

This is a newsletter prepared by lawyers to advise bicyclists about the joys of riding, bicycle safety, active transportation, and cyclists' rights. Bicycle Law is owned and operated by Coopers LLP, which has lawyers licensed in California, Oregon, and Washington state. Coopers LLP is regularly consulted by attorneys and cyclists nationwide on strategy related to bicycle crashes.



2261 Market Street #330
San Francisco, CA 94114

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**BICYCLE
LAW**



ROLLING RESISTANCE

ISSUE #11 | SPRING 2025 | MEET UP, CLIP IN, ROLL OUT

CAR-FREE YOSEMITE, COMMUNITY ON WHEELS, FIGHTING FAULT, AND MORE ►

Have you or someone you know been involved in
a bicycle crash? Want to know about your rights?
Are you a lawyer handling a bicycle crash who
wants the best result for your client?

Contact Bicycle Law at 866-912-2789



INSIDE THIS EDITION

Law / From wrongful blame to rightful victory

Adventure / Car-free Yosemite: Tioga and Glacier Point

Community / Two wheels, together

News / Events, rides, and goings-on

Safety / Slipping the left cross

Bicycle Law's lawyers practice law through Coopers LLP, which has lawyers licensed in California, Oregon, and Washington state, and can affiliate with local counsel on bicycle cases across the country to make sure cyclists benefit from cycling-focused lawyers.

Front cover: Fat Cake Club on Hawk Hill. Rachel Fenn / @maryparadox
Back cover: Zachary Morvant / @zmorvant

When one pays attention one notices patterns. One pattern right now is a groundswell toward in-person engagement: Run clubs. Chess clubs. Cycling groups. Some people *wanting* to return to the office (even in WFH San Francisco). People are craving human interaction. That desire for human engagement parallels the geometric increases in artificial intelligence. As machines take on more of what humans used to do, we're turning toward one another.

With that as a backdrop we explore the landscape of club and group rides. Want to expand your horizons, your endurance, and your skills while making some new friends? In-person is back! We also feature our sponsorship work. Great events like the Grasshopper Adventure Series, Velo Promo's road races and criteriums, Fat Cake Club's rolls around town, and our own Supermarket Street Sweep require financial support to be successful. A side benefit? Getting to ride at these fantastic events ourselves.

On the adventure front we revisit the Tioga Pass and Glacier Point Roads, hopefully with enough time to put them on your radar for their all-too-brief car-free days. And while this issue focuses on people coming together, there are some situations where we want to avoid that. We discuss one of the five leading cycling collisions, the left cross, and how to do one's best to evade it.

Because people sometimes ask us about our day jobs, we're including a recent case where we helped a commuter who was hit and initially blamed for causing the crash. Hopefully, you and yours never need us. But you can ride with confidence knowing that should something happen, we're here.

*Hoping you keep the rubber side down,
Miles B. Cooper, Maryanne B. Cooper, Bob Mionske,
and everyone at Bicycle Law*

Photo: Pamela Ocampo / @pamo.gif

FROM WRONGFUL BLAME TO RIGHTFUL VICTORY

Fighting when it's not your fault

Occasionally, we're asked about the work we do beyond these articles. To give you a glimpse, we're sharing a recent case where we represented a commuter cyclist involved in a collision. Initially, the cyclist was wrongly blamed for the accident, a common and frustrating experience for many riders. This case highlights the challenges cyclists face and underscores the importance of having someone in your corner. While we sincerely hope you never find yourself in a similar situation, we want you to ride with the reassurance that if the unexpected happens, we're here to advocate for you.



The facts

A pickup truck driver was driving his truck northbound at 30 mph in a 25 mph residential neighborhood as he approached an intersection. Meanwhile, a young woman commuting eastbound by bike was entering the intersection. Because the pickup truck driver did not have a stop sign and the cyclist's direction did have one, the driver decided to keep going, striking the cyclist. After striking the cyclist, the driver kept going. The helmeted cyclist hit the ground, losing consciousness. She also suffered dental injuries.



Tim Michael, pre-litigation manager and case manager.

The driver ultimately, at his passenger's urging, turned around to see what happened. Because the incident was thought to be unwitnessed, and because the cyclist's direction had a stop sign, the driver's insurance company insisted the driver was not legally responsible for the collision.

