

Buyer Beware

by Wally Wersching

With the coming of warm weather, many people are getting into motorcycling - some for the first time, and others getting back into motorcycling after many years.

The first thing that should be done is schedule an MSF class to learn (or relearn) the correct way to ride safely. Go to www.msf-usa.org to locate a class in your area. Many courses supply a motorcycle so you don't need your own bike to get a motorcycle designation (M) on your license. This is imperative to your safety, and longevity on your motorcycle.

The next thing is buying a bike of your own. You need to determine the type of riding you will be doing. Shop around. Go to many different dealers, and try on as many bikes as you can get your leg over. Some dealers might even let you take one for a test ride as long as you have that "M" on your license.

Once you have decided which type of bike fits you best, you have to see how much you have to spend. This will determine whether you buy used or new. You don't want to get yourself into any serious debt, and be paying for the bike for the next five to eight years. It's better to pay cash for a used bike than getting in debt over your head for a new one.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both new and used that will depend on the size of your wallet, and your mechanical skill and knowledge. I've bought both new and used, and have had good luck with both. I've heard of some horror stories of buying used, and the same about buying new.

Let's talk more about buying a used bike because there is an abundance of used bikes on the market today. Check out the prices of the bike you want using the Kelly Blue Book at <http://www.kbb.com>. - somewhere between the retail price, and trade-in price would be good.

Where do you find one? You could go to your local dealer. Many have trade-ins for sale at a reduced price from a new one - some even have a warranty. There are many papers, and places that a private owner can list their motorcycle to sell. Examples are: your local newspaper, Bike Trader, Cycle Trader, etc. Also there are many on-line places to locate a used motorcycle: hdtrader.com, cycletrader.com, etc. You can also go onto eBay, and look for a used motorcycle. I personally would not buy a motorcycle on eBay. It's hard to determine the quality of a motorcycle from a few close-up pictures, and there's nothing like touching, hearing, and riding before you buy which is normally not possible on eBay.

I would rather buy from someone local so I can go, and look at the bike before I put any money down. This is still a risky business because the seller might not always tell you the truth. After all, their main concern is to get the bike out of their garage. Check the bike out thoroughly before you buy. Ask questions about the type of riding, and the maintenance. If the bike was maintained by a dealer, there should be receipts. Check the normal wear items, tires, brakes, chain & sprockets, etc. If any need replacing, factor that into your equation about how much you have to spend. Stick your finger into the muffler (make sure it's not hot), if it comes out oily (not just sooty) walk away. Another way is to see if there is blue smoke out the exhaust - the engine is burning too much oil, and needs a rebuild. Check the sprockets, if the teeth are sharp and pointy, they have been abused, and both need to be replaced along with the chain. Check out the brake pads and rotors. If the rotors are grooved and scored, they will have to be replaced. Some rotors can cost into the hundreds of dollars. Check the tires for uneven wear patterns. This could show that the bike is in need of an alignment or the result of an accident. If the wheels are laced, check for loose spokes by tapping them with a pen or screwdriver handle. Listen for the thud - they all should have a ring to them.

After you have checked out all you can, give the bike an overall look. If it has been abused, it will have that worn look. If it has been down, there will be scrapes and scratches on the side items like exhaust pipes, mirrors, levers, etc.

Estimate how much it will cost to get the bike the way you want it. If it will cost more than you have, don't buy it. If you think that the asking price is too high for what you'll have to put into it, make a lower offer. They might take it.

Don't buy on impulse, because a friend likes the bike, or has one like it. You are the one who is going to ride and maintain it. It'll be your butt in the seat so you want it to fit just right! You also don't want it to leave you stranded on the side of the road in the middle of nowhere. If you are not comfortable about it, walk away. Just because you are there looking at a motorcycle doesn't mean you have to buy it.

After you have bought the right bike for you, take it to an empty parking lot, and practice some of the exercises you learned in the MSF class. Once you have become comfortable with the bike, venture out onto some back roads or residential streets to get the feel of it at speed. Try a couple quick stops to see if the brakes pull or chatter.

These are just a few of the things that you should be aware of when getting into the sport of motorcycling. There are many more that will appear the more you ride. Be flexible, always plan ahead, and you'll have a long enjoyable motorcycling experience. Good luck and have fun!

Let Wally know what you think of his stories. wallywer44@hotmail.com

**MEMORIAL DAY
MOTORCYCLE
HONOR RIDE!!**



MONDAY, MAY 30, 2016 6th ANNUAL!

For The Highground Veterans Park

6 Scenic Routes starting in Appleton, Boscobel, Medford, Minneapolis, Neillsville, Tomah & King / Waupaca
Ending at THE HIGHGROUND, W7031 Ridge Rd, Neillsville

\$15 per person / \$25 per couple

Includes Patch or Year Rocker & Lunch at The Highground after Ride

APPLETON Route— Contact Leon 920-740-8672 lrn101@ntd.net

Reg. at 7am—depart at 7:15am —Appleton Harley Davidson

BOSCOBEL Route—Contact Alan 608-485-1369 snafu66.ap@gmail.com

Reg. at 7am —depart at 7:45am—BP Amoco on Hwy 61—Boscobel

KING / WAUPACA Route — Contact Russ 715-281-9653 redwolfusa17@yahoo.com

Reg. at 7am at Chain O' Lakes Bar & Grill, King—Departure & stops TBA

MEDFORD Route—Contact Dean 715-785-8025 hommelsd@tds.net

Reg. 6:00-6:45am at Hardee's parking lot next to VFW on Hwy 13, Medford.

MINNEAPOLIS Route—Contact Bob for info. rmfz@prodigy.net

NEILLSVILLE Route—Contact Mark 715-937-2326 clubberman35@yahoo.com

Reg. at 7:15am—depart at 8:15am—BP Station in Neillsville

TOMAH Route—Contact Shane 715-937-1493 sdawg58@gmail.com

Reg. at 7:15am— depart at 8:00am—Kwik Trip (South side Tomah)
1504 Superior Ave, Tomah (NOT THE TRUCK STOP)

PLEASE CONTACT ROUTE LEADER FOR DETAILS OR CHECK AT
www.thehighground.org 715-743-4224



ABATE of Wisconsin Region 7D

29th Annual **Motorcycle**

Show & Swapmeet

One day only—Saturday

April 30, 2016

Recreation Park—Monroe County Fairgrounds

Tomah, Wisconsin—10 am to 5 pm

Admission \$7.00 public or \$5.00 ABATE Member

Food & Beverages on site

VENDORS & BIKE SHOW

For more information be listening to...

To book vending space
Contact Doug Smith
608-372-3870

10 classes—\$5 entry
Have bike on site by 10 am
Trophies awarded at 4:30 pm
Ride In—no need to drain tank!

Includes Sport Bikes & Trike! classes



On-location broadcast 10am—1pm the day of the Show!

On-site Beer Sales by Tomah Fire Department.

Everyone Please Remember

WE ALL SHARE THE ROAD!

Watch for Motorcycles in Traffic

TWICE—SAVE A LIFE!

