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## Recap of the 2012 IAMC Challenge

*by Craig O. Olsen*

With the close of 2012 in December we came to the end of our third annual IAMC Challenge. Last year the Challenge sites comprised mainly ghost towns and mountain outlooks with markedly varied terrain for us to traverse in order to visit them.



A record 63 club members signed up to participate in the 2012 Challenge with over half of them visiting one or more sites. Five club members made the bronze tire level (10-19 sites visited) while another 5 reached the silver tire level (20-29 sites visited) and another 6 club members attained the gold tire level (30-44 sites visited). We recognize all who participated in visiting last year's Challenge sites, particularly the gold tire level winners: Dax Mickelson, Gary Umland, Jesse Handy, Kevin Peter, Ed Torrey, and Doug Pike.

It is with special acknowledgment that we congratulate 2 from our club who achieved the platinum tire level (45-48 sites visited): Brad Johnson and Rick Skinner. It should be noted that both of them visited all 48 sites, and both are previous platinum tire level winners - Brad in 2010 and Rick in 2011. Two of the featured articles in this issue of the newsletter highlight their 2012 Challenge journey.

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# Challenge 2012

by Brad 'LegIron' Johnson

In the late months of winter, I began planning routes and dates for the upcoming Challenge 2012 ride. I knew from my poor planning in 2010 that good, detailed plans were the key to saving miles and time which would allow for a more enjoyable summer.

I set out to complete the lower and warmer southern sites first before the snow had melted in the high country by departing Boise on May 13<sup>th</sup>. Yes, this was Mother's Day and as I rode out the drive-way and looked over my shoulder, I could not see my wife Connie, mowing the lawn while mumbling some 'not so encouraging' words that I'd prefer to forget. Deep down, I knew she'd be back to her "old happy self" by the time I returned, so I aimed the KLR south and cracked the throttle.

By early afternoon, I'd reached Three Creek Store and Jarbidge, and then continued on to set up camp along some unknown creek in a grassy valley. It had been a long day of wrong turns and I was ready to hit the sack. The next morning I hit nearby Rowland and on to the infamous Rd. 67 to Charleston before camping near Wells NV. The trail along the Bruneau River was a little rough in places, but the remote scenic ride was well worth it. The next morning I found Metropolis, chowed down on a big breakfast at a local café and departed for Tuscarora on my return to Boise. As I pulled up my drive-way, I noticed how nice the lawn looked as I was greeted with a quiet stare from Connie the gardener. I wasn't worried though...I knew she'd be back to her "old happy self" in no time at all.

Once home, I began planning my next leg of sites to check off and focused on heading west since the snows had begun to melt away. I posted an invitation on the website and 'Idahosam' joined me on June 26<sup>th</sup> for part of the ride towards Oregon and sites along the way. We hit Mineral City amidst rain which created slick and muddy roads. I proceeded on to Cornucopia after spending the night along the shores of the Snake River. While in the area, I decided to 'run' the Hells Canyon road which took several unplanned hours, but was well worth the time. I checked Homestead off my list as I headed towards Sheep Rock Overlook and Helena where I met a small group of ATV riders that knew the in-depth history of the surrounding area. So, I spent a couple hours riding around nearby trails while learning about the old mines, towns and some of the colorful residents that called this area their home. Finally, I headed towards home...12 sites completed and I'd been able to avoid mowing the lawn once again as I'd learned the true meaning of the words 'deafening silence' from my bride. But, I wasn't worried...I knew she'd be back to her "old happy self" before I headed out on the next trip. And besides, I'd just been to Helena and back so I wasn't worried at all.

**The Big Trip:** By the first week of July, tensions around the house had lifted slightly and I was finally allowed to speak when spoken to. Our son, Matt, arrived in Boise from Seattle with his KLR and I headed out on July 7<sup>th</sup> for a memorable week with my favorite riding partner. Before we left however, I made sure the lawn mower was fueled up as a gesture of 'good will' knowing how much it would be appreciated by his mother.