The method

We investigated the incident. As part of our investigation we requested and obtained the Computer-Assisted Dispatch (CAD) log. This log contains all the entries made by 911

dispatchers related to an event, including the individuals who called 911. In doing so we uncovered a witness who had been nearby and called 911. In speaking with the neutral witness we were able to put together the missing pieces. Those pieces demonstrated that the driver was legally responsible.

The result

By being thorough we were able to help the cyclist demonstrate it was the driver, not the cyclist, who caused the crash. As a result, the insurance company paid the \$250,000 insurance policy limits before a lawsuit was even filed.



CAR-FREE YOSEMITE: TIOGA AND GLACIER POINT

By Zachary Morvant

Disclaimer: With the current administration, we realize that Yosemite's traditional "car-free" days for Tioga Pass and Glacier Point Road may be delayed (or not happen at all). Nevertheless, in the spirit of persistence and optimism, we hope this guide is useful, soon or in the future.

Fantasy to reality: Car-free Yosemite

Yosemite National Park, crown jewel of the Sierra Nevada, offers breathtaking vistas, unparalleled natural beauty, and a rich mine for lifelong memories. While typically traversed by car, a few precious days each year transform iconic roads into a cyclist's dream. During these limited "bicycles only" periods, before these roads officially open to vehicular traffic, riders can experience the grandeur of Yosemite in a truly unique and serene way. This guide will help you plan and make the most of an all-time adventure on Tioga and Glacier Point Roads.

Tioga Road

Tioga Road (Highway 120 through Yosemite) is a high-altitude mountain pass that connects the western side of the Sierras (if one starts in Crane Flat) to the east (Lee Vining, near Mono Lake and Highway 395). It provides paved access to the park's high country, including Tuolumne Meadows, Tenaya Lake, and numerous trailheads.

Before the road is fully cleared of snow and opened to vehicles, Yosemite National Park typically designates a period for bicycles only (though you may also see the odd person on foot or ElliptiGO). This allows cyclists to enjoy the road's challenging terrain and stunning scenery without the usual buzzing, honking throng of cars and recreational vehicles.

Here's the tricky part: The specific timing of these bicycle-only days varies each year, depending on snowpack and plowing progress. Notice is often only given with a couple of days to plan. But if one can get the stars to swiftly align, the reward is great: a breathtaking (literally and figuratively) ride you'll never forget.



Marked services typically aren't available on car-free days.
Photo: Zachary Morvant / @zmorvant



Miles and Zachary layered up for an early morning start to Tioga Pass.

Tioga Road stretches approximately 47 miles within Yosemite, climbing from 6,400 feet at Crane Flat to nearly 10,000 feet at Tioga Pass. (Note: If you start from the east, at Lee Vining, your ride begins with a nearly 12 mile, 3,000 foot climb to the top of the pass. One hell of a warmup.) Altitude aside, the terrain is challenging, with significant elevation gain and sustained grades.

Be prepared for a demanding ride with next to no options for resupply. Depending on how much you typically drink, carrying multiple liters of water and/or a filtration device is highly recommended, in addition to all the food you think you'll need. Riding the whole pass is no small adventure. For the extra-motivated rider starting in Crane Flat, you can pedal all the way to Lee Vining (about 58 miles and 5,600 feet), resupply at the famous "5-Star Mobil" Whoa Nellie Deli, and ride back. I did it once and it was a proper day out, but certainly made the drive home challenging.



Fish Camp General Store, south of the park. Photo: Zachary Morvant / @zmorvant

Glacier Point Road

The proverbial bridesmaid to Tioga, Glacier Point is often overlooked but not to be missed. A climber's delight, this iconic overlook offers unparalleled panoramic views of Yosemite Valley, including Half Dome, Yosemite Falls, and Vernal and Nevada Falls.

Similar to Tioga Road, Glacier Point Road often has a period for bicycles only before it opens to cars. This offers a unique opportunity to experience all of the beauty with none of the traffic. Pull over, pull out your phone, and snap away. It doesn't get any better than this.

Glacier Point Road is approximately 16 miles long, starting around 6,200 feet and topping out just over 7,800 feet. There's a brief descent in the middle; otherwise, it's one gorgeous levitation (until you turn around, naturally—then it's transformed into a thrilling descent).



