

Goldwing Road Riders Association



MA-A Newsletter May '10

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY to all the Mom's out there!



Friends for Fun, Safety & Knowledge
"EVERY MEMBER MATTERS"

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“From the Directors Chair”



May's finally here and our official riding season is underway. I hope by now all of you have had time to get some riding done. Even with the fluky weather one day hot, the next cool and wet there have been some gems in there. Look at it this way you're not down in Nashville underwater.....well some of us aren't. Our own Sean & Ginny ventured into Nashville last week just as the rain was subsiding. The good news the rain stopped the day after they arrived, the bad news the Cumberland River continued to rise for several more days. Their hotel was on the banks of the Cumberland which necessitated an evacuation of the hotel a day later. While being taken by boat from the hotel, they could see their bike was still high & dry. As of today, Thursday May 6th, they're on the way to see friends in FLA by rental car. They're looking to be back in the Nashville area at some point this weekend to check on the bike and round-up their belongings from the hotel, hopefully. I'm sure Sean & Ginny will fill us in on their further exploits once they return home. Pat Costello and I are in touch with them daily by phone, they are doing well and having fun in spite of the floods.

Don't forget guys, Mother's Day is this Sunday, take a little time and let her know how much she means to you and your family. And as you may have noticed, we have not scheduled an official ride this Sunday in honor of Mom. There is a pick-up ride being lead by PAO as a pre-ride to the Cape.

And to all the mothers out there – **HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!!!!**

As the month of May comes to a close, some of you will be off to another fun filled long weekend in Bar Harbor. Please take time to pause for a few minutes to remember what Memorial Day is all about and why it's so important we remember our fallen heroes. Georgia and I just returned from a vacation down in VA. We traveled over to Washington DC for a day, spending most of our time in Arlington National Cemetery. This was our first time in DC, walking through the cemetery and watching the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns. It was all very moving. After leaving VA we traveled to PA stopping at the Antietam battle ground then on to Gettysburg for two days. Walking the fields where so many gave their lives then walking through the Gettysburg Cemetery (where Lincoln gave his Gettysburg Address) put the story of the battle into a different perspective. We stood on the very ground where the soldiers from my home town, Somersworth, NH fought and died on the second day of the Gettysburg battle in the Peach Orchard. A prelude to the battle at the Wheat Field and Little Round Top. Memorial Day will forever have a new and deeper meaning for me.



The Tomb of the Unknowns – Arlington National Cemetery



Gettysburg Cemetery – the hill side where Lincoln gave his Gettysburg Address and where some of the boys from the Hew Hampshire infantry are buried.

With the riding season underway, please take the time to ensure you and your Wing are ready for trouble free riding. We have many miles to travel together, let's make them both safe and fun!

Until next month, ride safe - *Kevin*



Rider Education

"Safety is for Life"



OTL Kent Cook



A little background: Kent is an Air Force aviator in two seat jet fighters. He's also very fond of BMW racing, does more track days than I can afford, and is a very skilled track day rider.

What Are You Looking At?

Fear and panic. Fear is always just below the surface, waiting to rise up in us when we participate in a high-risk sport, such as motorcycling. Although fear can be beneficial in that it gets the brain working at a higher speed, panic will get you hurt, maimed, or killed if you are riding a motorcycle. Fear can switch to panic in an instant because panic is a chemically-induced mode. Good news is that we can take measures to avoid panic and higher levels of fear while motorcycling.

Here's a common scenario of fear taking hold of a rider. Our victim is cruising along at a good pace in a group while enjoying the sights, sounds, and smells. The motorcycles ahead enter a curve and he slows to adjust his speed. He focuses on the entrance and notices that the road behind it doesn't open up much. In fact, the curve seems a little sharper than he initially thought, as the riders ahead disappear around the bend. To make things even

more complex, the entrance now seems to be rushing at him faster than he can process his next action. He begins to brake more sharply. Then as he banks into the turn, the road seems to open up and its radius doesn't seem to be as sharp as he thought. He notices that a significant gap has opened between him and the riders in front, so he accelerates hard as he comes out of the lean to catch up.

