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Expo puts feminine focus on bikes

By: Michelle Miller, Journal Staff Writer

It may be a man's world, but women are going full throttle through it.

And they were certainly rumbling through Auburn this weekend for the first-ever Women's Motorcycle Expo at the Gold Country Fairgrounds, which capitalized on the increasing number of female motorcycle riders.

The two-day event included clinics on motorcycling, music (including femme rockers AC/DShe), merchandise and plenty of dreamy bikes for guys and gals to drool over.



Sabrina Nabhani, Alicia Karsten and Melody Kho discuss a purchase with Terri Lynn Link. Link, owner of Siren Custom Cycles, was on hand at the 2006 Women's Motorcycle Expo as one of the more than 180 vendors at the Gold Country Fairgrounds event geared toward women who ride motorcycles. Photo by MICHAEL KIRBY/Auburn Journal

Mary Dutton, 46, and boyfriend Thad Lietz came for both days of the expo.

Dutton has had her motorcycle license for around two months and wanted to learn the safe and legal way to ride.

"The clinics were great because you could ask questions about the laws," she said. "You learn to ride by riding with other people, but you don't always learn the 'right' way."

Lietz, a biker of 30 years, supported the expo.

"I always thought women should ride more," he said. "The more the merrier."

Dutton was also pleased with the selection of gear for women riders, especially in a variety of sizes and colors.

"Females have so much trouble finding gear. You could go into a bike shop and they have maybe one rack with women's and the rest is men's," she said. "And what they do have is pink. I ride a Harley. I don't wear pink."

Indeed, there were plenty of black leather jackets, chaps and toolbags - just don't call them purses.

Sabrina Nabhani, with Sacramento-based racing team Plush, said events such as this weekend's expo could inspire more women bikers.

"It's encouragement. It's telling them they belong," she said. "Because every time you go out there, you're a woman riding in a man's world."

Co-promoter Heather Tanfani said the show went off great, even if organizers didn't get as many attendees as they had hoped.

Tanfani expressed thanks to the Auburn 49er Lions, Auburn Knights of Columbus, the Boys & Girls Club and fairgrounds staff for helping to put on this first-time event.

Raffle proceeds went to Women Escaping a Violent Environment (WEAVE).

"We want to do this again next year, we'll just improve upon it," Tanfani said. "We got some great attention and a variety of people and vendors out here. I heard one comment that this was like motorcycle Disneyland for women."

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