

Gold Wing Road Riders Association



Gold Wing Road Riders Association



Rider Education Program



Motorcycle Parking Lot Practice (PLP) Guide FACILITATOR'S MANUAL

Gold Wing Road Riders Association
International Headquarters
21423 North 11th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85027
800-843-9460
623-581-2500
623-581-3844 (fax)
www.gwrra.org
© April 2008

**GOLD WING ROAD RIDERS ASSOCIATION
FACILITATORS' MANUAL
AND
MOTORCYCLE
PARKING LOT PRACTICE GUIDE**

OVERVIEW

RIDE WITH PRIDE AND CONFIDENCE

This manual is designed to be used in conjunction with the GWRRA Rider Education "Parking Lot Practice" Facilitator's Programs. The following pages describe exercises designed to assist the participant in developing and improving the skills they need to properly operate their motorcycle more effectively and safely. The proper execution of these exercises will help them in many traffic situations, and make their riding experiences more fun. You are their Facilitator.

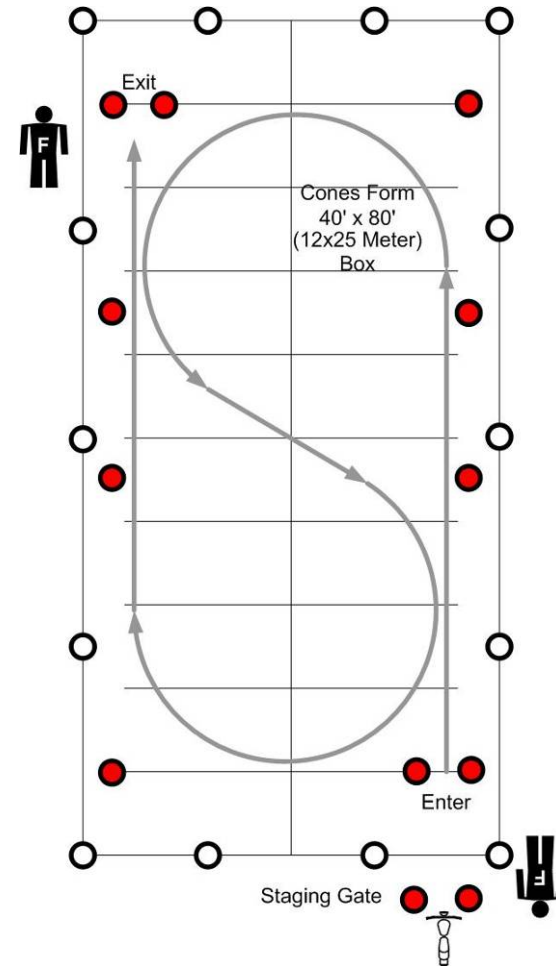
Information, including exercise diagrams, has been taken from a variety of public domain sources: publications, interviews, GWRRA Rider Courses, Arizona Skill Enhancement, State and Federal documents. As there are many differences in riding instruction, riding styles, state and federal laws, there may be organizations and/or individuals who hold differing opinions regarding the content or execution of the PLP program. Again, this is a GWRRA internal program intended solely for the use of GWRRA members.

To assist GWRRA in reducing motorcycle accidents and injuries, and to increase awareness of safety in motorcycling, GWRRA offers many programs and classes within the Rider Education Program (REP). These classes and programs are intended for both motorcyclists and motorists. Contact your Chapter Educator, or call GWRRA at 1-800-843-9460, 623-581-2500, or go on line to www.gwrro.org for more information.

PURPOSE

The objective of this PLP program is to build confidence and reinforce basic riding abilities. The information contained in these practice guides is offered for the benefit of those individuals and groups who have an interest in riding motorcycles. It is intended solely for the use of GWRRA members to enhance skill levels and as preparation towards other experienced rider courses. It is not meant for the beginning motorcycle rider, nor meant to take the place of professional motorcycle riding instruction.

- **Turning too wide.**
Turn head sharply, looking back to corner cone behind you. Allow the motorcycle to lean in the tight turn. Use more counterbalancing by shifting your weight (butt) to outside of seat in the turn.



