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GWRRRA

INTERNATIONAL Rider Education Newsletter



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What a Helmet Does for You

First, it is the best protective gear you can wear while riding a motorcycle. Think of it at the same time you think of your ignition key: Pick up the key; pick up the helmet. They go together. Helmet use is not a "cure-all" for motorcycle safety, but in a crash, a helmet can help protect your brain, your face, and your life. Combined with other protective gear, rider-education courses, proper licensing and public awareness, the use of helmets and protective gear is one way to reduce injury. You hope you never have to "use" your helmet, just like you hope you won't ever need to "use" the seatbelt in your car. But crashes do happen. We can't predict when or what kind they will be. You should not say to yourself, "I'm just running down to the store," and not wear your helmet. In any given year, a lot of people make good use of seatbelts, and a lot of riders give thanks that they were wearing helmets. Second, a good helmet makes riding a motorcycle more fun, due to the comfort factor: another truth. It cuts down on wind noise roaring by your ears; on windblast on your face and eyes, and deflects bugs and other objects flying through the air. It even contributes to comfort from changing weather conditions and reduces rider fatigue. Third, wearing a helmet shows that motorcyclists are responsible people; we take ourselves and motorcycling seriously. Wearing a helmet, no matter what the law says, is a projection of your attitude toward riding. And that attitude is plain to see by other riders and non-riders alike.

CHOOSING A HELMET

While color, design and price may be a part of your decision about which helmet to buy, think first about protection and comfort. A full-face helmet gives the most protection since it covers more of your face. It usually has a moveable face shield that protects the eyes when it is closed.

What you must know when choosing a helmet is that it meets minimum safety standards. The way to find a well-made, reliable helmet is to look for the DOT and/or Snell sticker on the inside or outside of the helmet. The sticker means the helmet meets the safety test standards of the U.S. Department of Transportation and/or the Snell Memorial Foundation. Each organization has rigid procedures for testing

Impact – the shock-absorbing capacity of the helmet.

Penetration – the helmet's ability to withstand a blow from a sharp object.

Retention – the chin strap's ability to stay fastened without stretching or breaking.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Pique Your Interest

MCSR

Group or Gaggle

Fleetwood MAC

Motorcycle Related Safety

Peripheral vision – the helmet must provide a minimum side vision of 105 degrees to each side. (Most people's usable peripheral vision is only about 90 degrees to each side.)

Since 1980, ALL adult-sized helmets for on-highway use must meet DOT standards. Helmet dealers and distributors must ensure that all the helmets they sell bear the DOT sticker.

Rhonda Stiles



DOES THE FOLLOWING EXCERPT PIQUE YOUR INTEREST????

It was the seventh consecutive year that motorcycle fatalities rose, after years of declines during the 1990's and it demonstrates the importance of a national study of motorcycle crashes that was funded as part of the transportation bill passed last week by Congress.

The multi-year transportation bill provides \$3 million in funding for the first comprehensive study of the causes of motorcycle crashes since the well – known Hurt report done in the late 1970's

Motorcycle fatalities increased by 8 percent in 2004 over the previous year, according to statistics released Monday (8/1/2005) by the National Safety Administration (NHTSA)



MCSR

The Motorcycle Crash Scene Response Seminar shown at Wing Ding is now officially a Rider Education Program that all Rider Education Seminar-Certified Instructors may use. The program is **only** a seminar program and to be used as the program is shown and cannot be modified. Demos cannot be used without approval by Bob Lorenz.



Are Your Chapter Rides in a Group...? ...Or a Gaggle?

I'll bet you've seen plenty of both - the nice tight staggered formation of five or so Wings, each one a second behind the offset bike moving as a unit - or, a string of seemingly unrelated motorcycles who all coincidentally happen to be going in the same direction.

Before you decide one is correct and the other not, recognizes that each style is a matter of choice. But if your Chapter chooses to ride as a group, or a team, there are some things to keep in mind, things that will first, promote safety, second, enhance the enjoyment of the ride, and third...look cool.

The GWRRA Team Riding Manual is full of tips and tactics for successful team riding. Every Chapter should have at least one copy. If not, see your Chapter Educator. Another excellent resource is the Road Captain Course available through your Educator or as a download from the GWRRA Web site.

