

Your opinions

LETTERS

THIS MONTH MORE DURABLE BIKES, 'FAKE' PHOTOGRAPHY, DRIVERLESS CARS, HEAVY-DUTY BIKES, BIKES ON TRAINS, AND MORE



Imagine Project bike

Left: Islabikes

Write to Cycle

Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ. Or email

cycle@jamespembrokemedia.co.uk

The star letter wins a pair of Compass tyres, courtesy of Sven Cycles, worth up to £116! These lightweight, supple tyres will transform the ride feel of your bike. They're available in a range of designs and widths in 700C, 650B and 26in diameters, and particularly suit touring bikes, gravel bikes, and road-plus bikes. For more information about these plush, easy-rolling tyres, or to purchase a set of your own, go online to svencycles.com



Technology

BUILT TO LAST



Letter of the month

I was interested to read the article about the Islabikes Imagine Project, designing totally recyclable bikes for a very long life. It sounds like they will be fantastic. My fear is that they will only reach the top end of the market as they will not be cheap.

It is possible to get some way towards the same aims at mass market price levels using design and technology that has been around for decades. I help run Resurrection Bikes, which you featured in the article. We have had thousands of donated bikes. Many of the modern budget bikes we receive have failing wheel bearings, bottom brackets, and brakes, despite little signs of use. It's largely because they use very poorly designed/manufactured parts and virtually no grease in the moving parts.

When we compare that to the bikes we receive dating from two, three and four decades ago, it's a different story. If basic bikes were designed with tubular steel frames, good quality paintwork, moving parts manufactured to a decent standard, and assembled with sensible quantities of grease, we could have bikes that would cost only a little more than those we see today but would last a long time.

John Rowe, Resurrection Bikes

The Imagine Project bikes won't be cheap, but they're going to *rented* rather than sold. As for the failings of today's bicycle-shaped objects... Well, they're built to a price, with the results you've seen. Decent cheap bikes exist (e.g. Decathlon) but are relatively rare.



IT'S A FAKE!

I'm aware of adverts doctoring the photographs to make them 'better', but a front cover of a mag about cycling? Look at the 'photo' and see how not only have the cyclists been superimposed on a backdrop of a lovely village in Cheshire, but they've ruined the picture of the lady at the front. She's got seemingly extra limbs and her left foot has gone, only to be replaced by that of the person who's been obliterated (bar his or her foot). And she doesn't seem to have her own left leg at all! Very, very shoddy indeed.

Mick Fairhurst

There's a rider behind, and largely obscured by, the lady in front. It's a real photo that hasn't been doctored. However,

it sparked an entertaining discussion on the Cycling UK Forum. See: bit.ly/cycle-itsafake. Top marks to Bez on the forum for referencing Father Ted: 'These ones are small. But the ones out there are far away.'

DRIVERLESS CARS

If Christian Wolmar's book, *Driverless Cars: On a Road to Nowhere*, is to be believed, then Martin Budden (Letters, Aug/Sep '18) has little to worry about.

It seems we are further from a driverless utopia than we are led to believe. There are still no driverless cars anywhere in the world today – not in the sense of a driverless vehicle that could be trusted to navigate streets or A-roads. At a recent Autonomous Vehicle exhibition in Stuttgart with 80 exhibitors, actual vehicle manufacturers were noticeable by their absence as they still have nothing to show. And the driverless dream will evaporate when terrorists hack into an AV's software to cause mayhem.

Hugh Davis

Google's Waymo car



Left: Alamy



Tout Terrain Silkroad

BIKE FOR A HEAVY RIDER

I'm 6'5" and heavy. I lost nine stone, down from 22 stone, cycling a round-trip of 26 miles a day to work in the hilly terrain around Bath. It took me 13 months to achieve the weight loss, and I got through three bikes doing it. The weakest part of a bike, when loaded heavily, seems to be the spokes. Two or three of these were breaking every week.

Eventually I used the money I saved on food to buy a Tout Terrain Silkroad, and can vouch for its strength. I often carry huge loads spread across four panniers. Broken spokes still happen, especially now our roads are so potholed, but with care it's rare.

Dave 'Tiny' French

RAILING AT LIMITATIONS

The problems Nicolas Sawyer draws attention to regarding bikes on trains (Letters, Aug/Sep '18) is widespread.

I travelled from Paddington to Swansea on one of GWR's new Hitachi trains. It was a 12-coach train, which could accommodate only four bikes; the 125s they replaced carried six. There were no bike signs, so I walked the length of the train before I found where to put it. This caused me

to nearly miss the train, as the platform was announced only five minutes before departure.

The bike 'compartment' was a cupboard with hooks to hang two bikes. Hanging mine was a fiddle.

The photo shows the provision on a German IC train. Their compartments accommodate up to about 20 bikes. This is what GWR should be providing.

David Naylor

A German IC train



THE FIRE STILL BURNS

The article in the latest magazine entitled 'The fire still burns' ranks as the most enjoyable article I've read in years. I know little about time trialling and nothing at all about that part of Scotland, but the article was a great example of inspiration, nostalgia, companionship, and sheer enjoyment. More of the same would be very welcome!

Bob Forster



BEST BAR NONE

What a great magazine Cycle is. Unfortunately, it is read in a day, cover to cover, and then passed on to my wife, and then further.

This latest magazine has a write-up about wrist problems. Why is there no mention of the Jones H-Bar? I have found that this handlebar is the answer to my problem. Its swept back design is a far more natural way for the hands to hold on for best comfort. I use large diameter foam grips.

Colin McKenzie

Photo of the month



Photo: Jason Patient

'This maintenance stand, with pump and tools, appeared in August at Tweedbank railway station. It's free to use for all cyclists.' **Jason Patient**

Join the conversation

CYCLING UK FORUM

Get immediate feedback from other Cycling UK members on the Cycling UK forum: forum.cyclinguk.org. Here's an abridged extract from a recent thread: bit.ly/cycle-customwheels.

CUSTOM WHEEL BUILDERS

Kralen: Any recommendations? Looking for a good set of wheels for a road bike (Bianchi Aria).

mattscem: Plenty of decent people online but I would be asking in my local decent bike shop or the local club.

althebike: I used Wheelsmith in Scotland for a while. Good wheels but the ones I liked were getting expensive. I am using Borg wheels now. They seem bulletproof.

Ant...: Dave Hunt at DCR wheels. I've

had three different sets off him, very good wheels. dcrwheels.co.uk

chris_suffolk: Where are you based? Madgetts of Diss (south Norfolk) have an excellent reputation

Retour64: Have a go yourself. I have built wheels with the help of online spoke calculators. I have to true them much less than machine-built wheels once they are being used.

De Sisti: How do you work out what spoke pattern to use? What about calculating spoke length?



AM7: Buy Roger Musson's wheelbuilding e-book for £9 (bit.ly/cycle-mussonwheels), which tells you everything you need to know. It really is easier than it looks.

Herts Audax: Key to a good build is being methodical and patient.

LollyKat: After encouragement from my husband and this forum (thanks, Brucey), I recently did my first wheel build, replacing a worn rear rim. I know it's not a big deal for a lot of you but I'm proud of myself!

OBITUARIES

Are now being published online at cyclinguk.org/obituaries. Send obituaries, with a digital photo if you wish, to publicity@cyclinguk.org.

How to contact Cycle



LETTERS are edited for space (especially if above 150 words), clarity, and, if necessary, legality. Please note that if you have specific complaint or query about Cycling UK policy, you should address it to the relevant national office staff member. Letters & emails for the Dec/Jan issue must arrive by 31 October. Write to: cycle@jamespembroke.co.uk or Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ



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