

The Florida MSTA Grapevine

You heard it through the Grapevine...

Volume 4 Issue 5

Events in May

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Feature

Group Riding Courtesy

by Bill Royal, MSTA FL Co-Director

As someone who has led a LOT of group rides over the last ten + years, I have experienced a wide variety of riders showing up to participate in said rides. Most of the time there are few, if any, problems, but every once in a while issues do occur so I thought I would take a minute to try to set some expectations so everyone can participate equally and enjoy the rides.

Your ride leaders work very hard to make the rides both safe and enjoyable. They may make it look easy, but believe me there is a LOT of effort put into planning and executing a safe ride for several or more riders, all of which may have varying levels of skills and experience. So the ride leader is one half of the equation, but the other half is YOU - the ride attendee. We (ride leaders) have certain expectations of the attendees that are necessary to ensure everyone has a good experience. I would like to list some of these expectations

for your review and consideration. Most of us would consider these items common courtesy or even common sense, yet every once in a while someone shows up for a ride and doesn't appear to have a clue... so here goes.

Editor's Monthly Note:

Still looking for contributed articles. Come on, folks! - ed.

- If you are to participate in any of the group rides led by MSTA Florida members, we ride leaders EXPECT you show courtesy and consideration for us and everyone else on the ride. Basic rules to assure this include:
- Be ON TIME for the start of the ride. That doesn't mean rolling in at the last minute before scheduled departure time, it means being there at least 15 minutes prior to in order to receive any pre-ride briefing, route updates, etc.
- As a rule you should ALWAYS be starting with a full tank of gas. If not that, you should have sufficient fuel to make the entire trip to the event or if any, planned fuel stops. It's already enough "load" for the ride leader to be keeping track of the group without having to suddenly deal with an unplanned stop - especially one for fuel. Also, when preparing for the return trip, if the ride leader hasn't polled or stated plans for fuel stops on the way home and you can't make the trip without filling please be SURE to let the leader know BEFORE you depart - again so everyone is aware of and prepared for a stop.
- If you plan on splitting out of the ride en-route, please let the ride leader know ahead of time so they don't stop the whole group and have to go looking for a "lost" rider.
- Be sure your bike is in good mechanical condition BEFORE you leave to attend the ride. Oil properly filled, and other fluids clean and filled as appropriate. Properly inflated tires with adequate tread. No loose parts threatening to fall off as you ride...
- If you haven't ridden with a particular group before, be sure to ASK the ride leader for any suggestions regarding local customs or practices for the ride. If none are given or offered, take your cues from the rest of the group as to proper alignment, following distance, speeds, etc.
- Ride PREDICTABLY - that means maintain steady position relative to other riders near you. This applies to both your "line" and your following distance. When riding in a formation and at a steady cruising speed it is NOT the time to be "scrubbing in your tires" with swings across the width of the road or to be running up close to the rider before you only to then fall way behind before riding up close again. That should only be occurring based on the speed of the group not your lack of attention to your position.
- Remember - a group ride is like a dance. It can be really good when everyone is cooperating. Or really bad if someone is stepping on others' toes... ;-)

SAFETY TALK

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Ultimately, the safety of motorcycle riders and their passengers is their own responsibility. Nothing presented in the column supersedes, negates or relieves a motorcyclist and/or passenger from assumption of personal responsibility for their own actions and safety.

“Margin for Error”

It is a term utilized in many different disciplines, but for a smart rider, it means just one thing: Safety. The Margin for Error is what you hold in reserve in terms of your capabilities and the performance of your bike, to account for the unexpected and/or the mistake.

How many times have you seen riders hurtling down the road at what is obviously an unsafe speed for the environment, or at the very limits of control for the conditions, pushing their bike’s available performance to the edge, etc.? These are riders who have no Margin for Error. All it takes is a small animal running out into their path, a wet patch in the shade of a corner, or an unexpected pothole to ruin their day.