Our first nights camp was near Worswick Hot Springs after hitting Danskin Mountain LO and Rocky Bar. And, while crossing the river, I checked off my water crossing too. The next morning it was off to Sawtooth City, then Muldoon. Muldoon was a fun visit...Mr. Peterson, who owns the ranch and the old town site was one I'll remember for a long time. Seeking directions for the exact site, we rode up to the ranch where he greeted Matt and me with a warm and quiet smile, typical of many remote ranch cowboys I've come to know over the years. If I'm ever in this area again, I'll make sure to stop in again to say 'hi.'



That night, we camped along a river and departed for Custer and the Yankee Gold Dredge the next morning. At Custer, we learned that the road to Pinion Peak was still closed from snow drifts, downed trees, and washouts. But, as luck would have it, we ran into a Forest Service maintenance team who radioed the LO tower and were informed it might be passable with motorcycles...so off we went! And yes, the road was every bit as bad as they'd warned us, and it took the better part of the day to make the loop which included Langer Monument. We lost about an hour to fix a flat tire when I picked up a horseshoe nail. Having Matt along to fix flats is the only way to go (hmm, I wonder if I could get him to mow the lawn for his mother when we get home?).





We camped again near Langer Monument and hit the highway in the morning for Bayhorse and Mackay Hill Mine Dist. (Yes, I know...highway is a bad word, but we wanted to make up for lost time, and we also needed to stop in Leadore to visit some old friends so we did it...shhh, don't tell anyone!) After we crossed Gilmore off the list, we spent the afternoon in Leadore with our friends Dan & Dianne Clark. Dan is the valley's trapper and hunting guide, so he had a bundle of stories with which to update us. It was another fantastic day before we headed to Salmon and treated ourselves to a motel, a shower, and café food!

The next day...Leesburg. What a great ride that was! Beautiful country! Then it was off to Ulysses where we were met with a 'less than pleasant' lady along the main road in front of their house. She was a tad demanding as to exactly what we were doing there, but her husband soon came to our rescue, and calmed her down as he pointed out the historical spots of days long gone. They'd relocated from New York to the backwoods of Idaho after buying Ulysses from the mining company. They tore down all the buildings and burned them to rid themselves of the vermin and threat of disease that was present in the dilapidated buildings. Considering their options, I probably would've done the same although another piece of history is now gone forever.

That afternoon, we checked off Yellow Jacket and camped up stream in a peaceful little grassy meadow. It was another evening of sitting around the fire, listening to the sounds of the night and talking about days gone by and days yet to come. This is what I'll remember and treasure the most.



The following morning...it was off for a long, rainy, tiring day that proved to be a real challenge for us both. On our trek to Middle Fork it began raining and it continued as we completed Twin Peaks





and struck out for *Sleeping Deer*. Several miles from reaching *Sleeping Deer*, we encountered a snow drift along the side of a steep hill that was impassable. We kicked out a trail through a snow drift about 40 feet long by 2 feet deep and attempted to ride through it but our bikes started sliding down the hill. After a couple hours, we finally made it through the drift by pushing and dragging them...a foot at a time, and then we proceeded in a downpour to *Sleeping Deer*. Our return through the drift was just as challenging, but we came through with no issues...at least for now.

From *Sleeping Deer*, we dropped down to *Fly Creek Point* where the fog was so thick it made it difficult to see more than a few yards ahead of us. After clearing fallen trees, we finally made it to the top, snapped a quick picture, and dropped back off to the main road. As I was negotiating the slick trail, I hit a rock that bounced my bike into a tree. The nerf bars saved the radiator, but the plastics and the tank suffered some ugly damage. We were able to make some trail side repairs and headed for Challis in search of a warm motel room, café food and a hot shower.

The next morning (our last day of the ride), we headed for Boise, arriving by early afternoon and the repairs began. Matt had to leave the following morning, so he loaded up his KLR and prepared for his trip back to Seattle.

