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BMW OWNERS NEWS

A WOMAN'S DAY — AT THE TRACK

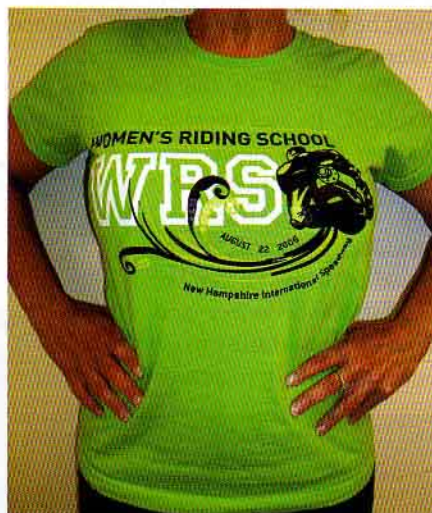


A sea of motorcycles entering the New Hampshire International Speedway (NHIS) at Loudon, New Hampshire, at 7 a.m. is always a wonderful site -- but knowing each bike belongs to a woman makes it even better! The 9th annual Women's Riding School or "WRS," that took place on August 22 was originally named Ladies Track Day. The WRS is open to women of all riding abilities and any brand of motorcycle.

Bikes began to unload into the pit garages. Lights and mirrors were duct taped, fuses pulled when possible, and extraneous gear and baggage removed. Ladies pushed their bikes to the tech inspection area where they also left their helmets to free themselves up for their morning. They took a "track walk" to get acquainted with NHIS' technical twists and turns. Remember, this is the track that has been removed from the AMA Superbike national road race circuit due to its dangerous layout.

Most women are upbeat after their initial nervousness was put to rest the night before during a dinner at Makris Lobster & Steak House on Route 106 just south of NHIS. As lead on-track instructor, I was there with event co-organizer Jay Duchin to answer last minute questions and allay fears. Jay also provided the on-bike video rider evaluations from his modified R1150GS.

Many participants had already



spent time chatting with me via e-mail numerous times and familiarized themselves with the event through the WRS Web site generously hosted by Max BMW Motorcycles of North Hampton, New Hampshire. (www.maxbmwmotorcycles.com).

You would think they'd be sick of all the talk, but they were just getting pumped-up and ready to take a huge leap of faith. For most of these women, riding on a closed-course racetrack and taking a formal riding school was way out of their comfort zone. This is one of the reasons we host the WRS.

It's a place where women can improve their skills in a safe testosterone-free zone, free of verbal harassment and with as much pampering as we can supply. This year, a masseur was available for the especially nervous students.

Just knowing there are other riders with the same fears and riding experiences

helps. There are always a few "regulars," return customers that mingle with the new gals and help answer the questions: Will I survive? Will I really have fun? Janet from "Joisey" Muller can say with conviction, "you betcha!"

Mary-Sue Reed (#122103) on her 2005 BMW F650 GS, a rider for 26 years, admitted her apprehensions. "I'm a little nervous about tomorrow, especially after seeing all the bikes pulling into the Red Roof Inn where a lot of the women riders are staying," she said. "What are my goals? I need to get more confidence and be more assertive. I have never been on a closed circuit before, so I am very excited about that."

Back at NHIS, the "track walk" brought on more questions as we walked "the line" and make our way around the 1.6-mile road course. "Think of this as your favorite 1.6 miles of road. You are going to ride it over, and over, and over again," I told the students. "Then, once you are really comfortable with the road, you can relax and really start to work on your goals."

After the "track walk," everyone headed into the classroom for the first of many sit-down instructional PowerPoints and on-track video lessons. Lead classroom instructor Tim Hafner reviewed the

A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE TURNS

BY JUDY MIRRO #50075

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day's safety rules and classroom agenda covering everything from proper body positioning, late apex turning to advance braking techniques. Tim set an upbeat mood for the day.

Laura Cadmus (#112260) rode a 2005 R1200ST and asked, "Why am I here? I don't want any nubbins on the edge of my tires and I want to have a smoothly rounded tire, free from those unsightly chicken-strips."

Laura started riding three years ago on her 1984 R80RT and purchased her new ride just weeks before the event. "I need to smooth out my acceleration."

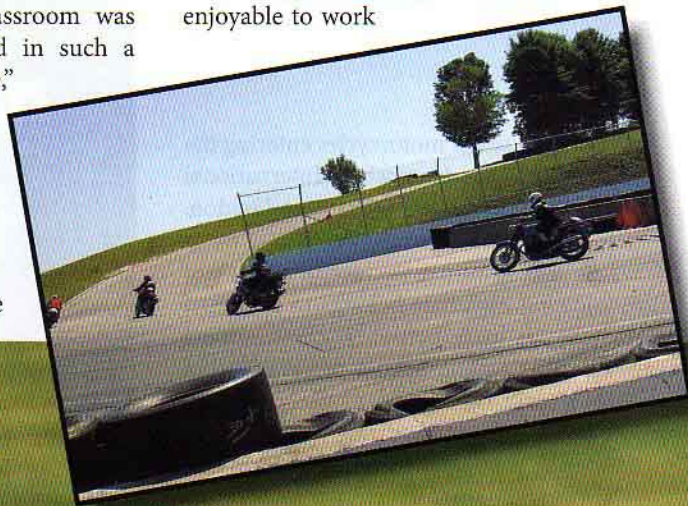
Another organizer, Habib Khoury, took over to announce the instructor assignments for the day and you would have thought the women were winning the lottery! There was clapping, whis-

