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GWRRA

INTERNATIONAL Rider Education Newsletter



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The National Rider Education Staff would like to thank all those who took time from their schedule at Wing Ding to come forward to help the membership get the training they asked for. Many MSF instructors endured the heat and rain to be on the ranges to train others to ride safer. If it wasn't for these dedicated members, our membership would not have the training they have today. Top notch in every way.

We thank you.

Rider Education National Staff



Safe Riding Tips

*by Gordon Murphy – National Director –
Rider Education – Canada*

For the next number of Newsletters, with the concurrence of Bob Lorenz and the Editor, Larry Stiles, I will be presenting a couple of safe riding tips, based on riding principles we teach in our Advanced Rider Course and other GWRRA riding courses. I hope these tips will be of some help. To get more information regarding these tips and to practice them under controlled conditions, enroll in an ARC or ERC course at your next available opportunity.

1. Braking. There are five (5) main principles riders should practice every time they brake:

- Always be in first gear.
- Always use **both** brakes.
- Put only the left foot down when stopping or stopped.
- Always be looking ahead, not down; and always do a mirror check (both mirrors) at the moment you stop.

There are two auxiliary principles:

A. Always use all fingers on the levers; and

B. Maintain a “flat” wrist position.

Sharp turns from a stopped position.

When making a sharp turn (either right or left) immediately from a stopped position, turn the handlebars slightly in the direction of the turn before moving. When you move, this will cause the motorcycle to lean a little, which means it will automatically turn, thus facilitating a smooth, controlled turn. Try it the next time you need to make a sharp turn.

Look for more safe riding tips in future Newsletter issues .



Buyer Beware (Or At Least Be Informed) When It's Time To Replace Your Riding Jacket

Buying a motorcycle helmet that will do its job when needed is pretty simple. Just look for the DOT sticker and stamp and you have a helmet that will do its job when needed. If your headgear also has a Snell rating, so much the better. The rest of your choice is all about fit, color, comfort and design.

But, during my recent search for a new riding jacket, I discovered (once again) how much I didn't know about the subject. So, what follows are things to consider, and for you to decide what is fact and what may be “marketing.” Sources include marketing materials from several manufacturers that shall remain nameless and several industry magazines and Web sites. For exhaustive detail on the European standards, visit

<http://www.pva-ppe.org.uk/standards.htm>.

When many of us were in our teens, jacket choice was pretty simple – tough black leather. But now we have leather in multiple weights, and materials like Cordura, Ballistic Nylon, and Kevlar. Which is best? The answer is, “The one you are going to wear.” Anything beats riding in a T-shirt. But how do you know the one you are going to wear will do the job when it’s needed? There are no officially approved safety standards in the U.S. for motorcycle jackets. The American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) may try to change that in the future, but, for now, we are limited to the CE (Conformite European) standard used widely in Europe and adopted by some American manufactures. Testing of body armor to meet the CE standard is similar to the U.S. DOT tests for helmets.

The difficulty is that some jackets have a “CE Approved” label which only means that the body armor used in the jacket is approved, not the jacket material itself. So, claims such as “abrasion resistant,” “shock absorbing,” “impact resistant,” may be misleading. For a jacket to live up to those claims, it would have to meet the PPE standards (Personal Protective Equipment) set in England in 1995.

Some mesh jackets have a Polyurethane coating that reportedly may melt into the skin when sliding on asphalt. Others are equipped with body armor that would easily fail CE criteria and provide little protection in the event of an unplanned separation of you and your Wing.

When that happens, research tells us that there are critical areas of the body needing the most protection. The area of the most frequent impacts includes knees, hips, elbows and shoulders. So, ensure that your proposed purchase offers good protection in those areas.

While protection of other upper body parts may not require as much armor, abrasion resistance, seam strength and tear resistance are important considerations. The minimum requirement to meet “high abrasion resistance” (sliding on your back, for example) is 4 seconds. An ordinary pair of denim jeans provides 0.6 seconds and a single layer of 1.4 mm cow hide will last 5.8 seconds. The material itself should have a tear-strength strong enough to repel a sharp object from penetrating the outer layer, and jackets should be lined with a slippery material to allow your body to slide against the external shell, further reducing the risk of your skin being

penetrated by sharp objects that get through the outer layer. Additionally the lining should have a high melting point, to ensure it does not melt into your skin under friction from road surfing.