I spent the next 6 days working on the KLR. The nerf bar was broken in half, the tank was pushed in, and the fairing was smashed. Luckily, I had a damaged fairing (from a previous encounter with something, somewhere) that I was able to plastic weld. I welded and straightened the nerf bars, and pounded out the dent in the tank. While everything was dismantled, I went ahead and serviced the swing arm and knuckle, replaced all the wheel bearings along with a new chain and sprockets. After a shiny new paint job, it looked like new, ran great, and was ready to hit the trail again.

During the repairs:



After the repairs:



On July 20<sup>th</sup>, I tested my mechanical skills by making a quick run to *Lucky Peak Bird Observatory*. Everything worked as it should, so I made a day run to *Trinity Mountain LO* the next day, and again, everything performed as it should. When I got home, I packed up my gear for another day trip...the next leg of the Challenge.

July 22<sup>nd</sup>. The lawn looked good...proof that the lawn fairy had been taking care of things in my absence, and the cold stares from Connie had transformed into simple looks of disbelief as she shook her head and walked away. I knew it...she was finally coming around to being "her old happy self" again! So, I again hit the dusty trail to ensure that her recovery continued as I'd strategically planned all along.

*Ruby City* and *War Eagle Mountain* came next before I turned the KLR westward towards *Inskip Station*, *Rockville*, and *Birch Creek Ranch* before pounding the pavement for home. It had been a long day (294 miles) but I'd scratched off another five sites with only ten left on the list.



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July 23<sup>rd</sup> was a day of rest and a chance to strengthen my improving relationship with the lady of the house. The lawn looked good, the grease stain on the carpet that I'd made while tracking across the living room was magically gone and I hadn't been served with any legal papers yet, so I knew I was making some serious progress in the right direction. Not wanting to take any chances on my improved progress with the lady warden, I packed up to complete the final ten sites in the morning.

Pearl was the first, and then Squaw Butte LO followed by Quartzberg and Scott Mountain LO before I attempted to check Meadow Creek LO off the list. The map, the GPS, and the road signs all directed me to Meadow Creek LO from the Ice Hole CG south of Yellow Pine...they were wrong! I spent hours trying to force my way through before finally giving up and pitching camp at the CG for the night. A group of ATV'rs camped there took me under their wing and invited me to ride along with them the following day which I immediately accepted. So, I spent the next day joining with eight ATV's moving at a snail's pace...but we had fun! Dick Feller from Yellow Pine led the procession with informative and frequent stops along the way. Today...Roosevelt Lake, Cinnabar and Meadow Creek LO...done! I made my way to a campground above Warm Lake and called it a day after chowin' down on a huge chili burger at Warm Lake Resort.

July 26<sup>th</sup> was my last day after checking off No Business LO and Packer John LO on my way back to Boise. The Challenge 2012 had taken me across 4,115 miles in 17 days of riding. I'd seen bears, elk, deer, coyotes, skunks, badgers, moose, turkey, antelope, and mountain sheep. I'd been able to slip in all the Challenge sites between the late snow pack and the wild fires that would soon follow that prohibited travel to many of the sites. I'd spent a fantastic week with Matt and met and made new friends along the way while reconnecting with old ones.

And yes, Connie has returned to her "old happy self again." But, I need to start buttering her up now for next year's Challenge 2013 even though she's always known how lucky she is to have me. Since her birthday is just around the corner, I think I'm gonna get that gal something extra special this year...maybe that new snow shovel that's on sale at Wal-Mart. She's just gonna love it!

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## Just in the Nick of Time!! My 2012 IAMC Challenge

By Rick Skinner



Metropolis School and the Ruby mtns

"Forgive me for asking, but what's the hurry? You have at least 5 months before the snow starts to fly," 'Idaho Sam' posted this question to me on the ADV site back in early June. I had already visited 19 of the challenge sites by then, and Sam wondered what the hurry was? I responded that I had a motorcycle trip to Canada planned for August and September and a trip to Lake Powell in October; therefore, if I wanted to visit all the Challenge sites, I had to start early to get to all of them before August. What I did not know, was that the fires were coming. I didn't yet realize in early June, that by planning for one thing, I was unwittingly setting myself up to accomplish another thing... go figure!

