

## Gear up!

A cross-section of cycling products selected and reviewed by CTC staff, specialist journalists and CTC members

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### TEKTRO CR520 cantilevers £32 PER SET

Reviewed by CTC Technical Officer Chris Juden

Tektro Oryx is the usual cantilever brake on touring and cyclo-cross bikes. I'll not say popular, because to be honest this semi-low-profile design doesn't work too well with drop bar levers. Rim clearance is poor, the feel is spongy and inclined to judder with a flexible touring fork.

Empella Froggles (reviewed in March Cycle, p57) proved what some of us always knew: that wider is better with drops. Tektro have taken note and launched two new models of wide-profile cantilever, CR520 and CR720. The only differences are finish, price and a few grams, so I was content to buy a full set of the black painted 520s from Zepnat, who call them 'frogleg style'.

They remind me more of the original Deore XT, but whatever:

these brakes combine the mechanical advantage of wide profile arms with the adjustability and availability of modern V-brake-style blocks. I fitted mine to a Hewitt Cheviot, where they're much better than the Oryx they replaced: firm action, much better rim clearance but still plenty of power and no more fork judder. At 168g per brake they're slightly lighter too.

These are the best brakes for drop bar touring I've seen in 25 years. All they need is a catchier name than CR520, maybe a pad upgrade, and better availability.

Details: Zepnat.co.uk (01629 760801) appears to be the only UK source of the 520, whilst dotbike.com (01367 888235) sell its silver anodised twin.



### TACX CARBON ASSEMBLY COMPOUND

£9.99, PER 80G TUBE

Reviewed by bike designer Mike Burrows

Seatposts can be a problem. They have a tendency to keep on slipping down unless clamped unreasonably tightly. Or else they corrode immovably in place. But not any more! At least, that is the promise of Tacx's new 'gritty grease', which is actually called assembly compound. And it's not actually gritty as such. What feels like grit is tiny plastic balls that crush when clamped to make fitting easier, and the grease (which is probably not actually grease) reduces the effect of galvanic corrosion caused by dissimilar metals.

So there is a free lunch! Except that £10 is not exactly free, but a lot less than you would pay to have an old seatpost machined out. I have not been using it long enough to be sure of its anti-corrosion properties, and would anyway always recommend removing seatposts at least once a year. But it does do well on the clamping bit. I used it on a friend's laid back racer that had a titanium stem onto a carbon steerer and no pull down bolt and solved its slipping problem straight away.

Details: distributed by Fisher Outdoor, [www.fisheroutdoor.co.uk](http://www.fisheroutdoor.co.uk)

## LIDL CYCLING SHOES £14.99

Reviewed by Sheila Simpson, editor of *Arrivée* magazine

At regular intervals Lidl and Aldi offer cheap cycling accessories. Their bargains vary by the week and region and are snapped up very rapidly so my partner was lucky to lay his hands on a pair of Lidl cycling shoes just in time for our Easter tour. These are mountain bike style shoes, weighing in at a substantial 1080g (size 9). They are suitable for cycle touring, being SPD compatible (cleats not supplied) with good grips on the soles for short walks. Unusual in this style of cheap footwear, they have a very rigid sole, which supports the foot well when cycling. The uppers are leather, mesh and an unspecified 'durable synthetic material', while the soles are rubber, and the whole is lined in Coolmax. The combination of laces with a Velcro strap fastening ensures a snug fit and the verdict at the end of the tour was that the shoes were comfortable but felt rather warm in comparison with his accustomed road cycling shoes.

Details: current specials in your local store: [www.lidl.co.uk](http://www.lidl.co.uk)



## CASSINI HISTORICAL MAPS £7.99 or £19.95/set of three

Reviewed by CTC Technical Officer Chris Juden



Some of the Landranger maps I use are already pretty old, but now journeys with out-of-date maps can now be taken to a whole new level, three levels actually, each of which charts a historical milestone in Ordnance Survey's mapping. Cassini have re-scaled and patched together material from original one-inch-to-the-mile sheets, to exactly match each modern 1:50k Landranger. With gridlines too, it's easy to see how things have changed – or not.

