

CBX *Rider Product Tests*

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GOAL: CBXers tell us what works and does not work in the wide world of jackets, riding suits, boots, helmets, gloves or any other CBX rider items.

SUBMISSIONS due for next Express 4/15/2003. Current article format/content, but be creative. 250-500 word count in MS Word or Email format preferred. Jpeg pictures please. Regular mail/photos acceptable.



Vanson “Avenger/Falcon” Vented Cordura

ESTIMATED STREET PRICE: \$250

What I was looking for in a jacket

1. would have 75% of abrasion resistance of a good leather jacket
2. weight would be 50% of a good leather jacket
3. could be purchased 50% of the cost of a good leather jacket
4. was comfortable in the heat of summer
5. worked in cool evenings or spring/fall without complex layering or a vest
6. fit and looked goooooood

Competing Products

After checking a material abrasion test in a older motorcycle magazine, I reconfirmed that 1000 denier Cordura did indeed offer 75% of the protection of leather at half the weight and price. There are a some newer synthetic fabrics available now that offer higher abrasion ratings than Cordura, but at a much greater prices.

Comfort in the heat and humidity of summer was critical, so some form of venting entered into the selection criteria, but I still wanted to be able adjust or close the vents to stop cold airflow penetration when the temperatures dropped at night.

I did not want a waterproof jacket and the winter jacket look that seems to come with these “do it all” jackets rather favoring a porous outer shell that would pass air in the heat and wear a rain suit as needed; novel approach.

Onward to the all new world of
Motorcycle Jacket Feature Weirdness.

How about a fully
perfed jacket with a
sleeveless vest that
would not keep the
arms warm as
temperatures drop.



oran all mesh jacket with very low abrasion resistance that works great when the temperature is above 70 degrees in sunlight, yet needs a liner to function at lower temperatures.

or a jacket made out of “ballistics” nylon one would think has great abrasion resistance, but doesn’t.

Every ridiculous combination seems to be out there today, but let's stick to our plan for a lightweight, cool, jacket that offers 75% of the protection of leather at half the weight and price.

After reading many the magazine tests, and talking to members related to their jackets I kept coming back to the old school Vanson Avenger/Falcon Variable Vent Cordura Jacket that has been on the market for 15 years or so. All things being equal, Vanson has always been a big supporter of ICOA's Marlinton Rally and members that won other Vanson jacket models in the drawings the last five years have to the person loved them. Given all this what could go wrong? Well, as it turned out, plenty.

First Impressions

Stiffffffffffffffffffffffffffffff was the impression when I put the jacket on the first time and the thick dense closed cell armor added to the “trapped” unyielding

feeling. I could hardly bend my arms.
Not the best start.

This jacket was no lightweight tipping the scales at 5-6 pounds, but this weight approaches the goal of being 50% the weight of a good racing weight leather jacket.

On the plus side the nice adjustable waist band gave my way tooo fttttt butt a good fit after playing with the adjustments a bit and vented cuffs. Another plus was the variable vent system that could be fully open, in between or fully closed by adjusting the two zippers on each chest panel.

Riding Impressions

Initial riding impressions with the jacket were not favorable. Basic arm movements were nearly impossible with the back, arm and elbow padding in place and as I soon found out these closed cell pads became super insulators during on hot days. So the net result was hot spots from the pads and not being able to move without being distracted and thinking just how uncomfortable I was in this jacket. Could it get worse?

I removed the back pad and this improved the fit, comfort and temperature matters substantially, yet now I had no back protection. After time, the jacket did loosen up and have a nice comfy feel so beware a break-in period is necessary.

The vents worked well and as advertised once the zippers on the back of the

jacket were opened, but one should not get a tight fit when buying these jackets since this will inhibit airflow. As stated, the back pad also interfered with airflow so we seem to have a jacket that seems to excel in having some features totally defeat the functionality of others.

The fit was too short at the bottom and this is a common complaint on many Vanson Jacket models.

On the early model CBX the vent system worked great and generated massive airflow around the body at even modest speeds. When it got cooler simply zipping the two zippers on each chest panel up closed off the air and worked in evenings and fall/spring down to temperatures in the mid 50s. On the CBX Late Model I found the windscreen deflects about half the air above the vents and this made for uncomfortable riding over 90 degrees or so. On bikes with full fairings like a Gold Wing, the vents will not function because no airflow reaches the rider chest area.



There are many color options and even custom sizing available from Vanson. I selected black, but in retrospect I wish I had opted for a color that did not contribute to the heat issues all riders face in the summer.

Yeas

1000 denier Cordura = good abrasion resistance
Lighter and costs less than a good leather jacket
Other Nice Design Features: Adjustable waist and vented arms

Made in the USA
Good looks
Members that won other Vanson jacket models in the drawings the last five years have, to the person, loved them

Nays

Uncomfortable until broken in
Pads contribute to uncomfortable impressions
Pads cut airflow in the heat of summer and act as giant insulators
Vent zippers cannot be adjusted while riding
Did I tell you this jacket is uncomfortable until broken in?

Summary

Fix the pads, use softer Cordura and this is a sure winner from the get go. As is.....don't think so.

Vanson www page

<http://www.vansonleathers.com/>

**CBX Rider Product Team Rating:
4 Cylinders**

GET THE CIA INVOLVED

Please (begging here) send an email or letter to the area/team involved on problems or questions as listed on the ICOA Directors & Team pages

Give them the courtesy/chance of helping you with your problem.

For example if you have a membership problem

send an email to: icoamemberprocessing@swva.net

or regular mail to:

ICOA Membership Center

295 Industrial Drive, Christiansburg, VA 24073

Do not send an email related to Memberships to the Products Team, WWW Director, Controller, Advertising Director, New York Times or the CIA . . . just an example now

TRUE OR FALSE

The very first
six cylinder
street bike Honda
made was
not the CBX,
but a Goldwing.

Answer next Xpress.