

GWRRRA, REGION N, VIRGINIA DISTRICT CHAPTER VA-E BATTLEFIELD WINGS FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA

FEBRUARY 2010

www.battlefieldwings.com



BATTLEFIELD WINGS, VA-E



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CHAPTER E DIRECTOR'S NEWS

February 2010



Once again I say hello to all Chapter-E Members and anyone who takes the time to read our News Letters.

Brrrr, it's cold outside and my wing just sits idle waiting for a warm day to get on the road and allow the wind to whistle past while I view the open road to any destination desired. We have received many safety instructions on the care of our wings and I'm sure many of us follow the Chapter Educator's information on preventive maintenance on our wings. Did you change the oil for winter storage or do you ride all winter? I finally took the time to change the oil in both my bike and Tina's bike last week, and washed and waxed both of them, then put them under cover. I also bought some Sta-bil to put into the tank so the gas will not go bad from storage.

As I begin to write this news letter the snow is starting to melt and the sun is shining today, but as the night begins to fall and the temperature begins to drop that's when I realize how happy I am that the wing is in the garage and I can anticipate warmer weather in the near future and plan for some nice rides when riding season begins. It is always an exhilarating experience to come together to plan our functions and dinner rides or to visit other chapters. I try to conduct our meetings/gatherings in an atmosphere that brings jovial experiences to everyone. I also want to thank those fourteen members who went on our February Dinner Ride down to the Timbers in Lady Smith. Because of the weather no one rode their Gold Wing, but just to come together and fellowship is very important. Where there is an exchange of ideals there can only be growth. As one poet so eloquently put it "When Love and Skill work together, expect a Masterpiece". You may ask yourself, why use that Quotation. Think about it, we Love to ride our Gold Wings and with the knowledge presented to us by our Chapter Educator along with years of riding experience, we are Skilled Riders and that's why Chapter-E is a Masterpiece as a Chapter.

We are looking forward to our first chapter function on March 14, 2010. We will get together and go to The Riverside Dinner Theatre to see Smokey Jo's Café. Since the weather is unpredictable in March, we need to keep active with the Chapter and this is one way of doing that.

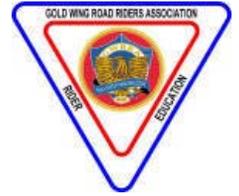
As usual, we are willing to serve anywhere, anytime and are proud to be members of such a great organization.

Sly & Tina

Chapter Directors

Chapter-E

CHAPTER E EDUCATOR'S NEWS



Trail Braking

This month I'm writing about trail braking. A GWRRA newsletter is an unlikely place to find an article on trail braking because this technique is more applicable to the race track or sport bike riding than to touring. But I'm interested in all motorcycling techniques and I do think a discussion of the subject is worth a quick read on your part if you don't already know all about it.

First, let's define the term. Trail braking is a cornering technique where the brakes are used during the first part of a turn. Rather than completing all braking before leaning the motorcycle and starting the turn, the rider enters the corner with some brakes still applied and slowly/smoothly transitions from brakes to throttle during the turn. The brakes (mostly front brakes) are "trailed off" during the turn. One obvious reason a racer might want to do this is that he could enter the turn at a faster pace.

Using brakes while a motorcycle is leaned over in a corner is tempting fate if you don't know what you are doing. (Let me stop right here and admit I don't know what I'm doing so I do not employ this technique in any real sense. I have begun to toy with it a bit for reasons I mention below.) There is only so much traction available and when the motorcycle is leaned, it is safest to not squander any traction on braking. This is why conservative, safety conscious riders separate braking and cornering – finish the braking while the bike is vertical and then with a light throttle gently accelerate through the turn. The light acceleration causes the suspension to lift a bit providing more ground clearance and this also adds to safety. "Brake before lean" should probably be the planned cornering technique for all street riding turns.

But, what do you do when you encounter a surprise (e.g. obstacle, decrease in radius) once in a turn and slowing/stopping may be required? The technique taught in MSF classes is to straighten the motorcycle and then apply brakes hard. This is, again, separating the cornering and braking actions so traction is needed for only one at a time. This is a good (probably best) technique if you have the real estate to execute it. However, in a right hand turn there may be dire consequences to straightening and traveling into the oncoming lane of traffic. In a left hand turn there may be a guard rail or other landscape feature you'd rather not deal with. In these cases the use of brakes while in a turn may be your only hope. This use of brakes is not trail braking per se because you are not trailing off the brakes during the turn but rather applying them part way through the turn to deal with a surprise. But, if you have some experience with trail braking, you may have a greater probability of successfully using the brakes in a turn if needed.

