

USING PERSONAL MOTORCYCLES IN THE MRC:RSS

For the last five years the MSF has been gathering information from programs who have been conducting the MRC:RSS using personally owned motorcycles. The following pages contain the information gathered and give MSF recommendations for future conduct of basic courses using student owned motorcycles..

In order to get a fair assessment without jeopardizing student safety or learning, limitations were put on the conduct of the initial field-tests. Programs were given two options to conduct the field-tests. Some programs used both options when scheduling permitted.

Option 1 – Courses conducted exclusively with student owned motorcycles. In other words, ALL motorcycles used in a particular class were to be student owned, regardless of size.

Option 2 – Conduct courses using both loan motorcycles (350cc or less) and student owned motorcycles 650cc and under. The standards for the field-test are outlined in the attached sample letter that was sent to each participating sponsor. Subsequent to the initial field-tests, the Georgia Motorcycle Safety Program had been conducting courses using loaned motorcycles and personally owned motorcycles of any size.

Programs that participated in the field-study were/are:

Georgia Motorcycle Safety Program	1992 – Current
U.S. Navy	1985 – Current
Motorcycling Ent., Inc. (Mary Donovan, WI)	1995 – Current
MN Motorcycle Safety Program	1994 – Current
KY Motorcycle Rider Ed Program	1994 – Current
Hesston Rec. and Community Ed (KS)	1994 – Current
Rider Ed Assoc. (Marty Caise, AZ)	1994 – Current
Paul Reese (PMS, FL)	1993 – Current
Bill Mize (AZ)	1993 – Current
Motorcycle Safety Ed Program (NC)	1993 – Current
Waukesha Co Tech College (CI Patzer, WI)	1993 – Current
Florida Rider Ed.	1992 – Current
Terry Haskew (AZ)	1995 – Current
TEAM AZ	1995 – Current

The information needed to assess the viability was outlined to the participants before their field-testing began. We attempted to get as much information as possible from the sponsors, relative to the topic, without making it too cumbersome to respond to. The three major categories that needed to be assessed were:

- 1. Safety concerns.** Are there any concerns relative to the mixing of “training” motorcycles with larger, personally owned motorcycles? Is there or could there be a great potential for “intimidation” by the larger motorcycles? Can the larger, personal motorcycles be run safely through the various MRC:RSS exercises? Were there any tendencies for the riders to ride more “aggressively” than the MRC:RSS calls for?
- 2. Instruction concerns.** Pass/Fail rates? Weight of motorcycle a factor? Can students meet the objectives of the MRC:RSS using their (larger) motorcycle?
- 3. Administrative concerns.** What new tasks, if any, will the sponsor take on? Additional waivers? Insurance coverage? State/local laws (does rider have proper endorsement to ride the motorcycle to class)? Is there a need to offer these options? i.e. They want to ride their own bike or lack of loan motorcycles? Are there any additional costs that might arise by offering these training options?

The responses collected from the field-testing organizations are outlined below.

1. There were over 500 documented riders throughout the field-test period. Thousands more “undocumented” through the Navy and other programs.
2. With the exception of a few “dropped” motorcycles, there were no accidents reported by the sponsors who took part in the field-test where students rode their motorcycle. (This is the information we received, a “few”.)
3. There were no costs incurred by the sponsors for damages or maintenance to the individual’s motorcycles in these field-tests. In fact, some sponsors noted the financial benefit of having students use their own motorcycles. This meaning less repairs, maintenance, securing, etc. of loan motorcycles.
4. Liability insurance was secured through the usual providers. MSF, Jon Ball, etc. Riders provide their own insurance following the guidelines in the ERC.
5. It was unanimously agreed that additional screening of potential students was necessary to determine ownership, insurance, and the ability to ride legally to the course, etc. Further, most programs required an additional waiver before riding. Additionally all personal motorcycles underwent the T-CLOCK inspection prior to riding.
6. There was nothing reported that indicates larger motorcycles show any effect on the overall conduct and safety of the course. One general comment made was the need for instructors to pay special attention to keeping riders’ speed “down” when there was a mix of small and big bikes. The “need to manage the mix of motorcycles” was a common statement.
7. Instructional concerns. There were no notable instructional concerns associated with using larger motorcycles in the MRC:RSS. Students riding their motorcycles had similar scores to those riding training motorcycles. A comment by one sponsor was that the Level II cone weave gave riders a bit of a “challenge” but no more than usual when students are on loan motorcycles. Again, there were no significant scoring differences.

Based on the information gathered from the program’s field-testing and numerous interviews with sponsors, MSF makes the following recommendations with regard to the use of personal motorcycles in the MRC:RSS.

- Programs may offer the MRC:RSS to students using their own motorcycles. These students may be integrated into classes with other students who are using small cc training motorcycles. **The entire course must be taught. The only exception to this is Exercise 17; if the student owned motorcycle has an integrated or linked braking system, they should not perform this exercise. Eliminate the buddy push in Exercise 2 when heavier motorcycles are used. Exercise 8 may be eliminated upon the program sponsors approval.**
- Programs/Instructors **must insure that the student rode their motorcycle to class. If a student hauls their motorcycle to the class, the entire course must be conducted as if it were a novice class with small displacement training motorcycles.**
- Programs must have a screening policy consistent with that of the ERC. i.e. riding experience, license/permit, proof of ownership, safety inspection of the motorcycle, and additional waiver(s) addressing the use of their motorcycle in the course.
- Programs and instructors should have a “back up” plan that allows a student to ride a training motorcycle in the event they do not feel “comfortable” using theirs. This could be as simple as rescheduling the student or having a loan machine available for the switch.

For basic courses conducted **exclusively** with student owned motorcycles the following guidelines may be used: **(In this case, all students must have ridden their motorcycle to the course.)**

- A. Level I Classroom:
 1. Eliminate the video “Motorcycle Controls” in Module Two. Cover the information in the Instructor’s Guide.
 2. Eliminate the armchairs. Again, students must have ridden to the course.
- B. Level 1 Range:
 1. Eliminate Exercises 1, 2, and 3. (Option to eliminate Exercise 8)
 2. Reduce Exercise 10 (Shifting) to ten minutes.
- C. Level II Range:
 1. For motorcycles with integrated or linked braking, eliminate Exercise 17.

Additional requirements for students to use their own motorcycle include:

- Require a valid motorcycle license or temporary permit
- Notify students they are responsible for any damage to their motorcycle or equipment as a result of their participation in the MRC:RSS.
- Provide adequate medical and liability insurance coverage.
- Inspect the motorcycles before class to detect defects that could impair handling and control in accordance with the T-CLOCK inspection sheet (included in the Experienced *RiderCourse* Instructor's Guide).
- Programs and instructors must take care to enforce the range rules established for safety. Riders may have the idea that it is their motorcycle so they are exempt from these rules. Extra emphasis may be needed in this area by the instructor on the range.