



SAFER, FASTER, BETTER!

The California Superbike School not just makes you faster, but more aware of what you are doing, and hence a safer rider on the track and road

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Siddharth Trivellore and Vicky Jaising (extreme right) are the first Indians to have been selected as coaches for CSS. Both are undergoing rigorous training currently.

It's difficult to think of a better way to spend a weekend for a motorcycle enthusiast than to hone his/her riding skills at a race track, that too under the meticulous eyes of world-class coaches from around the globe. This was exactly what ensued at the recently organised 2016 California Superbike School (CSS) in Sriperumbudur; as the sold-out event, considered to be one of the best motorcycle training grounds in the world, was choc-a-bloc with participants.

DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS, COMMON PASSION

The sixth edition of the CSS witnessed participation from more than 100 men and women, belonging to varied age groups and riding skillsets. Coming from equally diverse backgrounds such as banking, fashion industry, entrepreneurs and tinsel town, what bonded these individuals was their sheer passion for motorcycles.

The riders were split in two batches – the first conducted from February 5 to 7 with 55 people, while the other, from February 12 to 14, which saw 57 entries. There were no less than 10 renowned riding coaches who had flown in from various parts of the world including the



Parul Shahi and Maral Yazarloo were among the six ladies who participated in the 2016 CSS.

United Kingdom, Turkey and other parts of Europe.

HOLISTIC RIDING IMPROVEMENT TARGETED

Although this workshop was held at a race circuit – the Madras Motorsport Race Track at Sriperumbudur, near Chennai, the focus was not on speed but to rather improve the overall riding ability by using proven techniques. Everyday classroom training sessions were followed by practical implementation on the race track for a better understanding of the riding practices. The objective was also to make the riders safer and more aware on the road.



Peter Boon (aka Pinky) at Course Control has the tough job of reminding participants that CSS is not a race and to ride at their 80 per cent





>>> THE SOLE REASON CSS CONTINUES TO RETURN TO INDIA IS DUE TO EFFORT OF THE MOTORCYCLE CRAZY FATHER-SON DUO (TT VARADARAJAN AND SON SIDDHARTH TT) OF MAYA APPLIANCES FAME <<<



bike felt more sure footed and stable, which really inspired my confidence. Being lighter and stiffer, the race bike felt sharper and holds on to the desired line better when tipped into a corner. There's hardly any twitching or chassis flex, which ensured that I could focus more on the track and the recently-acquired CSS riding techniques. There were laps where I wasn't going flat-out, concentrating instead on applying the classroom theories on to the track. For my riding skill set, I couldn't have asked for a better motorcycle to hone my skills at the Chennai racetrack, as I graduated from CSS Level I, to II and finally to Level III. The CBR 250R is powerful enough to go as fast as I wanted to during CSS, yet wasn't insanely intimidating. So I could still focus on the task at hand.

It's needless to say that the CBR 250R race bike is loads of fun to ride. But what's truly commendable is the fact that most of these upgrades have been done by Honda locally, at their Indian R&D facility. Now wouldn't it be a treat to have a tamer version of this race-spec motorcycle available at Honda (HMSI) showroom, even as a special edition model?

RACING AHEAD

The last time I participated in the California Superbike School (CSS) was back in 2013, and my weapon of choice was the TVS Apache RTR 180 race bike provided by the school. This time round I wanted to step things up a notch and requested the good people at Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India to loan me a race-prepped Honda CBR 250R.

"seat." The entire rear section has been replaced by a tidy race body, and the entire bike doesn't have (or need) any of the lights or mirrors. Neither does it have a leg- or saree-guard, in order to save some weight. Just by jettisoning all these parts, Honda has managed to shave off close to 14kg from the bike.

Although the race bike looks rather similar to the production version seen on the roads, there are a bunch of changes done by Honda's factory racing arm to make the CBR 250R race bike truly special.

Rider geometry has been altered slightly, as the foot pegs have been raised and set back even more to match the sportier stance that is demanded by the laws of racing and aerodynamics. So, now riders can lean the bike a lot more and make optimum use of the sticky MRF soft compound racing tyres and firmer suspension.

As I slung a leg over the race motorcycle, I notice the obvious design changes first. Since racers don't intend to carry a pillion around on the racetrack, the race bike gets a sliver of foam that stretches the definition of a

I started off by warming up the brand new MRF tyres, and gradually increasing my pace. This also helped me understand the track and the bike. Surprisingly, as I went faster, the race



Lord R (read: Glenn Rothwell) takes a class room session before the participants apply the theory on the track.



The adrenaline rush on a motorcycle just before flag-off, is a feeling like no other



From neurosurgeons to IT professionals to fashion designers, this year CSS had over 100 participants from unimaginably diverse professions

GETTING BETTER BY THE YEAR
With over three decades of experience in training everyday commuters, MotoGP and World Superbike (WSBK) racers, the California Superbike School has trained over 1.5 lakh riders in as many as 27 countries. With the growing popularity of recreation motorcycling and the launch of world-class motorcycles in India, schools like the CSS are much-needed outlets to train petrolheads for optimally using the power on their saddles.