



April 2024 Kaution Korner:  
Gene Rigsby, SRC and President of TC Illinois!



## Ready! Set! Whoa!!!

In doing research for this article, searching the web. One thing I found most interesting and a bit frightening. Is that when searching for spring riding tips, the first page of results in Google produced over 20 law firm links. All providing spring riding tips (Almost all the same, even the same text) All looking to grab your attention so you can remember them WHEN something bad happens.

This should tell you something about spring riding... Get yourself ready now, before you head out on the road.

Preparing for spring riding should start now. Before you get out on the road with your Top Cats family. Not only preparing your equipment, which is a given. But, also preparing your mind and body.

Ted wrote his March '24 Kaution Korner about clearing your mind and being in the moment, when spring riding, so you can focus on what you are doing and the action of riding defensively. Being in the moment.

Great advice and an even greater thing to practice. Something that will be a benefit to you as well as your friends and Top Cats family. One way to get practice and get your mind right is by reviewing motorcycle safety with some of the most knowledgeable experts around. Who are they you ask...?? Well, they are members of YOUR club! And they are willing to provide a wealth of information to help you prepare for the riding season. All for FREE... As a matter of fact, there is a **GRASS class** coming up on **April 7th**. You should attend. Check the Top Cats calendar for location, time, etc... If you can't make that class, talk to Mike Bradbury about getting another one together soon, so you and your Top Cat family can attend. It is a benefit to all who ride around you, well... and you... You would want the same security from those around you... Right??

In all seriousness, this is a great class, and a huge benefit in getting your mind focusing in on riding habits and of being on the road. Not to mention all the other things you learn from the class.

Our GRASS class is not the only source of riding and motorcycle information. There are a large number of groups and organizations that service the motorcycle community. Not all are the same though. So be careful about what advice you take. See my note above about the Law Groups, though they have a good purpose as well. Most sites are very beneficial to review and have interesting content. Wayne provides a great amount of motorcycling related information, including links in his monthly OIL SPOTS article, as well, other ROAR contributors have provided suggestions. I provided a few lists of website links to Mary for this edition of ROAR. Take a look and let's talk about them at a meeting or out on the road.

We like motorcycles, right...?

Now that you started getting your mind fight and focused, let's work on preparing the body.

I had a wee bit of a problem with my knee last year and had to go to physical therapy. During a PT session, I realize that this activity was a necessity to getting me ready for riding and something

good to do all year, but especially when getting ready to ride, whether at the start of the season or after a long break. Keep in mind, 2 weeks is a long break. Atrophy (loss of muscle) starts in 2 weeks. So, keep them muscles moving to keep them.

The PT I took may be a bit much, so here are some items I found on one of those great motorcycle related websites I spoke about. ([St. Charles HD](#))



As with riding on the road, always use caution when exercising and know your limits. Do not over do it. These are activities intended to benefit you and make you feel better. If you are not feeling better or feeling even slight pain. Stop. And see a doctor about what may be the cause. It may be something to address before you get out on the road.

### **Pull-Ups**

Pull-ups are an exercise that will test your upper body strength. Having excellent upper body strength is ideal for handling a motorcycle. You will be thankful if you ride a large motorcycle with a powerful engine. More upper body strength will let you more easily control your motorcycle around tight corners and turns. **Could substitute push-ups**

### **Squats**

Along with upper body strength, you also need lower body strength to handle a motorcycle well. Simple squats can give you lower body strength. Squats will also help you work on your flexibility and balance. Having excellent balance is essential for a safe motorcycle ride. If you cannot keep yourself steady during turning, acceleration, or braking, you will be in big trouble on the road or the track. Eventually, you can work your way up to doing squats with weights. **Planking would be a good substitute or an addition. Doing this also develops your core, which is needed when handling your motorcycle**



### **Lunges**

Lunges are another exercise that works out your lower body and improves flexibility. Many different riding techniques depend on good lower body strength, particularly in your legs. For example, if you need to put a knee down on a race track while taking a corner. Lunges give you quads, glutes, and hamstrings a proper workout. You can also do them wherever and whenever. **This can be done with a chair to help as you develop balance and strength**

### **Bicycle Riding**

Although it may sound a little funny to ride a bicycle to get in shape to ride a motorcycle, it is a good test of your endurance and stamina. Cycling for a few miles will help you build yourself up for long drives on your motorcycle. Mountain biking is another similar exercise option. Mountain bikes require you to use and work out a lot of the same muscles you need for a regular motorcycle ride. **Also a good way to start getting your riding muscle memory as well as your mental memory jump started.**

Of course there are more or alternate exercises you can do. The point is, to do something to get yourself ready. Now.

**If you are looking for a challenge, ask me about the Spartan 500 next time you see me.**

Next step in your preparation journey would be to get out on the road for some short, easy trips. Reflect on GRASS class, using what was taught. Hand signals. Riding in a particular track. Practice the method for measuring spacing to a vehicle in front of you, etc... and also start getting the muscles reacquainted with the things that they must do to keep you and those with you and around you safe while we ride. Riding is a team sport. Everyone around you is counting on you to do it right, as you would expect from them. Right..??

Looking forward to seeing you there....

- Gene "Lucky" Rigsby