

# REVIEW OF *GREAT BASIN* SOFT LUGGAGE



*FINALLY, THE RIGHT SOLUTION!*



A number of times each year, my buddies and I take multi-day rides on our KLRs. In the past, I never seemed to have a good system for carrying the required supplies. I used to unbolt the factory rear rack and bolt on a larger rack chassis. Then I'd put all the essentials, tubes and irons, compressor and so on in a 30 liter piece of luggage. To keep it dry, I'd place the luggage in a huge plastic garbage bag, then would bungee that thing in every way imaginable to the rack, trying to be

sure it was secure... and hoping that I didn't need to get into the bag during the day because of the complexity of unwrapping it all. Because of the bag's height, I couldn't throw a leg over it, plus the weight was carried high on the bike which was undesirable. It was functional, and it worked... but it was a pain.

I needed a better solution.

First, I looked into hard bags. Wow, pricey... and they sure stuck out in to the breeze a lot. Since we're riding KLRs, these trips always include some amount of dirt riding, and skinny dirt bikes are better than wide dirt bikes. Plus, riding off-road, there's going to be a crash every so often.

Hard bags don't do well in a crash. Something usually bends or breaks, and sometimes that's the rider's leg. So hard bags were out in my case, and I started looking at soft luggage.

After lots of looking, I found this. The *Great Basin* bag from Giant Loop.

In a nutshell, this is a waterproof, 50 liter bag that doesn't stick out into the wind, carries its weight low and has built in straps and compartments to keep everything organized. It can take the rough terrain in stride - in fact the Giant Loop website is full of pictures of airborne dirt bikes with their soft luggage strapped on.



Horseshoe Shape Carries Weight Low

(View from rear)



So let's take this one step at a time, and let's first discuss the shape. The Great Basin is contoured like a horseshoe and straddles the seat, sitting where a passenger would. Wow, that makes sense. It has built-in straps so you attach the 'legs' to the passenger peg area. This holds the bag down and forward. The remaining straps hold the bag down and back, and a good portion of the rear rack is still available. The top straps are long enough that even with a full bag, you can hold down other items like a jacket or liner that you take off mid-day without carrying additional bungees or opening the bag.



Since the "legs" are down low, it makes sense to fill them with the heavy stuff - inner tubes, tire irons, tools, kitchen, etc. and carry the lighter stuff up high. In fact, once you open the bag, you'll see why this is easy to do - there is one form-fitting zippered pouch that fits in each leg, one sewn-in 1-liter plus bottle holder per side, one flexible stuff-sack per side, and a zippered center compartment sewn in the middle (I've seen guys turn this into a beverage cooler).

The 50 liter capacity is just right. When I used the old 30 liter luggage, I'd barter with my riding buddies to figure out who would carry the front tube, who



carried the back tube, and who carried the tire irons and compressor. No more. And the separate bags / compartments kept everything organized - my riding buddies remarked on our recent trip how much easier it is to pack each morning and start riding.



Next: it's made of 22oz vinyl coated polyester, which makes it waterproof, and has a nice water-resistant zipper with double pulls in the back. There is

also a wide rain flap.



Although the Giant Loop website mentions putting the bag where the passenger

usually goes, the KLR is pretty flexible here. You can mount it as Giant Loop states - (what I call the "forward location" in the upper right photo) or you can slide it back about 4 inches onto the rack ("middle location") by placing the rear straps through the slot in the KLR rear rack behind the toolkit. That's my preference, as it leaves me enough room to move around on the seat during the day. If you feel like relocating the rear turn signals like my riding buddy has, you can mount it even further aft (lower right).

In any of those three positions, the rider can still rest their feet on the passenger pegs too, when they would like a rest. The bag doesn't block your ability to do that.



So let's discuss the possibility of a crash, sometimes referred to as a 'dirt nap'. The 0 mph ones are easy, like the one here...



The only damage: PRIDE.

But later, my riding buddy had a much bigger test. He went down

at about 45 mph on asphalt. Yow! He came out OK because he was wearing the right riding gear, and the bag didn't hurt his leg at all. Check out the minimal bag damage. It's still waterproof because the vinyl lining was not affected, as the external protective layer did its job.



Still waterproof with minimal damage after laying it down at 45 mph.

The Great Basin is available in five colors. Three of them (Grey, Yellow and Black) are shown on my KLR on the right, and White and Orange are shown below. All of my products have free shipping in the US.

I only sell quality products that I believe in, and the Great Basin Bag fits the bill. You won't be disappointed.



To purchase a bag, go to:

[www.watt-man.com](http://www.watt-man.com)