



T-Clocks ~ Time for Safety!

By: Don DeLordo, Road Captain

The riding season is finally here! I had to get the cleaning supplies including bug removers out to the front of the shelf. These are all good signs of great riding. Like they Say... "Live to Ride, Ride to live".



I have been watching the RC Rider clips on YouTube, ever since Gene brought them to the meeting. They are great Safety videos and it prepares you before getting out there. As we all know SAFETY is the foundation of Top Cat's, and it is addressed in our GRASS classes, in our Pre-Ride Briefings and in every edition of our ROAR, right here in the Kaution Korner.

You're ready to ride but how about your bike? Don't forget that your motorcycle needs some TLC before you jump on the bike and ride.

The easiest way to winterize and de-winterize your ride is to have it stored over the winter at your favorite dealer! No need to worry about changing the oil, charging the battery, etc., since they do it all for you... All you have to do is give the service department a call and let them know when you would like to pick up your ride... Many of the dealers ask for a 2 week target date so they are not rushed and may overlook something. No hassles, and you start off the season right

However, if you are like many of us who store the bike(s) in our garage, you need to take some time and familiarize yourself with the steps to insure a safe startup. I like to get out the owner's manual and follow the steps recommended by your bikes manufacturer. The AMA also makes reference to "TCLOCK"

TIRES & WHEELS – How is the tread? Use a penny for a helpful gauge... put Lincoln on his head in the tread. If you see the top of his head, it's time to replace the tire. Don't forget to check the pressure and the wheels too. It is normal to lose some pressure in the winter.

CONTROLS – Check all levers, cables and throttle to insure they function smoothly.

LIGHTS – Check your turn signals, brake and wiring. If your ride is an older model and the headlamp or highway lights are foggy, this will reduce your visibility. You might consider replacing them or updating to LED's. You won't be disappointed with your investment.

OIL – Check under the bike and around the frame for any leaks or oil build up. Check all the fluids: Oil, brake, and primary.

CHASSIS – Check the bike frame and suspension (shocks & forks) for any leaks. This is a great time to also check the belt (chain) for ware and tare. One thing I found last year was my exhaust crossover bracket had cracked and was making a banging noise. Who would have thought?

KICKSTAND – Check the condition and retention spring.

Now that you conducted these checks, it time to treat your bike to a SPA treatment with a great detailing including washing, waxing and treating the leather. This will help keep the finish showroom new. It's still cold out but in a month or so the sun will be scorching hot and the SPA treatment will help protect the finish and really make your routine clean up much easier.

The last recommendation I would like to make addresses your first aid kit, rain gear and where you carry them on your bike. First Aid Kit - Make sure your kit is complete and the expiration dates are all good for the whole season. If not replace them. Rain Gear – Make sure there are no rips or tears. Remember the first rain gears, they were black. If you are still using one of those, please get rid of it and get one with a reflective color. Your life depends on it! Where should you carry these items? If you have saddle bags, you might want to consider keeping them in the right side or the curb side. It is much safer if you need to make an emergency stop and you are not in the line of traffic.

The AMA recommend we perform TCLOCK before every ride. Before you head out for the first ride of the season, take a little extra time during your bikes de-winterization, and your riding season will be more enjoyable.