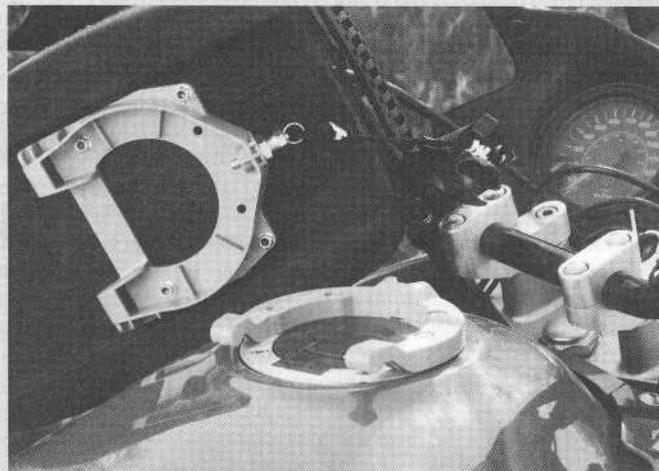


SW-Motech Quick-Lock Tankbag

TOP BAGS HAVE been more of a necessary evil than something we've really liked. Mounting straps are a hassle. It's difficult to find the optimum spot, and when you do, you worry you'll ruin the paint. Magnet-mounted bags have their own set of problems. At Americade this year, Erik Stephens of Twisted Throttle (www.twistedthrottle.com) showed us a brand new, creatively-designed top-mounted bag from German company SW-Motech for sport and sport-touring bikes. We love it.

The first thing to love about this bag is the innovative mounting approach. The mounting bracket is a tough fiberglass/stainless steel horseshoe that you attach to the collar of your gas cap. Depending on the model of bike (not all bike models are currently supported), you'll replace 4-6 screws that surround your tank's gas cap with longer ones that accommodate the horseshoe. It sits unobtrusively on your bike when no bag is there. You then mount the matching horseshoe bracket on the back side of the tank bag with four bolts. It may seem inconvenient that the bracket does not come pre-attached but this DIY step allows you to customize the location of the bag on the tank. Once installed, attaching and removing the light nylon tank bag is literally a snap. You set the bag on top, push it down into the quick-lock socket and it's secure. Pull a ring in front and *voilà*, it comes right off.

Next to love is the size and shape of this bag. Made of a heavy-duty nylon material, its molded teardrop shape is 11" long by 8"



INNOVATION OF THE MONTH



wide by 5.5" tall. With a 5 liter capacity, we found it perfect for daily travel necessities such as a cell phone, glasses, ball cap, water bottle, sunscreen and gloves. A second zipper along the bottom allows it to expand to nearly 8 liters. It features a clear map packet on top, an inside Velcro pocket for things like bike registration and insurance documents. It even has a carrying handle and a heavy-duty rain cover for when you encounter a real downpour.

The price is \$99.95 for the tank bag and top-mounting bracket. The bike-specific bottom adapter ring is sold separately for \$25. This set up will not work on bikes with off-center or dual off-center gas caps or on bikes without screw holes in the gas cap trim. Also, if you've installed barbacks, they could interfere with the SW-Motech (or any tankbag). And although not a problem with our Suzuki V-Strom, on some bikes there may be added risk in attaching anything that could pry open your gas tank in an accident. Finally, MCN's visit with Dr. Harry Hurt made us aware that any obstruction on top of the gastank could potentially make contact with a very vulnerable portion of the anatomy in a frontal crash. And although such frontal crashes are rare, they can happen.

—Steve Larsen

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