

Bratwear Powerdry Tee Shirt

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When asked to review a warm weather tee shirt, I was very excited to find something new, something a little more comfortable and less expensive than the “major brands” that tap into the financial budget of a patrol officer – the Bratwear Powerdry tee shirt.

Texas summers can be brutal. In July and August, the temperatures climb over the one hundred degree mark, up to one hundred and ten degrees and with high humidity. These weather factors combined can make for a very long and miserable twelve hours on the bike. The heat and sweat that fester under my duty vest is a recipe for dehydration and heat exhaustion. Re-hydration and the ability to stay cool and comfortable are my main concern. I want an undershirt that forms a breathable layer between my skin and my vest, one that has moisture-wicking ability.

I wear two brands of undershirts: the Bratwear Powerdry and Under Armour. The Under Armour shirts are a little more comfortable to me than the Bratwear Powerdry; they fit tighter and seem to be a thinner material, but I can feel my vest sliding up and down over my chest as I pedal, which does not happen with the Bratwear Powerdry. When I wear the Under Armour, it feels like I am wearing less clothing, and I get a feeling of coolness. It is long enough that it does not come un-tucked or bind up around my waist. However, the sweat under my shirt rolls down from my chest and settles around my waist where all the clothing meets, and at the end of the day everything is soaked, even my gun belt. I have a very uncomfortable irritation around my waist from the clothing that has absorbed the moisture throughout the day. In addition, the Under Armour shirt is not very durable; the shirts I wore this summer are about to disintegrate. The areas where my vest rubbed on the shirt are so thin you can see through them, and the side seams are torn. With Under Armour being a popular brand, it is pretty pricey, and I will not spend that kind of money on a product that will not hold up for two Texas summers.

The Bratwear Powerdry shirt is not as thin as the Under Armour. The Powerdry seems to “wick” the moisture away from my body; I don’t have the problem with the irritation around my waist, the sweat pouring down my chest, and the soaked uniform at the end of the day that I experience with the Under Armour. There seems to be a barrier between the inside of the shirt and the outside that takes care of this problem. The inside of the Powerdry is smooth like the Under Armour, which is a comfortable improvement from the other undershirts that I had from Bratwear several years ago. The Bratwear Powerdry is durable, there is little evidence of wear on the shirt from contact areas with the vest. The Powerdry does not fit as tight as the Under Armour but is cut to your measurements and if you get it right, the shirt is comfortable. I would like the shirt to be a little longer so it does not come untucked or bind up around my waist, but this is a personal preference.

Overall, I like the Bratwear Powerdry. Again, it is durable, and my body moisture does not “pool” around my waist. The Bratwear Powerdry is comfortable and cool enough in extreme temperatures and is very nice in temperatures around the eighties to mid-nineties. In addition, the shirt is custom-made, the cost is lower than the popular brand, and it is bike specific.

I wear the Powerdry “off duty” when riding, and since the shirt is not a tight fit on me, I’m very comfortable. I’m not one for fads; heck, I still wear a pair of sunglasses I purchased at the 2001 IPMBA Conference in Cincinnati. I like a product that is sensible, durable and not hard on the wallet.

There is a lot to be said for customer service as well. I know I can call or email Sally if I need something or have a specific problem and she will be extremely helpful and friendly. I have had the Bratwear Powerdry for awhile and evidently there is nothing out there better. This review for me was a “no brainer” The Bratwear Powerdry in my opinion is the way to go.

Bratwear participates in the IPMBA Product Purchase Program and can be reached at www.bratwear.com.

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