



What's the Deal With Pink?

Fad? Harbinger? Whatever it is, pay attention

If you attended Dealer Expo this past February and remember seeing all the new pink gear for women, you might be more confused than ever. Several dealers expressed to me, "I thought women riders didn't really care for pink."

One reason we're seeing so much pink this season — pink helmets, pink jackets, even pink accessories like dirtbike handguards — is simply because manufacturers want people to know they offer something for women.

At least that's what Brenda Trumbo thinks. Trumbo is Icon's V-twin sales and marketing manager. Icon was the first apparel maker in recent memory to offer pink as a color option. "Dealers would come up to me and say, 'Why aren't you making stuff for women?' I'd say we are. Then they'd ask me, 'Why aren't you making clothing in women's colors?'" That's when Trumbo set out to convince executives at Icon that pink's time had come.

Before then, there had been no color distinction between men's and women's gear. Now with jackets in pink, baby blue, and even purple, there is no question the clothing and accessories are for women.

Trumbo has been involved with motorcycle clothing for more than 10 years, including stints at Teknic and Intersport Fashions West working with the Hein Gericke line.

Why pink now? "It's different," she says. "Today a lot of companies are jumping on the pink bandwagon. With more women riding bikes, there's a demand for a bigger variety of colors."

In 2005 Icon first introduced pink with its Kitty line, which consists of a pink leather jacket, pink chaps and a pink helmet. Trumbo remembers wearing samples of the bright-colored outfit while riding down Main Street during that year's Daytona Bike Week. She said many women came running up to her asking her where they could buy the gear.

"When a rider is wearing pink it tells other motorcyclists and car

Pink is the No. 1-selling color across the entire Icon line.

drivers that this is a woman on a motorcycle. Some women want that to be known," says Trumbo.

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She says pink also makes a woman feel good. It's a bright, fun color that keeps a woman in touch with her feminine side while riding. "When I look in my closet and all I see is black, black, black, I want something more," Trumbo says.

I share her thinking. Pink is not synonymous with my personality, but I don't always feel like wearing the same traditional motorcycling colors: black, royal blue and red. Occasionally I'd like to have the option of a more feminine-colored outfit, and pink serves that purpose well.

While pink never really goes out of style, every once in a while it rises to the top of fashion trends. In 2004, all

the major designers and catwalks were abuzz in pink. *USA Today* featured an article in April 2004 called "Think Pink." It examined the pink trend sweeping the country and cited male celebrities sporting pink ties and shirts as evidence.

When asked if our industry is a little late in its pink intro, considering the fashion trend has since waned, Trumbo says no. "The fashion side has to turn merchandise around so fast. Motorcycle apparel stays around awhile. The styles don't change that much year after year. Of course, the motorcycle industry must stay abreast of fashion, but when we pick out a style it has to last awhile."

Although motorcycling gear may not play by the same rules as mainstream fashion, it's smart to take some cues from it. The color will be hot for a few years while companies make their statements. There will be a fair amount of female riders who'll buy into this trend, but I don't believe pink has staying power. Companies that want to really tap the women's market must delve further into what women riders want — what works for the long haul, what they'll want to wear long after they tire of pink.

For now, Icon's pink offerings are right on the money. According to Trumbo, pink is the No. 1-selling color across the entire Icon line — both men's and women's. **D**

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