Curves as a risk factor for motorcyclists

Robert McCall, VTTI
Cameron Rainey, VTTI
Vicki Williams, VTTI
Shane McLaughlin, VTTI

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Are curves risky for motorcyclists?

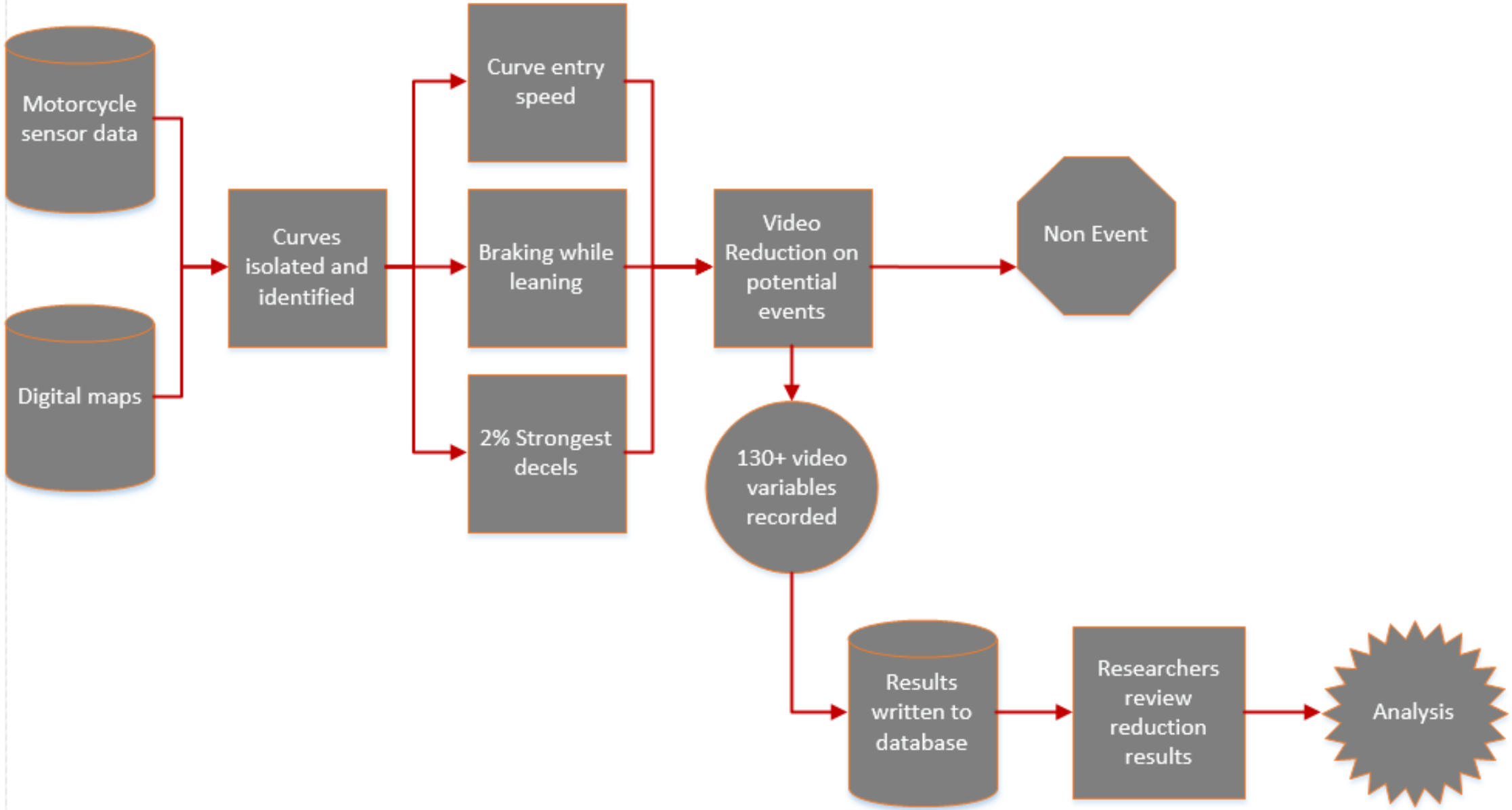
- Yes.

