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PINKBIKE REVIEWS

Pinkbike Product Picks

May 30, 2013
by Matt Wragg Follow

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Mavic Stratos H20 Jacket

Mavic have been one of mountain bikings top brands for wheels for as long as most of us at Pinkbike can remember. So the thought of them making a waterproof jacket felt a little bit weird. That was until they pointed out that they are in the same family of companies as Arcteryx and Salomon. Suddenly it made a whole lot more sense. This Stratos H2O Jacket is in their Altium line, meaning it is the top-end MTB jacket. They describe it as an "extreme wet weather jacket with technical features designed for the rigors of trail riding." It's made of breathable Cocona Xcelerator fabric, bonded together at the seams to create a jacket rated for whatever nature throws at you. It's light enough to fold into a backpack and is covered with useful features, like scuff guards on the sleeves, a removable hood and even a little plastic window to view your watch. MSRP \$399.99 www.mavic.com







We really like the way this jacket looks - technical, maybe even stylish, but not over the top. On the right, the zipped vent was a feature we are very fond of.

Pinkbike's Take:

Ex. 2021 - 001 IPR2018-00190



It may sound silly point to start with, but the Stratos simply looks and feels right. It's a fairly highend jacket with a pricetag to match, so being styled this nicely and feeling this good in your hands and when you're wearing it goes a long way to helping you justify the extra money it costs compared to a basic jacket. It's also worth keeping in mind that it is still a lot less expensive than the GoreTex exotica offered by its sister brand, Arcertyx. The lightweight, breathable material belies how waterproof it is and we are starting to suspect that we'd need to go swimming in it before it lets us down. That light weight also makes it a perfect pack jacket, as many times you have to compromise how waterproof your jacket is to have something that folds up this small. One feature we found surprisingly useful (but difficult to explain) is the unique system of having a strip of vent material alongside the main zipper, so you can keep the jacket open a couple of inches to let air in, without the jacket flapping about. The only two negatives we can find are that if you are wearing a full-face helmet the chunky main zipper taps on the chinbar as you ride and, if you like to roll your sleeves up, the watch window cuts into your arm a tiny bit. In all, this is a great riding jacket. - Matt Wragg

Renthal Kevlar Compound Lock-on Grips

Renthal's lock-on grips take a slightly different approach to anybody else out there. While most companies make their grips as three separate components, two collars and a rubber body, four if you count the end cap, these Renthals are a single, integrated piece. The rubber is bonded to the collars and the end cap is part of the outer collar because they felt that having separate pieces introduced too much play into your grip. Working with Fabien Barel to develop these grips, he identified that most riders put the heel of the palm on the outer collar of the grip as it's a hard surface to push against and control the bike, so they tailored the shape, tapering the rubber to the collar to make this as comfortable as possible. They are available in a range of compounds: super-soft, soft, medium and, these here on test, kevlar. MSRP \$32.99 www.renthalcycling.com







After around 500km of trail miles, the kevlar grips still look fairly fresh, if a touch muddy. There are lots of nice touches all the way though, look the drilled collars to save weight and the Renthal-branded, integral end caps.

Pinkbike's Take:



These kevlar compound grips feel about equivalent to the soft compound, costs \$3 extra over the regular compounds, but have a noticably longer lifespan. After a month on the bike we're struggling to see any signs of usage. We dismissed Fabien's theory of hand-placement initially, then we started thinking about it, realising we were doing exactly what he described. That doesn't mean there is a revelation moment with these grips, you don't put your hands on a set and feel your world has changed. It is more like a subtle, underlying sense of them just feeling right. Unless you spend time analysing it like we have here, we would suspect it would be hard to explain what it is about them which makes them so nice. Coming from much bigger grips, they are a touch small for our personal preferences, although we have heard mutterings from Renthal about offering them in a range of widths eventually, which is something we would be keen to see. The only warning note is that this kevlar compound gets very slippery in the wet if you ride without gloves. Renthal say that the super-soft is a much better bet in that situation, but we haven't had chance to test this out yet. We do also need to mention that the end bolts are very soft, so be careful when you're tightening and loosening them. - Matt Wragg