Also, fate played a hand. On July 30<sup>th</sup>, our last day of riding for Challenge sites, we were riding the road to Sleeping Deer Mountain. On our way out, we went up to Twin Peaks LO. While there, we noticed a large fire smoke to our west in what appeared to be the Pinyon Peak LO area. It appeared to be a "big one." Little did we know, that this and other new fires, would shut down the Idaho backcountry for the next two months and keep many Challenge seekers from completing their quest. We got lucky and barely squeaked in there ahead of the fires.





The fire that started it all... Beaver Creek Road from Twin Peaks LO, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012



Riding along the Bruneau River between Charleston and Rowland





When asked to pick a favorite Challenge site this year, I found it impossible... there were so many good places! The loop we rode to pick up Metropolis, Tuscarora, Charleston, Rowland, Jarbidge and Three Creek was one of the most memorable rides on which I've ever been.



Creek Ranch Kids

Three



Lava pavement, riding the back way from Birch Creek to Inskip Station





The back way around the lava fields, from Birch Creek to Inskip Station was an adventure! I also loved the old Town of Cornucopia.



Halfway Oregon on the way to Cornucopia

The ride from Pinyon Peak LO to Loon Creek Guard Station on the "closed road" was phenomenal.







Yellow Jacket and Middle Fork Peak LO were unforgettable and Sleeping Deer Road was a ride I will never forget. It all was amazing; it all was fun.



I was fortunate to do my rides with several different partners this year. Thanks to Gaylon, Dax, Carl, Mike and my frequent riding buddy, Trent, for making the rides safer, fun and more interesting.







Again this year; I want to thank the IAMC club leadership for their hard work in putting the Challenge together and for giving us a unique opportunity to see some amazing parts of the world we live in... it really is incredible.



I posted all of our rides visiting the 2012 Challenge sites on the following thread over at ADV:

<http://advrider.com/forums/showthread.php?t=792979>

If you wonder what the Challenge sites look like, or are interested in how we got all this done, check it out... but more importantly... get out there and ride!!

rick





## Getting in Riding Shape

by Craig O. Olsen, M.D.

For many sports (football, basketball, baseball, soccer, skiing, and swimming to name a few) being physically fit (defined as flexibility, strength, endurance and balance) improves performance while reducing the risk of injury. Initially, it may seem being physically fit is not necessary for riding a motorcycle, particularly when looking at some segments of our motorcycling community. (This is not meant as a back-handed reference to Harley riders; after all, I own one!) For that matter, motorcyclists don't get much respect as far as athletes go. For the non-riding public, many believe that riding just involves sitting on a motorcycle and letting it carry you and do all of the work. Nothing could be further from the truth.

To counter this misconception, we need only to look at motorcycle racers. Several studies from the sports medicine literature show that both professional and amateur male and female motorcycle road racers have very intense physical strains imposed upon them during qualifying and competition races as evidenced by sustained heart rates greater than 90 percent of maximum and significantly elevated serum lactate and cortisol levels. [1-3]



Figure 1: Maximum aerobic power ( $VO_{2max}$ ) measurement obtained by analyzing expired air with an oxygen and carbon dioxide analyzer. [4]

In addition other studies looked at both professional and amateur off-road motorcycle motocross racers along with enduro and desert rally racers. [4-5] These studies show significant increases in maximum aerobic power (measured by  $VO_{2max}$ ), sustained maintenance of heart rate at greater than 97 percent of maximum, isometric muscle strength, and serum lactate levels consistent with great physical stress and demand being placed on the riders. This is more evident in motocross riders than in enduro or desert rally riders, but all three groups of motorcyclists were equivalent to or exceeded the values achieved by male distant runners who were recruited as controls. [4]

Conclusions from each of these five studies support the development of well structured specific physical fitness training programs geared toward improving aerobic and anaerobic capacity as well as strength and power training of different muscle groups to improve road and off-road motorcycle racers' riding success while reducing their risk of injury.

