

DIRT RIDER GRIM WEATHER CLOTHING GUIDE

**. . . and wet, and
snowy, and miserable.**

Well, well, well, here it is Christmas time again. And along with Christmas each year comes snow or rain or wind or whatever. In most parts of the country, riding your bike in the winter can be a real test of your ability to deal with adversity.

There are a few ways to make foul weather riding a bit less uncomfortable. That's why we've put together this little guide. While you're lying around the house thinking about those new shocks you hope to find in your TT socks come Xmas morning, you can flip through the next few pages and picture yourself all bundled up in one of these spiffy new enduro outfits.

We gathered up a pile of jackets and pants from most of the major manufacturers of foul weather riding gear and compared the quality and features of each against the other. We had originally intended this to be a shootout with winners and losers and all that nonsense. As we got more and more involved with the project, we began to wonder if there had to be a winner in something like this.

Some of the jackets were constructed

of better materials, some fit better, some had more trick features, some were cheap. It became a personal thing. Each one of you will ultimately have to decide for himself which outfit has the right combination of pockets, zips, flaps, stitching, style, fit and price. Some of you will go first class and pop for the high dollar numbers while others will prefer to sacrifice a bit of quality or perhaps a pocket or vent and save a few bucks.

All of the jackets are good. All are comfortable and offer protection against cold, wet and even branches. Obviously some of the suits offer more of the above than others. They're also usually more money.

So go ahead, look at the pictures, compare prices, think about what your particular needs really are and, when you've settled on the one you want, start working on some creative hinting. If you play your cards right, you should be able to get someone to feel sufficiently sorry for your shivering, wet body to spring for a new suit this Xmas. Happy Hunting.



FULL BORE

The Full Bore jacket absolutely bristles with nifty features. The garment is made of 50% nylon and has huge pockets (one on each side which are easily accessible on the inside of the coat while two enormous zippered models are neatly hidden on the outside.

While hiding the pockets may keep the styling sleek, it makes it difficult to get into them, especially with gloves on.

Another neat feature is the belt which is also hidden. The belt is elastic and runs around the waist inside the lining with the quick coupling loops exposed on either side. All you do is pull out the loops, twist them together and the waist is instantly cinched up. When you release the buckle, the elastic immediately contracts and the whole thing disappears. No adjusting of fumbling for little holes like other belts. Very sano.

Also very sano is the sealable back vent. Under a flap across the shoulders is a large panel of mesh, rather like those fishnet tank tops you see everywhere. The flap is opened or closed by a nylon zipper, allowing the wearer the option of a flow-through system or a completely enclosed jacket, depending on weather conditions.

The zipper down the front on the Full Bore jacket is also nylon and is backed up by five snaps. The Mandarin (or Nehru or whatever) collar also snaps shut. Another neat trick. The ov-

erlapping collar flap can be snapped to the inside so it doesn't flutter in the breeze if you choose to wear it open. Very neat.

Cuffs snap shut to any of three positions.

The pants. Full Bore wins the over-pants competition hands down. If you've ever seen the warm up pants all the skiers are wearing these days, then you know how the Full Bore items are made.

A double zipper runs the full length of each leg down the outside. To slip into these goodies, you just unzip each leg, sit on the back half, slip a boot through each cuff and zip 'em up. Quick and easy. This arrangement makes it easy to get the pants on and off over your boots and leathers.

Reinforced seat, crotch and knees, 3-way snap cuffs to fit tightly around the boots and another big pocket just inside the right zipper. An elastic waistband makes for a comfy kit. Like the Full Bore jacket, the pants are washable and dry cleanable.

One more thing; the jacket we got is a large and is too big even for 6 foot, 200 pound editors. When you order, be sure you specify the proper size as the jackets seem to run a bit big. Pants fit fine. The entire suit is made from Trailex, an exclusive, patented material used only by Full Bore.

Price . . . \$98.00 Suit from authorized Full Bore dealers.



