

## KEEP THE COLD AT BAY

As a Southern California native, I do not like being cold. However, against my desires to the contrary, it does get cold in this part of the country. Not only does Angeles Crest Highway get snowed out every year, but also the Santa Monica Mountains get a dusting of the white stuff now and then. That means I go riding in cold weather, whether I like it or not.

Designed by DuPont, the technology behind Gator Skins thermal underwear is simple—microfibers that are claimed to be smaller than a human red blood cell hold warm air close to your body. Thanks to a polyethylene/nylon/Lycra blend that is 59-percent plastic, Gator Skins are also water repellent and wind resistant. Gator Skins are thicker than the ultra-light thermal undergarments you may be familiar with,

but are nowhere near as thick as wool, so they don't require you to wear larger outer clothing to accommodate them.

I did not test the water repellent aspect of Gator Skins, but I can assure you that the four-piece outfit I wore—neck gaiter, shirt, gloves, and pants—are warm when the going gets cold. Braving nighttime temperatures in the 40s, I took off on a Harley-Davidson Fat Boy for two hours of high-speed riding.

Instead of bundling up, I wore an open face helmet, denim riding jeans, vented gloves, and a textile jacket—warm weather apparel. Underneath, I donned Gator Skins and nothing else. It worked. I felt like the temperature was about 20 degrees warmer than it would have been without the Gator Skins—no small feat. Also, the claimed

breathability of the fabric was backed up by the fact that I didn't get hot or sweaty.

The neck gaiter was my favorite piece, preserving skin warmth and keeping wind out of the jacket. The glove liners did an amazing job of counteracting the outer gloves' venting, and my hands were never cold. Both the pants and shirt did their jobs unobtrusively. Later, I wore the pants and shirt while shooting a chilly night Supercross race, and I was as comfortable as I would be on a nice spring day.

Upkeep is simple with the Gator Skins—they can be machine washed and dried. Despite being a DuPont material rather than something found in nature, they feel good against the skin and give me one fewer excuse to avoid cold weather riding. —Don Williams

