

**EarthX lightweight lithium battery** *By Steve Hoffarth*

When Editor Jones suggested a test on an EarthX lithium battery, I was a little apprehensive. 2013 was my shot at a Canadian Amateur Superbike national championship, so having a battery let me down could have disastrous effects. However, my mind was put to ease knowing that 13-time Canadian drag racing champion Ethan Barkley has been using EarthX lithium batteries.

"I run an extensive and expensive race program and have done so for years," says Ethan. "I want the very best components that are available and have plenty to lose if a battery lets me down. In my world we utilize the highest-end ECUs and electronics, not to mention working headlights, so a battery failure would be catastrophic!"

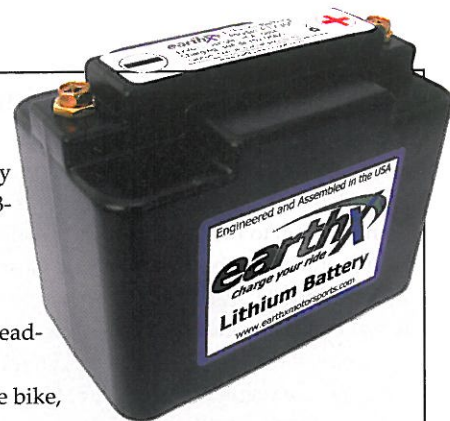
Thankfully, the EarthX battery performed perfectly all season long in my BMW S1000RR race bike, and even a weekend in my vintage Kawasaki ZX-7 racer.

Lithium batteries have been all the rage in recent years, and for good reason. The grandest reason of all, of course, is the weight savings. My stock BMW battery weighs in at 7 lb (3.2 kg) and is a relatively small battery. The EarthX ETX18B, however, comes in at a scant 2.2 lb (1 kg). That's a huge weight savings for a race bike at a very low cost. Even the largest EarthX battery, one that would be needed to crank behemoths such as the 110 ci CVO Harleys or the 2,300cc Triumph Rocket III, weighs just 3.6 lb (1.6 kg).

Other claimed benefits of the EarthX lithium are a long service life (up to 4,000 charge/discharge cycles or 8 years, four times the life of a lead-acid battery) and an exceptionally low discharge rate of two percent a month (versus 30 percent for lead-acid). There is no need for winter maintenance unless your bike has a regular draw on the battery when the key is off. Regular battery chargers will do (excluding chargers that desulfate), and an internal balancer in the battery eliminates the need for a balance charge or top-off charge like some lithium batteries.

The ETX18B that I used in my race bike needed no charging or maintenance through the summer, which is more than fine by my reckoning! And as many of Ethan's snowmobile customers can attest to, they perform better than acid batteries in the cold. "I sell plenty of the 36 series batteries to snowmobilers as they have the largest CCA (Cold Cranking Amperes) and perform perfect down to -30," Ethan informs.

The ETX18B retails for \$219 US. All EarthX lithium batteries are engineered and assembled in the US and come with a two-year warranty. For the size that fits your bike and a dealer near you, visit [earthxmotorsports.com](http://earthxmotorsports.com).



**Pros:**  
Lightweight  
Maintenance-free

**Cons:**  
More expensive than lead-acid batteries

**MSRP: \$129-\$349 US**  
**Sizes: 6-36 EqAh (lead-acid equivalent)**



**Bell Rogue helmet** *By Graeme Jones*

A lot of readers have asked me about the helmet I was wearing on the cover of our Nostalgia Lives On! issue (September 2013, Vol. 16, Issue 06). In an end-is-nigh type of shot, rocketing toward the camera on a Ural Patrol with aviator goggles and a determined demeanor, that helmet — the military-inspired Bell Rogue — was key to the success of that striking cover.

The Rogue is a DOT-certified half helmet featuring a lightweight composite outer shell that actually wraps fully around the back of your skull for an increased protection area. It actually feels a lot safer on your head than you'd expect from what appears to be a more aesthetic-focused lid. The removable and washable inner liner is soft and breathable, but for long-oval head shapes (like mine) the minimal frontal padding will leave a hot spot in the middle of your forehead. Otherwise, the inside of the Rogue is plush and even features speaker pockets.

Aside from the military look, what really makes the Rogue stand out is the adjustable and removable muzzle. It's equal parts style and function, shielding the lower half of your face from wind and bugs while playing on the whole military/retro industrial/steam punk fashion craze. The muzzle is easy to remove thanks to a neat magnetic connection called 'Fidlock'. It's also got a removable inner liner that can further protect from the tip of your nose to your chin in colder weather.

The Bell Rogue comes in four colours, includes a five-year warranty and retails in Canada for \$289.99. Visit your nearest Kimpex dealer or visit [www.kimpex.com](http://www.kimpex.com) and join the good fight!

**Price: \$289.99**  
**Sizes: XS-XXL (54-63)**  
**Colours: solid gunny, solid black, solid army green, solid matte black**

**Pros:**  
Awesome retro vibe  
More complete protection than it would seem

**Cons:**  
Muzzle is quite bulky  
Doesn't provide same protection as a full-face