

Stupidity kills:

How the cat get the bird everytime?

Satisfied, the cat digesting a tasty bird, this one just sold 350 kilos, 90 HP, fully faired, fully loaded and fully chrome bike to "a first time rider".

The newly acquired biker (who never touched more than a small scooter in his previous life) is hopeless drooling in front of the thousands dollars machine now part of his collection of toys.

Pictures of sunny days on Turkish shores, balmy evening with lovely girls and the song of sweet asphalt under polished wheels fill the mind and the anticipation. No need to mention riding skills or to raise the unpleasant subject of "safe and competent biking". After all, real men and real women do not read Owner's Manuals.

As soon as the new client is out of earshot, the cat turns to me with accomplice look "They are all beginners" he says "incompetent beginners that just want to show too much... more money than brain... nothing to do but cash in"

The confused grammar just reflects the emotion of my friend "the cat": in these war and peace times selling "a costly piece of metal" in Turkey is not so easy or frequent: last year this feast happened just less than seven hundred times. A ridiculous figure when compared with thousands of bikes sold in the much less populated Greece.

Still the cat does not care, the entire biking industry in Turkey do not care.

Every year around the solstice of spring the rite of MOTORCYCLE FAIR is celebrated in Istanbul: as any good pagan rite it requires human sacrifices and every year a good number of brands if duly immolated on the altar of bad marketing: Kawasaki (forever gone) has been followed by Harley Davidson and Piaggio (absent this year). Still the rite goes on... on a small space, a single exhibition floor, mixed with "adventure gear" the biking "industry" meets in an oriental style bazaar: dishabille "girls" from foreign circus mingle with grain and slave sellers from Schityan shores, spices merchants from Trans-Oxiana, while in private grottos deals are struck for the splendid sale of two bikes. Sweat, smiles, stickers and brochures... then everybody goes home and the cats start chasing the birds.

My cat still has feathers between his feline teeth

when he continues the talk "between experts": "This is not the bike for him... a beginner with too much to handle... but who cares... he will learn at his own expenses..."

After all metal has been moved, one more step toward to corporate target, one more click into personal bonus.

After all why should a dealer (my cat) care about educating a client when the State, the republican state looking after the wellbeing of Turkish citizens, does not even bother?

In this lovely Country, cradle of civilizations and bridge of cultures, everybody is happy to call himself Turk but nobody bothers to call himself competent on the road. Passing your riding test is a quick and sordid affair.

Present yourself on any two wheel of your choice (example a 50cc. scooter) at the "examination post": normally the side of a road open to traffic where an appointed "Authority" asks you to go between 10/12 cones placed in a straight line. Do it in "reasonable" time: just come back within the hour without profuse and evident bleeding and you got it.

A brand new driving license allowing the owner to go and immediately purchase a +150 MPH missile and blast it on the street of Istanbul.

Ottoman heritage gives to the Turkish governments a thirsty desire for meticulous laws but the riding test in some way managed to slip through the net: I am sure the future will see dramatic changes bringing the current level of lassitude to new heights of intolerance: as long as bikers and industry do not care they'll get what they deserve.

By now the cat got the bird once: this useless certificate of riding competence is the main reason for a small and ridiculous motorcycle market.

Because no effort and no intelligence is required in getting a riding permits the biking community of Turkey is unfortunately limited to few unpleasant prototypes: rebels without a cause but with a lot of cash, never tested racers, would be world travelers... bikes used a sign of superiority, two wheels replacing Viagra. Out of this primordial soup new bikers, new committed bikers struggle to emerge. Some dealers with

serious passion for our sport try to make a difference, groups and clubs recently born come to the rescue of the "birds".

The workshop for safe riding that we organized in January was a good meeting point for the new face of motorcycling in the Country: we just added the sound track while the action was provided by individual bikers, clubs, groups, dealers realizing that riding education must get some attention if we want to grow biking in Turkey.

To all of them a sincere thank: the generous participation did not stop the "cat's activity"... voices from the small pond of biking in Turkey, expressed jealousy and envy by criticizing in private chats and obscure meetings the training work.

"Who gives you the right to do this? Where is the law that allows you to meet and talk about safe riding? Where is the official stamp in your certificate of participation?"

These second class figures (part time dealers and part time merchants) are extremely worried by the entrance of "competence" in the Turkish biker's dictionary.