We all like a “spirited” ride from time to time. That’s one of the reasons we’re on two wheels. The challenge, particularly as we become more experienced and skilled, is knowing when to say it’s enough. There is a time and a place to push your bike and your skills to the limit...and it’s called a racetrack. Otherwise, the next time you’re on your favorite back road with its long sweeping corners and occasional tight turns, ask yourself “Do I have a Margin for Error?” If the answer is no, or even “I’m not sure”, then you already know what you have to do. Slow down, if just a little. Give yourself some time and space in case of a mistake, or just because that silly squirrel might be waiting in the middle of your line around that next corner. You’ll be glad you did.

The Florida MSTA Group Leadership

Florida News

South Director's Report

Greetings from the ever-warming south Florida!! As my schedule took a turn to the busy-work-focused side of life, I was not able to join you all in the fun and games this month. Fortunately, my partner in crime was able to stand in for the both of us. Read up on the fun you had in April in Bill's report!

Next month, be sure to join us for the last South LUNCH ride on May 7th. Details can be found in this newsletter and on our Florida website. In short, we can plan to buy lunch from the concessionaire at Everglades Holiday Park, or BYO. I'll stake out 3-4 picnic tables under shade and we can watch the inevitable parade of bikes and fishing boats!!

Also in May, we will once again enjoy one of the best bike shows anywhere!! Ride Into History will take place on May 20th. Our own newsletter editor will have 2 bike(s) in the show! This is a great opportunity to see several of the greatest bikes in history up close and in person. And there are no museum ropes to hinder your picture taking!! Instead of reading a mere paragraph on a museum wall sign, you can ask the owners all about their pride and joy!! Several of us are planning to make a weekend out of the event. In fact, the Central BRUNCH/LUNCH ride will be incorporated into the weekends events. Be looking for more details soon!!

As the heat begins to build, we will be switching to our BRUNCH rides in June, July, August and September. Details will be posted soon to your Florida website. Meanwhile, GET OUT AND RIDE!!!

ATGATT Van



Be on the lookout for this suspicious “Biker Gang”! This group has been known to run over small children and pets, on their way to out-of-the-way eateries in central and south Florida. No one is safe while this Gang is on the loose. Their ring leaders, “Van”, “Jim” and especially the notorious “Bill” (not further identified, as he has never been seen in a photo...) are particularly dangerous, known to lead innocent riders down mysterious, unknown roads, never to be seen again.

If you encounter any of the Gang, do not approach them, particularly if they haven't had lunch yet...

However, if approached by them, you can defend yourself by waving a hot, blackened catfish sandwich in the air, then throwing it in one direction while you run the other way. Do not look back...

North Director's Report

April shaped up to be yet another fine month for riding in Florida and we had two lunch rides each of which had a decent turnout.

First up was the South ride to Stan's Idle Hour in Goodland, FL. This one was very early in the month (on the 2nd) so I didn't get an email out for it. Sorry about that. However we still had nearly a dozen riders make it, mostly from the West Palm area but with a few others who rode in from as far away as Valkaria (Tom Blake) and Tampa (Bill Royal & Eve Blazsur). Next up on my calendar was the non-MSTA event - Moonshine Lunch Run. Eve and I took 3 leisurely days of all secondary roads up through Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana and finally Illinois. It was a stupendous ride up, watching the Spring season regress from almost summer time here in FL to trees just starting to bud out in IL. There, we joined up with over a thousand other riders who poured in from as far away as San Diego, CA. We did get a pretty heavy set of thunderstorms that rolled through over night Friday and into early Saturday AM, but they cleared out by 10:00 AM. That left the only issue of finding un-flooded roads to get to the Moonshine store which we eventually did after having to turn back at three other approaches. We did spot a few other MSTA folks there. We headed for home on Sunday morning, and opted for a two day trip in order to ensure we didn't get over-run by another front headed our way. Then we got a few days break before mounting up again for the Central lunch ride, this time to a new place in St. Cloud FL. We had another dozen plus turnout, and though the day started out coolish, the temps were soaring after lunch, signaling the time to start switching to our brunch timing for the summer months.

