

'No Fear' Battalion promotes motorcycle safety

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108th ADA Bde. Public Affairs

With summer approaching, and more and more motorcycles and their riders becoming part of daily traffic, 1st Battalion, 7th Air Defense Artillery is trying to keep its bike enthusiasts safe.

Last week, the battalion had a motorcycle safety "refresher" class for Soldiers in the battalion who ride a motorcycle.



1st Sgt. Gerardo Dominguez demonstrates the obstacle course during the motorcycle safety refresher course.

"We're having a presentation from an El Paso motorcycle police officer on motorcycle safety as well as having a small obstacle course for the riders," Sgt. Jesus Gonzalez, a class instructor, said. "We just want to make sure everybody is safe when riding their motorcycles."

Officer Mike Brooks, El Paso Police Department, said he was happy to see an Army unit taking the initiative in promoting motorcycle safety. "Anything that will help save lives is a plus," said Brooks. "Promoting motorcycle safety makes my job a little easier."

During the presentation Brooks gave statistics on the higher injury and fatality rates among motorcycle crashes. "Twenty percent of automobile accidents result in death or injury. Eighty percent of motorcycle accidents result in death or injury," said Brooks.

"As motorcycle riders, we are more vulnerable to everything around us on the road," Gonzalez added.

Both Gonzalez and Brooks said experience plays a big part in being a safe motorcyclist. "We get Soldiers that go and get their license on a little 100cc bike ... then they'll go out and buy [a] 1000 cc. They just don't know how to handle something like that," said Gonzalez.

"I could go outside and hop in one of your cars and have no problem driving it," Brooks said to the crowd of about 30 Soldiers. "But if I went



PHOTOS BY SPC. JASON STADEL

Sgt. Jesus Gonzalez helps to conduct the obstacle course during the training.

and took your motorcycle for a ride it wouldn't be very easy. You need to get used to it, and be familiar with the motorcycle you're riding. It has to be personally set up for you."

The instructors of the class also explained the proper safety equipment required to ride a motorcycle on any Department of Defense installation, as well as the proper licenses and docu-

ments needed.

In 2006 so far, there have been four motorcycle deaths in the El Paso area, two which were Soldiers.

"This is a very important thing to do," Lt. Col. Brant Dayley, 1-7 ADA commander said. "We don't want to lose any Soldiers. They are too valuable to us."

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