

**March was a month of long riding, more than 4.000 done on several type of bikes with the opportunity to test, in different Countries. New models (Triumph Tiger in road version, CBR1000RR in new colors, Ducati 1098 back with revenge), popular hits (KTM 950 Adventure) and long term classics (Honda Blackbird, Ducati 916). Most of the miles were done on two motorcycles: a brand new Yamaha FJ1300 (in loan from the good friend Bulent) and the Suzuki Katana 1983 GSX1100SD my old love never fading.**

And then I got the idea of buying a new bike... with some money burning in the pockets from the sale of the Blackbird. Went around, considered, went through new and old magazines reading reports, mumbled, discussed, tested... and still I am with two old friends Katana and 916 plus a "loved orphan" IZH Planeta Russian sidecar.

Why? No good bikes around? The opposite... there are no bad bike around, all bikes are good, powerful, reliable, sleek and they all feel the same. I never met a bike that I do not like and my style of riding easily adapt to minor (and major) glitch that a bike can have. So, instead of buying a new one (I went as far as placing an

offer on a good KTM adventure) I am still dreaming of getting back some of my old passions.

A Guzzi LeMansIII or a Kawasaki Ninja 1100 or another Blackbird carbs or a BMW GS 1000 PD or... searching for character or just an old nostalgic mood?

**Let me know where your old passion is and we will talk.**

### Ride One More Mile

If you would like to share the Bulletin with friends tell them to send me a simple e-mail with just on "Subject" – Subscribe Bulletin. The OMM website link (Join OMM) is not working for this purpose. But keep watching because [www.ommriders.org](http://www.ommriders.org) is going under a positive transformation and the new look/content will bring more enjoyment to the readers.

Further news on training are available by joining the ARA Yahoo Group clicking the bar below.

<http://autos.groups.yahoo.com/group/AdvancedRidingAcademy/>

## View from the Cockpit

### Position... Position... Position...

**Spring is here... or it never went away: the calendar reads March first week but outside, in the rural environment of Trakya, the thermometer reads +13 and the air is balmy and crystal clear.**

It is not a good winter companion but today is Ducati day and the glorious 916 meets the road, off season. Italian twins day on the Trakya (Thrace) roads between the Black and the Marmara Sea, drifting toward the Bulgarian border.

The roads, on this European portion of Turkey, are notoriously bad: with few exceptions (110 to Tekirdag and Ipsala border, 100 to Edirne via Corlu and motorway 03 to Edirne) one faces small and badly paved surfaces with long straights followed by crazy set of corners, erratic traffic, mud and debris moved in by tractors: the entire scenario is dotted by ugly villages, industrial constructions, unfinished residential projects and the spilling of urban refusal that Istanbul, the BIG BEAST, vomits on the surrounding areas.

Not a pretty picture but with this weather even Trakya can be beautiful.

The Italian twin will not care: road is and road must be faced. A briskly pace, picking not only cornering lines but, as important, surface lines... take that corner in style while double swerving around opening holes worth of speleological exploration and menacing cracks at the apex.

The intensity of the ride keeps brain (or what is left of it) working fast and then the real estate motto comes to life: in choosing a property three things are important: "position...position...and position". Bikes are funnier and faster than a house but position is equally important.

And I do not talk here about "position of the bike on the road": important but not what comes to mind when body is shaken and, at the same time, stirred. I am talking (and thinking) about position of your poor body itself.

In my year of riding and sharing riding experiences I discover that nothing change your style, technique and results as a correct and relaxed body position on the two wheeler. Get it wrong (so easy) and the ride becomes risky and difficult, get it right and you can relax enjoying a better progression and sharper lines.

Ducati's are not as famous for comfort and spaciousness: the bike is small, suspensions hard and the position is "sporting", to say the best. In few words, an ideal situation for start thinking about body position.

The bikes talks: take a corner with stiff posture, rigid locked arms, flat feet on pegs... touch a small bump (if you can find a small one)... the front feel vague, the bike head start shaking, the back tire wobbles and the entire process turn scaring.

Here you do not have too many choices but to listen: Volvo drivers take possession of the road, they cut big portions of your lane with nonchalance, happy fathers brake in front of you for no reason other than showing to kids "that red shining bike", joyous bus drivers slalom between potholes moving, without warning, between English and European lane discipline. You have to stay on your toes.

Positioning the balls of feet on the pegs is the key to keep mobility on the bike: this **position of feet** gives first of all great sensitivity on what the bike is doing. Furthermore it allows moving the entire body around rapidly and effortlessly. Big hole coming... impossible to avoid it... just press on feet/legs and raise your bum from the saddle leaving the bike free moving under you and absorbing most of the impact. The position is further improved by turning the feet toward the chassis: more leaning angle and better hold of the legs against the bike.

