



Sally Robinson

D.C.'s first gal licensed to ride

In 1937, it took the stamping of her feet, some harsh words and a lawyer to convince the policeman to give Sally Robinson a chance to get her motorcycle creds. Weighing in at 88lbs and having a 4'11" stature only added more moxy to this firecracker, who had been riding motorcycles on and off since 1928 and finally decided it was time to make it legal. She wasn't surprised by the unfair treatment at the DPS office. She expected it. But after having to do two takes of the test passing both with ease (80 & 92), the policeman was still not satisfied. That's when her lawyer stepped in, there were no current laws or restrictions about women riding motorcycles; it was just a matter of gender prejudice. With much reluctance the police officer continued on with her driving portion of the test complaining he was afraid to get in the sidecar with a woman manning the controls. To his surprise when the test was over, he exclaimed "Lady, you handle it as well as a man could. Your balance is swell and you know the machine. But I didn't see you kick it over so I can't give you the permit." Well, once this backhanded compliment hit Miss Robinson's ears, her colors went flying. With the might of her manner and a few choice words, the police officer obediently acquiesced signing off on her official license to ride.

For original 1937 article [click here](#) .

Photo credit: Washington Post Sep 11, 1937, Harris & Ewing

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