Used to sell chrome to rich or presumed rich boys they now use friends and allies to stop all training activities.

Honda trying to open a small forum for training at the Fair? Just put this effort down as marketing trick. A ride simulator in town? Just spread around the news that it does not work as it should be? A school to teach beginners? Just kill it as bad idea.

Let us try to clear the air: in Turkey, like in the rest of the civilized world, advanced education in riding is left to the personal initiative.

The law, in Turkey and abroad, just requires passing official test and training in order to obtain a driving license.

Advanced training (training taken when already in possession of riding license) is left, in Europe and in USA, to the commitment of the biker and to his/her desire to improve riding skills.

Instructors in advanced riding are just experienced bikers sharing knowledge and methods with clients: the market determines is the money spent in these lessons is worth the investment.

Certificates of participations are just nice souvenirs to place on the walls: mementos of a desire to be a better rider.

One More Mile Association, legally registered in Turkey, is committed to improve the level of riding education among the **Turkish motorcyc-**

ists already in possession of driving license for the conduction on public roads of two wheels vehicles.

As result of the low standards of mandatory instruction, biking is perceived in this country as "extremely dangerous" and many potential users of motorcycles are discouraged from trying by the irresponsible behavior of poorly trained pilots.

In Europe (and other western countries) emphasis is placed on raising the standard of qualification from license with mandatory training imposed to all drivers wanting to qualify for bikes, limitations on the power of the vehicles accessible to newly qualified pilots, **encouragement in taking further voluntary training for riders already in possession of legal license.**

Recent movements from the European Community to fix standard for Advanced Training have been severely criticized by FEMA and by MAG.

In the opinion of these respectable representatives of the biking communities, the governments must focus in raising standards for the legal examination without legislating in areas that are better left to the private initiative.

As results the Advanced Riding Schools are private companies aiming to establish and maintain

in a good level of quality in the tuition: certificates of Advanced Training can only be used to obtain rebates with Insurance companies.

"The reward of taking Advanced Riding Courses is just becoming a more proficient a motorcyclists: a responsible act/decision left to the consciousness of the individual rider."

Facing this situation OMM has been looking since 1998 into the Advanced Training Program available at the numerous schools for riders and took the decision to follow the system presented in the "Motorcycle Roadcraft" edited by the Police Foundation of Great Britain.

Malcolm Palmer of Cooper Bike Training www.cooperbikettraining.org.uk writes "Great Britain can lay claim to have originated formal high-standard rider training courses and then spread this training method around the world... This training, developed for the British Metropolitan Police at the Peel Training Centre, Hendon, London, is known as 'The Police System of Motor Vehicle Control' and is described in the 'Roadcraft' manual, upon which almost all British training, at all skill levels, is based"

The "System" presented in the "Roadcraft" has been introduced in Turkey by OMM riders in May 1999 when we invited M. Wheeler (ax bike policeman) to train a small number of friends.

Since then hundreds of bikes have been exposed to the principles of this book in Theory courses, circuit training session and rides. All the activity has been done at no cost or upon a clear request to share expenses.

Since April 2001, J. Taylor (trained policeman rider, IAM and RoSPA examiner and teacher in a well respected Training School in UK) supervised the OMM Advanced Riding program introducing standards of evaluation and self-improvement. Continuing the search for effective education for riders, OMM is now embarking in a new phase with the specific objective to involve in training more bikers, more "beginners" bikers, in safer environment and with measurable results.

Next time your dealer or any of the "cats" in the Industry suggest a new bike for your satisfaction just ask two simple questions:

Q1. My dear cat, is this the bike suitable for my riding competence or it is just what you have to sell for your own short profit?

Q2. My dear cat, how can you help me in gaining sufficient competence to survive as satisfied customer for long time?

Then sit down and look at the cat confused by the bird. **OMM**

OMM ARA Workshop on the Road

OMM Ankara is rapidly growing and in preparation of the ARA workshop of April 12/13 conducted a pre Ride on Saturday 8 March.

13 riders lined up under the leadership of Selim Demirel to complete the 250 K event.

There are still two places available for the **ARA Workshop that will start in Ankara with The-**

ory session at 16: 00 on Friday 11 April at ODTU Vişnelik Tesisleri.

The inspiration for this course comes from "The Pace" by Nick Lenatsch.

