

Watch out for us!

By Jim Roberson

While thinking about something for the rider education article, I came upon the following short clip from England from the GWRRA national website. Every driver education class should show this (<http://ruiner.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/howclose.mpg>) to its students and if you have the capability you should view it as well. It is 30 seconds well spent. It shows how much we miss by looking but not seeing. If you do not have the capability to view this short movie clip, it shows a driver looking right, then left then pulling out from a stop into traffic. He does not see the motorcycle coming from his right which unfortunately slams into his door. If you did watch this clip, did you see the motorcycle coming from the right? It was there, but not very big so it was not "seen".

The eyes and brain work together to "see" things, but sometimes those things that are seen are not truly perceived. We as riders of motorcycles need to be especially aware that drivers of cars and trucks may not see us. We can be right there in front of them; even something as big as Gold Wing but they do not "see" us which in some cases leads to an accident. Unfortunately we as motorcyclists usually lose in these situations.

What can we do? To start with we can drive more defensively. We cannot count on the other driver so we have to do double duty and drive our vehicle more carefully. We have to be constantly on the lookout for an alternate path if the need arises to make a split decision. We also must "gear up" to protect our fragile bodies with appropriate riding clothing and a good helmet. We can wear brighter clothes; make use of our lights and reflectors and if possible add more lights and reflective devices to increase visibility.

As the tag line on the clip says, "Take longer to look for bikes. Think!".

Ride Safe!