A point that each of these manuals make that is not always put into practice, is the role of the leader and the tail gunner, or drag. In fact, the Team Riding Manual calls the lead bike, "Team Point" and the last bike in line the "Team Captain." As the titles suggest, the rider up front is not the leader (read - not in charge of the group). The lead bike and the drag bike share leadership responsibilities equally. They are both responsible for the safety of the group, and each has specific responsibilities relative to their positions in the group. Read the manual for the details.

The first question every Chapter must ask is, "which way do we want to ride?" Exerting influence on members to ride as a team, or a group, or a gaggle, if they would rather make another choice, does not make for a happy riding experience. Some Chapters divide their flights by style of riding. Those decisions are best made among Chapter members.

If the decision is to ride as a team, then every member of the team has a job. That job is consideration for the group as a

whole. But **safety is always first.** Remember to "ride your own ride." If your style does not match that of the group, simply notify the trail bike that you are dropping behind, and follow the group at your own pace.

Consideration for the group as a whole begins before we mount the bikes. Some simple decisions like, comfortable speeds, road conditions, pit stops, photo ops, etc. begin in the parking lot before the ride. The job of the lead or Team Point in this discussion is to **LISTEN.** There may be one or two vocal members of a group who try to make decisions for the rest. Listen to all group members. Read body language and facial expressions to be sure the group is in agreement.

Once you're on the road, use all of the tools available to you like CB's, hand signals, your own mental alertness, spacing between groups, bike-to-bike spacing, and proper placement of Trikes, bikes with trailers or with no CB radio.

Question for tail gunners -- In the manuals, the illustration of riders coming to a stop at a traffic light or stop sign shows the tail gunner (Team Captain) in the left track, right up against the bike in front. Suggestion: why not hang back a bit and move to the center of the lane to create space between you and the traffic to the rear? That way you will have protected the group from being rear-ended while giving yourself room to maneuver just in case. When you are sure the traffic to the rear is stopping, gently move to the left, returning to the original formation.

The role of the Team Point and Team Captain is critical. But there is another rider who is critical to the integrity of the group. That is the number two bike.

Reason # 1. Visibility

The Team Point has the basic responsibility for speed, direction, etc. As a result, he/she is often scanning for landmarks, road signs, turn-offs, etc. The second bike in line in the right track has the best forward visibility and can spot potential problems early. A second set of eyes never hurts.

Reason # 2. The worm.

How many times have you been stuck in traffic on a wide-open interstate for no apparent reason? It's what traffic engineers call "the worm." It's just a function of the dynamics of traffic flow. Even in a group of five bikes,

we can experience the worm. If the number two rider daydreams for a second or two (never happens, right?), falls behind the point rider and accelerates to catch up, he/she creates the worm. Now the other bikes in the group must do the same, and pretty soon we have a gaggle, not a group.

The Team Point can create similar difficulties by accelerating too quickly after a stop, or on to a controlled access highway, or even just allowing his/her speed to increase too much going down the back side of a long hill if the remaining riders have not yet reached the crest.

Successful group riding takes special skill and lots of practice. Chapters that do it well are impressive as they maneuver smoothly through traffic or on the open road. And cool as they may look, they are also taking maximum advantage of the safety issues afforded to an alert team.

Bob Berry



Not Fleetwood Mac – Rumors

We hear a lot of comments from Members (sometimes serious, sometimes not) about how people think we need to inflate numbers "on the books" to bolster our training related activity for IRS purposes. This is perceived as a method to retain the not-for-profit status that GWRRA enjoys. We can say without hesitation that that is NOT the case with the Rider Ed Levels Program Database! This message can be used to fight rumor with fact.

We are always interested in anything that improves the accuracy of the Rider Ed Levels database. Since Phoenix does not have access to, and has never requested a copy of the database, we have good reason to believe that there is no concern how it "looks" to the IRS. It is strictly a tool for Educators and supporters to use for the benefit of the Membership. As far as we know, the only data used for the IRS is the monthly training activity reports.

