



CALIFORNIA SUPERBIKE SCHOOL 2019

Schooled!

WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT TO HEAD BACK TO SCHOOL AND WHAT BENEFITS YOU WILL GAIN FROM PAYING ATTENTION...

WORDS: ASHOK GEORGE

Yes, yes. We know we harp on and on about how important it is to attend riding schools. But we won't stop harping about it, because it is true. And like we've said before, there is no better place to do this than at the California Superbike School.

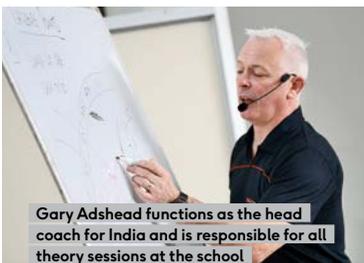
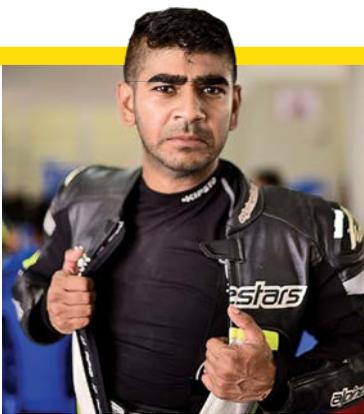
But we've given you enough information about the school itself and the things you learn there to warrant a smack on the head if we go into that bit again. So instead, we're going to give you a few pointers about what you need to expect going in and what you need to do while you're there...

First, leave all your delusions of grandeur at home. When you head to CSS, make sure you get it in your head that you are going there to learn. 99.99 per cent of the time, you will be much slower than any of the coaches around. And in the off chance that you are faster, well, calm yourself down. If you keep overtaking the coaches, you will never be able to pay attention to what they are showing you. They will also not be able to watch you and correct any mistakes you might be making. Besides, overtaking and trying to overtake takes up a whole lot of focus that you should actually be using to get your technique right.

Next, ask questions. Never think that any question is too stupid to ask. The first few times we went, we kept nodding our heads at all the pointers the coaches were giving us because we didn't want to appear to be a complete noob. But this time, we decided to ask them about everything and anything and turns out, we learnt much more. The coaches can only help you if you ask them!

All of the drills and theory that CSS uses to get you going faster is a result of years of research by founder Keith Code





Gary Adshead functions as the head coach for India and is responsible for all theory sessions at the school



STARTING YOUNG

While we were at CSS this year, we got a chance to hang out with this tiny gentleman. 13-year old Kavin Quintal is a motorcycle racer from Chennai who has been racing in the national motorcycle racing championship. Kavin splits his time between school and the racetrack and also holds the distinction of being the youngest rider in the history of the FMSCI to ever score championship points. Keep an eye out for him this season at the races. Especially since he's looking to put all of the skill acquired at CSS to good use!



“Go slow! It’s like what they teach the SEALs – slow is smooth and smooth is fast”

The first thing they tell you when you show up is to imagine a circle with a radius of six feet around every rider. You are not allowed inside that space at any time. They also tell you that you cannot overtake on the inside going into a corner and on the outside exiting a corner. What you need to realise is that all your fellow students are there to learn, just like you are. And if you act like a complete dimwit, you will not only be black flagged, you will also get in the way of someone else learning. And you don't want to be that guy, do you?

The last and most useful bit of advice we ever got was, “go slow”. It's like what they teach the SEALs – slow is smooth and smooth is fast. One of the coaches told us when we showed up this year that we should ride at a maximum of 60 per cent of our ability. It makes sense if you think about it. At 60 per cent, you have enough mental space left to focus on actually learning. Your mind isn't overcome with trying to process all the information coming at you when you're going hell for leather. You end up riding safer, learning more and eventually getting faster. And like the reason behind the SEALs using this technique, any action that has been practiced at slow speeds can eventually be carried out at faster speeds with more accuracy. Makes sense.

So, if you've decided that the next time CSS is in town, you'd like to go, keep these things in mind. And you might not even have to wait that long. We just heard that the first batch of coaches for a full-time school in India have just been cleared to teach. Class might be in session sooner than you think... **77**



The third one is an important one. Something that we've always noticed, and one even we're guilty of, is that some people show up at the school thinking of it as a track day. It's really not. Approach it as a school and you will learn a lot more. We have sometimes been too busy trying to go fast that sometimes we've forgotten all about the drills we were supposed to be practising. You might think that once gear and no brakes might take the fun right out of being on track, but trust us. When you start seeing how much faster you're going despite this, it'll all be worth it.

Number four, always respect your fellow students. You see, CSS takes safety very seriously.