Weary

at a time, or to the next meal, or the next motel or campground-- it's up to you.

See with "hard and soft eyes." Horses see two separate pictures - one from each eye. Their brains then integrate the information. They also can see long distances from the edge of their eyeballs and close up from the center. This allows them to scan the horizon for predators while they graze head-down. Humans do not have the genetic potential to see separate images with each eye, but we do have excellent peripheral perception. Learn to watch the road with the center of your eye and collect other information from the periphery at the same time. An easy drill is while watching TV, count the number of books or other objects in another part of the room. Keep trying; it gets easier and eventually quite comfortable. Keep a hard eye to the front, soft eye to the sides.

PART II. Physical Endurance

Physical endurance is a combination of muscle strength, cardio vascular conditioning and nutrition/hydration.

Develop Muscle Strength and Control Tension. We are each given a genetic gift at birth on the form of slow and fast twitch muscle fibers. Fast twitch fibers provide explosive, burst strength such as power lifters might use. Slow twitch fibers provide long-lasting, relatively low power.

Modern motorcycles do not usually require maximum fast twitch muscle power to ride. Although, if you drop one or try to get it on the center stand you may wish you had more. Motorcycle riding does, however, require slow twitch muscle power. Developing your run-for-ever slow twitch muscles are critical to endurance. If you do weight training (of course you do, you ride motorcycles right?) lower weight and more repetition is the key. Upper body strength including the muscles surrounding your shoulder's rotator cuff is equally as important as legs. Back strength must be balanced with abdominal fitness in order to avoid back pain.

Finally, realize that a death grip on the handlebars will wear you down. Riders often carry a lot of tension in their bodies without realizing it. Fear of losing control is often the cause. Improving your riding skills and learning the limits of your bike will often lead to a more relaxed riding

style which in turn will improve your endurance.

Manage your body temperature or pay the price. Just like the engine in your bike, your muscles need fuel and have an optimum operating temperature range. Performance drops off if an engine or your muscles are starved for fuel or get too hot or cold.

Cardiovascular performance is usually thought of as the flow of oxygen and nutrients to organs and muscles. While this is of primary importance blood flow is also a primary medium for temperature regulation. Because of this we get a double payoff for doing cardiovascular training.

Getting your heat rate up to an exercise level for 18 to 22 minutes or so, three times a week will do wonders for your riding. If you are not in a program now, check with your doctor before beginning training. He or she will also advise you on a good target exercise heart rate.

Our bodies have a number of ways to regulate temperate. In warm weather core heat can be lowered by conduction (blood flow), evaporation (sweat) or convection (breath).

In cold weather, your goal is to conserve heat. Don't wait until you feel really cold to stop and add layers or button up. By then you have already lost a lot of heat and your muscles will not be at peak operating efficiency.

Once we were traveling through Costa Rica on a bike trip. We went from stifling heat and humidity on the beach at Dominical to bone chilling fog on the Inter American Highway's Hill of Death - all in the course of two hours. In this case our inner garments were soaked in sweat when we hit the cold. To avoid getting chilled, we stopped to zip-up jacket vents and add another layer. Of course our under garments were the type that wicked moisture away from our skin.

Even if you're in great shape, you still have to manage blood volume. We all know that our heart pumps blood to our muscles and brain. As I said before, blood carries oxygen and nutrients to critical systems and scavenges CO2 and other byproducts of oxidation. Blood also shunts to surface capillaries under our skin to dissipate heat from hardworking muscles. So if our blood flow is reduced, we are not as strong, we don't think at full potential, and we can overheat.

Dehydration means reduced blood volume. If you want to ride all day, drink all day. Not just at gas or rest stops - on the bike. There are all kinds of drink systems with drinking tubes that can be used while you are moving.

When to drink is often in dispute. Some say they wait till just before a gas stop so they can make a pit stop while at the gas station. This is not a good plan - your body will not go as far as your fuel tank. As a rule, if you feel the need to go, but can hold it-- your hydration is just about right. To test this notion, look at your left thumbnail. Notice its color. Now, put the thumb flat on a table, nail up. Press down on the nail with your right thumb. Hold for a few seconds and release. Quickly look at your left nail and notice the blood has been squeezed out, under the nail is blanched white. Count the number of seconds it takes for the nail to return to its