

TRIED & TESTED

MCN STAFF RATE THEIR RIDING KIT

★★★★★

3000 miles ON TEST



Quality sliders give feel without being grabby



Alpinestars Racing Absolute V2 Leather Suit £3379.99

‘Proper protection’

The suit fits like a set of pyjamas



Tested by Carl Stevens for one year

I'm old-school, in the fact that I'm still convinced that there's nothing cooler than a one-piece suit. And on that subject, the Racing Absolute V2 from Alpinestars is one of the best I've used – and it's now the 17th suit that I've had... yes, really!

This is because it not only looks the part with its fit and colours (red and blue are also available), but in standard sizing it fits incredibly well; the arms are the perfect length and width (so as not to be too tight on the forearms which then exacerbates arm pump), the inner suit has never rubbed nor been uncomfortable and even though it's jam-packed with CE Level 2 armour throughout, none of it has ever really moved when wriggling in, or feels too bulky when on.

It's CE approved to AAA which is the highest rating on offer, yet thanks to the new, tear-resistant stretch panels in all the right places it's easy to move around in. The cut, although aggressive and set perfectly for a more committed riding position, isn't excessive and this is a suit that I can wear all day without having any issues with comfort, especially as it has an impressive level of ventilation to keep things cool as well, on both the body and the legs.

There are some neat touches, such as a newly designed cuff system that sits comfortably on the wrist (some of the lower-spec suits from Alpinestars and other brands often overlook this) and there's loads of room for the leather to stretch around the very bottom of your calf, in order to get the perfect fitment with a set of Alpinestars Supertech R boots as

well, because the inner-boot is designed to go underneath the leather. But, and this is a big but, it comes at a price which is pretty hefty.

The suit will set you back £3379.99 which is a monumental amount of money, especially because that is without an airbag (which I'd highly recommend – I run a Tech-Air 10 system in mine, but even the cheaper, Tech-Air 7X airbag is an extra £899). However, this suit has endured a huge amount of mileage and has been through just about every UK riding condition, and the quality has been outstanding – there's no wear on the leather, the protectors look as good as new and the lining is still as fresh as the day that I opened the packaging. The zips are all still as slick as ever while the knee sliders also feel impressively premium as not only do they last for a long time, but

they also offer great feel on the tarmac without being too grabby over kerbs. The only issue comes in trying to replace them, because the Velcro is so effective!

If you're happy spending big bucks on your riding kit then you won't be disappointed with the Racing Absolute V2 because it's an incredible bit of kit, but if you're on a tighter budget, there are quality suits that you can get far cheaper.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.alpinestars.com

PROS & CONS

- +** Comfortable, protective and built to last
- Seriously costly, and doesn't include an airbag



Comfortable in every riding position



Cuff sits perfectly on your wrists