The inconvenience of having to move the feet to reach gear and

brake levers is amply overrun by the mobility and control advantages.

Balls of feet on pegs also mean better **position of the knees** locked against the tank. Your legs hold the bike releasing pressure from arms. Knee pressure on the opposite side of the corner helps the control of leaning and steering contributing to a constant and clean line throughout the bend.

Old, but good, bikers used to say that if at the end of a ride your arms are more tired than your legs you still have a lot to learn. True, the entire mission is to keep the upper body, shoulders, arms and hands free of weight/tension to attend the delicate work of steering, braking, throttle control.

Sitting on the saddle like you would sit on your favorite armchair is not as good as it sounds and this is true for all types of bikes, tourers, choppers, cruisers, sport, trellies.

Besides making your lower back sore after few kilometers, a flat or back **hips position** may damage the spine allowing all forces from the road to hit without buffer. Moving the hips forward toward the tank and arching the back to the handlebar call all middle muscles (back and abs) to work keeping the entire body stable on the center while braking or accelerating.

A lot of my friends, victims of Ross-mania, spend a lot of time moving around the bike in the elegant attempt to lean and lean and lean till the knee kisses the ground. It is good on circuit but quite useless on road riding: focusing on shifting weight on the saddle takes the finesses out of riding and adds unnecessary work during the crucial moment of cornering. A disciplined and, at the same time, relaxed middle-body position (hips forward and spine arched) combined with a good knees-grip on the tanks is more the sufficient and efficient in keeping bike control throughout difficult surfaces and tight lines. Additionally you can move your head and shoulder toward the mirror on the inside-side of your corner.

**Shoulder's position** is the base for relaxed arms and good vision ahead. Tense, up-raised shoulders are always, when riding, a symptom of mental tension and physical discomfort. Shoulders should lean slightly forward continuing the arch of the spine and the tension must be taken out completely. Shoulders must drop down in a relaxed way taking tension from arms and allowing the head to rotate freely in order to scan the horizon.

With spine arched and shoulder dropped forward the head position must be raised to reach the extreme limit of the horizon. Not only look well ahead but, more specifically, look at the "absolute limit of view", the road's vanishing point.

A tightly comfortable helmet and the correct collar of the jacket must permit free movement of the head without any restriction of movements. The head is up, as the last portion of a bow, collecting information with deep and scanning vision.

The correct position of the head and shoulders is determined in major part by the **position of the arms**; this is the point to check and re-align with frequency during the ride.

The objective for the correct position of the arms is to reduce at the maximum the tension on the bars: to this goal arms should be relaxed, with elbows bent and inside. In this way arms operate as an additional pair of shock absorbers buffering the hits coming from the road (see potholes). Conversely tense and locked arms amplify any small movement coming from the road-tires-chassis making the ride erratic and jolting. Tense arms means as well tense grip on the controls: tight gripping hands loose the feeling and the smoothness of throttle control goes with the wind.

Bent elbows allow the lower part of the arm to be in line with the **hands** and levers facilitating the pushing (steering) of the bar.

A good setting of the levers (to be in straight line with lower arm and hand) not only provides better (easier) steering but also reduces fatigue and the risk of carpal syndrome. This is an easy job that can be performed in all bikes: exceptions are "show-off" handle-bars occasionally mounted on cruisers and choppers... no cure for them.

Biking is a sporting activity and, as such, requires a good level of fitness: being able to assume and maintain a correct position is the important indicator of the level of fitness. It keeps biking as a joy without pain, permits concentration and vision determining factors of safe biking.

The next time the road hits you and shakes body and bike check your position: better, make an habit to check and relax position frequently during the ride: California Superbike School's instructor asks the riders to wave elbows, as dancing chickens, in the middle of the corners in order to visually show total relaxation on the saddle. Play chicken often and all rides will turn safer and more pleasant.


**Now, where was I? That's right... Position... position... position and keep looking around. There's always something you've missed.** 

Paolo Volpara © 2007

## OMM Calendar

OMM has a new web face: the web site [www.ommriders.com](http://www.ommriders.com) has been completely redesigned by **Zafer Beysungu** and the group of **Sitepratik** experts with the supervision of Ozdem Guney and the cybernetic OMM rider Omer Koker. Take a look at the new visuals and let us know your comments.

OMM endorses **A.R.A. training system** and it is affiliated to the **Institute of Advanced Motoring**. The group certifies Long Distance Rides in Turkey on behalf of **Iron Butt Association** and we support the **Horizonsunlimited** communities.

With the season coming fast, OMM members organize rides almost every week. Hakan Cetinel spends more time on the roads of Greece than the ancient Athenian messengers... Give us your plans ahead for the summer if you are looking for friends and we will list them on the next bulletin. 