Ex. 2021 - 002 IPR2018-00190

SKS Aeron Mini-pump

The Aeron is an aluminium-bodied mini-pump made in Germany. It's nine inches (220mm) long and weighs just 157g. It's mountain-bike specific, in that it has a fairly large volume, but is only rated up to 5bar/73PSI, whereas road bikes would commonly need pressures over 100PSI. However, for a mountain bike that is no issue as we can't imagine when you would want more 40 or 50PSI in your tyres. The configuration inside the head can be quickly changed to accept both schraeder and presta valves. MSRP \$24.99 www.sks-germany.com



We reckon the Aeron looks more expensive than it actually is and we cannot fault it has been a solid performer.

Pinkbike's Take:



If there is one country we would trust to make pump, it's Germany. While it may not have the elegant, boutique feel of offerings from companies like Lezyne, the aluminium body is classy and, more importantly, solid. We especially like the rubber ring they use to keep the head in position while the pump is closed, it is both utterly simple and very effective. Inside the head are the usual two rubber parts to change the valve size, it is no better or worse than anything else out there, but it can be done quickly and easily. What sets this pump apart is the high volume, for mountain bike tyres it is spot-on as you need to get a lot of air in there. However, if you do need a pump to use with your road bike as well, then the limited pressure capacity will rule this one out for you. - *Matt Wragg*

Which of the products tested in this week's Product Picks are you most likely to try?	
O Mavic Notch H20 Jacket	
Renthal Kevlar Lock-on Grips	
O SKS Aeron Mini Puimp	
O Nothing here does it for me.	
Answer	
Discuss this on pinkbike.com	~
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Must Read This Week

Gwin's Ridiculous Scrub - La Bresse DH World Cup 2018 106823 views

First Ride: Yeti's New SB150 89688 views

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Review: Fox Live Valve Suspension 56425 views

Bike Check: Richie Rude's All-New SB150 29er 54745 views

Qualifying Results: La Bresse DH Video: La Bresse DH World Cup XC Photo Epic: One To World Cup 2018 47582 views

Highlights 46275 views Remember - La Bresse World Cup 2018 42238 views

85 Comments

Score Time Who Faved

thecarpy (May 30, 2013 at 19:46)

Jacket: \$400!?!?!?! Good joke!!! So many better things to spend on....for god sakes you could buy a new fork or wheelset.

Grips: They look well designed! I'd get em if they came in black. White grips is just not worth it for me. Don't know if it's something to do with the Kevlar though.

Pump: Looks nice.

[Reply]

adove (May 30, 2013 at 19:53)

+ 20

If that jacket is a dope as it claims to be it is a very worthwhile investment in a place like here in Vancouver/Pacific Coast... If, you know, you're not some sissy fair weather rider.

thecarpy (May 30, 2013 at 19:55)

+ 18

I wouldn't need it because I live in Norcal, but your point is completely valid in that it makes sense to invest in a high quality jacket, but even at that I'd max out at like \$250.

feardabeast (May 30, 2013 at 19:56) Yea I thought the Kevlar came in black but they don't <a>E + 1

[Reply]

TJquinn (May 30, 2013 at 20:21)

+ 17

You can get plenty of QUALITY cold weather jackets for \$100. Just look for last year's model on clearance. Race Face does some great closeout stuff.

[Reply]

jaseridesbikes (May 30, 2013 at 20:30)

+ 3

I thought the same thing, but have you seen what people spend on ski gear? Expensive MTB clothing will happen as the market grows. People will buy it BECAUSE it's \$400!

[Reply]

thecarpy (May 30, 2013 at 20:33)

Ski gear should be more expensive. They require extensive insulation and undergo much harsher conditions than even constant wet-weather riding.

[Reply]

Ex. 2021 - 004 IPR2018-00190 lightningskull (May 30, 2013 at 20:46) my favorite ski coat has no insulation at all

[Reply]

dv8416 (May 30, 2013 at 20:51)

+ 2

Well when you come to think about, the technology and design in that jacket put it in the same status as good snow jackets. As league that can atest, you get what you pay for. That jacket you spend on 400 dollars now, will probably still in your pack 5 years down the road.

