



Motorcycle Mentorship Module 26

Track and Closed Circuit Riding





Warning: Incorrect or inaccurate information could lead to tragic results on the road. If a question arises that is not covered in the guide and you don't know the answer from your own experience and training, simply state, "That is a great question, I'll get back to you with the answer."

Your Service Safety Center will help with these types of questions should they arise. Their numbers are as follows:

US Army Driving Directorate: **334.255.3039**

USMC Safety Division: **703.604.4459**

US Navy Shore Safety: **757.444.3520 x7165**

US Air Force Safety Center: **505.846.0728**

USCG Safety Division: **202.475.5206**



Preface

About: The Defense Safety Oversight Council (DSOC) Motorcycle Mentorship Modules are a set of thirty six (36) facilitation modules designed for the purpose of increasing rider knowledge on various aspects of riding and providing additional capability for self-policing within peer groups. The modules are intended as a mechanism to further decrease motorcycle related mishaps and fatalities within Department of Defense (DoD) by encouraging riders to talk, live, and think about the topic.

Using the Module: The module content enclosed is intended as a facilitation guide to assist you with discussing the topic. However, it is still critical to use your skills and talent to engage participants and develop “buy-in” on this subject from your group. To maximize this, motivate and moderate your participants, control the accuracy of participant feedback, and be mindful of their time.

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2	Facilitation Guide – A brief overview on conducting a facilitated discussion of a topic
3	Module Overview – This section provides the facilitator a synopsis of the topic, learning objectives, and the suggested environment, props, and handouts for conducting the module
4	Module Discussion Introduction – This section provides guidance to the facilitator in opening up the discussion and getting participants talking about the topic and their relevant experiences
5	Discussion Areas – This section provides various discussion topics, sample facilitation questions, and factual information for the facilitator to lead the discussion
8	Wrap-Up – This section provides guidance to the facilitator on wrapping up the topic discussion
9	Feedback Form – A feedback form to be given to all participants for their feedback on the module discussion
10	Resources – Additional resources and definitions to assist the facilitator in preparing for and conducting the topic facilitation
11	Handouts – Figures, pictures, diagrams, etc. to assist the facilitator to better demonstrate a topic idea

Facilitation Guide for DSOC Mentorship Modules

It is recommended that this Mentorship Module be conducted in a facilitation style. Using the information provided in this Mentorship Module, you, as the facilitator, will lead a discussion on the subject. *You should not be conducting a lecture!* The facilitator's role is to help with how the discussion is proceeding. Participants will have much more "buy in" and connectivity with the information if they have input. One of your roles as the facilitator is to control the accuracy of the input and control the time. From the Mentorship Module, generate questions which will lead to group discussion. The more you let the group participate, the more success you will have.

Competencies of a Facilitator:

- Prepare prior to the event
- Make sure everyone gets a chance to participate and help members to express themselves
- Ask rather than tell
- Honor the group, display respect for the members, and acknowledge participant contributions
- Ask for others' opinions
- Listen without interrupting
- Demonstrate professionalism and integrity

The key characteristic distinguishing facilitation from other types of leadership, like scripted training, is that the outcomes are never predetermined in a facilitative setting. Although the background information provided with this Module remains the same, the result will depend on the participants, the knowledge and experience they bring, and the information that they feel they need to take away. The group uses the activities provided by the facilitator to unlock expertise, ensure thorough discussion, stay focused and reach decisions that are better than those any individual could come up with alone.

At the beginning of each Mentorship Event, discuss why the participants are there and what they will receive as a result of participating. Adults have limited time and they want to know "What's in it for me?" A facilitator should make training fun. Encourage humor and laughter in your Mentorship Event.

Principles of Adult Learning:

- Adult Learners want material that is relevant to them. "What's in it for me?" "What will I get out of this that will make a difference to me?"
- Adult Learners come to training events with varying amounts of experience. They like to share their experiences. If you have minimal or no motorcycle experience, you can still draw from your group.
- Even if you have motorcycle experience, you should draw from your group because people tend to remember what "they" said longer than what you said. Information that they "own" is more valuable to them.
- Facilitators are not always subject matter experts; nor do they need to be. Facilitators may draw on the existing knowledge of the participants and the information provided in these Modules.

Section I: Module Overview

Time Frame: One 30-45 minute facilitator-led discussion

Level of Prior Knowledge: Participants should have basic to experienced level competency in operating a motorcycle and be familiar with motorcycle operations.

