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GWRRA INTERNATIONAL Rider Education Newsletter



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On April 6, 2006 I sent out a message to all regarding the Masters Luncheon at Wing Ding this year. That message included a copy of the invitation for distribution to all Masters. We have a good many seats available for the luncheon and we are requesting anyone knowing of a Master Rider that is going to Wing Ding and has not received this letter (attached to this newsletter) please have them call 1-800-843-9460 to reserve a seat no later than June 16th. We have received several feedbacks from Masters that they never received this information. Please post in your Region & District Newsletters Any Questions regarding this call me.

Bob Lorenz



In Rider Education, and most of us as MSF instructors, we have heard many things from riders who take our courses. Here are some put together by Chapter F in Massachusetts. Get a group of motorcyclists talking about crashes and safety, and you will almost certainly hear some of them— popular misconceptions, incorrect assumptions, urban legends, and intuitive explanations about motorcycle safety that turn out to be wrong when you actually check out the facts. The problem is that believing these misconceptions can increase your chances of being involved in an accident or getting hurt when you do crash.

Maybe you know — when you hear it, but maybe you have heard some myths repeated so often or by people whose expertise you respect that you think they are actually true. Unfortunately, there are a lot of motorcyclists who do believe them. We thought that some of these fallacies should be brought out into the light of day so that riders have the right information upon which to make informed riding-safety decisions. We also hope it will keep more motorcyclists from repeating such misconceptions to riders who turn to them for advice.

These are the Deadly Dozen, the motorcycle safety myths and urban legends that we hear most frequently.

Myth 1: Other Drivers Don't Care About Motorcyclists:

It may seem hard to believe at times, but other drivers almost never actually want to hit you. Most of those near-misses come about because they don't always know you are there, even when you are right in front of them, seemingly in plain view. You can be obscured or completely hidden by glare, by other things on or along the road, by the cars roof pillars, the handicap hangtag, or by other traffic. Of course, not all drivers "think motorcycles" or as we see it here in MA they completely ignore the laws and think they have the right of way no matter who is around them. They could make the effort to look that extra bit harder to see if there might be a motorcyclist hidden by that obscuration or in their blind spot. Remember most could be on their cell phone, reading their paper, looking for something that dropped on the floor which is far more important than what is on road in front of them.

Instead of assuming that they will ignore you even when they see you, you should help make it easier for drivers to spot you, especially as the population ages and more drivers have greater difficulty in picking you out. To overcome the fact that you might be hard to see and harder to notice, wear bright colors, especially on your helmet and jacket. Run your high beam during the day. Think about things that can hide you and your bike from other drivers, things that can be as common as the sun behind you,

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the car ahead in the next lane, or a couple of roadside poles that line up on the driver's line of sight toward you. Make an effort to ride in or move to a location where drivers with potentially conflicting courses can see you before they stray your way.

Myth 2: Loud Pipes Save Lives

Yeah, there are a few situations—like when you are right next to a driver with his window down who is about to change lanes—where full-time noise-makers might help a driver notice you, but all that noise directed rearward doesn't do much in the most common and much more dangerous situation where a car turns in front of you. Maybe it's the fatigue caused by the noise, maybe it's the attitudes of riders who insist on making annoying noise, or perhaps loud bikes annoy enough drivers to make them aggressive. Whatever the reason, the research shows that bikes with modified exhaust systems crash more frequently than those with stock pipes. If you really want to save lives, turn to a loud jacket or a bright helmet color, which have been proven to do the job, or install a louder horn. Otherwise, just shut up. One major issue a few years back in a city in Massachusetts—a ban was almost imposed because of loud motorcycles imposing on the peaceful enjoyment of life by others. The courts argued that motorcycling was a privilege, not a right, and the government could eliminate or restrict such a privilege.

A ban or a proposal to limit the modifications to a motorcycle was almost passed because of excessive noise.

Myth 3: Motorcycle Helmets Break Necks

It seems logical—you put more weight out there on the end of your neck and when you get thrown off the bike, that extra weight will create more pendulum force on your neck. Turns out, it doesn't work that way. In fact, the energy-absorbing qualities of a DOT motorcycle helmet also absorb the energy that breaks rider's necks on impacts. Studies show that helmeted motorcyclists actually suffer fewer neck injuries when they crash compared to riders who crash without helmets.

Myth 4: Helmets Block Your Ability to See or Hear Danger

The thing you learn when you dig into the research is that motorcycle riders who use helmets crash less frequently than those who don't. Maybe that happens because motorcyclists who decide to wear helmets have a better or more realistic attitude about riding. Maybe it's because putting on a helmet is a reminder that what you are about to do can be dangerous and the act of accepting protection puts you in the right mindset. Maybe it's because a helmet provides eye protection and cuts down wind noise so you can actually see and hear better. Maybe it's because, by cutting wind pressure and noise, a helmet reduces fatigue. Whatever the reasons, wearing a helmet clearly does not increase a motorcyclist's risk of having an accident and wearing one correlates to reduced likelihood of an accident.