[Reply]

thisspock (May 30, 2013 at 21:44)

- 1

Whatever, its a waterproof jacket that probably cost about 10\$ to make. Big deal. Am I supposed to sped \$400 on a jacket to keep my self free of water or sweat? THere are dozens of water proof jackets that will do the same thin g and they are not white. Oooooo, a plastic window for my watch who cares. I have a waterproof Sugoi jacket that is going on ten years old and it cost me \$100 and stil works perfectly. Again why not review something worthwhile that we all might buy rather than this trending unecessarily expsensive crap. OOoooo it has the brand mavic behind it...so what. Maybe \$400 on a jacket for someone who goes on week long back packing trips, but shit, most people aren't out riding for a week or even 6 hours at a time, wah wah wah , grow a set and deal with it.

[Reply]

freddiehg (May 30, 2013 at 21:52)

+ 2

thisspock, its not the cost of materials that ultimately determines a jackets price its the licensing, the manufacture cost, and over head, in adition to whatever additional cost the company can add on to increase profits. The competition charges similar prices for jackets that resemble this same one.

[Reply]

Rolas (May 30, 2013 at 21:55)

- 3

In fact, there is nano technology based spray, which can make any material waterproof and mudproof, costs about 40 \$ a bottle, lasts up to 18 months (even 6 months is more than enough), and this gets better- you can use it from your shoes to your gloves, so all your kit will be "at the same level".

[Reply]

finnrambo (May 30, 2013 at 22:11)

+ 1

slight typo they reviewed the stratos jacket not the notch jacket, the notch is \$100 on pricepoint

[Reply]

thisspock (May 30, 2013 at 22:54)

+ 1

Yeah so what... its still 10\$ worth of plastic derived crap. These style of jackets have been around for decades, I'm not sold on the fact its worth \$400 in any way. You can buy a high profile tent fot that much. Its an overpriced rain jacket. I repeat...its an overpriced rain jacket.

[Reply]

FreddyBear (May 30, 2013 at 22:56)

+ 2

I bought that jacket for half the price, last years model. Looks exactly the same. I wear it every day when i ride to work, and every weekend when I go shredding. It's the best, period. When summer kicks in, maybe in september, I can leave it at home ...

[Reply]

Foxbat (May 30, 2013 at 23:25)

+ 4

Yeah, a good waterproof jacket is expensive but why buy one for a single sport or activity? I bit the bullet and bought an Arc'teryx GoreTex jacket for skiing a few years ago but I also ride, camp, backpack, and walk around town on rainy days. Newer multi-layer breathable membrane shells are incredible plus just buy last years model and save some cash.

[Reply]

Mcgeezy (May 30, 2013 at 23:32)

+ 7

\$400 is far to much! I ride in a cheap waterproof jacket since eventually you'll take a tumble and tear it up.

[Reply]

PhilR (May 30, 2013 at 23:45)

+ 0

What kind of wheel set u buyin from Walmart.... Or fork... 400 dollars buys u nothing these days... Maybe bars stem seat and seat post

[Reply]

karaknic (May 30, 2013 at 23:47)

+ 2

Why on Earth would I pay \$400 for a rain jacket with NOTHING else to it, rather than spend less than \$250 on a high end waterproof jacket from Berghaus with a top notch removeable inner fleece jacket, a PROPER hood with wind flaps and drawcords and more pockets than I know what to do with? Mmmmm it packs down.... so does a nylon rain cape!