Your Region Educator with assistance of the Region Membership Coordinator is encouraged to spend time comparing the 1) Membership Database to the 2) Rider Ed database reports. This is already

happening in some Regions and Districts. We are able to "remove" a large number of people who are no longer GWRRA Members from the report that way. That is what the first hidden column is for on the monthly Rider Ed Levels report spreadsheet. It allows us to separate the expired folks from what we send out so you don't see them on the report. This was first done back in the 2000-2001 timeframe when Jim & Donna Cox were administering the database; after it was moved out of Phoenix.

We intentionally keep some folks in the database that *are* expired for only a short period because it sometimes takes a while to update the Membership database. If someone renews subsequent to being placed in the I - "Inactive" classification (inactive GWRRA membership - NOT Rider Ed participation) it is easy to recover their information by going back to the first column in the spreadsheet and changing it back to A - "Active" status. You may be surprised at how many do come back into the Rider Ed program after 5 or sometimes more years of non-participation.

By direction to us and the Region Educators thus far, the only people that can "authorize" switching someone to "Inactive" (Membership) status is the Region Educator, since he or she and the Region Staff have access to the two documents. We make exception for people who have passed away - mainly out of respect for the survivors that would otherwise need to look at the names of their lost loved ones each month.

As you might surmise, there have been a number of confused folks at the Chapter level that want us to change the status of certain people to "Inactive" because they have not renewed their CPR or First Aid certifications, seminars, or riding training for a few years, etc. Keeping these folks on the list is a reminder to check with them every once and a while. Locally, the Educator can decide when and how often - making a choice how to divide their efforts toward encouraging life saving Rider and Co-Rider Education.

The idea is to "lure" them back towards safety with "honey" rather than make it appear to be a punitive measure. If you have a list of people that you don't think are Members anymore, please feel free to submit N.10 Data Correction forms to your Region Educator for consideration. Let him or her know (if you have access to your District's Membership database report

a.k.a. Area Report or Membership Greenbar) that you have already checked to see that they are no longer on your District's Membership Report.

Thanks again for your assistance in helping the front line Officer - the Chapter Educator and ultimately our customers - the Membership. We appreciate your voluntary contribution to the Rider Education Program. By your actions, grouped with others like you, we are able to keep the cost of Membership down. We are also doing our part for Member retention - keeping our Members alive because of something they learned. Whether it was provided by GWRRA, or sponsored or facilitated in GWRRA activities, the training they receive does make a difference. Encourage Members to let someone know when that occurs. It is the ultimate compliment to hear how you helped save a life!

Don't Learn Safety by Accident!

Ride with Less Risk & B+,

Tony & Michelle Van Schaick

Motorcycle-Related Safety Articles

[Alcohol-Related Deaths on Highways Fall](#)
Published - Aug 01 2005 07:17PM EDT AP

WASHINGTON (AP) Traffic deaths declined and fewer people were killed in alcohol-related crashes on U.S. highways for a second straight year, the government said Monday.

Some 42,636 people died on the nation's highways in 2004, a reduction of 248 _ or 0.6 percent _ from the previous year, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said.

Alcohol-related fatalities dropped 2.4 percent, from 17,105 in 2003 to 16,694 in 2004. Safety groups attributed the decrease to all 50 states moving toward a uniform standard for drunken driving and to high-visibility enforcement such as sobriety checkpoints.

The decline in traffic deaths for the second straight year came as the number of motorists increased. When measured by the estimated miles driven, the number of deaths per 100 million miles traveled dropped to 1.46, down from 1.48 in 2003.

"While we were pleased with the overall decrease in the traffic fatality rate, we will never claim 42,636 people dead on our highways as a victory," NHTSA Administrator Dr. Jeffrey Runge said in Buffalo, N.Y.

Traffic deaths declined in 27 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. The district had the highest percentage decrease, followed by Rhode Island, Minnesota, Montana and Nebraska.

Traffic fatalities increased 42 percent in Vermont, the biggest jump in the nation, followed by New Hampshire, New Mexico, Alabama and Oklahoma. Alabama led the nation with 150 more motorists killed, followed by Indiana with 114. Fatal crashes continue to have a staggering cost. NHTSA estimated that fatal highway crashes cost society more than \$230 billion a year, or about \$820 per person.

