

# air Deflectors

## A Subjective Comparison of "Wind Wings" for the Honda GL1500

by Fred Rau

**W**E NEED to begin this particular article with a disclaimer, in order that it not be confused with most other product comparison articles published in MCN.

Most of our product comparisons are done as scientifically as possible, with each item tested under identical conditions to the others. Though this article began with that same premise, it soon became obvious that we simply couldn't control the variable factors sufficiently, nor conduct the volume of tests required to meet our own criteria for a completely fair and impartial test. Even though we tested only the top four brands of air deflectors, we identified over 15 different models of motorcycles they could be used on, and among those 15 were dozens of variations in control factors, by model year, that could skew the results. Even when we attempted to reduce all factors to the lowest common denominator, we discovered that to achieve a truly scientific result would require over 240 individual test sequences, all conducted in a wind tunnel—and we couldn't even find a wind tunnel large enough to accommodate a touring bike with two riders.

Without going into mounds of detail, suffice it to say that though every attempt was made in this article to keep the results as honest and fair as possible, this is not a scientific test, and most of the results are based on an average of testers' opinions, rather than on certifiable, scientific facts.



Part of our testing procedure involved installing a different type of air deflector on each side of the same motorcycle, as shown here. In this manner, if the rider and passenger noticed their left legs getting colder than their right, in cold weather, or vice-versa in hot weather, they had a pretty good idea which model was doing its job better.

**A**IR DEFLECTION DEVICES for motorcycles, also commonly known as air wings or wind wings, have been mass marketed almost since the introduction of the full fairing—or about 20 years. Today there are at least 10 companies making and selling air deflectors in about 30 different variations. There are air wings made for the sides of fairings (the most common), upper and lower fairing sections, the sides of windshields, the tops of windshields, under the feet, in front of the feet, on crash bars and even at the bottom center of a windshield. In our research we identified 19 different models of motorcycles for which air deflectors are made,

and over 200 different air deflection products built for them.

Obviously, it would take years of testing and hundreds of pages of copy to evaluate all of these products on all of the different bikes. But a check with the manufacturers of such devices, together with a couple of our own "Owners Surveys" conducted in MCN, showed that of all the air deflection devices purchased, those produced for the sides of fairings outsold all the others by over 10 to 1, and among those, units purchased for use on Honda Gold Wings equalled more than all the others put together. For those reasons, this article concerns itself only with standard fairing deflectors produced for the Honda GL1500.

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