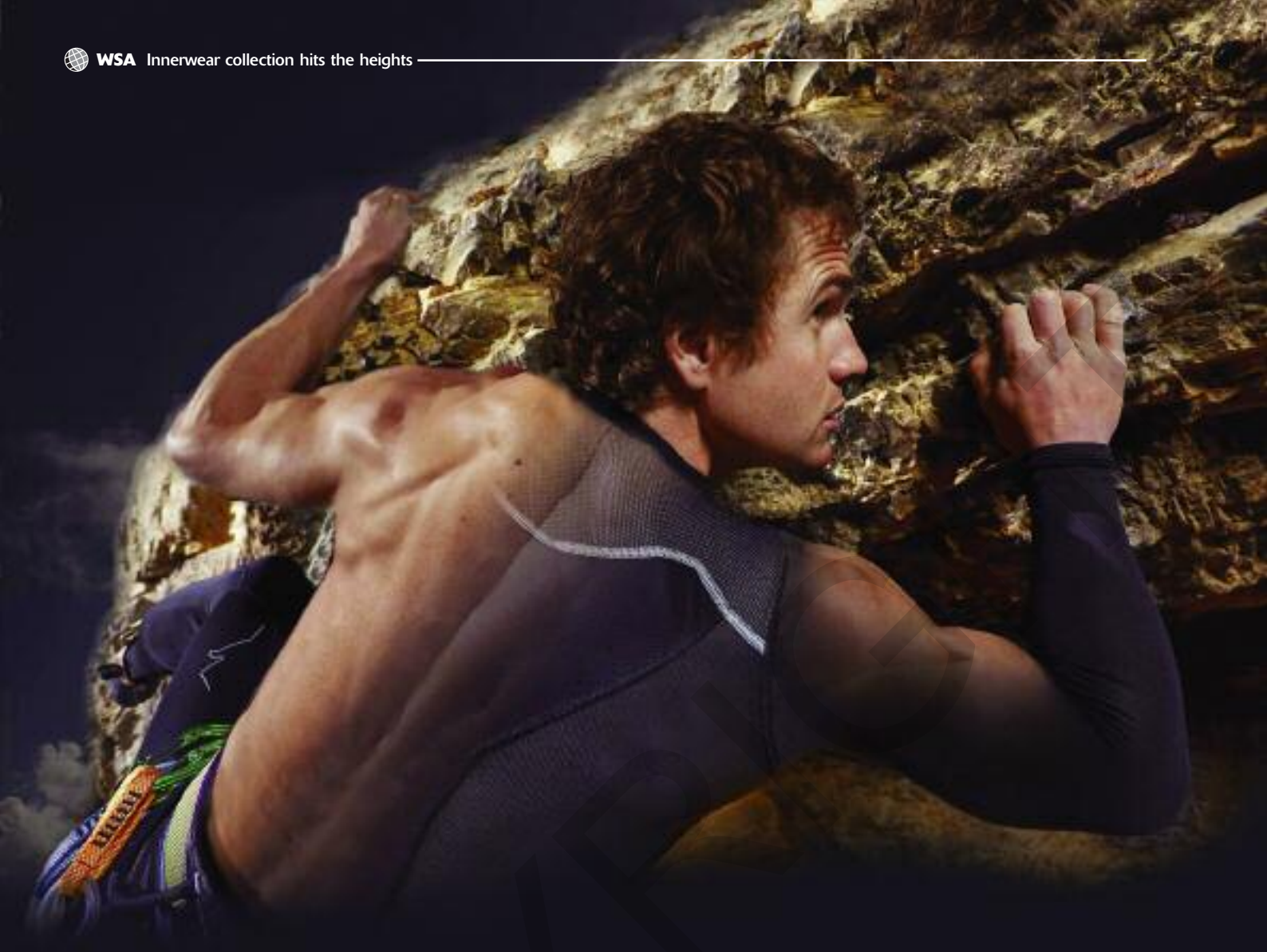




Italian outdoor brand Salewa has launched a collection of next-to-skin clothing designed, from the fibre up, especially for use in high mountain conditions.

Innerwear collection hits the heights

It's only natural that Salewa, a brand based in South Tyrol, should draw its inspiration from the Italian Alps that surround it and no surprise that it should have called a range of innerwear introduced for this winter season AlpineSkin.

