



By Roger Wiles

## Crocs and Electrical Connections

**T**ime for a few last rides, if you are among those in the northern climes. Maybe a Thanksgiving rideabout – stay warm and dry, and if you find out a better way to keep comfortable, be sure and share with us!

**I** have found those rubbery colorful Crocs (and the less-expensive knock-offs) to be very handy footwear when motorcycle camping. They are loose fitting, light of weight, and airy, just the thing after a hot day with feet in motorcycle boots. For me, they double as shower shoes as well. They squeeze practically flat for packing in a tight spot. (Andy Miles, #6840, SC)

**S**urely one of my most valuable assets, nearly everywhere I've been, all across Canada and the USA, is my personality! If you can meet people anywhere, anytime and open any kind of discussion with them, it most often pays dividends, even if only to get an education about nearby areas. I surely consider this a huge "Touring Tip;" it is clearly not something you can hold in your hands, or a tool you can manage any ole' way, but being friendly and open sure has benefits for one far from home. So many folks are so curious, anyhow, about where you're

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from, and have even offered their homes as shelter from storms that looked so ominous ahead. Folks want to help, and are interested in our bikes and our travels. It lightens their day, and mine, too. Just when you thought you had it all, and were self-sufficient, a stranger can be a golden asset, if for nothing else, a smile and great conversation! Happy Trails... (Randy Owens #13233, CA)

**H**ere's my tip: To maintain good traction between my gloved right hand and the throttle grip, I "installed" about ten pieces of appropriate-sized O-rings, carefully spaced along the length of the grip handle. This gives me a surer grip, as well as reduces hand and wrist fatigue from having to squeeze

harder to reduce slip - especially after a rain. (Roberto Ansaldo, #68306, Manila, Philippines)

**I** guess I will list a few things that have helped me: In the tool kit I always have tie-wraps - just a few assorted sizes - which have saved me in times of trouble. I had an external fuel filter break and was able to tie off the hose by pinching it, and tying it off. Being on my R100GS, I just closed that petcock and opened the other line. I also like to carry office binder-clips to hold and pinch maps on top or inside my tank bag along with a variety of other uses.

**I** like to include in my goodie-bag a pretty inexpensive rear red flashing battery-operated light. They cost about \$10. These lights, available from bicycle shops, are very, very bright - they get you noticed! Great peace of mind in case you get caught in a real fog storm or perhaps stranded on a back road late at night! It saves your bikes battery! (Al Kontis, #73081, CT)

**S**ince the cold will be on us soon now might be a good time to check out your electric riding gear, and your motorcycle's charging and electri-

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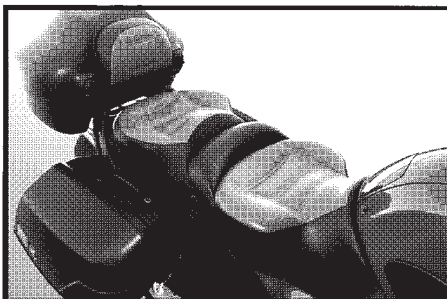
cal system. Adding an electrical load of 100 watts or more – heated vest, heated grips, maybe a heated seat – suddenly to the charging system can bring out the ‘gremlins electron’ to do their nasty work. Consider checking your battery’s state-of-charge, the charging system output voltage, as well as the connections from the bike to the heated gear. Next, go over the heated gear itself, looking for hot spots (discoloration and/or charring) inside the garment, and pay particular attention to the connection cord, any switches or thermostats, the plugs and any on/off indicator lights. The wires inside the Euro (i.e. BMW-style) male plugs can

often break off at the connection, even if they were properly tinned before installation; vibration is the culprit. Applying dielectric grease to all of the connections, and plug-in socket is a good idea. Since some of us occasionally wander away from the bike while still plugged in, look for stretched wires and other signs of strain that can fail down the road. Better you find out this stuff inside your warm and dry workshop...

It might be a good time to waterproof your riding gear, too. (RW, TT Ed) ●

“Touring Tips” is a monthly column in the ‘Owners News’ which allows each of us to

learn something new from the collective wisdom of the BMW moto-touring family. Contributions are welcome from all BMW MOA Members. Maybe you’ve learned how to conquer ‘Butt-Burn,’ or solve a roadside problem quickly and easily. “Touring Tips” can include technical information related to “Kluge Repairs” and quick fixes – however, we don’t deal with technical stuff inside the engine or drive-train. Send your Touring Tips to the TT Editor, Roger Wiles (32797) at: [roger@rogerwiles.com](mailto:roger@rogerwiles.com) or 9223 Hill Street, Blairsville, GA 30512. If your submission is published, the ON Editorial Offices will send you a nice ‘thank you’ gift.



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