Background

- In 2013 motorcycles accounted for 3% of registered vehicles[1].
- That same year motorcycles accounted for 0.7% of vehicle miles traveled[1].
- Yet they comprised14% of all traffic fatalities[1].
- Even when alcohol is eliminated as a contributing factor, single vehicle conflicts represent 25% of all motorcycle fatalities in the U.S. [2]

[1] National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2015, May). Motorcycles: 2013 data. (Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 812 148). Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
[2] National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2014, June). Motorcycles: 2012 data. (Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 812 035). Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

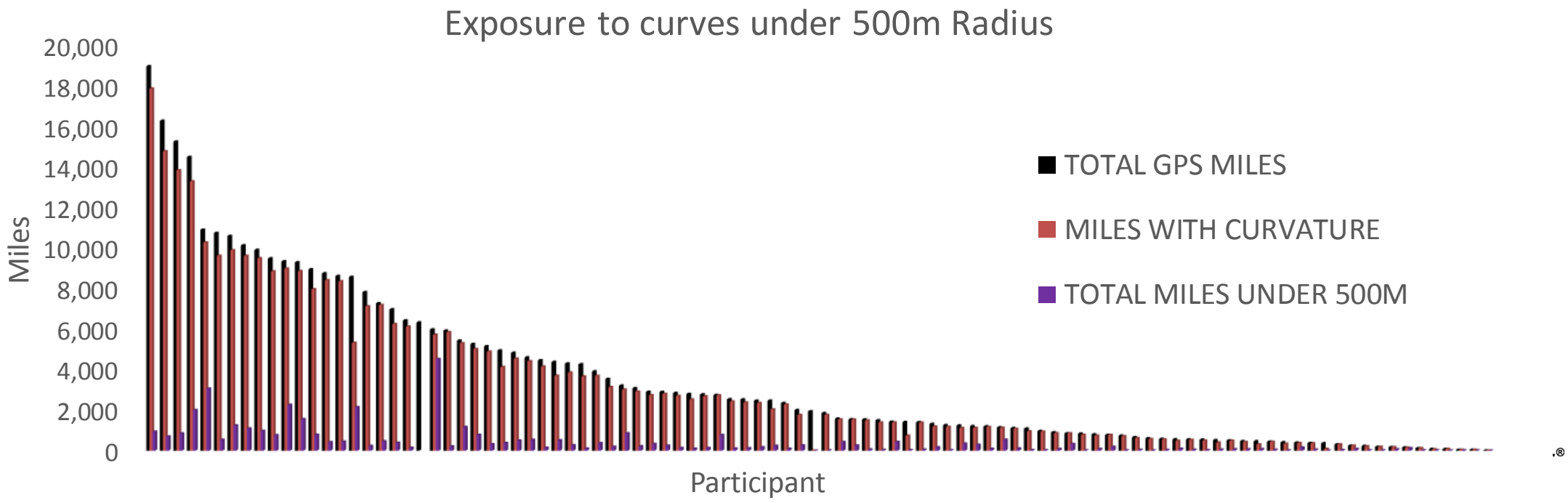
Identifying Events: Overview



Curve Exposure

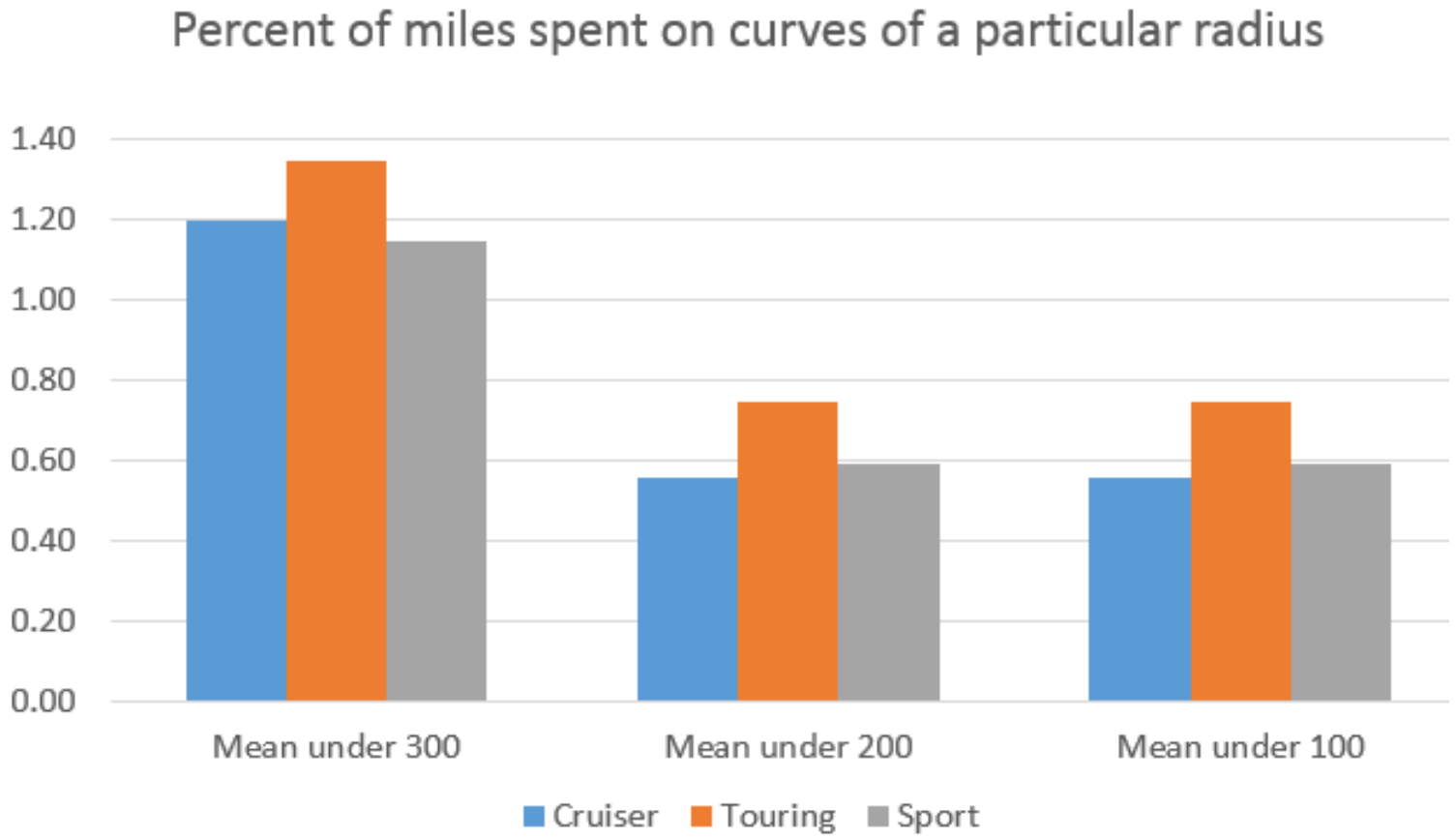
Curves were isolated in the digitally mapped data and assigned a radius.

- Radius calculated from digital map data
- Summary measures derived for each curve including min, max, and mean radius



Results Curve Exposure

- Between subjects ANOVAs revealed no significant differences between bike types, experience levels, or age groups in terms of the percentage of miles ridden in curves.



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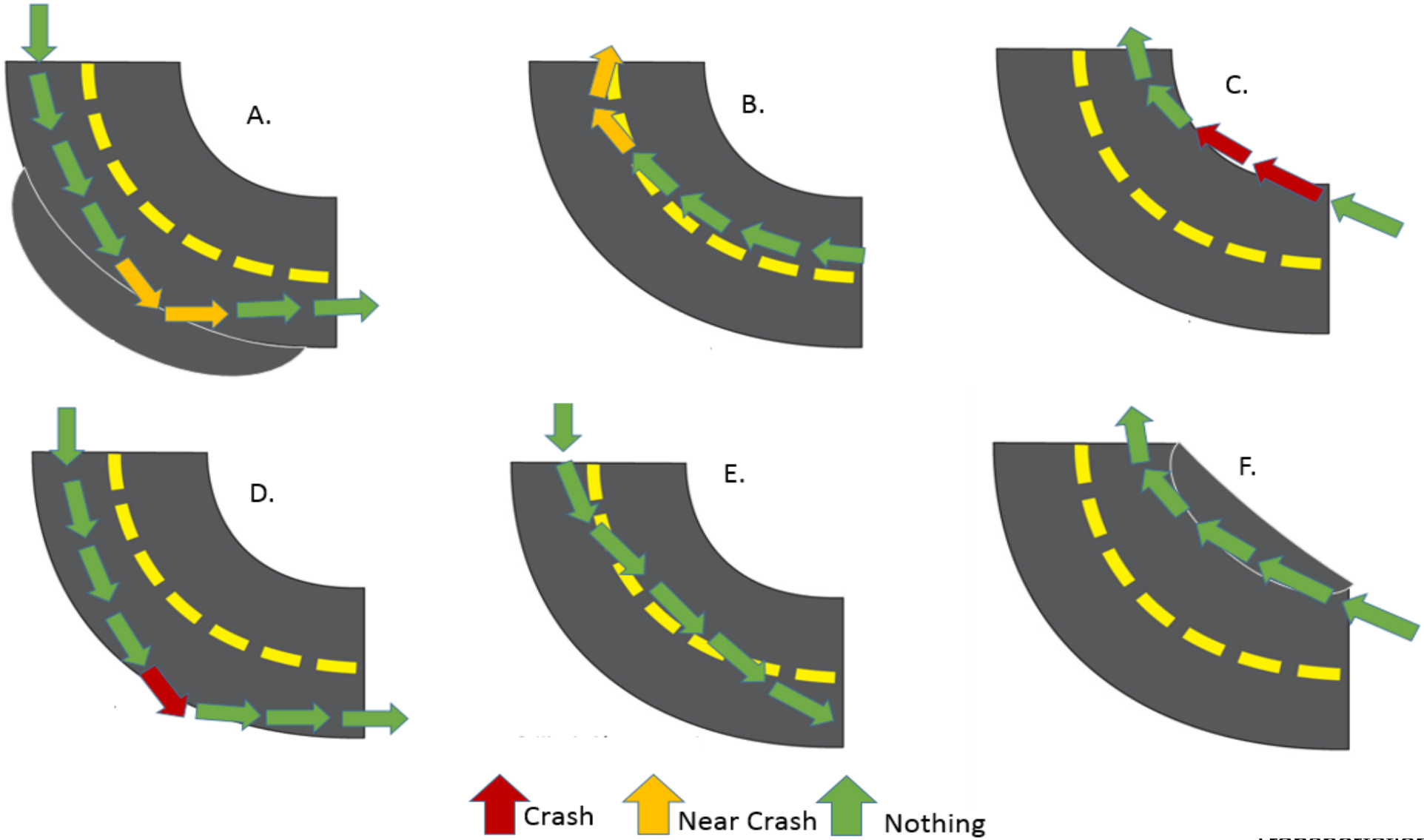
Event Types

