

PRODUCT REVIEW

Shoei Neotec II Modular Helmet

By Moshe K. Levy, RA #43605

Regular readers may recall the glowing review we lavished upon Shoei's original Neotec in the July / August 2017 edition of OTL. Indeed, we said at the time that it was "quite possibly the finest modular helmet on the market today." Not a company known to rest on



its laurels, Shoei introduced the Neotec II this past spring. Over the past several months, we've racked up thousands of miles on this handsome Matte Blue Metallic model to see if it could fill the proverbial big shoes of its predecessor, as the Japanese manufacturer's top of the line offering in the premium modular helmet class.

Chief among the bevy of improvements Shoei has made is the option to completely integrate a Sena SRL (or Shoei Rider Link) communication system into the helmet as a fully integrated package. The helmet's EPS liner has cutouts already built in specifically to accommodate the comm's speakers, wiring, battery, and controls. Features are Sena's standard for its ubiquitous 20S Evo, including voice command, up to 1 mile range, Bluetooth connection to your phone and GPS, and enough juice to power up to 10 hours of talk. Very slick, because now you don't need a big bulky comm unit hanging off the side of your helmet – it's all internal! (Unless it's not a SENA SRL, in which case installation won't be integrated into the shell.)

The Neotec II's exterior shell styling has evolved into a more aggressive shape, with sharper angles and more pronounced streamlining from front to back for a better aerodynamics at speed. Side by side, the new chin bar's "Vortex Generator" flares are especially notable compared to the more contemporary styling of the original Neotec. A two-position "catfish" chin vent and three-position ram-air style crown vent handle ventilation duty, while a fixed-position exhaust vent at the upper rear sucks hot air out using the venturi effect.

Shoei's UV-blocking "CNS-3" face shield includes a Pinlock EVO fog-resistant insert. A large slider switch on the helmet's left side actuates an integrated "QSV-1" 3D injection-molded sun shield, which is UV blocking and exceeds the ANSI Z80.3-2010 standard for non-prescription eyewear. Six solid

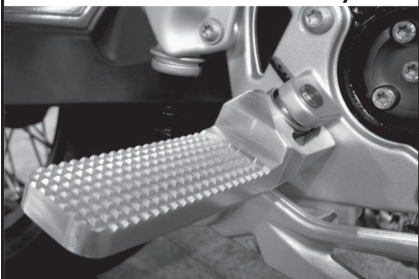
detents hold it firmly in place at any speed sanely possible on the street. Actuating the chin bar is ergonomically simple, thanks to the huge, glove-friendly red lock release button on the front. Pressing it allows the chin bar and face shield to glide upwards until the assembly locks in open position. It closes shut with a positive "click" sound that audibly alerts the rider when the pivot locking system is engaged. Fit and finish on our test model was perfection, with excellent paint and precision assembly throughout.

The interior benefits from Shoei's focus on sealing the openings further in an effort to reduce wind noise. The neck roll, especially, has been closed substantially on the new model vs. the old. As before, the plush liner bits are all removable, washable, and replaceable as needed. Built-in cooling channels direct cool air from the forward vents directly over the crown of the head, and it is no exaggeration to say the Neotec II is absolutely the class leader when it comes to ventilation.

As expected, the Neotec II's overall functionality is superlative, and its fitment will please those riders who prefer intermediate oval liner shapes. Weight was unchanged from the original Neotec, at 3.8 pounds for our size L test model, though its more aerodynamic design has definitely reduced highway buffeting and wind noise levels to a bare minimum for a modular. Personally, I preferred the original Neotec's traditional D-ring chin strap vs. the Neotec II's ratcheting quick-release mechanism, but that was truly my only niggle. In short, Shoei's Neotec II continues in the original Neotec's tradition of top shelf performance in the premium modular helmet class.

Model: Neotec
Sizes: XS-XXL (size L tested)
Colors: various
Price: \$699 and up (depending on color) for helmet + \$299 for SRL
shoei-helmets.com

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