

. . . Because Safety Has No Quitting Time

We have now survived two months of the mandatory Goldwing hibernation period we call 'Stummer', and I for one can't wait till its over. I always get a chuckle when I read about how some poor guy in Michigan is looking out the front window at a foot of new-fallen snow and dreams about the day the snow thaws so he can get his Goldwing on the road. With all respect to Michigan, that must really suck. But it seems to me that every year about this time it feels like Florida's proverbial 'show' (summer storms, heat, and hurricanes) will never 'rfeit'. "And I dream about the day . . . And I worry because unlike that poor guy in Michigan who has no choice, I know some of you are out there riding. I worry because an accident that happens in stormy conditions can be far more destructive than one in dry conditions. And the likelihood that you will be hit because someone can't or doesn't see you is so much higher in a storm.

My question to you is, why risk it? We are so fortunate to have eight or nine great months of riding here in the Sunshine State. If you were looking out the window at a foot of snow the decision would be made for you. But if you are watching a forecast that says 60% chance of storms, is that any different than a 60% chance for a foot of snow? Then, to make it worse some choose to ride in these storms in summer shoes, short pants, short sleeves, no gloves. You would never dress like that for a walk in the snow.

If you ask me, there is no shame in showing up for any chapter ride or event in your car. If you ask me, it's your best call when the weather simply and overwhelmingly stacks the odds against a safe ride. It's your best call when you are hurt, tired, or having to take prescription drugs, or just having a bad day. It's funny I should say such a thing. After all, it wasn't that long ago that I was dreaming of the day that FL1-B would get out of its cars and onto some bikes. The bottom line is this, GWRRA is part motorcycle and part social. Just because you can't get out on the bike doesn't mean you can't go socialize with your fellow Goldwingers. When you combine the 'showbird' absentees with our members who stay home because the weather is threatening, summer events tend to be a little lonely.

Those of you who choose to defy mother nature's fury and ride in the 'show, please take brief inventory of your safety ensemble. Especially your footwear and sleeves. Everyone says wear sleeves to protect you from road rash. To that many answer 'only if I go down'. I say wear sleeves to protect you from the skin cancer that kills at a rate in Florida much more frequently than motorcycle crashes. And it's equally important to protect your feet. Proper riding gear saves lives all year long. So please, come rain or shine, but come safe.

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