

GEAR UP

Components, kit, accessories, and more.

This issue we review saddlebags, hooks, sprockets, and books

REVIEW
OF THE
MONTH



Carradice

CARRADICE SQR BAG & SADDLEBAG £75 & £50

carradice.co.uk

I'VE GOT several Carradice bags made from cotton-duck, which I've found satisfactorily waterproof. The CarraDry range uses a PVC 'welded seam' fabric, which no doubt is even more waterproof, if not as aesthetically pleasing. Carradice saddlebags come in two versions: a standard design that will attach to

bag loops on the saddle; and a seatpost-fixing bag that uses

Carradice's SQR system. Both bags are slightly narrower than traditional transverse saddlebags.

The CarraDry Saddlebag swung wildly when attached only to saddlebag loops; you'll want Carradice's Bagman support system (£30-£45 extra) or an SQR support (£30). The SQR Bag, which as you'd expect includes the SQR support, is much more rigid. It does require a large amount of exposed seatpost and clearance to be able to get the bag on and off with ease.

The SQR Bag also comes with a waterproof external pocket on each side, while the Saddlebag has just one small pocket on the lid. With roll-top closure, quick release fittings, and carry-handles, these bags tick the boxes for modern cycle luggage. But I'm not convinced: I'll be sticking with my cotton-duck saddlebags for their look and feel. If you tend to ride in torrential downpours, these might suit your commute or lightweight weekend tour.

Reviewed by Chris Peck

- PROS**
- + Exceptionally waterproof
- + Good size for commuting or short tours
- CONS**
- Saddlebag needs a Bagman or SQR to support it better



SUBMIT A REVIEW

If you want to submit a review, write or email the editor – details on page 3 – for advice. Each one printed wins a Green Oil Eco Rider Deluxe set worth £34.99.

For more about Green Oil's environmentally friendly bike products, visit green-oil.net

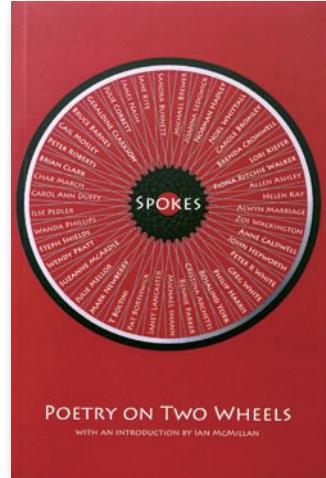


SPOKES: Poetry on Two Wheels £7.00

otleywordfeast.org.uk

THIS VOLUME was compiled to celebrate the 2014 Yorkshire Grand Départ. There is great variety, with poems about growing up with bikes, riding for pleasure and sport, and of course, Le Tour de France! Poet laureate Carol Ann Duffy imagines her bike is a horse; James Nash races to beat the twilight; Suzanne McArdle cleverly references helmets and hi-vis; and Brenda Cromwell playfully mixes French with Yorkshire dialect urging us to ride our bikes and see Le Tour: 'Sithee lads, je pense that nous/Should get oursens out on la rue/And ride nos bicyclettes à town'. Ian McMillan says in his introduction that poetry and cycling go well together, and this little book easily fits in a saddlebag!

Reviewed by Seamus Kelly



- PROS**
- + Gives single ring MTBs a bailout gear
 - + Much cheaper than buying 11-speed
- CONS**
- Guarantees an unevenly-stepped shift somewhere