Ex. 2021 - 005 IPR2018-00190

tabletop84 (May 31, 2013 at 2:22) these Jackets get glued together by childworkers in bangladesh for 10\$	+ 8
[Reply]	
RyanWensley (May 31, 2013 at 4:13)	+ 5
Surely everyone would just go for Goretex? Bit cheaper and looks better IMO	
[Reply]	
JAVIGUTZ (May 31, 2013 at 5:51) Well 400 buck for a quality jacket is not so much if you compare to Fjalraven or Spyder one (u\$1200)	+ 0
[Reply]	
RyanWensley (May 31, 2013 at 6:06)	+ 0
Oh man. The Spyder ones are really good though. Well worth the money.	
[Reply]	
mnorris122 (May 31, 2013 at 6:08)	+1
I can say with no shame that I have bought a \$500 VolkI jacket before. And I'd do it again. It's not an M t's hands down the best one I've ever worn. You get what you pay for, and I'm sad that it's too small for m	
[Reply]	
benbrooks1 (May 31, 2013 at 6:18) id expect that jacket to atleast come with a wheelset at that price!! almost more than my bike!?	+ 1
[Reply]	
husstler (May 31, 2013 at 6:24)	+ 1
I have the previous version of that jacket, when it was called the Creek and cost more. It was purchase	ed with part of
a bonus cheque from working hard like a reward. It's pretty bad-ass. At 4+ years old its still as waterproof	as new, none
of the zippers proke and I like wearing it.	
of the zippers broke and I like wearing it.	
	off
or the zippers broke and I like wearing it. I bought four \$100 jackets (pricing equal to this one for the sake of comparison) I wouldn't be any better	off.
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Ex. 2021 - 006 IPR2018-00190