# SUYUMUZU NASIL TÜKETİYORUZ?

OMM supports the activities of WWF in Turkey and abroad and you can join the current campaign for the protection of water by clicking the banner above

This is OMM calendar for the next months: join us on the road.

2007	From	To	Subject	Location	Note
April	28-Apr-07	29-Apr-07	OMM-ARA Road	Istanbul	
May	01-May-07	01-May-07	I.A.M. Test	Istanbul	
May	05-May-07	06-May-07	OMM-ARA Road	Izmir	
May	31-May-07	31-May-07	OMM-ARA Theory	Istanbul	
June	01-Jun-07	04-Jun-07	OMM Master Ride	Turkey	
June	22-Jun-07	28-Jun-07	OMM Crossroads Ride	Turkey	6.000K
September	1-Sep-07	2-Sep-07	OMM-ARA Road	Istanbul	
September	3-Sep-07	3-Sep-07	I.A.M. Test	Izmir	
September	8-Sep-07	9-Sep-07	OMM-ARA Road	Izmir	

## News from Friend

Do you think you are moving fast on your super machines? Think again. The dream of Icarus on jet can be seen in this **spectacular clip** (real). The link comes from Jon Taylor supplier of high adrenalin. Check as well this **"That Was Close!"** experience on two wheels.

OMM Riders in Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir and Bursa continue to "preach" the RoadCraft system of competent riding in theory lessons that, this year, attract large groups of new bikers. Click on this link to **Motordelisi** to get an idea of the work done (in Turkish but with a lot of pictures).

I am cultivating since last year the desire of repeating the Iron-Butt event "White Sea to Black Sea" completed by Russian Rider. Good friend Kaan from the north send two possible routes:

- A) Through Caucasus  
1: Istanbul-Hopa:(1 day)  
2. + 445 km Batumi-Suchumi-Russian Border +180 Km Tuapse + 122 km Krasnodar (747km)  
3. + 274 km Rostov + 586 km Voronez (860 km)

4. + 139 Elec + 453 Moskva + 79 Sergei Posad + 191 Jaroslavl (862 km)  
5. + 195 Vologda + 795 Arkhangelsk (990 km)  
B) Through Carpathia  
1. Istanbul-Ruse-Bucharest-Focsani-Bacau (1035 km)  
2. + 143 Suceava + 84 UA border + 28 Chernivtsi + 189 Khmel-nitsky + 49 +135  
Zhytomir + 131 Kiev (759 km)  
3. + 90 + 219 RUS border (440 km) + 159 + 67 Orel + 191 Tula + 100 + 84  
Moskva + 79 Sergei Posau (1117 km)  
4. + 191 Jaroslavl + 195 Vologda + 795 Arkhangelsk (1181 km)

If you are interested in this exceptional event write to me... I do not have any slot in 2007 for such ride but... one never knows.

Ted Simon is becoming famous among the general Turkish population: an unusual (in terms of subject) article from leading journalist Yalcin Dogan appeared on April 8 on Hurriyet newspaper introducing non-bikers to the achievement of Jupiter. Take a look at <http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=6290482>

OMM

## Ride and Think

From David Hough on Inattentional Blindness

"I continue to think about the psychological issue "inattentional blindness". Motorcyclists often wonder how a driver can pull into the path of the motorcycle and then claim they "didn't see you".

But according to research, it seems that the eyes send everything to the primitive part of the brain for processing first, and only things that are deemed to be of importance are sent on to the conscious part of the brain. So, the eyes record the motorcycle, but the brain may or may not pass the image along to the conscious. (In which case the person does not "see" the motorcycle). In other words, if you aren't thinking about (attending to) something, your subconscious ignores that something. Or, as I like to put it, "the subconscious flushes the image down the mental toilet."

As motorcyclists, we very likely "see" all the other motorcycles on the road. But unless a car driver has some experience that causes a motorcycle to be of interest, he or she may not "see" it.

It appears that no research has been conducted on "inattentional blindness" specific to motorcycling, so we're not sure what we should be doing, other than to follow the sage advice, "ride like you are invisible."

There is a little demonstration of how this "blindness" occurs at [http://www.michaelbach.de/ot/mot\\_mib/index.html](http://www.michaelbach.de/ot/mot_mib/index.html)

The demo isn't motorcycle specific, but imagine you (as the viewer) are a car driver, following the green dot (a vehicle ahead of you), and the yellow dots are motorcycles." OMM

This Bulletin is edited by Paolo Volpara with contributions from bikers in Turkey and abroad.

Ride One More Mile [www.ommriders.org](http://www.ommriders.org)