



Michigan Sport Touring Report

December 2017

Editor – Ian Orr

Brake Light Enhancement

By Roger Zander

“I never saw him.” This is frequently what a motorist says after an accident between their vehicle and a motorcycle. I have observed that most MSTR members wear all the gear, all the time. A number of riders also include some bright optical yellow gear, a jacket or helmet or both. An inexpensive option to increase your visibility to other drivers is to wear a construction worker type of mesh safety vest (\$10). Just put in on over your riding jacket. I was following another biker who was wearing such a vest and his position among a sea of cars was dramatically visible.



Helite Airbag Vest

For myself, I choose to wear a [Helite](#) airbag vest that is optical yellow and has Scotchlite panels for night time visibility.

We all know that motorcycles are required to have headlights on all of the time. One way

to increase forward visibility to other motorists is an upgrade to newer, brighter LED lights. I added extra Clearwater lights to my BMW K1600. Another option is to use a headlight modulator (\$60-\$100) from Signal Dynamics.

To increase situational awareness of motorists who are following behind us, there are a number of options to enhance our stock tail lights and brake lights. Replacing incandescent bulbs with brighter LED units is the quick and easy choice. I used this option on my Kawasaki Nomad, at first using brighter bulbs and then switching to LEDs. Since LEDs draw far less amperage than incandescent bulbs, increasing the numbers of lights or light locations will not overload a circuit designed for incandescent use. When replacing turn signal bulbs with LEDs the flasher unit will possibly malfunction, usually flashing too quickly. This can be corrected by adding load resistors to the circuit or using a special flasher unit. If your motorcycle has a CAN bus electrical system, you may encounter issues when making changes to light systems. The CAN stands for Controller Area Network and this allows different electrical components to exchange information. Many BMW models after 2005 and all Harley Davidson bikes after 2013 use CAN bus. A way to add accessories to some BMW motorcycles with CAN bus is to use the HEXezCAN from Hex Microsystems. It is an accessory manager that plugs in with no need to cut wires.

Besides additional or brighter brake lights, there are brake light modules that modify the brake light activation. Products like Signal Dynamics BackOFF XP (\$35) will flash the brake light 2 or 5 times before staying on

continuous, as there are two modes of operation. The BackOFF Brake HOLD Module (\$50) will keep your brake light on if you are slowing or stopped after initially applying brakes. It has a wire to tap into the electronic speed sensor of your bike. This frees your hand or foot from continuously showing brake light to rear approaching traffic. The brake light goes out when you start to accelerate. There are many brake light flash modules available, such as: Dynafash, FastFlash, XDP, and Qiorange. Some are priced as low as \$10. These devices may or may not be compatible with a CAN bus electrical system.



GearBrake Smart Brake

The best choice in brake light modules is, in my opinion, the [GearBrake Smart Brake Light Module](#). In addition to flashing the brake lights, the GearBrake module has a built-in accelerometer sensor that detects slowing of the motorcycle such as when using the engine to decelerate. This is how motorcyclists usually slow down and there would normally be no brake light warning to following motorists. This device is a significant safety advantage both on the highway and especially in city traffic where cars follow much closer. The GearBrake GB-1 is available for universal install and can be found on Amazon for around \$50. There are also plug-in modules for some specific motorcycles, available directly from GearBrake. I used the GB-1 module to add extra LED brake lights to a touring case mounted on my BMW with no CAN bus problems.

Another option to gain the attention of following motorists is to have a brake light located on the rear of the helmet. Similar to the function of the third tail light on automobiles, this location of a brake light is up in the driver's field of view. The technology for this brake light device has been around for a number of years. There is a wireless transmitter tapped into the motorcycle brake light and turn signal wiring. The transmitter is powered by the motorcycle's 12-volt system. The helmet LED light receiving unit will be powered by AAA batteries or rechargeable batteries. The LED helmet brake lights are universal to fit most any size or shape of helmet. An online search reveals there are variously priced helmet lights available (\$16-\$88). Most all have some negative reviews that they are not bright enough to be easily seen in daylight.



