

# SAFE Cycling

Spring 2005



## Rave Reviews for RiderCoaches and the BRC

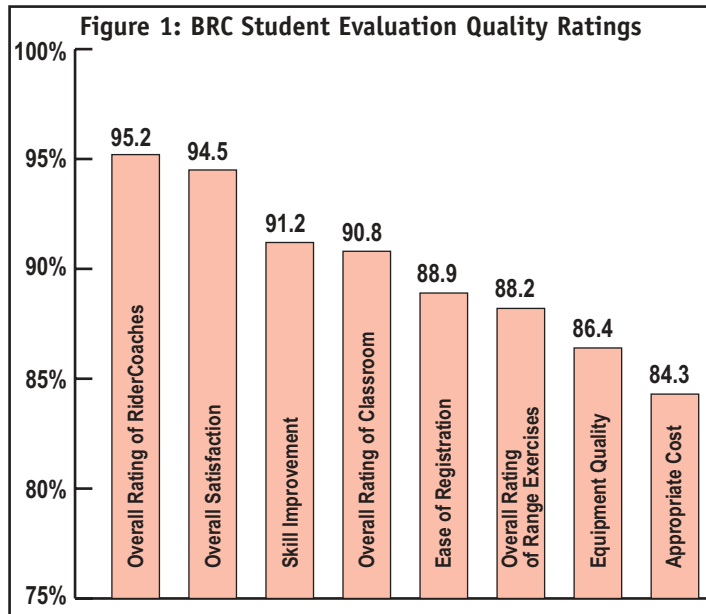
**D**URING JANUARY 2005, the MSF staff sent thank you notes and helmet stickers as a token of appreciation to nearly 10,000 Basic RiderCourse<sup>SM</sup> (BRC) students who had returned the BRC evaluation form directly to the MSF during 2004.

The Quality Assurance and Research Department has selected 2,500 forms at random to analyze and the preliminary results are in—full of rave reviews for rider education professionals using the BRC. Evaluations were received from students in 45 states and many military sites. The MSF will release the final results, complete with each state's individual responses, upon completion of the full analysis. Currently, an external statistician is processing the qualitative comments and writing up the full report.

The BRC evaluation form was revised during 2004 and provides more information about the nature of the students who submit an evaluation and aspects of the rider education program. For example, in addition to information about course content, materials, exercises, and RiderCoaches, the new form includes questions about a participant's skill improvement and demographic characteristics, the course registration process, and tuition cost.

Overall national quality ratings remain high in 2004 (Figure 1), with the Overall Satisfaction Level over 94% and the highest rating achieved by RiderCoaches (95.2%). Areas that posted somewhat lower ratings were Ease of Registration (88.9%), Overall Rating of Range Exercises (88.2%), Equipment Quality (86.4%), and Satisfaction with Tuition (84.3%).

Students reported paying an average tuition fee of \$159. The tuition fees varied widely, with a low fee of \$0 (5% of the respondents) to a high of \$405 (under 1% of the respondents). Over 50% of this sample of course participants reported pay-



ing between \$100 and \$200.

Demographic characteristics of students submitting the forms are an indication of the breakdown of who's taking the course nationwide. However, because these forms are sent to the MSF voluntarily, they may not be an accurate representation of the population of course participants. In this sample, over 60% identified themselves as male, nearly 80% recorded White (non-Hispanic) as their ethnicity, and students 45–64 represented the largest age group (35.7%, Table 1).

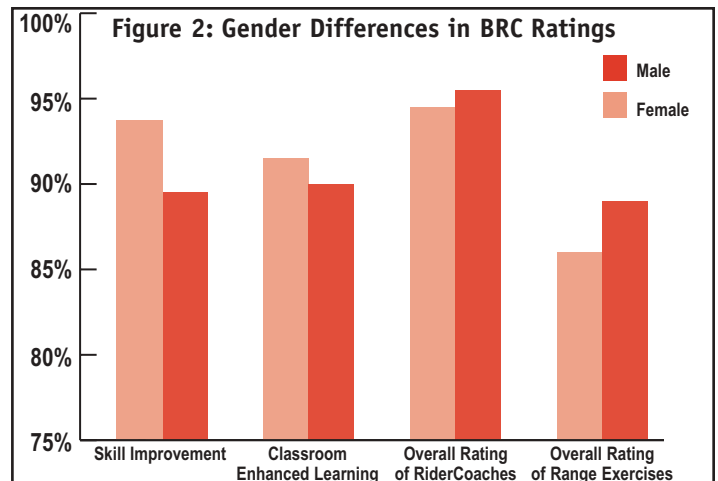
Student gender played a role in several perceptions

(Figure 2). Female students reported greater skill improvement and felt more positive about the classroom's effect on their learning. Both of these mean differences were tested and found to be statistically significant. On the other hand, male students provided significantly higher mean ratings for RiderCoaches and the range exercises.

The BRC Student Evaluation Forms provide one important benchmark for monitoring the quality of BRC training. Thanks to the dedication of many weekend range warriors (You!), high student satisfaction ratings certainly have been the norm for MSF *RiderCourses* and *RiderCoaches* to date. Keep up the good work! **SC**

**Table 1: Age Characteristics of Students Submitting BRC Evaluations**

Age Group	Percent of BRC Evaluations Received
Under 21	4.8
21–24	6.8
25–34	23.4
35–44	26.7
45–64	35.7
65 or over	2.6





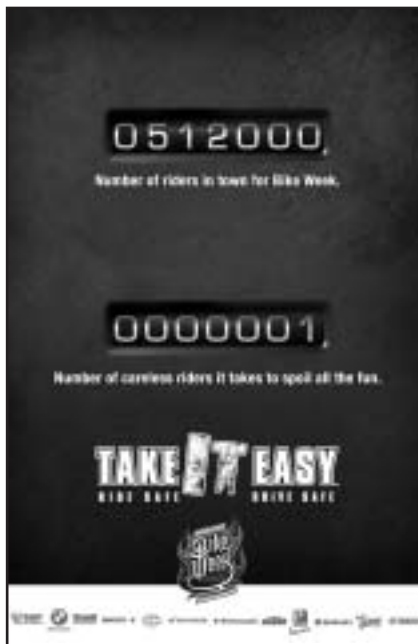
**T**HE MOTORCYCLE SAFETY FOUNDATION, in partnership with the Daytona Chamber of Commerce, joined numerous industry sponsors and local businesses to urge both drivers and riders to *Take It Easy* and be extra careful on the highways during Bike Week.

This year's program, the fifth annual Bike Week public awareness campaign, encouraged car drivers to be alert to motorcyclists on the roads. The *Take It Easy* message and new *Ride Safe Drive Safe* tagline were communicated through radio promotions, banners, T-shirts, and the distribution of thousands of commemorative pins.

