

tips from a pro

FOR MOTORCYCLE AWARENESS MONTH

By Wanda Vazquez, Case Manager and Rider

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May is Motorcycle Awareness Month and as a motorcycle enthusiast, it is a great time to remind everyone that with the warmer weather approaching, more motorcyclists will be on the road. It is thus more important to be extra careful and watch out for them. This is especially true in our beautiful state, where the weather provides for riding almost year-round.

Based on statistics from the Department of Transportation, in 2023, there were over 5000 motorcycle accidents and over 300 motorcycle fatalities in Florida. Sadly, these numbers have increased over the last year. Seventy percent of these collisions occur at intersections because drivers do not see the motorcycle. As a motorcyclist there are several steps that we can take to be as safe as possible on the road and to continue to raise motorcycle awareness.

First, please be sure to wear a DOT approved helmet while riding. While helmets are not currently mandated by law in our state, a proper helmet can protect you from suffering permanent brain injuries in the event of an accident. Also, be proactive and alert while riding. Make sure you are staying visible by wearing bright colored or reflective clothing. Obey traffic laws, including following the applicable speed limits. Stay up to date with the maintenance of the motorcycle. Also, have a mutual respect for all users of the road. Remember that car drivers share the road with motorcyclists. Be aware of their blind spots, and use of their signals. Car drivers should also take care and give riders plenty of space.

Lastly, and I say this not only as a motorcyclist, but also as a case manager that works for our firm, and sees a number of motorcyclists involved in accidents, I encourage you to do your research when obtaining an insurance policy on your motorcycle. Please, make sure you have a coverage known as Bodily Injury Liability coverage. Even though it is not required in the State of Florida, this coverage will avoid you having to be financially responsible for injuries in the event that you cause the accident. You also want to make sure you have UM or Uninsured Motorist Coverage. This coverage will protect you in the event of being involved in an accident where the other person may not be covered. Think of these insurance coverages as another piece of proper protective gear. Having them can protect you and your family from a financial burden in the event of an accident and injury.

Enjoy this riding season, be safe and stay protected! ■

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consejos de un profesional

PARA EL MES DE LA CONCIENTIZACIÓN SOBRE LA MOTOCICLETA

Por Wanda Vázquez, Administradora de Casos y Motociclista

El mes de mayo es la época de la Concientización sobre las Motocicletas. Como entusiasta de las motocicletas, es una buena oportunidad para recordarles a todos que con el clima más cálido que se acerca, más motociclistas estarán en la carretera. Por lo tanto, es más importante tener mucho cuidado y estar atento a ellos. Esto es especialmente cierto en nuestro hermoso estado, donde el clima permite montar en motocicleta casi todo el año.

Según las estadísticas del Departamento de Transporte, en 2023, hubo más de 5000 accidentes de motocicletas y más de 300 muertes de motocicletas en Florida. Lamentablemente, estas cifras han aumentado en el último año. El setenta por ciento de estos accidentes ocurren en las intersecciones porque los conductores no ven la motocicleta. Como motociclista, hay varios pasos que podemos tomar para que estemos lo más seguro posible en las vías de tránsito y continuar creando conciencia sobre las motocicletas.

Primero, asegúrese de usar un casco aprobado por el DOT por sus siglas en Inglés (Departamento de transportación) mientras conduce. Si bien, en nuestro estado los cascos no son actualmente obligatorios por ley, un casco adecuado puede protegerlo de sufrir lesiones cerebrales permanentes en caso de accidente.

Además, sea proactivo y esté alerta mientras conduce. Asegúrese de mantenerse visible usando ropa de colores brillantes o reflectantes. Obedezca las leyes de tránsito, incluyendo el cumplimiento de los límites de velocidad aplicables. Mantente al día con el mantenimiento de la moto. Además, tener un respeto mutuo por todos los usuarios de la carretera. Recuerde que los conductores de automóviles comparten la carretera con los motociclistas. Esté atento a sus puntos ciegos y al uso de sus señales. Los conductores de automóviles también deben tener cuidado y dar a los motociclistas mucho espacio.

Por último, y lo digo no solo como motociclista, sino también como administrador de casos que trabaja para nuestra firma y he visto a varios motociclistas involucrados en accidentes, te animo a que investigues al obtener una póliza de seguro para tu motocicleta. Por favor, asegúrese de tener una cobertura conocida como cobertura de responsabilidad civil por lesiones corporales. A pesar de que no es obligatorio en el estado de Florida, esta cobertura evitará que tengas que ser financieramente responsable de las lesiones en caso de que provoque el accidente. También debes asegurarte de tener cobertura UM o de automovilista sin seguro, o que tenga una cobertura que no tenga suficiente dinero para compensar por los daños Esta cobertura te protegerá en caso de verte involucrado en un accidente en el que la otra persona no esté cubierta. Piense en estas coberturas de seguro como otra pieza del equipo de protección adecuado. Tenerlos puede protegerlo a usted y a su familia de una carga financiera en caso de accidente y lesiones.

