

PRODUCT REVIEW BY JOE KNEZEVIC

SCALA-RIDER BY CARDO SYSTEMS

Hands-free cellular communication at its best

DO YOU REALLY NEED TO TALK ON THE PHONE while riding? That's what most people ask when I tell them I've installed the new Scala-Rider Bluetooth headset on my motorcycle helmet. My answer is "No, but why not?"

The Scala-Rider kit (MSRP \$149.99) comes with everything you need. Simply take the clamp/mic/speaker unit, align the speaker and mic in their ideal locations, and attach the clamp to the helmet's shell using the included Allen wrench. This

took about 10 minutes on my full-face Arai helmet, and since I used no glue, it can be removed, leaving no visible trace. After charging the headset, all I had to do was clip it to the helmet mount and turn it on. My Bluetooth-equipped phone easily paired itself with the Scala-Rider, and I was ready to go.

The durability of this equipment is evident in the fact that over the last few months there has been no obvious wear, even though the headset has been attached and removed many times. The company claims that the headset is "weather protected." That may be so, but I have yet to actually use the Scala-Rider in a down-pour. And, come to think of it, I probably wouldn't be talking while riding in extreme weather anyway.



With the equipment installed, receiving calls while on the move is a breeze, thanks to the large, easy-to-reach control buttons. I'm amazed that the speaker fits so comfortably in my helmet and sounds so clear even at high speeds. Initiating calls is a tad more involved, since it requires using the actual phone or voice dialing, which is limited to the numbers that have voice tags in my phone.

I must say that the Scala-Rider works and sounds better than the wired earpiece I use while driving a car. The only drawback is that I can't tell who is on the other end, since the phone is tucked away, and I can't see the caller ID. Regardless, I know of no other product like the Scala-Rider, and I am totally impressed. AIM

SOURCES

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