

Superbike School

Level Four

The fourth level of the California Superbike School is completely tailored to the individual. When the day started out I was unsure of what I wanted to focus on. It wasn't long before I knew and got into the swing of things.

The first lap of the day is, in my case, always the hardest. I spend a few laps trying to re-familiarise myself with the track and all of the flag points.

Level Four starts out with a quick questionnaire on what you want to learn on the day and a chat to your on-track coach, and then you're on your way.

For the first session on the track with my beloved Triumph I wanted to re-learn the Two Step drill, as I had a few questions that I had thought of while riding around on the road. I believe there is no better way to learn than the hands-on way.

Once the first session had finished I went straight into the pits for the debrief with my on-track coach, Adam, to see what I needed to focus on. In the past I was very nervous about hanging off the bike when cornering, so since the last school day I had been trying to use my newfound skills and ability every chance I got. Adam picked up on a few things, and turned out I was hanging off the bike way too much and had no idea. I had gone from one degree to the other. Once Adam picked up on this I went straight back out and practised.

That is one of the biggest benefits of Level Four – once you learn and/or discuss a topic in the classroom you don't have to wait until your group is up to go out on the track, you can just go straight out while it is fresh in your mind.

After the Two Step I thought I should scrub up on entry points and once again I had a few questions. I was using entry points that I found on the track - skid marks, notches on the ripple strip etc, and I was unsure if my entry points were in the correct location. After a few laps the track coaches went out and marked the entry points to the corners with tape, and to my surprise I was pretty close if not spot on the money. I was a lot more confident in my decision-making skills then, and with my extra confidence I felt more relaxed and more in control.

The next topic I thought I needed to work on was my Wide View technique. I think this will take years for me to really be able to use, the biggest problem being my SRs (survival reactions). At first I find it easy to use my Wide View, however, when I find myself in situations that are a bit hairy my SRs come out and my Wide View goes out the window.

Adam noticed I could work on this technique a bit more, so for a fair few laps I really concentrated on it. It is true what they say about the Wide View – it seems to slow everything down and gives you more time to prepare for the next straight, corner etc.

One of the biggest advantages of this school is the support given to the students. I have never been told that I have asked a silly question and I have never heard of this happening to any other student either. Now I must admit at times I can't seem to explain to the coaches the exact point I am trying to make and I guess it would almost test a saint, but I take my hat off to each and every one of the staff at the school as I have never met such a good spirited, fun and committed group of people.

Since starting Level One I have learnt more than I could have possibly imagined. It almost feels like prior to the school I was on my Learner's and I have only just now graduated to my full licence. I have a better understanding of what a motorbike can do and what I can do on one. I'm not suggesting by any means that I consider myself to be top ten in Australia but I feel more confident and aware than I have ever been.

I have just become the proud father of Marshall David Foster. I thank Superbike School for this opportunity to be educated – this course could have very well saved my life. I personally believe this school has and will continue to save lives.

Thank you to the California Superbike School and to all its staff.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Everyday Joe.