

Wearable Air Bag For Horse, Cycle Riding

By Jim Ruen, Contributing Editor

Anybody who's ever been thrown from a horse or a motorcycle (including this writer in both cases) knows the pain and even potential paralysis that can result. Personal airbag systems are now available in the U.S. for horseback riders and motorcyclists alike.

"You wear them like regular vests or jackets," says Alex Von Pichl, U.S. distributor. "When they blow, the top pops up and fills to protect the neck and the bottom pops down and fills to protect the lower spine. In less than half a second, you are surrounded by an airbag with 1,500 psi and as hard as a basketball."

Von Pichl said the systems are so fast that sometimes a helmet won't even hit the ground. The air bag keeps the head up and away from contact.

"You can use these over and over. You just have to replace the air canister if they deploy," says Von Pichl. "I was at a motorcycle show, and there are lots of protective jackets, but none with neck protection. They are just skid

plates."

A person wearing the vest or jacket simply hooks a coiled cord to saddle or bike seat. When pulled, it activates the gas canister. After a few seconds the airbag deflates. Von Pichl's website shows all models and a video of how the airbags work.

Wearing an airbag vest or jacket (priced between \$499 and \$699) may even pay for itself before long. Von Pichl says insurance underwriters are considering the impact on injury. In the meantime, buyers are considering just the impact.

"I sold one to a guy at the show I attended, and he called me two days later," says Von Pichl. "He had a wreck and told me the jacket saved his life."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Triple T Sales, 7526 E. Burning Tree Drive, P.O. Box 476, Franktown, Colo. 80116 (ph 303 688-8113 or 800 829-8643; fax 303 688-8114; sales@tripletsales.com; www.tripletsales.com).

Single Phase Motors Provide 3-Phase Power

Forget about paying big installation charges to get big electrical power. With Written-Pole motors, you can produce 15 to 75 hp with the same lines once limited to 15 hp motors or less. The technology was developed in Florida by Precise Power Corporation, but refined with the help of Manitoba Hydro. Today the motors are marketed in Canada by a subsidiary, Meridium Power, and in the U.S. by a number of different distributors.

"As an electric utility, we were searching for ways to service customers clamoring to run 3-phase motors," explains Dale Fresian, general manager, Meridium Power. "Farmers wanted big motors to run irrigation pumps and grain facilities. Developing rural businesses wanted bigger motors for their industrial operations."

The problem was that big motors required 3-phase power, and that required a big investment. Manitoba Hydro recognized it would never recoup the investment for 3-phase lines, and customers could never afford it, especially for seasonal power. A solution appeared to be a new technology that allowed single-phase power to be used in high horsepower engines.

"We started working with Precise Power Corporation and the Electric Power Research Institute in California to develop the motor," says Fresian. "We did a lot of field testing and lab testing at Hydro Quebec at their advanced testing lab."

The result was a single-phase motor that is able to provide high quality, high quantity power at less cost than alternative power sources.

"We have one installation that uses two 50-hp and two 75 hp motors on irrigation pumps," cites Fresian. "The owner said he reduced his costs by 80 percent over diesel fuel-powered pumps. We did an economic comparison, and over the past three years, he would have saved \$115,000 at today's fuel costs."

"Best of all," the customer told Fresian, "I know what my energy costs will be. Other farmers around me hold their breath as they get fuel bills."

Advantages of the new motors, in addition to high horsepower, include low starting current, high efficiency and enhanced reliability. The low starting current eliminates voltage sag interference with other customers.



Personal airbag system is worn like a regular vest or jacket. When it inflates, the top pops up and fills to protect the neck and the bottom pops down to protect the lower spine.



With Written-Pole motors, you can produce 15 to 75 hp on lines that were previously limited to 15 hp motors or less.

The Written-Pole motors are 92 to 95 percent efficient, compared to 85 percent for conventional motors. The simple design reduces service needs even under changing conditions.

Fresian says the motors are attractive alternatives for industrial facilities that need compressed air for tools and processes. Meridium is working with a compressor company to develop compressor products.

One unusual use is powering aerators to rehabilitate remote lakes that have become polluted.

"I have one site that uses one of the single

phase motors on an aerator," says Fresian. "It has more than 4,000 hours on it with no maintenance and only one visit to check on it."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Meridium Power Inc., P.O. Box 815, 820 Taylor Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R3C 2P4 (ph 204 474-4928; sales@meridiumpower.ca; www.meridiumpower.ca); or Precise Power Corporation, P.O. Box 9547, Bradenton, Fla. 34206 (ph 941 722-1600; sales3@precisepwr.com; www.precisepwr.com).

"Wetsuit" Seat Covers

If you're looking for high quality seat covers that fit like a wetsuit, are waterproof and UV-resistant, you might want to take a look at Wet Okole's seat covers. They won't get hot during the summer or cold during the winter.

The covers are custom designed to fit your vehicle's specific year, make, model and seat design and come in a variety of colors and patterns.

The covers consist of 1/2-in. thick foam neoprene covered by nylon. They wrap headrests, fit seat belt risers and cover armrests. Vehicles with side airbags in the backrest require seat covers with a cutout that allow for the deployment of the bags.

Although you don't need to remove your front seat to install them, you may need to remove the back seats. The company says that washing the seat covers extends their life. They do warn that overexposure to the sun may damage the seats.

Front bucket seat arms start at \$235. A rear bench seat cover costs about \$225.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Wet



Seat covers are custom-designed to fit your vehicle's specific year, make, model and seat design.

Okole (ph 888 246-5653; www.wetokole.com).

Easy Way To Keep Fence Lines Tight

Darryl and Debbie McNair came up with this method to keep a barbed wire fence tight on their Hanna, Okla., ranch.

Just take a length of steel tubing and drill a hole for each fence wire. Then weld a large chain link to the end of a 12-in. piece of 3/8-in. all-thread rod. Run the barb wire through the link and insert the other end through the steel tubing and attach a nut. Stretch the wire as tight as possible and tie it off. As the wire sags over time, use a ratchet to tighten the wires. Do this on each end of the fence line to pull evenly on the wire.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Darryl and Debbie McNair, R.R.1, Box 87, Hanna, Okla. 74845 (ph 918 657-2609).



A piece of 3/8-in. threaded rod connects to the end of each fence wire for easy tightening with a wrench.