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slimboyjim (May 31, 2013 at 12:05)
         Wow - some people REALLY don't like expensive jackets! I'm sure we could all have cheaper bikes/shorts/jerseys
      and anything else you can think of too - they will all work ok too but sometimes it is worth spending a bit extra. At the end
      of the day an item is only what you are willing to spend on it. If you can't justify spending the rrp of an item don't buy it
      there will be cheaper options out there and there's nothing wrong with that...
      Me - I've got that jacket (dont hate me!) as I like riding in crap weather, regularly on my own, and it is good to have kit il
      know will work and work well. The jacket is fantastic at keeping you dry and warm in some horrendous conditions. It is
      goretex and therefore repairable - something I looked for after a previous cheaper jacket got torn and failed to find. It
      also feels pretty substantial with reinforcement on areas of wear (shoulders/elbows). The only negative is that the watch
      window fogs up when you sweat heavily. I got it 50% off like others here, and feel it is worth what I paid for it. I would buy
      it again at that price because I like it that much. Yes it is pricy. Yes there are cheaper alternatives. I think it was worth
      spending the extra £50 over what I paid for my old jacket for the better quality here but if you disagree that's fine! Chill
      out - we're still having fun on our bikes!
         bmar (May 31, 2013 at 12:14)
         We all choose where to spend our money. I for one am not hating (at least that's not my intention). I just don't see the
      value in it. But that's because it hardly rains where I live and my budget doesn't allow for things that I don't need. But
      even then I have to be super picky about what clothes/equipment/parts I choose to buy as top of the line stuff. Different
      strokes for different folks...
        [Reply]
         pevensey (May 31, 2013 at 14:28)
         Yeah I bought a spyder jacket 5-6 years ago for half price and it still ran over $400 but it still looks and works like the
      day I bought it generally if you can afford it I think it's worth going for quality
         radrider (May 31, 2013 at 22:01)
                                                                                                                        + 3
         would love to see what it actually costs mavic to make that jacket.
         taletotell (Jun 1, 2013 at 4:46)
                                                                                                                        + 5
         i have realized that it is best to ride just wearing a thong. it has the best ventilation, water just rolls off, and you can
      always see your watch. No pockets, bu that is what the fanny pack is for.
        [Reply]
         Vincent66 (Jun 1, 2013 at 12:00)
                                                                                                                        + 2
         I got mine online for $200 last year; and last year's color is even nicer!
      For sure, $400 is too much, but for $200, it's a very good jacket.
         Adym (Jun 1, 2013 at 13:22)
         Yeah, the RRP is $400, but who buys anything at RRP price any more. I have a mavic goretex jacket, it was £80
      reduced from £215 and I love it!
        [Reply]
         Pdownful (Jun 1, 2013 at 18:47)
                                                                                                                        + 1
         I just ordered the jacket. i went onto some other website and read some great reviews
 rhino721 (May 30, 2013 at 19:40)
                                                                                                                        + 19
I can't buy any of these items...I am still saving for my XX1 Drivetrain!
[Reply]
          thecarpy (May 30, 2013 at 19:56)
                                                                                                                        + 19
         Let's split it and we can ship it back and forth every week.
 DarrenV (May 30, 2013 at 19:40)
                                                                                                                        + 13
that is a really ugly jacket....
```

Bizzam (May 30, 2013 at 20:23) + 9
Hmmm a \$400 which is white. That will look nice on the trails for about 10 minutes. It already looks horrible in the pictures.

Ex. 2021 - 007 IPR2018-00190

parkourfan (May 30, 2013 at 19:52) 4. Hundred. Dollars. Excuse me sirdo you want a bmx bike or a jacket?	+ 11
[Reply]	
NZNDURO (May 30, 2013 at 20:01)	+ 6
400\$ for a jacket is insane. NorthFace for me thanks [Reply]	
[10]	
dynamatt (May 30, 2013 at 21:24) Will you trade my '03 bmx bike for that jacket?	+ 0
[Reply]	
gunners1 (May 31, 2013 at 23:18) Could buy a goretex one from mec for half the price	+1
[Reply]	
Tek-8 (May 30, 2013 at 21:42) Who the hell wears a watch while riding a bike? I tried it once and all I remember was pain, also I don urvived.	+ 7 't think the watch
Iso to everyone complaining about the colours: Form Function [Reply]	
nwmlarge (May 31, 2013 at 1:49) if you wear a watch you have no excuse for being "late home" lol f*ck that	+ 1
[Reply]	
Lew-xvtt (May 31, 2013 at 2:01) Got a casio g-shock all the time, no pain, no crash.	+ 4
[Reply]	
downbeat73 (May 31, 2013 at 5:08) Yeah, if you want to wear a watch Casio G shocks will withstand just about anything. I go sur with no problems. I also have been known to take it off and smash it against a wall to show peop knob head.	
[Reply]	
daveh2012 (May 31, 2013 at 5:17) Same here the watch is waterproof and doesn't need it's own 'window'. It's a nice Jacket bukind of price.	+ 1 ut it's hard to justify that
[Reply]	
