Splitting, Sharing, and Filtering

There has been a lot of buzz around the interwebs about the various legislation around the west allowing riders to move between lines of traffic. There are two major versions, lane splitting or sharing and filtering. (Yes, there is no real difference between lane sharing and lane splitting, just the terminology.) The major difference between the two methods lies with the speed of the traffic. With lane splitting/sharing the traffic being passed is in motion, while in filtering the traffic being passed is stationary.

So how does the average rider supposed to deal with each method?

Filtering is fairly straightforward. When the traffic is at a dead stop, such as at a traffic signal, motorcycles gently move between the stopped lanes of traffic, ideally to the intersection, until traffic begins to move again. At that point the motorcycle melds back into the regular flow of traffic. The only imperative in target tracking is to locate the vehicles that are might close off the path of travel and be prepared to check up.

Easy, peasy, lemon squeezy.

There are more moving parts with lane splitting/sharing. There are vehicles on either side of the rider that need to be monitored, as well as the traffic gaps in each lane. As per the studies, the optimal speed differential while splitting is 10 mph faster than the traffic being overtaken, ergo the most vehicles that you have to track on either side is two. Under normal circumstances the biggest worry is that someone will move to tighten the gap, which means checking up until they get bored. It's not the last lap at Talladega, so just have a bit of patience.

The gaps are a bit more problematic. They open and close as traffic moves, and it is moving temptation to folks in the other lane, therefore a rider needs to be ready for the unannounced lane change. There are tons of intangibles that come into play to help discover who might make the sudden lane change, but that will be reserved for a later discussion. The important point is how do we do predictive analysis on potential incursions.

See y'all next time, and until then ride it safely and make it home with no new scratches.