Myth 5: A Helmet Won't Help in Most Crashes

People look at the seemingly low impact speeds used in motorcycle-helmet testing and assume that if you are going faster than that, the helmet will no longer be up to the job. That ignores a few critical facts:

- Most accidents happen at relatively low speeds.
- Most of the impact energy is usually vertical—the distance your head falls until it hits.
- Helmets (or at least helmets that meet DOT standards) perform spectacular life-saving feats at impact speeds far above those used in testing.
- When a helmeted rider suffers a fatal head injury, it frequently doesn't matter, because, to hit hard enough to sustain that fatal injury, he sustained multiple additional fatal injuries to other parts of his body. In other words, the fact that the helmet didn't prevent the head injury was of no consequence.
- The numbers clearly say that riders using DOT helmets simply survive crashes more successfully than those without them.

Myth 6: A Helmet Will Leave You Brain Damaged in an Crash When You Would Have Simply Died

Of course that's possible—your helmet attenuates the impact energy enough to keep the injury from being fatal but not enough to keep all of your eggs from

getting scrambled. However, that's rare, and if you hit that hard, you are likely to get killed by some other injury. It's actually the un-helmeted rider who is likely to cross from animal to vegetable kingdom, and often from a relatively minor impact that would have damaged nothing but his ego if he'd been wearing a DOT helmet.

Myth 7: A Skilled Rider Should Be Able to Handle Almost Any Situation

The sharpest, most skilled motorcyclist in the world isn't going to be up to the task when a car turns or pulls out in front of him a short distance ahead and stops directly in his path broadside. Believing that your superior skills will keep you of trouble is a pipe dream, even if they are as good as you think. No matter how skilled you are, it's better to ride to avoid situations that can turn ugly. Slow down, scan farther ahead, and think strategically. And Dress for the crash. Helmet, gloves, over the ankle boots, and long sleeve shirt or jacket.

Myth 8: If You Are Going to Crash, Lay It Down.

I suspect this line was developed by riders to explain why they ended up flat-side-down while trying to avoid a crash. They over-braked or otherwise lost control, then tried to explain the crash away as intentional and tried to make it sound like it wasn't a crash at all. Maybe motorcycle brakes once were so bad that you could stop better off your bike while sliding or tumbling. If so, that hasn't been true for decades. You can scrub off much more speed before and there be going slower at impact with effective braking than you will sliding down the road on your butt. And if you are still on the bike, you might get thrown over the car you collide with, avoiding an impact with your body. If you slide into a car while you are on the ground, you either have a hard stop against it or end

up wedged under it. Remember that the phrase "I laid'er down to avoid a crash" is a oxymoron, often repeated by some other kind of moron. The only events where being on the ground *might* leave you better off are: 1) on an elevated roadway where going over the guardrail will cause you to fall a long way, or 2) in that situation you see occasionally in movies, where the motorcyclist slides under a semi trailer without touching it. That's a good trick if

Myth 9: One Beer Won't Hurt

Maybe not while you are drinking it, but if you get on your motorcycle after that, the effects of a single beer can get you hurt for life. No matter how unaffected you are sure you are, all the studies say differently. You increase your risk to yourself and to others when you drink and hit the road. Also, as you age, your metabolism slows down, and those "coupla drinks" you had last night may still be affecting you when you hit the road the next morning.

Myth 10: It's Better to Stay in Your Lane than Split Lanes

In most parts of the world, motorcycles split lanes all the time, everywhere traffic is heavy. Here in the U.S., people often act as if lane-splitting is insane. But when someone actually studied it in the only place in the U.S. where it's legal (California), they discovered it's actually slightly safer than staying in the lane in heavy, slow-moving traffic. Still many motorcyclists berate others who do it, when they should in fact be endorsing it. *GWRRA Rider Education MSF instructors will not endorse or recommend anyone lane-splitting on any roadway. Remember, the study said a slightly safer move. It is not a safer move, it only takes one door opening to make it an unsafe act. A car moving over because they do not see you coming up the lane can be very dangerous and very unsafe. Stay in a lane and move lane to lane when it is feasible.*

Myth 11: I'm Safer on the Street than on an Interstate

The thinking here must be that slower is safer, but that's only really true after the accident begins. Controlled-access roadways are inherently safer because all the traffic is going the same way, and there are no side streets from which someone can pop into your path, no pedestrians, and, often, less roadside "furniture" to hit if you depart the roadway. Running down the road at 70 mph side-by-side with the whirling wheels of a semi may feel hairy, but you are actually safer than at half that speed on a city street or even a country road.

Myth 12: A Skilled Rider Can Stop Better with Conventional Brakes than with Anti-Lock Brakes

Extensive testing done recently disproves this popular notion. Even on clean, dry, flat pavement, skilled experienced riders (who did hundreds of panic stops for the testing on outrigger-equipped motorcycles) stopped in less distance with anti-lock brakes (ABS) than with conventional or linked braking systems. Though the tests didn't include samples on surfaces with slick, dirty or wet spots, ABS certainly would have performed even better under those conditions while eliminating much of the risk of crashing.

