

# Motorcycling oversuit

THE PERENNIAL problem of the motorcyclist is how to keep dry in the rain. To this elementary difficulty we may now add—"and look respectable at the end of my trip". The Barbour suit can solve the simple Mark I problem very effectively, but we must shift to the nylon-based garments in order to achieve the Mark II objective. If we now add the additional requirement that the rain protection must be compact and portable when not in use, the field shrinks still further. Some issues ago I mentioned Peter Storm sailing clothes, which are heavy-duty nylon anoraks and trousers. Indeed, these clothes do fulfil our needs, but are rather expensive, and tend to balloon badly in the wind of a motorcycle's passage. Also, they have the disadvantage of being two-piece garments.

Rivetts, of Leytonstone, supply the Kett Champion oversuit, constructed from 3mm-gauge proofed nylon: this is the same gauge as Peter Storm use for their rock-climbing garments, and is amply strong and abrasion-resistant for motorcycle use.

I have used one of these oversuits for over 1,000 miles of mixed weather, and have only two small complaints. The major one is the tight elastication at the ankle, which stops one from guiding the water *outside* the boot and also stops one from putting the suit on over one's shoes.

A simple zip would answer both objections, and the elastication should definitely remain. The other complaint is that no ventilation is provided, and as nylon does not breathe it would be much appreciated if a couple of breathing eyelets were inserted under the armpits.

The knitted elastication is used for both the arm and ankle positions, and is very effective at the wrist position, cutting the usual ballooning to a minimum. The frontal zip is carried down to the bottom of the stomach, and is securely fixed to the nylon material. I am not entirely happy at the security of the poppers used to secure the deep and effective weather flap across the zip. These poppers are so well fixed that a rapid and careless removal of the suit could lead to a nasty tear. A small Velcro patch is used to locate the neckband, and a number of similar patches would serve the suit in better stead than the current poppers.

The waistband is lightly elasticated, and the three sizes of suit available should therefore suffice to make the suit look neat and non-baggy on most people. The three sizes are S (34in plus), M (38in plus), L (42in plus), and the basic (black suit) price is £7 19s 6d.

It was a little disturbing to notice when I was wearing the black suit that I seemed to be even more invisible to other road users than usual. In the light of this experience I would recommend that coloured suits of identical construction be

studied. Red, orange and blue are available at an increase of 9s over the basic price.

The good windcheating properties of the suit, aided by the elastication at wrist and arm, make this suit a good buy for racers as well as for those who want a really waterproof garment that can be fitted inside one's helmet with gloves and goggles when not in use. M. R. W.