

KEEPING IT UP

Where did it go wrong?

As most motorcycle accidents (crashes) occur in the city or suburbs with passenger type vehicles, knowing how best to avoid them is a very important issue. I thought we would analyse several typical suburban-crashes and see how we could have possibly avoided them.

ANTICIPATION

You are riding down a suburban street approaching a slow moving vehicle. The temptation is to go down a gear and accelerate around the vehicle. The driver keeps slowing down and speeding up and you feel yourself getting frustrated and your aggression takes over. You pull out to pass, as you do the vehicle turns suddenly to the right and attempts a U turn. With no time to stop or swerve, you collide with the vehicle.

Where did it go Wrong?

The fact that this vehicle was slowing down and then accelerating should have warned you that the driver was looking for something, possibly an address or a driveway. So many drivers fail to check their rear view mirrors to observe following traffic and as a result are unaware of our presence. It is very important to keep anticipating the “what if” and keep a buffer from the vehicle waiting until you are sure before overtaking. Controlling your aggression is an important aspect of mental skills on the road.

THE CAR PULLING OUT FROM THE DRIVEWAY

You are riding along a suburban street with good vision left and right. Well ahead you see a vehicle waiting to pull out of a driveway, the car is not moving. As you approach the vehicle the driver accelerates out into your path and then brakes as he sees you. You cannot stop in time and you collide with the car.

Where did it go Wrong?

Often drivers of vehicles appear to be looking at you but often they do not perceive a moving motorcycle or are not thinking or looking for motorcycles. In most cases they may not accurately judge the speed of the motorcycle. A motorcycle rider needs to anticipate this and keep a buffer from the vehicle and also covering the brakes and being prepared to take evasive action to avoid this situation. Watching the wheels will give you an indication that the vehicle is starting to move.

OVERTAKING

You are riding down a single lane highway, the vehicle in front of you is travelling just below the speed limit and you make the decision to overtake. A short distance ahead is a T-intersection. To the right on approach to this intersection a vehicle turns left into your lane from the intersection - you are now in a collision path with this vehicle and a crash is imminent.

Where did it go wrong?

It is important that you have good clear vision through intersections. On approaching where vision is restricted it is advisable to hang back before overtaking. When a driver is turning left into a street they are more likely to be looking to their right as they turn. If you are travelling on the wrong side of the road at the approach to the intersection, a crash may be difficult to avoid.