A more extreme, but still far too common, outcome is that the rider becomes overwhelmed with the feeling that he will not make this turn and really nails the brakes at the entrance. At this point, he goes on automatic, reverting to what is taught by the MSF—keeping the motorcycle upright while under heavy braking. Next thing he knows, he is off the road on the outside of the curve. If he survives without going down, his friends congratulate him on 'keeping her upright'. The reality is that he is a concerned because he missed that turn. Maybe he even

rethinks whether or not he should be riding a motorcycle at all.

So what happened to these riders and how could they have avoided the fear and panic? There is a good explanation for why this happens and with it a method to creating riding skills that you can depend on. If you master the technique, you will never blow a curve like this. The trick is that it takes discipline and enough practice to make it totally ingrained in your riding.

Fear and panic are built-in automatic survival reactions to danger. Fear is meant to give us a turbo boost for outwitting or outrunning a predator while living in the wild. Panic shuts down everything not needed for "fight or flight" and diverts the energy where it is needed to support extreme survival activities. The brain basically stops thinking, fine motor skills evaporate, and hearing is lost, as is peripheral vision. This makes these pre-programmed states counter-productive to successfully piloting a motorcycle through a hairy turn at speed where a clear head and fine motor skills are needed.

So what can we do to avoid debilitating levels of fear and outright panic if they are an 'automatic' response? Since you don't go into a panic on purpose, you should be coming to the realization that it is your subconscious processing which hits the panic button. If your brain does not perceive danger, it will not generate fear or go into panic mode. That is our key—control what the brain perceives by controlling input.

Of the five senses (sight, touch, hearing, smell, and taste), sight is by far the more dominant in humans. For the motorcyclist, touch is the next most important. Beyond these two senses, we also need kinesthesia. Kinesthesia is the awareness of our muscle and joint movement. It allows us to make coordinated movements such as simultaneously operating the throttle grip, clutch lever, and foot lever when shifting gears. Kinesthesia is programmed as we learn physical activities and is deeply affected by the loss of fine motor skills when we panic.

Thus, our process of controlling a motorcycle is that we receive key input via our eyes, provide an appropriate response based on our knowledge and skill level, execute and fine-tune the response using kinesthesia, and get feedback through touch, eyesight, and kinesthesia. Our other senses provide supporting roles (throttle and braking

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is confirmed via our hearing and the sensation of motion and lean angle). Most training focuses on kinesthesia to manipulate the motorcycle's controls. But in my experience, the biggest benefit beyond the basic parking lot maneuvers is to develop visual scan discipline.

To understand the importance of proper visual scan, let's analyze what is happening in the brain as we ride. Whenever we see converging lines drawn on a piece of paper, most of us motorcyclists automatically think of a highway stretching out into the distance. If those converging lines are drawn in an arch to the left or right, we automatically think of a road with a left or right curve in it. Now imagine these illustrations in motion. As we focus ahead, the straight highway rolls along beneath us, but we never get to the point where the lines converge. The point of convergence never gets any closer. The brain is happy because it perceives that we always have road on which to ride.

What would your reaction be if the point of convergence started getting closer? Wouldn't you get the impression that the road was about to end? Your brain sure would.

And you can bet that the survivalist in you will want some pretty drastic action to deal with what it perceives as a pretty drastic situation. To it, the point of convergence is rapidly becoming the point of danger! That is what happens when you focus your vision on the entrance of a curve in the road. Your brain does not 'see' where the road is going. You 'know' it goes left or right, but your brain cannot see that, so your survivalist overrides your knowledge and hits the panic button.

To compound the problem, speed is perceived relative to our frame of reference—the distance between us and the point of convergence. When the point of convergence is in the far distance, it does not seem to approach very quickly so we perceive that our speed is low. As the point of convergence get closer, the distance and frame of reference shortens, so we start to get a more meaningful appreciation of our speed. The effect is that the approach to a curve seems to hang in the distance for a while, then it rushes upon us during the last few seconds.

Try putting these two phenomena together and replay that scenario where our hapless rider ran off the outside of a curve. By focusing his vision on the entrance of the turn, his brain concludes that the road is ending because the point of convergence is getting nearer. As the distance closes, his perception is that his speed is increasing. He 'knows' the road continues off to the left or right, but since he is not including that portion of the road in his immediate vision, his brain is not getting the confirmation that it needs. At some level, his brain is arriving at the conclusion that the road ends and he is about to rush headlong off the road into the abyss, trees, fields, or whatever lies out into the more distant peripheral vision.