In defining this style of riding Nick writes; "The Pace focuses on bike control and de-emphasizes outright speed. Full-throttle acceleration

and last minute braking aren't part of the program, effectively eliminating the two most common single-bike accident scenarios in sport riding. Cornering momentum is the name of the game, stressing strong, forceful inputs at the handlebar to place the bike correctly at the entrance of the turn and get it flicked in with little wasted time and distance"

April 19 – 20 OMM will run a new workshop reserved to Harley Davidson Riders. The workshop theme is "Total Control" applying for the first time a new system of theory and practice based on individual experience.

For information call OMM Association member UGUR POLAT yenistar@superonline.com
OMM

Separate vision from direction

In the always interesting web site <http://www.bmwmotorrad.co.za> Francois Hugo has a nice story explaining "first hand" the concept of target fixation. Competent riders must always separate the line of "bike direction" (where the bike goes) to the line of "Vision direction" (where we want the bike to go)

"Object fixation and Country Trax" By Francois Hugo A while ago a friend and I headed for Amersfoort, where BMW's maestro of off-road biking, Jan du Toit, conducts riding courses on his farm.... The following morning after a lecture on the mechanics of our bikes, Jan demonstrated how to walk around our heavy machines holding it upright with only two fingers. "It is all about balance," he said. He then instructed

us to mount our bikes, to follow and to imitate him. I was lured into doing things I had never thought I was capable of.

Just as I felt that I had the knack of it, Jan gave us a new challenge. We had to do a slow U-turn on the seriously narrow gravel road leading to the focus on "look exactly where you want to go." My first turn was to the left. I did as told, but the sand bank next to the road caught my eye and as I tried to stay clear of it I went straight into it and dropped my bike (biker's jargon for falling off). With the bike OK, but my self-esteem bruised, I got up and started a turn to the right. This must be easier I thought. This time the barbed wire attracted my attention. As I looked at it, it came for me. Fortunately the wire preven-

ted me from falling, but I dropped my ego. Someone helped me untangle myself from the fence. Jan demonstrated the turn once again. I saw him focus intently on that part of the road to which he wanted to turn. I was fascinated by the ease with which he did it. In a flash I understood. Psychologists call it object fixation. During World War II pilots were so obsessed with their targets that after hitting an enemy plane, they often crashed into the plane. They had to be trained to look away immediately after they had hit their target. As Jan says, "you always go where you look". This is a truth that does not only apply to biking, but to life in general. With this new insight I managed a perfect turn.

I would like to leave one thought with you: the things you focus on will invariably come your way. Be it negative or positive, you will connect with whatever is the top focus in your mind. **OMM**

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We will miss you

The world of Motorcycle will not be the same from now on. **Barry Sheene** died in March 2003 at hospital on Queensland's Gold Coast in Australia.

I got the news while I was reading his article on "Bike" magazine of March. He opened the piece by saying "There's no startling news on my health front, so let's get straight on with the bikes". Classic Sheene's style brimming with the desire to see a new championship season.

Barry will not be with us this season but no real biker will ever forget him.

Sheene won the World Motorcycle Championships twice in the 1970s and became famous for overcoming his numerous crashes on the track.

Sheene, who was awarded the MBE in 1978, had cancer of the throat and stomach. Sheene, 52, was regarded as almost indestructible on the track, and at one stage in his career he had metal plates in both knees, 28 screws in his legs and his left wrist. He began racing motorbikes at the age of five and claimed the world title in 1976 and 1977. In 1981, he became the last British racer to win a 500cc GP and he remains the last rider from the home nations to win the world title. He returned to the sport in the 1990s in his 40s. Sheene faced the news he had cancer with the same bravery he accepted the scrapes of motorcycle racing, opting for alternative treatment rather than the pain and discomfort of chemotherapy. He leaves a wife, Stephanie, a daughter Sidonie, 18, and a son Freddie, 14. **omm**



FEMA: Federation of European Motorcyclists

FEMA is pleased to count amongst its members the Swiss riders' organization, "IG Motorrad".