The 2005 *Take It Easy* campaign sponsored the Daytona Chamber of Commerce's high-visibility Welcome Center on Main Street, and its staff wore *Take It Easy* T-shirts throughout the week.

As in years past, on Friday, staff of each participating motorcycle manufacturer wore *Take It Easy* T-shirts in a show of solidarity and support for the program, and to reinforce safety messages to riders and motorists in Daytona Beach.

"We wanted to get everyone in the Daytona Beach area to think



about safety on the streets and to look out for the other motorist, whether on two wheels or four," said Tim Buche, president of the Motorcycle Safety Foundation. "This year's *Take It Easy* message was that there were more than half a million riders in town for Bike Week, but that it only takes one rider or driver to spoil the fun. Drivers have to be more aware of motorcyclists and share the road, and riders need to ride responsibly and respect other roadway users."

As part of this year's campaign, radio advertisements began running the week before visitors arrived. With Bike Week underway, the same radio stations used the *Take It Easy* message at their live remote broadcasts from various events. The *Take It Easy* logo, used in conjunction with the official Bike Week logo, was splashed on banners at gas stations, restaurants, and other businesses throughout the area. *Take It Easy* teams were spread from the ocean to the speedway, wherever riders gathered, sharing the *Take It Easy* message and passing out pins. Riders also picked up pins for their collections at the Bike Week Welcome Center on Main Street and at locations throughout the region. **SC**

### The Motorcycle Safety Foundation Urges All Riders to Follow These Safety Recommendations

1. Get trained and licensed. Take the MSF Basic *RiderCourse* if new to motorcycling.
2. Be a lifelong learner. Expand existing skills with the Experienced *RiderCourse*.
3. Wear protective gear.
4. Ride Straight.
5. Ride within your limits.

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The MSF is sponsored by the U.S. manufacturers and distributors of BMW, Ducati, Harley-Davidson, Honda, Kawasaki, KTM, Piaggio/Vespa, Suzuki, Victory, and Yamaha motorcycles.

The information contained in this publication is offered for the benefit of those who are MSF-certified RiderCoaches, RiderCoach Trainers, and Program Administrators.

The information has been compiled from publications, interviews and observations of individuals and organizations familiar with the use of motorcycles and training. Because there are many differences in product design, riding styles, federal, state and local laws, there may be organizations and individuals who hold differing opinions. Consult your local regulatory agencies for information concerning the operation of motorcycles in your area. Although the Motorcycle Safety Foundation will continue to research, field test and publish responsible viewpoints on the subject, it disclaims any liability for the views expressed herein.

Please notify MSF of any change in your address.



# 2006 International Motorcycle Safety Conference

**T**HE INTERNATIONAL MOTORCYCLE Safety Conference is a forum on current research in motorcycle safety. The information presented and discussed in the conference will assist industry, government, academic institutions, and research organizations in planning for research and programs related to motorcycle safety needs.

The International Motorcycle Safety Conference is a two-part series of conferences. The first in the series will be held in Long Beach, California in March 2006\* and is called *The Human Element*. This segment is sponsored by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) and co-sponsored by the German Institute for Motorcycle Safety (ifz). *The Human Element* will focus on the human factors involved in motorcycle safety. The second segment in the series, *Safety, Environment, Future*, will be held in the fall of 2006 in Germany and focuses on accident research; safety technology; environmental aspects; rider, vehicle, and traffic behavior; and trends in development of motorcycles.

The most recent U.S. International Motorcycle Safety Conference, which was also co-sponsored by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation, was held in 2001. Twenty-one countries and forty-seven states were represented, totaling nearly 400 participants.

## Conference Scope

The goals of *The Human Element* are

- To review the body of research activities in motorcycle safety from 2001 to 2005.
- To provide an updated review of all recent motorcycle safety research, focused primarily on rider behavior and the human element. Presentations will be made by industry, colleges and universities, local, national and international government agencies, rider organizations, and professionals from the rider education and training community.
- To provide long range goals that the industry, private researchers, and other safety-related organizations can strive toward during the years following the conference.

## Conference Topics

### Research and Studies

- Motorcycle Crash Analysis
- Injury and Fatality Statistics
- Legislative Updates
- Rider Education Statistics
- Impaired Rider Research
- Other

### Human Factors

- Motorcycle Rider Safety Attitudes on Training/Education, Impaired Riding, Conspicuity or Protective Apparel
- Visual/Hazard Perception—General
- Visual/Hazard Perception—Roadway Characteristics
- Visual/Hazard Perception—ITS and other Technology
- Rider Demographics
- Other

### Countermeasures

- Motorcycle Rider Training and Education
- Motorcycle Rider Training Program—Management and Customer Service
- Motorcycle Rider Training Program—Evaluation and Quality Assurance
- Protective Apparel
- Conspicuity
- Impaired Riding Programs
- Motorcycle Operator Licensing—General
- Motorcycle Operator Licensing—Graduated or Tiered Licensing Programs and Evaluation
- Public Education and Information—General
- Public Education and Information—Motorist Awareness
- Law Enforcement
- Other

### Status Reports

- Review of the "National Agenda for Motorcycle Safety" (a cooperative project sponsored by the MSF and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)
- Update on MSF Rider Training Curricula and other Training Techniques

### Conference Steering Committee Chair

- Tim Buche, President  
Motorcycle Safety Foundation

The members of the steering committee will be finalized and announced July 1, 2005.

## Call for Papers

Please submit an abstract of 500 words or less (one single-spaced typed page using a font no smaller than 12 pt.) of your proposed paper by July 15, 2005. Visit the MSF website ([www.msf-usa.org](http://www.msf-usa.org)) under 2006 IMSC News for an application form and complete all applicable information requested. Illegible submissions will not be reviewed. In addition to the abstract, a maximum of five pages of supporting documents such as charts, tables, diagrams, and references will be accepted to aid in the selection of papers.

Abstracts will be reviewed by the conference steering committee to determine acceptability for presentations. Upon acceptance, authors must grant rights of publication to the MSF for the conference proceedings only. Papers might be presented orally on an individual basis or as part of a panel discussion. Others may become display or poster-only presentations or published only.

Proceedings of the papers to be presented will be published and made available on the first day of the conference.

Only papers using commonly accepted research methodology and authored between 2001 and 2005 will be considered, with priority given to more recent research.

Oral presentations in English are preferred. Translation services will

be provided if necessary. All printed materials must be submitted in English for publication in the conference collection (CD ROM) and can be accompanied by versions in other languages.

By September 15, 2005, authors will be notified of acceptance and given a preliminary conference agenda. Authors will also be given the format requirements for the final paper at that time.

