

## TRIED & TESTED

MCN STAFF RATE THEIR RIDING KIT



Still like new after 1200 miles and four washes

1200 MILES



Detailing is pleasingly high-end



**Bull-it Tactical Icon II jeans, £139.99**

# 'The comfort of protection'

**Tester Richard Newland Time tested 3 months/1200 miles**



The trade-off between protection, comfort, style and versatility is one that rages almost every time we get on a bike. I've tried to get the options down to two set choices over the years: Jacket and jeans, or a textile suit. Even I can usually make a fast decision between only two options.

My absolute default – even in winter when it's dry – is riding jeans and a jacket, so having highly protective but comfortable jeans is crucial, especially as I often spend all day in them, either in the saddle or while wandering about having ridden to a destination. I've tested a large number over the years, and these Bull-It jobbies are definitely in my top three (Draggin and Spidi make the other two on my podium).

These Tactical Icon IIs were superbly comfortable from the moment I put them on. Much of that is thanks to the construction and stretchy feel of the material, and the fact that they're single-layer, meaning they're

almost indistinguishable from normal jeans in terms of weight, flexibility and comfort. Where they differ, is that they're certified AA rated for protection and, if you want to, they can be fitted with knee and hip armour as well. Personally, that's one of my trade-off items, and I don't have the armour fitted, but I have ridden with it fitted, and the armour is comfortable in position. The supplied protectors slot into sewn-in pockets within the jeans which fasten with Velcro closures.

The armour doesn't move, sculps well, and doesn't look cumbersome beneath the material. The armour is CE161 Level 2 at both knee and hip. And while the jeans are single layer, there is a mesh liner to knee height on the front and the aforementioned pockets for armour, but all the extra bits are integrated without rough seams or scratchy panels – so they don't detract from the feeling of a lightweight jean. On the bike they offer a good connection to the seat – they're not overly sticky or slippery – and are stretchy enough to offer some give. In hot weather they stay

appreciably cool, and they're just like a normal jean to walk around in.

They come in sizes 30-44 for men, with different leg lengths available. In my size, they're ever so slightly large, so try them first. A ladies' cut is also available (Tactical Icona II) in sizes 4-16.

After 1200 miles and four washes they still look new, and I really like the detailing in terms of the 5-pocket design, branded button – and the use of a proper YKK zip. They look and feel (and perform) like a quality high-end garment, for a price that feels like exceptionally good value.



Protective, with the comfort of normal jeans

### PROS & CONS

- + **Soft, pliable, comfortable and protective to a high standard**
- **Try before you buy to ensure a good fit – mine came up large**



Five pockets are a handy addition