



## The Straight and Narrow

### July News

Well guys I will have to apologize for this months newsletter articles. Seems that there has been way too much going on for me to get to writing an article. If you know me you know that this is very rare for me and I promise that I will try my best to not let it happen again.

Instead I have come up with a couple of articles that I have "borrowed". I think that you will find them interesting, and hopefully you will see something in there that will click with you.

As always I have all the forms that we need for Enrollment in the Riders Education Program as well as to Update your current information with District. Fell free to let me know if you need them, or if you need help with them.

Also we will be having our July Safety Social at the Wesley Baptist Church on July 21<sup>st</sup> at 8:00 AM. We would love to see you all there.

Till next time, Ride safe, take care of each other, and Remember above all else,

**Have fun!**

**Dale and Kathy Compton**

**G2 Chapter Educators**



## ***Hot Weather Riding***

By James R. Davis

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Riding when the temperature is well in excess of 90 degrees can be dangerous to your health. Unless you take care to keep your body temperature under control even rides as short as an hour can result in heat-prostration or even sun-stroke.

Many riders know that if you keep your neck cool, because the large veins that feed your brain are so close to the surface, you greatly diminish these health risks. There are two very popular devices that are simple and effective in this regard.

One is called a 'cool collar' and is made from a tube of bandana material that contains some water absorbing beads sewn into it. The beads increase in size about 50 TIMES over when they are dry. Thus, when dry, these collars store easily and take up very little room. But getting them wet is not as easy as it sounds. That is, you have to take a dry collar and submerge it in water for up to 1 hour before it has absorbed all the water it can. That hour is often not available to you when you need it.

The reason the collar works to cool you off is that it takes even longer for the beads to dry out than it did to get them wet. That is, water will evaporate from them over a several hour period. Any evaporation activity cools - but only marginally so from the wearer's point of view. That is, within half an hour of putting one of these collars around your neck, even if it had been in a freezer before you put it on, the collar will be very nearly at the temperature of the air around it.

Far better than these 'cool collars', I have found, is the original design of them (sometimes called 'Kool Kollars'). These are usually made of terry-cloth sewn together in such a way as to contain a pocket into which a zip-lock bag is placed. These are filled with ice! This type of collar REALLY cools your neck as the ice melts, AND they drip cool water. That dripping leaves the front and back of your shirt sopping wet over time which provides a huge source of evaporation - i.e., it helps to COOL!

At every pit stop you make you can refill the 'Kollar' with ice (just pour in a glass of ice water, ice and all).

The bead filled collar cannot be rapidly cooled again once it has gotten warm. Thus, you usually find that people that use them have two - one of which is always sitting in an ice-chest.

One more way to handle high heat - those of you that wear skull-caps (helmet liners) can simply saturate them with water before putting them on. This works very well indeed, for about half an hour.

Further, of course, simply pouring water on your shirt helps a great deal - again, because it provides a huge area over which evaporation takes place.

While on the subject let me remind you that your wet shirt is not the only large area that evaporates - all of your exposed skin does the same. Thus, you NEED to DRINK lots of fluids too!!!

## **'Skill' is often no more than CONFIDENCE**

By James R. Davis

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Some time ago I was riding with a group down a back-country road when our group leader decided that we needed to perform our 'mandatory' U-turn. The road had two lanes (one in each direction) and there was no oncoming traffic.

With only one exception everybody made a 'three-point' maneuver. That is, we turned across the road and stopped when we could not keep going without running off the pavement, then backed up after turning the front wheel, stopped and turned the front wheel again and proceeded to complete the maneuver.

There was, as I said, one exception. This rider was on a relatively new GoldWing and he was carrying a passenger. Further, he is a BIG man - well over 6' tall and well over 300 pounds.

This man simply aggressively leaned his bike over and drove his bike through the entire 180 degree turn without needing to stop or running out of pavement.

The chatter on the CB was filled with compliments relative to his profound skill with his bike. Those compliments started again at our next rest stop. They were well deserved compliments. But they were misdirected.

That is, what should have been complimented, in my opinion, was the rider's CONFIDENCE rather than his skill.

Don't get me wrong - the man demonstrated lot's of skill. He had demonstrated a mastery of his clutch, his throttle, and his HEAD!

With even modest skill almost anyone can lean a bike far enough in a slow-speed turn to drag a peg - but very few of us want to or would even try to get close to that big a lean because we do not KNOW that we can do it successfully. Why? Because we lack confidence in either our machine or ourselves. So, we compromise and do what we KNOW we can do - we make a three-point U-turn on a narrow road.

And how is it that this BIG man developed the confidence to make that slow-speed hard lean needed to complete his smooth U-turn? He had lot's of experience. Experience gained from lot's of practice.

Whether you call it skill or confidence, this man handles his bike very well indeed. He deserves recognition and regard, and he certainly gets both from me. Further, his U-turn maneuver took substantially less time than mine did. In other words, he was at risk for far less time than I was. THAT aspect of the value of experience never occurred to me before - confidence can reduce time at risk.

So, schedule some time on a regular basis and go out and practice, practice, practice. Earn the respect and regard of your friends by increasing your confidence/skills. Potentially reduce your at-risk time while on the road.

Practice increases confidence. Confidence shows as 'skill.' Over-confidence, however, can kill. The difference between the two, of course, is that being confident means you *know* you can do something, being over-confident means you *think* you can.

Making a U-turn like my friend did may not be the most important thing you will ever have to do, but failing to negotiate a curve at high

speed because you lack confidence enough to lean the bike just a bit more is simply unacceptable motorcycling.