None of the protective material will do you any good if the seams separate under stress. A test reported in Motorcycle News (MCN, 2003), in the UK found only 4 out of 18 leather suits from the major European manufacturers, passed all the tests against the European Standard. Twelve of these suits failed the burst test due to either thread and/or leather failure.

Look closely at the seams. Seams in the critical areas should have at least one row of concealed or protected stitching, to hold the seam together after the visible stitching has been worn away against the road surface. Check the stitching. It should be regular with no dropped stitches, which indicate a potentially weakened seam.

Leather should have 11-14 stitches per 5 cm, fabric should have 13-16 stitches per 5 cm. Too few stitches means the seam will be too weak, but too many stitches will actually weaken the fabric. Additional layers should be double stitched.

Getting the answers to all of this requires some research. Magazine reviews and motorcycle Web sites are a good place to start. I’ve had good luck talking directly with the jacket manufacturers. Most are pretty straightforward with their responses to my questions. So, which jacket is best? To repeat – “the one you are going to wear.” Choose yours for comfort, utility, visibility, good looks, and price. Then add a little homework to ensure that the jacket will perform well at the critical time.

By Bob Berry

Risk Management System

Riding a two-wheeled or three-wheeled motorcycle requires constant vigilance in identifying and minimizing risk. All successful riding courses have their own defensive strategies to help rider’s manage their risks in motorcycling. These strategies present a logical sequence to identify and deal with potential hazards while riding by; first recognizing the hazard, then making an educated guess on what might happen because of the hazard and taking an appropriate reaction to the hazard as if it were a threat.

All of the GWRRA Rider Course Training Programs has developed and uses the risk management system strategy -- **SAA**:

SAA -- SEEK – ANTICIPATE – ACT

SAA is a three step, continuous process as we ride, in making appropriate judgments and applying them correctly in different traffic situations. It never ends and cycles over and over. As Riders and Co-Riders, we should always assume that everything and everyone on the road intends to do you harm.

SEEK: -- What kinds of information should we be looking for?

You must seek or observe everything that is in or about to enter your path of travel -- other riders, drivers, curbs, road surfaces, signs, traffic lights, road makings, pedestrians, animals and so forth.

Since 90% of all accidents occur in an arc of 120 degrees to the front of the bike, the majority of your attention should be directed to your front and sides of your motorcycle. Whether the other vehicle is coming towards you, going in the same direction as you, or entering your path of travel from the side you must watch all of them closely and run the “what if’s” thought your mind. You should always shift your seeking or observing between other users and your riding environment in order to observe any changes in movement or potential dangers.

ANTICIPATE: -- What kinds of information should you be processing?

Closely watch what the other vehicles are doing or objects in your path of travel and anticipate a range of potential consequences “the what if’s” beginning with the worst-case scenario while taking advantage of the best alternatives.

The quickest way to spot movement of a motor vehicle is to observe the front wheels position in question.

Are the wheels starting to revolve --parked or stopped car?

Are they beginning to turn (as in a left turn)?

Watch for the door to begin to open.

Is there a child or a dog playing close to the street?

Anticipate either of them darting out into traffic.

Is that truck that’s next to you creeping into your lane?

Be prepared to take immediate evasive action.

Do you have eye contact with the driver who is stopped at a stop sign?

If you do, they are less likely to pull out in front of you, but not always.

Give them a short blast of your horns to get their attention and move to the opposite side of your lane

ACT: -- When it is time to “act,” what primary actions should we practice?

Keep as many options or alternatives open for as long as possible. We should allow for sufficient time and space to make the optimum decision and to take the optimum action.

This is where your GWRRA Rider Course Training Program comes into play. Your three main evasive actions as identified in the Hurt Study in 1981 are: apply **braking** (possibly maximum), **swerving** out of danger, or **cornering** if you have the room.

Always have an escape route -- always. Look for wide paved shoulder areas of the road.

Maximum straight-line braking will often help. Motorcycles can stop in an amazingly short distance if you know how to do it.

But in order to be able to act properly you must first take Rider Course training:

Take a MSF Experienced Rider Course (ERC); GWRRA Advanced Rider Course (ARC), Trike Rider Course (TRC) or Sidecar Rider Course (SRC).

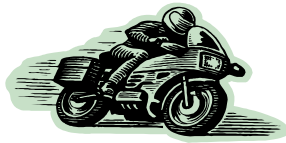
Don't just take it once and practice what you are taught. It just might save your Co-Riders and your life one day.

