

Practice, Practice, Practice

By Jim Roberson

We hear it all the time. You have to practice to be perfect. Practice; what does it mean? Merriam-Webster ® defines it as “a: to perform or work at repeatedly so as to become proficient <practice the act> b: to train by repeated exercises”. Train by repeated exercises to become more proficient. It sounds logical doesn't it?

Last month I mentioned the Cornering Practice Guide in my article and you should request one of these guides if you would like to use it. We have several copies in stock. It really is an excellent resource. Each of the exercises presented in the booklet covers common problems and corrections for them. Browse through the booklet and see if you don't see yourself doing some of these things. We all become complacent and think we are doing the right thing all the time. After all, we have been riding motorcycles for many years, right? Right? Wrong!!! If we did not fall into bad habits, the instructors at the ERC, ARC, etc. would not have anything to do except watch us go around the courses perfectly every time.

That would be nice, but it isn't reality. We do fall into bad habits; and we should make every effort to recover from them. How many times do you forget to look into the turn or keep your knees tight against the tank? How often do you swing too wide on a curve and go into the opposite lane? How often do you slide or skid in a quick stop? These are all examples of losing a bit of control and that is something we do not want to do.

The answer; pick up a copy of the practice guide. The exercises are easy enough to setup and repeat until you do not make any of the mistakes. You might just come up with some new problems and recommended corrections that could be incorporated into future editions.

The Rider Education Manual recommends the following order for the exercises. (1) Turning and Cornering, (2) Weaves, (3) Normal Stop – Straight, (4) Normal Stop – Curve, (5) Quick Stop Straight, (6) Sharp Turns, (7) Higher Speed Turns, (8) Quick Stop Swerve and finally Obstacle Swerves. Note that this is different from the order printed in the booklet.

Practice! Become more proficient! Ride Safe!!!