There are two Facilitators at adjacent ends of the Range looking in the direction of their feet. Facilitator at the start gates sends the next Rider. Facilitator at exit gate is observing the Rider watching for unsafe acts.

Range Exercise 6

Double U-Turns

What: To have riders learn and practice the principles and techniques of how to make a U-Turn in a tight radius.

Why: It is necessary to learn how to U-Turn your motorcycle to reverse the current path of direction.

Statement: Developing the ability to make tight U-turns in as short a radius as possible will require exaggerated use of head turns, the friction zone and counterbalance to the outside of the turn.

How:

- Enter the box on the right hand side. As the rider approaches the far end execute a left hand u-turn crossing back across the box. As the rider approaches the end of the box, execute a right hand u-turn. Proceed along the border, exiting the box.
- Stay in your comfort zone. This is not a competition. When making a U-Turn use the following sequence.
 - Use your Brakes to slow the motorcycle prior to the turn.
 - Shift your weight to the outside of the turn to counterbalance the motorcycle prior to the turn. This also helps you to turn your shoulders.
 - Make an aggressive head and shoulder turn looking back to the other end of the box.
 - Use your clutch Friction Zone to control and maintain your speed through the turn.
- As you repeat the exercise try to make sharper U-Turns.
- 2-up is OK with Facilitator's approval, after rider has successfully negotiated the U-Turns.

Rider Self Evaluation Tips:

- **Put a foot down in the turn.**
Keep head and eyes up. Use more rpm and the clutch friction zone to control your speed.

The PLP program **is not** intended to provide the participant with a motorcycle endorsement, nor will it qualify for reimbursement from any insurance or other organization program. It is designed to reinforce and improve the riding abilities and confidence of the average rider who desires to accomplish these goals.

DISCLAIMER

The information has been gathered from many sources: publications, interviews and observations of individuals and others familiar with the use of motorcycles, accessories and training. Because there are many differences in riding styles, instructional styles, Federal, State and local laws, there may be organizations and individuals who hold differing opinions.

Consult your local regulatory agencies for information concerning the operation of motorcycles in your area. Although GWRRA will continue to research, field test, and make responsible viewpoints on the subject available to the membership, they disclaim any liability for the views stated herein.

We understand that it is the responsibility of the Owner/Operator to practice and use the skills we learn in this program. We cannot guarantee the safe operation of the motorcycle.

THE SAFE OPERATION OF THE BIKE IS UP TO THE RIDER!

THE FACILITATOR'S ROLE

As a facilitator, your role is two-fold:

- 1) Maintain range safety at all times
- 2) "Remind and Refine" skills and habits—not to teach! Therefore, in the opening exercise of each PLP, observe each participant carefully. Determine if there are any who are unable to execute the exercise safely. If so, stop the exercise and ask that individual to park their bike. Explain the purpose of the PLP and suggest that they take a full rider course such as a BRC, ARC or ERC prior to returning for a PLP session. Range and individual safety is your main concern during these programs. Allow nothing to jeopardize an "incident-free" experience.

During each PLP drill, your function is to observe how each participant performs, looking for obvious deviations from the proper execution of the exercise. During the post drill discussion, congratulate the participants who

performed well, and through questioning as well as referring participants back to the written “tips and techniques” section of the manual, remind them of the proper way to execute the exercise. These facilitation techniques will help the participants to “discover” how they can improve their individual skills.

FACILITATED VS. ALONE

It is intended and recommended that the participant first complete this PLP course with a GWRRA certified PLP Facilitator before attempting these exercises on their own. The Facilitator will set up the exercises, have the participants read the purpose of each, and then have them ride the exercises. The Facilitator will then facilitate a discussion to help the participants discover what they did well and what they might need to do in order to improve their skills.

After this formal introduction to Parking Lot Practice, they may want to set up one or more of the exercises on their own for additional practice. Be sure to emphasize to them to exercise caution in the location they choose, such as traffic and surface conditions, as well as having a friend along to help if something goes wrong. Proper safe riding gear is mandated when taking the PLP, and is recommended whenever any member practices these exercises alone.

