA's close working relationship with the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF), as well as additional GWRRA programs and studies, has provided a wealth of information for use in establishing a comprehensive Rider Education Program. The following is an overview of the four levels in the Rider Education Program (REP) and how to qualify for each level. For a more complete understanding of the requirements for qualification at each level, please see me.

Level I: Safety by Commitment The first big step to success

Safety is a state of mind, which can only be attained through total commitment. Every successful accomplishment began with a commitment to reach the intended objective and a promise to learn for the sake of you, your Co-Rider, your friends and family and others on the road.

Level I is perhaps the most important part of the REP structure. Regardless of your training and skill level, it is basically worthless if you are not committed to utilize your training and skill to their fullest. This commitment not only affects you and your Co-Rider but others on the road. You will be registered with the GWRRA across the country and your promise never has to be renewed as it truly is a commitment for life.

Though there are no mileage requirements to enter Level I, the commitment to safe riding is tracked by the number of accident free miles since joining GWRRA. Accident free miles are accumulated in 5,000 mile increments and may be updated at yearly intervals. You may sign up for Level I at any time. Simply bring your commitment to make riding safer for you and those with whom you ride.

Level II: Safety by Education

GWRRA has chosen several educational training programs for the Riders and Co-Riders such as the MSF (Motorcycle Safety Foundation) programs, the United Sidecar Association course, the CSC (Canadian Safety Council) programs, and the GWRRA's riding courses and parking lot programs.

GWRRA says "Go see the experts" for your "On Bike Training". Completing these courses provide the foundation and skills for your quest to be a safe motorcycle rider. All recognized programs are taught by qualified and nationally certified instructors.

For the Co-Rider, GWRRA has provided an excellent seminar and "Two Up" programs to assist in your role in the safety aspect of motorcycle riding.

Motorcycle education goes "Hand in Hand" with commitment, and the "On Bike" education by MSF, USCA, CSC and GWRRA for the Rider and Co-Rider and the "off bike" education specifically for the Co-Rider provides a very effective approach to Motorcycle safety. This is truly when a Rider begins to understand what his or her Level I commitment means and sees the value in the program

To progress to this level you must be enrolled in Level I and achieved at least 5,000 safe miles. Level II of the REP is also referred to as Tour Rider. It represents the commitment of the Rider and/or Co-Rider to be safer motorcycle riders by taking approved motorcycle riding courses at regular intervals.

Level III: Safety by Preparedness

It would be great if we could achieve the coveted goal of zero accidents, however, we know realistically this is hard to attain. Since accidents will and do occur, it is important that we be fully prepared to lend aid to unfortunate accident victims. We should always be prepared to save a life.

The Level III of the Rider Education Program was developed to deal with such circumstances by recognizing and encouraging proper First Aid or CPR training. CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation), a level III requirement has been used to save many lives. Being trained to render CPR or give First Aid is a tremendous asset.

Level IV: Safety by Enhanced Commitment and Preparedness

Level IV is the most prestigious level within the Rider Education Levels Program and is referred to as Master Tour Rider/Co-Rider. It represents the highest level of commitment by the Rider and/or Co-Rider toward safe riding and preparedness. This commitment is shown by a demonstrated history of safe miles, continuing education and current certification in both First Aid and CPR. Master Tour Riders/Co-Riders are the finest example to everyone of the highest level of commitment to safe motorcycle operation and preparedness. To progress to Level IV, you must be current and have a full year at Level III and have ridden no less than 25,000 safe miles since joining GWRRA. Master Tour riders sign a commitment to wear all the safety gear all the time.

We've had 14 FL1-Q riders enroll in Level I this calendar year. Our goal is 100% participation in the REP.

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