



ROAR

Official Publication
of Top Cats — Illinois

President's Corner...

by Carlton R. Marcyan

Greetings Top Cats

Despite some cold days, there are signs of spring. Length of daylight is increasing, motorcycle dealerships are sending out more ads and Top Cats are starting to GROWL. Hopefully, as suggested in earlier articles, you have kept in shape during our riding hibernation. Make sure your bike is ready too; our Safety Committee stressed getting your iron to the dealer during the cold months when service departments' workload is lighter. The more you postpone needed work, the longer the turnaround time to have it completed once other bikers bring in their rides.

Now, let's get to business. The Charity Ride Committee (Joan DeRango, Eileen

Perry and others) have put a tremendous amount of time and work in the preparation of our Ride for Dreams. In tough economic times the non-profit and social agencies find it especially difficult as government payments slow to a trickle and "deep-pocketed" donors dry up. Although it is easy to rationalize not making a contribution from our own individual pockets, keep in mind that our purpose as an association is more than just riding but to help those less fortunate than we. Several new members have told me that they joined Top Cats not only because of reputation for safety and number of rides we sponsor but **because of our charitable mission to NISRA.**

Start talking up the Charity Ride. Get your friends to

commit and have them calendar in the date, **July 26th**. It is terrific that NISRA considers us their single biggest contributor; as you may know we have donated over \$200,000 to them over the years. Their organization is extremely well run, low overhead and great benefits to the hundreds of disabled children who benefit from their services. Each dollar we contribute represents an activity that can happen that otherwise might not have; each dollar we provide allows a disabled child to participate who might have been excluded had we not made our contribution. Maybe that child will remember that NISRA event for the rest of his or her life, and that memory is what that child looks forward to every day because there isn't much else in that child's life.

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THE BIKERS WHO MEAN BUSINESS

TOP CATS—Illinois is a group of motorcycle enthusiasts with similar interests. Members consist of responsible Leaders, Presidents, Chairmen, Owners, Proprietors, Partners, principals, CEO's, and other 'Top Cats' of large, medium and small organizations, institutions, and companies. The content and opinions expressed in articles are those of the authors and not necessarily those of Top Cats—Illinois.

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President's Corner Continued

Remember, that child is a prisoner in a body that doesn't quite function well or who has learning disabilities that prevent interaction with other kids. Many of us have children and grandchildren who suffer a similar fate.

Stop feeling sorry for yourself because of the economy; get yourself motivated by helping out children whose disabilities prevent them from having any kind of normal future. Talk up our Ride for Dreams; volunteer to help out and get involved.

Ride On!

The Top Cat

General Meeting Minutes...

February 3, 2009

Meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by Carl Marcyan.

President's Update

Carl informed the membership how very encouraged and excited he was about the enthusiasm of the new board. Details of their first meeting were published in the ROAR and Carl encouraged members to read the minutes and see the details of the topics discussed and the goals being established for the club this year.

The board identified the need for a club historian to create a written and oral history of the club to be shared with existing, new and potential members. A Want Ad is posted in the February ROAR. Interested parties please contact Dennis P. (Wombat) Dougherty at wombat@dpdougherty.com.

Another need identified by the board is for a Sergeant at Arms; someone to assist in setting up the room for monthly meetings, running the 50/50 raffle, taking care of Top Cats products for sale and other misc. tasks. Interested parties should see any board member.

Secretary Update

Joan DeRango informed the group the minutes for the January general meeting as well as the January board meeting were published in the ROAR.

Introduction of Guests

Joe Fiedler, President of Jersey Pine Cruisers
Joe Rabanus, former member, representing Little Angels

Treasurer's update

Tom Nichols had a previous commitment and was unable to update the membership in person. He updated

Carl Marcyan prior to the meeting that the club was financially sound.

Safety Committee – Schaffer/Kirkpatrick

Wayne Kirkpatrick provided the safety tip for the meeting. Riding with a windscreen provides protection from flying objects, such as birds, insects, or pebbles. If you currently do not have one now is the time to be checking them out. It is also time to be checking on the condition of your current windscreen. Polish out scratches if possible.