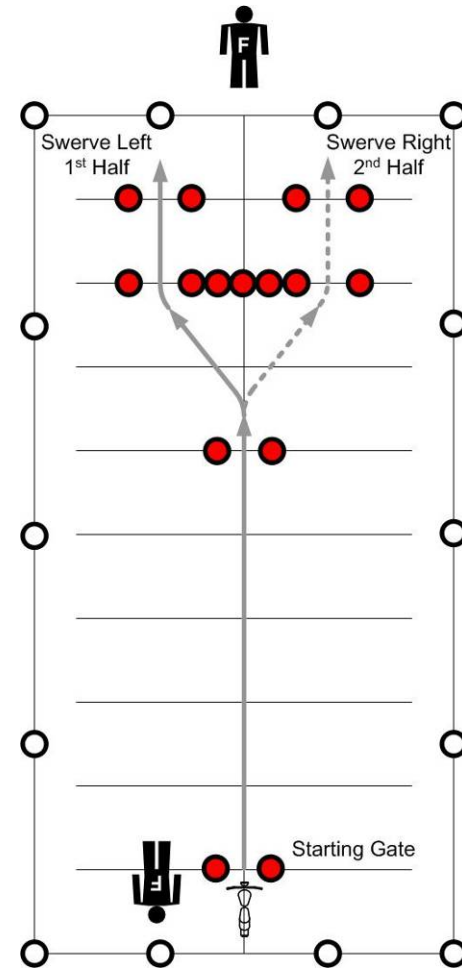
TWO-UP

This program can be taken *Two-Up* (rider and Co-Rider). We require, however, that the course be taken without the Co-Rider the first time so that you can assess the skill level of the rider, and so the rider can become more confident in his/her abilities when the Co-Rider accompanies him/her. When you have a two-up scenario, make sure you remind the rider to be very careful of his/her speed in the various exercises and never exceed his/her comfort level.

RANGE SAFETY AND ORGANIZATION

1. All riders must adhere to GWRRA recommendations regarding protective clothing.
2. All riders need to perform a TCLOCS inspection of their motorcycles prior to entering the range.
3. No more than 6 bikes in the program—based on your confidence level and ability to control the situation.
4. Establish a staging area either at one end or on one side—based on the

- **Speed is varying through the swerve.**
Keep wrist straight (as opposed to wrist up or wrist down position) when pressing on the handlebars, especially when swerving to the right. Do not brake during the swerve keeping your speed steady.



There are two Facilitators down the center of the Range looking in the direction of their feet. Facilitator at the start gates sends the next Rider. Facilitator at opposite end is observing the Rider watching for unsafe acts.

Range Exercise 5

Obstacle Avoidance

What: To have riders learn and practice the principles and techniques of how to swerve their motorcycle to quickly change their path of travel.

Why: It is necessary to learn how to swerve your motorcycle to avoid obstacles in your immediate path of travel.

Statement: Practicing this exercise will help to swerve properly to avoid potential hazards in the road like potholes, rocks and gravel, loose items that may have fallen from other vehicles, etc.

How:

- Begin at the start point, shift smoothly into second and maintain a speed of between 15 and 18 mph (25 to 30 kph). After the front wheel passes the first set of cones, perform a swerve maneuver and exit through the next two sets of cones.
- Maintain a steady speed. Do not roll off of the throttle or apply either brake.
- A swerve is defined as two consecutive counter steers. It is executed by forcefully pressing on the handlebars in the direction you want to swerve and then press in the opposite direction to return to a straight path of travel.
- Allow the motorcycle to lean independently. Keep your weight off the back rest.
- 2-up is OK with Facilitator's approval.

Rider Self Evaluation Tips:

- **Driving through the swerve.**
*Press more **aggressively** on the handlebars in the direction of the swerve, in each direction.*
- **Bike is not moving correctly under the rider.**
Consciously sit up straight, weight off of the backrest when making the swerve.

