

Castelli Mannaggia jacket £250

GONE are the days when three or four layers are required in a freeze; trust us, just the Mannaggia and a base layer will suffice, and even then we think you'll still need the zip vents and have to undo the main zip a bit at times — it really is an exceptionally warm winter jacket. The Windstopper X-Fast stretch fabric, with extra stretch panels on the elbows, allows a close fit without being restrictive, but for several of us, the cut was borderline in some areas. The sleeves are on the short side and the tail could benefit from a touch more drop to protect the lower back. Breathability is adequate on the whole, until you reach high levels of perspiration, when it can't quite cope, and feels clammy directly against bare arms — a good long-sleeve base layer is the solution.

Of the three rear pockets, really only the middle one is large enough to use on the go, especially with thick gloves, the sort you'd almost certainly be wearing if cold enough for the Mannaggia. It's a superb technical winter garment and great looking, but not without a few irritating flaws. SB

Contact: Saddleback 01454 299965,
www.saddleback.co.uk

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