For May, there is a South ride on the schedule, but I will be in Las Vegas for the first two weeks so am unable to sponsor a Central ride. Also, I won't be sending out my usual batch email until I return so stay tuned to the Events calendar page on the MSTA Florida website for any last minute additions. Towards the end of the month we're planning a weekend event around the Riding Into History event in St. Augustine. Nothing too formal, just different groups riding in so far from Tampa and West Palm (so far) to spend Friday evening through Sunday morning in the area and attending the great antique bike show at the World Golf Village on Saturday. If you're interested in riding in with any groups or just hanging out with others attending, be sure to email or call one of the state directors for details.

Bill Royal, MSTA Florida State Co-Director & Webmaster

Florida Rides This Month

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: Sat, May 7, 2011, 12pm – 1pm

Where: [Everglades Holiday Park](#), Southwest Ranches, FL 33332 ([map](#))

Description: We are trying something new this month! More details are coming soon. This may be a BYO lunch event, though there is a concessionaire on site. Rather limited menu though. Lots of tables under cover, and always a great "bike show" in the parking lot, as you never know what is going to roll in on a Saturday afternoon. We saw one of those jet-bikes out there a while back!!! Stay tuned!

Contact: Van at 561-386-2594 or busavan@flahsta.org

MSTA Weekend at Riding Into History

When: May 20-22, 2011

Where: World Golf Village and Surrounding Area, St. Augustine, FL

Description: There will be group rides originating in Sun City Center and West Palm Beach on Friday to an as yet undetermined hotel in the St. Augustine Area. We'll have a dinner meeting on Friday evening, Saturday is attending RIH or a self guided ride and another dinner outing on Saturday evening with return to home rides on Sunday. Stay tuned! More information to follow...

For additional Florida events and information, [click here](#) to see Florida MSTAs web site Events page.

MSTA web site information on "Just For Fun Events": [click here](#).

National MSTAs www.sporttouring.us

Florida MSTAs www.flahsta.org

Mystery Hyperlink of the Month

Don't miss this great event in May!

More Contact Information

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ALL PHOTOGRAPHS WERE PROVIDED BY THE CREDITED AUTHOR, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Riders Needed

WEAVERVILLE, CA – June 10-12, 2011

I'm looking for one or two fellow riders who would like to journey from Florida to Weaverville, CA to join the "Western Ducati Madness" event. You don't have to own or ride a Ducati. Northern CA is great riding territory if you've not been there before, or if you simply want to go again. I am planning a two week trip, including the three days with the group in California. Bob Barnesky, 352-270-8723 or email rbarnesky@tampabay.rr.com

Motorcycles For Sale

2003 Honda ST1300, 19,780 miles, silver, Honda Box, Heated Grips, Total Pref. Risers, like new condition, one owner, purchased new in Indiana. Bike is now located in Ft. Myers. Tom Sizemore, 317-431-4114 or sizemore.agency@att.net

2007 Triumph Tiger 1050, 11,137 miles, Caspian blue, original owner, adult miles, pristine condition. Bike runs perfectly, has never been back to the dealer. Tires: Dunlop SportMAX with at least half tread life left. Extras: engine crash bars, center stand, luggage rack, hard locking tail trunk. Last oil/filter change at 10,795 miles w/Mobil MX4T exclusively. Price: \$6,490. Pictures available upon request. Bob Barnesky, 352-270-8723 or rbarnesky@tampabay.rr.com

(Ed. Note: I've seen this bike and while I haven't inspected it closely, it is from casual assessment a very clean and well-kept ride.)

Gear For Sale

Tour Master Cortech GX Air lady's black mesh summer riding pants. Women's size small, inseam short 27". Removable padding, washable, sold as is, great condition. Worn twice. \$40.00 & you pay shipping. Paid \$169.00 new. Contact Eve by email: eblueday@mindspring.com or phone: 813-633-8155. I can send a photo or bring them to a lunch ride.