There are literally thousands of possible situations you may encounter on the highway. The most important thing is to continuously **seek** information, **anticipate** what that hazard could do to harm you and be ready to **act**.

Safety is for life, your life.

Bruce & Sandra McMahill

A RARE PHOTO OF OUR LEADER— HARD AT WORK AT WING DING:



Beware—Check your tires before you travel anywhere or on any trip. We have talked about the T-CLOCK and we have kicked tires as we sit at night talking about our travels. One of the most important parts of our motorcycle is our tires. When checking them, make sure you really check them. On our way to the Ohio Rally in June we came upon a problem when the Wing started to shake. We thought we had a front end problem. We pulled off the road and checked the bike over in the rain but couldn't see anything wrong. We had 20 miles to go to where we were going to stop for the night so we took it slow. We asked the hotel clerk if there was a Honda dealer in the area (Newburgh, NY) and we were told there was none. We called the Chapter A NY Director to see if he knew of any and he said no but there was a HD shop just down the road from where we were staying. We rode there, shaking bike and all, 1/2 mile and found this HD dealer was also a HONDA service dealer and he took us right in. It wasn't the front end after all, the back tire came apart from inside the rain grooves. The whole left side of the tire was peeling away or lifting up from inside the rain grooves, a real mess. Be careful of your tires and check your tire pressure, should be 43 in the rear and 36 in the front. Many thanks to Moroney's Harley Davidson and if you are ever in the Newburgh NY area and need service, they are an excellent choice. The entire staff was very helpful and accommodating, getting us back on the Wing in just a few hours.

Larry & Rhonda Stiles



The new Version 6 has come out and some of the MFA instructors have gone online and have taken the MEDIC FIRST AID test that has to be completed to be certified. If any instructor has NOT done so, please do it now and inform your Region Educator and Trainer that you have completed these tests. There are four of them, make sure you print them all out to keep a copy.

Anyone that has not received an email from MEDIC FIRST AID® please inform your Region Educator, Trainer or myself so we can contact MFA and let them know. If MFA does not have your email then we have to contact them so your email can be updated. This update must be done in order to remain as one of our instructors. If you have any problems please contact us and we will try to fix the problem.

Larry & Rhonda Stiles



Stay Alert to Signs of Heat Stress

Staying cool and safe when temperatures and humidity are high is important, especially for elderly people, young children and people with chronic illnesses.

As summer temperatures rise, watch for the following signs that a heat-stress condition requires medical attention:

- Dizziness or overwhelming weakness
- Chest pain or rapid heartbeat
- Nausea, cramps or diarrhea
- Throbbing headache
- Dry skin (NO Sweating)
- Problems breathing

To prevent heat stress, remember:

- Take cool showers, and let the air dry you.
- Wear light, loose-fitting clothing and a wide-brimmed hat.
- Avoid prolonged, strenuous outdoor activity.
- Spend time in air-conditioned places such as shopping malls, libraries, theaters, etc.
- Stay in regular contact with a friend or relative, especially if you live alone. That way you'll both have help if you develop a heat-related problem.
- Ride when it is cooler at night if possible and drink lots of water.

EDITOR'S MAILBAG: letters

Motorcycle helmets a must

By **RON AND KAREN KNUDTSON**
Gold Wing Road Riders Association Region "E"
Directors

In regards to the article in the June 14 Globe Gazette regarding helmet laws in Iowa, let us tell you that a helmet is the most important piece of motorcycle safety equipment you can buy.

Many motorcycle riders choose to not wear helmets, thinking that as experienced riders they do not need a helmet. Even those who have ridden motorcycles for many years can never be certain when they will encounter a situation on the road that is beyond their control. The majority of multi-vehicle motorcycle crashes are caused by the operator of the other vehicle.

Two years ago, riding along a two-lane highway in Missouri on our new 1800 Gold Wing motorcycle, a dog literally jumped at us from the left ditch and caught his head in the

front wheel of our motorcycle. We were thrown up in the air and landed on the pavement. Our protective gear and our helmets saved our lives.

We both had full-faced helmets on; one was scraped on the side and the other had the front face shield destroyed. It would have been our faces had we not had full-faced helmets on. How thankful we are for our full-faced helmets.

We agree that wearing a helmet is a freedom of choice and personal responsibility issue. However, we encourage all motorcyclists to wear their helmets. When you ride, take care of yourself and the ones you love. Think safety — wear a helmet and protective clothing.

Ron and Karen Knudtson