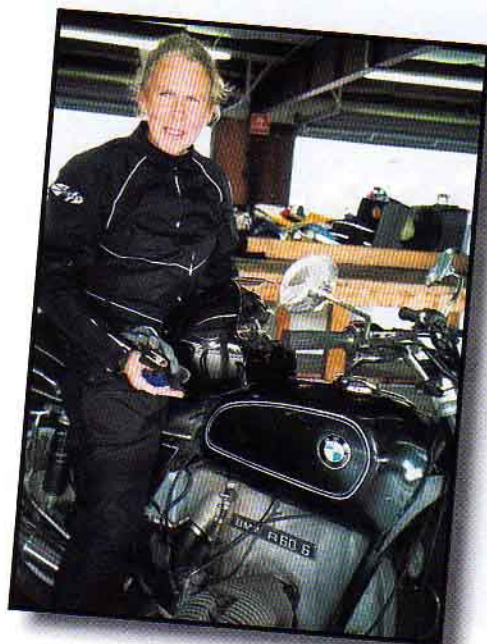
ting, even cat calls when Habib stood-up to announce each group.

Instructors were selected for their ability to instruct (and their good looks), but also for their ability to work with women. They must be good at their sport, patient, fun to be around, and have the ability to smile. Most importantly, they must be very protective of their assigned riders.

"The format of the classroom was excellent. It was presented in such a manner that it made sense," said Laura Cadmus. "We had classroom time to introduce the concepts in a variety of ways: books, diagram and video, and then the opportunity to get out on the track to practice

the concepts and receive constructive critique for the next session. I had been cornering with counter-steering only and hadn't used my body to enhance turns before today - it made a big difference. My instructor knew exactly what to say to get me to think about my riding differently to help me improve. He delivered great instruction in a supportive and encouraging manner; he was really enjoyable to work





with. I met some really cool women that I can ride with!"

The day started with a 3:1 student to instructor ratio. Some lucky students got the red carpet treatment with one-on-one instruction not to hold up their small group, whether they needed to move forward or slow down and re-group.

So group by group the women were

released with their assigned instructors, to ride the course or continue with their classroom instruction. The process continued all day. Classroom, on-track time, de-briefs with their instructor and right back in classroom again, and the process repeated until our catered lunch.

One student commented on the women's event, "Is having this much fun, legal?"

At noon, event T-shirts and completion certificates were handed out and the well-received raffle drawing took place. BMW Ms. Moto pins, donated by Frank's Motorcycle Sales & Service of Essex Junction, Vermont (www.franksmotorcyclesales.com), were awarded to all the participants. The two big raffle prizes: a free photo shoot from the day from

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professional race photographer John Owens (www.owensracingphotos.com) and a free scholarship for the "2007 WRS" were big hits.

The afternoon continued with a repeat of the morning routine of track time, review time, and classroom instruction until 5 p.m., when we conclude the day.

We have come a long way since our 1998 Ladies Track Day and I dare say we are heading into unknown territory in 2007. Why, you might ask? We are always looking for ways to improve the riding school. As we did this year, the addition of the CAMbike and handout materials were introduced to a delighted audience.

So, how appealing is a day at the track? If the excellent instruction, gifts, event shirt, masseur, certificate, and track time weren't enough, the food was healthy and scrumptious.

It is worth noting that BMWs were well represented with more than one-third of the 45 students riding BMWs.

I'll let the students sum up the Women's Riding School event in their own words:

Janet Thompson, 2005 BMW F650GS, a rider for 14 years said, "Don't feel bad about not having a lot of experience before signing on, because there is a



lot of one-on-one interaction, a lot of excellent instructors, and a "no pressure" feeling. If you feel like you have it in you to advance - then just go for it!"

Mary-Sue Reed said, "I still grin ear to ear when I

think of the wonderful time I (and many others) had on Track Day! Everyone was extremely professional, friendly, and it was just so exciting to see so many women gathered together to learn or improve their skills at Loudon. My instructor, Bruce Meyers, was so knowledgeable, and yet he was laid back and great at explaining how and why we should be doing certain maneuvers - not at all superior-sounding or confrontational. He really helped build my confidence on what I and my bike can do together. I don't even know how to describe it to people. You just have to do it. You have to go to the track with your bike and take the Women's Riding School. It was awesome."

Teresa Tanzi also noted, "My husband first fell in love with me as I stood next to my 1971 CB350 Honda named Roxy. He was hooked on me and *then* became hooked on vintage BMW's. Most people wrongly assume he rode first and I picked up the sport afterwards. It was quite the opposite!"