The organization was recently created to undertake a campaign on behalf of motorcyclists

against anti-motorcycling proposals emerging from the national road safety institute. These proposals include a very strict speed limit of 80km/h for motorcycles, high road taxes, compulsory rider training of minimum 40 hours, permanent observation of vehicles location and major increase in insurance premiums. <http://www.ig-motorrad.ch> **omm**

Ring of OMM Friend

Hamit Abbasoglu hamit@seratarim.com.tr (yes the flying blue pilot) **OMM riders and member of the Associations writes;**

"With the encouragement of Suleyman Memnun, I have started off-road in Kemberburgaz Motocross racecourse for the first time in October 2001. I was really impressed because I have realized that how far one can do with a motorbike. After Suleyman has taught me more techniques of off-road, I have improved my skills further and I have bought an Hard enduro off-road motorbike: YAMAHA WR250. This is a 4 stroke motorbike and I strongly recommend it to the beginners. Afterwards, I became a member of the motocross club of Suleyman. The Club provides real good service and I started to go there every day for training. I also started mt racing career participating to club races: exciting and bringing great pleasure. In 2002 I came 3rd in the final race in Izmir. I recommend to everyone to follow the stages that I experienced. It is a different world, a real sport and off-road greatly helped in improving my on road riding techniques.

• **OMM Ankara goes to Hechlingen.** **Baran Kaya, Okan Tarhan and Murat Orhon** will visit BMW Enduropark on May 23-25 to take the "best lesson of life". The instructors in the Park not only improve your off-road skills but also substantially modify the way you approach your everyday ride on roads.

This is probably one of the best (and value for money) course available in Europe and you can read OMM previous experience in this issue of

the Bulletin where we publish for the second time our article "Standing up fro Dr. Schalber"

Mariola Cichon woman riding solo around the world has been stopped in her attempt by a serious accident in Gambia. Now back in Chicago Mariola is filling up the web site with stories of her ride. Read it at <http://www.rideoftheheart.com>

• **Nick Sanders has a new challenge for you!** The world traveller and OMM friend is offering the chance for 200 bikers to join him in a multi-sport motorbike MOTO CHALLENGE of BRITAIN.

Having successfully organised the world's toughest around the world motorcycle expedition - the 30 000 mile Motorcycle World Challenge - he has now brought together a team of dedicated motorcyclists to set up a number of endurance events in different parts of the world.

This 8 day event starts on the 2nd August 2003. Designed to test the abilities of riders who can think hard as well as ride hard, individuals and teams will do battle on a route that will cover the length and breadth of Britain and the Isle of Man on legendary biker roads: from the Pass of the Cattle, to the Cat and Fiddle, from Devil's Bridge to Douglas. One lap timed-trials will take place on some of the UK's most loved small circuits. The jewel being a one lap observed circuit of the famous Isle of Man TT Mountain Course. Add to this a standing quarter of a mile from a Le Mans style start at Santa Pod, hill climb tri-



als, bike skills tests and observational tasks, all incorporated into each days adventure riding and totalling 3000 miles over eight days. There's more info at www.motochallenge.com **omm**

one more mile

www.ommriders.org

Singing in the rain

On Sunday March 16th fifteen riders from Istanbul took part to an observed ride with the contribution of expert trainers H. H. Dilthey and K. Sanders. The weather was definitely wintery with occasional heavy rain and low temperatures: Kevin and Hans spent time with the bikers sharing some of the experience coming from years of riding and training.

Kevin focused on the need of planning when riding on rain and "hot-so-grippy" surfaces: "Any search for vision in position when conducted to the extreme can be quite dangerous. It is dangerous to take a position offering the best and most forward vision when this position pla-

ces the rider in a zone of reduced traction. The search for the right position must always follow the sequence SAFETY, STABILITY, VISION. First search for a position that assures a good margin of safety, then check the position that offers good grip to your tires and finally take the position giving the better vision ahead. The choice must be done in the exact order: do not sacrifice safety in order to gain traction and vision. Do not sacrifice traction in order to get vision." As second consideration for the bikers attending this event, Kevin spent some time on "economy of movements" "Do not move if you do not need it... as simple as this... try to avoid changes in line and position if they are not ab-

solutely demanded by the situation. The competent biker applies an intelligent economy to any move and searches fluidity above all"

Hans focused on the need for relaxation when riding on slippery surface: the original recommendation of smiling under the helmet in order to reduce tension has now become an invitation to sing under the rain inside the helmet. "*When rain happens the rider became nervous and tense. This makes the going tiring and erratic. Relaxing is the only safe way out and singing under the helmet is the only cure...*" Hans took this opportunity the elaborate on his five rules for better riding:

- Ride Relaxed
 - Mental attitude
 - Take The Right Rest At The Right Time
 - Realistic Self-Evaluation
 - Separate Vision From Direction Of Machine
- omm

25th Motorcycle Meeting for Word Travellers

From Bernd Tesch <http://www.berndtesch.de>: "Dear Motorcycle-Traveller world wide, this year I have a double-anniversary to celebrate:

- 44th Tesch-Survival-Training in the EIFEL-forest. 14th-16th.03.2003.

