February 2009

Test rides:
2009 BMW G 650 GS
2009 Piaggio MP3 400

Safer Riding: Clutch Control

Lawrence’s Broughs

International Motorcycle Show

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The Essential Guide to Dual Sport Motorcycling is both a "How to" book and an inspiration. I learned techniques that I will likely use while on the roads this spring. I also found myself excited about the prospects of expanding my motorcycle experience to include more time in the dirt. I spent my first five years riding a motorcycle in the dirt. That was almost 40 years ago. As time passed and I became more in tune with street riding, the dirt was a memory. This book and the experiences riding local dirt roads this past year have me thinking it's time to get back to my room. I feel both inspired and better prepared for those trail rides as a result of this book. Available from White House Press (www.whitehousepress.com).

For me, winter time is the best time to catch up on my motorcycle-related reading. Magazines are read almost as soon as they enter the house but books read only after gathering dust until I can dedicate serious time to reading. Ideal temperatures and continual snow fall have made this winter perfect for catch-up reading. While I'm still in the midst of reading two books, two others have been successfully completed.

The first book I read is *The Essential Guide to Dual Sport Motorcycling*. Everything You Need to Buy, Ride and Enjoy the World's Most Versatile Motorcycles by Carl Adams. None other than Malcolm Smith wrote the forward for the book. For me, this was not a book to read from beginning to end. Instead, I started reading the "Increasing Your Enjoyment" section near the back of the book first. The chapter about Organizational Aspects, Exploring and Navigation and Tips and Tricks stimulated my new-found interest in dual sport / adventure touring. Adams' tips are incredibly detailed and the photos show not only beautiful scenery and trails but also help to explain detailed instructions.

Every time I picked this book up, I found myself in a different section. As is the norm in the dirt, the basic and advance riding techniques were quite helpful in the reading; we'll see how good those techniques will be when translated to the trail. The maintenance and trail side repairs provided specific preparations and helpful tools that might be needed in the event of a breakdown - the inevitable breakdown - on the trail. While I already spend a good deal of time and money on maintenance, descriptions of some trailside repairs were incredibly helpful.

This February issue is full of featured stories for you. From the BMW G 650 GS sized by international motorjournalist Cabe Tella and the Piaggio MP3 400 review by Diane Orita to the Cycle World International Motorcycle Show assessment by Ken Wiler and the Safer Riding Clutch Control article by Pat Ausman, we hope you enjoy every contribution.

Thanks for reading. We hope you're not struggling with economic issues as so many are right now. The bright spot - the thing on which we're focusing our attention - is the coming riding season. Riding has a way of shifting problems to the background, letting us clear our minds and enjoy what we're doing at the moment. As always, with our noses for asking, please pardon our adventures. They support this publication and the motorcycle industry in your area. They're good folks with whom we're proud to be associated.

See you on the road.

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