GRIFFIN ENDURO JACKET

If this were a shoot out, it would be between the Griffin and the Belstaff. The Griffin is a quality jacket with no corners cut to save expense.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the Griffin jacket is the material used in its construction. It's called 1,000 Day Cloth and has been approved by the AMA for use in MX pants. The material is light, waterproof, strong and abrasion resistant. Even the nylon thread used in the stitching is among the strongest available.

Ensolite padding is found on the elbows, upper arms and shoulders. There is a zippered vent under the shoulder

flap and the inner lining is a lightweight nylon type material that feels comfortable under any conditions.

Three snap flap storm proof pockets in front, plus a card holder. Instead of a pocket on the left chest, there is a large velcro flap with a neat little pocket to slip your card into. This is one of the neatest ideas we've seen for the enduro rider.

The collar flap and cuffs also close with velcro and there is a soft lining in the collar. The external belt has a quick fastening buckle. Four snaps help seal the front flap over the zipper. The zipper is of the two-way variety making it possible to have the upper part

closed and the lower portion open.

The Griffin Enduro Jacket is available in solid blue or red, or team color combinations of blue/yellow blue/orange or blue/red. Sizes are S, M, L, and XL. The sizes run true to form as our jacket was a medium and felt a bit too snug for all of us.

You'll be seeing more and more pro motocrossers wearing the Griffin MX pants made from the same 1,000 Day Cloth as the word spreads. Griffin knows their stuff and are making some mighty fine products.

Price . . . \$85.00. From: Via-Therm Products, P.O. Box 486, Bridgeport, CT 06601. (203) 335-0721.

YAMAHA

The Yamaha is the only jacket we tested that came with a zip out fur liner. Or at least fake fur, anyway. The Yamaha jacket turned out to be an extra large and is about the same size as the Full Bore large.

The coat is made from rather thin nylon material and is equipped with four velcro flapped pockets in front, two in the rear, none inside. The upper right pocket has a zipper under the velcro flap, presumably a place to stash valuables. External pockets like these may break up the lines of the garment somewhat but they sure are easy to get to.

The collar is lined with a knit material to soak up moisture and closes with velcro. This coat has shoulder epaulets which, with a little imagination, can be used to hold all kinds of things, we suppose.

Yamaha has come up with a very light very comfortable jacket with no frills or cute gimmicks . . . Editor Carman wore this jacket in the Bad Rock Two Day and came back very impressed with the fit and feel of the garment.

A mesh screen under the shoulder flap lets air circulate through the coat when the liner is not used. When the

liner is zipped in, the Yamaha jacket is very warm yet still retains the light feel.

An outside belt cinches up the waist with a double ring type buckle. Velcro tabs close the front flap over the zipper to help seal out weather. Double stitching abounds and the jacket is machine washable.

While not as waterproof as some others, the Yamaha is fairly resistant to most moisture. If you live in a particularly wet area, you'll probably want to treat the jacket with some sort of waterproofing compound.

Price . . . \$74.95 from Yamaha dealers.





HONDALINE

Your basic raincoat. The Hondaline jacket has the least features of any of the jackets we tested. The bare minimum. Lightweight nylon and nylon lining give the coat a very thin feel. Weight is minimal and comfort is very good. Most of our testers felt that the Hondaline would be most sensible in very moderate climates as it is not particularly water or weatherproof.

There is one nice feature of the jacket in the form of very thickly padded elbows.

The Hondaline enduro jacket comes equipped with four snap flap pockets in front and one on the inside left, much like those found in sportcoats.

Nylon zipper up the front with a narrow flap over it. Fine snaps close the flap. The collar closes with a little

elastic velcro tab that also tucks neatly out of the way when not in use. The collar is lined with a stretchy knit material that doesn't look as though it would soak up much water.

Machine wash the Hondaline, or dry clean if you prefer. Tumble dry at low heat. Hondaline jackets require very little special care.

There are better jackets around, but for low bucks the Hondaline is hard to beat. Especially if it never gets very wet or cold where you live.

Price . . . \$46.00. From: Your Honda dealer.

(NOTE: A lined version that is much more weatherproof is available for a few extra bucks. This word came too late for an evaluation. Look for one in a later issue.—ED.)