The Survival training is a practical education dedicated to world travelers. Did you ever loose orientation in deep mist / snow in the Alps or in heat of desert without a map and compass? I will show a program of 26 different points and you have to practice it yourself: Orientation by nature. More. How to light a fire absolutely sure with the last match while it rains... to find and

disinfect water... to get food out of nature ... to build shelters....etc.

- 25th Motorcycle-Meeting for WORLD-Travelers in Malmedy / Belgien. 11th-13th.04.2003. In the last 25 years I get together Motorcycle-World-Travelers to offer an exchange of experience for those who have traveled and those who intend to travel far. The main subject at this anniversary will be "Around-The-World". Therefore I asked all Around-The-World Travelers I know, to join the party. The meeting will take place on a wonderful spot in the forest. On Saturday I have organized shows from some of the

best riders:

- **Dafne and Rob de Jong (Dutch)** <http://www.horizonsunlimited.com/rideonworld-tour> Two times Around-The-World with a sidecar: "Ride-on Worldtour". They rode 250.000 kms with Yamaha EZS 900

- **Nick Sanders** (British) <http://www.nicksanders.com> Five times Around-The-World by bicycle and motorcycle. Nick wrote several books and videos. In 2002 Nick guided a group of 20 riders Round-The-World.

- **Martina Seep and Liven Goethe's** (Germans) <http://www.tinkasreise.de> around Alaska on special sidecar.

- **Bernd Tesch.** I plan to give a slide-show: 25 years of Tesch-Meetings. Get in contact by e-mail to reserve your place berndtesch@gmx.de omm

Standing up for Herr Doktor Schalber

Report on the BMW Enduro Training in Hechlingen

OMM Training Session in 1999. While Richard Schalber is not longer teaching at Hechinger, the course organized by BMW remains one of the best in Europe.

The reputation of Richard Schalber as Master of the Enduro did not need further exploration: an impressive list of victories and placements in Enduro and Cross Events, a fifth place in the 1988 Paris-Dakar, BMW team leader of the return to victory in the 1999 African marathon.

BMW Enduro Park is the Academy of Enduro on big four stroke bikes. Flying from Istanbul to Munich, driving a Volvo station wagon for two hours to the Forellenhof Gasthof Murad, Cemil,

Selim and I arrived just in time for dinner and drinks. The beautiful manicured landscape surrounding the village of Echtinglen was not soothing enough to dispel the tension of the challenge ahead: all my partners never placed a wheel on dirt road before (if you exclude the bad roads of Turkey) and for myself I never took a best as the

BMW R1100GS for a ride in the mud. We went to sleep with vision of mountain to climb, deserts to cross, river to ford and bikes to crush.

For an Enduro rider the BMW Park in Hechlingen is the replica on hearth of the paradise waiting on the other life of motorcyclists. Three big,

natural amphitheatres surrounded by steep wall signed by trails leading to top paths. Rocks, sand, wet spots, bumps, natural and artificial

obstacles just designed for constant testing of riding skills.

Two big hangars accommodate the Bikes and the lesson room (with coffee and drinks).

A short but comprehensive briefing on what to expect, a division of participants into three groups and a signature for the disclaimer of responsibilities: the atmosphere is happy but tense with each of the 20/25 participants looking around to get reassuring clues

The totality of riders is German and German is the official language of the course: here again (and for the entire trip) the German-Turk Selim comes to help with punctual translation.

Now we get dressed with all the paraphernalia of off-roading protections and we meet our bikes: BMW R1100GS or F650 in top conditions (mine had 2.000 Km. on the clock) and on standard preparation. For the GS the only modification are: removal of rear mirrors, Touratech hard part frontal, reinforcement of the swing arm points (done in house without using Touratech parts), plastic tank.