Synopsis: The purpose of this module is to facilitate discussion and disseminate information on closed circuit motorcycle riding and training options. This module includes an introduction and discussion phase, with emphasis on information sharing, planning, and preparing for a safe motorcycle track day or track school experience.

Learning Objectives:

- Introduce basic knowledge and create participant recognition of track riding responsibilities, methods and techniques.
- Define and illustrate generally accepted best practices and techniques for motorcycle closed-circuit riding.
- Participants discuss and understand the need for rules and discipline among motorcyclists on closed-circuits. Recall situation-related variables and conditions.
- Participant should comprehend and recall presented information. Additionally, participant may offer alternative perspectives, contribute to discussions, and share personal experiences.

Suggested Environment/Props/Handouts:

Any comfortable environment, such as classroom, conference room, auditorium, or stadium seating, is appropriate.

Module Handouts/illustrations (Copy Masters Attached)

- Handout 1 – Basic Track Day Checklist
- Handout 2 – List of Track Tips and Hints
- Handout 3 – Flag Color Code Reference

Section II: Module Discussion

Introduction: Facilitate discussion: Which is safer, track riding or street riding in traffic?

Definition: Motorcycle track riding is done on a closed-circuit course and in a controlled environment (with the exception of weather) and eliminates vehicular traffic risks and concerns found in street riding. Closed-circuits remove many of the variables often encountered while operating in traffic situations. Closed-circuits are free of curbs, conflicting and unknown intersections, other roadway users, and domestic or wild life. Closed circuit and track sessions include stringent track management procedures, risk mitigation practices, and event specific emergency medical services. All event participant motorcycles are inspected to ensure safe operating condition and additional mishap safeguards (e.g. taping up glass).

Open discussions with participant-centered activities. Have attendees introduce themselves (or each other) and share their current motorcycle make and model. All activities should encourage participant interaction and develop camaraderie and a willingness to participate in discussions. Ask for and encourage participant sharing of experiences related to the module topic.

Sample questions may include:

- Have you ever ridden on a track?
- Was the event organized and well-planned?

Suggested Discussion Areas:

Discussion Area 1: Why Ride at the Track

Facilitation Questions:

- What are the primary advantages to riding on a track?
- Do skills gained at the track have any direct connection to street riding skills?
- Do you think learning may be accelerated during closed-circuit experiences?
- Are there other benefits to track riding? What are the primary disadvantages and downsides to track riding?

Facilitator Facts:

A. Upside/Benefits:

1. The most obvious advantages to track riding are the lack of threats and reduced rider risk. Lack of debris on the roadway and on-coming traffic; the curves, turns and hills are predictable and exactly the same every time around the circuit. There are no speed limits and no law enforcement officers to be concerned about, but there are flagmen, other track workers, and officials whose job is to make sure the rules are followed and to keep the track conditions as safe as possible.
2. At the track, because of the lower-risk environment, a rider can better focus on improving skills at real world speeds. Improvements in traction management, braking, and cornering ability translate directly into a better, more skilled street rider who is more prepared for emergency maneuvers on public roadways.
3. When a rider has the opportunity to focus his efforts entirely on skill development, improvement tends to occur rapidly.
4. Competitive and/or aggressive every-day rider personalities who participate in track days and schools often become safer and more controlled riders on the street as a result of discovering their motorcycle's capability and their own riding limitations in track experiences. Many of these same riders discover that skill and finesse are the hallmarks of advanced motorcycling, and speed becomes a resulting factor.

B. Downside/Disadvantages

1. A challenge for many riders in setting up track riding is the expense. A day at the track is something young riders often must plan and save for. There are costs associated with transportation, attendance, new tires, required safety gear, and motorcycle maintenance. However the military has worked with local tracks to get reduced rates for military members.
2. Time and effort are required.. A significant amount of preparation is required to get a bike fully prepared for a day of performance riding. Careful inspection of all integral parts to ensure no leaks, good tire tread, suspension is set correctly, controls operate smoothly, and engine performance is within OEM specifications is critical for safety.

Discussion Area 2: What Type of Track Riding is Best

Facilitation Questions:

- What are the two primary types of track riding?
- What are some of the advantages of Track Schools?
- What are some advantages of Track Days?