The conference registration fee, which includes most meals, will be paid by the MSF for all presenters. Presenters must arrange and pay for their own travel and hotel accommodations. **SC**

*\*For planning purposes, the events will take place between March 26, 2006 and April 1, 2006. Exact dates will be announced by July 1, 2005.*

### Please send all submissions to

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The deadline for submitting the final copy of the paper for publication is January 9, 2006.



# Best Practices

**T**HE MSF WOULD like to encourage all RiderCoaches, Dirtbike School<sup>SM</sup> Coaches, Program Coordinators, and State Administrators to submit Best Practices that have proven beneficial when teaching or operating various components of the Rider Education and Training System (RETS). In doing so, everyone in the motorcycle training community can benefit from your experience.

If your Best Practice is published in *Safe Cycling* or on RETSORG, you will receive a \$100 gift certificate (which can be redeemed for Online Store purchases) as our way of saying thanks. All Best Practices can be found at [www.retsorg.org](http://www.retsorg.org). If you have a Best Practice that you would like to submit, please fill out an online form available from the RETSORG submission link.

The most-recent winners of \$100 gift certificates are Tennessee RiderCoach Chad Hargis for *Teaching the Ladder of Risk* and Delaware RiderCoach David A. Potter and South Carolina RiderCoach LeAnn Sawyer for separately submitting their ideas which were combined into *Visualizing the Friction Zone*.

## Teaching the Ladder of Risk

Many new riders don't realize that a crash is actually a chain of events. To demonstrate this point and to have students interact with each other, make up a number of post-it notes with crash factors written on them (i.e., rain, traffic, low tire pressure, inoperative light, high speed, insufficient skill, impaired rider, fatigue, etc.). Have each student take a post-it, form a circle, then discuss which factor caused the crash. The students will usually come to the conclusion that no single factor is responsible. This exercise enables the students to not only learn the lesson but also get the opportunity to work as a large group and move around (which will help keep them awake if they're attending class after having worked all day). I have found that this works well with up to 12 students.

## Visualizing the Friction Zone

A soda bottle is a good prop to visually demonstrate the use of the clutch lever. With the group gathered around the coach in Exercise 1, shake a soda bottle vigorously for a couple of seconds. Ask the group "How should I open the bottle?" Usually someone will reply "Carefully" as the group takes a step back.

Link the shaken soda bottle to the motorcycle's clutch by explaining that a source of energy (power from the motorcycle's engine) is built up in the bottle. This energy can be released quickly or slowly depending on how the cap is opened (how the clutch is released), but the best way to maintain control of the soda (motorcycle) is by slowly unscrewing the cap (easing out the clutch). If while unscrewing the cap (easing out the clutch) the soda starts to fizz too much (the motorcycle lurches or wants to stall), control the situation by screwing the cap back on (squeezing the clutch lever). By slowly working the bottle cap, eventually it can be taken off completely without having the soda spray all over the place.

This is the same concept as easing and squeezing the clutch through the friction zone to precisely control engine power to the rear wheel. This demonstration works well because there's student discovery and they are relating past knowledge to new knowledge by making a connection between a familiar real-world situation and a new skill.

One unplanned benefit from this demonstration is reinforcement of the margin of safety and the margin of error. As the cap is unscrewed from the shaken soda bottle, students back up to create a margin of safety while observing the RiderCoach's margin of error. The RiderCoach has to determine the proper time to screw the cap back on to keep the soda from spraying. If the RiderCoach misjudges the soda, someone gets wet. **SC**



# RETSORG

**I**F YOU'VE VISITED RETSORG lately, you'll notice that the home page now features important news topics that the training community should be aware of. Whenever the MSF has a change in administrative policy, procedure, forms, etc., a notice will be posted on the RETSORG home page. Some examples of topics that have been posted in the last month are listed in the table at right.

The MSF has been sending regular update emails to

### RETSORG Topics Listed at RETSORG.org

- Twenty-four new Best Practices have just been posted.
- The MSF rolls out new RiderCoach Rules of Professional Conduct.
- Instructions for RiderCoaches on how to use the MSF's new RiderCoach Online Recertification Survey.
- Special notice about how State Coordinators and Administrators can benefit from RETSORG and the Online RiderCoach Recertification Survey.
- Information about the MSF Web-based RiderCoach Survey hosted by California State University.
- The MSF Announces BRC Training Aid \$5 Upgrade Program.
- The California Motorcyclist Safety Program posts copyright-free Policy and Procedures manual.

RiderCoaches, RiderCoach Trainers, Sponsors, and State Coordinators and Administrators to inform everyone of any important news posted on RETSORG. If you have not received an update email, please log onto RETSORG.ORG and update your contact information (make sure that you include your email). If you need any technical assistance, please contact Don Ankrom at [dankrom@msf-usa.org](mailto:dankrom@msf-usa.org) or 949.727.3227 Ext. 3072. **SC**



## US Department of Defense Activities

**I**N RESPONSE TO the United States Department of Defense (DOD) Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld's charge to reduce the incidence of motor vehicle deaths by 50 percent, the military branches have been re-doubling their efforts to implement safety programs and policies. Motorcycling is a key motor vehicle ingredient in the crash data. Service members are purchasing motorcycles at an unprecedented rate.

Recently a "Way Forward" was presented to Dr. David S.C. Chu, Under Secretary of the Defense for Personnel and Readiness. The presentation was made by William Cosby (MSF RiderCoach Trainer) of the Marine Corps Safety Division, and was developed by representatives from the DoD Private Motor Vehicle Task Force with help from the Motorcycle Safety Foundation. The current DOD motorcycle fatality data was provided, and recommendations were offered to improve the motorcycle crash picture. Fatalities have risen from 42 in 2000 to 76 in 2004.

Many actions are underway and several new initiatives were proposed. These include a review of military instructions related to motorcycle safety with a continuing emphasis on safety education and training. The Army continues to emphasize motorcycle safety training and has enhanced its website to be more contemporary and interactive. The Marine Corps and Navy have established a program for personnel development called the Motor Vehicle and Power Sports Training Specialists Program. Select individuals will receive specialized training and earn certifications that include, among various defensive driving course certifications, MSF RiderCoach Trainer certification, *DirtBike School* Coach Trainer certification, and All Terrain

Vehicle Safety Institute Chief Instructor certification. Additionally, the Marine Corps is considering an intervention program to promote a framework similar to graduated licensing to provide reduced risk exposure. The Air Force is re-tooling its policies and procedures and has established a formal mentorship program to be implemented at its bases throughout the world. The program uses topical modules developed by the MSF.

The Way Forward presentation emphasized the establishment of comprehensive, foundational programming. Fully embracing the concept of the MSF Rider Education and Training System, solutions were proposed to reverse the increasing rate of motorcycle mishaps. Multi-dimensional countermeasures include not only the Basic *RiderCourse* and Experienced *RiderCourse* Suite offerings, but public information and education, license checks and registration records screening, emergency medical care, enforcement practices, and refreshing service and installation policies, priorities, and funding.

