

Adventure bikes tip the scales in excess of 500 pounds, unladen. The daunting reality of returning a motorcycle to an upright position after a get-off prompted the invention of portable hoists, to help riders pick up a downed motorcycle. The Eastbound MotoWinch (right) is made of aircraft-grade 7075 T6 aluminum and weighs less than 5 pounds.



A Little *Pick-Me-Up*

Two portable hoists put the power to lift a heavy, downed bike into your hands.

> By **Arthur J. Treff**

Riding solo in New Zealand, Fred Rau dropped an R1200GS headfirst down a hill, 20 miles from civilization and without phone service (MCN 6/18). Fred was lucky the bike fell in a way that he could rotate it before using his training and leg strength to right the bike. How different would this situation be with a physical limitation like a bad knee, hip, rotator cuff or an injury incurred in the fall?

The necessity of similar situations has fathered a new self-rescue tool for injured or physically compromised, solo riders. South African rider Chris Louw designed the Dustrid-

ers Motorcycle Hoist while healing from a crash, and Netherlander Noel DiPietro designed his Eastbound MotoWinch while recovering from an illness. We tested both products.

Both hoists tilt the bike upright via high strength webbing fed into a cargo ratchet mounted to a tubular metal upright. Each product comes in a travel pouch and is assembled without tools. As a bonus, either can function as a repair lift by balancing the bike's weight against the side stand to raise a wheel.

Dustriders' hoist is constructed from mild steel tubing with a yellow passivation coat to the outside (ours arrived with rust inside the tubing). It has two steel feet with a

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top-mounted ratcheting winch, and the four pieces assemble in seconds. In use, it resembles an inverted Y.

The webbing spools out of the ratchet and has polyurethane covered steel hook for attaching to the bike. Dustriders claims a 772-pound max lift weight.

The disassembled hoist measures 19.3 by 8.3 by 2 inches and weighs approximately 9.5 pounds. The company says the size is intentionally large, so it cannot be buried in a side case, which might not open after a crash. We'd prefer to see it pack smaller and lighter.

The two-legged Dustriders Motorcycle Hoist is made of tubular steel and weighs just under 10 pounds, with a claimed maximum lift weight of 722 pounds.

With legs removed, the Dustriders can also be used as a tire bead breaker.

Eastbound's MotoWinch has a single leg, the ratchet is mounted mid span, and the webbing is fed through a top-mounted pulley on its way to the ratchet. The foot resembles a crutch tip for pavement, which then slips into a machined Delrin plate for soft terrain. This hoist doesn't use a hook; the webbing has a loop on one end, the other is passed through the loop to form a slip knot, and then threaded into the ratchet.

The Eastbound leg is five tubular aluminum sections joined by machined male couplers, each with an O ring riding in a slot; this keeps the tubing in place during use. All parts except the ratchet are aircraft grade 7075 T6 aluminum with a quality silver anodized finish. The company offers two ratchet sizes; the larger reduces operator effort. Eastbound's product takes longer to assemble and begin lifting, but disassembled, measures 10 by 4.7 by 4 inches and weighs 4.2 pounds with the smaller winch, and 5 pounds with the larger.

Eastbound also makes accessories that turn the hoist's parts into a bead breaker, tire changing tools and axle wrenches.

OPERATION

Using a strap secured to a single pole to lift the bike requires that the base be placed as close to the bike's center of mass as possible, adjusting to suit conditions as necessary. Unless it's attached to a handgrip, expect the webbing to contact the bike's seat or body panels, which may cause damage. However, these are rescue tools, and could mean the difference between walking or riding home. Both manufacturer's websites provide detailed instructions.

Purchasers should practice using their new winch on a small bike on pavement, trying varying attach points, before attempting to right a large touring or ADV bike in the field.

PAVEMENT

We lifted an R 1200 GSA on pavement with no problems using both products. The Dustriders required less effort to winch and the end hook attached readily to crash bars and foot peg mounts. The Dustriders' two feet required less experimentation to find the hoist's stability point. However, the hook became a liability when we attempted to lift the bike using a handgrip. We improvised using a tow strap, which used up precious vertical space: the hoist topped out with the bike at a 45-degree angle.

