

# ***PUSH TO STEER***

## ***July / Aug Newsletter***

South bound, I-15 near the Port of Entry, I was following a flatbed trailer hauling 2x4 wood form boards. After the 2x4 left the trailer, and after I made a move to prevent making contact with the obstacle, it was at this time when I decided what my next SUHOG safety article was going to be about.

There you are, cruising down the road just enjoying the ride. You're a safe distance behind the vehicle in front of you, when suddenly a large obstacle appears in the center of your lane. The vehicle went right over it without a problem. Unfortunately, the obstacle is too large for you to go over it and it came into view so quick, you don't have time to brake. *What should you do?*

Obviously, you have two choices. The inexperienced rider will probably look at the obstacle and run right into it. The experienced rider will simply get off the gas and counter-steer around the obstacle.

Let's talk about counter-steering for a moment. Above 15mph, the gyroscopic effect of the motorcycle becomes apparent. In other words, to go left you push left on the left hand grip. To go right you push right on the right hand grip. Now, this would seem the opposite of what you should be doing. But, believe me, it isn't. At speed, when you push on the left grip, it causes the bike to lean to the left, and since a motorcycle at speed turns by leaning, when it leans left, it goes left and visa versa. The good news is counter-steering is instinctual. Anyone who has ever ridden a motorcycle above 15mph and has turned even slightly has counter-steered. If you doubt me, try this. Cruise down the road at 30mph, keep both hands on the grips, but loosen your hand on the right grip, then push slightly on the left grip. Your bike will immediately lean to the left and steer to the left. Then try pushing on the right grip, you'll quickly understand the counter-steering phenomenon.

Every rider should try this obstacle avoidance exercise. It's called the 30mph cone weave, but should be practiced at lower speeds until you get the hang of it, 18 to 20mph would be a good starting point. All you need is 3 cones set at 36' apart with the center cone offset 3'. Go to the right around the first cone then to the left around the second cone, the third cone should be on your left as you pass it. Sounds easy, doesn't it? Well, give it a try and you'll see that it isn't as easy as it sounds, especially at 30mph. If you want to make the exercise more difficult, add more cones or increase your speed. Once mastered, this exercise will improve your obstacle avoidance skills immediately.

So when approaching rapidly on an obstacle, always keep in mind, use your counter-steering techniques, act quickly and act in a safe manner.

Always remember, SAFETY FIRST.