Specific recommendations were suggested to Dr. Chu. These include adding to the DoD readiness metrics such criteria as motor vehicle fatalities, disabling injuries, lost duty days and training, and developing traffic safety expertise within the military community. Also presented were ideas to develop consistency among the Military Services, increase helmet use enforcement, include motorcycle safety as part of the overall Department of Defense communications plan, and enhance safety renewal and cultural change by implementing MSF courses and training opportunities into base safety operations. **SC**



## ResLab Update: BRC Standard and BRC Combined

**A** MONTH OF data collection is winding down in Arizona and California. In order to accurately test the effects of a proposed BRC curriculum change, MSF Research Director Sherry Williams has been making twice-a-week trips to a T.E.A.M. Arizona range in Phoenix while MSF Research Associate Allison Tyra has been observing training at Palomar College in San Marcos, CA.

A combination of measurements, including number of stalls, ratings of clutch and throttle control, amount of "down time" per class, and many others are being used to compare the "Standard" BRC with its counterpart, the "Combined" BRC (what we are calling this Research Laboratory). Observers, RiderCoaches, and students are providing data.

In the Combined BRC (a suggested curriculum change from both J.T. Smith of Tennessee and Mark Weiss of Arizona, MSF RiderCoach Trainers) BRC Exercises 2 and 3 are combined. The change was suggested in part as a solution to the difficulties in finding neutral with many training bikes and the resulting frustration felt by many beginning students around this issue.

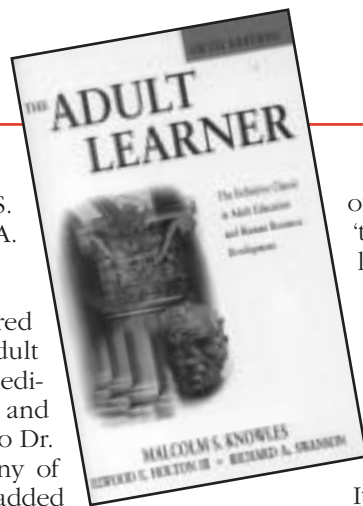
In addition, Smith and Weiss have suggested that the heavy focus on finding neutral in Exercise 2 of the Standard BRC seems to contradict the later focus of the curriculum where RiderCoaches want students to leave their motorcycles in first

gear for shut-down. The question may be whether this adjustment overrides the clear need for neutral as a safety measure and a simultaneous means for encouraging bike bonding (getting comfortable with shifting procedures so they become automatic) during Exercise 2.

The data collection process is proceeding quickly. The Quality Assurance and Research Department's goal is to present the final report to Training Systems by May 30. QA&R's final recommendation to Training Systems will be one of three possibilities:

- The suggested change is not safe, effective, or efficient. Do not implement it.
- The suggested change has some weaknesses but also some strengths, and produces an equally safe training environment. Allow it to be implemented as an optional Best Practice.
- The suggested change is a clear winner in all areas, having far more strengths than weaknesses. Implement it as a permanent change in the BRC curriculum.

But, first we'll check the data. Look for an announcement about the results in an upcoming issue of *Safe Cycling*. A big thank you to Mark and JT for their commitment to continuous quality improvement in our curriculum products! **SC**



*The Adult Learner, 5th edition* by Malcolm S. Knowles, Elwood F. Holton III, and Richard A. Swanson. (1998); \$39.95; [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

**M**ALCOLM KNOWLES, THE person considered the Father of Andragogy (Adult Education), passed away in 1997. This edition of his definitive classic in Adult Education and Human Resource Development is a testimony to Dr. Knowles' work. This 5th edition contains many of the original thoughts of former texts, but has added segments related to the advancement of and practice in adult learning.

Although *The Adult Learner* is closer to an academic manuscript than a formula of how to conduct learning activities, it has the potential to illuminate within practitioners a sense of purpose about being a change agent or a help agent in facilitating others in their learning. RiderCoaches may benefit by reviewing this book because it identifies the wealth of research and theory (contained in the first few chapters), and the practical applications in practice that is being played out in the MSF Rider Education and Training System and its products, particularly the Basic *RiderCourse* (BRC).

For example, in looking at four key assumptions about adult learners, you discover that modern education has little to do with how many perceive schooling ought to be. Let's look at these key assumptions.

### **Adults are motivated to learn as they experience needs and interests that learning will satisfy.**

Most people choose to participate in BRCs and Experienced *RiderCourse* Suite courses and enroll because they want to be there. They have a desire to learn more about what they love to do—ride, and ride safely. The motivation is intrinsic, that is, there is no need to try to trick people into learning. They recognize quickly whether or not a RiderCoach is helping and if the learning activities are beneficial.

### **Adults' orientation to learning is life-centered.**

Motorcycling is likely to become, if it already isn't, a centerpiece of life for most course participants. This means adults have already identified personal needs and want to solve problems. They know the value of a good educational experience and have chosen to improve their riding strategies and skills. Riders are looking for the benefits and are provided the experiences that already have meaning to them.

### **Experience is the richest source for adults' learning.**

Adults attach meaning to classroom content or riding exercises based on their past experience. RiderCoaches have the opportunity to nudge riders into deeper learnings by giving technically correct information and feedback and providing timely tips or encouraging riders to fine-tune their skills.

### **Adults have a deep need to be self-directing.**

Show them the way and then get out of the way. A previ-

ous *Safe Cycling* book review highlighted that 'telling ain't training.' Talking at adults is no longer appropriate as most have matured beyond the need to be told what to learn or what is important. They know from life's experiences and they know what they want to improve upon, and a good curriculum matches the two with the added benefit of providing an empathic guide (RiderCoach) who can serve as a catalyst to the whole process.

It may be that many RiderCoaches have never explored the world of adult education and its approach to creating a good learning environment with high quality results. After all, the teaching-learning process may be viewed as simple, basic communication. But *The Adult Learner* points out competencies and skills that transcend content-centered instruction. Important characteristics include expertise, empathy, enthusiasm, and clarity.

Expertise is practically a given. Screening RiderCoach applicants and having a rigorous certification process results in *RiderCourses* conducted by enthusiasts who have more than a cursory knowledge of motorcycling and safety instruction.

Empathy is a little more difficult. It takes sensitivity to understand riders' skill levels and capabilities, and a recollection of the stress involved in learning something new, especially in acquiring a motor skill that involves machinery. Few things are as humbling for an adult as being a student again.

Enthusiasm for most RiderCoaches isn't much of an issue, but the passion for motorcycling has to be accompanied by an excitement in seeing others learn. Lastly, clarity means to impart specific and exact basic content when it is needed. Whether answering questions from the BRC Rider Handbook or explaining an exercise path of travel on the range, a RiderCoach knows the benefits of providing clear instructions and directions.

