

Riding the Whole “Day-Long”

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This is a follow-up to an article that appeared in the April 2010 issue of *Wing World* (page 40) called “Aftermarket Seats and Other Riding Comforts: How Finding the Right Aftermarket Seat was Priceless to Us!” You may or may not recall that, at the time, I had placed an order for a Russell Cycle Products’ Dual “Day-Long™” saddle and was awaiting its arrival.

Well, it arrived, and I am now here to give you a product report on this seating option. But first, let’s review a few reasons one might want to consider the comfort level of his or her motorcycle seating to begin with.

Why Consider Your Seating Comfort?

When was the last time you sat on a motorcycle seat and thought “I could ride on this seat all day long?” When you sit on your current seat, do you think it too hard, too soft, or just uncomfortable? If so, maybe you need a different seat.

For example if after riding for awhile you find there are sore spots where you and your seat meet, there are a few things to consider. First: Could they be caused by what you wear while you ride? When the sore spot appears, reach down to where it hurts and see if there is a seam in your clothing there.

Bicycle riders know the value of a good pair of “bike shorts”. Variations of these are available for use on motorcycles, and their thin seams do provide an advantage to long-distance motorcycling comfort. In fact, clothing can make or break riding comfort.

Next, you need to look at your riding position. Having multiple places to put your feet on a long ride is important for comfort as well as for breaking up the monotony.

As for how firm the saddle is, while there are extremes, the real issue is support. When seated for prolonged periods of time, your body *needs* to be properly supported. Back support, lumbar support, a seat that positions you for the proper leg positions while supporting the weight of most of your body—all of these things need to be looked at.

Consider the angle of the legs in these two photos (most noticeable is the position of the knee). You can see that the leg in the left-hand photo is almost 90 degrees while the photo on the right shows the leg at slightly less of an angle. (By the way, this clothing was worn to more clearly demonstrate the change

in the angle of the legs after raising the seat; obviously it is not my normal riding attire).

These photos demonstrate the difference resulting from raising the seat height 1 1/2 inches. I accomplished this by cutting a block of 2-inch-thick foam to place on top of the stock seat, allowing for 1/2 inches of compression of the softer stock seat.

Besides giving me a better view of the road and a better angle at the knee, it also reduced the amount of my body weight where the leg rests on the edge of the seat.

All of these considerations, and much more, were discussed with Russell Cycle Products prior to my placing an order for a new seat.



Did Russell Cycle Products Deliver?

I was waiting by the curb as UPS delivered our "Day-Long" seat. The contents were carefully unpacked and spread out on the floor; everything was there and exactly as ordered. There were two pair of custom-made passenger armrests. I had asked them to make stainless steel bases with 3/4 inches of rigid foam added on top. Since they were unique, my curiosity was piqued as to how the vinyl would be stitched. Nothing had been specified by Russell Cycle Products.

What I found was that, although from the top they all looked the same, on the bottoms were four threaded holes in a diamond pattern near one end. When unwrapped, the first two had the seam on the right, or inside, surface of the rest. The other pair was stitched on the opposite side.

From my previous dealings with Russell (I had owned another of their seats years earlier), it would have surprised me had they not been made in this "mirror image".

Also, since they were unable to staple the vinyl on the bottom, they had to rivet. I was already aware of the need to do this, but what wasn't expected was the black velour fabric affixed to the bottom. It provided a very nice finish that covered the rivets. And this attention to detail is how it was with everything I had ordered.

Close inspection of the seat showed that all of its workmanship was flawless. There was not a single visible missing stitch or loose thread.

First Test Run

With everything installed, we were pleased at how the whole package made our bike look better.



Soon, after having had enough riding time to fully break in the saddle, my wife Lyn and I were looking forward to our trip to Americade in Lake George, New York as the real test of the seat.

Now, if one thing is guaranteed to ruin the comfort of any motorcycle seat, it's rain. Put the rain cover on the seat, add rain suits, and you can forget about a reliable test. (More than likely, you'll end up sliding around on the seat and probably tensing up your muscles due to concern for the wet road traction.) So it is understandable that—due to rain on our trip—parts of our 200-mile journey there (plus a long day on the scavenger hunt) were neither fun nor comfortable.

As for testing the seat on our ride home, well, that was going well until the throttle cable broke mid-trip. From there, our thoughts were instead focused on just getting home safely. However, it did give us the opportunity to test out the rain cover for the seat and drivers backrest, another for the trunk rest, and one for each of the armrests.

I'm pleased to report that all of these were well-made and fit with extra material so that they did not stretch when weight was applied. Unlike other rain covers I've had with straps that tore off the first time I tried to use them, this seat cover was elasticized all the way around, including the passenger lumbar support. It fit under the edges of the seat and covered everything. (A quick note here is that, for its use, you need to open the trunk and wrap the seat and trunk rest covers all the way around to ensure protection. You can avoid having the trunk open if you are in the rain but, unless you have a passenger on the bike, the wind may try to pull them off.) The covers even came packed in a matching storage pouch that was in a Ziploc bag for protection in transit.

Second Test Run and Conclusion

Until leaving for Wing Ding 32 this summer, the most important part of testing the seat had eluded me. But then, the GWRRR convention gave me the perfect opportunity—from my home in Bethel, Connecticut to Des Moines, Iowa and back—to really test the comfort of the seat.

I'm happy to say that, as I write this article, it has now been 24 hours since Wing Ding 32 ended, and I am pleased with the results.

After Wing Ding, Bob and Chris Wilson and I hit the road for Solon, Iowa, about 120 miles from Des Moines, as soon as we could. That morning, Bob and I did the 400 miles to Marion, Indiana.

In all, in the last 12 days I've ridden 2,200-plus miles on the seat, including three 400-mile days. I'm excited with the improvement this seat provides when compared to prior seats on this Wing. Though there have been moments of discomfort, I have to attribute most of those to the clothing I was wearing (just before going to press, I quantified this statement by doing 400 miles in 6.5 hours wearing pants with no seams, and there were no sore spots) and staying on the bike for longer periods of time than one should without taking breaks to stretch one's legs and maintain alertness.

With my previous two seats, there had been days when I would notice sore spots during even my 15-minute ride home from work. But now I can sit on the Wing for over two hours and, after a quick 10-minute break, get right back on and ride in comfort for another hour or more.

The final result is that Lyn and I are both pleased with the new seat. Russell Cycle Products has again met, or exceeded, our every expectation.

For further information about the Day-Long seat, contact Russell Cycle Products at www.Day-Long.com. ●