

No consensus on bike helmets

By Blair Anthony Robertson, Sacramento Bee

It seems like such a no-brainer. You get out your bike to go for a ride and you put on your helmet, a highly engineered and carefully scrutinized piece of equipment designed to protect you from serious brain injury, even death.

Helmets are lighter, more comfortable, more versatile and more stylish than ever. If you come out to watch the Amgen Tour of California this week, when the peloton of 100-plus riders will be speeding around the state, it goes without saying that all of the racers will be wearing helmets.

But helmet use at the recreational level does not enjoy that kind of consensus, something you're bound to realize during May is Bike Month events, when thousands of local bike riders will be racking up close to 2 million miles commuting, touring, cruising, training and, in some cases, racing. For something that seems so obvious – helmets protect the brain in a fall or collision – it may surprise you that helmet use has been studied and studied again for decades.

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