



The Road Captain column is dedicated to a smarter, safer journey.

**The One Second Advantage**

There is just no way the federal government has run-a-muck and run out of money, at least not in my neighborhood. I say this because it seems every other "dangerous" intersection in my part of the world is being replaced with a roundabout. I dreaded the first one built, crossing my well beaten path to my 8-5. But in the first week of its opening I saw a profound increase in traffic flow. But I also saw an increase of blue and red lights when I approached that intersection, along with strangely scattered sheet metal strewn everywhere and in every direction. I personally have no fear of these four-lane, double-exit, engineering after thoughts. But many people do, not to mention the ones that use these intersections as a qualifying session for a drift competition. Both of these people honestly scare the shit out of me, really ignorant humans are capable of anything.

So after 2 years of the daily commute using a roundabout I noticed certain traffic patterns start to appear and I have adjusted my driving choices. I figured out the best way if you are going straight thru a roundabout is to use the inner lane not the outer lane. It turns out a lot of drivers approaching a roundabout have it in their mind they don't need to stop and are not prepared to do so. Now go back and read that last sentence again.

We've all heard that last second tire screech coming from the right feeder lane and we are usually close enough to see the look on the other drivers faces as well. And this ladies and gentlemen is one of the reasons I use the inner lane. It gives me just one more second of time and space to keep a front bumper off my flesh and most of the time, that's all it takes for you to make it thru unscathed.

Now for the second reason the inner lane is safer. As I approach a roundabout in the outer lane, I too sometimes have that same unwillingness to stop, or to even have the thought that I need to be prepared to stop, just like all those other tire screeching idiots. Mentally we are just concentrating on the outer lane of traffic. It's just human nature, but when I approach in the inner lane now I have to look at two lanes coming at me from the left and now I am always mentally prepared to stop. It comes down to the fact that most people draw the line of risk at crossing two lanes of traffic, turns out as humans we are more than willing to risk one lane. So on paper and most of the time in theory it turns out the roundabout design is a great way to move traffic, just until you add human behavior. Let us not forget, as a friendly reminder; it is illegal to use your turn signal when approaching a roundabout and that is all they need to pull you over.

Otherwise "drive like a dumb ass, die like a dumb ass"

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