First G.R.A.S.S. class of the year is scheduled for 3-15-09. Currently the class is scheduled to be held at Village Green but the Safety Committee is looking for other location options. Suggestions should be given to Wayne Kirkpatrick or Don Schaeffer. Don reminded the membership that all Road Captains are required to take the class on a scheduled basis as well as new members within one year of becoming a member.

No new Road Captains to announce at this meeting. Anyone interested in becoming a Road Captain should speak with Don so arrangements can be made now to assign a mentor and begin working on the requirements.

24 members have signed up to participate in the Accident Scene Management Class on 2-28-09. Bill Lowry will be teaching the class. Members who have signed up need to pay Don Schaeffer.

Palatine Hog wants Top Cats to train Road Captains for their group. McHenry Hog is interested as well. A compliment to the value and effectiveness of Top Cat's G.R.A.S.S. and Road Captain training.

Road Captain Requirements – Gary Brandt

Two levels of Road Captains; initial Road Captain and Senior Road Captain. Requirements for both are published on the Top Cat's website. In general, the goal of a Road Captain is to plan a ride to safely lead a group from one destination to another. Familiarize the group, guests in particular, with road and hand signs, plan gas and food stops and safely lead the group through the course. The ride need not be lengthy, can be as simple as a few hours riding ending up at a food stop. Work with a Senior Road Captain as your mentor who will help you plan the ride and pre-ride the route with you.

Gary also informed the group that we need Senior Road Captains to sign up to mentor rides. Please see Gary. Also, all Senior Ride Captains will be required to lead a group at our Charity Ride.

Membership – Eileen Perry

Cindy Raybern will be assisting Eileen with membership duties. Currently 52 paid members, 4 have notified Top Cats that they will not be re-joining the group. Eileen and Cindy will be working to set up a membership table at the entrance to our meetings where guests can sign in and obtain information about the club.

Carl encouraged members who have not paid to get their money to Eileen as soon as possible. He also informed the membership that at the board level we will be looking at ways to increase membership while maintaining the core membership standards set forth when the club began.

General Meeting Continued...

February 3, 2009

ROAR and Website Updates – Dennis Dougherty

Dennis asked for the members' patience as we work on transitioning some of the ROAR responsibilities and updating the publication as well. The February ROAR is available on the website as of 2-3-09.

To keep ROAR interesting for everyone we will be looking for more articles from members. If you are interested in submitting an article please talk to either Dennis or Andy.

Andy and Dennis are investigating ways to update the website. Please provide feedback to either Andy or Dennis, things you like about the site, things you would like to see added or modified, any idea you may have on site improvements are welcome.

Website contains many photos depicting the rides and events we've experienced in 2008. Visually capturing our riding experience and displaying them on our website is a great way to share with potential members the adventures they can share as a member of Top Cats. The CD shown at our annual banquet is available for purchase at a price of \$10. The video is approximately 57 minutes long and contains 760 photos. See Eileen Perry or Mike Bradbury if you would like a copy.

Long Term Planning – Carl Marcyan

Carl informed the group the Dennis Dougherty has accepted the responsibility of working with past presidents and other members to develop a long term plan for the club.

Vice President Update – Mike Bradbury

The awards dinner was a great success. A good time was had by all members. The banquet truly highlights the accomplishments and efforts made by our membership, in particular the Road Captains. Mike encouraged the group to show their support for the group by purchasing and displaying some of the various club merchandise. Available are decals, two sizes of flags, and t-shirts. Any one interested stop by the table before or after meetings.

Charity Ride Update – Eileen Perry and Joan DeRango

Flyers for the event have been completed and printed. Larry Scalzitti will be passing out flyers at the Chicago Motorcycle Show as well as at the International Motorcycle show. A sign up was passed around requesting members to sign up and sell raffle tickets at various local events. The scooter being raffled will be brought to the event to help encourage raffle ticket sales. A request letter was sent by Charity Committee member Frank Coletto to a number of corporations asking for donations. Another letter has been designed to be used by members to seek smaller raffle donations such as restaurant coupons, bike detailing, gift cards etc. We'll be seeking members help in obtaining these types of raffle items over the next few months. Flyers are available for members to bring to other club meetings making them aware of our ride date and helping to get our charity ride on their ride calendars.

Activities – Greg Smith

Activities committee is seeking a new member to help the group. Please see Greg Smith or Muriel Brandt if you are interested in helping.

