

Rampaging Bikers

By LCpl Brian J. Reimers

Like lots of Marines who love whizzing past, around and between four-wheel crawlers on their two-wheel speedsters, LCpl Zach M. Stacy isn't about to let a scrape with the asphalt deter him from riding his motorcycle.

While riding down Highway 76 in Oceanside, Stacy totaled his Yamaha R6 and sustained injuries that left

him unable to ride for months. Nevertheless, he can't wait to mount up again.

"Even though I crashed my bike and got hurt, there is no way that it is going to stop me from riding. Now I just have to save for a new bike," Stacy said.

Many Marines who've recently returned from Iraq are way ahead of Stacy. With pockets full of combat pay, a bulletproof attitude, and a need for speed, they figure to be making a beeline for local motorcycle shops.

Gunnery Sergeant Donald J. Zerillo, traffic-division chief with the provost marshal's office (PMO), says he's seeing evidence of "motorcycle mania" here. Motorcycle accidents and citations are on a pace to eclipse last year's total in only eight months, according to PMO statistics. However, an increase in PMO checkpoints and radar sweeps may account for some of the increase.

"I understand wanting to buy and ride the bikes, but they need to do their homework about the different orders on riding and maintaining the bikes on and off base," said Zerillo, who formerly served as a motorcycle-safety course instructor at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

According to a local motorcycle store manager, it's not true that younger Marines overwhelmingly choose "crotch rockets"—high-speed racing bikes that authorities say account for more than their share of accidents. "But, the younger crowd does tend to opt for speed over style," he acknowl-

