

# Flat Tires

## by the Roadside

by Ken Freund

**Flat tires suck!** They can really ruin your whole day (especially if you are riding at high speed, but that's another story). So what can you do to rescue yourself from the side of the road? When your tire is airless, you need a tire repair kit to plug the leak, and a means to inflate the tire. With the balloon-type tires that Harleys have it's important to have enough inflation volume to re-inflate them.

A company called Genuine Innovations has introduced its Monster Air Chuck tire-repair kit, which is designed to accommodate Harleys with their large balloon-type, high-volume tires. The kit includes plugs, a reamer and insertion tool for tubeless tires, patches for tube-types, plus an inflation system that uses two large 45-gram cartridges—enough to get you to civilization after a deflated tire. There's also a handy padded carrying pouch that measures about 6 by 5 by 1.5 inches and has just enough room to stuff all the items in the kit. It will easily tuck into a saddlebag and could even fit in a large jacket pocket.

Tubeless tire repairs are quite simple with this kit. You find the puncture, remove the offending nail or screw, ream the hole with the included reamer, insert a string-type plug into the T-handle tool, and push it into the hole. After carefully removing the tool, snip the excess part of the plug off, then inflate the tire using the CO2 cartridges and check for leaks (spit applied around the plug works quite well in a pinch). You should also carry pliers, a single-edge razor blade or pocketknife to trim, and a pencil-type tire gauge. Also, if your bike has a 200-width or larger rear tire, carry another 45-gram canister.

Reinflating a tire is fairly simple, especially with the Monster Air Chuck kit. Insert the CO2 cartridge into the threaded base of the chuck. Quickly and firmly thread the chuck into the air chuck until it is punctured. (Note: Gas flow will not

start yet). To use, push the air chuck onto the tire valve. Hold your thumb firmly over the green post located on the back of the valve body and directly behind the green outlet. To prepare to inflate, push the air chuck onto your valve. This will prevent the unit from discharging while installing it onto the valve.

Once the tire valve is fully inserted into the chuck's green nozzle, pushing the chuck's valve body against the tire valve starts inflation. Holding the chuck's valve body and pushing into the tire valve causes the internal valve located behind the green nozzle to open and start the flow of gas into the tire. Continue to push to inflate until the desired pressure is reached. Releasing the pressure against the tire valve will stop the flow of gas. It will get very cold; you may want to wear your gloves. The two 45-gram bottles inflated our 160-width tire to 28psi, which was enough to get us home.

If your Harley has wire wheels, it has tube-type tires, and you aren't quite so lucky. You'll have to remove the wheel from the bike, break the bead and pull the tube out to patch it. You will also need a way to support the bike while all this is done. Many riders have actually laid their bikes down by the roadside to remove the rear wheel. I've done this in a pinch, using flat rocks and pieces of wood I found along the side of the road, but it's not pretty or particularly safe, and it's a huge chore. Since Harleys don't come with tool kits, you're on your own here.

All of the kit components are sturdy, well-made and high quality. I

found the kit (suggested retail price



\$54.99) to be a handy and mentally reassuring item to have along. It can save the day and get you or one of your riding buddies out of a bad situation without the need for, or cost of, a tow truck. Genuine Innovations Monster Air Chuck CO2 Systems are sold by many motorcycle dealers and are distributed by Tucker Rocky, Parts Unlimited, etc.

For further information contact  
Genuine Innovations, 800-340-1050,  
[www.genuineinnovations.com](http://www.genuineinnovations.com). ☐

## FIXING A FLAT



The first step is to remove the offending nail or screw.



Using the special tool that comes in the Innovations kit, the hole is reamed to accept a plug.



An included T-handle tool is used to insert a string plug.



After removing the tool, excess material is trimmed from the protruding plug.



A CO2 bottle inflates the tire. Large tires may require two bottles.



After checking pressure, you're on your way again.