

# Battle of the Butt Bumpers

by Gary Prickett

## Freedom Air vs. AllynAir Eagle Air Inflatable Seat Cushions

IN THE JULY 2008 issue of MCN, we reviewed and compared two inflatable seat cushions, both of which made a highly uncomfortable stock motorcycle seat suitable for human habitation. The winner of the comparison was the Freedom Air sport-touring inflatable seat cushion over the popular AirHawk.

But it wasn't long after this review was published that we heard from the AllynAir Company, who brought to our attention their "original" Eagle Air inflatable air cushion, which they claimed to be "the best-priced air cushion on the market." Around the same time, we were also offered two other inflatable seat cushions in the Freedom Air product line, the Standard Cruiser and XL Cruiser Cushions. The arrival of a Victory Hammer to our pool of test bikes provided the perfect opportunity to once more engage in some seat-of-the-pants product testing.

### Freedom Air Standard Cruiser & XL Cruiser Cushions

Freedom Air's cushions consist of elaborately configured bladders containing 33 separate air chambers in seven different sizes and shapes contained in a zippered cover that features an anti-slip bottom surface to resist sliding on vinyl or leather motorcycle seats. The cover is provided with small fabric loops to facilitate the use of straps or bungee cords for attachment to convenient points on the chassis of the bike. The arrangement of air chambers is designed to provide optimal support to the various portions of the rider's or passenger's posterior. The separate chambers are also tall enough to provide for air circulation between them—another important comfort feature.

The Freedom Air cushions incorporate two air filler tubes, one for each side of the seat. This design is intended to negate any tendency for side-to-side air movement which might be present in an inflatable seat cushion with only one main chamber. The amount of air can be varied, but we found the optimal volume to be the minimal amount to support the rider's weight. More air just gave the sensation that we were perched on top of a beach ball, rolling around on the cushion as we rode. Just enough air to slightly

round off the tops of the individual air chambers was enough. When the center chambers are compressed by the weight of the rider's or passenger's posterior, air is directed to the larger chambers at the rear of the cushion to provide support to the occupant's hips. A wedge-shaped cut-out at the front of the cushion prevents any uncomfortable bulging that might interfere with a male's frontal anatomy—a welcome innovation not present on the AirHawk cushion.

The only difference between the Freedom Air Standard Cruiser and the Freedom Air Cruiser XL model cushions is size, with the former measuring 14" x 13.5" and the latter coming in at 15.5" x 16".

### AllynAir Eagle Air

The Eagle Air is a much thinner, single-chamber inflatable cushion sectioned into 34 interconnecting compartments. The material used is thick flexible plastic that appears to be rugged enough for durability. The four corners of the one-size-fits-all semi-rectangular cushion contain eyelets to accommodate its shock-cord attachment system. Because all the air compartments are interconnected, the weight of the user's body tends to flatten the cushions beneath the thighs and buttocks, moving this volume of air to the leading edge of the cushion where it exerts unwanted pressure against the front of the rider's pelvis. Even when fully inflated through its single filling port, the depth of the air cushioning beneath the rider is barely noticeable.


### Bottom Line

Comparing the Freedom Air products to the Eagle Air inflatable seat from the AllynAir Company is virtually no contest. Although the Eagle Air can tout its simplicity of design and low price as desirable product features, when comparing the riding comfort offered by these products, the Freedom Air Cruiser Standard and the Cruiser XL come out way ahead, justifying their nearly 300% higher MSRP. 🚫

**Freedom Air Cruiser Std. & XL \$178**

**Adaptability:** ●●●●○ **Comfort Improvement:** ●●●●●  
**Ease of Use:** ●●●●○ **Value:** ●●●●○ **Overall:** ●●●●○  
**Comment:** Our 5'7", 163-lb. tester felt as though he was perched on top of the Standard Cruiser cushion, while the feeling of security offered by the more enveloping pocket of the larger Cruiser XL cushion (shown) made a world of difference in overall comfort. Although either size Cruiser cushion will make an uncomfortable cruiser seat more bearable, cushioning the bumps encountered by the typically short-travel rear suspension of cruisers, given that the cost of each size is the same at \$178, we see no reason why riders or passengers of any size or shape would not opt for the larger size XL cushion.

**Freedom Air Products—5 Commerce Dr.; Freeburg, IL 62243; (888) 277-7827 or (618) 539-7070; www.longeride.com**



**AllynAir Eagle Air \$59**

**Adaptability:** ●●●○ **Comfort Improvement:** ●○○○○  
**Ease of Use:** ●●●○ **Value:** ●●○○○ **Overall:** ●○○○○  
**Comment:** The Eagle Air provided no discernible improvement in comfort on our Hammer test bike, but the discomfort that comes from sitting on a non-porous plastic surface on a hot day was very noticeable. The inflation volume of the individual compartments was insufficient to provide for air circulation between these compartments, and the cushion's unfortunate tendency to press on vulnerable male anatomy at the front didn't help. Although there is little doubt that the Eagle Air can defend its claim of being "The best priced air cushion on the market," for the money we'd prefer a sheep skin seat cover.

**Allyn Air Cycle Products—30 Millstream Rd.; Woodstock, NY 12498; 845-679-2051; www.woodstock-ny.com/allynair/**

