

have great freedom of movement for such a heavy-duty garment, which is hugely beneficial when you're riding off road, as tricky surfaces can require some decidedly unconventional body positions to negotiate.

I rode in the suit for eight hours, on a mixture of flowing A roads, casual trails and full-on motocross tracks – and in that time nothing rubbed or chaffed, everything was just as comfortable as if I were wearing casual clothing.

With the vents closed on the road, there was absolutely no wind leakage, no chilly breeze down the neck – nothing. On the motocross track, in slick and slippery conditions, with the vents open on a sunny day, I was not much warmer than I would have been if I'd just been wearing more conventional motocross gear.

I did sweat – Gore-Tex is good stuff, but it can't work miracles. It won't prevent you from perspiring when you get hot – but I was never uncomfortably warm, even when I stopped, which is normally when the temperature levels go critical. And at my modest pace, on a slippery track where I was even slower than normal, for it to vent well without the assistance of much through-draught is truly impressive.

The weather was unhelpfully sunny, so I couldn't test how waterproof the suit is – the best I could manage was a shower in



RiDE's Paul Harris tries the kit in its element

it back at the hotel, where 10 minutes of vigorous warm water failed to find any leak points. I shall put some miles on the suit over winter, safe in the knowledge that the British winter will test its waterproofness more fully.

It's important to note that the Adventure Rally suit was designed for use as a layer system, so it's not warm in itself, but the material is pretty chunky. While cruising at 60 and 70mph with the vents closed I was plenty warm enough – if you're crossing the Andes, however, you'll want to take something to keep you warm when the sun goes down.

At around £1000 for the jacket and £600 for the jeans, the Klim Adventure Rally suit is undeniably very expensive kit. But it was never designed with big sales in mind – it was conceptualised, designed and built by and for people whose kit might genuinely make the difference between life and death, not for people who have the odd ride out on their BMW R1200GS Adventures when the weather's not too bad. There's just no compromise to it, everything feels dependably bulletproof and there's a long list of features that are there purely for practical reasons.

This is a suit for people who push adventure riding to the limit, who are entirely dependant on the kit they take with them, where getting wet or too hot could quite literally be life-threatening. So it's been designed and built to perform, rather than to a budget or a styling brief – and this prices it out of reach for most of us.

But is the suit worth the money? I think yes – the quality is awesome and it has more performance than I could ever use. Is it worth the money to you? That depends on how extreme your riding is – it won't be worth it for everyone. But if not having dependable high-performance kit means consequences somewhat more severe than just a miserable, soggy ride home, it's essential.

PRODUCTS



Q I was hit in the face by a stone thrown up by a quarry truck – don't worry, I'm fine. But my visor now has a huge scratch in it. How do I get rid of it?

Jay Reynolds

A There are a couple of things you could try, Jay – but to be honest you may be better just getting a fresh visor. A basic course of polishing should take care of small scratches, but you won't be able to do anything about a deep gouge. Also, a deep scratch may weaken the visor, so it could fail in a crash. You don't tell us what the helmet is, but www.visorshop.com stocks replacement visors for most brands of helmet.

Q I've gone through four sets of heated grips in the past five years. There must be a better way of keeping hands warm in winter?

Steve McBride

A Grips are good things, Steve – it's strange that you've had so many pack up on you, though. We'd consider getting the bike checked to see if there's an unhealthy surge in its electrical system that's damaging the grips' controllers.

For heat we'd favour heated gloves run off the bike's 12v battery. We've used Gerbing kit (see www.gerbings.co.uk) but there are several similar systems (see www.exo2.co.uk or www.gjali.com). Or try battery-powered 9v gloves which aren't so warm and have a limited charge, but don't tether you to the bike with a power lead. There's a choice of systems, but we were impressed by Harley's heated gloves: search on www.harley-davidson.com

THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THE ADVENTURE RALLY SUIT

The Adventure Rally suit came about through the collaboration of three groups. It started when Dave Lomax and Chris Colling of Adventure Spec approached waterproof fabric manufacturer WL Gore to enquire about having a suit made to their specifications for the adventure riding market.

Adventure Spec exists solely because Dave and Chris were unable to obtain high enough spec'd equipment for their own adventure riding needs, so started their own company to source and provide what they knew extreme adventure riders would require. When it came to suits, they had their own ideas of what a top-end kit should be and there was nothing on the market that matched their standards.

They initially approached Gore hoping for a Gore-Tex license to manufacture kit to their own design. Gore listened to their ideas and then suggested they speak to a garment manufacturer who already had a Gore-Tex license, who could also make bespoke, specialist, extreme outdoors gear. Enter Klim.

Klim have been around for 16 years. Based on the edge of the Rocky Mountains,

Klim trace their roots back to making bespoke kit for the staff at ski resorts.

It wasn't long before they realised that the kit that they manufactured – warm, durable and waterproof – was also perfect for snowmobiling, so they went to market and quickly became leaders in snowmobile wear. About 10 years ago they theorised that what works for the snowmobile crowd could work for the off-road biking crowd and began to produce kit for enduro riders.

Adventure Spec are the exclusive UK importers of the Adventure Rally suit. Dave and Chris are also happy to share their astonishing range of experience of real-world adventure riding, if you're planning your own expedition.

If you'd like a taste of the flavour, check the excellent *Salt and Gold* DVD, which tells the story of Dave's 2009 trip to seek out the salt mines of Taoudenni in deepest Malian Sahara. It's a good-humoured and unpretentious tale of a small bunch of British riders cheerfully exploring sub-Saharan Africa. Be warned, however – it'll have you scouring eBay for a big-bore off-roader with a massive fuel tank.



Want to know more about Adventure Spec? Visit www.adventure-spec.com