



Don't Always Trust What Your Eyes See

By Mark Manley— Safety Officer

This month I'd like to talk about the dangers of intersections and what your eyes don't always see. When approaching intersections of any kind there can be hidden dangers you don't and probably can't see or you may not be looking for them. What are they you might ask? What I'm talking about here are in these following scenarios:

Scenario A) You are traveling North on a two lane road and are approaching an intersection with a stop sign. East and West bound traffic is four lane through traffic. North and South bound have stop signs. As you come to a stop your looking to your left and all you see is a pick up with a trailer in the right lane approaching, he signals he's turning right you see he's slowed and is committing to the turn you look right and it's clear and you ease off the clutch and proceed, WHAM! What you didn't and couldn't see is the Smart car in the left lane paralleling the trailer. This happened to a buddy of

mine. He wound up under the car and the Yamaha he was on totaled the Smart car and no one was seriously hurt. Had he have waited a second longer the car would have come into view.

Scenario B) You are traveling on a four lane city road and at the intersection it's four lane all directions with traffic lights. As you are heading East and you're in the # 2 or curb lane you are approaching the intersection you take notice traffic is light and on the West bound side of the road you see a car in the left turn lane ahead of you, on your right there's a UPS truck a little far up in the lane and a sedan in what you'd reasonably think or looks like from your vantage point in the North bound #2 or curb lane waiting at the light you now enter the intersection and an S.U.V. that was next to the UPS truck pops out from the turn lane he was in to make a right turn and you both see

one another at the same time. He jams on the brakes and you (being the awesome biker you are) swerve left (because you knew where your outs were) to avoid him. A couple of things here could have caused you not to notice the right turn lane, one would be that comes to mind is a high crown in the road, another might be if it's early morning and the position of the rising sun in your eyes making it difficult to see, let alone determine how close the truck was to the curb.

Scenario C) You are in a small town and the road you're on is a three lane with left turn lane and a right or straight turn lane with no directional arrow for left turns only the green light. You are in the left turn lane and across from you is a cement truck in the thru traffic lane. While waiting for your green light (being the observant biker you are) you look straight, you look left, and you look to your right. Your situation looks normal. Now the light turns green for both of you. you visually clear the intersection the truck driver looks at you and

you at him and he sits there a second to see if you're going or he motions you to give you the road you try to peek around him and as you ease out and toward your left here comes a car from behind the truck that was coming down the road and he didn't have to stop sees the truck sitting there and goes around it but you saw him in the nick of time before fully exposing your flank and getting T boned.

The moral of the story don't always trust what your eyes see, expect the unexpected and be prepared to deal with whatever comes your way. When coming to an intersection if you don't already practice it, cover the brakes and the clutch slow down a bit and give yourself that extra second.

If you want to blend in, Ride the Bus! Mark.

