

Q&A

MEET THE EXPERTS



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Photo: Chris Juden



A touring bike with 700C wheels and fatter (e.g. 37mm) tyres will comfortably cope with unsurfaced tracks

[TECHNICAL] Tourer wheel size

Q I am looking to buy a steel touring bike. I would like to use Sustrans routes as well as roads and know that some are gravel tracks. I have seen some 26in wheel touring bikes and wonder if you feel such a bike, with its stronger wheels, would have an advantage over a traditional 700C-wheeled tourer such as the Hewitt Cheviot?
PETE HUTCHINSON

A Even mountain bikers are beginning to realise that bigger wheels roll smoother and easier

– especially on rough or loose surfaces – and are moving up to '29ers' (which actually have 700C wheels). Less effort and a smoother ride equals more pleasure, and a 700C wheel with its usual 36 spokes is just as strong as 26in with its usual 32, so there's no point in going down to 26 inch unless you are physically too short for a well-designed 700C frame with plenty of clearance. Many modern touring frames (e.g. the Hewitt Cheviot) will comfortably run 37mm tyres, which is enough for un-worried riding on any half-decent track.

CHRIS JUDEN

[HEALTH]

Tennis elbow

Q As a keen cycle tourer I suffer regularly from tennis elbow in my right arm. I have tried positioning my hands in different places on my drops, not gripping so tightly, and simply resting them on the bars – all to no avail.
NICK HOWELL

A Tennis elbow (lateral epicondylitis) causes pain on the outside of the elbow due to inflammation of tendons. It often occurs with repeated or strenuous overuse of the forearm muscles and tendons. Lifting, gripping or twisting movements like turning a door handle or opening a jar may be painful, although pain can sometimes be constant. Despite the name, playing tennis is a relatively uncommon cause. Investigations are not usually needed.

Tennis elbow is usually self-limiting. Resting from exacerbating activities is the first thing to do. Try an ice-pack (such as a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a tea towel) twice a day for ten minutes. Anti-inflammatory painkillers such as ibuprofen may help; try the gel form rubbed over the tender area.

If the pain is severe or you have difficulty using your arm, a steroid injection may help but is not thought to confer additional long-term benefits. Physiotherapy exercises and elbow supports may

CONTACT
THE
EXPERTS

Send health and legal questions to the Editor (details on p78). We regret that Cycle magazine cannot answer unpublished health and legal queries. Technical and general enquiries, however, are a CTC membership service. Contact the CTC Information Office, tel: **0844 736 8450**, cycling@ctc.org.uk (general enquiries) or Chris Juden, technical@ctc.org.uk (technical enquiries). You can also write to: CTC, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, GU2 9JX. And don't forget that CTC operates a free-to-members advice line for personal injury claims, tel: 0844 736 8452.

[TECHNICAL]

No road ahead for lower gears

Q I have been asked to lower the gears on someone's road bike and bought a 12-36 cassette with a Deore SLX shadow rear mech. The shifters are 105 (10-speed). It doesn't seem to be pulling enough cable through. Have they changed the ratio for Shadow?

DAVID BEACHAM

A It sounds like you mistakenly bought a 10-speed MTB rear mech. The pull ratio on that is different, not because it's a Shadow mech, but because it's MTB 10-speed, which paradoxically is the last thing you want with 10-speed road shifters. Shimano calls this new pull ratio Dyna-Sys. It's not compatible with anything else that they or anyone makes, so it completes the separation of road from mountain.

What you need is a 9-speed MTB mech of as good quality as you can still get hold of, so it'll be precisely made enough to shift within the finer tolerances of 10-speed. And since your friend wants a bottom sprocket bigger than 34, it'll need to be the Shadow design.

Once all the 2011 equipment sells out, it will become true that Shadow means a different pull ratio, since there aren't any 9-speed Shadow mechs in the 2012 catalogue. This will

also be pain for anyone who bought a 29er MTB more than one year ago, since a broken mech means they won't be able to get really low gears without replacing everything with 10-speed Dyna-Sys.

CHRIS JUDEN

Compared to 9-speed Shadow mechs, new 10-speed 'Dyna-Sys' models locate the cable casing on a long arm sticking out the back: hence the longer pull.



help. Rarely, if very troublesome symptoms persist despite all of the above, a specialist may advise an operation.

A bike seat that is too high will put extra pressure on your arms and shoulders. Consider dropping the saddle and moving it forwards slightly, or raise the handlebars. Your shoulders and arms should be relaxed with your elbows bent



An ice-pack twice a day for ten minutes can give some relief from tennis elbow. Try raising the handlebar too

and your handlebar grip not too tight. Changing handlebar positions can help but I see you've tried this already and are considering different bars; it's difficult to know in advance whether this will help. Padded gloves or handlebar taping may help as an additional shock absorber. For prevention, try some forearm stretching and strengthening exercises – these can be found online.

