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Motorcycling Guides

number

8



ARE YOU RIDE FIT?

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Introduction

Riders are sometimes caught out at the beginning of the riding season by not being physically fit enough to ride our bikes. You should think about this, especially if you are about to go on a long ride soon after the weather improves.

Over the winter months, most riders get out on their bikes a lot less than during the good weather of the spring, summer and autumn. For some, the winter weather means no riding at all for a significant time.

When we ride during better weather, we regularly use muscles to steer, turn and balance the bike, plus we brace ourselves, especially if we ride without a screen, against the forces of the wind. Those muscles are toned as we ride in the summer, and we feel good, especially with the sun shining down on us.

However, over winter, those same muscles don't get used as much and you become out-of-shape for riding. You are in danger of not being 'ride-fit'.

it is easy to get caught out when going for a long ride, one a whole day, or even worse, as week or so of riding on a tour and you can become fatigued very quickly. This is especially the case as you get older.



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I myself have just suffered as a result of this. After doing virtually no riding over the winter in the UK, I fancied some early spring riding, so in March, I went off to Florida for Daytona Bike Week and some riding in the sun. We did 1,600 miles in a week and that was on a bike with no screen. The first day was okay, but riding every day thereafter took its toll. Muscles ached and concentration levels dropped. I became very tired each day and even though riding was great fun, I didn't feel great.

So, what should we all do about this?

The simple answer is like anything physical you should build up slowly by riding for half-a-day at first, then a whole day, then a couple of days one after another. If your planned riding is all relatively short journeys, then the need to do this diminishes, but if you plan to go on a long ride, or a tour, early in the spring, then you really must get yourself in shape to do this.

Almost any other form of exercise helps. Climbing stairs, walking, cycling or light gym work will all benefit you.

The worst thing you could do is nothing to prepare get out there and get fit, even if it is just to ride your motorcycle!