My personal favourite is the Old Series, beautifully drawn between 1805 and 1874: the cartographic equal of a Patterson print. It might also be useful to indicate the

existence of an old right of way.

The Revised New Series, 1896–1909, coincides with the first age of the bicycle. The Popular Edition of 1919–1926 heralds the motor car and shows today's A-class roads coloured red.

Maps are available individually or as a boxed set of three, direct or from bookshops. Until the end of September, readers can obtain a 10% discount on any order from [www.cassinimaps.co.uk](http://www.cassinimaps.co.uk), by typing CTC2008 when prompted at checkout. At present only England & Wales are covered, plus the Isle of Man and Edinburgh. Maps of other populous parts of Scotland are in preparation.

## JETBOIL GCS (GROUP COOKING SYSTEM) £69.99

Reviewed by expedition cyclist Cass Gilbert

The main selling point of the Jetboil GCS is the heat exchanger – a series of radiator-like fans – fixed to the base of the pot. It's a clever system that makes cooking twice as efficient as normal, so you don't need to carry as much gas. The whole kit is easy to put together, and thanks to the nifty plastic feet that clip onto the gas canister, more stable than other stacking set-ups. The stove itself features an ignitor and a 1.5L pot, which provides enough room to cook for two to three hungry riders. Unfortunately there's no wind shield or frying pan, though the plastic lid and heat exchange protector double up as plates.

While the whole kit fits into the pot, including a 460ml canister, we needed to wedge in material to stop anything scratching the aluminium. Overall, a well-designed, efficient cooking system, but it's slower than we hoped. A wind shield would help.

Details: weighs 554g (not including gas). Info at [www.jetboil.com](http://www.jetboil.com). Distributed by Lyon Equipment, tel: 015396 25493, [www.lyon.co.uk](http://www.lyon.co.uk)





## OPTIMUM GLOW GUARDS £19.99/PAIR OR £12.99 EACH

Reviewed by editor Dan Joyce

So the obvious question is: why add reflectives for road safety to off-road mudguards? I suppose people do ride mountain bikes on road with such guards – teenagers in particular. The reflectives are 3M. Because MTB guards are mostly horizontal the biggest reflective strips are mostly visible from above, but there are patches you can see from the sides or rear.

The rear guard is very much like a Mr Crud Raceguard, only with deeper side panels. I found it neither better nor worse, since my mountain bike lives off-road not on. The front is a motocross-style guard that fits under the fork crown with an expanding rubbery bung. This is much more solid than a plastic wedge bolt – if you can get it to fit.

I had to lubricate it with hairspray and knock it home with a hammer, and it was then so tightly fitted that I broke it when I removed it. The rear part of the front guard interfered with the down tube both on my 29er and my son's 15in frame 26er, though it should fit bigger 26in-wheel frames well enough.

Price is comparable to rival guards, and having reflectives already on is cheaper than DIY with Respro's Scotchlite Sticker Kit (£9.99). While Tortec's full-length guards with reflective stripes make more sense, these are worth a look if you do use partial guards on road.

Details: available in white, black, yellow, green, pink, graphite. Front weighs 100g, rear 153g. See [www.theogg.co.uk](http://www.theogg.co.uk)