The authors of *The Adult Learner* provide a modern treatment of adult learning theory and practice and assume that the adult learner is no longer a neglected species; this assumption may be a stretch. (*A Neglected Species* was the subtitle of the original edition of *The Adult Learner*.) Everywhere one looks the trappings of old-style instruction still exist. A common question about the teaching-learning transaction is "How will they know if I don't tell them?" Teaching can occur without learning, and learning can occur without good teaching. But when the dynamism of good teaching (facilitation) meets good learning, positive change and improvement result.

Although *The Adult Learner* provides information beyond what was known a quarter of a century ago, Malcolm Knowles' fourth edition *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species\** may be a better primer for gaining an understanding of the adult learning and its practical applications. Together, these two textbooks provide the underpinnings of adult education and the practical applications for human resource development. **SC**

\**The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species, Fourth Edition* (1990) by Malcolm S. Knowles.

**Human learning is one of the most complex subjects of the scientific and scholarly world.**  
—*The Adult Learner*



# RiderCoach Survey Preliminary Results and Progress

**A** VERY BIG *Thank You* to all the RiderCoaches and RiderCoach Trainers who took the time to complete the recent web-based RiderCoach Survey. Over 7,000 active RiderCoaches received either an email or postcard invitation through our independent contractor, The Social & Behavioral Research Institute (SBRI) of California State University, San Marcos.

After two weeks of activity, we received 3,049 total responses for an astounding 43% return rate! While we have received some preliminary results, the majority of the data is still under review and analysis by the contractor. For example, when just the open-ended responses were compiled, the analysts sent us a 2,000-page document.

We'll highlight various findings from the RiderCoach Survey analysis in the next few issues of *Safe Cycling*. The box at right indicates the basic demographic characteristics of the sample.

## 2005 RiderCoach Survey Participants

- Average number of classes taught in 2004—BRC: 12.5; ERC: 1.78
- Average age—48
- Gender—Male: 87%; Female: 13%
- 47% have a 4-year college degree or more
- Only 4% are full time in rider education
- Rider's Edge—Yes: 11%; No: 89%
- Surveys received from all 47 states using the BRC, Guam, Puerto Rico, and many military installations

vidual perceptions. Further, stressed individuals vary widely in the effectiveness of their coping. Many stress models emphasize a “mismatch” between the individual and his or her environment. Both too little and too much stress inhibit learning.

Most scholars do agree that the amount of control a person feels in a particular situation dramatically affects how much of a stress response his or her body produces. Having a personal sense of control is an important factor in reducing stress. For example, when students do not know what to expect in an academic course, they feel out of control<sup>1</sup>. Thus, increasing the level of individual control felt by a *RiderCourse* participant (particularly in the early exercises), should, by itself, reduce the stress level of the training. In addition, setting up clear exercise expectations should increase a novice student's sense of control.

When high levels of stress are perceived by an individual in a learning situation, research results have shown an overall negative effect, perhaps especially for females. Several studies have shown that high stress

## Control, Stress, and the BRC

The BRC was designed with very clear goals in mind toward improving the way people learn to ride a motorcycle safely. Two of the important goals were lowering the stress level on the average beginning rider and developing control of the motorcycle earlier in the program, while maintaining the maximum benefits of a basic, learn-to-ride curriculum.

The RiderCoach survey results tell us convincingly that those two goals were accomplished. Over 60% of the RiderCoaches surveyed who have taught both the *Motorcycle RiderCourse: Riding and Street Skills*<sup>®</sup> (MRC:RSS) and the *Basic RiderCourse* (BRC), felt that compared to the MRC:RSS, the BRC enabled a student to gain control of the motorcycle earlier (Figure 1). As far as student stress, nearly 70% of the same sample reported that compared to the MRC:RSS, the BRC student experienced less stress (Figure 2). In each case, less than 8% of the sample said that the BRC student gained control later or experienced more stress than the typical MRC:RSS participant.

These results are important when we consider them in light of study findings reported in research journals about the relationship between stress and learning. Many note that stress is difficult to define because individuals react to it very differently, and a situation that is stressful for one person may not be for another. What constitutes stress is determined by indi-

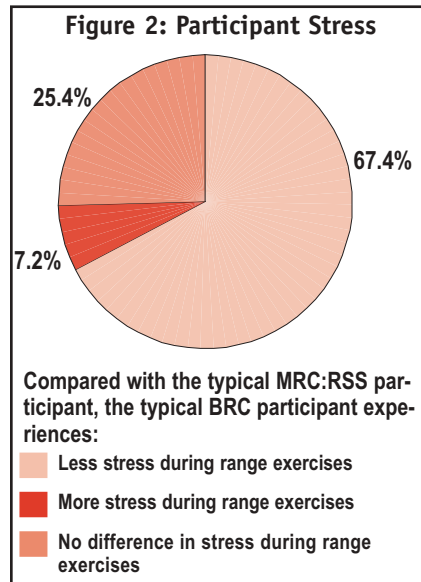
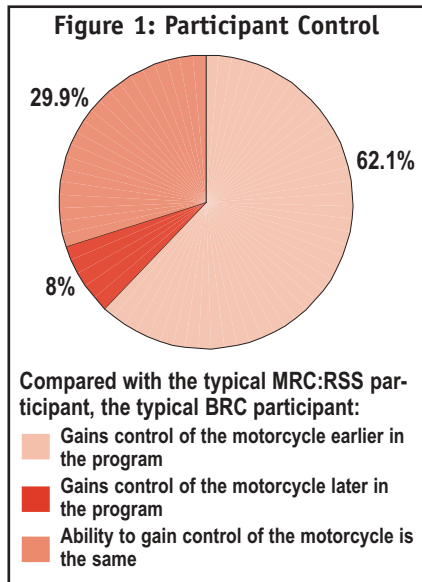
“can alter and impair learning and even kill brain cells.”<sup>2</sup> When too much stress is present in the learning situation, anxiety has significant effects on one's memory and shuts down opportunities for learning. Stress can cause a loss of concentration, memory (particularly short-term memory), and therefore, learning. In addition, prolonged stress appears to lead to structural changes in neurons in the hippocampus that may facilitate learning

in males but inhibit it in females.<sup>3</sup> Thus, males may prefer a competitive learning situation, but the same environment is likely to hinder learning for females.

The BRC is designed to naturally increase the level of control and reduce the level of stress. What can a RiderCoach do to further this effect? One suggestion made by writers in this field is to give realistic feedback that can be used to improve future skill attainment. When given properly, feedback can encourage positive stress that motivates students to action and can discourage the negative stress that inhibits action. In this way, a RiderCoach can positively impact the proper balance of positive and negative stress that is optimum for learning.

