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# ANY ROAD

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NATIONAL LAND SPEED  
RECORD HOLDER  
BONNEVILLE SALT FLATS



“We are here to go fast, but remember, SAFETY FIRST!” This was a line that I heard from a long time Bonneville Salts Flats racer and now an official starter at the races, Bill Taylor. If you read this new column last month, you would have learned that I got my first opportunity to race at the salt flats in 2006. We traditionally have participated in the “Speed Trials by Bub” ([www.speedtrialsbybub.com](http://www.speedtrialsbybub.com)), which is a motorcycle only event sanctioned by the AMA (American Motorcycle Association). In 2007, we got the chance to attend the Bonneville Nationals, which is an SCTA (Southern California Timing Association) sanctioned event that allows cars and bikes. Seeing hot rods actually running on the salt was so surreal. Generally if you have heard of the salt flats, an image of an old hot rod racing there comes to mind. Bill Taylor himself got into the 200 mph club in the 1950’s, and long after he stopped racing, he still can’t stay away. He is the man on the starting line that checked my helmet strap every time, made sure my leather suit was zipped all the way up and said to me, “We are here to go fast, but remember, SAFETY FIRST!” This man stole my heart with his gentle ways.

I start with that information because anyone who is a veteran of any type of sport has the opportunity to share their experiences with someone just starting. Bill knew that calm words would get my focus back to where it needed to be. He understood how your mind can race in a million directions right before you twist the throttle and take off, because he has been on this starting line himself many times before. I appreciated his gentleness, consistency, and his wisdom. Recently I was able to take what I consider a next step in my own riding experience. Last summer Dan Cheeseman from our shop and I became Motorcycle Safety Foundation certified RiderCoaches. I can now legally and officially share my riding experiences with others who have a desire to learn! What greater level of satisfaction can you get from your

sport than to come to a point where you can “pass it on”? Share what you know. It’s really been a blessing to me.

I travel and speak at many venues where I have the opportunity to inspire women and men alike to conquer their fears and hop on a motorcycle for the first time. Or, if they are already riders, challenge them to take it to the next level, whether that is a longer cross country ride, an experienced riders course, leading a charity ride, maybe racing, or even...teaching and mentoring by sharing their OWN stories from the road! And every opportunity I get, I tell them to get the education, take the class, because we are out there to have fun (or go fast!), but remember, SAFETY FIRST!

What better way to become a confident, SAFE, rider, than to learn in a controlled environment with trained instruction? Someplace where you can develop your own habits based on proven techniques. Classes are available all over South Dakota so you can find a location near you that fits your schedule at [www.southdakotasafetycouncil.org/motorcycle](http://www.southdakotasafetycouncil.org/motorcycle). Go to the website to find out more, but the Basic Rider Course covers the fundamentals to help you become a safe and responsible motorcyclist. It provides the opportunity for you to learn the physical and mental skills important for operating a motorcycle.

Bill really had an impact on me. At the end of racing week, I went and got my picture taken with him. I mailed him the photo with a thank you note and he sent me a typed letter with a photo of him and his family on the salt back in the 50’s. He shared his experience with me, and I will never forget it. I can only strive to model after Bill and do the same for any student that is put in front of me.

*See you next month! Please e-mail what you’d like to read about to [laura@kustomcycles.com](mailto:laura@kustomcycles.com)*