

**From:** "Stuart Shakespeare"  
**Subject:** Why I really like my Darien  
**Date:** October 12, 2013 9:39:38 AM CDT  
**To:** <[aerostich.com](mailto:aerostich.com)>

Dear Aerostich,

I am not typically predisposed to write fan mail to the companies that I purchase products from, but when the products work well, I generally feel a "well done" or an "attaboy" or something positive should at least be shared, so that the manufacturers know when they are doing things right. Especially in this day and age of internet forums and the ease of posting "I'm really unhappy!" messages and other negativity.

When a product saves my neck and skin, and helps me keep body and soul together, I'm downright ecstatic, and I certainly want to talk about it.

So, leaving the hot air and windbagedness of my message aside at least a little bit, let me take some of your valuable time and tell you about it.

Last Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> October, my good riding friend and I set off across Wisconsin on a last multi day tour of the season, with plans to catch the SS Badger across Lake Michigan, and tour up the lake coastline, cross the Mackinaw bridge and ride back through the UP, including Copper Harbor along the way. A final stop at my favourite restaurant in the world, The Delta Diner was also planned.

Alas, as we motored through the county roads in Lublin, WI the whole trip was cut dramatically short by a sudden encounter with an overgrown, hoofed forest rat. Sorry, I mean a deer.

Long story short, the deer ran right out of the woods and right into me. I was travelling at 65mph.

The resulting collision threw the bike completely out of control. For the briefest of moments I thought I might regain control – a sentiment echoed by my riding friend, who observed the wobbles gradually easing, but for whatever reason it was not to be, and I high sided. Thrown dramatically (I assume dramatically – I didn't get to observe of course) from the bike. I hit the pavement hard, and tumbled and slid a ways down the road, followed by my precious Triumph Tiger 800.

Well, I lay still in the road for just a few moments, and took stock of the situation, but it was quickly apparent that there was no significant pain from anywhere, and the neural damage reports were coming in as "all checks out OK", so I slowly stood up, much to the relief of my friend. And sure enough – that was the extent of it. Sure – my Darien jacket and pants are written off, they are torn pretty badly, but the padding did its job. I added a back protector to my Darien and that was a very smart move.

Despite significant damage which I am sure is beyond economical repair, the jacket and pants were still whole. They saved my bones, my body and my skin, and they still survived intact to let me ride home 200 miles the next day.

Yes – although the Tiger has suffered some significant damage, we were able to patch it up well enough to get it, and me home.

So I just want to say a big "thank you Andy and everyone at Aerostich" for your excellent and very functional Darien equipment range. A riding suit that can save the rider AND keep the rider dry on a 300 mile rain soaked ride must surely be a top quality product.

I have an older design Darien Light and a Falstaff on hand which will see me through the rest of the riding season, but come January / February, I shall be making a trip to Duluth to order my next Darien jacket and pants.

Maybe the next one will be tan rather than grey. Those tan ones really look quite superb.

It really is a pleasure to be a member of the "great big reflective back stripe" crowd.

I have put 42,000 miles on this Tiger since buying it in 2011, and I am happy to say that as far as I can tell, after some repair, it will continue to take me around the country.

Yours

Stuart Shakespeare  
Expatriate Brit  
Princeton, Mn

PS Picture of me at the Delta Diner on March 1<sup>st</sup> this year also attached, for no other reason than I really hope to get on the cover of the Stich catalog one day. I'd rather it was with my Tiger instead of a boring old KLR650, but that was the bike that got me through snow and ice to the restaurant. Cheers again.