- configuration of the range - in order to allow safe entrance and exit from the area, and which is far enough away from the extreme path of travel.
5. Divide class participants into groups (A, B, C, etc). One group is on the range performing the exercise, while the next group is on their bikes observing the riders on the field and ready to enter the field on the facilitator's signal.
 6. Instruct participants how and when they must move from staging area onto range, and how and when they must move off range back to the staging area.
 7. No more than half the group on the field at any one time—realistically no more than 4 bikes performing any one exercise at a time.
 8. The Facilitator is responsible for safety on the range. If any situation arises that distracts you from concentrating or jeopardizes that safety, stop the exercise, park the bikes and end the session. This may include arguing, too much joking around, unsafe operation of a bike, or participants' inattention.
 9. Emphasize to participants that no bikes move on or around the range without your direction or permission.
 10. If, for any reason, the facilitator has to leave the training session, the session immediately ends. No one can substitute for the facilitator if the facilitator is no longer on the range—unless s/he is already a Certified PLP Facilitator.
 11. Remind participants:
 - a. Do not move unless instructed to do so.
 - b. Check your path of travel before moving
 - c. Ask if you do not understand any instructions
 - d. When parking put your bike in 1st gear and turn ignition off before dismounting.
 - e. Turn off their radios and/or CBs
 - f. Have fun and enjoy.
 12. Review Range Signals, which include:
 - STOP
 - SPEED UP, SLOW DOWN
 - SPREAD OUT
 - RETURN TO STAGING AREA
 - WHISTLE (Immediate Stop)

CONES AND CONE SUBSTITUTES

If cones are not available to borrow from your chapter, there are many easy substitutes that can be used. Use your imagination and you may discover many more.

1. Used tennis balls—cut in half. Small size may be difficult to see in dim light.
2. Plastic water bottles—500 ml size. Add sand to 1/3 to 1/2 for weight. Add food color to make them fancier.
3. Half-pint milk cartons with a little sand in the bottom.
4. Two-inch tall cones—available from the Motorcycle Safety Foundation: www.msf-usa.org under products and accessories. Their cones (green and orange) sell for \$1.50 each, or a range set of 20 green and 80 orange for \$100.00.
5. Various hardware stores and safety product sources carry cones of different sizes and costs.
6. Chapter Educators—have a cone raising project. Ask for a \$5.00 donation from chapter members for the purchase of a set of cones (any size—your choice) followed by an autograph party where the donors have a chance to autograph their own cone.
7. When all else fails, there is always playground chalk. Be sure to get permission from the lot owners to use the chalk.

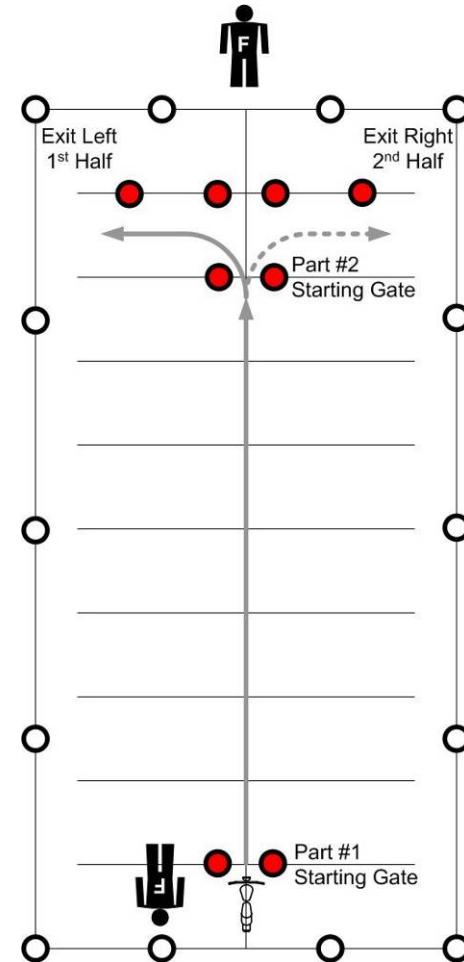
PRACTICE AREAS

A well marked parking lot is the best practice area. Be aware, however, of grease left by parked cars. Look for lots that are not used all the time, i.e., shopping centers, schools, churches or community centers. For instance, you might use a school lot in the evening hours or weekend, or a shopping center early in the morning. Remember to gain permission from the owner. And always leave the area cleaner than when you arrived. Traffic will always be of the most concern. Check for traffic from all directions before starting an exercise. Be considerate of others in the area.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND THOUGHTS