Again, thanks to all of you who responded to the RiderCoach survey. As you remember, we promised you entry into a drawing for one of five \$50 gift certificates to the

*continued on page 8*





# 2004 MSF Award Winners

SINCE 1977 THE MSF has been acknowledging the efforts of groups, organizations, and individuals who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in promoting motorcycle safety. This year the awards committee has selected 32 winners to receive the following prestigious MSF awards for their accomplishments during 2004. Our helmets are off to all the nominees and award winners. Congratulations on a job well done! **SC**

## Award of Excellence

Gary Schoenfeldt

## Outstanding State Program

Category I: No submissions

Category II: Massachusetts

Category III: Texas

Category IV: Pennsylvania

## Outstanding RCT/CI

William Gleason Tennessee

## Outstanding RC/I

James J. Cooper (military) California

Bill Cruz California

Terry Gable Indiana

Kellie Higginbotham Arizona

Edward J. Nolte Nevada

Thomas O'Meara III Wisconsin

Bruce Seigars Maine

Larry Thorsen Montana

## Outstanding Community Training Sponsor

Mancuso H-D Motorcycle Rental of Houston Texas

T3RG Colorado

## Outstanding Dealer/Retailer

Beasley Honda-Yamaha-Kawasaki Alabama

Blackman's Cycle Center Pennsylvania

Bloomington Powersports Indiana

Carter Powersports Nevada

Classic Motorsports Michigan

Dillon Brothers Harley-Davidson Nebraska

Fargo Harley-Davidson Sales North Dakota

Mike Tingley's Suzuki

Yamaha Triumph Montana

Shawnee Cycle Plaza Kansas

Wild West Motorsports Arizona

## Outstanding State Licensing Program

No submissions

## Outstanding Licensing Examiner

No submissions

## Outstanding Military Branch

No submissions

## Outstanding Military Base

Luke Air Force Base Arizona

US Marine Corps Air Station California

US Naval Air Station Nevada

## RiderCourse Promotion Award

Renfro Productions, Inc. Indiana

## Outstanding Motorcycle Safety Support

ABATE Iowa

## Outstanding Motorcycle Club or Event

Green Knights Motorcycle Club

## Outstanding Motorcycle Club or Event, Honorable Mention

Fellowship Riders Texas

## Outstanding Media or Entertainment

Minnesota Department of Public Safety

## Outstanding Enthusiast Press

No submissions

## Public Awareness Award

Ride to Work Day

## RiderCoach Survey (cont. from page 7)

MSF On-Line Store as an incentive for participating. Congratulations to the following participants chosen at random by the survey administrator:

Joan Long-Ignaszewski Fairfield, VT

Richard McCleery Ft. Collins, CO

Vickye Cunningham Memphis, TN

Troy Cotten FPO AE

Robert Rupert Hubert, NC

To claim your prize, call the MSF Order Department at 949.727.3227, Ext. 3023.

## References:

1. Lackney, Jeffery A. Ph.D. (2002) 12 Design Principles Based on Brain-based Learning Research On-line document: <http://www.designshare.com/Research/BrainBasedLearn98.htm>

2. Shors T. J., Chua C., & Falduto J., (2001). Sex differences and oppo-

site effects of stress on dendritic spine density in the male versus female hippocampus. *Journal of Neuroscience*, 21(16), 6292-6297.

3. Whitman, Neal A., and others. (1987). Reducing stress among students. *Association for the Study of Higher Education*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education Washington DC.

## An Overdue Apology to Illinois

In the Spring 2004 issue of *Safe Cycling*, the number of students trained in 2002 in Illinois was incorrectly reported as 3,998. The actual numbers are 10,597 total trained in 2002, 11,509 total trained in 2003, and 12,454 total trained in 2004. The MSF deeply regrets this error—Illinois should be very proud of their accomplishments.



## MSF General Manager Becomes A RiderCoach

**A**SK MSF GENERAL Manager Charlie Fernandez what kind of rider training he received as a youth and he will laugh and reply, “None!” Instead, at the tender age of 12, he was dropped onto a 250cc BSA dirtbike by his uncle and essentially told to “just get out there and do it.” He looks back on the event today and says that there was no discussion about the mechanics of riding at the time. His ‘training’ was of the ‘here is the clutch, here is the brake, now go’ variety. He remembers, “I only had a vague idea about one down and three up!”

Naturally, this lackadaisical approach resulted in Fernandez picking up some bad riding habits, one of which resulted in a nasty street crash in a long corner when he was 22. At the time he did not recognize that the root cause of the crash was a lack of proper training. That realization came when he took the Basic *RiderCourse* (BRC) for the first time last July. He remembers sitting in the classroom during the discussion of the concept of stopping quickly in a curve. As he sat there, Fernandez flashed back to that long-ago crash, cringed and thought, “Man, I hope we don’t have to do *that* out on the course.”

But of course, once out on the pavement Fernandez and his fellow classmates did “have to do that,” and today he says it was one of the best parts of his BRC experience. (That, and learning how to use the front brake properly—something he had always avoided simply out of fear.) He admits that when it came time to do Exercise 14, “I had sweaty palms inside

my gloves.” He survived the exercise and says, “When I saw I could do it, it was a revelation.” Because of that success, as well as all of the other knowledge gained during his BRC experience, Fernandez acknowledges that the course has given him “a lot more confidence” in his riding skills. And, as anyone who has ever had an increase in their belief in their own abilities knows, the more controlled confidence you have, the better it gets.

In light of his revelatory experience in the BRC, it will come as no surprise that Fernandez elected to become a RiderCoach himself. Outside of work, he has a long history of coaching both youth baseball and football, while his professional career includes 30 years in the Human Resources field coaching people to succeed in their chosen occupations. As he puts it, he saw the BRC as “another opportunity to coach.”

And now that he has a couple of BRCs under his coaching belt, what does he think of the experience? Not unexpectedly, he loves it. He says he really enjoys training the total novices—students who have never ridden before and come into the class afraid to get on the bike. He says, “Once they get through Exercises 3, 4, and 5, once they get an understanding of the friction zone and realize, ‘I can do this,’ it is great to see their faces light up.” He goes on to note that when these students master the basic skills, their confidence improves and they often end up outscoring the

*continued on page 10*



## New RiderCoach Trainer Guide

**M**OTORCYCLE SAFETY FOUNDATION RiderCoach Trainers will soon receive their personal copies of the newly published *RiderCoach Trainer Guide*. It is used to plan and conduct RiderCoach Preparation Courses. The Guide consists of three segments: Administration, Lesson Guides (or Parts), and Supplements. A great debt of gratitude is due to all the RiderCoach Trainers who provided suggestions and content for the Guide, and who field tested many of the aspects of the training.

The *RiderCoach Trainer Guide* contains standards and guidelines for

- conducting a RiderCoach Preparation Course
- earning and maintaining RiderCoach Trainer certification
- enrolling RiderCoach Candidates in a preparation course.

