

Motorcyclist's actions may have contributed to crash

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A motorcyclist who was reportedly seen by others speeding and “popping a wheelie” on U.S. Highway 31 North may have contributed to the accident that seriously injured him just before 5 p.m. on Saturday, July 18, in Austin.

Two witnesses to the accident at the highway's intersection with Bond Street said that motorcyclist Justin E. Richie, 21, Scottsburg, was “traveling fast” and had just maneuvered his 2006 Honda CBR into a one-wheel stance known as a “wheelie” before striking a 2006 Suzuki Vitara.

Austin Police Department Lt. Shawn Hurt was called to the scene of the injury accident. He stated that, when he arrived, Richie was lying on U.S. 31 on the Suzuki's passenger side.

His motorcycle had struck the SUV in the front driver's fender as Stephanie Scott, 15, Austin, had pulled out from Bond St. Both the teenager and her father, Gary Scott, who had been in the front passenger seat of the SUV, said the motorcycle was perhaps a couple hundred feet south of the intersection when the girl pulled out onto U.S. 31. Both said that the motorcycle was going faster than what the girl had reckoned.

Passers-by tended to Richie, keeping him still while the officer contacted county dispatchers to provide an update of the situation. Scott County EMS arrived on the scene and tended to the injured motorcyclist. While they were doing so, StatCare, the air ambulance stationed in Louisville, was flying over the community on the way back from a run to Indianapolis. Learning of the accident and possible condition of the motorcyclist, the StatCare crew landed the medical helicopter and transported Richie to University of Louisville Hospital.

According to a family member, Richie suffered two broken legs and additional internal injuries as he flipped over the SUV and landed on the pavement. He was not wearing a helmet, Ptl. Hurt's report indicated.

Stephanie Scott was transported by ambulance to Scott Memorial Hospital for treatment of a possible back injury.

In his report, Lt. Hurt related that he saw and photographed a long skid mark going south of Bond St. which the motorcycle had made prior to impact. He also took statements from two men who said they had witnessed Richie's earlier driving along U.S. 31.

Property damage was estimated at up to \$25,000 by Lt. Hurt.