1. Keep the whole PLP experience light and fun; however, let everyone know that *safety* is a serious issue.
2. Stay organized and focused. It is easy to get side-tracked or distracted during this process. Remember: the Facilitator is the sole person responsible for the safety of everyone there, and their motorcycles.
3. Prior to the start of the program, ask the participants if anyone has any physical limitations, prescriptions or other handicaps that would hinder their participation in this PLP.

- **Motorcycle wants to stall or wants to falls into the turn.**
Concentrate on controlling your speed by correctly using the clutch friction zone. Turn your head sharply to help initiate the turn looking where you want to be at the end of the turn.



There are two Facilitators down the center of the Range looking in the direction of their feet. Facilitator at the start gates sends the next Rider. Facilitator at opposite end is observing the Rider watching for unsafe acts.

Range Exercise 4

Sharp Turns (2 parts: while moving, and from a stop)

What: To have riders learn and practice the principles and techniques of how to make sharp turns while moving and from a standing start.

Why: It is necessary to learn how to turn your motorcycle sharply to remain in the correct path of travel.

Statement: Practicing these drills will help to make sharp turns from stoplights or stop signs, pulling out of parking spaces or driveways, and turning into a driveway or onto a narrow street.

How:

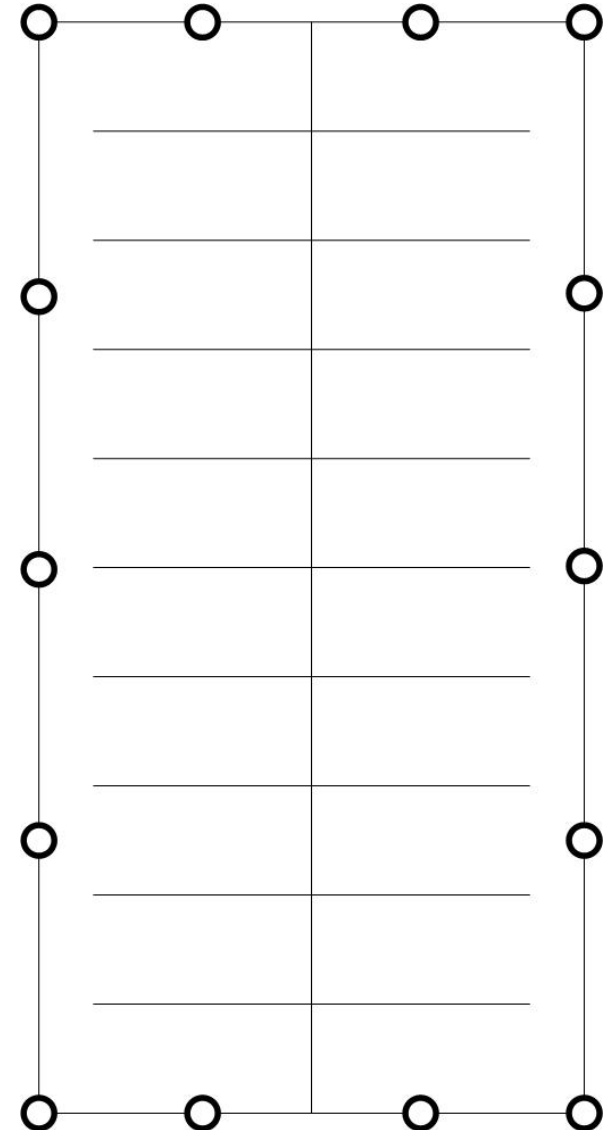
- **Part 1:** In first gear, begin riding straight across the lot, increasing speed to approximately 10 mph (15 kph).
- Just before reaching the cue cones, use both brakes to slow and adjust speed for making a sharp turn to your left or right.
- As soon as the front tire has passed the cue cones start the turn. Use the friction zone to control your speed, use proper head turn, and slightly accelerate out of the turn as you smoothly release the clutch.
- **Part 2:** Start at the cue cones. Begin making a sharp turn from the starting point.
- Look though the turn as you lean your motorcycle, and slightly accelerate out of the turn as you smoothly release the clutch.
- 2-up is OK, with facilitator's approval, after rider has shown ability to handle sharp turns.