The first pleasant surprise is that our Instructor

is Richard himself: two riders are added to the group and the six of us we will have his dedicated attention for the next three days.

What follows is a brief description of the program written from my personal notes taken at the end of each day: many exercises and a lot of off-road riding are not reflected here.

Day One: "Gentlemen on your bikes...start the engines" You would expect an off-road biking course to start with these words and in Hechlingen you would be surprised.

You start by learning how to handle the bike while standing aside, mowing around the bike, changing position and trying to hold the as a pro: one finger gently pressed on the top of the windscreen (noting else and...no stand). This exercise provides a good feeling of the bike balance, weight, and movement while delivering to the rider a good level of confidence. If you are still not confident than...put down the bike, trash it on the floor and learn how to lift a GS all by yourself: with the many falls waiting ahead this is a lesson to learn extremely well.

Nobody will be there to help you when agonizing under the too many kilos of your bike.

Standing on the side of the bike you then start the engine, you engage the first gear and take the bike for a stroll. You literally walk with the bike on your side while slaloming between cones or circling around: you are requested to control the speed by a right combination of throttle, front brake, clutch and to reduce the strain on your arms by balancing correctly the bike. Incredible what you learn from a simple stroll with your favorite lady!

Time to get on the bike for what the instructor calls "gymnastic on wheels".

This hour of exercises is conducted with the Trainer in front, the bikers in line after him circling around rough surfaces and completing at any circle a set of 20 cones slalom: standing on the foot pegs with the bike in first gear you start by lifting the left arm from the handlebar getting a good feeling of throttle control. Around you go with the bike bolting at the beginning (if you lose balance on the back the vehicle jump ahead, if you lean forward the throttle close) smoothing down toward the end: it is matter of finesse, of placing little pressure on the arm, of turning by shifting weight on the pegs.

The fact that you are trailing on rocks, gravel, mud becomes less important. Next two hands but...one leg: alternatively you place one leg under you on the seat and you keep going. Riding, you then move both legs first on the right and then on the left foot peg, finally both legs on your knees on the seat.

This concludes the first set of exercises: please note that you stay on each position for about two/three minutes continuously circling around and following the bike and the movements of the Instructor.

"Gymnastic on Bike" is great for learning balance and throttle control, disconcerting at the beginning when repeated (on the third day) it becomes quite pleasant and relaxing. This is a set of movement I plan to repeat on regular basis to keep my (old) body in bike-shape.

A gentle tour of the Park follows: you can see quite demanding climbs / drops and you can-

not stop wondering whether you will be asked to take your bike there.

It is time to learn the basic position you will keep for all the duration of the course: standing on the foot-pegs with knees locked, shoulders relaxed and parallel to the terrain, body at the center of the bike. This standing provides good visibility ahead, it leaves the bike free of moving under you, it allows for amortization of jumps and hits, and it guarantees good balance while steering the vehicle. You also learn to shift the body weight from one peg to the other while cornering: the explanation of the technique is simple but the execution requires long practice.

You have to place the body weight on the foot peg on the side of the turn you want to take by bending the knee placed on the outside of the corner: Professor Richard can turn with this technique a GS at 180 degrees just by skidding the rear tire. For the mortal of us it was a joy, at the end of the three days to receive a moderate skid on the rear. Practice...practice... more practice, (and possibly a rented bike!)

Once captured the basic of "standing position" it is just matter to put it in action with a long set of slalom, squares and figures of "Eight".

In this way the morning comes to end and we move (on bike... on asphalt... two hands and two feet on standard position... comfortable on the seat... what a relief!) to the local restaurant for lunch. The afternoon session opens with a ride around the park including some climbs and descents: we are always on first gear, always standing on the bike... learning a new way to move around: this is a good warm up and the teaching starts setting into the practice. Time for more demanding obstacles: the designer of the Park obviously was not satisfied with the roughness of the terrain: in his perverse wisdom, he also created artificial obstacles and these are the one we are tackling now.

The fist is an undulated section of undulated metal: take several sheets of the corrugated metal normally used for roof on sheds, arrange them on the terrain in waves, moving up and down, sprinkle the surface with loose gravel, some mud and dust, line up six bikers and ask them to move standing along this path. Receipt for disaster?

