

Styles of Riders

Contributed by Ryan Bohnert
Monday, 12 January 2009

First off it is not my intention to undermine or enhance anyone or any riding style. These thoughts are mine and mine alone. Let me start by saying this is Part 1 of a 2 part article of things I have encountered, been apart of and observed while riding with my 3 closest friends, my wife Linda, my brother-in-law Jimmie his wife my sister-in-law Vicki. The second to be published in a few weeks.

Does one measure skill by time or by feats? If you have no fear of a situation verses objectiveness does this make one a better rider? If you are consistent in your abilities rather than randomize them are you a better rider? Are you a leader or do you like to follow or are you a watcher?

This adventure started for the wife and I shortly after my son's passing with Jimmie and Vicki dropping by one day with there ATV's. We rode all day switching back and forth so all could ride and enjoy our little place like we had never done before. Shortly there after the wife and I purchased 3 ATV's 2 for us and 1 for the grandkids. It has been a remarkable journey since that time helping to fill a void (but never replacing) in both of our lives with planning, riding and dreams. Meeting and talking to people we otherwise never would have met.

It also brings questions to bear along with differences between people, their abilities and riding styles. No 2 people are alike in there thoughts or styles and no one should try to be like the other as it will usually just get that person in predicaments that they do not know how to handle. I have found as has the wife that our way of riding is different than other people's way of riding. We both like the moderate to somewhat aggressive trails at times, that are a little more technically challenging than others may want to try. While other rider's may like the moderate to less aggressive trails, fire roads and mud pits (we like them too). So we tend to diversify our trips. Jimmie and I lead the pack, one time he is in the front and I in the rear, other times I am in the front just depends more so on the situation we are in. This past weekend we went to Finger Lakes Park the wife and I would rate this as moderate to advanced and they would rate it as advanced.

Where the wife and I live we have a wooded area to ride everyday, a creek bottom, farmers land with water drainage hills we jump along with a small table top and mud pit I created. Plus the neighbors boy built a MX style track right up the road we ride on. They live fairly close to a swampy area by the Missouri River they frequent. Full of bogs and flat land areas that they ride at night, not many hills nor rocky areas in it nor long expansions of creek bottoms but lots of mud, grassy areas and a old farmers road along with the dikes to ride on. They like this kind of riding which is no problem for us but it is there style not our style (though we do like it as well) as it is our style to ride the rocks and to not avoid it but to get deep into that mud pit ahead or the hills that are in front of us of a moderate nature. We do not ride without fear nor without thinking but ride with it to control us when a giving situation arises so we may work out a solution or avoid it entirely.

At all times we try to think before doing and attempt to take the appropriate action required. This is required in order to make it a safe ride for all. You do not learn the bike but rather learn what you can and cannot do on it, what your style is and what your ability is. Do not hasting to judge others by there way of riding but rather understand that they are different. They are not crazy nor lacking in ability it is just there style.

This past trip Vicki got herself in a jam and she hurt herself (yet to go to doctor so unsure of the severity). Though nothing was said no words flung you could feel it in the air that maybe blame for the days events where trying to be placed. In the end the rider has the choice to choose to press forward or not. If they choose too press forward they alone accept responsibility. Accidents occur problems arise events cannot be 100% contained within any given circumstance. Styles of riding differ as do people, I nor the wife are any better rider than anyone else. It boils down to what a person is use too when they begin to ride if you start out climbing that big hill or jumping or riding along the bottom lands then that becomes apart of you, your style.

ATV's, dirt bikes, ORV vehicles are not toys as we tend to think of them, they are heavy duty motorized vehicles as are our everyday cars and trucks and can get you hurt. When you go beyond your style you must remove yourself from the tunnel you ride in and open up your perspective. If you do this then you lower the chance of getting hurt and up the level of fun you will have. Riding can be great adventure, you can go places you would never have gone before. Test your nerve or take a long leisure ride. Do not limit the places you go or ride because you feel they are extreme or not worthy just know your limits and know when to ask for help. Allowing yourself to question the path taken is not detrimental to you as a rider. If riding with others let them know your thoughts they will either talk you through it or help you out of trouble. Remove yourself from the tunnel you ride in, look around to see the full picture and you will lessen the chance of getting hurt plus enjoy the ride more. Next time, "Riding Styles" are discussed.

Posted by Old Goat