

2500-MILE TEST

PROTECTION

The suit is CE A-rated and comes with Level 2 armour on the shoulders, elbows and knees. There is no back protector - Oxford prefers to let customers choose what they want - and no hip armour as standard, though there are pockets.

LOOKS

Subtle coral and silver detailing provides a gentle touch of femininity - not everything has to be shocking pink! The jacket is tailored to fit the female form and there are zips at the hip.

VENTING

Zippered, mesh sections on both the trousers and jacket aren't quite cooling enough on warmer days. I think airflow would be improved if they were slightly larger or better placed.



Ventilation isn't the most effective



Female-specific trousers are available in three lengths



'Great value and performance'

OXFORD WOMEN'S MONDIAL 2.0 £299.99 (JACKET), £249.99 (TROUSERS)

> oxfordproducts.com

The ladies' version of the updated Mondial laminated jacket puts up a decent fight against the ravages of winter

THE FACTS

USED BY Alison Silcox

USED FOR 2500 miles

USED ON Sports tourer, tall-rounder

TOTAL MILES 2500

THE CLAIM

"The best-selling Mondial Dry2Dry Lamine jacket returns with a host of improvements, including CE Level 2 protectors, increased adjustability and more wearer-friendly ease of use across the garment.

"Lamine textiles fuse the Dry2Dry membrane to the outer shell, creating an extremely lightweight, durable and waterproof garment. Protection has received a spec bump, in the shape of upgraded CE level 2 protectors."

THE REALITY

I tested the first-generation Mondial suit and was really impressed, so I jumped at the chance to put the updated version through its paces. It now comes with Level 2 armour and claims to have increased adjustability. Like the original version, it's a fully waterproof, laminate suit. At £550, it's very good value but quality hasn't been compromised.

From the off, it's been comfortable and, for once, sizing is spot-on. At 5ft 10in with a 33in inside leg, I struggle to

get trousers that are long enough, so I often end up wearing unisex, which then don't fit around my hips. The Mondial trousers are female-specific and are available in three lengths; sleeve length on the jacket is great too.

Little touches make a big difference. I like the Velcro adjusters at the waist and on the arms, and there's the option of either having the collar zipped and popped shut, or pinned back by using the hook-and-loop system.

But the braces are pointless. They're well-made and attach directly to the trousers but when a lady needs to use certain facilities, braces are a pain. You need to take off the jacket; not great in some of the less-salubrious toilets you get on the road. However, they can be removed, and the jacket and trousers zipped together to prevent gapping.

On a recent trip to mainland Europe, I lived in the kit for a week; it was incredibly comfortable and withstood 'normal' rain conditions. However, back in the UK I had to ride through Storm Babet for three hours, and both trousers and jacket leaked. To be fair, I don't think any kit would've withstood that deluge.

THE WEAR AND TEAR

Nothing to report on this front - the zips and Velcro flaps work as they did when new and there are no areas of piling or threads appearing. It has stood up to this winter's onslaught very well so far.

SCORES

- Comfort 8
- Practicality 8
- Quality 7
- Protection 8
- Value 9

Total score 40/50

Comfortable, waterproof and looks good. It didn't stand up to storm-force conditions but, to be honest, a motorcycle isn't the best form of transport in that weather. Too hot for high summer but below 20°C, it fits the bill.

TESTING IN PROGRESS

RiDE staffers on kit they've been using recently

Shoei Neotec III helmet
£589.99-£679.99

shoeiassured.co.uk

I use this for longer trips because I prefer the convenience of a flip when stopping multiple times for fuel or breaks. It's a weighty, solid-feeling helmet that's stable in use. It isn't draughty when you don't want airflow, and the chin vent is effective at preventing misting. However, the two-position vent can be a little tricky to operate with winter gloves, as can the visor-release button (it locks, unlike previous versions). Flipping the chin bar is easy. It locks open nicely and it is superbly comfortable in all conditions. This is now my go-to helmet for long rides or tours - I absolutely love it.

Jim Blackstock



Zerofit Heatrub base layers
£60 top, £60 trousers

zerofit.co.uk

I've been using these for two years, and I'm astounded by their warmth and comfort. Fit is good, with a decent amount of stretch to fit a variety of body shapes.

To give you the required length in the arms and legs, I'd go one size up from the website recommendation; and I'd go for the polo-neck option because the crew neck is wider than I'd like. Great value; far cheaper than buying a flash winter jacket. As RiDE went to press, there was £5 off both top and trousers. **Matt Wildee**