Facilitator Facts:

1. Track Schools, while generally costing more than a simple Track Day, provide a structured environment with professional instruction. Students are divided into groups based on skill levels and are taught proper techniques for cornering, braking, and throttle control.
2. Track schools provide basic education in rules of behavior when on or near the track.
3. Track days are lower cost alternatives to track schools, are on a per-visit basis, and offer the riding time and environment in which to practice the skills learned from a previous track school.
4. While it is not prohibited to participate in a track day without previously completing a track school, most experienced riders and mentors would recommend it.

Discussion Area 3: How to Plan and Prepare

Facilitation Questions:

- What preparations are necessary?
- How do you plan a trip for a track day?
- What is important in preparing the motorcycle?
- What is important about preparing the rider?

Handout: 1 – Basic Motorcycle Track Day Checklist

Facilitator Facts:

1. Planning begins with finding and contacting the track/school you want to attend. Most riders will want to attend the closest one, just to save on transportation expenses. At the track's website or management office, details are available regarding exact preparation for the motorcycle and the rider.
2. Most tracks/schools require: new or nearly new tires, safety wiring of specified components, and antifreeze removal and replacement with water. Where the track sponsor does not require it, side-stand removal is a good idea as it is the first grounding point for most motorcycles. Taping over (or removal of) any breakable glass or plastic lenses is usually required too. Spare parts are also important: brake and clutch levers, gas can, hand tools and bike stands will come in handy. All motorcycles and the rider's riding gear are subject to a 'Tech Inspection.' If your bike fails it, you don't ride.

3. Getting the rider ready is just as important. The rider must be **well rested**. A proper track riding PPE ensemble will include a helmet in excellent condition (most tracks in the US require a sticker showing recent Snell Certification), a full leather riding suit, gloves and boots made for track use, and a back protector. No single one of these items is prohibitively expensive; however overall cost of the ensemble can add up quickly depending on brand and quality.
4. Transportation to and from the track is important. Either using or renting a truck to transport the bike you'll ride is important, as fatigue will be a factor if you ride to the track and back home. Pair up with other riders, carpool and transport trailers with multiple bikes if logistically possible. Make sure sport bikes are properly secured with the right tie-down straps.
5. Stay hydrated the night before and day of. You'll lose lots of fluids inside the riding suit. Eat right!

Discussion Area 4: What to Expect at the Track

Facilitation Questions:

- Where does a novice find the rules for track events?
- How can you get all the info necessary to have a successful track experience?
- How important is the Riders Meeting that is held at the beginning of each track day?
- What techniques might you encounter for the first time at a track day or school?

Handouts: **2 – List of Track Tips and Hints; 3 – Flag Color Code Reference**

Facilitator Facts:

1. First-time track day or track school riders will find that just about all track organizations have websites filled with necessary and important information on preparations, start/finish times, and rules for both track and rider. A search of the Internet will provide a wealth of information, as well.
2. Possibly the single most important event at the track is the Rider's Meeting held at the beginning of each track event. Riders should arrive early and be in attendance at that meeting. Very important rules covering rider behavior on and off the track (e.g. pit area) are discussed at this meeting. Failure to comply with all rules will most often result in the rider dismissal from the track (Black Flagged).
3. At a track school, most riders are taught techniques they were never aware applied to sport bike riding, such as; throttle control, body steering ('hanging off'), identifying apex and exit of turns, riding with relaxed arms and shoulders, trail-braking, and front-wheel-only braking coupled with braking pressures not previously encountered. Track school participants are never left "free reign" of the track and are most often given stair-step exercises to perform while on the track (one at a time). As the day progresses, multiple techniques are combined to form smooth and controlled (not necessarily fast) riding. Instructors watch from the side and also trail behind; frequently pulling riders over for minor coaching sessions.

Wrap-Up:

Suggested Wrap up discussion:

- Ask for, and discuss individual attitudes, predispositions, and expectations toward track riding.
- Ask if anyone knows the locations of one or more tracks in the region.
- Ask the participants how they would apply the knowledge they gained from today's discussion to their future of motorcycle riding and training.

Distribute copies of the DSOC Motorcycle Mentorship Module Evaluation form to all participants and request that they deliver or mail the completed form to the Command or Command Safety Office for processing.

Remind everyone to ride safe, and see you at the next Mentorship Meeting.