Rider Self Evaluation Tips:

- **Turning too short or too long.**
Slow to a correct entry speed, keep your head and eyes up and look through the turn.
- **Not sure when or where to turn:**
Start the turn when the front wheel passes the start cone. As you start the turn, turn your head sharply and look to the exit point.

Range Set-up

Set up cones (or suitable substitutes) to outline the PLP field, 50' x 100' (15 x 30 meters) minimum. Try to locate a parking lot marked for straight-in parking with a center line. Allow for a 40' (12 meters) buffer area around the perimeter.



Range Exercise 1

Cone Weave

What: To have riders learn and practice the correct techniques for weaving their motorcycle why maintaining a steady throttle.

Why: Practicing these drills will help in making quick lane changes in traffic or changes in direction.

Statement: At a speed greater than 15 mph (25 kph) a rider needs to counter-steer the motorcycle to change direction.

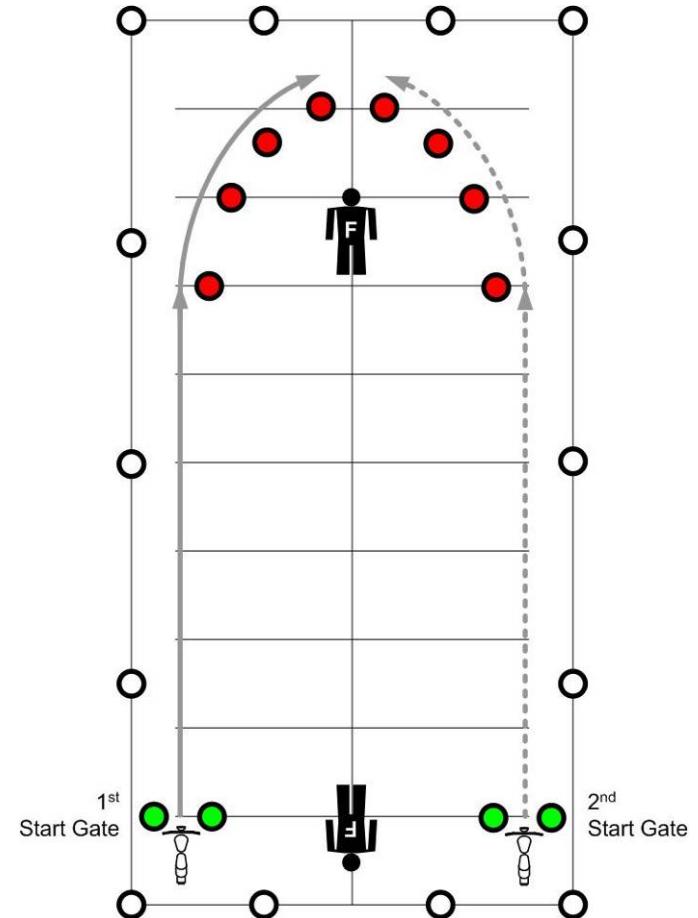
How:

- At a speed of 15-20 mph, (25 to 35 kph) Ride counterclockwise around the field, weaving through the cones, going outside the first cone at each end. Keep head and eyes up, looking down the line of cones at least two cones ahead, allowing peripheral vision to guide you through the weave.
- Cones are set 20 feet (6 meters) apart on one side, 30 feet (9 meters) on the other side. Use an odd number of cones on each side.
- Allow up to 4 bikes on the course at one time—more if space permits, in a continuous loop as shown. Exit upon facilitator's signal where shown.
- To weave through the cones Riders should counter-steer their motorcycle. (press right to go right, press left to go left)
- Facilitator positions are marked, facing oncoming traffic
- 2-up is OK, with Facilitator's approval.