Beginning the climb up Glacier Point Road. Photo: Zachary Morvant / @zmorvant



What to know before you go

Arguably, the hardest part about making either of these dream rides into reality is making the very short (often two days) notice work with your schedule. Stay informed about plowing progress and potential bicycle-only dates by checking the official Yosemite National Park website (nps.gov/yose) and following their social media channels. You can also call the park's information line for updates. One more option? A cyclist built a site called istiogaopen.com (because of course he did). Sign up for email updates there.

Accessing Tioga Road

- East side access is typically from Lee Vining, and west side access is from Crane Flat.
- Be prepared for potentially cold temperatures at higher elevations, even during the day. Dress in layers and bring appropriate gear.
- Reservations to enter the park may be required depending upon the day and time of year. If so, plan accordingly: Without a reservation, you may need to arrive very early, or plan on riding into the park.

Accessing Glacier Point Road

- Access is typically from the intersection with Highway 41 (Wawona Road), near Fish Camp.
- Parking can be very limited, so arrive early. See the above note under "Accessing Tioga Road" regarding reservations.
- Be prepared for a strenuous climb, and bring plenty of water and snacks.
- The road can be windy and cold, so dress appropriately.

General Tips for Yosemite Cycling

- **Be prepared:** Yosemite's weather can change rapidly. Dress in layers, bring rain gear, and be prepared for cold temperatures at higher elevations.
- **Bring supplies:** Carry plenty of water, snacks, and a repair kit.
- **Follow park rules:** Respect park regulations, stay on designated roads, and pack out all trash.
- **Enjoy the experience:** Take your time, savor the breathtaking scenery, and enjoy the unique opportunity to cycle in one of the world's most beautiful places.

Disclaimer: Road conditions and bicycle-only dates are subject to change. Always check the official Yosemite National Park website for the latest information before planning your trip.

TWO WHEELS, TOGETHER

In this post-pandemic age of artificial intelligence and digital distraction, the primal need for connection is harder to ignore than the scream of rain-soaked disc brakes. What better way to scratch that all-too-human itch than to get outside and ride bikes with friends?

At their core, bicycles are vehicles for bringing people together. We believe that a strong cycling community is a vibrant and safe cycling community. That's why we're proud to support a diverse range of organizations that are working to make cycling accessible and enjoyable for everyone. We don't just advocate for cyclists in the courtroom; we're invested in building a better two-wheeled world. Here's a look at some of the fantastic groups we're honored to partner with.

Fat Cake Club: Fostering inclusivity and joy on bikes

The Fat Cake Club is more than just a cycling group; it's a movement celebrating inclusivity, the sheer joy of riding, and (naturally) a shared love of delicious pastries. Their mission is to create a welcoming space for cyclists of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities, challenging the often exclusive image of the sport.

Support and community building is valued more than skill and raw fitness. But don't let that fool you—some of the rides (and riders) are very fast indeed. Just hang out at the finish of a local race and you're sure to find someone in Super Sprinkles (Fat Cake's inclusion-focused racing team) kit on the podium.

Bikes, pastries, pals: an unbeatable combination.

Photos: Rachel Fenn / @maryparadox, Pamela Ocampo / @pamo.gif



Community exists even in competition. Photo courtesy of Grasshopper Adventure Series.

Like the Fat Cake Club, we believe that cycling should be for everyone, and that all cyclists should have the resources and support they need to ride (and race) safely.

Grasshopper Adventure Series: Inspiring self-discovery and resilience

The Grasshopper Adventure Series embodies the spirit of adventure and exploration that lies at the heart of cycling. These events are designed to challenge riders with diverse terrain and unique courses, encouraging them to push their limits and discover new possibilities.

Beloved since their inception in 1998, the "Hoppers" are an iconic fixture in the world of gravel and mixed-terrain cycling. Featuring epic scenery, pre-ride prep and on-course support (hot tip: one of the rest stops usually has grilled cheese!), and a welcoming community of passionate explorers, the Grasshopper Adventure Series is not to be missed.

Each "Hopper" also supports a unique charitable cause with a portion of their proceeds. The Low Gap race benefits NorCalGrit, a program to recruit and retain more female student-athletes and coaches. The Huffmaster event partners with the Adventure Therapy Foundation, an organization created by a cancer survivor to minimize the emotional side effects of the disease, using adventure as the catalyst. The other events



You'll see AV riders all over the Bay Area. Photo courtesy of Alto Velo Racing Club.

in the series have their own beneficiaries, including the Redwood Trails Alliance and the Moriah Wilson Foundation.