There are a total of 18 lesson guides that include rationales, materials, support, and RiderCoach Trainer action steps. Supplements include a suggested a RiderCoach Preparation Course preliminary assignment and two final knowledge tests.

Also, two forms are provided so RiderCoach Trainers can complete their requirements for recertification—the RiderCoach Preparation Course Reflective Piece Form and the RiderCoach Trainer Learning Experience Application Statement Form. The former is used by a RiderCoach Trainer to capture thoughts and experiences to make the next preparation course even better. It does not ask for personal information about



RiderCoach Candidates but rather focuses on what the RiderCoach Trainer found that worked well and how improvements might be made for the next group of RiderCoach Candidates. The latter is used to report learning experiences that fulfill the 60-clock-hour requirement for recertification purposes, which is in addition to conducting at least one complete RiderCoach Preparation Course every two years.

RiderCoach Trainers must be lifelong learners. These two forms, which are kept in an electronic portfolio by the MSF, provide the means to help capture professional growth experiences. Five general knowledge strands (topics or competencies) are used to identify specific areas of expertise. The five strands include the MSF Rider Education and Training System, general motorcycle awareness, teaching/learning interactions, motor skills principles, and safety or risk management.

RiderCoaches should know that there is no secret content in the *RiderCoach Trainer Guide* (except for the knowledge tests). In fact, RiderCoaches may purchase the *RiderCoach Trainer Guide*, without the knowledge tests, through the online store. Just as in the Basic *RiderCourse* where a RiderCoach and student are working and learning from the same document (the *Rider Handbook*), the RiderCoach Preparation Course has RiderCoach Trainers and RiderCoach Candidates working from the same documents—the *RiderCoach Guide*, range cards, and *Rider Handbook*. **SC**



## Our Delivery Partners At Work

**B**ELOW IS AN excerpt from an email message sent to MSF Training Systems from MSF certified RiderCoach Trainer Mark Weiss on behalf of T.E.A.M. Arizona.

“Some thoughts on the Extended BRC. For the past year and a half T.E.A.M. Arizona has been conducting the Extended BRC (labeled by T.E.A.M. Arizona as BRC+) on a regular basis. Our prime reason for adopting the E-BRC was to offer a curriculum that would appeal to our weaker, and less confident, candidates. We had noticed that a disproportionate number of female students had been failing the BRC and we were looking for a solution. The E-BRC seemed to be the answer.

“Looking back on a full year of classes, it would appear that the E-BRC is not accomplishing what we had expected. In regular BRC classes we are having female students failing the course at a rate of 13.3%. This rate has held steady for the last two years. Since I have fielded virtually no complaints from failed E-BRC riders, I expected that the success rate would be considerably better than we had seen in the BRC. When we analyzed the data, we found that the failure rate for female E-BRC students is nearly the same (13%).

“Considering this result, I feel that E-BRC riders are just as

likely to fail—they just feel better about it. Maybe the riders are being served, the level of satisfaction is high, but I think that we could do better.”

Weiss went on to propose a different solution involving an introductory class with a short classroom time and shortened range time that would serve as a voluntary pre-requisite to the BRC for those students who considered themselves to be “zero-level” riders. In this class, Weiss believes that unsure riders will get a taste of motorcycling without committing to an entire BRC. Further, the more gradual learning curve will allow weaker riders more time to develop basic motor skills, thus reducing the dropout rate in the BRC by allowing students who are ultimately not going to ride to discover this fact more easily. Students who know what to expect are more prepared to learn to ride, thus increasing the likelihood of success for students entering the BRC.

MSF Training Systems is working with Mark Weiss and T.E.A.M. Arizona to implement and test these ideas by tracking results from this change. In this way, our delivery partners can help MSF be more responsive to the needs of this diverse group of current and prospective riders. **SC**



## DBSROC

**T**HE *DIRTBIKE SCHOOL*<sup>SM</sup> Retailer Operated Course (DBSROC) has been continuously growing since its start in 2002. What began as a way for dealerships to get involved in safety training has become a benefit to many other groups and individuals as well. Some independent training programs, not-for-profit organizations, DBS Coaches, ATV Instructors, and MSF RiderCoaches have all become DBSROC Providers and have contributed to the growing number of students trained.

### The Benefits of Becoming a Provider

Many successful DBSROC Providers have enjoyed the benefits of training students with the *DirtBike School* curriculum and running their own business. Although they are held to the same quality assurance and curriculum standards as a DBS Coach, DBSROC Providers are able to customize the program and offer additional benefits to the students. Some include lunch, giveaways, or a trail ride after the DBS class.

DBSROC Providers pay a small, per-student fee to the MSF for use of the curriculum, and insurance is also available at a low additional fee. What a DBSROC Provider charges for the

class is at their discretion based on the local market value. DBSROC Providers also qualify for the Dealer Loan Program which allows them to borrow bikes (usually for a year) under a special agreement. Obviously, each manufacturer's requirements vary and are explained in the DBS Coach Guide, but the partnership with local dealers benefits the DBSROC Providers, the dealers, and the students.

### Advantages and Opportunities for the Retailer

DBSROC can also be worked into the overall market strategy of motorcycle dealers—many have found additional benefits from developing relationships with newly trained students who are ready to enter the sport. Some dealers have offered DBS to prospective customers, using the class as an incentive or “test ride” for individuals or families “on the fence” about a new off-highway motorcycle purchase. A family may also take the class together—off-highway motorcycling is a great group activity that DBS has been designed to accommodate.

Those interested in participating in the MSF DBSROC Program should contact the *DirtBike School* Operations Administrator at 949.727.3227, Ext. 3079. **SC**

### MSF General Manager (cont. from page 9)

more-experienced riders on the skills tests. Fernandez remarks, “I am continually impressed by the program and the students’ willingness to overcome fear, and then do well in the skills evaluation.”

At its most basic level, Fernandez feels that his job as a RiderCoach (or any kind of coach for that matter) is to “help people see where they are good and where they are not, and

then help them maintain what they are doing well, while addressing areas for improvement.” He believes that whether he is coaching BRC students or his own four dirt-bike-smitten children, his job is to teach people to understand the risks of riding and manage them well. As he says, he constantly reminds his own children, “The whole idea of riding is to come back and ride again.” Well said, Coach Fernandez, well said. **SC**



## Government Relations

**T**HROUGH THE END of February over 83,000 bills have been introduced in state legislatures, and over 3,400 of them have already been enacted into law. Unlike the U.S. Congress, legislation doesn't move at a glacial pace in the halls of state legislatures.

Numerous motorcycle safety and education related bills have been introduced at the state level. Space constraints preclude summarizing them all, but they will be highlighted in upcoming issues of *Safe Cycling*. In this issue, we review a number of state bills on motorcycle rider education program funding.