Rider Self Evaluation Tips:

- **Swinging too wide away from cones.**
Look at the next cone or beyond, decrease the lean angle and push less on the handlebars.
- **Hitting the cones.**
Look past the cone, increase lean angle slightly and push more on the handlebars.

- **Rear wheel skid.**
Apply even pressure on the rear brake (as opposed to a "panic" application), with a definite squeezing of the front brake. Use both brakes smoothly to stop. Keep pressure on the brakes until completely stopped.
- **Failed to downshift into 1st gear.**
As you square the motorcycle squeeze the clutch, then begin braking and downshift. Do not release the clutch.



There are two Facilitators down the center of the Range looking in the direction of their feet. Facilitator at the start gates sends the next Rider. Facilitator in breaking area is observing the Rider watching for unsafe acts.

Range Exercise 3

Braking in a Curve

What: To have riders learn and practice the principles and techniques of braking in a curve.

Why: In normal riding, the rider will sometimes be required to quickly and safely stop in a turn.

Statement: Aggressive braking in a curve with the motorcycle leaned may result in the motorcycle being unstable resulting in a crash.

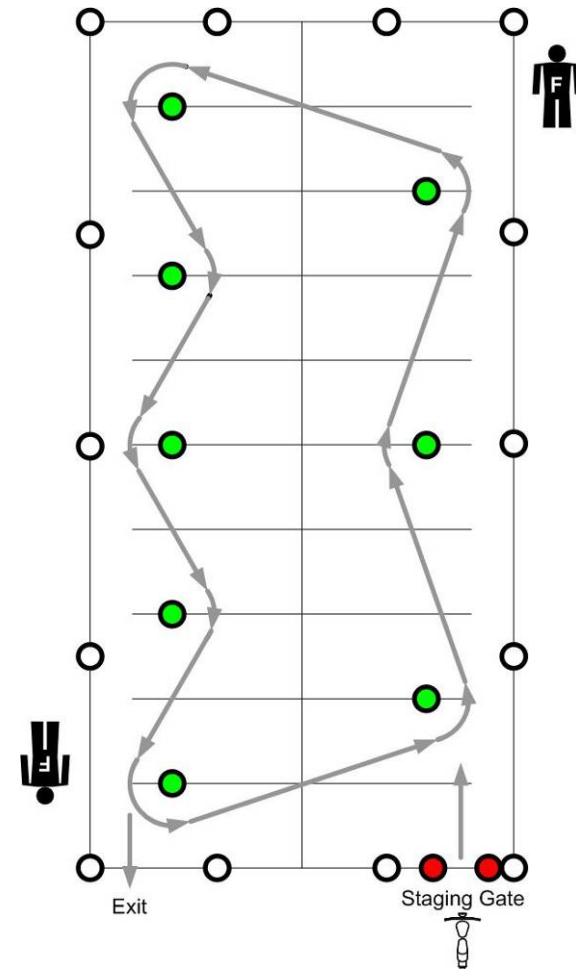
How:

- Start in first gear, shift to 2nd, ride to the outside of the indicated turn at 12 to 15 mph (20 to 25 kph). As you reach the first cone, turn in the curved path indicated.
- After passing the second cone sequentially do the following:
 - Look straight ahead
 - Square the handlebars
 - Squeeze the clutch and begin braking, using both brakes, while downshifting to 1st gear.
 - Do not release the clutch; come to a smooth upright stop, left foot down, right foot remaining on the foot brake.
- All riders start on one side, and then switch to the other side.

Rider Self Evaluation Tips:

- **The motorcycle nearly fell over.**
Straighten up the motorcycle and then apply the brakes. Be sure the handlebars are square with the motorcycle.
- **Stopping in too great of a distance.**
Apply more pressure to the brakes once the motorcycle is straightened from the lean angle.