Just simple exercise for throttle and bike control. The real disaster comes when Richard lifts the left hand from the handlebar and requires passing the obstacle single-handed. The bikes are unstable, the terrain rocks the vehicle and the undulations move your body front and back. Unless you keep the position well balanced at the center of the bike, any up-down translates into a movement of your right wrist on the throttle: this is the real receipt for disaster with the bike jerking and sliding under you.

The next artificial obstacle was a personal nightmare: I always feared deep grooves, when your wheel get trapped between walls: now picture a ten meters with two logs running parallel separated by a space barely sufficient to accommodate the wheel of the bike. Got it? I did not and the first attempt ended with a fast separation from the falling bike.

Enter instructor's wisdom: the trick, he says, is to look ahead...at the exit of the obstacle. In this way the body keeps the right position, the head is up looking forward, the bike moves in straight line. Incredible but true, by just applying the

instruction what seemed impossible becomes feasible and then "normal".

We move then to an artificial "bump" in the middle of the field, what a cross rider will see as a perfect trampoline for jumping. Richard uses it to teach the right approach to a climb: when to open the throttle and when to close it. We are requested to cross the bump accelerating when the front wheel touches the climbing angle and closing the throttle before the same wheel reach the top. The spectacular side of this lesson is Richard showing "what-not-to-do".

"If you approach the climb too fast and your do not accelerate at the right time this is what's going to happen" Richard GS shoots on the air and lands on two wheels 15 meters after the bump... "If you forget to close the gas at the end of the climb this is what's going to happen" and this time the GS jumps even higher with Richard landing perfectly on the back wheel. Just looking at the "mistakes" all of us realizes that transgressions are more appealing than rules. Still, for the mortal of us, is time to learn the rules first on single bump, than on double bump and finally on a series of bumps.

When the lesson is well honed into our beginner's brain it is time to put the "theory" to practice and off we go to experiment some minors climbs and downs. The length and the incline of these obstacles gradually increase until some of the so feared trails becomes "normal road" The day is over and it is time for rest.

While the bike are returned to the hangar, we spend the remaining of the late afternoon exploring the natural beauties of the area: going back to infancy we rented a "pedaling boat" and spent one good hour on the lake drinking beer, watching ducks and boasting about our performances. Dinner is a serious affair in a village near by. Good night.

For the second day, the scene and the protagonists change. We are divided in two groups and taken to a military camp: it is home of a thanks division and the school gets free use of the land in exchange of training for the soldiers. The novelty of the day is that we are on asphalt and we are doing calisthenics in full off-road uniform. The teachers believe that a good warm up of the muscles followed by a session of stretching is indispensable for safe off road riding. This proves to be true and we suggest inserting a few minutes of exercises in your "preparation routine" before starting a ride.

The exercises of the day cover counter-steering, cornering and braking. The way counter-steering is passed to the students is quite interesting: after a brief explanation (push on right bar to go right and vice-versa) and time for individual experiments, two cones are set as entry gate. Perpendicular the two cones at a distance of about three meters the teacher sets a cone line two meters wide. The rider has to approach the gate at moderate speed (30 km/h), enter the gate and than counter-steer to avoid the cone barrier. It is relatively easy when you are the one who decides if steering left or right: more difficult when the teacher faces your approach and, at the moment your bike crosses the gate, indicates on which direction you should steer. A fellow student approaching the obstacle too fast and obliged to change direction at the last minute generated a fantastic accident skidding a good F 650 for quite long distance.

This accident (and others involving our group)

shows a unique face of this school: the school let you test your own limits without worries for the bikes. If you do not feel like you can "refuse the obstacle" but if you want to go for it, nobody will complain if the bike is damaged. The skilled mechanic of the school is always at hand to bring the vehicle back to operating standard.

Diminishing circles and figures of "eight" are used to explain the different cornering techniques: hanging (knees down), pushing (bike down), on line (body in line with the inclination of the bike). It is always surprising to discover that (outside of circuits) the hanging technique does not produce always fastest corner.

It is also good to learn the "pushing" methods coming quite useful in cornering maneuvers at low speed or on loose surfaces.

Emergency braking concludes the morning: the GS have to disengage the ABS and then you learn how to lock the back wheel under control. More interesting is the request to lock the front wheel to get the feeling and learn control: to do this you must keep the throttle slightly open while operating the front brake. After the first moment of disconcerts one can hold the skid for few meters without crashing.