10 Rides on the Calendar already. Goal for this year - 30 rides. Nothing on the calendar right now for May so if you're interested in planning a ride please consider May as your target month.

The activities committee is looking for help. Members interested in helping plan activities please contact Greg Smith.

Feb. 7th – International Motorcycle Show at Rosemont. Members wishing to attend will meet at Egglectic Café – 7:30 a.m., and caravan to the show. Details are on the website

Feb 28 09 – Accident Scene Management Class at the Great Lakes Naval Hospital.

Mar 22 09 – Bocce Ball at the Hollywood Bocce Ball Court. The event will be held as a joint outing with the Jersey Pine Cruisers. Brochures on the table.

Apr 19 09 – Kick off Ride – details to follow – check the website for details

Friday June 5th – Ride to the Dells. Ride Captain is Gary Brandt. 15 rooms in an old fashioned hotel have been set aside for Top Cats. The number for making a reservation is on the website. This is a 3 day, 2 night.

General Meeting Continued...

January 6, 2009

June 13th – 17th Tom Nichols has a ride scheduled. See website for details.

June 19th – Little Sturgis. 3 Days, 2 Nights

If you are planning any overnight rides please give Greg the detail dates as soon as possible.

Bard Board provided the group with the details of this year's Sturgis Ride. Video of last year's ride was displayed throughout the meeting to encourage participation. Leaving on Wednesday July 29th. Now is the time to make reservations. Check the website for details and sign up now.

Little Angels Ride – Guest Joe Rabanus

The 22nd Annual Little Angels Ride will be held on May 17th sponsored by the Elgin Area Harley Riders Association. This year an all out effort is being made to promote the ride. They will be raffling two motorcycles and a \$1,000 third place raffle.

Due to budget cuts and the economic situation the need is great therefore the ride sponsors are looking for new ways to promote the ride and raise participant numbers. \$20.00 if you sign up early, \$35.00 the day of the ride, raffle tickets are \$10 each. Sign up is also available at their website - Littleangels.org

New Business

Jeff Tietz of City Scooters demonstrated some new Bluetooth enabled helmets. Helmets are available at a discount to Top Cats. Visit Jeff at City Scooters located on Milwaukee and Devon across from Super Dog. Check out their website CityScooters.com.

Joe Fiedler of Jersey Pine Cruisers talked about their group. Started 30 years ago the group is based in Des Plaines. A family oriented group similar to Top Cats. Information about the group can be found on their website Jerseypine-cruisers.org.

Pat Michaud won the 50/50

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Board Meeting Minutes

February 10, 2009

Board Members Present: Carl Marcyan, Mike Bradbury, Tom Nichols, Joan DeRango, Dennis Dougherty, Wayne Kirkpatrick, Eileen Perry, Greg Smith and Gary Brandt

Board Members Absent: None
Guests: Randy Braun

Meeting was called to order by President Carl Marcyan at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting called to order- Carl Marcyan

Wayne Kirkpatrick obtained a U. S. Flag to be used at General Meetings going forward. Carl submitted the reimbursement request to the treasurer. Wayne will obtain a container similar to the one used for the Top Cats flag. The board agreed the official start date of the club will coincide with the first election of officers which occurred on 9-2-1995.

Insurance Report – Randy Braun

Randy Braun provided the board with an update on current insurance coverage for the club. Currently the club has two policies with West Bend Mutual - Directors & Officer Liability covering the board and General Liability. The limits are 1 million per occurrence and 2 million aggregate for the policy year. Current pricing is reasonable. A separate policy also exists for the Charity Ride. Dennis inquired whether Road Captains are covered in the event they would be sued for events/accidents related to a ride they lead. Randy replied - all members are insured under general liability therefore Road Captains are covered. Carl asked Randy to provide Carl via email with what the additional costs would be if the aggregate was raised to 3 million.

Treasurer-Tom Nichols

Tom will email the group with the 2009 proposed budget by 2-20-2009. Tom was unable to update the signers on the account at LaSalle. Additional paperwork is required to be submitted by the secretary. Tom provided Carl with paperwork he needs to sign and have notarized. Carl will then forward the documents to Joan DeRango to bring to the bank to finalize the signatory changes. Tom will be able to invoice members via Quickbooks next year. Approval was given to upgrade from the current 2005 version to the most current version. Tom was unable to complete the membership survey regarding products prior to the board meeting. He will email the membership a survey and report the results at the next board meeting. Carl requested budget updates be forwarded to the board prior to meetings on an ongoing basis. Carl inquired about the need to file tax forms as a 501-C-7 organization. There have been recent changes to tax law for not for profit organizations. Carl will investigate and report findings to the board.

