

REVIEWS

» Angel Ride Videos

MAINTENANCE BY FRED HARMON

The Gold Wing has many fasteners, panels and “tricks” to gain access. A fork service or tank replacement may only take an hour on a conventional bike, but on a Gold Wing it can take many times longer. Everything depends on experience with the fasteners, fixtures and tabs and how far into the vehicle’s core you must go. The price of figuring this out yourself is high, and that’s without breaking any brittle plastics.

In the late ‘90s, touring and sportbikes started using automotive style paneling, with a seamless “shell.” You don’t see many fasteners on the outside, everything is recessed and hidden. By the mid-2000s overcomplication was apparent. Pop rivets became popular, fasteners were placed behind panels at odd angles and ball-Allen hex wrenches have become necessary. These configurations became a nightmare for even seasoned technicians to find all the fasteners and know which direction to pull or pry. Miss a fastener or move the wrong direction, and you’ll hear an ominous crack, as an irreparable tab breaks off. Failure requires ordering a replacement panel for a couple of hundred dollars. The alternative is to add hundreds of dollars in mechanic labor for simple repairs.

Consider Fred’s instructional videos an investment. They take the worry out of Gold Wing plastic engagement and servicing. Fifteen hours of step by step procedures cover every aspect a DIYer would want to try on their own, and some more complicated procedures they may never want to try. Use discretion on your confidence level, but once the “tricks” are known, the process won’t seem as daunting. Even purchasing for a simple spark plug change would pay for itself, saving



hundreds of dollars in service fees. The series includes well-aimed video angles of tab and grommet locations and even bolt identification when sizes differ on the same panel.

Fred’s decades of experience working on jet aircraft and motorcycles is apparent in his knowledge of procedure and organization. Disassembly is the critical point where many techs get into trouble working on multilayered configurations such as the Gold Wing. Fred clearly points out every fastener and grommet along the way. If you get the parts mixed up, you can be kind and rewind.

Fred specializes in the plastic-clad Honda Gold Wing and Kawasaki Concours tourers. \$80 to \$100 streamed or DVD.

—Kevin O’Shaughnessy



Fred Harmon, angelridevideos.com

» BMW 2-IN-1 GLOVES

BMW’s 2-in-1 gloves promise to perform both wet and dry weather duties, by offering a choice of two color-coded chambers in which to insert hands. Chamber 1, the “Grip Chamber,” is unlined, perforated and generously vented, typical for a summer touring glove. Chamber 2, the “Proof Chamber,” features a Gore-Tex membrane that is completely waterproof, windproof and breathable. The rider can switch between chambers within seconds, eliminating the need to carry multiple pairs of gloves.

The styling is contemporary, but clearly functional. The superior materials and stout construction are as one would expect from gloves at this price. The exterior consists of a 0.7mm thick perforated kangaroo leather palm, surrounded by safety stitched elasticated cowhide leather. Textile panels comprise the rest of the shell.

“Superfabric” material reinforces impact areas on the heel of the palm, for additional crash protection. The knuckles are fortified with a hard-plastic mold, and 3M Scotchlite reflective piping on the palm’s outer edge adds conspicuity at night. A rubber visor wipe is thoughtfully included on the left index finger.

We verified waterproofness of the Gore-Tex membrane Proof Chamber by inserting the gloves into a bucket of ice water for over an hour. It remained bone-dry inside the membrane. This chamber also completely seals off perforations in the exterior shell, and was comfortable down to 55 F.

Fitment is snug but comfortable, and they immediately felt broken in, thanks to the vented, pre-curved fingers and soft internal materials. Glove adjustment is via large hook and loop straps, which are easy to actuate with the gloves

» Warm & Safe

CYBER HOT SEAT SEAT PAD

Warm & Safe's Cyber Hot Seat is essentially a waterproof cushion with internal heating elements that riders can strap onto their stock seats using two integrated Velcro mounting straps. The pad itself measures 9.5 inches at its widest point, toward the rear of the motorcycle, and tapers down to 8 inches toward the front of the motorcycle, with an overall length of 11.5 inches.

Installation is simple. The included wiring harness for direct-to-battery connection is the same as typically used in heated garments, with an inline 15A fuse and coaxial type connector covered by a weatherproof cap. The Cyber Hot Seat is strapped around the stock seat and plugged in.

A raised pushbutton on the front of the unit allows the rider to toggle between low, medium and high heat modes. The pushbutton is backlit in blue for low mode, white for medium mode, and red for high mode. According to Warm & Safe, when set to "high," the seat draws 18 watts and the internal elements reach 127 F.

On the road, the Cyber Hot Seat worked as advertised, warming up within two minutes, providing toasty warmth to the rider's backside. The button placement is as ergonomic as one can expect on such a device, and was easy to actuate, even with bulky winter gloves on. The heating elements are on the Hot Seat's top side and are comfortable to sit on,



though seating was tested with insulated and armored winter motorcycling pants.

The bottom of the pad has a grippy material, which prevents it from sliding around, and its overall exterior shell is made of Gelanots fabric, which is the same material as Warm & Safe heated liners. It was durable over the course of our fall and winter test regimen. An optional 7.4-volt DC battery (untested) allows portable use of the Cyber Hot Seat off the bike. \$99

—Moshe K. Levy



Warm & Safe, warmnsafe.com

on. The gauntlet opens to about 3.5 inches, which is just wide enough to fit over a typical summer jacket's cuff in wet weather. We would appreciate another inch of gauntlet opening for thicker wrists, but this is a minor quibble.

We can confirm that this product is indeed "one glove for all summer touring needs." Testing in brisk morning mountain air, the Proof Chamber sealed off wind, without the bulkiness of a heavier cold-weather glove. A few hours later, as the afternoon sun raised the ambient temperature, switching to the Grip Chamber allowed plenty of airflow and the increased tactile feel of a summer glove.

Overall, these Chinese-made gloves do a superlative job of serving the multifunctional needs of most touring riders, and they exceeded our expectations. \$199

—Moshe K. Levy



BMW, bmwmotorcycles.com

