

Sharp as a Razor

Did you know that a dull knife is more dangerous than a sharp one? Why are good razors sharp? What happens when they start to get dull? Have you ever started shaving with a razor, only to realize, as you tear your skin, that it had gotten a little dull and you should have replaced the blades? A dull razor, or knife, is a very dangerous thing. It is intended to slice cleanly, but it doesn't quite have the edge to do the job right, and does a lot of damage instead. Motorcyclists are like that too. If you don't keep your edge, you might not do the job quite right, and may cause a lot of damage to yourself, your passenger, and other riders around you.

So how do you keep the edge? That's the idea behind the Rider Education Program: to encourage you and let you know about opportunities to sharpen your skills. We arranged for an Experienced Rider Course in May and many members took advantage of that. We're keeping our eyes out for other opportunities to sharpen our skills as a group. But there are things you can do for yourself, as well (after all, who's looking out for you? Remember?) For example, when we had rain, did you take some time to go out and practice riding in the wet weather? Or maybe you decided that you didn't want to get wet, so instead you could have stayed inside and read some books on motorcycling skills. (And if the book is well written, it no doubt encouraged you to go out and practice!)

There are many good books available to refresh your skills. One of my favorite authors on the subject is David Hough who has written articles for *Motorcycle Consumer News* for years on the subject of riding skills. His three most recognizable titles are *Proficient Motorcycling*, *More Proficient Motorcycling*, and *Street Skills*. All three are excellent sources to sharpen your edge and learn things you may have never known such as "just why does counter-steering work"; "what effect does the trailing-link front end on the Rune have on cornering ability"; "what do I do about that dog that keeps running toward my bike when I'm riding"; or maybe just "what the heck does Mark mean by 'delayed apexing'?" The first two books cover these topics well, and *Street Skills* is a book written about numerous accident situations and what went wrong.

Practice, read, and practice some more. Keep your skills sharp, maintain your edge, and ride safe!