We also believe in the transformative power of a challenging day on the bike—and, if we're being honest, the Grasshopper events are too damned fun to miss.

Alto Velo Racing Club: Cultivating excellence and community

Alto Velo Racing Club is a renowned Bay Area cycling organization that promotes excellence in competitive cycling while fostering a strong sense of community. They provide training, support, and mentorship to cyclists of all levels, from aspiring racers to seasoned veterans.

With a robust schedule of group rides from beginner to advanced, well-defined etiquette and safety guidelines, a mentorship program, and many more benefits, it's no wonder why Alto Velo fields one of the largest and most successful amateur race teams in the region. The community infrastructure and support are powerful, helping newcomers and seasoned racers overcome the many challenges of being a racer.

At Bicycle Law, we laud Alto Velo's commitment to safety and responsible cycling, and support their development and involvement of racing skills and culture.

Supermarket Street Sweep: Cycling for a cause

The Supermarket Street Sweep is an annual charity bicycle race in San Francisco that benefits the SF-Marin Food Bank. Participants race around the city, collecting food and financial donations.

We proudly adopted the Supermarket Street Sweep in 2022, supplying much-needed time and people power in the form of organization, promotion, and sourcing prizes (and tacos!) for participants. By supporting it, we support the San Francisco-Marín Food Bank, and their stated mission to end food insecurity in the Bay Area.



Making a big deposit at the food bank. Photo: Erik Mathy / @erikmathy

Community takes all of us

At Bicycle Law, we believe that supporting these organizations is an investment in the future of cycling. Each of these groups contributes to a safer, more inclusive, and more vibrant cycling community. By partnering with them, we're not just providing financial support; we're demonstrating our commitment to the values that make cycling such a rewarding and transformative activity.

We encourage you to learn more about these incredible organizations and consider how you can get involved. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of cyclists everywhere. If you're interested in checking out some of their events, we've created a handy calendar in the next story.

EVENTS, RIDES, AND GOINGS-ON

Clip in to some fun with friends. We've included a list of cycling events that we enjoy (and happen to support). Flavors include group and recreational rides, road races, mixed terrain adventures, and more. For more details, check out the organizers' websites or social media channels.

- Alto Velo Racing (altovelo.org)
- Fat Cake Club (fatcake.cc)
- Grasshopper Adventure Series (grasshopperadventureseries.com)
- Velo Promo (velopromo.com)



Photos courtesy of Alto Velo Racing Club (top left); Fat Cake Club, Pamela Ocampo (top right); and Grasshopper Adventure Series (bottom).



MAY

May 3: Alto Velo Saturday rides presented by Bicycle Law | *Palo Alto, CA*

May 5: Fat Cake Club WTFNB + Allies ride (coffee and pastries on us!) | *San Francisco, CA*

May 10: Grasshopper Adventure Series finale (King Ridge) | *Duncans Mills, CA*

May 18: Velo Promo Strawberry Fields Forever ride | *Watsonville, CA*

May 24: Velo Promo Ward's Ferry Road Race | *Sonora, CA*

May 29: Fat Cake Club city loop ending at Breadbelly (coffee and pastries on us!) | *San Francisco, CA*

JUNE

June 2: Fat Cake Club WTFNB + Allies ride (coffee and pastries on us!) | *San Francisco, CA*

June 7: Alto Velo Saturday rides presented by Bicycle Law | *Palo Alto, CA*

June 7: Velo Promo Regalado Road Race | *Regalado, CA*

June 26: Fat Cake Club city loop ending at Breadbelly (coffee and pastries on us!) | *San Francisco, CA*

JULY

July 1: Fat Cake Club WTFNB + Allies ride (coffee and pastries on us!) | *San Francisco, CA*

July 5: Velo Promo Watsonville Criterium | *Watsonville, CA*

July 12: Alto Velo Racing Team presents the Pescadero Road Race | *Pescadero, CA*

