

VACATIONS

Summertime usually means vacations and travel and many of us prefer to do our sightseeing from the saddle of our motorcycle. We travel far, and occasionally long, to see some of what this magnificent country has to offer and we generally pack for whatever conditions we may encounter. Too often we fail to pack our motorcycle brains. Traveling through unfamiliar territory while trying to read maps and find highways can take on a whole new meaning while riding a bike.

Riders should get into the habit of learning their route before they depart. Leave the navigation to your co-rider. Your job is to pilot the motorcycle. Avoid looking at the spectacular scenery and keep focused on the task. Don't expect to cover the same amount of ground as you would in a vehicle and arrive feeling just as refreshed. Riding will, and does take its toll. Here are some simple tips for summer time riding.

Plan on taking more and longer breaks. Not only does your bike lack the range of a car between fill ups but when you do stop take several minutes and relax. Drink plenty of fluids. Dehydration is the major problem in the summer and the best way to prevent it is to drink plenty of fluids.

How much should you drink? The average person requires one pint of fluid per hour for non-strenuous work. Here's a good rule of thumb: If you are not urinating at each stop then you are not drinking enough. What to drink? Plain old water is the best (since sweat is mostly water) but the energy drinks are also a good supplement and should be taken with equal amounts of water. Stay away from alcohol and caffeine, as they tend to speed the loss of fluids. Eat fruits and vegetables as they usually have high water content. Avoid salt tablets. They tend to keep the fluids in the stomach and slow the cooling process. Don't wait until you feel thirsty, by then its too late. Learn the symptoms for heat exhaustion and know how to treat it.

Wear a long sleeved shirt or jacket. The covering over the arms not only keeps the sun off, but also provides an insulation barrier that allows the body to cool itself. Sweat needs to remain on the skin and evaporate to cool the body. With no barrier the sweat will vaporize off the skin and not provide the necessary cooling effect. Brand name cooling scarves and vests can also be of immense help in keeping your body cool. Likewise, a wet towel wrapped around the neck works wonders. Remember, you never see a desert dweller riding his camel in a T-Shirt and shorts.

Other news of interest...the tickets for the Gold Wing Raffle are being printed. We should have them shortly and start mailing them out to the chapters. We are printing the same number as we did last year (35,000) and hope to once again have a complete sellout. There are three prizes, and plaques will be awarded to those chapters selling one thousand or more tickets. All of you did a spectacular job selling tickets last year and we really want to thank you. Remind your buyers that each **book** (ten tickets) has **30** chances to win a prize. Ride Safe. Bob & Barbara Groff