DSOC Motorcycle Mentorship Feedback Form

Presenter Name:

Date:

Topic/Title:

Unit Number:

Please review each statement below and check the response that closely matches your experience in the Mentorship Module today:

1. Please rate the presenter's performance:

Prepared Not Prepared Engaging Not Engaging Led Discussion LECTURED

Comments:

2. I was given opportunities to participate in the module's discussion

Never Only Once 2-4 Times Many Times Throughout Discussion

Comments:

3. With regard to my personal riding experiences, this discussion was:

Relevant Not Relevant Interesting Not Interesting

Comments:

4. This discussion topic has provided me with specific learning points that I can use to be a safer, better informed rider

None One Idea or Fact 2-4 Learning Points 5 or More

Comments:

5. I would be interested in participating in other Motorcycle Mentorship Module discussion topics

Never Again Willing to Try Another Module Would Like to Do Modules Regularly

Comments:

Thank you for your participation. Please make note of any other suggestions or comments below (continue on the back if needed):

Deliver or mail this completed form to the Command or Command Safety Office for processing. Please do not return this form directly to the Module Presenter.

Resources

Continued Reading:

Code, Keith (1983). *A Twist of the Wrist* (Vol. I.)
Glendale, CA: California Superbike School, Inc.

Code, Keith (1993). *A Twist of the Wrist* (Vol. II.)
Glendale, CA: California Superbike School, Inc.

Ibbott, Andy (2006). *Performance Riding
Techniques – The MotoGP Manual of Track
Riding Skills*. Newbury Park, CA: Haynes North
America, Inc.

Ienatsch, Nick (2003). *Sport Riding Techniques:
How To Develop Real World Skills for Speed,
Safety, and Confidence on the Street and Track*.
Phoenix, AZ: David Bull Publishing

Parks, Lee (2003) *Total Control – High
Performance Street Riding Techniques*. St. Paul,
MN: Motorbooks International

Pridmore, Reg (2004). *Smooth Riding The
Pridmore Way*. Center Conway, NH: Whitehorse
Press

Spiegel, B. (2010). *The Upper Half of the
Motorcycle*. Stuttgart, Germany: Whitehorse
Press



Handout 1 - Basic Motorcycle Track Day Checklist

<p><u>Bike Related</u></p> <p>Bike</p> <p>Key(s)</p> <p>Front Stand(s)</p> <p>Rear Stand(s)</p> <p>Good tire condition</p> <p>Spare tire(s)</p> <p>Coolant Level</p> <p>Extra Coolant</p> <p>Spare bolts/nuts etc</p> <p>Spare parts</p> <p>Lap Timer/Beacon</p> <p>D/L accessories</p> <p>Chain Lube</p> <p>Fuel</p> <p>Oil</p> <p>Removed Mirrors</p> <p>Tape Headlights</p> <p>Unplug Lamps/Ballasts</p> <p>Check Front/Rear Brakes</p> <p>Wash Bike</p> <p>Tape/remove Blinkers</p> <p>Tape Wheel Weights</p> <p>Valve Stem Caps On</p> <p>Stand Functional/removed</p> <p>Check Chain Tension</p> <p>Check Throttle Return</p>	<p><u>Tools</u></p> <p>3/8" Ratchet</p> <p>1/4" Ratchet</p> <p>Tie Wraps</p> <p>Extensions</p> <p>Torx Set</p> <p>Allen Set</p> <p>8mm-14mm</p> <p>28mm-32mm</p> <p>Screw Gun/Tips</p> <p>Wire Strippers</p> <p>Klein's/Pliers</p> <p>Channel Locks</p> <p>Scissors</p> <p>Screw Drivers</p> <p>Flashlight</p> <p>Generator</p> <p>Air Compressor</p> <p>Masking Tape</p> <p>Duct Tape</p> <p>Air Pressure Gauge</p> <p>12v pump</p> <p>Misc Fuses</p> <p>Camera (charged)</p> <p>Jumper Cables</p> <p>Honda Wash</p> <p>Rags</p> <p>Swivels</p> <p>Extension Cord</p> <p>Batteries (AA, AAA, 9V)</p>	<p><u>Others</u></p> <p>Cooler</p> <p>Water</p> <p>Gatorade</p> <p>Snacks</p> <p>Laptop</p> <p>Internet Card</p> <p>Easy-up Canopy</p> <p>Lawn Chairs</p> <p>iPod/Ear Phones</p> <p>Bike Manual</p> <p>Note Pad (2)</p> <p>Pens & Pencils</p> <p>Marker</p> <p>Clip Board</p> <p>Stop Watch</p> <p>Wallet</p> <p>Cash</p> <p>ID</p> <p>Ice</p> <p>First Aid Kit</p> <p>Sun-Block</p> <p>Camcorder</p> <p>Cell phone/Charger</p> <p>Small Electric Fan</p> <p>Bungee Cords</p> <p>Table</p> <p>Dog Leashes</p> <p>Pen for Dogs</p> <p>Food for Dogs</p> <p>Bowls for Dogs</p>	<p><u>Clothing</u></p> <p>Leather Suit</p> <p>Gloves</p> <p>Boots</p> <p>Sandals</p> <p>Sneakers</p> <p>Shorts</p> <p>T-Shirts</p> <p>Under Armor Shirt</p> <p>Under Armor Pants</p> <p>Under Armor Socks</p> <p>Rain Gear</p> <p>Umbrella</p> <p>Helmet(s)</p> <p>Tinted Visor</p> <p>Clear Visor</p> <p>Back Protector(s)</p>
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Handout 2 - List of Track Tips and Hints

