

# **My Evolution to Soft Luggage**

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I installed Jesse Bags on my 2005 GS and my 2011 GS. In those days, I carried all my tools and emergency gear in a tail bag and tank bag and never installed the Jesse Bags unless I was headed for a multi-day ride.

In those days, almost all of my multi-day rides consisted of loading up my Jesse Bags with gear, riding to a rally location, and setting up camp. I would then remove my Jesse Bags and leave them in camp before going out on the rides which always consisted of day trips out and back from/to camp. The Jesse Bags worked great for this type of riding! All of my serious off-road riding was done without panniers.

One year, I ran into a bunch of guys from Arizona and started to ride a lot of expedition rides which required packing all our gear with us every day as we traversed our route. Here's where I started to think about changing the way I did things.

- Jesse Bags are heavy ..... and hard. I fell a couple of times and hurt my lower leg when the pannier landed on my tender flesh. One time, I injured my ankle pretty seriously and spend several months getting back to normal.
- After my first fall, the Jesse Bags got bent and would no longer kept my gear dry. I had to use water proof liners to ensure my gear stayed dry.
- I had a couple of falls that bent the Jesse Bags to the point where the lid wouldn't close properly. I spent a lot of time banging on them with rocks those evenings.
- Once, one of my bag mounts was bent to the point where I had to take it in to a local welder to get it straightened out.
- Once of my riding buddies actually broke one his Jesse Bag mounts and we spent an hour on the trail jerry rigging a way to attach the bag so we could ride to civilization
- I had trouble when paddling through some of the tougher rocky or sandy sections. It's very easy to catch a foot between the ground and the pannier when paddling or dabbing. I had many close calls, and actually twisted a few ankles. It's easy to imaging getting caught between a rock and a pannier and casing serious damage to a foot, ankle or even a leg.

When I purchased my 2014 GS, I decided to forgo the Jesse Bags in favor of soft bags. My buddies from Arizona had almost all switched to soft luggage by now and were having great luck with Wolfman Rocky Mountain Saddlebags. I had my new GS outfitted with Touratech pannier mounting hardware and installed the Wolfman Rocky Mountain Saddlebags.

I actually liked the Rocky Mountain bags and they worked very well for many great rides. All the above problems were solved. They were light, waterproof, soft when landing on my soft parts, up and out of the way when dabbing/paddling, and they didn't bend when they hit the ground.

The only problem I had with them was getting loaded up in the morning when it was raining. The Wolfman panniers took me about 10 or 15 minutes to remove and 30 minutes or so to install, so I left them on the bike at night. I would remove the waterproof liners with my gear and take it into the motel. It was a little tougher getting everything loaded back up. The full liners were pretty much impossible to stuff back into the bags. I would have to put the empty liner into the bag, then load my gear into the liners after it was in place. This was no problem ..... unless it was raining.

When I saw a video demonstrating the simplicity of loading and unloading the Mosko Moto panniers, I had to have it ..... I ordered a set and the rest is history as far as I'm concerned. It works perfectly.

To be fair, there are a couple of downsides, but I can live with them.

- Each pannier is about 8 pounds heavier than the Wolfman pannier.
- I now have a very wide 38" butt. My Jesse Bags were only 34", and the Wolfman panniers were even narrower..

Still, they are lighter than Jesse Bags and has all the advantages of soft panniers. They keep my gear dry and they have stood up to a fair amount of abuse. The only time the wideness has caused me concern was in splitting traffic ..... and it went OK at that.

The Mosko Moto bags have one other advantage that I didn't consider until I purchased the WR250R from you and started thinking about doing some "real" rides on it.

Since you were so kind to install the Happy Trail Pannier mounting hardware, it was very easy to install an extra set of Mosko Moto wedges, which allows me to switch the same panniers from my GS to the WR250.

The Mosko Moto panniers work just as well on the WR250 as they do on the GS. In November, 2016, I took the WR250 to Death Valley and rode about 300 miles (150 miles dirt) with fully loaded Mosko Moto panniers. This was a test to see if how the WR250 would handle such a load --- no problem. Next week, I'm again traveling to Death Valley to try some of the more difficult roads. I'll let you know how it went, but I'm expecting no problems.



***Mosko Moto Wedge on GS  
Touratech Mount***



***Mosko Moto Wedge on WR250  
Happy Trail Mount***



You can see how the WR250 looks with the fully loaded Mosko Moto Panniers in the following photo taken in Death Valley in November, 2016.



*WR250 with fully loaded Mosko Moto Panniers  
Taken in Death Valley, November, 2016*