The vast majority of adventure dual-sport motorcyclists are neither professional nor amateur road or off-road motorcycle racers, so how does the above information translate to a need for our being in shape to ride? The answer is that it does apply. Recently, a few novel studies out of Canada looked at the physiological demands and physical fitness of riding off-road vehicles (ATVs and motorcycles). These studies were conducted in 327 off-road riders, ages 16 and older recruited through local and national Canadian off-road riding organizations. [6-8] Some of the findings from these studies include: (1) Off-road motorcyclists had above average aerobic fitness (79th percentile) while those riding ATVs were below average (40th percentile) compared to the general population. (2)



Off-road motorcycling conforms to the recommended physical activity guidelines and can be effective for achieving beneficial changes in health and fitness. (3) Positive physical fitness and health adaptations can be gained from a training program using off-road motorcycle riding as the exercise stimulus. (4) The aerobic demands of riding off-road was found to be similar to other self-paced individual activities, such as golf, rock climbing, alpine skiing, tennis, and racquetball. [7]

*Figure 2: Ambulatory oxygen consumption measurement while riding an off-road vehicle. The rider's nose is plugged and all expired air is expelled through the mouthpiece which contains a volume meter and expired air sample line held in place by the modified chin guard of the helmet. Inset top left: Reverse angle view of the metabolic computer (with protective padding) in the backpack as worn by riders. [7]*



In addition to the physiological benefits of off-road motorcycling there is a distinct benefit from being in better physical shape to ride; being fit to ride (as is true of many other sports) significantly reduces the chance of injury. [9] Being physically fit to ride definitely helps prevent fractures by increasing flexibility, greater strength, and better balance. It also helps prevent strains, sprains, and falls. [10] Having improved physical endurance (an important component of physical fitness) significantly reduces riding fatigue that can contribute to rider error, accident and injury, especially on longer rides. (See "Fatigue and Managing Motorcycle Riding Risk," IAMC Newsletter, Issue 1, 2010.)

Of the four components of physical fitness (see first sentence of this article) strength is the easiest and quickest to develop. Strength building involves resistance exercises (using free weights, resistance machines, or the weight of your body). If you are out of shape and start doing regular resistance exercises, you may expect to see a 50 percent increase in your strength in less than a month. While it is possible to develop your strength from resistance exercises using commercial or home gym equipment, you can also accomplish it at home with very minimal equipment and expense.

Some muscle groups to target with strengthening resistance exercises for motorcycle riding include calf and thigh muscles used to stand on the pegs for prolonged periods of time that is sometimes required, arm and shoulder muscles used to deftly maneuver your bike and secure the handlebars over rough terrain, and core back, abdominal, and chest wall muscles occasionally needed to pick up your dropped bike. Some fully loaded dual-sport bikes weigh around 600 pounds and require both strength and technique to pick them back up when dropped; and if you ride like me, you may need to pick it up several times a day.

The only way to increase the flexibility component of physical fitness is to stretch your muscles. Strengthening muscles without stretching them makes them tighter; just as some body builders who don't stretch their muscles become muscle-bound in that their tight muscles keep them from moving quickly and fluidly. For motorcycle riding (as for many other sports) emphasizing muscle strengthening without stretching actually increases the risk of injury. A good time to do stretching exercises is before and right after each workout, especially after doing the endurance component of your exercises while your muscles are still warm.

