

Rider Education Report

Happy New Year everyone. After reviewing and reflecting on what I have learned during the past year, now is when I start to plan for the things I would like to learn in the coming year. I found the results of a survey of women riders and thought it would be good to share.

Women who ride are happier, more confident, and sexier, according to a survey commissioned by Harley Davidson. Now, I am usually skeptical of a survey commissioned by a party with a vested interest in the results, particularly when the survey confirms the results sought by the entity that requested the survey. However, in this case, I believe that we as experienced riders would find the results of the survey to be logical. We all have a thorough understanding of the complexities of riding. Mastering any complex task typically leads to a feeling of confidence and pride in that skill. I think that those of us who frequently take Advanced Rider Courses, and are always striving to improve our riding skills, have an even greater sense of confidence and pride. So, given that feeling of pride and confidence, it seems logical that anyone who learns this skill, and particularly those who continually seek to improve, would have an enhanced overall sense of self-worth, confidence, and pride. How that impacts other aspects of someone's life would vary by the individual, but a general improvement in outlook and well-being is logical.

While this survey looks only at women who ride their own bike, I think there are several aspects of this line of thought that would extend to a co-rider. Most of us have experienced, or at least understand, just how significant an impact an untrained co-rider can have on the safe operation of any motorcycle. Instability at low speeds can become severe if the co-rider is not stable. Cornering at any speed can be made more complex by a co-rider in the wrong position, or by one moving around during cornering. Needless to mention, screaming and pounding on the rider is not helpful, either. The skilled co-rider, on the other hand, is an asset. Not only does their proper riding technique enhance the stability of the bike, a co-rider assisting with navigation, observation, and communications can reduce the task load of the rider. It seems logical that the confidence and pride of the skilled solo rider could easily extend to the skilled co-rider.

As you look forward to a new year of riding to new places, decide now to make learning to ride better one of the destinations. Register to take a rider or co-rider education course. Knowledge is power. The skills and experience you learn in these controlled situation classes will give you a good base from which you can draw when similar circumstances occur on the street. Consider also getting involved in the Levels program. This is a great way to show your pride and confidence to others.

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