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Riders of Indiana University Unite

In single-vehicle accidents, nearly two-thirds of the incidents are caused by rider error, typically a low-side and fall due to over-braking or running wide on a curve due to excess speed or under-cornering. Riding a motorcycle requires a sharp mind and quick reflexes in order to avoid dangers on the road. The IU campus is home to an unofficial motorcycle club known as the Indiana University Riders Club with nearly two hundred and that number continues to grow. This niche club is a great way for motorcycle enthusiasts to share their hobby and be part of a tight knit community. Although new members are always welcome to join, individuals who have little to no experience with motorcycles may be intimidated to reach out.

Riding a motorcycle can be a thrilling experience that allows an individual to truly be free and standout on the road. However, motorcycle riding can also be a very dangerous and less forgiving endeavor than driving a car. With proper training and practice, riders can develop the necessary skills to stay safe on the road and enjoy the company of other motorcyclists. This semester, my goal was to reach out to new riders like myself and provide them the opportunity to learn the basics of riding a motorcycle and how to stay safe on the road.

I embarked on my journey by first engaging with other members in the club who would be interested in attending an event to get hands on experience practicing on their motorcycles in a safe, closed environment. I also reached out to more seasoned riders in the club who would be willing to share advice and teach new riders. My proposal was received with great enthusiasm.
There were responses from both new and long-standing members in the club. A couple of the established members were willing to offer help teaching and some newer members were eager to learn and meet fellow riders. After evaluating approximately how many attendants would be present, I set a date and time for the meet that worked best for those who could make it.

Though my proposal was well received, the turnout was not what I had hoped. There were only two us at the meet for a majority of the time. A couple of other riders showed up sporadically throughout the day, but they only stuck around for a few minutes to chat and make introductions. While one of the riders was traveling to our location, he experienced complications with his motorcycle, thus forcing him to return home. Another potential participant forgot that the meet was taking place and did not realize until later that evening. Although the event did not turnout as well as I had hoped, I learned a lot from this experience.

Preparing and hosting this event has encouraged me to plan additional meets with the same intentions – to aid new riders in bettering their skills for operating a motorcycle. Gathering helpful exercises and practicing them myself made me realize just how much effort it takes to learn how to ride a motorcycle. I also learned how helpful it is to have a mentor giving advice and feedback on my riding. I want to be able to do the same for others. One of the seasoned members of the club mentioned that if an event such as this were to gauge enough interest, then the club would push to make it a repeatable event for the future. I hope to help make this happen. I will continue to plan events such as this at least once or twice a month to encourage new motorcyclists to better their skills and stay safe on the roads.