



## RawHyde Adventures

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# DIRT UNIVERSITY

**R**emember camp? Cold drafty cabins, bland meals, and daily activities? After spending a weekend at RawHyde Adventures, I can attest that camp isn't what it used to be.

Founder Jim Hyde saw a need for training those who are interested in riding large displacement motorcycles off-road. His vision is more than rigorous curriculum; it's an all-encompassing experience. Jim's philosophy extends beyond the trail to good physical conditioning and diet. The low-carb, protein rich meals are filling and sumptuous. Did I mention RawHyde has its own wine? Dirty Cab anyone? An hour north of Los Angeles, the RawHyde Camp is an ideal location for national and international students wishing to experience an official BMW training center.

After Friday night's meet-and-greet dinner, students prepare for Saturday's class: Adventure 101. Though many ride their own

motorcycles, others choose to rent from a selection of BMW models. The coaches teach by the book. Jim has developed a challenging plan for them to follow, and they frequently check to ensure all facets of instruction are covered. Interestingly, many instructors are former students wishing to return to their roots and give back what they've received—is there any greater testimonial to a program?

Day 1 is, well, scary! After a training session and stretching, we're broken into two groups before we mount our metal steeds to tackle our first trail—the road to camp. The rutted, gravelly path is a knee-knocker, and we make slow progress. However, we quickly build skills and confidence. Next, the paddock's tight turns and sandy ruts keep us focused; hills measure our braking acumen. "Up on the pegs, lean your body, on the gas—move it!" Part drill sergeants, part therapists, coaches point out behaviors with one hand and pat backs with the other. It's

a good philosophy, and it works. By afternoon, we enter the ribbons course, a tight, snaking path with markers lining the trail. By the end, ribbons lay in tatters proving that skills take time to master.

Day 2 is almost as scary! Though emboldened by our progress, today's menu of steep hill climbs and descents, whoops, and sand are sobering. But we make it. Sure, bikes are dropped (stickers are applied to fenders to a chorus of horn honks from fellow empathetic riders), but skills are honed. The day ends, once again, with the ribbons course. We charge the tightly roped passage and, to our collective shock, we make it! In 48 hours, unsure novices are forged into beginning adventure riders. For those seeking further training, there are the intermediate and advanced courses, but us newbies revel in the satisfaction that we've survived what Dirt U can dish out! **RR**

For more information visit [www.rawhyde-offroad.com](http://www.rawhyde-offroad.com).