

Heat For Your Hands

BY TRICIA SZULEWSKI

Every year around Halloween, I inevitably begin to question myself as to why I still live in the Northeast. And inevitably I come back with the same answers that have kept me here for all of my 38 years, despite having to come up with creative ways to stay warm and continue riding until the town trucks dump sand all over the roads.

This year, I acquired a set of heated grips for my Suzuki Bandit that I've been contemplating for a few years — Oxford HotGrips. Known in the US as Heaterz, the kit now includes an electronic temperature controller with four heat settings, which replaces the old dial-controller and is easy to operate with gloved hands. To turn the unit on, you simply push the on button for two seconds. To turn the heat up or down, just push the appropriate arrow. Turning

it off is just as simple. The unit runs between 13.5 and 14.3 volts, and will turn off if the voltage is reduced to 11.5 volts, so that the HotGrips don't drain the bike's battery. This is extremely helpful to those of us who may forget to turn the unit off at the end of a ride. However, Oxford recommends powering the unit off, especially when connecting a charger to the bike's battery, which may cause the grips to remain heated. Also, to prevent the grips from being turned on by accident, the unit will flash the blue LED five times, indicating insufficient voltage.

Installing the kit is fairly simple, the hardest part being deciding what to do with all the wiring slack. For now, I decided to fold the extra wire and zip-tie it near the steering stem. The grips warm up within minutes, offer plenty of heat, and, added to my collection of heated clothing, should keep me riding comfortably even in below-freezing temperatures.

If the HotGrips don't work on your bike, Oxford makes a couple of other products to keep your digits warm. Custom HotGrips are designed to fit on 1" bars, and HotHands will wrap around the existing grips and are held in place with Velcro. All of these products include a reputable "no quibble" two-year guarantee. **RB**



1 Oxford provides everything you need, including a converter tube for ATVs.



3 The temperature controller can be mounted to a fairing or other flat surface with the included double-sided adhesive, or you can use the provided metal bracket. First use the screws to fix the controller to the bracket...



2 Remove the stock bar-end weights and grips. Test the Oxford grips to make sure they fit, then use some grip glue before permanently installing them on the handlebar. It was a tight fit, but I was able to twist them into place with a bit of effort.



4 ...then mount the bracket to the brake master cylinder.



5 After connecting the negative and positive ring terminals to the bike's battery, I routed and zip-tied the wires from the battery along the frame to the steering stem. The two grip wires and the battery lead all click into the controller via multipin block connectors.



6 To test the HotGrips, I ran the motorcycle in order to allow enough voltage through the temperature controller. Make sure that all wires are neatly tucked out of the way, don't interfere with any controls, and have enough slack for turning the handlebars and twisting the throttle.