The endurance component of physical fitness, or cardiovascular fitness, is typically developed by exercises that increase your heart and breathing rate in a sustained fashion. The goal of endurance training is to build gradually to a moderate-to-vigorous level that increases both breathing and heart rate. Once your goal is reached, you can





divide the endurance activity into sessions of no less than 10 minutes each with a total minimum of 30 minutes per day most or all days of the week. Your goal with endurance workouts is to achieve 55-90 percent of your maximum heart rate for a minimum of 30 minutes per day for most or all days of the week in order to be effective. Your maximum heart rate is calculated as 220 minus your age in years.

Some examples of moderate endurance activities include walking briskly on level ground, swimming, bicycling, golfing (without a cart), tennis (doubles), volleyball, rowing, or dancing. Vigorous endurance activities include climbing stairs or hills, swimming laps, bicycling briskly uphill, tennis (singles), cross-country skiing, downhill skiing, hiking, or jogging.

The cardiovascular system delivers oxygen to the skeletal muscles, which in turn use this it to burn various fuels (carbohydrate and fat) to yield mechanical energy. Your body adapts in response to the demands placed upon it. As you work or exercise hard, you overload your aerobic systems. During rest, your body adapts by making improvements in its cardiovascular and muscular function. The heart becomes stronger and more efficient, and the skeletal muscles become better at extracting oxygen from the bloodstream. Within muscle cells, the mitochondria boost their enzyme systems to oxidize fuels. These changes occurs slowly over time. For continued improvement, you must continue to overload these systems, and as you adapt, you require more strenuous workouts to do this. How do you know if you are training at the right level? Physiologists have discovered that the rate of oxygen burned in the muscles is the best measure of aerobic work. To determine this requires expensive equipment and specialized testing facilities. Basically, this is determined by having an individual run on a treadmill while heart rate and volume of inhaled and exhaled air are measured. Samples of exhaled air are periodically taken, and the oxygen concentration determined. The difference between the amount of oxygen breathed in and out during this test is what the muscles have consumed to burn fuel. The rate of oxygen consumption, in liters per minute, is call  $VO_2$ . The test is done at progressively greater levels of exercise until the individual can exercise no more. The maximum rate of oxygen consumption is called the  $VO_{2max}$ .

Research on  $VO_2$  has shown that there is a threshold below which no additional gains are achieved in aerobic exercise. For most people this is approximately 55 percent of  $VO_{2max}$ . Since it is difficult (a cumbersome process requiring expensive equipment) to calculate  $VO_2$ , percent of maximum heart rate is a much easier determinate for the effectiveness of your endurance exercise workout. The relationship between percentage of maximum heart rate and percentage of  $VO_{2max}$  is very predictable and is independent of age, gender, or level of fitness. As you can see from the graph, 55 percent  $VO_{2max}$  corresponds to about 70 percent maximum heart rate.