Board Meeting Minutes Cont'd

Secretary-Joan DeRango

General meeting minutes were approved by the board.

Joan DeRango, Greg Smith and Joe Fiedler will be attending a Bocce event on Sunday the 15th so we have a firsthand experience and know what to expect at our event on March 22nd.

Carl requested that the secretary review the database being maintained currently by Gary Brandt. The secretary needs to be the "keeper" of the records. Once the database is updated with all current members it needs to be sent to Tom Nichols so he may begin building the Quickbooks database.

.Charity ride committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday the 11th of February. Eileen and Joan will be meeting with Volo on the 22nd to review our options at Volo.

Vice President-Mike Bradbury

Mike presented the board with the final numbers for the cost of the award dinner. Cost to the club after receipts was \$1,105.48. A financial report is available upon request.

Mike requested clarification on what the goal of the products project. The board is requesting a general investigation of 3 or 4 vendors and their pricing on basic products. Mike will gather and present at next board meeting

Mike requested contact information to obtain more Top Cats leather patches and dye cast. Brian Rainey was identified as the contact.

Mike has arranged for the CO from the motorcycle unit of Waukegan to talk at our April General Meeting. Mike will provide an article for ROAR notifying the membership of the special guest at the meeting. An email will be sent to the membership as well.

Jeff Smith of City Limits Harley Davidson would also like to present to the club a new package. Wayne will make arrangements for him to speak.

Membership-Eileen Perry

Eileen presented Chris Marcyan's application for regular membership. After review the application for membership was approved.

Some recent members were questioning whether or not they needed to pay the '09 membership dues since they became members and paid late in 2008. The board agreed that if a new member is approved at the October, November or December board meetings their dues will be good through the following membership year.

Email notifications have been sent to all past due members. Anyone who has not paid their membership dues by March 1st will be come inactive. They will no longer be able to access the website or receive general membership emails.

For next meeting Carl requested Eileen to set membership goals 2009.

Dennis volunteered to update the current membership brochure. Eileen will work with Wayne to update the history on the current brochure. She will then make any other change recommendations and send the brochure to Dennis for printing.

Safety/Road Captain – Wayne Kirkpatrick/Gary Brandt

The board approved a \$1,000 expenditure for a projector to be used by the Safety Committee.

Gary Brandt presented a written Road Captain Committee Report. Copies are available upon request.

March 15th will be next G.R.A.S.S. class. Palatine Hog will have 5 members attend.

Board Meeting Minutes Cont'd

February 28th is the Accident Scene Management Class. 24 members have signed up Wayne reported on the requirements to become an AMA club. After reviewing the pros and cons the board determined that the AMA requirements are bureaucratically and financially a burden and the benefits do not offset the costs.

ROAR/Website – Dennis Dougherty

Jill Hansen will be editor of ROAR for the 2009 year.

Articles need to be submitted to Jill by the 15th of the month. She will get edited articles to Andy by the 25th and ROAR will be published by the 1st of the month.

A suggestion was made to remove the board and general meeting meetings from ROAR and publish them to the members section of the website. Discussion of the pros and cons ensued. A decision was made to table this discussion/ decision until the next board meeting.

After some preliminary discussions on how to update the website the board agreed more time needed to be devoted to this topic in order to properly address all concerns therefore the topic of ROAR and the website upgrade will be the primary focus of the March board meeting. Prior to the meeting each board member is required to supply input to Dennis regarding their thoughts on improvements/changes to ROAR and the website.

Long range planning discussions were also deferred to the next board meeting.

Activities – Greg Smith

10 rides already scheduled for the year. Goal for the year is 30 rides.

No rides currently scheduled for May. June is full but the remainder of the riding season is fairly open.

Eileen will provide a date for the Progressive Dinner Ride, Carl will provide a date for the President's ride. A radio-active ride will be scheduled for May.

Dennis is planning a Route 66 – Lincoln's birthday ride to Springfield in July.