Full emergency braking without ABS (full back, clutch, hard front brake) is than practiced a different speed (50 and 70 km/h) to show the substantial increasing space required by a marginally faster approach.

The afternoon is fun and unfortunately, we do not have pictures of the splendid course through the forest: this is the track used by the thanks for exercises and one stretch will always stay in our memories. A two meter wide and 300 meter long track gently undulating up and down: in the "down" portion big pools of water sometime at seat level. All bikes performed very well in such demanding conditions: riders had several encounters with father mud and mother water.

The skills learned in the previous hours now come to fruition and everybody in our group enter the off-road mood. Roads that just two days before we would have avoided or ridden with difficulty now look easy and pleasant. The moral is high and the Turkish eyes are smiling.

The evening is again biker time: Richard and the team use videocassettes to present the activities of the Company. All levels of competence in off-road riding are taken into consideration: Richard's Company organizes off road tours in Spain and Italy, the Transdanubia Ride and the Paris-Dakar.

The third and last day opens with gymnastics and two good hours of riding around Hechlingen area in a mixture of paved and unpaved road: Richard leads and lessons are placed into practice. Back to the Park additional time for teaching: stopping the bike in the middle of a climb, reversing the bike down a slope, changing direction during a descent, using front brake.

Now we move along the entire circuit of the Park and we try increasingly demanding passages.

A steep, narrow and loose gravel climb is baptized in honor of Murad while the sandpit takes the best of my strength (I also managed to break an ankle in the last few minutes of the last sand exercise). We repeat most of the exercises we learned on the first day and now everything seems to flow much easier.

It is time to close, get the Certificates, say good-bye to our Instructors and Friends.

This has been, without doubts, the best motorcycle course of my long life on two wheels: Cemil, Murad, Selim and I are now looking for continuing this fascinating aspect of biking in Turkey.

Everyone owning a big trial bike (BMW R1100 GS or F650, Honda Transalp/Africa Twin/Varadero, Kawasaki KLX650, Aprilia Pegaso, Yamaha Tenere, Triumph Tiger) or everyone interested in improving road and off-road biking must place this course at the top of priorities.

Just contact:

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Riding Around

The best weather forecast and report site for Turkey (also in English) is available at <http://www.meteor.gov.tr/english/forecast/forecastmaster.htm>

In the March issue of BMW ON (the Magazine of BMW Motorcycle Owners of America at <http://www.bmwmoa.org/global/>) Court Fisher BMWMOA Ambassador and OMM long standing friends presents the Circumnavigation of the Black Sea that will start on May 1 from Istanbul. For the first time a group of pilots from different countries, led by OMM Riders will complete the tour of the Black sea moving through Bulgaria, Romania, Moldavia, Ukraine, Russia, Georgia and Turkey. Court will be with us to report and if you want more information contact Kazim Uzunoglu at kazoom@kazoom-moto-adventures.com

Same issue has an interesting article, Turkish Delight by Simon Edwards "Discovering a BMW restoration shop on a four-day pass" Simon is a BMWMOA member on army leave from Kabul to Adana/ Incirlik, who by chance met Mr. Enver Akbas, with a shop specializing in restoration of vintage BMWs Enver is well known in Turkey (and abroad) for the experience on BMW and two OMM riders are on bikes restored by him. **omm**



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Read and Ride

At <http://www.whitehorsepress.com/> you can order the new book of Nick Lenatsch (yes, the author of the Pace article) It is titled SPORT RIDING TECHNIQUES, 128 pages.

"In this new book, Nick Lenatsch, former AMA racing champion, internationally known motorjournalist, and lead instructor at Freddie Spencer's High Performance Riding School, helps riders master the subtleties of riding well on the street and track. The book includes chapters on the various ways a rider can influence steering, master advanced throttle control techniques, learn the fine points of trail braking, and pick the right line in a turn. Practice drills help build your skills with practical how-to tips, while Lenatsch's bench-racing tales entertain and inform. **omm**

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This Bulletin is edited by **Paolo Volpara** volpara@homemail.com with contributions from bikers around the world. From November 2002 we also distribute a version of the bulletin in Turkish. You may have friends who ride with you and who would like to get included in the Bulletin distribution list: go to OMM web site and register online.

For more information about OMM visit our web site at www.ommriders.org

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