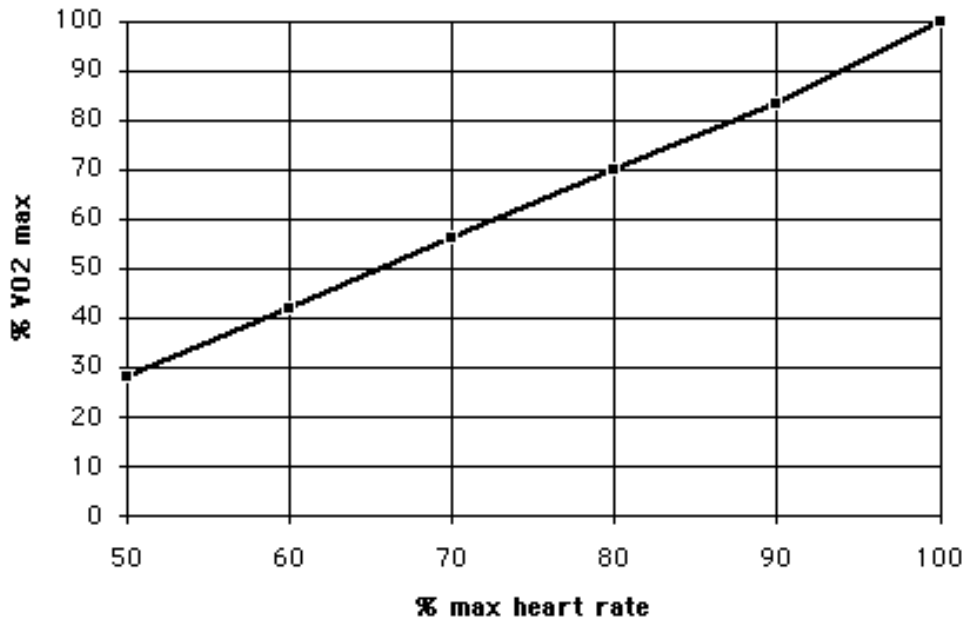


Figure 3: Linear relationship between %  $VO_{2max}$  and % maximum heart rate. Maximum heart rate = 220 - age (in years).



For motorcyclists balance is another important component of physical fitness. While motorcyclists probably have better balance than the average individual, this component nevertheless should not be neglected in your physical fitness program to get into better shape to ride. It involves strengthening the muscles used to balance and conditioning the neuromuscular components of balance (vestibular system of the inner ear, visual system, and somatosensory/proprioception system). Improving the balance component of physical fitness augments your riding ability while reducing your risk of injury. The more technical and difficult your level of riding, the more effect this has.

Following are brief summaries of websites that deal with the four components of physical fitness (strength, flexibility, endurance and balance) along with some that are specific to motorcycle riders.

- A. **The Motorcyclist's Free-Weight Workout Made Simple for Riders.** This article from Sound Rider appeared in Spring 2010 and summarizes 7 simple strength resistance exercises you can do at home utilizing free-weights (dumbbells) to help you get in better riding shape. You don't have to wear your motorcycle gear to do them.  
<http://www.soundrider.com/archive/tips/motorcyclist-workout.htm>
- B. **Racer X Virtual Trainer** has teamed up with professional trainer Seihi Ishii to offer useful instruction for improving your performance both on and off the motocross track. While this is geared toward motocross, much helpful information on physical fitness for off-road riding can be gleaned from its 26 pages of archived articles and features on training.  
<http://www.racerxvt.com/category/training/>
- C. **Physical Conditioning for Riding: Getting in Shape.** This site from MCL Sport-touring in Simi Valley, California, lists 10 strengthening and stretching exercises to improve physical conditioning for riding. These exercises are illustrated and can be done without any special equipment.  
[http://www.motorcyclelarry.com/index.php?main\\_page=page&id=6&zenid=vlpo0lmc94hcfm8hlvcl3h6sa2](http://www.motorcyclelarry.com/index.php?main_page=page&id=6&zenid=vlpo0lmc94hcfm8hlvcl3h6sa2)
- D. **P1Fitness.** This is a series of 11 short YouTube videos by "83268matthew" illustrating several exercises that target strength, flexibility and balance and can be done at home without specialized equipment.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOnMXbL6JG8&list=PL8F390E8BE4A01ABF>
- E. **Offroad Fanatic.** This company strives to bring all off-road motorbike enthusiasts together in one place to share, learn and experience exciting and engaging content. They have over 114 videos posted on their YouTube channel from pro tips, new products, and featured rides to do-it-yourself videos. Among them are the following four specifically related to (1) body conditioning; (2) core flexibility, balance and endurance training; (3) training like an athlete; and (4) strength and power training. These four videos by Mandy Thomas and Brad Compere show several excellent exercises geared toward the off-road motorcyclist, combining all four components of physical fitness that can be done without specialized equipment.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hAOs2koJwWo>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4uUk7MeYMRk>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-pjk1M5Suj8>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Im6WLM6mtM>
- F. **Physically Trained.** This site contains the US Army physical readiness training and physical fitness training programs outlined in detail with illustrated exercises covering all components of physical fitness. This site probably has more on physical fitness than you would ever care to read, but it also contains about everything you need you will ever need to know.  
<http://www.physicallytrained.com>





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