

Sight Distance

Many of us have been riding motorcycles for a long time. Sometimes we get complacent and feel we know everything we need to know about riding, and surviving. Some of us still thirst for knowledge, and may not know where to turn for information. Personally I have become a much better rider since I joined GWRRA. Before that I was doing my own thing in my own way, and had a few friends that were the same. I've always said it's a miracle that I've survived my youth.

One of the reason I joined Gold Wing Road Riders Association (GWRRA) is to met other people with similar interest as Darlene and myself. Well, we sure have accomplished that. We have made some great friends, and managed to improve our riding skills along the way. Ever since I took on the role of Rider Educator I found I have taken even more steps to become a safer rider. Darlene and I have entered in to the Levels program a couple of years ago, and at the May's gathering, along with Joe Lupo, I have proudly joined the ranks of other skilled riders in getting my Master Tour Rider, level 4 number of 5054. I have made a commitment to safety and practice it every time I straddle that Goldwing, or any other motorcycle. I think we all are aware of the risks we taking when we ride our 2 & 3 wheelers, at least we should be, and by joining the levels program & practicing what I preach, I can feel confident that I'm doing what I can do to educate myself. This doesn't mean I'm fearless, and invincible, it just means I'm trying to prepare myself and train myself to be as safe as possible so we can enjoy this life style for as long as possible. I would strongly recommend to any of you reading this to give some thought to try to do the same, no matter how long you've been riding. I will attach a Levels 1 – 3 form in the back of the newsletter. Read it over, give it some thought, and by all means if you have any questions, give me or Phil Yapple a call or e-mail.

I'm in the process of reading a great book right now that I would like to share with you. It's called Proficient Motorcycling by David L Hough. Motorcycle Consumer News has deemed this book as "The Ultimate Guide To Riding Well". It's a great read, and has enlightened me so far. I am not about to break any copyright laws, but periodically I will add tidbits of the book in my articles to come. If you'd like a good book to read on this subject, I highly recommend it.

I'd like to share from the book this little guide on sight distance. It might help you on the road do some quick math in your head to make you realize if you're in a safe place or not.

I would also like to share a couple of pie charts from the book. One was done by the Hurt study, And the other by Road Rider.

Sight Distance

At any given speed a certain minimum distance is needed to stop a specific motorcycle.

For example, if your motorcycle is capable of coming to a stop from 60 mph in a 120', and you can't see any further than 120' your max speed should be 60 mph.

It is difficult to judge distance, or how many feet ahead you can see, so the next best thing is to judge time. To make a time measurement pick out an object ahead of you and count how many seconds it takes to get to that object, then compare it to your speed, then you can make an intelligent decision on how far you're hanging it out there.

Here are some basic sight distance guidelines.

Speed Minimum sight distance

40 - 50 mph 4 sec

50 - 60 mph 5 sec

60 - 70 mph 6 sec

70 - 80 mph 7 sec