



Greased lightning

When we received our sample of Nitrolube, we immediately tried it on every application in the shop. We used it in open style rear wheel bearings, steering head bearings and suspension linkage collars and bearings.

It has a bright red colour and a feel of quality when you dig into it. Its only annoying feature is also its best quality – it has a Four Cheese Pizza kind of stringy consistency that will catch you out when you grab some with your finger or applicator and turn to apply the grease to your part. You will look down to find a bright red string of it across your bench or maybe even your shirt.

This consistency is great once applied, as it will not easily wash off the part you were lubricating or trying to protect. Due to this consistency, a little extra care is needed in its use, but this is rewarded by exceptional protection.

This grease would be perfect in applications where water contamination is expected and lubrication is still important, like on most motocross bikes where the swingarm pivot bolt passes through the engine as well as the frame. This bolt not only needs good lubrication, but it sees thermal cycling as the engine heats it up. Then the rider splashes it with water, either during riding or more commonly with God's gift to the chain suppliers, the pressure washer.

The grease also performed great in the tough steering head bearing application, where tapered bearings and various torquing strategies really show up a bearing's ability to reduce friction under load. I have tested maybe 10 different greases in this application, and Nitrolube matched our best.

So if you want to use one grease in the garage for all your applications, Nitrolube is it.

For more information, including where to purchase Nitrolube products, go to www.nitrolube.com.

Reviewed by John Sharrard

Impressive addition

Did you know that Arai doesn't build custom helmets for its sponsored racers? No sir, you can walk into a dealership, plunk down your cash and leave with the very same lid as Hiroshi Aoyama. Why is this, you may ask... don't they care about their racers? Don't racers need safer helmets than street riders?

Well, Arai's answer to that question is that every helmet that leaves their factory is the best helmet they can make. Each helmet is hand-made, each shell is laid by hand by highly-trained specialists. Their helmets feature many innovations – most of them subtle, all of them purposeful – but Arai studiously refuses to add gimmicks that might look flashy but compromise safety.

The company's purposeful avoidance of gee-whiz flash makes the announcement of a new helmet that much exciting. And when Arai boldly states that its new RX-Q is, "the best" street helmet it has ever made, well, that's some stiff talk.

The RX-Q is a clean, streamlined design. With two intake ports at the front and one at the rear, the RX-Q superficially resembles Arai's Profile model and that, in our books, is a compliment. In this day and age of horns, ridges and spoilers the RX-Q, like the Profile, is a refreshing, classy change.

The resemblance to the Profile is skin-deep, though. Arai claims it has incorporated a host of advances and improvements in the RX-Q, including a wider eye port, a removable neck roll and quick-release cheek pads for easier helmet removal in case a rider is injured.

Speaking of those cheek pads, Arai has lined them with a new sound-deadening foam. The lower part of the cheek pads fits more snugly around the jaw, which Arai calls a 'cradle' support and this, the company claims, makes the RX-Q the quietest helmet the company has ever made. Sure enough, the RX-Q feels as if it grips the jaw with a bit more enthusiasm than do some helmets, but it's a reassuring feeling.

The RX-Q feels like a second skin. The lining is plush and there's a resilience to the



foam that seems to conform to the head rather than squeeze it.

The RX-Q is noticeably quieter than the Profile, and I get the feeling that the tighter fit and better foam insulation are responsible. The RX-Q feels very light on the head, with a low centre of gravity that seems to help keep neck fatigue at bay.

I received the RX-Q very late in the season and only wore it in cold weather, and that makes me wonder whether the new foam and more intimate fit might be a bit warm in the summer but then again, Arai has, in my opinion, the best ventilation in the business, and the company claims a number of improvements over other helmets in its line, so I'll assume that it should all even out.

As mentioned, the RX-Q is a clean design, and it cuts the wind with almost unbelievable smoothness. At speed there's no buffeting, no side-to-side movement, even when shoulder checking. Arai is proud of its "organic" shell design and its aerodynamic benefits, and justifiably so.

Fit and finish – as always with Arai – is superb. Our Diamond White sample is a subtle, rich, flawless metal flake finish. The lining is plush and the helmet conforms to the head in an almost sensual manner. The only misstep on the helmet we received was that the big sticker just above the visor wasn't clear-coated over, so it may experience some premature wear.

Is the RX-Q the best street bike helmet in the world? I can't say for sure as I haven't tried them all, but it is the best one I've ever worn. Highly recommended.

Reviewed by Jason Thorpe

Zox goes vintage

Zox has gone retro with the release of the Colli open face helmet and Banos half helmet in vintage metal flake.

The Colli meets or exceeds DOT safety standards and is made of a thermoplastic alloy with adjustable front and rear vents. Weighing only 2.0lbs and available in sizes XS to 2XL, the Colli comes with a three-snap visor and can be picked up in gold, blue, red or black metal flake.

The Banos also meets or exceeds DOT safety standards and is constructed of a fiberglass composite. Available in sizes XS to 2XL, it comes with a two-snap visor as well as a removable neck curtain and comes in gold, blue, red or black metal flake.

The Colli retails at \$56.99 and the Banos at \$69.99. For more information visit your local Zox powersports dealer or www.motovan.com.