- Never miss the rider's meeting!
- Learn where the officials want you to enter/exit the racetrack. Always give the appropriate signal when preparing to exit the track! (Hand up in the air or dangle foot off the peg.)
- Stay hydrated
- Bring a friend to help with the bike; call them your 'Tuner' and buy them dinner
- Check your tire pressures every time you enter or leave the racetrack. Check your fuel while you're at it. You will be very surprised at how quickly your fuel dwindles when you spend that much time on and off the throttle.
- Always give a big friendly "Hello" to the people in the next pit. You may need their help.
- Always accept help when loading or unloading your bike, always give it.
- Buy a good loading ramp. If you use a substandard ramp, you will pay in unfortunate repairs to your bike.
- Hide valuables and lock personal items up if possible. There's very little theft but if something does disappear, it's usually expensive.
- Bring chairs and shade. If it's a sunshade/tent/canopy, stake it down immediately upon putting it up (dirt), or use sand-bag weights if on pavement area.
- Make a riding gear list (to check before you leave home) and check it every time you go to the track. Add items to it as you learn.
- If you're late for the beginning of your session, don't worry. You still get to ride. Don't let the stress of rushing cause you to be out of mental focus and ride on cold tires too hard. Warm them up before taking the fastest cornering lines and before getting up to ideal track speed.
- Most riders only push cold tires once and find out their limits.
- Wear earplugs when riding. Every time!
- Ride your own ride. Following a superior rider may be a good way to pick up some tips, but it's also a good way to get over your head very quickly. Follow them until you feel they are too far away to track a good line, then go back to what you were taught.
- Use the first lap to warm up and the last lap to cool down. The cool down lap is good to cool down your engine. The cylinders and heads of modern sport bikes run at amazingly high temperatures; allowing a lower rpm cool down period prior to shutdown allows those critical parts to adjust to each other gradually and as they contract due to cooling cycles.
- Wave at the corner workers on the cool down lap so they know you are okay.

Handout 3 - Flag Color Code Reference

GREEN: The practice session, qualifying session or race has started. The track is “hot” or “active”, riders are out on the racetrack and at speed.

YELLOW: Standing: Caution, control your speed, but the problem/cause for the flag is not on the racetrack. Passing is usually allowed, but with caution. The yellow is often displayed one or two corner stations prior to the incident.

YELLOW with RED Stripe: Caution, debris on track, usually displayed one corner station prior to the incident.

YELLOW, Waving: Extreme Caution! Crash or debris is on the pavement. No passing. Usually displayed one corner station prior to the incident. Watch the corner worker for hand signals to help you avoid the problem.

RED: Cessation of practice or race due to conditions that could endanger other riders or rescue workers. Some tracks want riders to come to a controlled stop while others want riders to proceed slowly to the track exit onto pit road. You won't know which of these rules is in effect unless you attend the Rider's Meeting. Remember that you must signal your exit from the track each and every time by putting your hand in the air (even in flag conditions) or dangling a foot off the peg and that is done BEFORE you reduce throttle. Suddenly reducing the throttle while on a race track at speed produces a threat of being hit from behind.

BLACK: Signals a rider that he/she must pit immediately due to a motorcycle problem or rule infraction. Usually displayed at the Start/Finish line and often accompanied by a board with the offending rider's number on it. Safely exit the track and see the official on pit lane for instructions.

WHITE with RED: Emergency vehicle on course. Will be displayed one corner station prior to vehicle's location.



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Some of the principal contributors to this effort include the following:

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