

# RED HOT NEWS

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Honda Riders Club of America • Southern California Motorcycle Association • American Motorcyclist Association

## Safety Report

### Riding in the rain SoCal Style

By Keith Knapp, Rider Education Chairman

Fact #1: It does rain in Southern California, Unlike most areas of the USA, our infrequent rainfalls cause one unique problem not faced by other motorcyclists: extremely slippery roads during the first half hour of a good rainfall. This first half hour danger period can be extended to all day if the rain is only a drizzle or a mist.

Rule #1: Pull off the road for half an hour if it hasn't rained recently. Get something to eat, or just have a cup of coffee while staying dry. If the rain continues and you want to resume your ride, get on your rain gear and enjoy the rest of your ride at a somewhat slower pace.

Fact #2: Wet roads have less grip than the same roads when dry. Even with perfect road conditions, motorcyclists wear protective gear and must use defensive riding techniques including the all-important "high visual horizon" to prevent injury, but wet roads require additional precautions and adjustments to our riding style.

Rule #2: Be smooth. The fewer and smoother your control inputs are with your bike to achieve a desired result, the better. Prepare for braking distances to double, do so smoothly and progressively. The best technique for a curve or corner is to finish your braking in a straight line, turn in with the brakes released and the weight transferred to the rear wheel with a "gentle application" of throttle - the same as on dry pavement, but slower. Avoid sudden changes in speed or direction, again doing both smoothly. Another technique is to keep your engine in the middle of its torque's range to prevent too little or too much power from affecting your bike's rear tire traction.

Fact #3: Some dry road surfaces can become very dangerous when wet.

- Metal construction plates and manhole covers on city streets
- White lines and road markings - those BIG lane directional arrows & lettering at intersections
- Tar "snake" seams
- Leaves - especially in shaded areas of forested mountain areas
- Mud &/or dirt & gravel runoff in corners - especially on mountain roads for up to a week after it rains
- Oily surfaces, especially diesel fuel - between wheel tracks, at traffic lights & stop signs, and by gas pumps

Rule #3: If possible avoid any road surface that looks shiny when wet. If it is not possible to avoid a shiny surface item, then maintain current speed & direction while avoiding braking or acceleration while your tires are in contact with such an item.

Fact #4: Motorists do not "see" motorcyclists. A number of "un-attentional blindness" studies have shed light on car-motorcycle accidents where motorists tell the police officer "I never saw the motorcycle. This "invisibility" of motorcycles is the main cause of drivers turning left in front of motorcyclists.

Rule #4: All means of increasing visibility can help motorists "see" motorcyclists. **SPECIAL FREEWAY RAIN WARNING:** decreased visibility

caused by the spray kicked up by vehicles on freeways during rain, make seeing motorcycles with single taillights & motorcyclists wearing non-bright and/or non-reflective clothing almost impossible. Although a study by researchers where test subjects were watching black & white objects while an unexpected red object appeared, 30% did not see the red object but 70% did. These studies suggest that while nothing can guarantee car drivers' will see you, such attention getting equipment as modulating headlights, along with brightly colored clothing & helmets may help.

*Practice the "BS" approach to riding in the wet:*

**Be Smart, Be Smooth, Be Seen, and Be Safe!**

## February Ride Report

### Anybody got a GPS?

By Marina Pelner

Ah, the thrill and challenge of new roads! What motorcyclist doesn't jump for the chance to explore new territory? After our standard donuts and coffee and a quick word from **Richard French**, about safety, acceptable mechanical condition of our mounts and the two pages of directions (Oh Boy!) a large group (60+) of all types of bikes, left the House of Motorcycles on the morning of February 2.

We headed north via I-15 and exited into North County for a taste of the twists. Much of the group was already separated by stoplights after leaving the House, but that's okay, we all had maps right? We turned onto a fine stretch of road, enjoying the truly scenic views and the challenge of the new route, but quickly found out that a finger swirling above the helmet meant, "turn around". As soon as we completed the "U-turn" a group of some friendly looking bikers going the opposite direction turned out to be members of our own club riding their version of the route!

Spring in San Diego with its unpredictable weather and how it affects our back roads, led us into a "Lord of the Rings," like territory. Many of us were carefully wading in and out of puddles, weaving around branches and dirt mounds as this part of the route was like something out of the movies. Woe to the rider who just washed/polished any part of their bike before the ride, as his or her reward will be to practice with their elbow grease again after they get home.

We all eventually made it to Dixon Lake and the experience and challenge of the ride was rewarded with a much-appreciated lunch provided by House of Motorcycles. Do we still want new roads? Absolutely. The adventure makes for some good laughs, a chance to polish your navigating skills for the Baby Butt and some great bench racing at the monthly meetings.