July 25-27: Grasshopper Mendo Gravel Camp | *Caspar, CA*

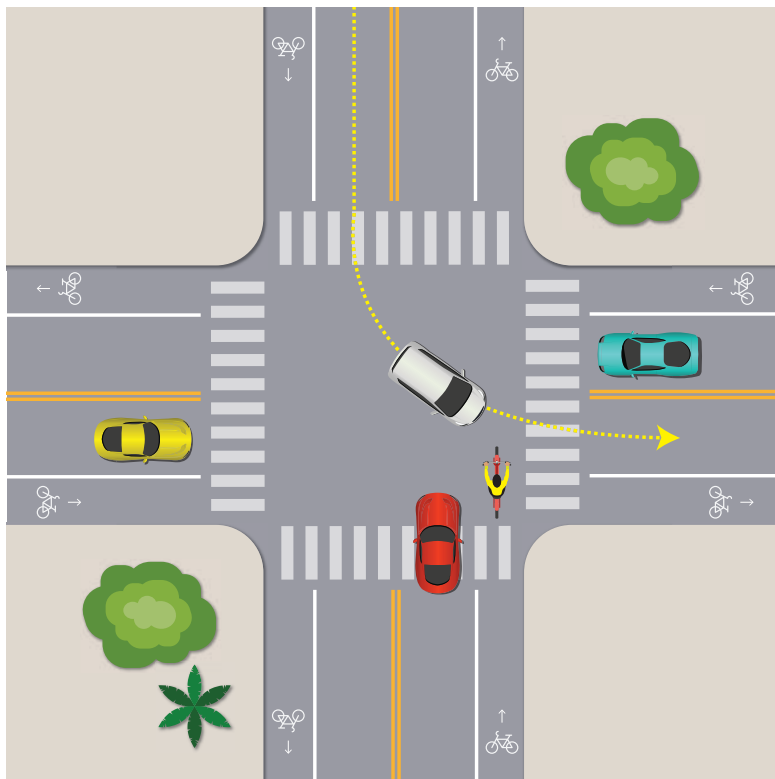
July 31: Fat Cake Club city loop ending at Breadbelly (coffee and pastries on us!) | *San Francisco, CA*

SLIPPING THE LEFT CROSS

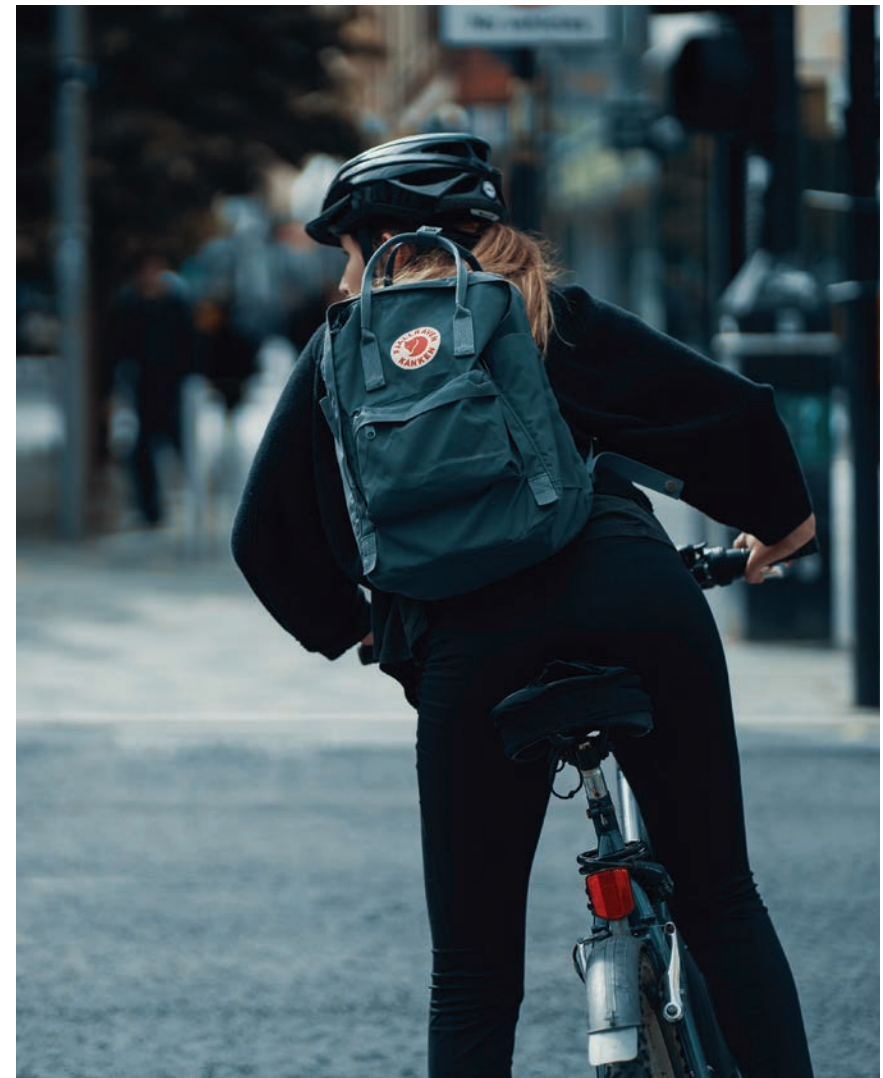
Many cyclists have heard of the right hook (see issue #7 of our newsletter on BicycleLaw.com for more information)—but its similarly boxing-inspired counterpart, the left cross, is another of the “Big Five” types of collisions riders face.

