



The Sunstar bottom bracket motor provides assistance for up to 80km per charge

OUR ELECTRIC, S&S PINO TANDEM

Age, disability, and train regulations don't stop **Peter** and **Angela Mynors** from touring through Europe

We ride a Hase Pino tandem because the front seat is recumbent. While I've been riding bikes since childhood, Angela only began cycling aged 57; she has scoliosis and cannot ride a conventional bike. Initially, we rode a Periscop tandem, Marec Hase's prototype for the Pino. It had a recumbent front seat and a Pedersen saddle at the back. The Pino has a conventional rear seat and is more comfortable on long rides.

For the last 20 years, we have spent our main holiday each year cycling down one of the many European river cycle routes or

along a coastal route. Especially in the Alps, these provide wonderful cycling at a leisurely pace, as river valleys are generally slightly downhill and accommodation is plentiful. We recently completed a ride from the Atlantic coast to Budapest in stages, along Eurovelo 6. At the end of each stage, we returned home by train, going back the following year to pick up where we left off. Coastal rides have included trips to Greece, Croatia, New England and in 2016, part of Eurovelo 1 along the Atlantic coast of France.

A big challenge was how to take the Pino on long-distance trains. Eurostar do not accept tandems. In 2005, I asked Marec to build a Pino with S&S couplings so that it could be broken into two parts not exceeding 90x120cm and could therefore fit the luggage racks of a TGV or Eurostar. Ours is now the only S&S Pino in Europe; there is one other in the USA. Soon after our steel S&S Pino was built, a new aluminium version was introduced with a frame specifically designed to make it splittable without special couplings. All new Pinos are now built this way.

Although cycle paths along rivers provide easy riding, there are times when the only

hotel is in a hilltop town set back from the river, either to avoid floods or for defensive reasons. Now that Angela can only walk very short distances, this posed a problem. So as a combined 150th birthday present to ourselves, we bought a pedelec attachment.

We chose a crank motor rather than a hub motor to avoid affecting the steering or preventing the continued use of our Rohloff gears; we only intended to use the motor on steep hills, in traffic and against strong headwinds. The Electric Transport Shop had recently fitted a Sunstar kit to another Pino, so we decided to use this experience and ask them to fit ours. The installation on a Pino is not straightforward because the left side chainwheel incorporates a freewheel for the front rider.

Excluding VAT, the kit cost £1191, including two 264 Watt hour 24v batteries, the fitting £188 and the Pino-specific parts £91. A single battery will last about 80km against a headwind on the flat or 40km in hilly country. At the touch of a button, I can now choose whether Angela has the legs of a 30, 45, 60 or 76-year-old! Changing gear under load takes a little practice, but when the motor is turned off, the Pino rides just as it did before the electrics were added.

The attachment, including one battery, has added about 6kg, roughly 3% of the total laden touring weight including us and our luggage. A new Pino STEPS pedelec including all the above features, with a splittable aluminium frame, costs around €7300 plus delivery and VAT. ●

Tech Specs

MODEL: Hase Pino tandem (2006)
FRAME & FORK: Steel, S&S couplings
WHEELS: 20in front, 26in rear with Rigid Andra 30 rim and Marathon Plus tyres **GEARING:** Rohloff 14-speed hub, range 16-85in **BRAKES:** Magura Julie hydraulic discs plus ratchet parking brake **SEATING:** Recumbent front, Brooks Conquest with coiled springs rear **ACCESSORIES:** S&S Couplings, Sunstar ibike S03+ pedelec (250w max output) from electricbikesales.co.uk

Share your story

If you've got an interesting bike that's been chosen or customised to suit you, email cyclinguk@jppublishing.co.uk