



Child's mountain bike

ISLABIKES CREIG PRO

Journalist **Guy Kesteven** reviews an ultralight performance hardtail for junior riders

THE NEW PRO series Islabikes are evolutions of the Shropshire firm's existing benchmark, Creig (MTB), Beinn (all rounder) and Luath (Road/CX) ranges, designed to offer the ultimate performance for budding bikers.

The frame and contact points of the Creig Pro use Islabikes' carefully evolved proportional fit dimensions, with 580mm bars, super thin but bulged-end grips, and slimline saddle. Avid DB5 brakes are picked for a small-hand-friendly sweep. The 152mm Islabikes crank arms give an extra-narrow 135mm Q-factor (pedal stance) so shorter



Above: Junior-friendly 152mm length and 135mm Q-factor cranks use thick/thin chainring teeth

legs aren't splayed too far apart and pedals don't get in the way of a stabilising foot-plant.

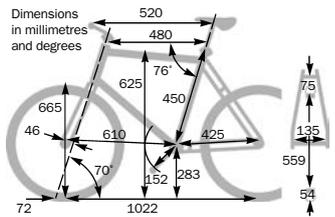
The Creig 26in is designed for riders 9+ and my test team (135-150cm tall, 62-73.5cm inside leg) all fitted okay, with Fin (143cm tall, 69cm inside leg) in the proportional sweet spot. There's also a 24in wheeled version.

THE PRO DIFFERENCE

Slimmer head tube, seat stays and tapered seat tube on the Pro frame save weight over the already light Creig frame, but the real weight saving is in the component choice. Superlight custom-built 24-spoke Crest-rim wheels are paired with equally light, tubeless-ready Schwalbe tyres. The saddle rails are hollow and the 25.4mm seat post is carbon fibre. The air sprung Rock Shox TK30 Gold fork has an alloy steerer and butted upper legs. Islabikes even fit a titanium-spindled, carbon-sleeved bottom bracket.

Judging from my test team reaction, it's beautiful to ride, thanks to minimal mass, supple suspension and intuitive gearing. It generated endless 'just one more' laps of local skills loops. It's a *lot* of money for a bike that may fit for two years. However, while it's comparable in spec to an adult bike at the price, the level of detailing and performance far exceeds anything else readily available for a keen junior rider. **C**

Tech Specs



ISLABIKES CREIG PRO

PRICE: £1499

SIZES: 24 and 26in wheel versions

WEIGHT: 9.23kg (20.34lb)

FRAME & FORK: 7005 T6 aluminium frame, Rock Shox TK30 Gold Solo Air suspension fork, 80mm travel

WHEELS: Schwalbe Rocket Ron Performance 26x2.1in tyres, Stan's NoTubes Crest rims, 24 stainless 14/17 gauge spokes and alloy nipples, alloy disc hubs with lightweight QR skewers

TRANSMISSION: Islabikes alloy 32T single ring chainset, Token Ti/carbon fibre cartridge bottom bracket, 11-42 tooth 11-speed Shimano XT cassette. SRAM GX Gripshift, SRAM GX 2.0 derailleur. 11 ratios, 20-76in.

BRAKING: Avid DB5 hydraulic brakes with 160mm front and 140mm rear rotors.

STEERING & SEATING: Islabikes double butted 580mm flat bar and ultra slim grips, KCNC Fly Ride 60mm stem, Islabikes Pro saddle and 25.4mm carbon fibre seat post.

islabikes.co.uk

OTHER OPTIONS



1 Islabikes Creig 26 £749.99

The 'standard' Creig is still a great kids' MTB with the same proportional fit component detailing and 1x10 gearing. Less exotic components and chunkier tyres mean an 11.3kg weight.

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2 Frog 69 £280

Unsurprisingly, the Frog's rigid-fork, rim brake 26in wheel option is relatively light at under 10kg. It comes with road or hybrid tyres plus full mudguards and seven colour options. The 36t chainring 1x10 gear range is tall for real off-road riding. frogbikes.com