

**CROSSROADS HOG  
SAFETY THOUGHT**

**For  
JUNE 2008**

***WHAT ARE YOU LOOKIN' AT?***

Whether you are rolling down the Interstate, cruising the suburban streets, or negotiating a parking lot the most 'controlling' element of your effort is your visual focus – *what you are looking at*.

You and your bike will go where you look. Be aware of that, control it, and you will have a better ride. Allow me to give you a few examples.

On a group ride we see bikes that are maintaining a relatively consistent position in their lane segment and we see bikes that are not. Some are moving side to side, drifting left and right. Some of that drifting will be the result of 'looking around' at the scenery, roadside sights, etc. Each time you turn your head to look away from your direction of travel, your direction will change.

Some of the drifting is the result of the rider not maintaining a visual focus that is high enough. Looking at the road too close to the front of your bike will make it very difficult to maintain a straight line. Your focus needs to be more toward the horizon than to the road. In a group, it is helpful to refrain from focusing on the taillight of the bike in front of you. (yes, you do need to look at it to manage your following distance, but you do not want to stare at it or make it your primary focus). Keep your vision elevated to several bikes (heads) ahead of you.

When you see a bike "go wide" as it makes a turn or starts from a stop and turns (or experience it yourself) chances are very good that the rider was not looking toward the goal of the turn (where he/she wanted to end up) but, rather, looking down or straight ahead.

When a biker goes wide in a curve, catches the gravel on the berm, and ..... it is highly likely that that rider was staring right at what he/she was afraid of and trying to avoid.

Examples are numerous – I'm sure you are thinking of some right now. Just remember this –

*Look level, look where you want to go*

Mike – the safety guy.