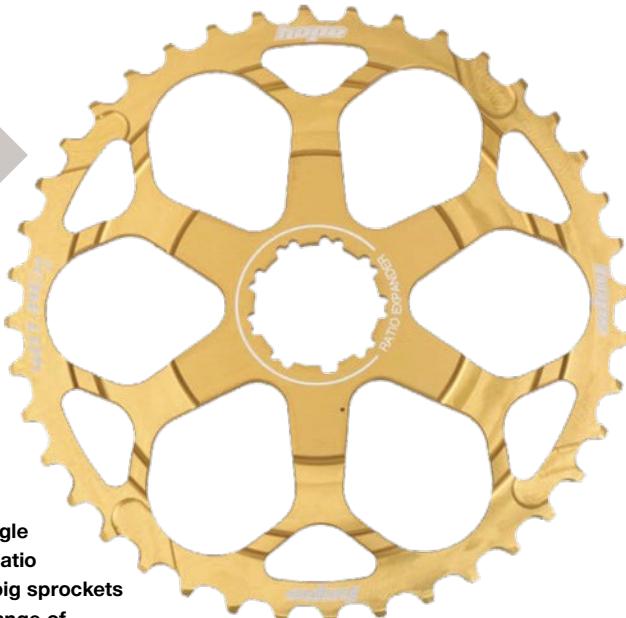
Hope 40T-REX £60

hopetech.com

MEANT FOR bikes with a single chainring, Hope's 40-tooth Ratio Expander is one of several big sprockets now available to boost the range of 10-speed mountain bike cassettes. You remove a sprocket and spacer from an 11-36 cassette and fit this behind it, giving an 11-40T range. That's almost as wide as Sram's XX1, which is expensive and can't be retro-fitted piecemeal.

There are two 40T-Rex options: SH, for Shimano XT (CS-M771) and XTR (CS-M980); and SR, for Sram X5 (PG-1030), X7 (PG-1050) and X9 (PG-1070). Given correct speed, spacing and tooth profiles, you might use other cassettes, but you'd likely have to drill out rivets to discard a suitable sprocket. That's usually the 17T.

As well as the 40T aluminium sprocket, Hope provide a longer B-screw. Screwing this in stops the derailleur's guide pulley from fouling the



huge sprocket. (Note: the rear derailleur needs a capacity of at least 29T.)

I fitted the 40T-Rex to my 29er, already set up with a single 30-tooth chainring (see Feb/Mar 14, p20). Bottom gear is now 22in rather than 24in. That looks a small step, but including decimals it's a downshift of around 10%. That's enough to stop my legs aching on the steepest hills. The trade off, with the 17T missing, is a big jump from 15 to 19. This bothered me a lot less than I expected.

Performance has been excellent. On muddy rides where clubmates have cursed front derailleurs, this has kept on working. It's light and it's simple. I like it.

Weight: 70g (50g net, deducting 17T).

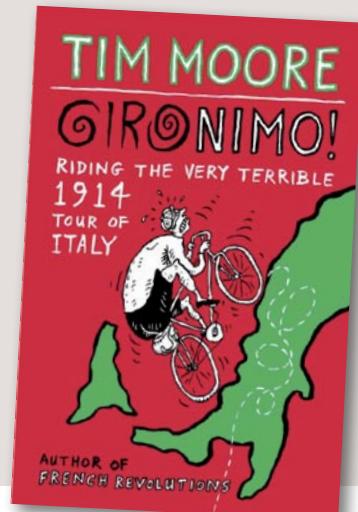
Reviewed by Dan Joyce

Yellow Jersey GIRONIMO! by Tim Moore

£14.99
vintage-books.co.uk

SUBTITLED 'RIDING the very terrible 1914 Tour of Italy', this is French Revolutions author Tim Moore's engaging account of his recreation of said grand tour, which only eight riders finished. He follows the journey, and story, of the unexpected 1914 winner, Alfonso Calzolari... and does so on a renovated 100-year-old bike, with a singlespeed gear, wooden rims, and brake blocks carved from wine corks. Gironimo! is partly a story of adversity, despair, and tenacity – and partly a funny, and often swear-y, travelogue. I was hooked from the start.

