

Product Spotlight: Removable Fairings

This month we have featured an outstanding product that we found while on our Sturgis trip last year. A fairing that can be removed in less than 15 seconds. Those long trips can be more enjoyable with a fairing and some tunes. We met Ben Coppock, the owner of Wide Open Custom Plastics, when he was in his booth down the aisle from our booth at Thunder Road (no relation). That was when we discussed creating a feature article about their fairings. There are other companies that have similar products for twice the price of what Ben offers.



Fairing with stereo



Test fit prior to sending off to paint



Crimped

Twisted & Taped

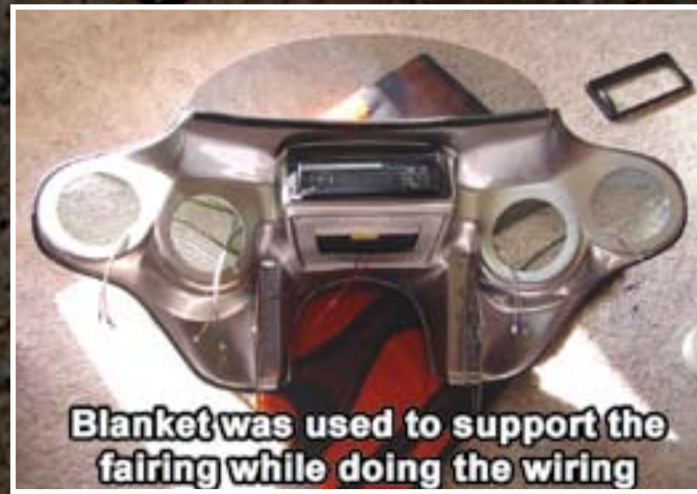
Do not use screw on connectors

Ben has been in the ABS Plastic industry for nearly 25 years. During a Sturgis trip a few years back he saw a fairing and figured he could design a better version. So Ben decided to combine his passion for motorcycles and his knowledge of plastics and started Wide Open Custom Plastics based out of Oswego, KS.

Wide Open Custom Plastics offers two types of fairing packages. One is without a stereo for \$699 and the other is with a stereo for \$799. Whichever one you order plan on receiving a large box. The high quality of craftsmanship and unique style can be noticed before paint is even a thought. Naturally the kid in me said, "Let's tear open the box as if it were Christmas". Here is the first tip, do not ignore the instructions. There are some very important steps that need to be taken before you send the fairing off to your painter. It is important to test fit the unit to your motorcycle. This way there are no surprises later. In my case the Road King running lights need to be moved to the front bracket hole. Make sure the lights are straight up and down to have clearance for installing and removing the fairing. When installing the brackets be very careful if you use an electric screwdriver or drill. Stainless steel screws can strip out with too much torque. If you choose to use the access cover panel that has the tray (for your MP3 player), I suggest that you drill a drain hole or two for those rainy days.

Now it is time to figure out a paint scheme. Your painter can help with a look that matches your ride. A standard paint job should cost between \$400 and \$600. I had Darrin of Liquid Illusions Custom Paint & Fabrication. Be sure to let your painter read the "Paint Preparation" portion of the instructions to ensure the proper steps are taken. Darrin matched the two-tone 100 Year Anniversary theme for our project. Simple, but appropriate. Here is a tip; something to have your painter check for on the outer front surface. Where the inner supports are epoxy welded to the outer surface, there were two dimples in the surface. Be sure to point these out so that before paint they can be filled.

Installing the windshield is the hardest part of the whole project. The Wide Open Custom Plastics website, www.wideopencustom.com, has some great tricks on getting the washers and lock nuts in place. You may need a third hand to get this step done. After that it was onto installing the stereo and speakers, which is a pretty straight forward wiring job. I used a couple of different connections for the speakers to see which method works the best. With normal motorcycle vibrations, I don't think that screw-on connectors would be a wise choice. I tried the crimped wire nuts and the old fashioned, twist them together and tape the heck out of them. There will be some extra parts in the stereo box that are for other applications. So it is alright to have a



Blanket was used to support the fairing while doing the wiring



installing stereo housing



notch filed for stereo wires



Anyone ready for a road trip?

few extra parts on this project.

Once you have all of the screws in place that attach the stereo and speakers, be sure to have the red and black wire come out of the access hole on the bottom of the fairing. Tip; I used a round file to notch out a place for these wires. Now it is time to see how it looks on the bike and run the last of the wires. Per the instructions run the wire harness from the battery to the fairing be sure to have the inline plug disconnect near the fairing. Here is a great tip. If you use a battery tender religiously, unplug the stereo and plug the charger into the same plug.

The tools needed to do all of the above were; 11mm wrench, #3 phillips screwdriver, masking tape, strapping tape, electrical tape, wire strippers, and an electric screw driver or drill with phillips bit. It took me about 4 hours to assemble everything, but I was also taking pictures along the way. I would think it should take about half that for everyone else. To make sure everything was correct, I did a quick test ride and some hard braking to see if the fairing would move forward. It didn't move at all.

My personal opinion

This is an ideal product for those of you that ride long distances but once you are there, you want to remove the fairing for around town. Let's face it, 1000 miles to Sturgis without a little wind protection will wear you out. Plus you would get to listen to some music instead of 70 mile an hour wind noise. One thing that I will do is reset the windshield in the fairing to get a tighter seal to help keep any rainwater off of the stereo. I do realize that the stereo is for marine use, but I figure if I can keep it from getting wet, why not.

Other fairing manufacturers say that fiberglass is stronger than the ABS plastic. I thought about that for a bit. If that were true, why are car bumpers not made of fiberglass?

I can already tell that when I have another trip over a couple hundred miles, I will have the fairing with me. It is probably one of those things, if you have it, why not use it?

For read more info go to www.wideopencustom.com or give them a call at 620-795-4421.



A fairing can give the bike a new look