Old Business/New Business

New member Chris Marcyan was approved as Sergeant-at-Arms.

Joan was asked to provide an accounting of patches for the next meeting.

With no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Why Be A Road Captain

By Gary Brandt

An interesting question that some of you might ask yourself. Is all the effort worth it? Will the people who attend the ride have a good time? Will it be a safe, well executed ride? Why take the chance?

Once you find yourself riding up front with 10 or 20 bikes behind you, it will become clear very quickly why. It is a great feeling as you wind around the curves in our staggered formation and you look in your mirror and all you see are Top Cats as far back as your field of vision allows. Rides can be short or long, include specific destinations or simply be in a big circle. Plan as complex a ride that you're comfortable with.

Even the pre-ride is a fun day, as is any day on the bikes. Hopefully you have your mentor along as you make certain the route is safe, gas stations are along the route (with proper facilities) and you have a good start end locations. Starting the ride at a gas station give those who have to travel far or those who never remember to get gas, a great opportunity to be ready for the ride. This and other great tips will be provided by your mentor. When you take the road captain portion of our GRASS class, you will be properly educated on how the Top Cats like to organize and lead rides and hear many other good tips from experienced road captains. Your next chance to attend a GRASS class will be on Sunday March 15th. Anyone who is even considering leading a ride this year should take the opportunity to attend.

Still not certain about leading a ride? Feel free to contact me and ask any questions you have. In fact, any senior road captain will be happy to answer questions and look forward to hearing from you..

Topcats 2009 Banquet



Topcats 2009 Banquet



Topcats 2009 Banquet



Topcats 2009 Banquet



Topcats 2009 Banquet



SAFETY ARTICLE

When I first started thinking about writing this safety article, my intent was to think of some new and different approach to emphasize motorcycle-riding safety. But the more I thought about it-and failing to identify any such innovative approach- I concluded that, like professional baseball players returning to spring training, emphasizing and re-learning the basics was probably a better approach. And what better way to identify the basics than to go back and review the conclusions of the intensive motorcycle safety studies that have been completed.

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WHAT DID THE HURT REPORT TELL US?

Source: Motorcycle Accident Cause Factors and Identification of Countermeasures, H.H. Hurt Jr., J.V. Ouellet, D. R. Thorn, 1981

HIGHLIGHTS THE RESEARCHERS FOUND:

In multiple vehicle crashes, the driver of the other vehicle caused the crash two-thirds of the time.

The single most common motorcycle crash involved a car making a left turn into the path of a motorcycle at an intersection.

Single-motorcycle crashes accounted for only a quarter of all crashes, with motorcyclist error being the cause of two-thirds of those crashes. The most common crash was a slide out caused by over braking in a corner, or running wide in a corner due to too much speed.

Most motorcyclists involved in crashes were inexperienced, untrained, unlicensed, and did a poor job of avoiding the collision--highlighting the need for training.

Almost half the fatal crashes involved alcohol.

Other road users failed to detect the motorcycle in traffic due to the lack of caution and awareness of the car driver, and the motorcycle's lack of conspicuity.

The typical motorcycle accident allowed the motorcyclist just less than two seconds to complete all collision avoidance action.

Most crashes happened on very short trips, with the crash occurring within a very short distance of the trip origin.

An inexperienced rider's lack of skill and traffic strategy increased the motorcycle rider's likelihood of being involved in a collision.

73 percent of the accident-involved motorcycle riders used no eye protection,

Injury severity increased with collision speed, but the motorcycle rider's lack of head protection accounted for the most severe but preventable injuries.

92 percent of the motorcyclists involved in crashes were self-taught.

Motorcycle Safety Foundation training courses were considered effective in training motorcycle riders at the time of the study, and those trained riders were both less involved and less injured in motorcycle accidents.

The use of the headlamp in daylight and high-visibility jackets definitely reduced accident involvement,

CONCLUSION: The failure of motorists to detect and recognize motorcycles in traffic is the predominating cause of motorcycle accidents. The driver of the other vehicle involved in the collision with the motorcycle did not see the motorcycle before the collision or did not see the motorcycle until too late to avoid the collision.

LESSON: All motorcycle riders could benefit from more thorough training, increasing conspicuity by running their headlamps at all times, wearing brighter clothing, and using head and eye protection to reduce accident involvement and injury frequency and severity.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM MOTORCYCLE CRASHES IN EUROPE?

