

Champions Choice
PROTECT ALL

We tend to get suspicious when a new product comes to market with a huge amount of hype and wild claims about how wonderful it is. Usually the stuff that yells the most about how magnificent it is, offers the least substance or value to the buyer.

So when Adam Huber spent a half-hour on the phone telling us how amazing his Protect All spray cleaner was, we didn't get very excited about it. He said he'd send a box of the stuff. We said okay. He said we were going to be favorably impressed, just like everyone else who had used the stuff. We said sure, fine. He said the only thing he'd appreciate us not doing was comparing his product with Lemon Pledge. That comparison, he said, was invalid; he went on to ask us not to associate his wonderful product with furniture polish.

That's why the first thing we did when we received the test samples of Protect All was run a series of direct comparisons with Pledge. What the heck. A challenge is a challenge, right?

Protect All is a petroleum-based cleaner/waxer in a spray can. According to Huber, and the label on the can, it cleans dirt and oil, treats vinyl and rubber, waxes paint, and polishes chrome. The only thing it doesn't claim to do is peel potatoes or cure athlete's feet.

So we dug out a couple of dirty bikes and a filthy car hood and went to work to see how good this "miracle goop" really was.

It's quite good, as a matter of fact.

The results of our Protect All/ Pledge shoot-out were interesting. We tried both products side by side on painted metal, ABS plastic, fiberglass, chrome, rubber, vinyl, and polycarbonate face shields. Both products spray out of the can as a milky white mist; both look similar in application; both yield fairly identical immediate results; and both smell the same—though the Lemon Pledge smells detectably more lemony than the Protect All. Beyond that Huber is right: there really is no comparison.

On painted metal the Protect All gives a richer, deeper gloss than Pledge, implying a higher wax content. Both agents cause water beading initially, but two days later the Pledge treated area had virtually no remaining beading effect; the Protect All treated area was still beading noticeably when sprayed with a fine spray or hit with a full shot from the garden hose.

On chrome the Protect All buffs down to a slick, almost slippery, feeling. The Pledge will buff down, but the cloth tends to "stick" slightly as you rub the Pledge-treated surface. On all types of plastic the Protect All cleans very thoroughly and polishes out to a nice luster. The Pledge shine things up but leave a faint film that has the colored petroleum highlights that you see on an oil slick when the light is just right. This residue also tends to attract dust quickly. The Protect All is visibly more static-free. Just for kicks we threw handfuls of cat sand on the two surfaces. The Pledge side wiped clean, but left tiny abrasion marks behind that dulled the shine a bit. Most of the dust slid right off the Protect All side; the amount that stuck wiped clean, returning the painted surface to its original luster.

The final blow to the Pledge came when we called the Johnson Wax people. They told us that they categorically would not recommend Lemon Pledge for any external, outdoor surfaces. It is furniture polish, they said. It works wonderfully on wood furniture, but they would

not be responsible for any long-term effects it would have in a car or motorcycle application. So much for Pledge.

How does Protect All stack up against the more traditional motorcycle cleaners, waxers, et al? As an all-purpose motorcycle goop it turns out to be most useful. It is not as good on rubber or vinyl as Armor All. It doesn't clean quite as thoroughly as Gunk followed by a soap and water bath. A good paste wax can beat it on paint or fiberglass; a plastic polish does better job on faceshields and windshields; and a chrome polish is a better substance for producing brilliant chrome.

What Protect All does best is perform reasonably well on all of the above! It also does it quickly, with a minimum amount of effort expended. It is the lazy person's answer to motorcycle beautification.

There are two drawbacks to the product. First, you can't always find it at your local dealer. Second, when you do find it, you will probably faint at the price tag. A 13.5-ounce can of Protect All goes for \$8 off the shelf. Add another \$2 if you have to mail order it because your dealer doesn't have any. That's pretty steep. On the other hand, if you had to buy wax, polish, and cleaner separately, it would cost quite a bit more than \$8, so the time and labor you save in buying a single can might be worth it.

It's certainly worth it to a lot of people. At Americade—Lake George this year, there were an estimated 25,000 to 30,000 bikers in town. We swear that at least half that number were walking around with a blue can in their hands. Adam Huber had a booth at the Lake George TourExpo. He said folks were lining up to buy the stuff. He said it was selling itself. He said customer word of mouth was all he needed. He said all a person had to do was stand by his booth and pretty soon someone would come up and start talking about how great Protect All was.

We didn't argue with him this time. Sometimes the hype turns out to be deserved praise.

Try your dealer first. If he doesn't have the stuff, you can order it direct from Champions Choice, Inc., 1910 E. Via Burton Street, Dept RR, Anaheim CA 92806. Call toll-free(outside of California) 1-(800) 322-4491; California motorcyclists call (714) 635-4491.