BELSTAFF XL 500 TRIALMASTER

Belstaff, the big gun. The XL 500 is designed just like it's big brother, the trailmaster Professional. The only difference is that the XL 500 is made of nylon instead of waxed cotton like the Professional.

It's light, sturdy and has a quilted lining. Super comfy.

Something about Belstaff styling just makes you feel like Sammy Miller. When the XL 500 is new you wouldn't hesitate to wear it to a dinner party or to the movies with your girl.

The nylon used in the construction of the XL 500 feels to be a bit thicker than the other nylon jackets. Maybe it's a bit higher quality. Sounds reasonable to us. Belstaff has a reputation for producing nothing but the best grim weather gear.

Metal zipper up the front, five snaps close the flap. Four snap flap pockets outside, none inside. Corduroy lined collar closes with a conventional buckle. It's a pain in the ass with gloves on but terribly British.

Super little screened metal vents under each arm. We don't know if they actually accomplish anything, but they sure look spiffy.

Cuffs close with two snap positions. No padding anywhere, a belt cinches things up around the middle.

The matching pants feature a reinforced seat and crotch area, the same lining as the jacket, and zipper leg closures. Good fit and feel.

The Bellstaff XL 500 outfit is right in there with the Griffin jacket and the Belstaff Professional.

Price . . . \$63.50 Jacket, \$36.50 Pants. From: Your dealer through Hap Jones.





BELSTAFF PROFESSIONAL

Take all of the styling and features of the XL 500, make the jacket out of heavy canvas-like waxed cotton, line it with plaid cotton and you have the Professional.

This is the old standard. You'll see more of these jackets at cross-country events than any other. Part of the reason for the popularity of this coat is its incredible durability. Belstaff waxed cotton enduro jackets have been known to wear out several owners before finally giving up the ghost.

This coat is possibly the most weatherproof of all, and that's kind of a problem. You see, the Belstaff Professional is so waterproof that it won't let any air get to your little body. This means that sweat can't evaporate prop-

erly and that sometimes gets uncomfortable. On real cold runs, there's nothing like it. In the desert, it sometimes feels as if you're wearing a pup tent. Protection from branches or gravel rash is superb. Editor Carman once went down on an asphalt road, in the rain, at over 40 mph and didn't receive a scrape. The oil in the cloth and the water on the street made for a nice lubrication, enabling Carman to slide easily along the macadam.

The strength of the material also presents another problem; it's the heaviest of all the coats we tried. It's really heavy. As it gets dirty, it seems to get heavier and it does get dirty. Dust clings to the oily surface like a magnet. Helpful hint; don't you ever show up at an enduro with a clean Belstaff unless you

want to be laughed out of the sign-up line.

This coat is the big rage in Europe and they know from crummy weather. Somehow, the heaviness, the clumsy buckles and the zipper being on the wrong side, all serve to make the Belstaff seem more British.

Pants are same material with reinforced seat and crotch. Same lining and same snaps and funny buckles close the legs tightly around the boot. You won't find velcro on a Belstaff. Perhaps that's as it should be.

Price . . . \$67.50 Jacket, \$43.50 Pants. From: Your dealer through Hap Jones Distributing.

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CLOTHING GUIDE

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GRIFFIN SIX DAYS JACKET

This is an advance copy (a *Dirt Rider* exclusive) of the outfit the American Six Days riders will be wearing in Austria.

Since ours is one of the first three made, a few changes may be made before actual production begins.

Super light red nylon with blue trim. Huge white U.S.A. down each sleeve leaves no doubt. Definitely adjustable velcro cuffs and collar closure.

The nylon zipper up the front is covered by a velcro flap to increase weatherproofing.

A mesh vent lets air out under the shoulder flap and the soft corduroy lined collar seals with velcro for easily accessible snap pockets with a big velcro lined flap on the upper left for your score card.

A super good looking jacket that should provide plenty of service, like the other Griffin products.

Comfort is excellent and the standard belt goes around the middle.

Matching nylon rain pants are very basic, with no lining, elastic cuffs, waist band and snap closures on either side. Price . . . unavailable at press time. From: Visa Therm Products, P.O. Box 486, Bridgeport, CT 06601. (203) 335-0721.

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