Source: "Motorcycle Accidents In-Depth Study (MAIDS); In-Depth Investigations of Accidents Involving Powered Two-Wheelers," Association of European Motorcycle Manufacturers, 2004

DETAILS THE RESEARCHERS FOUND:

54.3 percent of the accidents happened at an intersection.

72 percent of crashes were in urban areas.

Operators of the other vehicle were responsible for the crash 50.4 percent of the time, while the rider was responsible for the crash in 37.1 percent of the cases.

In 36.6 percent of the cases, the primary contribution factor was a perception failure on the part of the other vehicle driver.

62.9 percent of the drivers and 27.7 percent of the riders made a traffic-scan error that contributed to the crash.

40.6 percent of the drivers and 32.2 percent of the riders made errors in judgment, which contributed to the crash.

Where there was a traffic control, it was violated 45.6 percent of the time by the other vehicle driver, and 29.8 percent of the time by the riders.

Other vehicle operators who also held a motorcycle or moped license were less likely to commit perception failures than other vehicle operators who didn't have a motorcycle or moped license (26.4 percent versus 50.9 percent).

Rider lower extremity injuries made up 31.8 percent of all injuries, followed by upper extremity injuries, which made up 23.9 percent of all injuries. Head injuries accounted for 18.7 percent of all reported injuries.

No one style of vehicle was over-represented in the crash data.

The size of the motorcycle's engine had no bearing on whether that motorcycle would be involved in a crash.

CONCLUSION: 90 percent of all risks to the rider, both vehicular and environmental, were in front of the rider prior to the accident. Further, similar to data from the Hurt Report, the European study shows that other road users who violated the motorcyclists' right-of-way remain one of the biggest dangers.

LESSON: Watch for dangers in front of you, practice crash-avoidance skills like braking and swerving, and wear protective gear for your legs and upper extremities.

WHAT RESEARCH HAS BEEN DONE SINCE THE HURT REPORT?

Source: Recent Trends in Fatal Motorcycle Crashes--Umesh Shankar, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2001

THE RESEARCH Researchers looked at motor vehicle crash data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System and information from the Motorcycle industry Council, Federal Highway Administration, and the U.S. Census Bureau for insight into recent increases in motorcyclist fatalities.

THE FINDINGS THE STUDY DETERMINED:

Motorcyclist fatalities decreased each year from 1993 to 1997, reaching a historic low of 2,116 in 1997.

In 1998, and again in 1999, this trend was reversed, with increases to 2,294 in 1998 and 2,472 in 1999, likely due to more motorcycles on the road.

In addition to more motorcycles being on the road, there were more vehicle miles traveled.

More people over 40 were operating motorcycles.

Larger-engined motorcycles were being purchased and operated.

There were more motorcyclist fatalities on rural roads in recent years.

Undivided roads accounted for a majority of motorcyclist fatalities, particularly on rural roads.

Speeds higher than the posted speed limit were a major factor in motorcycle crashes, especially among riders under age 30.

Alcohol-impaired riding was a major problem.

Motorcycle operators, especially in the under-20 and 20-29 age groups, were often improperly licensed to operate motorcycles.

CONCLUSIONS: Alcohol was involved in almost half of the single-vehicle motorcycle crashes resulting in a fatality. Further, more than 40 percent of all motorcyclist fatalities were associated with speeding as a contributing factor.

LESSON: Do not drink and ride, do not speed, and be extra careful riding in rural areas.

THE BEST WAY TO STOP SHORT?

Source: "Task Analysis For Intensive Braking Of A Motorcycle In A Straight Line"--Promocycle Foundation, January 2004

THE RESEARCH Canadian researchers used eight experienced riders riding two different machines to study emergency braking techniques. They recorded 820 tests using data-gathering equipment, and analyzed 298 of those tests to create their final report.

THE DETAILS- THE OPTIMUM SEQUENCE OF ACTIONS (SOME WILL OVERLAP) IS:

1. Deceleration--Completely close the throttle and apply the rear brake.
2. Equilibrium--Place the bike vertical, brace arms and legs, straighten torso, position fingers and feet.
3. Braking--Apply appropriate pressure to the front brake, pull in the clutch completely,
4. Adjustment--Adjust the front and rear brake pressures.