¡Disfruta de esta temporada de montar en motocicleta, mantente seguro y protegido! ■

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Eme's B-day,

DANCE COMPETITION SEASON HEATS UP, AND AN MVP

By: Attorney Michael T. Gibson



There was a lot of dancing and giggling, and some movie watching as well. Jen took the girls on a boat tour through one of Winter Park's most scenic lakes. All in all, it was a pretty exhausting forty-eight hours for Jen, but Eme made some great memories and enjoyed her birthday celebration. One note, I get really mixed emotions when I look at these pics of Eme. It hits me that our baby is not a baby or even a child anymore, but a lovely young lady, who is growing up so fast. Birthdays and Christmas used to be a time of never-ending toy assembly for me. But this birthday was all clothes and makeup and accessories. I am so proud of her and it makes me happy to see her happy. But a small part of me gets sad and realizes that we are more than halfway to our kids being fully grown, and on their own.

Eme's competitive dance competition season also kicked off this month. Like travel hockey for me, Jen is in full competition mode, and now traveling almost every weekend. The first competition was local, and I got to see her two solo dances, and two of her group dances. She was awesome. You can really see her hard work and improvement over the course of this year. Again, Jen and I are so proud of her. Even though I know absolutely nothing about competitive dance, I can tell she is working hard and in my opinion, she was the best I saw.

Lastly, spring also means that Brady and I are back to work at travel hockey. This season, the team has put together a spring tournament team, and we will be doing three tournaments over the course of the spring season. Brady is moving up to the 16U age group, and he is playing Double A level. He is currently slotted to be on the team's top line, with two of their top returning players.



Additionally, at a recent banquet for last season's team, he was named the Most Valuable Player for his 14U team. This was the same team that he was cut from at tryouts just two years ago. At that time, he was devastated not to make the highest 14U team. But, to his credit, he never complained about it. He simply went to work, on the ice and in the gym over the course of the next year. And he became the best player on the team, and is looking like he will be a valued member of the 16U AA team this coming year. We are both so proud of him and his dedication in doing the same. Dad is also moving up, and I will be the assistant coach on his new team. Having only been in coaching for three years, I was honored to get this opportunity.

For all of our professional achievements, Jen and I will always believe that the best thing we did together was raise these two wonderful kids. Seeing them succeed at what they love helps us to know we have done ok at this parenting thing. And as they get older, we try to slow down and enjoy the ride where we can. Competitive dance and Travel hockey is a lot of work and a very busy schedule to conquer. It is easy, in the grind of those schedules, to forget that this time with our children is precious and that it is limited. We try to enjoy every minute that we can.

To Brady and Emery, keep doing what you love. We love you both very dearly. ■

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ASPHALT VS. FLESH: asphalt wins

Motorcycling may be exhilarating, but cyclists are extremely vulnerable. In crashes, injury rates for cyclists range from four to seven times higher than those for car and light truck occupants. Makes sense. Motorcyclists have no protective frame surrounding them, no airbags, and the only barrier between them and the asphalt is what they're wearing.

Not surprisingly, road rash is one of the most common motorcycling injuries. Road rash, in many cases, is not just a mere abrasion or scrape. There are three classifications:

- First-degree road rash is marked by notably red skin, possibly slight bleeding, and tenderness. It is typically limited to the top layer of skin and treatable at home. Count yourself lucky to fall under this classification.
- Second-degree road rash can affect down to the second or third layer of skin (the skin has three layers). Bleeding and swelling may be accompanied by nerve irritation. These rashes are obviously more painful and frequently lead to permanent scarring. Seek professional medical attention.
- Third-degree road rash involves skin that's peeled back or torn off, exposing muscles, tendons, and fat layers beneath the skin. This one's a medical emergency. Severe pain, nerve damage, and possibly disfigurement will result. Permanent scarring is practically guaranteed. Skin grafts and hospitalization may be necessary to repair the skin and underlying structures.

For all categories of road rash, proper wound cleaning is critical to prevent infection.

Leather chaps or long pants made of sturdy material, boots that cover the ankles, a padded jacket, shin guards, gloves, and a helmet give you the best shot of minimizing injury in the event of a crash.

If you are injured due to the negligence of another, contact our firm for skilled and thoughtful representation. ■

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