

BIKERS AND BAND-AIDS

Mark Welch — Safety Officer



This year, we have had a couple of our members suddenly customize their bikes in the middle of a ride. Fortunately, there were no really serious injuries but it does make one think, “What would I do if my riding partner got injured on

a ride?” This month, we are going to explore some basic things we can all do to help each other in the event of a crash. You need to have a plan. My plan is to weep and pace until the ambulance gets there. If you are riding with me, you will have to think of something else to do, I claimed weeping and pacing first.

The first thing to do goes without saying but I am going to say it anyway, CALL 911! Get the professionals on their way as soon as possible to provide the best care available. If you have personal protective equipment, don it immediately. Really, would you want to touch some of our HOGs without latex gloves? Next, assess the injured rider. Remember your ABC’s:

- Airway
- Breathing
- Circulation

Make certain the airway is open and the fallen rider is breathing. Place the side of your face near their mouth and nose to detect breathing while you watch the chest to see if it rises and falls. Check for circulation by de-

termining the pulse rate. Once you have determined the rider is breathing and has good circulation, check for any bleeding. The best method to control bleeding is with direct pressure and elevation.

You may have to treat the rider for shock. Loosen restrictive clothing and elevate the extremities if there are broken bones in the extremities. Maintain body temperature. (Theirs, not yours.) Usually, this is accomplished by placing a blanket or another type object over the injured. But in Florida, in the summer, on hot pavement, that may not be necessary.

The things that you do not want to do is move the injured person. There may be a neck or spine injury that would be exacerbated (thank you, thesaurus) by moving them. Leave their helmet on for the professionals to remove. Don’t try to move their limbs in the event there is a fracture. Moving a fractured limb may cause a worse injury.



You may want to consider taking a professionally taught course in CPR to be able to assist our riders who stop breathing or go into cardiac arrest. By the way, if you are doing two-person CPR with me, I have dibs on the chest compressions. You can provide the respirations.

Lastly, consider buying a small first aid kit to carry around in your saddle bag. You never know when it will come in handy. I used the tape in mine once to secure a loose turn signal.

Head and eyes!

Mark