

GENIUS AWARD

V2 SPONGE

WE KNEW IT was good when it was launched back in 2004, but the fact that it's still not been beaten – only imitated – serves to emphasise that the V2 Sponge is a work of some genius.

Like many of the best ideas, it's absurdly simple: a visor-cleaning sponge that lives in a sealed plastic bag to keep it moist, with a cloth for drying visors. Like many of the best ideas for motorcyclists, its inventor is himself a biker.

Paul Berryman first tried to solve the problem of cleaning your visor mid-ride when, many years ago, he had to ride his Yamaha Thunderace home

at 30mph because his visor was so badly splattered with bugs that he couldn't see where he was going. He tried cleaning it with the sponge kept in a bucket of murky water at a petrol station, which was far from satisfactory... but that started the train of thought that eventually led to inventing the V2.

He tried microfibre cloths, but the big breakthrough came when he switched to microcell fibre. It's able to remove bugs and other visor crud, and doesn't require anything harder to find than tap water.

"I gave it to some riders to try, and they liked it," recalls Berryman, whose company Visorvision is now based at his home in Bedfordshire. Visorvision (www.visorvision.co.uk) have tried various other ventures, but the focus is now back where it began, with the V2 Sponge and

two other visor-related products: Fogtech (to stop the inside steaming up) and Raincoat (to help water run off the outside).

The V2's not perfect – it's incompatible with the chemicals used in current AGV visors – but it's the best we have.



ALL-ROUND EXCELLENCE AWARD

BUFF

'BUFF' HAS BECOME the generic name for neck cosies. The company was founded in 1991 by Spanish trials rider Juan Rojas, who wanted something that could be worn on his head or around his neck. Plenty of other manufacturers make cloth tubes that do much the same job, in some cases for a lower price, but the consistent excellence of the Buff design and quality throughout the range is

phenomenal. So is the size of the range (visit www.buffwear.co.uk). Don't blame Buff for the ludicrous manner in which some people choose to wear them. Here are our three favourite Buffs.

- **Original Buff** Fits under everything, never snags or gets in the way. It's warm but not hot. Always comfortable. It won't keep you dry, but it will delay the moment of moistness.

- **Polar Buff** Bigger and more substantial than the Original. It's basically a long Original with a Polartec fleece base. Warm, comfortable, handy as a hat.

- **Storm Buff** Half Gore Windstopper and half soft-touch microfibre. You put the microfibre part over your mouth and nose and you can still breathe, while the Windstopper part covers your throat to keep the cold at bay. There's a drawstring to help form a good seal with your jacket.