The Eastbound, being aluminum, bends under load, which the manufacturer says is normal, and it too lifted the big BMW off the pavement. Attaching it to the handlebars was easy with the webbing's slip-loop. We were surprised that the winch was too short to lift the bike fully upright, but it stopped at an angle where a solo operator had no trouble pushing the bike the rest of the way. The manufacturer says this was intentional to keep the disassembled size small and the bending loads minimal for the aluminum structure.

GETTING DIRTY

To simulate real-world crash situations, we tested the hoists on a soft grassy slope of approximately 20-25 degrees. We used an R 1200 GS with hard bags removed so it would be more difficult to lift. Nothing falls flatter than a tall dirt bike, so we also tested a Hugo Moto Harley Sportster conversion.

We dropped the bikes with wheels downhill and wheels uphill, attaching both hoists to different locations on the bike and performing multiple lifts.

Sloping terrain added a degree of difficulty in getting the bike fully righted when the hoist reached its lifting limit. Test lifts were performed by one person without help, including the crucial final push to upright.

R 1200 GS

The bike's crash bars and exposed frame members made attaching both hoists easy. Attaching the Dustrid-



In a wheels-uphill situation, neither product hoisted the bike high enough for a rider to easily lift it to an upright position, but they both lift it to a point where one could get blocking underneath and spin the bike to a wheels-downhill orientation, for an easier pick-up.

The Eastbound MotoWinch weighs half as much as the Dustriders and is more compact, for easier packing onto the bike. It did bend under load, which the manufacturer said was normal.

ers' large hook proved faster, unless the crash bar was pressed into the ground. In this case, the Eastbound's strap loop could more easily be slipped underneath.

The BMW was shod with 50/50 dual sport tires which slid sideways when lifting from a wheels-downhill attitude, so if alone, plan on improvising with sticks and stones. Slipping wasn't a problem with wheels uphill.

During a wheels-uphill lift with the hoist attached to anything but the handlebars, the strap put high loads on body panels and deformed the seat significantly. If possible, remove the seat or put something between the strap and plastic parts.



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HUGO MOTO SPORTSTER

This bike came to rest with weight on the clutch cover, foot peg and handlebars, so attaching the hoist low on the bike was more challenging, due to the lack of crash bars and exposed frame members. The Dustriders' hook was too large to fit between the engine and adjacent frame member.

We attached to the low side foot peg mount and removed the seat to avoid damage and both hoists lifted the bike successfully. We tried to attach to the frame tubes under the seat, but this resulted in lifting the entire bike off the ground, as opposed to tipping it.

Testing on this converted Harley enduro proves that buyers should practice with any rescue product before adventuring solo.

GENERAL

In a wheels-uphill crash on greater than 25-degree slopes, neither hoist will raise the bike to an angle where it can be righted by a solo operator. However, both hoists will lift a downed bike enough so that improvised blocking can be slid underneath, allowing the bike to be spun to a wheels-downhill attitude, where it can then be hoisted upright.

FINAL IMPRESSIONS

The Dustriders Motorcycle Hoist was assembled and lifting within a couple of minutes, with less operator effort. The two feet reduced sinking into soft ground and the sewn-on hook attached to crash bars, some frame members but not handlebars.

We'd like to see a short adapter loop ship with the hoist. The included felt blanket was useful to place between the strap and bodywork. The product's weight and 19.5-inch packed length will not appeal to those who pack light. \$269.99 plus shipping at advmotorrad.com.

The Eastbound MotoWinch takes a little longer to set up and position because of the single foot and it requires more operator effort because of the flexing, but the slip-knot webbing attachment allowed for unlimited at-



The Dustriders Motorcycle Hoist was heavier and not as portable at nearly 20 inches long. Having two 'feet' spread the load, helped keep the stand from sinking into the ground.

The black felt blanket provides good protection between the hoist and the bike. It is important to practice with new tools before facing the task out on the trail.

tach options. Given the infrequency of use, we'd choose the longer setup time in favor of a lighter tool that's compact enough to store in a tank bag.

We also recommend the larger ratchet, to lower the operator effort, for \$226.00 (€195) including shipping to the U.S., at eastbound.org.

A motorcycle hoist can be a good self-rescue tool for solo adventurers or riders with injuries that preclude lifting a heavy bike. Additionally, shorter or weaker riders who struggle lifting anything larger than a starter bike may feel empowered to ride something larger if armed with a hoist. Special thanks to Hugo Moto for their time and donor bike. **MCN**

