



*My car hit your bike. But I wasn't hurt, which I'm sure matters most to you.*

## Next Month

- ▶ Triumph's new Sprint GT evaluated
- ▶ Aprilia's 2011 Shiver evaluated
- ▶ Milan Show Shockers
- ▶ Engine Building 101 - Part 1

# Motorcycle

## CONSUMER NEWS

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PERIODICALS MAIL

## The Chain Drain and The Grunge Brush

**M**OST FANS OF chain-driven motorcycles have often heard the jibes from their shaft- and belt-driven compatriots: "Chains wear out faster than a shaft or a belt," or "Chains require regular cleaning and lubrication, and it's a messy job." Of course, you could retort, "Yeah? Well, Lorenzo and Rossi ride motorcycles with chains!"

But in truth, the other guys have a point: Despite their advantage of reduced parasitic drag and the ability to withstand the strain of monumental torque and horsepower from today's high-performance twins, triples and fours, chains usually do wear out more quickly than belts. They also require frequent cleaning and lubrication, and neglecting them can have catastrophic consequences. Dirty or dry chains create excessive heat and friction, causing premature wear to both the chain and sprockets, which are expensive to replace. Neglected chains can stretch and fatigue, and when the weakest link says "goodbye," a chain can do awful things, such as punch a huge hole in your engine cases when it breaks. If that happens, your bank account will feel your pain.

Most of the high-performance models we evaluate still use chains. We're also sticklers for maintenance, but that doesn't mean that we get some sort of sick enjoyment out of the grimy task of chain maintenance. Fortunately, two companies, Applied Ingenuity and Simple Solutions, offer innovative products to make chain maintenance quick, clean and simple.

Applied Ingenuity's Chain Drain is an amazingly simple product that prevents your favorite chain degreaser and lube from coating the rest of your motorcycle,

your garage floor or your wife's antique sewing machine—also an unexpected pain-inducing side effect of proper chain maintenance, making its \$39.95 MSRP seem a bargain.

The Chain Drain consists of a molded plastic tank with a threaded cap on one end and an articulated support tube that threads into a drain channel featuring a shallow bottom with a tall back-splash to catch the splatter from your degreaser or lube can. An easily attachable wire stabilizer supports the tank to prevent it from tipping. Set-up is easy: Just place the Chain Drain so that the drain channel is located squarely under the chain with the back-splash between the chain and the tire and squirt away. Unless you have an extremely nervous disposition, the drain channel will catch all of the goop and lube during maintenance, and any excess liquid simply drains down the support tube and collects in the tank for easy disposal later.

The Chain Drain is safe for use with most motorcycle degreasers and lubricants that are safe for O-ring chains, but it should never be used with chlorinated or harsh solvents such as trichloroethylene or acetone. It is also not intended to store flammable solvents.

### INNOVATIONS OF THE MONTH



Although a small cleaning brush is supplied with the Chain Drain, we used Simple Solutions' The Grunge Brush when cleaning the chain on our test bike. Retailing for \$12.95, the Grunge Brush has been around for years, but it's still one of our favorites. Its sturdy plastic frame (an aluminum version is also available) features an angled head with stiff nylon bristles on three sides, making it easy to attack all four sides of the chain simply by adjusting your attack. The bristles are adjustable to fit anything from a bicycle chain to 630 O-ring motorcycle chain. The long-bristle head on the other end of the handle is also great for cleaning between sprocket teeth and other hard-to-reach areas.

Cleaning and lubing your chain and sprockets is necessary if you want them to last. The Chain Drain and The Grunge Brush help keep the job from being a necessary evil.

—Scott Rousseau

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