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

Use It or Lose It

As humans, we are creatures of habit and this is not a bad thing. It keeps us on track, beer in the fridge, bills are paid, slap the maid. And why not, let's face it, without habit some of us would just as soon walk blindly out into a busy street. But when we relate habit to riding our motorcycles we know every inch of this machine and how far we can push it, right to the edge. Yup there's nothing like a late night run to anywhere. Get in the saddle, fits like a glove, after day one, everything has been positioned and adjusted to exactly where you want it. You have no closer relationship with any other machine; it's really an extension of yourself. Confidence looms so large all because of this bond.

So when the sky turn black and the drops start to fall, you not only know exactly where the rain gear is stashed but in what order it's packed away. Just the same way you know where the tool pack is stored and exactly what's in it. As creatures of habit you top off the tank at that one certain gas station for all the right reasons. No two bones about it, you've got your machine all figured out. Except for one thing... It happens almost every time you ride, some other human dose something stupid that's about to involve you if you don't take evasive action. As it is almost every time you see it unfold in front of you, almost anticipating what's about to occur and you make your move to avoid another incident. And as always 5 seconds later you say to yourself, I should of hit the magic button...but for some reason my fingers stumbled.

Magic button, what the hell are you talking about? Simple, the horn. That's right, it's not that we didn't think of using it, it was just a mille second little too late to make a difference. I talk a lot about seconds and half seconds in this column for a reason. Because most of the time having an extra one second is all it takes to avoid a bad situation. So back to us being humans creatures of habit. How do we naturally re-integrate this button so it becomes second nature, and not of the 5 second variety. This may sound simple, heck it may sound stupid to some, but here it is. Every time, and I mean every time you start your bike just hit the horn button. Ok I know you're not going to do this when you're out with your group and you are leaving your favorite place. But how about the first turn of the key for the day. I guess that's a little more obtainable. So the next time you have a novice member join you for a ride have them sit on their bike and close their eyes and tell them to hit the horn and see how long it takes. Then let them know, you just need to do it the first turn of the key for the day. Eventually it will become second nature. It only takes a second, but more importantly it could also give you back that one second.

Otherwise "drive like a dumb ass, die like a dumb ass" By DuWayne Porto





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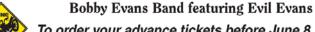
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