

News For Thought

NCOM Newsbytes
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German Study Claims Motorcycle Helmets Could Be Significantly Safer

A study carried out by the German Hohenstein Institute in Bönningheim shows that motorcycle helmets could indeed be a lot safer if some other measurements would be taken into account, concluding that inner shell size alone is not enough for providing the best protection-to-fit ratio, and the head shape is just as critical.

The Hohenstein Institute study narrowed the head shapes to 6 major categories, with an amazing width variance of 3.5 cm (1.37"), determining that one helmet size cannot possibly offer the best fit for all these head shapes, even provided the circumference is the same.

With the way the inner impact layer fits on the rider's head being one of the critical elements in shock absorption and G-dispersion, it's apparent that the same shape will create different pressure points on a motorcyclist's skull, leading to various outcomes in similar crash conditions.

Spaces between the skull and the protective layer / liner result in less optimal protection in case of an impact, and such anthropometric head data could improve helmet design and manufacturing significantly, should the leading brands take notice of the study's finding.

motorcyclist fatalities, and in light of overall motor vehicle fatalities steadily decreasing gives the impression that motorcycling is becoming more dangerous, but just the opposite is true.

While so-called safety experts point to more and more states relaxing their helmet laws as the root of all this evil, it's in fact a numbers game that motorcycle enthusiasts are winning.

Over the past five years, since 2007 when there were just over seven million motorcycles in the U.S., motorcycle registrations nationwide have ballooned to eight and a half million; an increase of 15% more motorcycles on the road today, while at the same time fatalities per 100,000 registered motorcycles has actually decreased by nearly a quarter!

Moreover, over the past decade motorcycle registrations have risen 40.7% (from 5,004,156 in 2002 to 8,437,502 in 2011), but the fatality rate dropped 17.3% (from 65.35 per 100K to 54.66).

Check out the most current statistics acquired by the National Coalition of Motorcyclists (NCOM) from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), compared to motorcycle registration numbers found on the U.S. DOT Federal Highway Administration website: Year - Registered Motorcycles / Rider Fatalities = Fatality Rate per 100,000 Motorcycles

2007 - 7,138,476 / 5,174 = 72.48
 2008 - 7,752,926 / 5,312 = 68.52
 2009 - 7,929,724 / 4,469 = 56.35
 2010 - 8,009,503 / 4,518 = 56.40
 2011 - 8,437,502 / 4,612 = 54.66

**NOTE: According to these data analyzed by the National Coalition of Motorcyclists, motorcycle registrations have increased 15.4% over the past five years, while fatalities decreased by 10.9% and the fatality rate declined 24.6%...why isn't the news media reporting THESE facts?



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Jayhawkers See The Light

The Kansas legislature unanimously passed House Bill 2318 which allows a motorcycle's headlamp to be wired with a headlamp modulation system, which must meet federal standards. The bill also allows certain types of lights on the sides of motorcycles, visible only from the side and not from the front or rear and

to not protrude beyond or outside the body or wheel of the motorcycle. The side lights may emit white, amber, or red light without glare.

The legislation was signed into law on April 4, 2013 by Governor Sam Brownback and goes into effect July 1st.

Red-Light Camera Companies Fight Laws And Rulings Against Ticket Cams

Purveyors of red-light cameras continue their quest to place cameras on every street corner in the nation, and one strategy is to put the hit on states that have traditionally been "protected" from cameras either through legislation or court ruling.

Redflex lobbyists recently swarmed over the Minnesota Statehouse pushing a bill to allow ticket cameras into the state. The bill was written to thwart a 2007 Minnesota Supreme Court ruling that Minneapolis' red-light camera program was unconstitutional. The bill was defeated in committee, thanks in part to the efforts of ABATE of Minnesota and the National Motorists Association (NMA).

In Michigan, where a 2007 ruling from the state's attorney general has been keeping cameras at bay, recently introduced camera legislation has turned Michigan into the latest photo enforcement battleground state.

The NMA (www.motorists.org) warns that if you live in one of the 15 states that have taken steps to keep cameras out, stay alert. Chances are that a camera company

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Pope Blesses Harleys & Riders

Thousands of Harley riders from around the world were blessed by Pope Francis in St. Peter's Square on Sunday, June 16 as one of the stops in a worldwide celebration of the famous motorcycle maker's 110th anniversary, which will roar across 11 countries before concluding in Milwaukee over Labor Day Weekend.

Choral music mixed with revving engines as the Holy Father blessed a sea of Harley-Davidson motorcycles and riders from all parts of the planet flocking to Italy over the weekend of June 13-16 to celebrate Harley-Davidson's milestone, and earlier in the weekend festivities, the leader of the Roman Catholic Church was presented with two white classic Harley-Davidson motorcycles for use by Papal police and his own black leather jacket.

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lobbyist is cozying up to a friendly state lawmaker with a nice campaign donation and a pre-written camera bill that needs support.

Despite Media Hype, Motorcycling Is Safer

Record numbers of motorcycles over the past few years have resulted in an increased number of annual

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"Men love their country, not because it is great, but because it is their own." Seneca (4 BC - AD 65), Roman philosopher and statesman