

Sandies a cautionary tale of just how fast it can change out on that great big Roadway we all ride. It is a very good read

From: Regi

Please share with the Sandies if you think it would be helpful.

Last Wednesday afternoon, as we rode southbound on I-29 about 35 miles North of Kansas City, MO, I ran into a Road Gator. My buddy and I were returning from Black Hills Rally (Sturgis) and were travelling in the middle of 3 lanes in good weather on dry pavement. I was the lead rider initially in lane position 1 with my buddy a few seconds behind me in lane position 3 also in the middle lane. I saw a blown truck tire tread laying horizontally across lane position 3 of the lane to my left and across lane positions one and two of the middle lane we were riding in. I hand signaled the tread to my buddy and drifted into lane position three to pass by the tread. Right about then, a sedan changed lanes from my left into the middle lane in front of us. The sedan driver seemed to see the tread as they crossed into the middle lane because they abruptly turned back to the left and ran over the tread with all four tires. I heard the impact and saw the tread flip up into the air directly in front of me. My bike was moving around 70 mph with the cruise control set when the tread wrapped around my forks and fairing. The bike stayed upright, but the impact forced my bike to the right hard enough that I crossed the right hand lane and wound up on the right hand shoulder still with my cruise control engaged. I remember seeing a guard rail flashing by my right side and I was able to move back into the right most lane, pull full clutch, turn on my flashers, and ease back onto the shoulder where I eased the brakes to stop and shut down the motor.

The tire tread was still wrapped around my front forks and rested on my fender. I was wearing full ATGATT with 10" tall leather boots, but I could feel pain in my left shin and my right ankle. I was not able to hold the bike up with my right ankle so I waited for my buddy to hold the bike up for me and extend my side stand. The tread was longer than my Road Glide and weighed about 50 pounds. The fender was scratched and knocked out of line, the right cowbell was dented, the left hand turn signal was knocked off, the fairing was scratched and one side was disconnected, and somehow, my garage door opener was knocked out of my left hand glove box. So, after the adrenaline wore off, I called home and the insurance company, my buddy and I both TCLOC'd the bike on the side of the road, and we continued on to Kansas City. I rode the bike home to Fort Walton Beach without further incident. My right ankle was swollen and sore, but I was able to walk on it that afternoon.

The sedan driver must have known they hit the tread, but they may not have realized that the tread hit my bike because the sedan did not stop. In hindsight, one thing I would have done differently is changing lanes, not just lane positions, to avoid debris in the road. If I had been travelling faster, I may have been closer to the tread when it was chest or head high in the air at impact. If I had been travelling slower, the tread may have impacted my front tire and knocked the bike out from under me. As it turned out, the tread hit my bike in the one place that gave me

a chance to ride it out. After impact, all I did was hold on and I didn't make a conscious input again until I saw the guard rail.

On a side note, the Sandie Skills training for tight turns from a stop on hills came in handy every day while riding in the Black Hills. Just to make things interesting, sometimes it had rained recently which meant we wound up using both brakes to hold the bike while easing into the friction zone. Overall, our ride to Sturgis and back was a great trip and the Gator Attack just added to the adventure.

Looking forward to Barbers!

Regi