Reviewed by Seamus Kelly



Westfalia BC60 CYCLE CARRIER £418.80

westfalia-loadcarrier.co.uk

WESTFALIA IS a large manufacturer of towbars, so it's not that surprising that its own bike carrier sits on a tow ball. You don't need any extra attachments, and it's happy on swan-neck or flanged tow balls. Uniquely for a towbar carrier, the Westfalia folds into a very compact package. We're used to the main support hoop folding flat, but here the wheel supports fold in and even the rear light units hinge back to make a flat, square shape that's barely wider than the numberplate. It'll easily go in a car boot once you've unloaded it. It's best to mount it to the ball folded and then unfold it in situ. The rack clamps to the tow ball with a single lever, although it comes out sideways and will be easier to use if you're right-handed. Bikes are secured with plastic straps at the wheel supports and adjustable arms and clamps that cope fine with strangely-shaped frames and oversized tubes. The bikes can hinge down to give access to the boot. At 17.5kg unladen (it'll take up to 60kg of bikes) it's heavy for a two-bike rack, but it's robust. *Reviewed by Mike Davis*



- PROS**
- + Folds very compactly for storage
 - + Sturdy. Can carry 60kg of bikes
- CONS**
- Expensive. Shop around for a good price

- PROS**
- + Folds flat when not in use
 - + Hollow hinge provides a locking point
- CONS**
- Less stylish-looking hooks are cheaper



Cycloc ENDO & LOOP

£39.99 & £14.99

cycloc.com &
upgradebikes.co.uk

ANY CHEAP wall hook will hang your bike vertically, but Cycloc's colourful, plastic Endo looks nicer indoors in a house or flat, and it folds down against the wall when not in use. This foldability also means that the hook will come out a small distance to hold a skinny tyred-road bike or further for a fat-tyred mountain bike. The hook is hollow to enable you to slide a lock through it to lock the wheel. There's a separate panel that can be screwed or stuck to the wall underneath to prevent scuffs from the rear tyre. It's possible

but harder to hang the bike front wheel down, especially if the bike is heavy. Maximum recommended load if you're hanging the bike (either way up) is 18kg. For heavier bikes, or easier handling, you could set it up so the rear wheel rests on the floor.

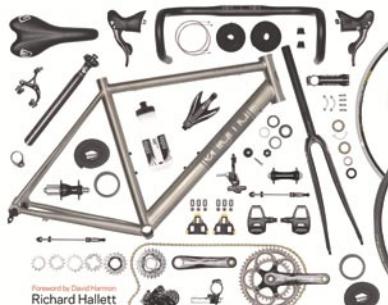
The Loop is a small, wall-mounted box that you can use to stash lights, tools, and/or hang a helmet or lock. I found it useful if a little small. Like the Endo, it's available in black, white, blue, green, red, yellow, and pink.

Reviewed by Roland Seber



The Bike Deconstructed

A Grand Tour of the Road Bicycle



Octopus Publishing Group THE BIKE DECONSTRUCTED by Richard Hallett

£20

octopusbooks.co.uk

THIS FORENSIC dissection of the road bike combines technical commentary with coffee-table accessibility. Industry stalwart Richard Hallett has been writing about cycles for 25 years in magazines such as *Cycling Weekly* and *Cycle Sport*, and it shows. He takes you through a thorough analysis of each part of the road bike: frame, wheels, gears, brakes, contact points, etc. Referencing history, common sense, engineering and manufacturing evolution, the book covers everything you'd expect: Shimano, Campagnolo, Sram, carbon fibre, disc brakes, tyre performance, electronic gearing and more. While I count myself a bike geek and thoroughly enjoyed it, you could get plenty out of it wherever you sit on the technical spectrum, thanks to exploded diagram views, clean design, and non-threatening language.

Reviewed by Matt Mallinder

MKS LEATHER HALF CLIPS £19.99

zyro.co.uk

TOE CLIPS or clipless pedals are great for keeping your feet in secure contact with the pedals, but can be frustrating in stop-start urban commuter traffic. The MKS leather half clip is the perfect solution. Your feet are kept secure. Any sudden stops are easily accommodated, as you can move your legs outwards rapidly with no hindrance. Picking up the pedals is easy, with little likelihood of squashing the clip or flipping to the wrong side. They're deep enough to accommodate ordinary footwear, and the leather sleeves help protect your shoes should you ride to work in non-cycling gear. I've been using half clips a year now and wouldn't go back to the full-cage toe-clip assembly.

Reviewed by CTC member Neil Belson



PROS

- + Very easy to get your feet in and out
- + Leather sleeves prevent scuffed shoes

CONS

- Suit commuting and touring, not racing