

CURVES AND INTERSECTIONS

Mark Welch — Safety Officer



Greetings, fellow HOGs!

It is that time of year when we look forward to the holiday season. I don't know about you, but I am looking forward to our Toys for Tots ride. It should be a blast!

You may not be aware but most of the crashes we get into on our bikes occur at curves and intersections. Usually, single vehicle motorcycle crashes are in the curves and multi-vehicle crashes at intersections.

Recently, an analyst had the opportunity to review fatal motorcycle crashes in another state and the conclusion was quite interesting. It seems that we, as riders, take evasive action but many times don't do it properly. The study found that when a rider was faced with a car entering its path, the rider did swerve but swerved the wrong direction. Instead of swerving away from the path of the other vehicle, the riders swerved into the path of travel of the offending vehicle.

Don't misunderstand what I am saying, I am not implying that the rider was in any way at fault in the crash. What I am saying is that under the circumstances, the choice to swerve in the direction they did put them into

more danger. I am not certain that I know a way to train to make the proper decision when swerving. But at least making one aware of the importance of that decision will have an impact (no pun intended) when faced with the offending cager.

The other poor choice the riders made was when braking. They did not brake properly. Most only used one brake. I have recently had the opportunity to observe a video of a biker who lost his leg when a tractor-trailer turned into his path. The biker tried to stop by only using

his rear brake and ended up crashing into the trailer.

Consider this, if you always brake using only one brake, that will become your reflex.

You cannot change from what you always do when faced with a stressful situation. That is why it is important to always brake to a stop while using

both brakes. Then when the fecal matter hits the oscillating, rotating thin rigid vanes, you will use both brakes to stop without thinking about it. It is your habit! And I have already proven to you that we are creatures of habit.

All the gear all the time,

Mark