- Single vehicle conflict - A crash\near-crash type involving only the participant rider.
- Near Crash – taking a curve wide
  - Rider taking a right curve too wide and crossing the traffic divider.
- Crash – Run off the Road
- A rider leaving paved surface of the road or shoulder while negotiating a curve.
- A rider choosing to flatten their trajectory in a curve by cutting inside across the yellow line was neither recorded as a crash or a near-crash

Situations of Interest



Detection Algorithms

- A three-pronged approach was used to identify potential crash and near-crash events in the dataset.
  - 2% strongest deceleration events
  - Curve entry speeds
  - Lean angle and braking

The Event Set

- 27 crashes and near-crashes (15 participants) were identified as being both single vehicle conflicts and occurring on a curved roadway geometry.
- 85% of the detected events happened on a right-hand curve (23\27).
- All 27 events occurred on roads with two lanes and opposing traffic.
  - In the majority of cases (85%), the rider took a curve too fast for the situation (geometry, ability, etc.) leading them to cross over the left hand lane marker into opposing lanes.
- Roadway debris was not listed as a contributing factor in any of the events.
- No events took place in construction zones, and
- all events occurred under sunny or partly cloudy skies with no moisture on the roadway.

Results Curve Crashes and Near Crashes 1 of 2

- Riders are 2.7 times more likely to be involved in a CNC in a curve than while on straight road segments.
  - [OR = 2.72 CI (1.92, 3.87)]
- Motorcyclists are 1.6 times more likely to be involved in a single vehicle conflict while curving than any other type of crash while on straight segments.
  - [OR = 1.56 CI(1.02, 2.37)]
- Novice riders are 3x more likely to have a single vehicle conflict in a curve than non-returning experienced riders.
  - [OR = 3.39, CI (1.13, 10.17)]
- All riders are nearly 10 times more likely to have a single vehicle conflict in curves than straight sections.
  - [OR = 9.3, CI(4.9, 17.4)]