The collection comprising a variety of tops and bottoms for next-to-skin wear is for outdoor enthusiasts for whom combatting raw cold and high winds is all part of the fun. The product range includes long-sleeved, short-sleeved and sleeveless tops, and full- and three-quarter-length pants for men and women. Women's products also include short-style

underpants and briefs, while men's options include short and long boxers.

All of the products use Dryarn, the ultra-light polypropylene microfibre from Aquafil, with Salewa saying that this choice has offered it "superior material qualities", including robustness and flexibility, as well as being fast-drying and odourless, in addition to its weight advantages.

There are three different styles, and at the time of the launch, Salewa said climbers, hikers and others who enjoy the mountains would recognise that AlpineSkin has the potential to improve their performance, as well as helping to "preserve the mountains thanks to eco-friendly production and recyclability". The first, Power

Garments in the AlpineSkin range come in three styles, adding carbon fibre, a wind-resistant membrane or the comfort of merino wool to the qualities of Dryarn.

 Salewa

Carbon, includes carbon fibres to enhance the qualities of Dryarn, making for finished garments that support muscles and improve muscle performance. According to Salewa, this combination can reduce the wearer's heartbeat by four beats per minute, improve breathing capacity by as much as three litres per minute and reduce the concentration of lactic acid in the body by between 7% and 10%. Salewa insists that the amount of carbon fibre in products in the Power Carbon range is "just right" as a result of intense field testing, which is where these interesting figures come from.

With Wind Defence, the second of the three styles, the main additional benefit the outdoor brand points to is extra protection against wind chill because the fabric contains an additional windproof protection layer, achieved using a laminated breathable membrane. This is something that presented a new challenge for Dryarn's makers, but one they were happy to take on. Power Carbon and Wind Defence both have "3D heavy duty zones" at the shoulders and hips for extra protection and support.

The third AlpineSkin style, Warm Merino, offers an extra layer with merino to give higher levels of warmth and comfort. This was Salewa's choice born of its desire to offer wearers what it regards as a guarantee of comfort and performance. Wool has the ability to absorb up to one-third of its own weight in moisture without becoming clammy, while the hydrophobic qualities of Dryarn help to take moisture away from the wool. These characteristics are helping to make Warm Merino attractive to finished garment brands right across the sports and outdoor industry, the two partner companies say. Aquafil takes the view that wool and Dryarn complement one another and offer a combination that allows garment manufacturers to "put life" into extremely lightweight clothing. It's a mix that carries no compromise on freedom of movement while also bringing to the table what the fibre manufacturer insists is a higher level of thermoregulatory functionality than wool can achieve on its own.

The addition of carbon fibre, of a special windproof protection layer and of merino makes an important contribution, but the two partner companies agree that Dryarn is at the core of what they believe will be a successful addition to mountain enthusiasts' wardrobe.

For Aquafil marketing and communications manager, Nathalie De Marco, Dryarn had already proven itself to be a good choice of fibre for performance and sportswear. What Salewa has done in AlpineSkin for the first time is use a very high proportion of the fibre (more than 90%) to create layers that allow the benefits of Dryarn to make the maximum impact. It's a fibre



Italian mountaineer Angelika Rainer, one of Salewa's sponsored athletes. The brand subjected AlpineSkin products to intensive field testing.

 Salewa

that offers what she calls "an extraordinary level of thermo-physiological comfort" because of its ability to transport moisture away from the body. "The three different lines each have their own characteristics," she says, "and they are all capable of helping sports enthusiasts improve their performance in a great variety of activities and in very diverse climatic conditions."

The head of product development for apparel at the finished product brand, Massimo Pasqualotto, says Dryarn meets his company's requirement for material that allows Salewa to combine design and technological innovation to make products with a high level of performance. The partnership has worked and the two companies have already confirmed that AlpineSkin products, with Dryarn, will be part of Salewa's offering in the seasons ahead. They are also looking at new developments for the future. 



Carbon fibre added to Aquafil's lightweight polypropylene microfibre Dryarn gives wearers of Power Carbon under garments a number of physical advantages, Salewa claims.

 Salewa