Safety groups said the data showed mixed results on whether the nation's roads were becoming safer. They noted the increases in motorcycle fatalities, rollover deaths and the number of fatalities involving sport utility vehicles. Motorcycle fatalities grew nearly 8 percent last year to 4,008, the first time it has topped more than 4,000 deaths since 1987. Motorcycle deaths have increased seven years in a row and safety groups have attributed it to the repeal of helmet laws in several states.

Tom Lindsay, a spokesman for the Ohio-based American Motorcyclist Association, said strong data on what has caused the motorcycle fatalities has not been available. He said the highway bill Congress approved last week included funding for the first major study of motorcycle crash data since the late 1970s.

Congress Includes Funding For Motorcycle Study In Transportation Bill (AMA 7/29/05)

A new, scientific study of the causes of motorcycle crashes will be conducted for the first time in more than two decades.

Funding for the study was included in the huge transportation bill approved today by both houses of Congress. The bill now goes to President Bush, who is expected to sign it within a week.

The transportation bill provides nearly \$3 million to pay for a study of motorcycle crashes. The bill specifies that the research will be done by an independent and respected organization, the Oklahoma Transportation Center, which is located at Oklahoma State University.

After years of declines, motorcycle fatalities have begun to increase in recent years. There's been a lot of speculation about why, but not much unbiased research. This study will help us understand the true causes of motorcycle crashes and find ways to prevent crashes and save lives.

The new study will be the first comprehensive look at motorcycle crashes in this country since the groundbreaking research done in the late 1970s, commonly referred to as the Hurt study, for lead researcher Harry Hurt. Many of the lessons learned from the Hurt study are still valuable, but because of the huge changes in traffic density, vehicle technology, driver distractions and other factors, the AMA has long called for a new study to provide reliable, updated information.

Rep. Sam Graves (R-Missouri) introduced the motorcycle-study language into the bill. "It has been over 20 years since we last studied what causes motorcycle accidents and now is the time to take another look."

Off-road riders also get something from the transportation bill, which covers spending through 2009. The measure provides \$370 million from gasoline taxes to fund the Recreational Trails Program.

The bill also preserves two other rules important to many motorcyclists: Motorcycles will continue to be allowed to use High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes; and local governments will continue to be prohibited from excluding motorcycles on roads maintained in part with federal funds.

The bill also calls for motorcycles to be included in research on Intelligent Transportation systems, which would introduce more automation to U.S. highways.

Eye catching gear may reduce motorcycle injuries

Fluorescent clothing, white or light colored helmets, and daytime headlights may reduce motorcycle injuries and death. Wells and colleagues analyzed 463 motorcycle drivers admitted to hospital following a road traffic incident and 1233 other drivers (control group) to evaluate how wearing conspicuous attire affected the risk of having an accident. They found that with reflective or fluorescent clothing the risk of a crash injury was

reduced by 37%, with a white helmet by 24%, and with headlights by 27%.

Susan Wells et al., in a paper published 23 January 2004 (from British Medical Journal article 4/10/2004)

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Ride with Less Risk & B+,

Tony & Michelle Van Schaick



Looking for Articles From ALL Educators.

I need articles to put into YOUR Rider Education newsletter. If you have anything from your chapters or districts please email them to me or mail your articles to: **Larry & Rhonda Stiles**

32 Wellesley drive, Somerset, MA 02726.

First Aid/ CPR

I would like to congratulate Wayne & Cathie Ketenheim who were the MEDIC FIRST AID® Co-coordinators in Region B. They are now the Region B Trainers for MEDIC FIRST AID®. Also, Brad Lindsay Region E Educator has become a Trainer for his Region to help out Mike in the large area he has to cover. Linda English has become a Trainer so as her and Bill travel they can help out in any area that a Region Educator or Trainer may need help in. The best news from the North in the great country of Canada is we now have two instructors, Phil & Margaret Craven who have stepped forward and are eager to start training in Canada. We'd like to thank these folks for taking the time to come to Wing Ding to help our great program grow.

Region I is moving forward also with several new MFA Instructors that just went through their training, thanks to Jim & Donna Cox.

We'd like to thank all the Regions and Trainers that have worked hard to make GWRRA MEDIC FIRST AID® Program a big success. Without your efforts and dedication to our membership that would not have happened. The riding season is coming to a close soon so the Classes should start beginning.

Ride Safe — **Larry & Rhonda Stiles**