CONCLUSIONS: All these actions happen quickly. On average, the rear brake was pressed 0.07 seconds after completely closing the throttle. The front brake lever was pulled 0.08 seconds later, and the clutch pulled 0.05 seconds after that. Most riders can easily achieve 0.4 Gs in deceleration (moderate braking) under real world conditions. The level of 0.6 Gs (hard braking) is achievable by many riders without extensive training. Achieving 0.8 Gs (very hard braking) generally requires advanced training and experience, and highly skilled riders are often capable of deceleration levels above 0.8 Gs.

LESSON: Skilled riders can stop best using a succession of front- and rear-brake-modulating routines that happen extremely quickly and can only come with practice. Therefore, to stop quickly, use both brakes and practice long and hard enough to make the hard braking procedure a matter of habit.

Finally, motorcyclists should know that the first major study in almost three decades to look into the causes of motorcycle crashes is slated to begin this spring. This study, which is expected to last several years, will examine the factors associated with motorcycle crashes, the types of crashes, the severity of injuries and nature of fatalities, and the effectiveness of protective gear- all with the objective of providing the motorcycle community with hard data on which to develop effective strategies to prevent and/or minimize the severity of crashes. The Oklahoma Transportation Center will be overseeing this study and the \$5.6 million cost will be funded in equal parts by the federal government and the motorcycling community.

Flexible Calendar

By Gary Brandt

One of our traditions that set us apart from many other riding clubs is the flexibility of our calendar. We do our best to limit restrictions or close the calendar at any time. This gives our road captains (or future road captains) the ability to create rides as new ideas are conceived. As we all know, the fewer restrictions we have the more creative we can be. Over the years we have not taken advantage of unexpected nice weather days with pick up rides. On many weekend days during the riding season we will have no ride scheduled or perhaps a weekend ride that many Top Cats do not attend. These are perfect days for a pick up ride. Perhaps you have the planning all done for ride, have had a mentor work with you. Maybe it would be your first ride to lead! You can still schedule such a ride with short notice if we have open days.

Activities Calendar



Upcoming Events

Date	Ride/Event	Location	Destination	Time	Leader
Tuesday, March 03, 2009	General Meeting	Village Tavern & Grill	Buffalo Grove	7:30pm	Carl Marcyan
Tuesday, March 10, 2009	Board Meeting	Ginos East	Lake Zurich	7:30pm	Carl Marcyan
Sunday, March 15, 2009	G.R.A.S.S. Class	Village Tavern & Grill	Buffalo Grove	8:30am	Ric Case
Sunday, March 22, 2009	Bocce Ball Event	Highwood Bocce Courts	Highwood	4:00pm	Lenny Innocenzi
Saturday, March 28, 2009	New Orleans Ride	TBD	New Orleans	TBD	Joe Rominski
Tuesday, April 07, 2009	General Meeting	Village Tavern & Grill	Buffalo Grove	7:30pm	Carl Marcyan
Tuesday, April 14, 2009	Board Meeting	Ginos East	Lake Zurich	7:30pm	Carl Marcyan
Sunday, April 19, 2009	Kick Off Ride	BP Station-Rt176/Rt12	Cotton Exchange	8:30am	Andy Konsewicz
Saturday, April 25, 2009	Tune-Up Ride for Veterans	TBD	Columbus, OH	9:00am	Wayne Kirkpatrick
Sunday, May 03, 2009	G.R.A.S.S. Class	Village Tavern & Grill	Buffalo Grove	8:30am	Ric Case
Tuesday, May 05, 2009	General Meeting	Village Tavern & Grill	Buffalo Grove	7:30pm	Carl Marcyan
Tuesday, May 12, 2009	Board Meeting	Ginos East	7:30pm	7:30pm	Carl Marcyan
Tuesday, June 02, 2009	General Meeting	Village Tavern & Grill	Buffalo Grove	7:30pm	Carl Marcyan
Tuesday, June 09, 2009	Board Meeting	Ginos East	7:30pm	7:30pm	Carl Marcyan
Friday June 05, 2009	Wisc Dells Adventure-3 day	BP McDonald Rt. 12 &120	Wisc Dells	8:30am	Gary Brandt