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## A Rider State of Mind, Part Two

Last month I introduced you to the first two of the four basic approaches to riding safely. Now I'm going to lob the other two across the bow. Remember: it's okay to disagree with these theories. All you have to do is to pretend, and ride, as if you do.

**Attitude #3** The road is designed to make you crash. Let's face it, the only "safe" road would be one that went dead straight and had no hills, intersections, or other vehicles. And even then a rider with poor skills or poor judgment would still find a way to wad his or her bike up. Add weather, sand, oil spills, sharp turns, four-way stops, on-ramps, deer, drunk drivers, bicyclists, commuters on cell phones, yellow lights, and the occasional "freeway couch," and you have a melting pot of hazards that are all converging on you and your motorcycle to send you into the next world. Treat the road as if it's a trap designed to ensnare motorcycle riders, and don't let your guard down for a minute, even if there's not another vehicle in sight.

**Attitude #4** There are two kinds of riders: those who have gone down, and those who will.

Even I know this is a big load of flapdoodle, and when you hear it, it's usually uttered by someone trying to prove how wise they are and how much they know about motorcycling. They're conning you. There are lots of riders out there who have never crashed and never will. There are no absolutes when it comes to motorcycling.

You can be a complete, idiotic, drunken, speeding wanker and never even come close to crashing your bike. On the other hand, no matter how smart you are, how skilled

you are, and how great your attitude, you can still get tangled up in traffic—or in the middle of nowhere, on your own—and put that motorcycle in a very upside-down and bashed-up sort of way. But saying you've either crashed or you will crash is a load of hooey.

Or is it?

Seen from the perspective of an adopted attitude and not an absolute truism, it takes on a whole new life. Thinking back last month, the first two attitudes riders need to survive are:

- 1) You are responsible for everything that happens on the road.
  - 2) All other drivers are trying to kill you.
- We've just added a third:
- 3) The road is designed to make you crash.

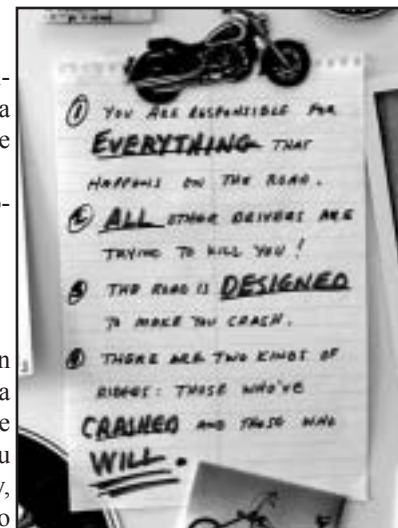
Now, we know that none of these things can possibly be true, but we agree that it's in a rider's best interest to pretend that they are true. This new one is no different. If you assume that you will, someday, eventually, crash, you'll always take measures to try to keep that from happening. This keeps you fresh, keeps you learning, and keeps you

honest about yourself and your abilities. It is the rider's attitude that makes the biggest difference in their survival, and this "Those who have and those who will" saying is another great example of good rider attitude, whether the know-it-all utterer realizes it or not.

So add a fourth attitude to your approach to riding:

- 4) There are two kinds of riders; those who have crashed, and those who will.

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