I have just begun to experiment with the use of brakes while cornering. I mean I'm doing it on purpose and preplanning it (I've often used the brakes in a corner in an unplanned way for all the wrong reasons). Before starting on this I tried to read what I could about the technique and here are the high points:

- 1) The rider must be smooth. No quick transitions on or off the brakes or throttle.
- 2) The front brake is preferred. There is more weight on the front when braking and therefore more traction available. And, if you start to skid the rear wheel in a turn, the back end will immediately start to come around and this could lead to a high side crash.
- 3) With the brakes applied and the front suspension compressed, the motorcycle's turning characteristics will be somewhat "quicker" and a newbie should be prepared for this difference. (Ground clearance will also be less.)
- 4) The motorcycle may tend to "stand up" as the rider brakes in a corner. This seems to be just the opposite of 3) above and I think this may be more rider-induced than physics-induced but either way the newbie should be prepared for this difference.
- 5) Countersteering is still the way to make mid-corner heading adjustments.

According to what I've read, the suggested way to experiment is what you would expect. Start by using very light braking (mostly front) with the motorcycle not leaned over very far (go slower) and on subsequent practice turns use more brakes (mostly front) at greater lean angles. Above all, be smooth. There is some point (lots of brake and lots of lean) where physics will demand a crash. I wish I could know where that point is without suffering a crash to find out but I

can't so I'm not taking this too far, I'm just getting comfortable with it in hopes that I won't be too uncomfortable if I ever come upon a mid-corner surprise. I'm also using a downhill curve for my practice sessions. The same curve so there is no variability except what I am doing and downhill so even though I'm braking (front brake only for now) I'm not slowing as much as I would otherwise (after all, I'm not doing this at race speeds).

Please don't take this article as a challenge for you to try any of this. It's right for me even though I am increasing my personal risk (at least in the short term) but a smarter rider might avoid trail braking like the plague. Should you choose to experiment as I am, you should read lots more on the subject than I've included here. What I do challenge you to do is identify some riding skill you feel could be improved and improve it. Read what you can find on the subject, plan how you can practice it (including picking an appropriate place), and then get to it. Don't expect results overnight. If it were that easy you probably would have mastered it long ago.

Larry

CHAPTER E'S MEMBERSHIP ENHANCEMENT COORDINATORS' NEWS



Greetings E Team Members.

Are you tired of all this snow yet? I know I am. Spring cannot get here fast enough for me. I am starting to fill my calendar with events for the upcoming riding season. We have dinner rides planned, visits to other chapters and places I want to go. Winter is a good time to think through how much and where you want to ride. We are having our next Chapter gathering on the 17th and now is a great time to come out and see your friends and talk about rides this year. Larry has been putting together some great talks on safety for our meetings this year, Dan has been putting together dinner rides and Sly is working on places to visit. But we need YOU to complete the planning. Our chapter gathering is a great place and time to give your input into our planning. Please make plans to attend the meeting this month and enjoy time spent with friends. As our motto points out, Friends for Fun, Safety and Knowledge.

Gordon Combs – Membership Enhancement Coordinator





CHAPTER E NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2010

Established
10/24/87

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 STAFF MEETING	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17 CHAPTER MEETING	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Dinner Ride Leedo's Pizza Costner's Corner						



Provided just for Gordon!

MEMBER NEWS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST



09 Larry & Sylvia Gray

10 Robert & Kimberly Clark

24 Tracy & Katriece Williams

29 Gary & Renee Best

STAFF MEETINGS ARE
SCHEDULED FOR THE FIRST
TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH MEET
AT 6:30 PM TO EAT MEETING
STARTS AT 7:00 PM

MEETING PLACE TBA



05 Elaine Murphy

07 Linda Hardisty

11 Nancy Groves

11 Sharon Poulakowski

16 Larry Gray

17 Alvin "Tim" Hayes

20 Sonny Pratt



Visit with us for our Chapter Meetings the
3rd Wednesday of each month

DYNASTY BUFFET - FOUR-MILE FORK

Meet at 6:30 pm to Eat

Meeting begins at 7:30 pm