## OSPREY TALON 22 DAYPACK £59.95

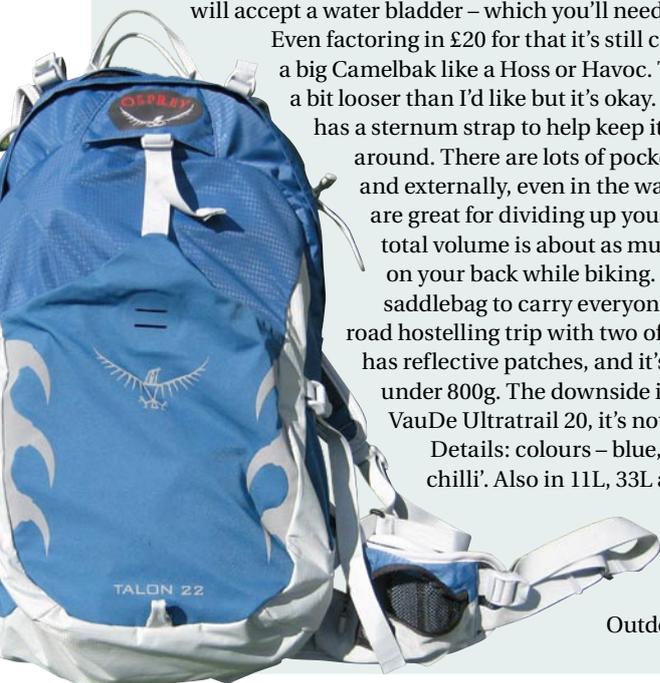
Reviewed by editor Dan Joyce

The Talon 22 is designed as a daypack for 'active light pursuits' such as mountain walking or adventure racing. It's also about the right size as a 'several days pack' for mountain biking, and there's a pouch that will accept a water bladder – which you'll need to buy separately.

Even factoring in £20 for that it's still competitive with a big Camelbak like a Hoss or Havoc. The bladder sits a bit looser than I'd like but it's okay. The pack itself has a sternum strap to help keep it from bouncing around. There are lots of pockets, internally and externally, even in the waist straps. These are great for dividing up your gear, and the total volume is about as much as you'd want on your back while biking. I used this and a saddlebag to carry everyone's gear for an off-road hostelling trip with two of my sons. It even has reflective patches, and it's nice and light at under 800g. The downside is that, unlike my VauDe Ultratrail 20, it's not waterproof.

Details: colours – blue, green or 'spicy chilli'. Also in 11L, 33L and 44L sizes.

See [www.ospreypacks.com](http://www.ospreypacks.com), available from Cotswold Outdoor (p80)



## Book reviews

### 50 QUIRKY BIKE RIDES £9.99

Reviewed by CTC Information Officer Mark Waters



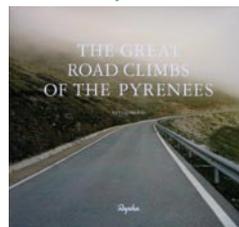
A bit like Dr Who's Tardis, this slim paperback conceals a cavernous interior, with copious facts about unusual biking experiences all over England and Wales. Each ride includes a 'snackstop', a 'bevvie break', a tourist tick list (making sightseeing a doddle) and details of further information sources.

Yet more icing on the cake comes in the form of a dedicated website with maps of all the routes shown. The book will interest a whole spectrum of riders, from casual pootlers to dedicated cycle tourists. A great book.

Details: author, Rob Ainsley. Published by Eye Books, [www.eye-books.com](http://www.eye-books.com). ISBN 1-903070-55-4

### THE GREAT ROAD CLIMBS OF THE PYRENEES £40

Reviewed by editor Dan Joyce



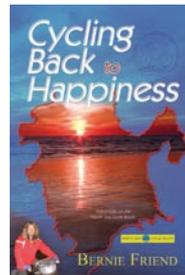
You'll have just seen the Pyrenees on the telly in the Tour de France... now read the book! This is an unusual one, marrying 'spotter's guides' to 90 climbs – with details on length, gradient, and height

gain – with interesting accounts of the drama that unfolded there some time in the history the Tour de France. They're accompanied by photography that I found understated and dull. There aren't any cyclists, just tarmac and empty mountains. It's like looking at an empty stage after the actors have gone home. It's the perfect present for an Ordre des Cols Durs member or hard-core sportive rider, but I didn't like the presentation or the price.

Details: author, Graham Fife. Published by Rapha, [www.rapha.cc](http://www.rapha.cc), 320pp, ISBN 978 0 9558254 0 8

### CYCLING BACK TO HAPPINESS £8.99

Reviewed by CTC Information Officer Julie Rand



Subtitled 'Adventure on the North Sea Cycle Route'. Unusually, it is written by a self-confessed 'travel phobic hypochondriac' who embarks on the trip in a last ditch effort to try and overcome his anxiety disorders. The book is an earthy and entertaining read and should provide plenty of inspiration and

information for anybody attempting this route or anybody who shares Bernie's irrational travel phobia and wants to overcome it.

Details: ISBN 978-1-906206-71-0, 276 pages, Pen Press Publishers Ltd, tel: 0845 108 0530