

Kit reviews

GEAR

COMPONENTS, KIT, AND BOOKS SELECTED AND REVIEWED BY SPECIALIST JOURNALISTS AND CYCLING UK STAFF

Review requests
 Is there a product that you would like us to review?
WRITE TO: Cycle,
 PO Box 313, Scarborough,
 YO12 6WZ
EMAIL:
 cyclinguk@
 jppublishing.co.uk



- PROS & CONS**
- + Versatile
 - + Pleasant riding sensation
 - No onboard computer
 - Price

Pendix
EDRI300 £1,649
 pendix.com, velobrands.co.uk



SUITABLE FOR FITTING to almost any bicycle frame with a British-threaded bottom bracket shell 68mm or 73mm wide (road or MTB standard), the Pendix system comprises a detachable battery and frame-fitting mount, a battery charger, and the motor unit, which is integrated with the left-hand crank. This offsets the pedal to the outside, so Pendix provides a suitably offset right-hand crank with four-bolt chainring spider. The system is designed as a bolt-on addition to an installed square-taper bottom bracket axle of correct length.

Installation of the kit, which adds 6.5kg to the weight of the bike, must be done by a Pendix-authorized dealer. As with any pedelec, pressure on the pedals is required to generate power assist, in this case up to 250W and 50Nm or torque. The standard 300Wh battery (a 500W version is also available) is claimed

to provide assistance for up to 105km in the low-power Eco mode and just over 40km in Sport mode. Smart mode sits in between. Recharging takes about three hours to 100%. The non-lockable battery docks with a neat-looking aluminium station. The system powers up using a button on the front of the battery, which also displays charge status using a coloured LED band behind the rotating power selector ring.

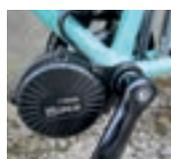
The Pendix gives an impression of high build quality commensurate with the price, with neat wiring. Installation on the Brompton, however, requires the battery holder to be clamped to the main frame spar rather than bolted to bottle cage bosses. The holder was held on by twin stainless steel straps which were too slack to secure the bracket with no means to tighten them further. Assuming this was a one-off, the system integrates well with the

Brompton's looks and folding action, leaving the battery readily accessible for charging.

Setting off, it took me a while to note the absence of an on-board computer. Every other pedelec system seems to have one, but given the user-friendliness of the battery's controls and indicators, it's of little importance. The system is limited in any case to 24kph/15mph. In Eco mode, there's little sensation of assistance; a quick turn of the selector to Sport and matters improve markedly. Power delivery is smooth, seems to persist for a moment after pedal effort ceases, and feels most generous at mid-to high(ish) cadences. Given the Brompton's wide-range three-speed hub gearing, this meant sticking to the middle ratio for best results on the flat, which, given the bike's natural habitat, is no real hardship.

Richard Hallett

OTHER OPTIONS



1 PANDA M-DRIVE KIT
 £700 (AS TESTED)
 An effective, mid-drive pedelec conversion kit with a 13Ah battery and a 250W motor, which we looked at in detail last issue. pandaebikes.com



2 BROMPTON ELECTRIC
 £2,595+
 The long-awaited e-bike version of the Brompton has a 250W front hub motor and a 200Wh battery integrated into the front luggage system. brompton.com/Electric

- PROS**
- + Water tastes great (Hiker Pro)
 - + Easy to use (both)



Katadyn
HIKER PRO £86,
BEFREE £43
 katadyn.com, lyon.co.uk

UNLESS YOU'RE A CAMEL, ensuring you have a steady water supply for anything much longer than a day on the road can be difficult. In the past, I've relied on water purification tablets or a combination of iodine drops and Vitamin C tablets. These leave an unusual taste and don't do anything to remove the debris. Over three weeks in Iceland, including a week's cycle tour and week's trek, I wanted to enjoy the famed water without the inevitable glacier grit. I also needed a means to do so for the other three members of my party.

Katadyn's Hiker Pro Microfilter fitted the bill perfectly. Marketed as ideal for three people, it worked well for four. In one pumping session, I could easily fill a wide range of bottles, including a normal cycle bidon, a wide mouthed 1L Nalgene bottle, and a 1.5L plastic bottle. It took about five minutes to filter around four litres of water. In comparison, tablets can take 20 minutes or longer and taste foul.

There's a little resistance when pumping water but nothing too onerous. Pumping will grow more difficult towards the end of the replaceable filter's lifetime, but with a capacity to pump up to 1,150 litres of clean water, you're going to need to have been on the

road for quite some time before getting to that stage.

Weighing 310g, it comes with a little bag that handily separates the clean 'out' tube from the 'in' tube that sucks up water from your source. It's fairly robust, and I felt comfortable enough to pack it in my panniers without wrapping it in cotton wool.

It's meant to reduce bad tastes and odours, which came in handy while I was staying in Reykjavik, as the tap water is sometimes tainted with the stench of sulphurous eggs! It didn't remove the smell or taste completely, but it did reduce it.

The BeFree Water Filtration bottle is even quicker and simpler to use than the Microfilter. All you do is fill the bottle, screw the top back on and suck. It's that simple. At 59g when empty, you hardly notice it. It doesn't filter as many nasties as the Microfilter, but is very convenient and a handy 'on the go' water bottle, holding 600ml.

