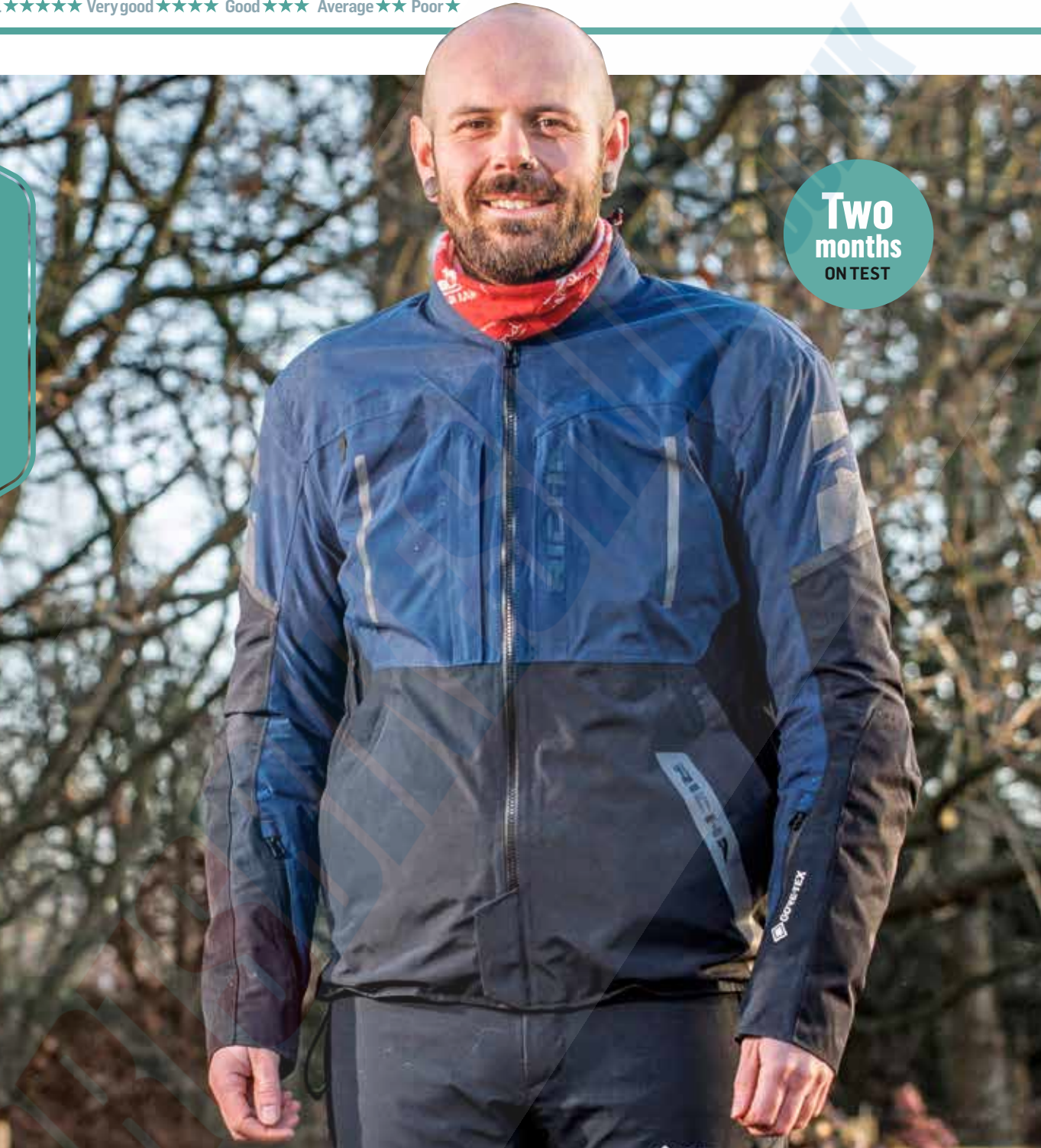


TRIED & TESTED
MCN STAFF RATE THEIR RIDING KIT
 ★★★★★

Two months ON TEST



Vents have waterproof zips, and they work so far



Richa Orion GTX jacket £550

Understated design for all types of bike

It's shrugged off winter



Tested by Ben Clarke for two months/300 miles
 I've only worn this new textile jacket for a couple of months and a few hundred miles but given that it's just come out and the miles I've covered have been quite extreme weather-wise, I wanted to give my first impressions.

What drew me to the jacket in the first place is that it doesn't look like typical adventure gear. There's a tendency for this kind of kit to make you look like you're heading off around Morocco or a RTW trip. A colleague describes this aesthetic as "pockety", which I think sums it up rather well. It's all very well if you ride a GS or Tiger or whatever, but sometimes you just want textiles because the weather is rubbish. Not

that the Orion would look out of place on those bikes, either, I think you could wear it on anything, especially in the subtle colour options (although RNL orange is also available).

I was also pleased to see the D30 Level 1 armour and AA-rated CE certification, which isn't always a given even at this price point. Sticking with safety, there are plenty of reflective flashes to keep you visible in the winter darkness, too.

During my first few hundred miles with the Orion, I've encountered sharp frosts, -1°C commutes and rain that would have deep sea fishing captains thinking twice, and the laminated Gore-Tex Orion has shrugged it all off no problem. With the long connector zip between the top and bottom halves fastened, I've not a drop of moisture or a puff of cold air make it

through. The jacket uses a band of elastic to cinch at the waist and a drawstring to tighten up the hem, which helps with warmth, waterproofing and riding comfort.

I was surprised that the main zip is exposed to the elements as you often see an exterior storm flap on this type of garment, but the internal storm flap uses a clever guttering system so that any rain that comes through is channelled down and out of the bottom. The rubberised gusset zips on the sleeves have also remained watertight and double up as vents for the summer. Additional vents on either side of the chest and a large exhaust at the rear suggest that once the temperature climbs and the thermal lining is removed, I'll have no problem staying cool – I'll find out eventually, I hope!

Despite not looking too "pockety", there are plenty, with two large ones on the front, two internal and a massive side-entry poacher's pocket on the rear. The internal pockets are also on the jacket itself, not just the liner, so you get them in summer, too. There are also chest protector pockets fitted.

So far, I've not got anything to complain about at all.
MCN rating ★★★★★
www.nevis.uk.com

PROS & CONS

- + Keeps out the cold and the rain. AA rated with D30
- As far as winter's concerned, there are none so far



This label is always a welcome sign



Zip vents will be welcome in summer