



Richa Blade boots £129.99

‘Set for fast riding’

Tested by Gareth Evans for 2000 miles and two trackdays



I've built quite a relationship with these boots. We've seen some things – notably huge storms, both on road and on track. I can confirm Richa's claim that they're 100% waterproof. But more importantly, I love how comfortable they are considering the rigidity required to offer the required protection. But you might expect that from the most expensive boots in the firm's racing line-up.

There's bracing for your calf, armour for your shin and both things for your heel, plus removable toe sliders and a patch for gear changes, which was welcome given the quickshifter on my R7 needs a bit of a kick to operate.

Despite their racy looks, they're actually pretty flexible for use off the bike (although my jeans don't fit around them so I've had some weird looks) and they're well ventilated too, which helped in blazing sunshine at Brands Hatch.

The soles have treaded rubber grip, which helps on the pegs and the ground. Plus, in this colour scheme they match Yamaha's 60th Anniversary Edition Speed Block livery brilliantly. There is a choice of four other hues if this one doesn't work.

In fact, my only criticism is that they're fairly tight around my calves and ankles, and while they've fared well to date, I'm a little concerned the fastening zip is getting a hard time. It gets the liner trapped occasionally too, and that plus the force required to do the boots up could mean it doesn't last as long as I'd like. I'll keep on going and let you know.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
nevis.uk.com



RST Pro Series Paragon 6 Airbag Jacket £449

‘Top tech at an sensible price’

Tested by Justin Hayzelden for four months



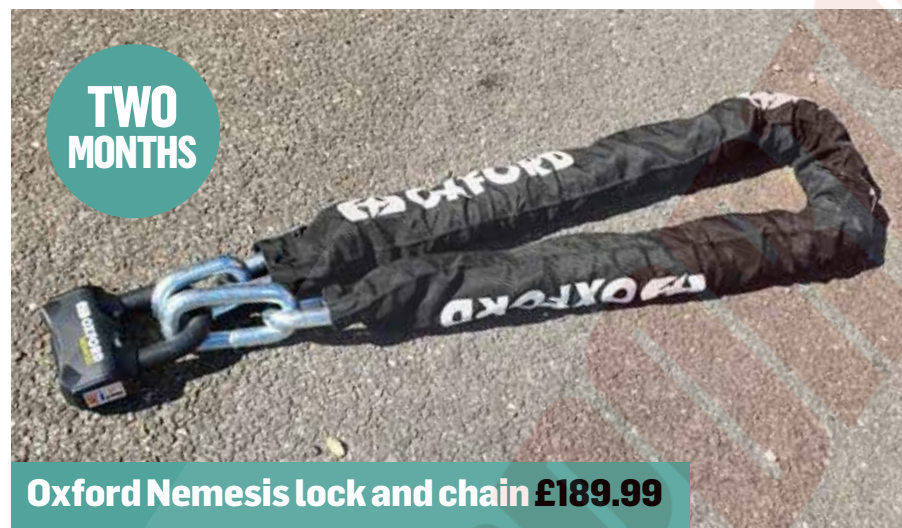
Pro Series is the catch-all moniker for RST's top-of-the-line textiles and heading up the touring section is this Paragon 6 Airbag jacket, packed with technology from French safety specialists In&motion.

Although it comes with the inflation unit and bag built in, the control unit – called the In&box – has to be acquired separately, either by lease at £12 per month or £399 outright. It sounds like a faff, but actually makes sense, as the unit is subject to continuous updates from user generated data, downloaded directly from In&motion over wi-fi via an intuitive app. Once fully charged, the In&box should have a battery life of 30 hours – I top it up once a week, which easily covers the daily commute plus a few miles for smiles. The jacket itself is constructed from ballistic reinforced MaxTex, a tough polyester weave that earns it an AA CE certification. This outer layer has been treated with a hydrophobic coating to act as a first line of defence in the wet and it's pretty effective, causing water droplets to just bead up and roll off. Although it holds up well in showers, prolonged heavy rain can cause it to 'wet out' – which is when the Sinaqua inner membrane comes into play. This layer has so far proved impregnable to damp. It's breathable too, so you don't suffer that 'boil in the bag' feeling.

The 'quick dry' inner mesh lining takes care of comfort, whilst a removable thermal layer helps keep things toasty in winter. There's a detachable 'throat coat' to seal the gap between collar and helmet, an absolute godsend when the wind chill's down to zero. In summer, effective airflow can be achieved via an array of zippable vents both front and rear.

Airbag aside, the Paragon 6 makes a great touring jacket, but combined with safety tech that has been a proven lifesaver at the top level of motorsport, it offers additional peace of mind – and at a surprisingly affordable price.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.rst-moto.com



Oxford Nemesis lock and chain £189.99

‘Protection meets usability’

Tested by Ben Clarke for two months



The recently updated Oxford Nemesis lock and chain set is a great middle ground between a portable chain you might use out and about and the kind of heavy-duty metalwork you could only realistically deploy at home. At 7.7kg (1.2m version), it's a little too heavy to carry with you on the road but the 16mm hardened steel links are more than a set of bolt croppers can munch through, so if you are able to carry it somewhere it offers a great level of security (it carries a Sold Secure Gold rating). On the plus side, it's dainty enough to fit between the spokes of most bikes – the fairly tight pattern of the

Indian FTR S's cast rims are no problem – and it's light enough to manhandle without issue, too. As an added bonus, the padlock acts as a disc lock when you're out and about and you can arrange the chain in such a way that it's locked to the disc to make it harder for thieves to move your bike around and gain access with cutting tools. The fabric sleeve protects your paintwork and this is the first chain I've used where the studs holding the sleeve in place haven't immediately given up.

The £189.99 price is a little salty but when you consider the lock's double use it doesn't seem so bad. There are plenty of deals to be had online, too.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.oxfordproducts.com



Zerofit Neck Warmer £25

‘Warm but restrictive’

Tested by Joseph Wright for four months/1500 miles



Zerofit gear normally strikes the perfect balance between comfort and warmth but sadly not this time. Don't get me wrong, this neck warmer will keep you more than toasty on frosty January mornings but I found it just too bulky.

While the neck warmer provides great insulation, it felt restrictive, making it difficult to turn my head for good visibility when approaching roundabouts and using slip roads. Being a newer rider I would choose awareness and safety over coziness. On the other hand, for marathon motorway miles this is the ultimate winter warmer and the 'heat rub' technology is top class.

The heat threads, claimed to make this apparel five times warmer than rival kit, are effective but the material feels a little irritating and prickly. So, while this neck warmer is the ultimate insulator it also delivers restricted mobility.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.zerofit.co.uk