### Arizona

House Bill 2555 would provide continuous appropriations to the motorcycle safety fund (currently the appropriation is subject to legislative appropriation). It would also repeal the requirement that all monies deposited into the fund (\$1 of each motorcycle registration fee) that exceed \$150,000 revert to the state highway fund.

### Minnesota

House File 212 and Senate File 422 provide that 90% of all revenue from the motorcycle endorsement surcharge on driver's licenses in excess of \$750,000 will go to the motorcycle safety fund rather than to the trunk highway fund. The remaining 10% would continue to go to the general fund and the first \$750,000 in revenue would continue to go to the motorcycle safety fund.

### Missouri

Senate Bill 76 provides additional penalties for failure to yield the right-of-way to another vehicle if the violation contributes to an accident resulting in physical injury to or fatality of another person. It would require all new fines collected to be used to fund the motorcycle safety trust fund. New fines include surcharges up to \$200 if the violation caused physical injury, up to \$500 if the violation caused serious physical

injury, and up to \$1,000 if the violation caused a fatality.

### Montana

Senate Bill 285 was a comprehensive bill that repealed the state's dedicated funds (including that for the Motorcycle Safety Training program) and instead provided an annual \$215,000 appropriation for the program. Rider groups in the state worked to delete the motorcycle program funding change from the bill and retain the current funding scheme of a one-time \$16 motorcycle safety fee and a percentage of the motorcycle endorsement fees. This funding mechanism provides flexibility for increases in program funding and makes clear that funding is derived from motorcyclist-paid fees. The MSF worked with rider groups to provide input to state legislators.

### New Mexico

House Bill 133 would increase the motorcycle registration fee by \$3 and deposit the increase in the motorcycle training fund.

### North Dakota

House Bill 2339 would raise the motorcycle safety education fee required when registering a motorized bicycle or motorcycle from \$5 to \$10. This fee is credited to the motorcycle safety education fund.

### South Dakota

South Dakota has already enacted a motorcycle program funding bill into law. House Bill 1078 was passed by the legislature and signed by the Governor on February 14. Effective July 1, 2005, the motorcycle safety education fee collected upon motorcycle registration will increase from \$3 to \$7. This fee is used to fund the state's motorcycle safety program. According to Federal Highway Administration statistics for 2003, there were over 37,500 motorcycles registered in South Dakota, meaning that this law will result of an infusion of over \$150,000 into the state's rider education program. **SC**



## MSF Learning Centers Head West

**A**FTER CROSSING THE East and parts of the Midwest last year, Ray Ochs and Sherry Williams are taking the MSF Learning Center agenda on a westward tract. Since January 2005, Learning Centers have been held in Indianapolis, Denver, Phoenix, and Kansas City. Indianapolis boasted the largest numbers with 96 in attendance, followed by Denver with 88, Kansas City with 50, and Phoenix with only 33 due to a busier than usual training day.

Learning Center agendas consist of a combination of Ochs' and Williams' prepared materials plus any site-specific issues raised at the beginning of the day-long seminar. Some common topics raised by attendees include BRC and ERC materials and exercises, BRC exercise transitions, new BRC videos and simulations, *MCN* articles, MSF's relationships with state programs, how MSF is handling the state programs we administer, clarification of previous *Safe Cycling* articles, MSF website content and compatibility, and new course possibil-

ities (trike course, introductory course, etc.).

The basic slides used at the Learning Centers are posted in RETSORG ([retsorg.org](http://retsorg.org)) as well as commonly asked questions and answers. Many of the responses given to common Learning Center questions were published in the Winter 2005 issue of *Safe Cycling*.

Invitations have been sent for two more Learning Centers: Albuquerque, NM (June 25) and Reno, NV (July 16). You should have received an invitation if your mailing address is in the LC state or any surrounding one. If you have not yet received an invitation and would like to come join the discussion, it's not too late to register—just send an email to [aday@msf-usa.org](mailto:aday@msf-usa.org).

Future Learning Centers are being scheduled in Oklahoma and Arkansas (with dates and locations yet to be determined). We hope to see many of you as MSF makes its way across the national training landscape. **SC**



## Keeping Informed

**T**HE MSF SENDS news update emails to all RiderCoaches, RiderCoach Trainers, State Administrators, and Site Sponsors to keep everyone informed of important motorcycle training-related news. If the MSF does not have your correct email address, or your email is returned to the MSF, you will not receive this information. However, you should receive a postcard asking you to review and update your “Contact Information” page in RETSORG. The information in the update email is always posted on the RETSORG Home Page.

If you receive a postcard, please go to your “My Profile” page located from the “Profile” link on the menu bar. If you receive a postcard and the email address in your Profile page is correct, you may have a mail blocker, your ISP may have been temporarily unavailable, or your ISP will not forward the email. If this is the case, please consider signing up for a free, non-business email account. We highly recommend doing this if you are in the military.

Please stay informed by updating your contact information and visiting RETSORG regularly. **SC**



## Lessons from the Range—Learner-Centered Questions

**L**EARNER-CENTERED QUESTIONS are key to getting students involved in discussions in the classroom and in debrief sessions on the range. In practice, a RiderCoach can ask what seems to be a learner-centered question, yet it doesn't produce much discussion. Why not?

In the left-hand column of the box are a series of learner-centered questions heard recently on

a site visit. These questions produced one-word responses or were followed immediately by a mini-lecture by the RiderCoach. Why? Two reasons:

- The learner-centered question must be also an open-ended question in order to encourage a more full discussion.
- The open-ended learner-centered question must be followed by wait time (count 1001 – 1002 – 1003) so that students have time to think and respond.

Contrast the questions in the left-hand column with those in the right-hand column. Those in the left-hand column can be answered with a one-word response and would not usually

Learner-Centered Question	Open-Ended, Learner-Centered Question
Were you able to find the basic controls of the motorcycle? Did you get a basic feel for the motorcycle?	What did you try that made the skill easier to achieve?
What happens when you ease out the clutch all the way? We go fast, right?	What happens when you ease out the clutch all the way?
Head and eyes up—did that work for you?	Why is “head and eyes up” important for this exercise?
Did you hear the throttle on the weave? What was the objective of that exercise?	What did you notice about the throttle on that demonstration?

lead to a more involved student discussion. Those in the right-hand column leave the response type open, allowing participants to direct and control the discussion while the coach *facilitates* the dis-

ussion toward important concepts for each exercise.

RiderCoaches must use their best judgment. Sometimes a short debrief is appropriate, and sometimes a longer one may better serve the riders because of the importance of feedback and discovering what is going on in their minds. Also, debriefs can be a good use of time while changing the range for the next exercise. Be sure to visit [retsortg.org](http://retsortg.org) to see Best Practices for other ideas. **SC**