

## **Warming up to autumn and beyond**

*Here's how to dress for success in cold weather*

**BY CHARLES HOWE**

Cool temperatures may be a month away – or even longer if this year is anything like 2007 – but now is still a good time to begin planning for autumn's chill, while clothing stocks are full and availability is plentiful.

### ***Striking the right balance***

The optimal combination of garments depends not only on temperature, but on wind strength, the presence of direct sunlight, and the level of effort as well. In addition, sensitivity to cold can vary from one individual to another, however, years of winter cold-weather riding experience has led me to the following guidelines:

***Slightly chilly (60° – 70° F)*** – if the temperature is expected to rise during the course of the ride, arm and leg warmers are the only addition you need to make to your normal summer outfit. Otherwise, a lightweight long-sleeve jersey, lightweight knickers, and a pair of glove liners will do.

***Chilly (50° – 60° F)*** – add lightweight gloves and switch to a light, form-fitting long-sleeve undershirt (such as from Craft) plus full-length tights. On a windy day, add a vest with a windproof front. Tip: choose bib tights. They eliminate chafing at the waist and keep your base layer undershirt in place.

***Mildly cold (40° – 50° F)*** – this is about where the cold starts to get serious, and you'll need more serious protection, including thermal tights (such as from Pearl Izumi with ThermaFleece®), a midweight thermal jersey, midweight gloves, and heavier weight socks

***Cold (30° – 40° F)*** – in this temperature range, garments with a layer of breathable windproof fabric, strategically placed over knees, upper arms, and chest can make all the difference, as can a heavier base layer, such as a compression shirt by Under Armour. You'll also need more heavily insulated gloves and neoprene toe covers.

***Very cold (20° – 30° F)*** – “lobster-style” gloves from Pearl Izumi were the only thing that kept the tips of my fingers warm in this temperature range. Full-coverage insulated booties and a balaclava become necessary as well.

***Severely cold (under 20° F)*** – not recommended, and not covered here.

Finally, in choosing what you wear for cold-weather riding, keep in mind that the goal is not necessarily to be warm at each moment throughout each ride; in fact, if you're a bit chilly at the start, comfortable during the middle portion, and ready to shed a layer at the end, then you probably got it about right. In your training diary, keep track of the starting and ending temperatures, what you wore, how you felt, etc., and you'll be on your way to developing your own set of guidelines.

AREA	EXTREMELY COLD ← → CHILLY					70°+ F
	20° - 30° F	30° - 40° F	40° - 50° F	50° - 60° F	60° - 70° F	
<b>Upper Body</b> (inner layer)	Heavier weight base layer undershirt (long-sleeve)	Midweight base layer undershirt (long-sleeve)	Midweight base layer undershirt (long-sleeve)	Base layer undershirt (short-sleeve)	Base layer undershirt (short-sleeve)	Sleeveless lightweight undershirt
<b>Upper Body</b> (outer layer)	Breathable, heavier thermal jacket with wind-blocking front	Breathable, heavier thermal jacket with wind-blocking front	Midweight thermal jersey, or jacket with wind-blocking front	Lightweight, long-sleeve jersey or short-sleeve + arm warmers	Lightweight, long sleeve jersey, or short-sleeve jersey + arm warmers	Short-sleeve jersey
<b>Lower Body</b>	Thermal, wind-blocking tights	Thermal, wind-blocking tights	Midweight fleece-backed tights	Lightweight tights	Lightweight knickers, or shorts + knee warmers	Shorts only
<b>Hands</b>	Heavier weight, insulated "lobster style" gloves	Heavier weight, insulated gloves	Midweight, thinly-insulated gloves	Lightweight, uninsulated full-fingered gloves	Lightweight glove liners	
<b>Feet</b>	Full thermal booties	Neoprene toe covers + heavier weight or thermal socks	Heavier weight socks			
<b>Head</b>	Balaclava					