

RIDER ENGAGEMENT

Giving Members Reasons To Ride

By this point in the year, most New Year's resolutions are already out the window. That is, unless your resolution was to ride more in 2020. As winter finally gives way to spring, the opportunity for those of us who live in much of the country is just now presenting itself.

One way to achieve the goal of riding more is to incorporate more riding into your everyday life. You can accomplish this by doing things like commuting to work by motorcycle—if you don't already—or doing it more often, if this is something you already do, but only on occasion.

Commuting by motorcycle can do wonders for the psyche. I find that the concentration required to ride a motorcycle to work helps sharpen my mental focus so that, by the time I get to the office, I am fully alert and ready to tackle the challenges of the day. Similarly, the ride home from work in the evening helps put the stresses of the day in the rearview mirror.

While commuting is one effective way of logging more miles on your motorcycle, participating in organized rides or competition events is a great way of racking up more quality riding time as well. There are thousands of AMA-sanctioned events across the country in which you can participate as an AMA member.

In addition to motorcycle racing opportunities in every motorcycle discipline, there are many recreational opportunities as well. There are a variety of local events, as well as a number of national series. Some of the national series include the Beta AMA National Dual Sport Series, the Honda AMA National Adventure Riding Series, AMA National Gypsy Tours and AMA Grand Tours.

The Beta AMA National Dual Sport Series includes some of the most amazing single-track in the country, tied together by incredible backroads through America's countryside. These two-day events are designed to provide the perfect off-road riding experience, traversing challenging routes that are well marked and well designed. At the end of 2020, one

lucky participant in the dual sport series will win a Beta motorcycle because all participants in the series are automatically entered to win.

AMA membership is required for these national-level events. If you bring along

a non-AMA member, a one-event pass may be purchased for \$20 (only available for purchase at the event) or as you know, a full AMA membership is available for \$49 (online or at the event).

Adventure riding is one of the fastest growing segments of motorcycling. The Honda AMA National Adventure Riding Series offers the best routes, roads and two-track trail that showcase the versatility and capabilities of adventure motorcycles. These two-day events provide challenging rides that are well marked and thoughtfully designed by local clubs. Series participants also have a chance to win prizes from the series sponsors at the end of the year.

Gypsy tours represent one of the original experiences in motorcycling. AMA National Gypsy Tours are gatherings of riders from all over the country who converge upon a single destination to enjoy the camaraderie of motorcycling, often in a location of particular beauty, historic significance and/or importance to the sport.

AMA Grand Tours allow participants the freedom to ride to checkpoints on their own time. Grand tours can take place over several months or an entire year. Some encompass a single state, while others are nationwide. Each AMA-chartered organizer

sets the tour routes, checkpoints and rules. More activities are always being added, and you can find a complete and current list of AMA-sanctioned events in our online events database.

The AMA also has a recognition program that can provide extra incentive to keep your resolution to ride more. The AMA LongRider program gives AMA members the opportunity to earn patches for various milestones. Mileage awards are available at 10,000, 25,000 and 50,000 annual miles. In addition to the awards, AMA LongRiders are recognized on the AMA website. You can also let your miles accumulate for various lifetime mileage awards. Riders who achieve 1 million miles will earn a special AMA LongRider plaque.

There are many organized AMA opportunities to ride your motorcycle if you apply yourself. As discussed in my December 2019 column, the origins of the AMA can be traced back to the motorcycle industry's desire to have an entity that engaged motorcycle consumers and gave them something to do with their motorcycles. Indeed, the AMA exists in large part for this purpose.

There has been a lot of discussion within the industry and on social media lately regarding the need to attract new riders to motorcycling. That is certainly a critical element to growing the sport we all love and we must continue to search for new ways to introduce motorcycling to non-riders. That is, however, only one part of the equation as it is imperative that motorcyclists, whether they be brand new beginning riders or seasoned, life-long motorcyclists, have reason and opportunity to ride. It is vital that we attract new riders, but we must engage those riders so they return to ride more, year after year.

The riding opportunities organized by AMA clubs and promoters mentioned above represent just a small part of what the AMA does to engage riders. For more information about AMA sanctioned activity, visit the AMA website at AmericanMotorcyclist.com.



By Rob Dingman

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