downhere67 (May 30, 2013 at 19:57) I have the previous version of that jacket. Paid like 120 at jenson for it. Other than the crap sizing mavicked. I wear it trail riding and road riding in the spring and fall. When they say waterproof they mean it. revious model or wait until the end of the season closeout, you will not be sorry. dave	
[Reply]	
shredhard (May 30, 2013 at 19:37) Nice jacket. Too bad white doesn't stay white especially when riding bikes [Reply]	+6
TheTrailsideCrew (May 30, 2013 at 23:44) My thoughts:	+ 2
he jacket looks pretty nice, but i don't have money for something i do not really need. he grips look like the odi ruffian. So i guess they are as excellent as them, too. he pump seems to be nice, too. I have already one, so no need at this time.	
II of them are quiet good stuff.	
[Reply]	
Matt76 (May 31, 2013 at 10:21)	+ 2

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my bikes. I cant understand why they use aluminium bolts instead of steel ones maybe its something they can change Verk79 (May 31, 2013 at 4:31) + 3 400 for a jacket that will get thrashed in a crash or snagged on a branch No thanks I II stick to my 80 dollar Ilbean goretec and spend that extra three hundred on other gear [Reply] broccolirob (May 30, 2013 at 21:09) + 5 I bought a SKS mini pump a few months ago. Zero flats since I started carrying it. [Reply] finnrambo (May 30, 2013 at 22:13) + 2 oh the irony! the one day I didn't bring co2 or a cellphone I got a flat 50km from home on the roadbike... always bring at least a cell [Reply] SuperSlowDH (May 31, 2013 at 7:06) That is an amazing pump. [Reply] MOLDTRUTH (May 30, 2013 at 21:20) + 3 Only a tool would spend \$400.00 for a jacket that would rip like a trash bag on impact. We should be able to vote products off to save other readers time. [Reply] thisspock (May 30, 2013 at 21:45) + 1 exactly [Reply] dangdang (May 30, 2013 at 22:02) + 5 pfffft. those dudes riding those new \$10K bikes gots to be wearing somethin flashy. finnrambo (May 30, 2013 at 22:14) + 2 it'd go great with the 40 air paired with the new vivid air on a new wilson carbon Bobbydazzler2010 (May 30, 2013 at 21:08) Its probably originally aimed at the road segment at that price as they tend to spend more, you could always get a Royal Racing jacket for around 120 does the same job, bigger pockets, huge hood, looks good etc etc, a lot cheaper and gets the job done. Mine has been great the last 2 years. Had a Gore Bike jacket before that and that wasn't worth the money I spent on it. jodsterincomoxvalley (May 31, 2013 at 9:19) I also have the previous version of that jacket and picked it up on blowout from Jenson as well. Perfect BC Westcoast jacket. Breathable, waterproof x10, windproof, uber lightweight, and packs into literally nothing. Would have liked to have a back or front pocket to be able to carry a snack. Other than that small issue, I would still give it a 10. If you do a lot of riding I strongly recommend it but not at the \$400 price point. Seems rather steep for what it is. You get way more jacket for \$400 from a company such as Arc'teryx. [Reply] LOSTMAYHEM (May 31, 2013 at 8:42) I bet it is a nice jacket but on the same level as Arc'teryx, I think not. Only Arc'teryx is on the same level as Arc'teryx. but since it is so expensive it will be on CHAINLOVE.COM at the end of the year for %50 off or more. That when you should get it [Reply] jrocksdh (May 31, 2013 at 7:48) + 2 Mavics stuff is great, but I think 75-100 is probably the price point. Shoot, a \$25 shell that stuffs into ur pocket will suffice for most. Pumps need a t-handle...thank you toi1 (May 31, 2013 at 0:45)

buy them again. Shame as I have always been mega impressed with Renthal quality and I have thier bars and chainrings on both

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I just got the Renthal with soft compound, and they are very good when yor hands are dry, with or without gloves. As soon as your gloves are wet and muddy, the grip disappears. louiscypher (May 31, 2013 at 0:06) + 2 soon to ride a bike you will have to earn 20 grand a month to afford pedaling. Is there any stuff that normal people can afford without spending a fortune? [Reply] RodRamsey (Jun 3, 2013 at 8:16) I'll buy 2 jackets better than that for 100 each then take extra 200 and put it on red, win my 200 back 2 free jackets then spend the 400 on a mavic wheelset. Yeaaa!!!! harveyhoman (May 31, 2013 at 5:06) + 2 I've got myself a pair of Renthal Lock-Ons in the Kevlar compound and all i have to say is 'WOW'. [Reply] rongreer31 (May 31, 2013 at 9:42) agreed! [Reply] theoutlaw (May 31, 2013 at 15:19) + 1 The clamp bolts on the renthal grips are made from cheese. Great grips apart from that... [Reply] dfiler (May 31, 2013 at 10:11) + 1 White!!!? Have these guys ever actually ridden a mountain bike? Or perhaps they live in a desert which never sees mud. [Reply] + 2 Jose-David-DH (May 30, 2013 at 19:56) wanted the renthal grips but... i ride gloveless and like mud [Reply] theoutlaw (May 31, 2013 at 15:22) + 1 Buy the ODI troy lees then. Grip like crazy in the wet and mud. [Reply] dirty-fecker (May 30, 2013 at 23:14) + 1 With the weather in Germany approching a new Ice-age, a good jacket is a definite must have !! [Reply] panzer103 (May 30, 2013 at 19:49) + 1 I like the jacket but hate the color. I like the grips but HATE the color. Chuckbike (May 31, 2013 at 11:22) + 0 That jacket is fucking retarded looking, and from the pics the grips are worn down like crazy [Reply] elmerfudd302 (May 30, 2013 at 19:48) + 0 Jacket.... [Reply] whatyousaid (May 30, 2013 at 21:43) I have a mountain hardware rain jacket that works awesome for 100\$ with pit zips...white is not a good color for rainy muddy conditions mini pumps suck, nothing is worse than waiting a half hour for someone to pump up their tire... do yourself and all your friends a favor and get co2 ... I like my Genuine Innovations Air Chuck SL. [Reply]

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