Brake Free

The one helmet brake light that stands out is called [BRAKE FREE](#) (\$119). This is a new product that has 100 very bright LEDs, for daytime visibility, in a unit that attaches via a mounting bracket to any helmet. It can be easily removed to switch between helmets, an extra bracket (\$10) is required. The BRAKE FREE light is totally independent from the motorcycle brake light system. There are 3D accelerometer and gyro meter sensors built-in to the rechargeable helmet light. When you slow down, the brake light flashes on. It is available by placing an order on Indiegogo for delivery in April 2018.

Giving back to our Sport

By Glen Feldpausch

Now that we're 'kinda' off of our bikes for the winter, it's a great time to reflect on how much fun the activity of motorcycling is. And it is fun - right? Is it one of the highlights in our lives? Is it something we use to identify ourselves? Is it a rewarding activity? Of course it is! Could we even say that it's become 'life changing'? I'll bet you're saying 'Yes' to that also!

So, ever thought of giving back to this sport? Helping another non-rider get a start in this sport we enjoy so much? Giving them a 'safe' start in this challenging and fun activity?

Ever thought of being a motorcycle riding instructor?

Being an instructor is a rewarding activity. There have been many times I've listened to a non-rider state during class introductions, that riding a motorcycle has been a dream of theirs for years. They arrive in all ages – young to 'seasoned'. They may be in a place in their lives where they can now pursue this. Or, they've dreamed since a young age after seeing a motorcycle and rider glide by on the road and instantly knowing 'that' is something they want to do. Being an instructor allow you to help them realize their dream. I'm not being dramatic – you can be helping another to achieve their dream!

The curriculum that is used in the State, the Motorcycle Safety Foundation Basic Rider Class, is well established and proven successful in taking a non-rider and steadily developing them into a basic rider in several hours over a few days. I won't tell you that becoming an instructor is easy, but, you don't have to be a brain surgeon. You'd study the material and prepare. You'd spend some days in Instructor Prep learning your task, polishing your presentation and actually teaching in a controlled environment. You do not have to develop 'material' - you follow

the 'script' supplied by the MSF. The curriculum is pretty complete and you'll be trained on how to administer it in Instructor Prep.

But not only will you be helping others, you'll receive benefits as an instructor. Preparing to be a Rider Coach forced me to re-examine my riding skill and motorcycle knowledge. As a result, I pushed myself to improve - I became a better rider. Another benefit is you get paid to do this. You actually get paid to hang out with other riders and ride. Depending on your personal finances, you might have more money for the accessories and motorcycles that we always seem to want. So, there are tangible rewards for teaching

If you are an experienced rider with good riding and communication skills, you may qualify to become a Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) certified RiderCoach. Becoming an MSF RiderCoach is a great way to improve your own abilities while helping others to learn or enhance their riding skills. If interested and want more information, feel free to contact these MSTR members.

Glen Feldpausch: (517) 930-6329

<http://www.lcc.edu/lifelong/community/motorcyclesafety/>

William Webb:

<http://cyclesafety.training/coach.html>

A special thanks to Roger Zander and Glen Feldpausch for their articles and pictures featured this month.

Remember... All published articles earn a free breakfast, entry into the year-end newsletter drawing AND your articles will be appreciated by your fellow members and the newsletter editor, and you will also earn points toward the **2017 MOTY Award!**



MSTR Heads Up

Here's a listing of some of the upcoming local events and meetings within the next few weeks. If you know of a local motorcycle event in Michigan or Ontario the MSTR would be interested in send Ian Orr an e-mail, with the details, to Communications@mstriders.com.

MSTR EAST Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, December 16, 2017, @ 9:00 AM

East breakfast meeting is at **Doc's Sport Retreat** in Livonia, MI. Doc's is located at 19265 Victor Parkway. East of I-275, north of 7 mile road and across from Dave and Buster's. Augie Fernandes will be moderating this meeting.

MSTR WEST Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, January 13, 2018, @ 10:00 AM

West breakfast meeting is at the **Alibi Bar & Grill**, 1394 E. Riverside Drive, Ionia, MI (www.alibionia.com). Please send an email to Gala (gschip@me.com) so she can plan on providing breakfast for everyone who attends. Breakfast will be available for \$11 plus tax & tip. Keith Danielson will be moderating this meeting.