The other cool thing about ABS on a motorcycle is that allows you to safely practice panic stops without risking a crash caused by lock-up.

Anyway, the next time some one tells you they had to "lay it down" or that green bikes crash more than purple ones, you can nod and snicker internally or challenge them. Just don't base your own riding choices on what other people assume unless there is some solid science to back it up.



MEDIC FIRST AID® International Version 6 is out and ready to be used as soon as all instructors get their email notification to take the online testing from MEDIC FIRST AID University. All Region Educators and Trainers of MFA should contact their instructors to inform them to be aware of this email that should be coming to them in early June. If some MFA instructors do not have email then we must tell them to contact MFA/Judy Hill at 1-800-800-7099 to setup their testing. Since we are close to Wing Ding and I have some fine outstanding instructors helping us, we will stay with the version 5 training incase some of the instructors were unable to update to version 6 through testing. We will add the new areas to the testing and I will have a meeting with all instructors before each class so we are all on the same page. The new version 6 is a good, new and revamped training for MEDIC FIRST AID. One thing that will not change is the way MFA has been successful through "seeing, hearing, doing, speaking, and feeling" methodology that focuses on a student-centered, low-stress learning environment the will continue to make this program one of the best. The new

guidelines of Version 6.0 will be even more simple and easy to use. There will be less segmentation of skills, less medical terminology, and the video segments will be shorter and more "direct". Student and Instructor packets will be more colorful and easier to understand.

The new programs released will be the following:

- BasicPlus CPR, AED, and First Aid for Adults (formerly Basic and AED Supplement)
- Basic CPR and First Aid for Adults (Formerly Basic)
- AED Response for Sudden Cardiac Arrest (Formerly AED Supplement)

The basic Training Programs video and instructor Guide can be used to teach both the BasicPlus and the Basic classes. AED classes taught as a stand alone will require the purchase of the AED Response for Sudden Cardiac arrest (Formerly AED Supplement) video program and Instructor Guide. No Region or District should need this one. The main Video or DVD which is your choice now should be the BasicPlus CPR which will cover everything we need for our membership. The cost has been reduced by the GWRRA corporation we have with MEDIC FIRST AID. As more information comes out I will keep all National Staff and Regional Educators with their Region Trainers informed of what we will be doing within GWRRA. There are changes coming and we will be adding them into our REP as I see what needs to be changed.

There will be new programs coming in the near future in this department. Your Regions, Districts and membership have asked for them, we will move forward as quickly and logically as we can. To succeed is to go slow and make it happen and make it right.

All MEDIC FIRST AID TRAINERS COMING TO WING DING, please check at Rider Education Booth on Monday to see where we will be meeting. With the new Version 6 coming out we need to discuss what we are looking for in the future to keep our program the best that it is. Region Educators are more than welcomed to come to this meeting.

Summer is upon us, ride smart, ride safe. Have a wonderful summer and have a safe trip to Wing Ding.

Larry & Rhonda Stiles

Rider Education Division

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June 9, 2006

Re: Wing Ding 28 Masters Luncheon

You are cordially invited to attend the Masters Luncheon on Thursday, July 6, 2004, at 11:00 a.m. The luncheon will be hosted by the **Gibson Showcase at 161 Opry Mills Dr., Nashville, TN**. This is located in the mall adjacent to the Opryland Hotel.

The luncheon is a new approach to our annual get together and is a result of the feedback and input from many of our Master level membership. The event has been scheduled to allow attendance and participation without the overlapping schedules of seminars, training and other Wing Ding events. Please plan on joining us and sharing the camaraderie of an elite group of motorcyclists dedicated to maintaining and growing Rider Education not only within GWRRA but also within our sport throughout the world.

Lunch will be served promptly at 11:00 a.m. and will be followed by the annual Rider Education Division recognition awards including the annual Rider Education Division National Merit Awards and the National Educator of the Year Award. The presentation ceremonies will conclude no later than 1 p.m.

The luncheon is capacity limited to 500. With the elimination of the annual renewal fees for all Masters the luncheon is available only by pre-registration reservation and purchase. Tickets can be reserved and purchased for **\$15 per person** by contacting member services at **800-843-9460**. The luncheon tickets will be included in the member's registration packet for Wing Ding. **Entry for the luncheon will require the ticket.** Guests are welcome but must be registered Wing Ding participants and accompanied by a Master.

Thank you for your dedication, support and enthusiasm. You represent the finest of examples for our membership. We trust that this will be a great event and that it will provide an enjoyable time for everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Lorenz".

Bob Lorenz
Senior International Director
Rider Education Division

Luncheon Menu:

Roasted Chicken Breast
Roast Beef Carving w/ assorted fresh rolls and sauces
Mashed Potatoes and Gravy
Green Beans with Shallots
Fresh Fruit Display
Assorted Cakes and pies
Beverages: Tea, coffee, soft drinks, bottled water