

Canadian Tie-Down Straps Keeps Sleds Secure



Every snowmobile strap is not made the same. Last winter, I tried the Cinchtite line of Tie-Downs and Tow Straps from Steadymate. Billed as ‘the better built securement system’, these straps meet or exceed government regulations. They are 100% manufactured in Canada by Kinedyne, the name behind the pros in the trucking industry for almost 50 years. This company also counts airlines and the military among its securement customers so they have to be serious about their business!

The first thing I noticed when handling this product for the first time is that everything is HEAVY DUTY! The weight, thickness, and hardware quality far exceeds most other straps. The solid feel of the Cinchtite lineup inspired confidence that my sleds would stay secured no matter what. And stay tight they did, even after driving over bumpy roads for hours.

These straps can also save you from being fined for an insecure load infraction. According to Jim Hillis, product manager for Steadymate, strict new regulations for tie-downs are already implemented in the western provinces, and are being phased in across the east by 2010. These rules place much greater onus on strap manufacturers by demanding that the real ‘working load limit’, and the manufacturer’s name, be clearly marked on each tie-down.

Meanwhile, Canadian authorities are stepping up inspections of trucks and trailers with tie-downs, including snowmobile haulers. I have no doubt that the Steadymate products will pass with flying colours, but many offshore and generic straps won’t measure up. And by the way, if you’re looking for the best tow strap for dragging that dead sled out of the bush, look no farther than the one from Steadymate! Click on www.kinedynecanada.com/consumer

Value Priced Helmet Gives Great Value

It used to be that finding a great helmet at a snowmobile dealer was unlikely. And if you did, it was usually resplendent with brand colours and lettering. Then the sled manufacturers realized how many helmet sales were going elsewhere. To meet this challenge, BRP introduced its original Modular Helmet, then the deluxe BV2S, and recently the Modular II. All are great helmets, albeit premium priced, with the shared characteristic of being generic enough that loyalists of any other brand could wear them

Last winter, BRP introduced a feather light, fully featured, full-face helmet, the Ski-Doo EXO700 SE Full Face Helmet by Scorpion. It’s very good, very affordable — and also very generic. Made of fiberglass and Kevlar (yes that’s the bullet-proof stuff), this Snell M2005 and D.O.T. Certified lid fulfilled a number of key functions very well for me.

The optically correct, fog resistant face shield provided wide peripheral vision and kept my head warm by sealing out frosty breezes. Alternatively, the adjustable vent system allowed me to add a little cooling in warmer temperatures and if I cracked the visor a little, it stayed where I set it. The integrated sun visor slid up and down with the convenient swipe of my gloved hand, eliminating the need for sunglasses. The visor and sun panes tightened or switched easily without tools. And the adjustable breath deflector did a credible job in the anti-fogging department.

My EXO 700 was a comfortable fit. It didn’t make my head feel heavy, or strain my neck, as a long day on the trail has done in the past with some helmets. I especially liked the moisture-wicking liner and cheek pads. Like any full-face helmet, it was tight to pull on at first, but after a while, it slipped on snugly, but easily.

If I had any misgivings, it was that I had ordered the BlackSoft Touch instead of Black Glossy. My sense was that without the gloss finish to reflect sunrays the Soft Touch helmet (really a matte finish), seemed to absorb more heat on sunny days. Next time, I’d go for the gloss. The value-priced Ski-Doo EXO700 SE Full Face Helmet by Scorpion also comes in an electric visor model. Both are available in sizes XS to 2XL at your local Ski-Doo dealer.