MSTR 2018 Rides

For those who are counting, there are 116 days from the East side December breakfast meeting to MoArk 11, the first MSTR event in 2018. Note many of these 2018 event dates

have been set and are listed on the MSTR Website on the Events page.

MSTR Newsletter & Website

The MSTR Newsletter and Website (www.mstriders.com) belong to you, the riders. They both can only be as good and as interesting as you make them. If you've got something to say about a ride, your bike, perhaps a trip you're planning, whatever, send it in for the newsletter and/or website to: Ian Orr: Communications@mstriders.com

MSTR Photo Gallery

The MSTR maintains a SmugMug photo gallery (<https://mstriders.smugmug.com/>) to allow riders to upload and download pictures of various club events. Upload and download passwords are sent out to participants for each event. Click on the above link or visit the MSTR website and select the MSTR Photo Gallery link to check out all the event pictures.

MSTR Dealer Members

BMW Motorcycles of SE Michigan
www.bmwmcsem.com/

BMW of Grand Rapids
www.bmwmcgr.com/

College Bike Shop
www.collegebikeshop.com/

Ducati Detroit
www.ducatidetroit.com/

Fox Powersports
www.foxpowersports.com/


Please patronize the following businesses owned by your fellow MSTR Members, whenever possible.

Chip Ashton

CJ'S HEAD & HOLE SHOP
Head & Boring Service for 2 & 4 cycle engines
248-683-6344

1140 Shady Lane ♦ Waterford, MI 48327

BellaCorse SEL-MOTION MOTORSPORTS MARKETING
POB 760403, LATHRUP VILLAGE, MI 48076
TEL: 248.569.2850 FAX: 309.422.2407
www.bellacorse.com



MICHAEL SELMAN
sales@bellacorse.com

1-248-853-4333

Glenn V Brechner Welding, Inc.

303 S. Grey Rd.
Auburn Hills, MI 48326

web site www.mywelder.net e-mail qvbweldinginc@aol.com

"metal welded or brazed repair or production"

Get a GRIP! **PETE MEYER**

HAMMERGRIPS
CUSTOM CUT TANK GRIPS



bighammer@chartermi.net
(231) 499-7935
1800 Nelson Rd.
Traverse City, MI 49686


OZONE
BIKE WORKS

Dave "O" Ostaszewski
State Certified Master Motorcycle Mechanic
We service all makes, models, foreign and domestic.

Union Lake, MI • 313.663.2836
daveo@ozonebikeworks.com • ozonebikeworks.com

OUR COMPLETE LIST OF PERSONALIZED SERVICES

- Mechanical repair and maintenance of all brands
- Cylinder boring and valve-jobs
- Carburetor cleaning, restoration and synchronizing
- Plastic and metal repair
- OEM, powder coating, replica and custom painting
- Accessory installations (GPS, electrical, lights, exhaust and suspension)
- Tire changing and disposal
- Free pick-up and delivery within 20 miles
- Servicing sport, dirt, touring and cruiser bikes.



WILLIAM W. WEBB, PRIVATE ATTORNEY
248-647-9000
Author of the The Traffic Ticket Maze
<http://statebar.net/trafficticket.pdf>



BMW Motorcycles of Grand Rapids



Blane Kamp
General Manager

616.530.6900
Fax: 616.530.8421
5995 South Division Grand Rapids, MI 49548
blane.kamp@bmwmcgr.com / www.bmwmcgr.com

December 2017
FREE
www.midwestmotorcyclist.com

Midwest Motorcyclist
Celebrating 19 Years
The Complete Guide to Motorcycling in the Midwest

Big Fun in a Small Package



Also in this issue:

Motus to Introduce Naked Model!	Sub Zero Helps Homeless Vets Survive the Winter	Zeigler Motorsports Tour	What's New at EICMA	Wheels
---------------------------------	---	--------------------------	---------------------	--------

Merry Christmas! Happy Holidays!



DUCATI DETROIT 248.792.8999
MICHIGAN'S EXCLUSIVE DUCATI DEALER

33828 Woodward Ave
Birmingham, MI 48009 | DucatiDetroit.com

