

Mateship may save your life

By ED EARL

A SOUTHPORT mother has used the pain of her son's fatal motorbike crash as a grim warning to reckless riders.

Sam Hammersley's oldest son, Darren Lattenstein, was killed in an accident on Coolibah Street in Southport four years ago.

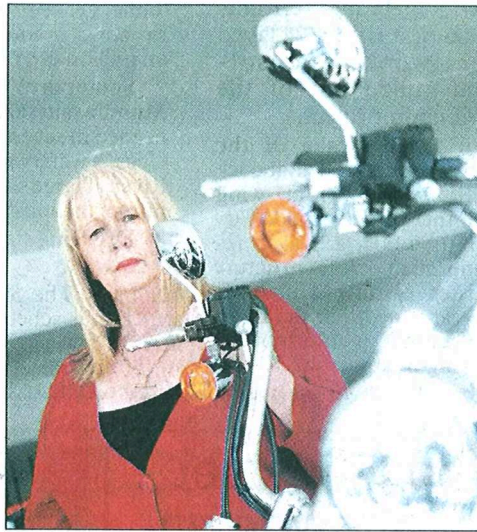
The 33-year-old, who died at Gold Coast Hospital, left a family, including a daughter of six at the time.

Despite having to confront the 'unfair' accident on a daily basis, Mrs Hammersley is intent on using the tragedy to rein in the state's skyrocketing road toll.

Along with two other heartbreaking stories, the Southport resident's tale of four years of anguish and pain appears on a new website launched by MATES (Motorcycle Awareness Training Education Safety).

"It has such a profound effect on everybody. Sometimes I struggle just to get through the day," said Mrs Hammersley.

MATES, a group of



GRIEF ... Sam Hammersley lost her son in a traffic accident. *Picture: SCOTT FLETCHER*

volunteers including firefighters, policemen and motorcycle enthusiasts, was launched in 2007 to help reduce the Gold Coast's road toll, which stands at eight in 2009.

Three of those fatalities involved motorcyclists and which have prompted Mrs Hammersley to tell her story on the internet to encourage change.

"I knew he was in pain because he had broken both his legs but not in a million years did I think he would die," she said.

To read Mrs Hammersley's story, visit www.mates.org.au.

The website features riding tips, maintenance, safety advice, road conditions and rider training.