It's more of a hardy plastic sack than a bottle. I strapped it under a bungee, which worked well. Otherwise it would have had to go in a pannier, as it won't fit into a bottle cage.

Sam Jones



- CONS**
- Better for hiking than cycling (BeFree)

Above: The BeFree 0.6L is a flexible sack, not a hardshell bottle. It's easy to carry when empty but won't fit a bottle cage

OTHER OPTIONS



1 PLATYPUS GRAVITYWORKS 2L ~£90

An award-winning system that works well for large or small groups. It's faster and less hard work than a pump as it uses gravity.
platypus.com



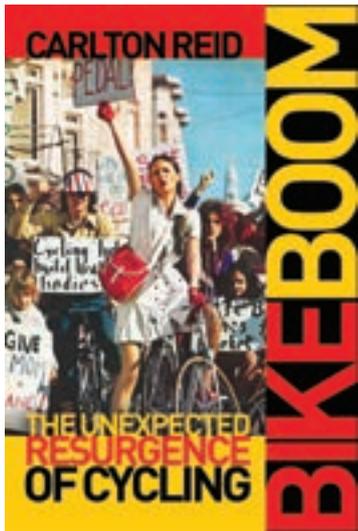
2 STERIPEN ULTRA ~£100

Battery powered, the SteriPEN zaps bacteria, viruses and protozoa with UV light. Rechargeable, it has limited battery life and is best for the solo adventurer. Combine with a muslin cloth to filter out the bits.
steripen.com

Book reviews

BOOKS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST CYCLING-RELATED READS



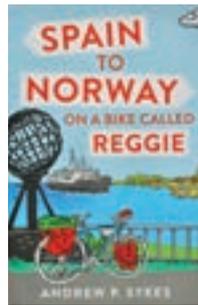
Carlton Reid
BIKE BOOM £22.99
 islandpress.org

CARLTON REID HAS been writing interesting stuff for a long time now, but mostly for the cycle trade. This and the earlier book (*Roads Were Not Built for Cars*) are more mainstream, and suggest that Carlton could end up filling the gap left by the passing away of Richard Ballantine. But, as yet, no mention of how to kill dogs!

I have to start this review by rather breaking with convention to tell you that the ending is not a happy one. As this is the second of a trilogy, the third should feature the light at the end of the tunnel. This one is mostly about the tunnel. The title is a little misleading, as the book's main focus is the ongoing battle for and against the 'cyclepath' or 'fietspad' approach: comparing the UK and USA with the Netherlands.

Having spent seven years working for Giant, whose European headquarters is in Lelystad, the most cycle provisioned town in a cycling land, this is something I have experienced first hand. Until I read this book, I had not given much thought to it, other than thinking that fietspads are 'obviously' better. But I am now thinking: are they? Would I want to swap my informal wanderings around the lanes of Norfolk for the, by necessity, rather more regimented approach used across the water?

The book is completely neutral and sets out the full history of all three countries' progress (or lack of!). This is not a very obvious book – no lycra-clad heroes or shiny bikes – but if you think of yourself as a 'cyclist', it is one you should be reading, if only to prepare yourself for the third one. **Mike Burrows**



Andrew P Sykes
SPAIN TO NORWAY ON A BIKE CALLED REGGIE
 £9.99

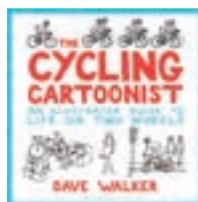
THIS THE THIRD volume of Andrew Sykes' series of books about his and Reggie the Ridgeback's tours around Europe, and it is every bit as entertaining and enjoyable as the first two. Making the trip from Europe's geographical south to its most northern point over three months, Andrew recounts his exploits in his usual witty but informative style. Intermingled with descriptions of landscape, people and architecture are snippets of history, culture and geography. It's perfect for the armchair traveller. **Julie Rand**



Anna Hughes
PEDAL POWER £9.99
 summersdale.com

READING THIS BOOK is like going to a star-studded networking event to meet cycling celebrity after cycling celebrity in rapid succession: inventors, Grand Tour masters, women pioneers, record breakers, and people who've overcome barriers to ride, and more. Each individual only has a few pages devoted to them, but almost all of them stick in the mind – **Alfonsina Strada**, for example, an Italian farmer's daughter who battled through the 1924 Giro d'Italia, some of it with a broomstick for a handlebar after hers snapped! It's an excellent book. **Read it.**

Cherry Allan



Dave Walker
THE CYCLING CARTOONIST £10.99
 bloomsbury.com

YOU'LL HAVE SEEN Dave Walker's wry cartoons in *Cycle*. This is the book of all 138 of them. What makes the simple black and white line drawings work is that they ring true. They've clearly emerged from the mind of a club cyclist like you. So you get cartoons titled 'Training Advice, wisdom gained by reading several magazine articles,' 'Levels of Fury with a bike you can't fix,' 'The Sunday Club Run, sorry I couldn't make it,' and so on. It might not make you laugh out loud, but it should make you smile. **Dan Joyce**



READ MORE ONLINE

For more reviews of bikes, kit and components, as well as how-to guides, visit cyclinguk.org/cycling-advice