

RISE TO THE CHALLENGE: VOZWEIMAX AND SCHOELLER

German triathlete Michael Stigl tried for years to find a suitable running jacket. In 2014, he gave up and launched his own sports brand, Vozweimax. With the help of a detailed series of instructions on how athletes can take their own measurements, and high-end performance fabrics and textile technologies from Schoeller, he is proud now to be able to offer the type of running jacket he always dreamed of.

The jacket runners really wanted

German sportswear brand Vozweimax has produced a new running jacket made out of functional Schoeller fabrics with c_change membrane and corkshell technology.

Schoeller c_change is a windproof and waterproof membrane that independently reacts to changing temperatures and environments.

Depending on the situation, breathability or heat-retention increases or decreases. For its part, corkshell combines the naturally high levels of thermal insulation of cork with the qualities of high-performance fabrics, providing (according to Schoeller) 30% more thermal insulation than conventional softshells. The fabrics are also said to be soft and lightweight and to offer natural antimicrobial properties. The technology uses natural certified cork granulate, which is a by-product

of the wine industry. The granulate is pulverised and combined with textiles in a patented process developed by Schoeller to fix the cork to the fabric. An example of the options in the range is the use of corkshell on the reverse of the Schoeller's 'shape' pique cotton fabric, with the combination offering high levels of breathability and comfort in addition to thermal insulation.

Tailor-made

Michael Sigl, an enthusiastic triathlete from the North Rhine-Westphalia region of Germany, founded Vozweimax in May 2014. The name comes from spelling out 'VO2 max', the term athletes use to measure their rate of oxygen consumption during exercise ('zwei' being the German word for 'two'). He says the reason for launching his own sports apparel brand was that, after 18 years as a competitor

Because each runner has different needs in terms of adapting to conditions, Vozweimax wants athletes to be able to configure their own running jackets.

 lzf / shutterstock.com





Vozweimax jackets use advanced textile technologies from Schoeller, including corkshell and c_change.

 Vozweimax

who had spent considerable time hunting high and low for a jacket that would fit properly, he gave up looking and decided to produce his own, tailor-made to suit his body 100% correctly. "I suffered from wearing running jackets that did not fit my body as they should have," he says. Initially, he admits that his aim was to satisfy his own requirements, but quickly realised that, if a tailor-made jacket could meet his needs, other runners would be interested too. With this the brand was born.

Transparent and true

Mr Sigl says his reasons for choosing Schoeller as a partner were simple. "Schoeller Textil offers premium levels of quality and technology and, working with this supplier, we also have transparency in terms of the source of our materials." An important issue for Vozweimax is the production process it has in place. Its jackets are tailored on home soil in Germany in keeping with local social standards with regard to workers' rights and salaries. The company refers to this as Fair Play production. "The women who make our jackets identify with Vozweimax," the founder says, "and are committed to producing garments of the highest possible quality. Clearly, running jackets are garments for the autumn and winter seasons; what we want is to offer the best possible running jackets for these colder seasons, in terms of fit, quality and production transparency."

Measure for measure

The range at the moment includes three jacket types: Warm, Hybrid and Light. There is also a Fair Trade cotton T-shirt line and an interesting development in jackets specifically for disabled sports people. The brand offers athletes the opportunity to have one of these jackets tailored to their individual body dimensions.

Customers can download from the Vozweimax website a set of detailed instructions on how to take the necessary measurements themselves (with the help of a friend). Ten measurements in all are required (including the wrists and the biceps), but the brand insists this should take no more than 15 minutes of anyone's time.

Options include the freedom to stipulate incidentals such as how long each runner would like the collar to be, the overall length of the jacket, the position of pockets and so on. It also means being able to configure for themselves the material mix in the product—for example, to using corkshell technology on the back and front panels and c_change in the shoulder and arm panels, the parts of the garment most likely to expose themselves to changes in temperature and environment. "All runners should be able to optimise climate conditions," Michael Stigl says, "to suit their running speed, no matter how fast or how slow, their personal climate tolerance and the outside temperature." 