What is a left cross?

A left cross collision occurs when a motorist makes a left turn across the path of an oncoming cyclist. This collision type poses a significant threat to urban cyclists in particular. The rapid nature of the turn, combined with the cyclist’s momentum, leaves little time for reaction. Unlike collisions where cyclists are overtaken, the left cross involves a direct frontal or near-frontal impact, dangerously multiplying the force involved and often increasing the severity of injuries.



A left cross collision occurs when a motorist makes a left turn across the path of an oncoming cyclist.



Position yourself. Scan and anticipate. Photo: Ross Sneddon, Unsplash.

What factors contribute to left cross collisions?

Similar to right hook collisions, left crosses often stem from a motorist’s failure to adequately scan for—and yield to—oncoming cyclists. Drivers making left turns are often focused on oncoming car traffic and may overlook cyclists approaching from the opposite direction, especially if the cyclist is in a less visible position or traveling at a speed the driver misjudges.

The driver may also be distracted, hurried, or simply not expecting a cyclist to be traveling at that speed or in that location. Poor visibility conditions, such as rain, fog, or darkness, can further exacerbate the problem. Complex intersections with multiple lanes or obscured sightlines also increase the risk of these collisions.

Even when a motorist *does* see you prior to initiating their left turn, you may still be at risk if they misjudge your speed and distance. They might think they have enough time to complete their turn before you reach the intersection, leading to a collision.

How can I reduce my left cross risk?

The danger of left cross collisions, caused by motorists who fail to signal or check for cyclists before turning, is all too familiar to us. As riders, what strategies can we employ to mitigate this risk?

Riding technique is key. Consider these tips when approaching an intersection:

- **Position yourself:** Don't hug the curb. If safe and legal, take the lane or position yourself so you are visible to drivers preparing to turn left. This helps you avoid being in a driver's blind spot.
- **Scan and anticipate:** As you approach an intersection, scan for vehicles approaching from the opposite direction. Look for signs of a driver preparing to turn left, such as their position in the lane, their wheel direction, and any signals (though these are often unreliable).
- **Make eye contact:** If possible, try to make eye contact with drivers who appear to be preparing to turn left. This can help confirm they see you.
- **Slow down:** Reduce your speed as you approach intersections, giving yourself more time to react if a driver turns left unexpectedly.
- **Be prepared to react:** Have your brakes ready and be prepared to take evasive action if a driver begins to turn left in front of you. This might involve braking hard, swerving, or even stopping suddenly.

Visibility (or conspicuity, which we've written about on our blog) is also paramount.

While we cannot control driver behavior, we can increase their chances of seeing us, as well as their time to react. Bright, reflective clothing and front and rear lights are helpful for this, even during daylight hours. We

shouldn't have to dress like Christmas trees simply to commute or get some exercise, but we are also realistic about the potentially grave consequences of car-on-bike collisions.

A 2018 study on cyclist visibility demonstrated that wearing bright clothing significantly reduces the risk of collisions.* Specifically, high-visibility clothing, such as fluorescent yellow or orange, increases the likelihood of being seen by drivers, especially during daylight hours. Reflective materials are crucial for nighttime visibility.

In short, being proactive in your equipment choices and defensive in your riding techniques can help to minimize the risk of a left cross collision.

* Lahrmann, et al., *The effect of a yellow bicycle jacket on cyclist accidents*, *Safety Science*, Volume 108, October 2018, Pages 209-217.



Get your regular dose of Bicycle Law
bicycling joy on Instagram: [@bicycle.law](https://www.instagram.com/bicycle.law)

