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CTC, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, GU2 9JX
Tel: 0844 736 8450
Email: cycling@ctc.org.uk
Website: ctc.org.uk

CTC Patron:
Her Majesty the Queen
President: Jon Snow
CTC Council Chair:

David Cox
Chief Executive:
Kevin Mayne
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Cycle Magazine Editor: Dan Joyce
email: editor@ctc.org.uk

Designers:
Simon Goddard and Gemma Hancock

Advertising:
Arthur Priggs
tel: 020 7487 8410
email: arthurp@jppublishing.co.uk

Creative Director:
James Houston

Publisher:
James Pembroke
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THE EDITOR



WEIGHT loss. Gym attendance temporarily balloons in January, I'm told, which suggests that it's part of many New Year's resolutions. As a cyclist, all you can do is shrug. Where is the joy in a gym? Why not just ride a bicycle instead? Eat cake, burn calories, have fun, get fit.

Yet cyclists aren't immune from obsessing over the weighing scales either, particularly those who like to ride fast or far. 'I'd like get down to X weight,' says one club cyclist. 'I've put on a bit over winter,' says another. We sound like models!

And if it's not the body, it's the bike. Maybe that could be a bit lighter, to make our cycling easier? Some new wheels? A new frame? Any weight saved from the bike helps to reduce the pedalling energy required, and it helps more the lighter and weaker we are.

How much does it help? Probably less than we think. Dr Jeremy Groves (p45) found that a bike 4kg lighter made essentially no difference to the time it took for his 27-mile round trip commute. The biggest benefit of a lighter bike – assuming we're dealing with normal, quality-bike parameters – is that it feels nicer to ride.

Ultra-lightweight tourer Igor Kovše (p38) allows that he has no real proof of the benefits of paring his kit down to 3kg for a full-blown tour. He has fewer mechanicals and easier cycling, he thinks, but he's really doing it because he's embraced a minimalist philosophy. He's not only losing weight for the sake of it but freeing himself from unnecessary baggage.

DAN JOYCE



MEMBERSHIP
Get five years CTC membership for the price of four. Details on p70

Photos: Igor Kovše, Mat Brett, Jeremy Groves

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