### Good Luck Keith!

"Change Happens" and you can expect it to happen consistently. Well... change has happened as Keith Knapp, our HRCA representative and Rider Education Chairman has left the area for NASCAR country, (Asheville, North Carolina). The Executive committee, staff at the newsletter and membership thank Keith for his contributions and wish him continuous success and good fortune in "good ole boy" country. Best of luck, Keith!



Keith (right side) at an RHR meeting. This one just happened to be in Monterey during the 2001 Laguna Seca Superbike races!

### Membership Fees are Due!

2002 Memberships expire on January 1, 2003. Renewal forms/ checks made out to Red Hot Riders, Inc. (\$15) should be mailed to  
Chris Crawford  
16329 Arena Drive  
Ramona, CA. 92065.

The renewal form are available at club meetings and on the Red Hot Riders Website.



Thanks to the House of Motorcycles for providing a BBQ lunch! Good company and a challenging ride made this a day to remember.



During the February ride we regrouped in Temecula.

## February Meeting Report

by Ron Farkas

Our guest speakers for the February meeting brought some of the weather with them from their recent tour of the Alps. If it were a little colder that night, we would have had snow flurries here in San Diego! Jane and Josef Usatin were good enough to share with us their experience in touring the Alps on rented BMWs. Jane, who is an accomplished touring rider, started off the presentation with a recommended source for renting BMWs and a book for getting around Europe on two wheels. Time of the year to visit, what to wear and how the new "Euro" affected their trip were some of the topics she shared with us in a general overview. The challenge of the mountain roads are that they are cut into the side of the mountains and the hair pin turns are supported from below like a train trestle, but hang out in space completing the route. Navigating these turns was like a well-choreographed dance on the twin cylinder Beemers. Guardrails on the side of these mountain roads are used sparingly so concentration on your visual horizon gained extra significance to avoid the "E-ticket" ride down the mountainside. Accommodations throughout the 3-week trip were varied, but mainly

consisted of Bed and Breakfast type establishments with a hearty emphasis on the breakfast! Some of the challenge that Jane had was available space to pack clothing and gear. The secret was utilizing clothes from a company here in the states that manufacture truly wash-n-wear clothing! Laundromats don't exist in the Alps; Jane completed the task by utilizing the bathroom sink and hanging the laundry out to dry. If the clothes weren't quite dry, you could still put them on and your own body heat helped the clothing complete the drying process. Shopping is always fun and the Usatin's used the opportunity to spend some "Euros" in many of the local shops that were able to ship their souvenirs home, thus saving space on their bikes. In closing, both Jane and Josef made themselves available after the meeting to discuss their photo album and answer any questions that the membership may have had.



... after hearing about the riding around the Alps from Josef and Jane Usatin, Jim tries desperately to think up excuses that will allow him to take 3 weeks off of work!

### Club Meetings

Club meetings take place on the second Wednesday of the month at:

Acapulco Restaurant and Cantina  
8998 Miramar Road  
(858) 578-6390

Dinner: 6:00 pm  
Meeting: 7:00 pm

### Officers 2002-2003

president ..... Jim Branch  
vice president ..... Chris Crawford  
secretary ..... Michael Gorga  
treasurer ..... Ed Krugman  
rider education chairman ..... Keith Knapp  
activities chairman ..... Richard French  
merchandise chairman ..... George Devereaux  
publication chairman ..... Andy Mansker  
membership chairman ..... Chris Crawford  
HRCA Liaison ..... Keith Knapp  
referee ..... vacant  
legislative officer ..... vacant

### Newsletter Submission

News letter submissions can be sent to Ron Farkas, email is [hondaron@cox.net](mailto:hondaron@cox.net), Phone and fax is 858-486-3257



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## House of Motorcycles

1425 South Coast Highway  
Oceanside, CA 92054  
(760) 433-4333

### EVENT CALENDAR

Mar	12	Wed	.....	Club Meeting	<i>Check out our web site for an up-to-date calendar: <a href="http://www.redhotriders.com">www.redhotriders.com</a></i>
April	9	Wed	.....	Club Meeting	
April	14	Mon	.....	Streets of Willow Track Day	

**Next Meeting: 3/12/03**

Our Guest Speaker for March is, Brenda Bates. Brenda is certified in motorcycle repair, a counseling psychologist, hypnotherapist, and author of "Back in the Saddle Again: How to Overcome Fear of Riding After an Accident". Many of us know how our bikes work, but join us for an interesting evening with someone who understands not only the machine, but of the "mechanics" of the mind as well!

Red Hot Riders  
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San Diego, CA 92119