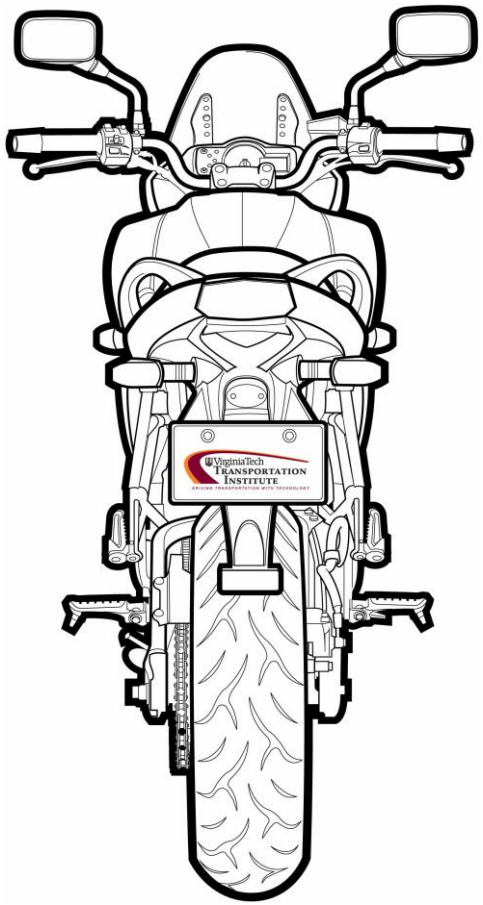
Results Curve Crashes and Near Crashes 2 of 2

- Riders are 15 times more likely to experience a single vehicle conflict in a curve when riding with one or more other motorcyclist(s) than they are while riding solo
  - [OR = 14.86, CI(5.95, 37.08)]

Are curves risky for motorcyclists?

- Yes.
- No differences between motorcycle types on exposure.
- Riders are more likely to have a crash or near-crash in a curve than any other road geometry.
- Right hand curves are of particular risk.
- Novice riders are at an increased risk compared to experienced riders.
- Riding with one or more other riders increases your risk of a crash or near-crash in a curve 15-fold.

Questions?



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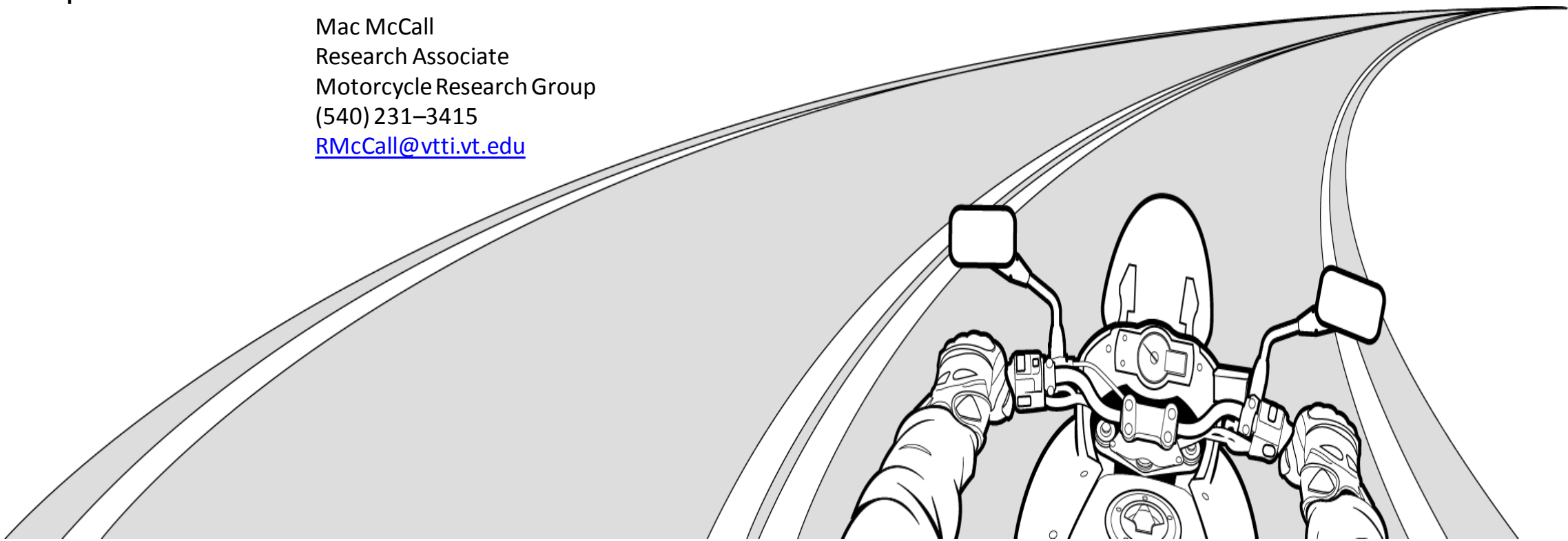
Contact Information

If you have any questions about motorcycle related research at VTTI or would like further information, please contact:

Mac McCall
Research Associate
Motorcycle Research Group
(540) 231–3415
RMcCall@vtti.vt.edu



http://www.motorcycle.vtti.vt.edu/

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