

**PS VALUE GUIDE FOUL-WEATHER GEAR (COASTAL CRUISER UNDER \$500)**

PRODUCT	GILL KEY WEST ☆	GUL NEWPORT STORM	HELLY HANSEN FJORD	HENRI LLOYD BISCAÏ	RONSTAN HEAVY-DUTY COASTAL \$	SLAM EVOLUTION	WEST MARINE THIRD REEF
JACKET PRICE / PANTS PRICE PRICE SOURCE	\$168 / \$179 (\$347) westmarine.com	\$220 / \$160 (\$380) sailingproshop.com	\$250 / \$135 (\$385) defender.com	\$225 / \$150 (\$375) Henri Lloyd	\$145 / \$125 (\$270) newjsl.com/ linehonors.com	\$240 / \$225 (\$465) team1newport.com	\$82 / \$68 (\$150) westmarine.com
WATER RESISTANCE	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good	Good
WIND RESISTANCE	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Good
WARMTH	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good	Good
HOOD	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good	Good
WRIST/ANKLE CLOSURES	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Good
ADJUSTABILITY	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Good	Good	Good
DURABILITY	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good	Good
<b>FIELD TEST RESULTS</b>							
ABRASION RESISTANCE	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good
WATER RESISTANCE TESTS	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good	Good
WIND RESISTANCE TEST	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Good
ZIPPER TEST / ZIPPER SIZE	Excellent / Heavy-duty YKK	Good / Medium-duty	Good / Medium-duty	Excellent / Heavy-duty YKK	Good / Medium-duty	Poor / Medium-duty	Poor / Medium-duty
REFLECTIVITY	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Good
WEARABILITY	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good	Good

★ Best Choice \$ Budget Buy

**Bottom Line:** The Key West kit exceeds testers' standards for construction and design quality, securing its rating as the PS Best Choice for men's foul-weather gear in this price range.

*Gul Newport Storm*

**GUL INTERNATIONAL**

Britain-based Gul International, best known for its innovations in the world of surfing gear, also produces sailing gear that is anything but traditional.

The Gul Newport Storm coastal jacket and coastal hi-fit trousers employ the same weather-protection strategy adopted long ago by mountain climbers: layer, layer, layer. The coastal kit's two-layer GCX2 EVO material is featherweight and more comfortable than your favorite pajamas.

Despite its lightness, the material weathered abrasion and heavy spray favorably in our tests, but we're curious to see how it will stand up over time. Heat-taped seams kept our tester dry during testing, and chest vents improved breathability. The Newport wasn't completely weatherproof though, as our testers noted that wind penetrated the material during the fan test. (See "How We Tested," page 21.)

Despite Gul's layering philosophy,

testers found the Newport coastal products a bit too snug to allow for such layering. Our testers—average size for American men, about 5 feet, 11 inches tall, and weighing about 180-200 pounds—noted during tests that the UK-made Gul men's size large had little room for a fleece or heavy sweater underneath. According to Gul, sizing was intentionally scaled down this year to produce a more narrow fit and reduce the amount of windage from loose material flapping in the wind. Gul does offer the jacket in sizes men's small to XXL.

The jacket sports prismatic reflective strips on the chest and high on the shoulders. It also offers a notably comfortable collar and plenty of pocket space with quick-dry hand-warmer pockets and quick-draining cargo pockets. The trousers also have hand-warmer pockets and a quick-draining pocket on the thigh.

Like the Gill bibs, these have rugged, elasticized suspenders for easy adjusting. But the Gul bibs have a storm-flap over the two-way zipper where the Gill doesn't. Taffeta-lined, the trousers are reinforced at the seat and from the knees to the ankle for extra abrasion resistance.

The Newport jacket comes in black, red, and yellow, and the trousers are available in yellow and black.

**Bottom Line:** This lightweight, comfortable, and seemingly rugged foulie set impressed testers. The main thing holding it out of Best Choice-contention was its performance in the wind test.

**HELLY HANSEN**

Helly Hansen—well known for its fashionable ski and water-sports apparel—continues to crank out quality foul-weather gear like the new men's Fjord jacket and



## A CLOSER LOOK



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1. Both the Helly Hansen (pictured) and the Henri Lloyd wrist closures use a velcro circle at the loosest adjustment. After repeated opening and closing, these patches failed to adhere well. 2. Testers had some difficulty removing a cell phone from the Helly Hansen AquaPac pocket. We would limit its storage use to electronics smaller than a flip-phone or those not needed in an emergency. 3. Slash pockets on the Slam Evolution give the jacket a tailored look, but do little to warm cold hands or safely store handheld electronics.

new Fjord hi-fit trousers we tested, but some of the frills seem a bit over the top. For example, the AquaPac—a clear, watertight, plastic pouch sewn onto the New Fjord jacket sleeve—is meant as a protective pocket for your cell phone or other small electronic device. (See “A Closer Look,” above.) To test the functionality of the AquaPac, we inserted a very slim flip-phone. Testers had difficulty removing it with bare hands.

Extracting the phone in an emergency or with gloved hands likely would be nearly impossible. Perhaps another fashion-over-form feature: Neither the jacket nor the trousers have anti-abrasion patches.

The suit, made from HellyTech fabric, fits the American man's frame well, just loose enough for a midlayer.

Testers noted that the Helly zippers were a bit undersized and the jacket's wrist closures left room for improvement. The closures include circular velcro patches to secure the wrist tab at its loosest setting. After opening and closing the tabs 200 times, testers found they lost much of their ability to adhere, leaving the wearer with flapping strips of material at the wrist.

The jacket has more reflective surfaces, overall, than other test jackets thanks to its reflective piping that runs

along the chest, arms, and back. We prefer patches to piping, but every bit helps, and the jacket also has reflective patches on the forearms and shoulders.

**Bottom Line:** Despite its fastener issues, the Helly Hansen is high-quality foul-weather gear. We'd like to see anti-abrasion patches added.

### HENRI LLOYD

Henri Lloyd manufactures an array of sailing gear, including many styles of foul-weather gear for men and women. We tested the new for 2008 TP2 Biscay Jacket and TP2 Coastal hi-fit trousers.

According to the maker, the TP2 fabric technology uses a moisture transfer that helps reduce condensation on the inside, keeping the wearer dryer during high activity. Testers found the TP2 fabric to be lightweight and comfortable.

The Henri Lloyd size large suit was too roomy for an average man, but it rated Excellent in most of the performance categories.

Like the Gill wear, the Henri Lloyd kit has high-quality bungees and heavy-duty zippers.

Henri Lloyd  
Biscay



Helly Hansen  
Fjord