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TOP TRAIL RIDING DESTINATIONS

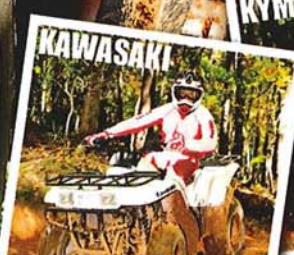
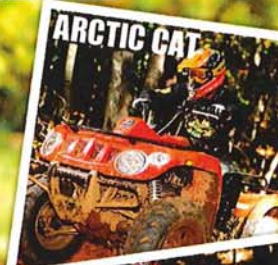
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trailtested

TIGER TAIL TOW SYSTEM

IT'S GREAT BEING THE TOUGH GUY OR GAL WHO COMES TO THE RESCUE WHEN A RIDING BUDDY GETS HIS OR HER QUAD STUCK IN A MUD HOLE. WHETHER IT'S BECAUSE "I TOLD YOU NOT TO DRIVE IN THERE," A FEELING OF SUPERIORITY THAT YOUR FOUR-WHEELER IS A TRACTION POWERHOUSE, OR BECAUSE YOU'RE THE SCOUT OF THE GROUP — ALWAYS PREPARED FOR WHATEVER PROBLEMS CROP UP ON THE TRAIL — IT'S GOOD TO BE READY FOR THE UNEXPECTED. A NEW PRODUCT FROM TEAM TECH ENGINEERING MAKES IT EASY AND AFFORDABLE TO BE THE TRAIL-SIDE HERO.

When the moment of triumph comes to pull out a marooned ATV, there have traditionally been two basic options: use a tow strap or hook up a winch. Winches can be expensive — especially if they're only occasionally put to work pulling out a friend. On the other hand, tow straps are cheap, but they get dirty, frayed, often aren't long enough and take up cargo space to provide the occasional tow.

Team Tech's Tiger Tail is a great compromise — a self-retracting spool of durable line that has a heavy-duty hook for quickly running out some line and attaching to another machine. It's less costly (and faster!) than a winch, is easy to clean and, at eight pounds, doesn't add as much weight to your machine.

We got our own, attached it to our Arctic Cat Thundercat and hit the trail, hoping to be the Quad Hero pulling out stranded mud victims everywhere we went. It's worth noting that installation is as easy as slipping it into our Cat's two-inch receiver and inserting a pin. Other ATVs or UTVs may require a bracket, which is available for most models.

Since spring is the time of sloppy trails and deep standing water, finding stranded travelers was easy, especially when the goal was getting stuck. Making sure to stay on trail, out of sensitive areas and avoiding unnecessary erosion, we got our Arctic Cat 366 stuck plenty of times. The Thundercat was ready for the challenge.

With the Tiger Tail, you just back up to the vehicle needing a tow, grab the hook, pull out some line and attach. Getting back on the T-cat, just slowly advance until all 15 feet of rope is out and then gradually pull the victim to higher ground. It's a simple concept, but when you remember how much money you're saving, it's really quite brilliant. —Kaiser

Price: \$159.95 (ATV), \$199.95 (UTV); www.tigertail.us



MOOSE EXPEDITION GEAR

SOMETIMES WE STUMBLE ACROSS A PRODUCT THAT WE LIKE SO MUCH THAT WE WANT TO TELL ALL OF OUR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES ABOUT IT. ADD THE MONARCH PASS PANTS AND JACKET FROM MOOSE TO THAT LIST.

The uninsulated Monarch Pass gear is durable, waterproof riding gear that doesn't have the clammy, garbage-bag-against-your-skin feel of other weather-resistant riding gear we've tried.

The secret — according to Moose — is the "TriTex" fabric, a laminated three-layer dobby nylon material designed to provide both venting and waterproof qualities. To test the theory, we used the Monarch Pass gear in multiple scenarios in the past eight months: warm and cold rainy days, winter riding, shoveling the driveway, walking the dog, even playing outdoor hockey in the gear on cold Minnesota nights.

The gear definitely kept us dry — we got damp around the neck and ankles, but nowhere that the gear was protecting. The sealed seams did their job expertly. The gear also generally kept us warm — obviously, being uninsulated means that a rider will want to layer underneath it, but the tough nylon exterior did a good job of knocking down the wind. That said, the pants in par-

ticular are cut relatively slim and are not made to be worn over other pants. If your legs get cold easily, they may not be the best for winter use.

Once we worked up a sweat, we could open up the vents in back and let the jacket breathe a bit. We liked the reflective patches on the jacket and pants for night use, and the pockets, though relatively small, gave us the room we needed.

The gear isn't cheap, but good stuff never is. —Prusak
Price: Pants, \$199.95-\$219.95; Jacket, \$249.95-\$259.95. **ATV**