Finally, it may worth considering whether something else you are doing off the bike is perpetuating the tennis elbow and, if necessary, reducing these activities.

DR MATT BROOKS

[LEGAL]

Is scooting cycling?

Q Is scooting a bicycle, one foot on the pedal, the other pushing it along, considered to be cycling or not? I can't find evidence either way.

IAN HEWITT



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A Unfortunately, there is no direct case law that answers your question. Section 72 of the Highway Act 1835 states that a person has committed an offence if they 'ride upon any footpath... any carriage of any description'. Carriage was later defined by Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1888 to include 'bicycles, tricycles, velocipedes, and similar machines.'

In the case of *Selby v DPP* [1994] R.T.R. 157 the court considered whether a defendant sitting astride a motorcycle and propelling it with his feet along an alleyway was riding it within the definition of the Act. Whilst this is different from 'scooting', it has some relevance.

Taylor LJ held that 'riding is being carried out if a person is being carried on a motorcycle (my emphasis) as it moves on its wheels, whether propelled by engine, or by his feet or by gravity.'

A further case which is of some relevance to the question is the case of *Crank v Brooks* [1980] R.T.R. 441. Again the facts of this case provide a different scenario from 'scooting'. In this case a cyclist, who was on foot pushing her bicycle on a zebra crossing, intending to cross the road, was knocked down by a motor car.

The defendant driver was charged with failing to accord precedence to a foot passenger, contrary to regulation 8 of the Zebra Pedestrian Crossing Regulation 1971 and

section 23(5) of the Road Traffic Accident Act 1967.

The court considered whether a cyclist should be considered a 'foot passenger' when wheeling their bicycle. The court held that a cyclist with both feet on the ground, pushing their bicycle is clearly a 'foot passenger'. They differentiated this from a person who was using their bicycle as a scooter by having one foot on the pedal and the other pushing them self along, stating that in this situation the cyclist would not have been a 'foot passenger'.

Whilst in the case of *Crank v Brooks* the issue of scooting was considered in a different context, I am of the view that this demonstrates that a court is likely to take the view that scooting is the same as riding.

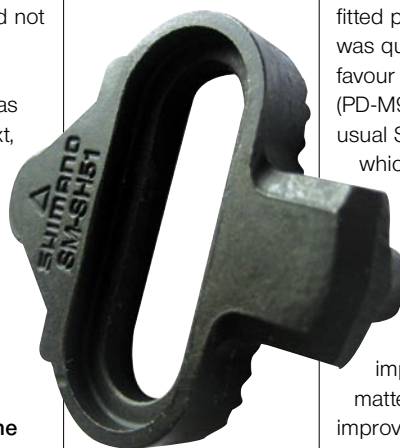
PAUL KITSON

[TECHNICAL] Which cleat?

Q Can you please explain the difference between the various types of Shimano SPD shoeplates? So far I have seen SH51, SH55, SH56 and SH71. Are they compatible with all SPD pedals or are some off-road only?
ANDREW GOLL

A Some cleats are purely road and are not practical for any purpose other than racing or pseudo-racing, since they project from the sole and make walking

No cycling means no scooting. You'll have to get off the bike and push it, while you walk alongside



SH51 is the standard SPD cleat, while SH56 is the 'easy release' cleat. Take your pick from these two

difficult. All off-road, i.e. recessed cleats, can on the other hand be used for any purpose: mountain biking, touring, commuting, shopping... since many of the shoes that accept these cleats are also good for walking.

This is the original SPD concept and so much more versatile that I'll not say anything more about the several incompatibly different road-only designs that Shimano have experimented with, apart from noting that SM-SH71 is one (which can also be used with some early designs of original SPD pedals).

All that follows is concerned only with the more versatile recessed cleats and the pedals that accept them. When I write below: 'all SPD pedals', that's what I mean.

Originally there were just two SPD cleats: SM-SH50 was the standard single-release cleat (twist outwards only) and SM-SH55 offered multi-release (twist any direction you like and less force required), which is best for beginners and light riders. SH51 was an early (1995) improvement on the original SH50, and remains the current standard single-release cleat that fits almost all SPD pedals.

The exception is PD-M858, a race-special MTB pedal introduced in 2000 along with its own special cleat (SH52) that nevertheless also fitted pre-existing pedals. This pedal was quietly dropped in 2002 in favour of a new MTB racing pedal (PD-M959) that works with the usual SH51 cleat but not SH52, which nevertheless remains in Shimano's catalogue for the benefit of anyone who bought M858.

The existing multi-release cleat didn't work with the new-improved M959, which didn't matter much as long as those improvements were only for MTB racers. But as the new pedal binding design trickled down to cheaper models it became necessary for Shimano to offer a compatible, new-improved, multi-release cleat, which is SH56. It fits all earlier SPD pedals except M858.

So it's simple: use any SPD pedal (except old M858) and either SH51 or SH56, depending on whether you want standard or easy release.

CHRIS JUDEN