

# INSIDE THE HELMET OF YOUR SAFETY OFFICER

Lee McClellan— Safety Officer



As I pull out on the road, after looking up and down for a clear space in traffic, I try to look again right and left as well as in both my mirrors. I also look up and down because when you pull out in the middle of the

road, things could be a whole lot different than they appeared, and that is just on the surface of the road.

The road seems dry, but I see a small patch in the road ahead rolling into the throttle.

Looking up, I glance in the mirrors to see that I'm not impeding the traffic behind me which makes my smile bigger with the acceleration. That's when I see the buzzard on the side of the road.

That buzzard DOES NOT LIKE the sound of my pipes and is making a motion to leave the ground. That has my attention, and on calculating a route to avoid interception of the BUZZARD, I realize the small patch in the road is not a patch.

It's a black trash bag that wind from the buzzard or Mother Nature is blowing right in front of me. The buzzard cuts to my right and I duck and quack. The trash bag gets caught on my road peg and I cuss, thinking that before I can get rid of it, the bag will melt to something hot!

Now, back to the mirrors to see if I am the new hood ornament of the car behind me! After the third kick to the plastic bag, which to my relief was exiting stage right, all of that happened in a time span of 10 seconds.

This is how fast things can get weird. Riding around a problem should be your first choice.

Braking creates problems because you lose a large amount of traction trying to steer and brake. Sudden braking scares me because I don't want someone to rear end me. So I'm always looking for a way out.

Looking for a way out starts by looking as far ahead as you can. You may need to move from the left to the right side to see around vehicles.

This also helps you become more visible

and you don't become part of the vehicle you are behind, as well as your head light flashes from mirror to mirror for your friend in front.

Speaking of a way out, don't forget the vehicle behind you.

I always try to stop as far left in the lane as I can to give them a way out to the right, in case they don't see you until the last minute!

YOUR SAFETY OFFICER  
LEE