In the extreme case, his survivalist hits the panic button and he grabs a handful (or if his skills are poorly developed, a footful) of brake. Any thoughts of leaning the bike have evaporated along with the fine-skills needed to execute that maneuver. In fact, his brain is no longer even thinking about a curve, it is focused only on stopping in the remaining pavement he is showing it.

For those of us who have been in this situation, we are quite simply causing our own panic attack by failing to provide the basic visual input our brain needs to determine which way the road goes, the radius of the turn, whether or not it is banked or off-camber, if there are any obstacles, or debris that could affect traction, etc. We are starving it of

vital information that it knows it should have. No wonder there is panic and fear.

Perhaps the explanation is simple enough, but the fix does take some work to counter our natural tendency to focus on threats. But anyone who will put in the effort can work up to a sufficient level of skill to never run wide in a turn, much less go off road on the outside of a turn.

I will give you my methodology for taking a turn--use it, or adopt another's technique as revealed in the many excellent books on the subject of sport riding. As I approach a turn, I scan all the way around the turn to feed basic information about direction, banking, surface condition, traffic, possible obstacles, or whatever else I can discern about the curve. I focus momentarily on the first section (the entrance) to judge my speed and to select my braking point. I then turn my head and scan to the next section (apex) to pick up any new info. I follow that with a visual sweep back to the entrance as I throttle back and begin getting most of my braking done. Just before turning in, I swivel my head and scan back to the apex and as far into the turn as I can see. Continually adjusting my speed with trail braking, I lean over, turn my head further to find the last section (the exit) of the turn. As the point of convergence starts to recede and the road begins to open before me, I begin adding throttle to maintain my momentum and to settle the suspension. As the exit comes into view, I progressively add more throttle and move my visual scan up to the road beyond the exit.

To make sure you are always scanning, you can try the feedback loop I use. If I ever feel any fear rising in me, I tell myself to look up. That mantra has saved me a few times in my early days, and continues to be my curve angel today.

So, if you ever Feel The Fear at a curve, LOOK UP! 🍀

VISIT THE
RACING
<http://www.bmwra.org/racing>
BLOG

SCHEDULING & EVENTS

Monthly Meeting



Bertucci's

45 Walkers Brook Road
Reading, MA

**Next Meeting:
Tuesday May 18th @ 7:00pm
(meeting)**

Up-Coming Ride/Events



Cape Cod Pre-Ride Run ~ Sunday May 9 (see website for more details)

Ice Cream Ride - first ride of the 2010 season

White Horse Press Open House - Saturday May 15 ~ leaving Reading @ 8:00 am

Chapter B Fun Raiser/Mystery Ride - Sunday May 16 ~ leaving Reading @ 8:00 am



Mike Lozzi	May 2
UB Madden	May 12
Carle Lee	May 26

The Lee's	May 7
The Price's	May 12

Congratulations to April's meeting winners!

Item

Surprise Gift Bag
 Red Sox t-shirt
 Tropical Mix
 Almonds
 Traditional Mix
 DD Coffee
 Venco GC
 Bertucci's GC
 Bread
 Coffee Roll
 Bread/Cake
 DD GC
 50/50
 10 free tix May's meeting

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 MaryBeth Traynor
 MaryBeth Traynor
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 Lynn Peters
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 Paul Sarty
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 Billy d'Entremont

Winner

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 MaryBeth Traynor



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		PEARL YELLOW		
	TPMS	METALLIC BLACK	\$25,399.00	\$ 22,099.00
	AUDIO & COMFORT PKG	METALLIC TITANIUM		
	XM RADIO & NAV	METALLIC RED		
		PEARL YELLOW		
	TPMS	METALLIC BLACK	\$25,699.00	\$ 23,149.00
	AUDIO & COMFORT PKG	METALLIC TITANIUM		
	XM RADIO & NAV	METALLIC RED		
	ABS	PEARL YELLOW		
	TPMS	METALLIC BLACK	\$27,999.00	\$ 23,999.00
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	XM RADIO & NAV	METALLIC RED		
	ABS	PEARL YELLOW		
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