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A few months ago a twenty-something friend of mine sent me an E-mail asking a lot of questions. He told me he was going to Deals Gap on a motorcycle vacation with his riding buddies. The plan was to trailer their high powered racing style bikes down and then spend the week riding in the area. He thought they would be riding as many as 500 miles a day when they got there and wanted to know how he could do this comfortably. He admitted that he had not ridden more than 200 miles in a day before. My first thought was that riding the world's fastest production motorcycle could not be comfortable for that many miles in a day, especially on curving mountain roads, but to each his own.

First we talked about riding twisty roads and the need to add more time for the difficulty factor of the roads. 500 miles on mountain roads would take a lot more out of you versus riding down easy highways. They may want to make sure they can cut a trip short if it becomes too demanding or too late in the day. In mountainous areas this is not always possible. My next suggestion was to look at his seat and handgrips to make sure they were in good condition and the foam was in good shape. Then we talked about riding clothes designed for motorcycling and the need for proper attire with the proper cuts. He had a nice motorcycle leather jacket with venting and leather pants - a good start. Then we discussed that June would most likely be very hot and he would be better off in some of the new mesh-tech type jackets and pants. After we talked he purchased a new mesh-tech style jacket and was ready to go. I recommended that he ride as much as possible before he left. I also gave him several web sites for motorcycle comfort needs and the Iron Butt site for reference. I suggested a few books he could read to get some ideas. I told him to look out for the dragon's tail and away he went.

He went on his trip and was having a good time until he lost control and went down. His super bike hit a guardrail and was very heavily damaged. My friend had some bumps, small scrapes and a sore leg from sliding. He borrowed a bike so that he could finish his vacation. Proper riding apparel had saved him from some very heavy discomfort. I received another E-mail from his Mom thanking me for helping him get properly outfitted. She credited his minimal injuries from the crash to what he was wearing. When my friend and I originally talked the emphasis was on his comfort, but it ended up saving his hide.