

Safety Officer – Mike Murray

## **TRAINING & TECHNOLOGY**

**Words: Guilty**

**Riding is both a mental and physical exercise. Some motorcyclists hone skills by periodically taking a safety course where instructors reinforce good skills and point out bad habits. Other motorcyclists, workout regularly to condition their mind and body to the rigors of spending hours or days in the saddle. The best riders incorporate both. Since fatigue slows reaction times and compromises a rider's ability to make sound judgments when confronted with challenging situations, training helps offset these effects while improving performance on the bike.**

**Task awareness is an active, not passive, process. Maintaining 360-degree situational awareness by continuously trying to predict what other vehicles are going to do, as well as anticipating what's around the next corner, is key to implementing accident-avoidance maneuvers. Riders encounter all sorts of hazards on the road in the form of wild and domesticated animals, man-made and natural obstacles, weather and, of course pedestrians, cars, and trucks. To avoid what could turn into a dangerous situation, it's necessary to continuously scan the road for these and other potential hazards and identify them before they become a threat.**

**Operating a motorcycle is a multifaceted activity. In this regard, the most important control on the motorcycle is the throttle which affects all aspects of the bike including acceleration, deceleration, traction, weight transfer and steering. Combined with visual cues to identify the safest line, riders use the throttle to modulate their speed, as well as to constantly adjust their lane position to occupy a place that puts them in the most advantageous spot possible. By thinking ahead and remaining flexible, riders stay engaged and vigilant.**

**Many of us have been involved in this sport/lifestyle for decades and, perhaps as a result of our experience, rationalize that we don't need remedial training. Oftentimes we get on our bikes, hit the starter and ride off while our subconscious thoughts are preoccupied with**

**work-related deadlines, a family concern or paying the bills. Then, if we encounter a hazard, we react to the situation. This complacency is unsafe and though most of us believe that our skills will save us from a crash if suddenly confronted with a problem or hazard, it's far better to avoid those situations in the first place. In other words, don't rest on your laurels because you haven't crashed in 25 years, especially since new techniques and training curriculums are always evolving. We won't always do everything correctly, but we can at least reduce those factors within our control that could lead to a crash, and there is always room for improvement.**

.....

**With so many motorcycle magazines that have gone out of business or out of a printed version in the last few years; I have found myself much less informed as I once thought I was. When I stumbled across the article about BMW's motorcycle radar reflectors for last month's article, it came as a bit of a surprise to me. I spent a few evenings in the last couple of weeks to find out what is in the technology pipeline for motorcycles, and I want to share some things that are on the horizon and in the process of development or are currently available.**

**The engineering firm Italdesign has applied for a patent for their Smart Seatbelt Technology for bikes. It is a computer-controlled system that senses when it's better to release the rider in the event of a crash.**

**Honda introduced airbags in 2006, but is in the process of developing a new and improved air bag system. Progress has been slow but the technology could yet spread to more bikes.**

**Honda is looking to develop its own in-house radar system for motorcycles, with the setup likely to appear in the Africa Twin model first.**

**Ducati offers a front and rear radar setup on the Multistrada V4S as an option.**

**KTM has introduced a front radar system on the 1290 Super Adventure S.**

**The Honda Gold Wing is to get radar assisted adaptive cruise control in future GL 1800s**

**Ride Vision launches collision avoidance system for motorcycles.**

**BMW is developing a Safety Bike for a caged two-wheeler that is directed at the scooter market.**

**And I have saved the best for the last here. Honda is developing a Mind-Reading Bike. Honda has a patent on their brainwave detection system to help future motorcycles know their riders' intentions. (Think about that for a minute!).**

**RIDE LIKE YOUR LIFE DEPENDS ON IT...**

**IT DOES!**