MOTO.CH tried out online coaching from fast-travel.ch

SPEED THROUGH REMOTE COACHING

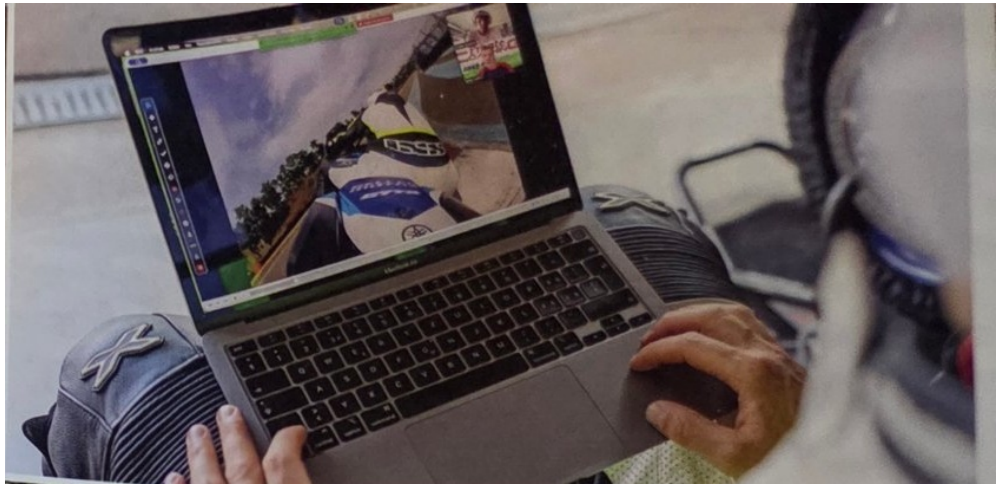
If you want to improve your lap times, private coaching is probably the fastest way to measurable progress. But such coaching is expensive … or is it?

Text: Daniele Carrozza & David Basler | Photos: Oskar Moyano



The famous 80 percent are usually in the bag quickly. The last 20 percent, which make you really fast and separate the wheat from the chaff, take disproportionately more time and training effort. One efficient way to shorten that time for good is private coaching, where a professional instructor takes his “apprentice” under his wing directly at the racetrack – through theory sessions, following or leading on track, video analysis and so on – and trains him to be faster. Peter “Pedro” Spörri has offered exactly this kind of coaching through his company “fast-travel.ch” since 2008. The Zurich native has been racing regularly at circuits across Europe for almost 40 years and, with an average of 90 coaching days a year, has now trained more than 200 riders, many of them repeat customers. Spörri offers tailor-made all-inclusive packages that customers can put together individually. On request, Pedro takes care of everything a track rider’s heart desires: bike transport, accommodation, meals, registration with the trackday organiser including entry fee, pit box and, of course, coaching, right through to the return transport. Depending on package and destination, it can get expensive. Three days of coaching with all the services mentioned (excluding bike transport and travel to and from the venue) can quickly add up to several thousand francs per head for two friends sharing the coaching arrangement.

“Since the pandemic, demand for my coaching has steadily declined slightly. The tense geopolitical situation also means my customers have become more hesitant about booking,” is how Pedro describes the latest development in his field, where competition is also said to have intensified. So the resourceful entrepreneur came up with the idea of extending his offering to include online coaching. The customer is alone at the racetrack, records his laps with action cameras, downloads the footage to his laptop after the session and shares the onboard videos with Pedro via Teams, Zoom or Webex. Pedro waits at home on standby and then delivers the one-to-one coaching by video meeting. It goes without saying that only a fraction of the cost of classic, “physical” coaching is incurred: Pedro charges 400 francs for half a day of video coaching (which can also be split between two participants). Incidentally, Pedro analyses the first video free of charge.







Excellent value for money

We wanted to know what online coaching feels like, how much you benefit from it and where compromises have to be made. So, during our racetrack tests in mid-June, when we were guests of have-fun.ch at the Anneau du Rhin in France, we made a “digital appointment” with Pedro. Specifically, our freelancer David Basler, a really fast rider with decades of track experience, had two of his sessions analysed by Pedro. Here are his impressions:

MOTO.CH test rider Basler does online coaching with Peter Spörri

“I wasn’t aware that my spine isn’t parallel to the longitudinal axis of the bike in every riding situation. It’s astonishing what Pedro can read and hear out of a video!”

David shares his screen, Pedro takes over, controls the video player, points out the mistakes and gives instructions for correcting them.

At least one camera that can be repositioned from session to session is required. Technical know-how with action cams and basic IT matters is certainly an advantage.

Pedro Spörri charges 400 francs for half a day of video coaching and 720 francs for a full day; the coaching can also be split between two people.

“The most important thing is that the technical equipment is checked from A to Z with Pedro before the trackday in a ‘dry run’, so that on site, when it matters and there’s little time in the trackday rush, you only have to worry about the internet connection – via mobile hotspot, for example. Pedro quickly spotted one or two flaws in my riding position and explained how to correct the deficits. Incidentally, it was impressive how Pedro calculated how many sessions I will need until the mistake is corrected for good. For that alone I will have to invest a few days of track time. And precisely for eliminating standard mistakes that, as a self-taught rider, you simply train into yourself over the years, online coaching is incredibly cost-efficient. Once those gross mistakes are gone – such as ‘You have to use the full width of the track, including the curbs!’ – I could very well imagine booking physical private coaching to work efficiently and intensively on the final details. For that, though, I would take three days with Pedro. Another good thing is that the coaching began with an assessment in which I could state where I see myself and what goals I have set. All in all, I think online coaching is highly recommendable for riders who are still at the beginning of their trackday career and for intermediate riders with medium speed, because it is precisely during these ‘career stages’ that you train in most of your mistakes. But even the pros among us should consider it. After all, you can be very fast even with gross mistakes … but not efficient. In other words, you waste energy unnecessarily that – if used correctly – makes you really fast!”