



**FROM THE EDITOR**

**THERE'S ALWAYS** a charge for excess baggage; as a cyclist, you pay it in sweat. Some go to great lengths to reduce the load so they can cycle further and/or faster, with less effort and fewer breakdowns.

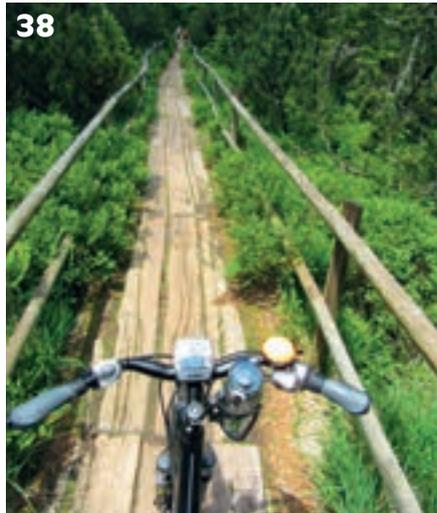
In 1986, when they rode 5,301km across Asia, Richard and Nick Crane cut the labels out of clothes and sawed their spoke key in half. (The book of their trip, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, is out of print but available online.) To carry their minimal (8kg) loads, they both used a couple of small panniers on a rear rack.

Maybe they'd have ditched the racks if they'd done the journey today? That was Igor Kovše's approach in 2011, when – way ahead of the bikepacking boom – he trimmed his luggage for a 4,000km trip to a mere 3kg, mostly carried in a compression bag strapped under the saddle. We covered that trip in *Cycle*; see [bit.ly/cycle-travellight](http://bit.ly/cycle-travellight).

Most of us aren't so dedicated to minimalism. We just do the thing where we lay out our luggage and get rid of those items we don't *really* need or *really* want. What you carry your luggage *in* is key, of course, since any touring or bikepacking load will tend to expand to fit the space available.

For road touring without a tent, a couple of small panniers and a bar bag works for me. My last off-road tours used a lightweight backpack. But now I've injured both collarbones, backpacks are uncomfortable. Time to investigate bikepacking seatpacs that will work with a dropper post!

**DAN JOYCE**  
Cycle editor



Clockwise from far left: Rob Ainsley, Richard Hallett, Natalie Wilson

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Founded in 1878



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