- **Steering instead of counter-steering.**
Speed too slow. Increase speed to 15-20 mph (25 to 35 kph).



There are two Facilitators at adjacent ends of the Range looking in the direction of their feet. They observe the riders to ensure the bikes are properly spaced and watching for unsafe acts.

Range Exercise 2

Straight Line Braking

What: To have riders learn and practice the principles and techniques of straight line braking.

Why: The smooth controlled application of both brakes is required to ensure the safe operation of your motorcycle.

Statement: Smooth braking techniques are required to maintain maximum control of your motorcycle. Front brakes account for 70-80% of your braking force.

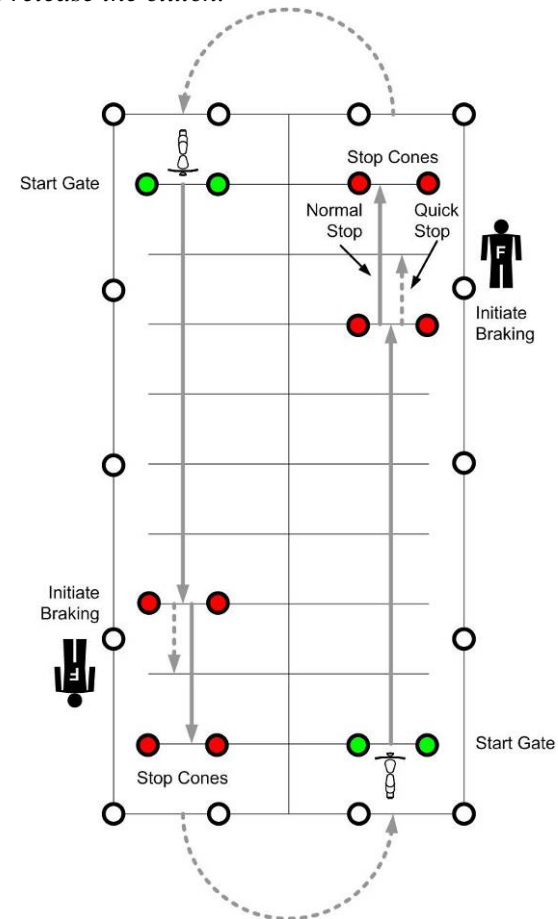
How:

- Travel down range at 15–20 mph (25 to 35 kph) in 2nd gear maintaining a steady throttle. Do not exceed 20 mph (35 kph).
- When your front tire passes the 1st set of cones, apply both brakes while squeezing in the clutch and downshifting into 1st gear. Come to a smooth stop at the 2nd set of cones.
- Use a smooth, progressive squeeze on the front brake and a steady to decreasing press on the rear brake.
- Head and eyes up, looking straight ahead.
- Use all four fingers on both the clutch and front brake levers.
- Hold your rear brake when stopped with your right foot and put your left foot down to hold the motorcycle in an upright position.
- Have downshifted to 1st gear and performed a mirror check.
- As you repeat the exercise progressively decrease your stopping distance.

Rider Self Evaluation Tips:

- **I am overshooting final cone.**
Apply more even pressure to brakes.
- **My engine over revs when using front brake.**
*Close the throttle before braking. Avoid pulling back on the throttle when applying pressure to the front brake. **Squeeze** the front brake using all 4 fingers.*

- **The bike leans when I stop and I have to put my right foot down first.**
Keep the motorcycle on a straight course by keeping your head and eyes up, looking straight ahead, and square the handlebars. Do not release either brake until you come to a full stop.
- **I'm having a hard time downshifting into 1st gear.**
*Begin braking and downshift at the first cone. Squeeze the clutch, downshift to first gear and apply **both** brakes at the same time. Do not release the clutch.*



There are two Facilitators at adjacent ends of the Range looking in the direction of their feet. They signal the Riders one at a time ensuring the previous Bike is clear before sending the next bike down the course.