

Protect All

One of my many functions at *Rider* is detailing the motorcycles prior to a photo shoot. I usually put this off until the last minute so the bikes are still fresh for the pictures. Good plan, until it backfired on me before the cruiser shoot-out for the August issue. I got the FXRS-Sp and the Vulcan 88 clean with soap and water, then polished them off with carnuba wax.

However, when it came time for the Intruder's beauty treatment, a dribble was all I could squeeze from the hose. Oh, no....It seems that the construction crew down the street forgot a few details, resulting in a new lake for them and no water pressure in the building for us. Although there was no mud or tar to remove, the Intruder was far too dusty to shoot as it stood, and there were streaks on the tank at the fill cap, beside.

Rather than try to clean the bike with Perrier, I decide to try a can of Protect All. I had gotten a case of this spray polish in the mail several weeks before, and had just put it on the shelf with all the other polishes and chemicals we receive regularly. But with a deadline fast approaching, I had to give it a try. It would at least take care of the dust, and maybe camera angle could hide the streaks.

The label on the can says Protect All cleans and polishes, and further claims the product will treat vinyl, plastic, rubber, paint and chrome. In short, all the external parts of a motorcycle are fair game to this aerosol spray. First I put a little on a cotton cloth and rubbed it on the fender. A lustrous gleam greeted me. Heartened by this, I proceeded to try sample patches on the chrome and seat, again with excellent results. A test on some fuel line yielded an Armor All-like appearance. Then I applied a little to some textured plastic. Now I was really impressed. No product that I'd used in the past made textured plastic look so new. In fact, when plastic is new, it doesn't look this new.

Finally, I sprayed the bike down liberally with Protect All. The lemon-scented spray stuck to where it was applied without running. I used one cloth to wipe the bike and another to pick up any excess, as per instruction. After a few minutes, the Intruder was the cleanest motorcycle in our lot. The finish had that slippery paste wax feel to it, and it hurt my eyes to look at the chrome in the sun. I shook a few drops from the hose onto the bike, and the water beaded up and ran off, like it would after mucho elbow grease with carnuba. Even the fuel streaks were gone. And this was after spending a mere third of the time that either of the other two cruisers has cost me!

Hmm. Those other two bikes looked kind of dull now compared to the Protect-All'ed Intruder. Twenty minutes later, all three bikes were shining brilliantly, and on their way to the location up Pacific Coast Highway.

When it came time to shoot details on the bikes, another advantage of Protect All came to light. Cruisers have chrome. Lots of chrome. And chrome sometimes reflects things you don't want in the photograph. The photographer, for example. Since Protect All stays where it's sprayed, it acts as an excellent dulling agent. No more will you see the reverse image of a rusting Rambler on the air cleaner. A quick wipe and the shine returns.

After a complete cleaning of one bike, the detailing of two more, and spot cleaning for an afternoon of photography, I still had most of a can of Protect All left. This stuff lasts! As for convenience, one can of Protect All in my saddlebag took the place of several cleaners, polishes and waxes. Durable? I used it on our Honda Magna. 1,000 miles later, I had a layer of mud and insects to remove. All that was required was a quick rinsing and a dry wiping, and the Magna was as good as the day I cleaned it.