

Reviews

Gear up

COMPONENTS, KIT, AND MEDIA SELECTED
AND REVIEWED BY BIKE JOURNALISTS AND CYCLING UK STAFF

Put to the test

Is there a product that you think we should review?

Write to: *Cycle*, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ

@cycle@jamespembroke
media.co.uk



Pros & cons

- + Hardwearing
- + Stain resistant
- Price

Other options



MADISON ZENA WOMEN'S SHORTS

£59.99

With a range of colours, these MTB shorts have zip pockets throughout and vents in case you overheat. They're quite bikey. madison.cc



ENDURA HUMMVEE 3/4 SHORT II WITH LINER

£65.99

Endura's Hummvee has a thicker material than Findra's and comes with vents, zip pockets, and a detachable padded liner. enduraspport.com

Findra

Relaxed Fit Shorts & Trail Shorts

Each £90 findraclotthing.com

Relaxed Fit Shorts (women's): I've had a French Navy pair of these shorts for over a year, in which time they've served me well off-road in Iceland, touring in the Outer Hebrides, and rolling along in the Surrey Hills. They still look like new, despite tussles with brambles and several hundred miles of wear. They're comfortable, splash-proof, light, and breathable. They don't scream 'bike', and I'd happily wear these trekking too as they dry very quickly.

Unfortunately, in my case at least, they're not especially true

to size (14 for mine); I'd prefer more room. I also wish there was a zip pocket at the back, as I don't feel comfortable leaving anything in the unzipped ones there, especially when it's bumpy. The discreet zip pocket on the front is great for holding a phone or a small wallet.

I would balk at paying full price, but it's worth keeping your eye out for when Findra holds a sale – and that's not just for these but also their lovely merino tops!

Trail Shorts (men's): I've been jealous of Daria's Findra kit and

waiting for them to produce a range for men. Now they have. Unlike the women's shorts, which look normal off the bike, these are definitely MTB shorts and they're so long on me (I'm 5ft 8in) they almost feel like three-quarter length trousers. Made from the same fabric as the women's, they have plenty of give and seem to shed all but the worst of trail filth with a brush of the hand. They're available only in this colour (called 'Nine Iron').

I'd have preferred the front pockets to be placed on the side, rather than in front like jeans. That's a small niggle though, as they're zipped and deep. There's also a discreet side pocket on the left leg and a small zip pocket in the centre of the shorts' seat.

In case you have a large lunch on your ride, the shorts' stretchiness and adjustable Velcro waist fastener will ensure you keep riding in comfort. They're a great addition to my MTB wardrobe. ● **Daria Taddei & Sam Jones**

Verdict

Daria: *My go-to trail shorts. I always take them on tour too.*
Sam: *Great MTB shorts but at this price I'd like them to double as touring shorts, like Daria's.*

Pros & cons

- + Affordable accuracy
- Some judgement required

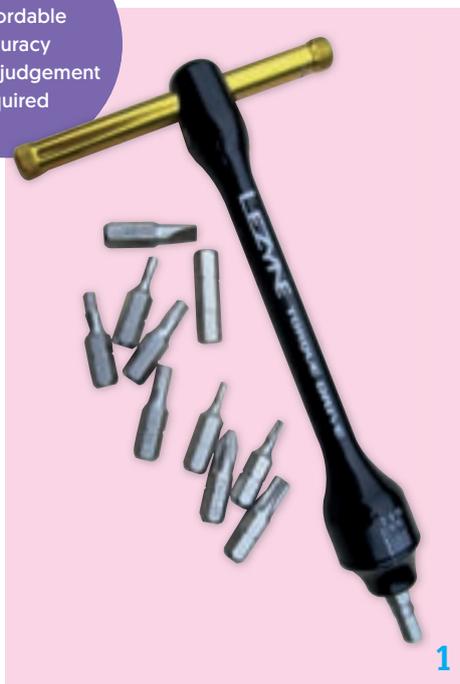
1 Lezyne

Torque Drive £50

2 Effetto

Mariposa Giustaforza 1-8 Deluxe £130

upgradebikes.co.uk



Pros & cons

- + Highly accurate, easy to use
- Premium price

The threaded fasteners used on today's lightweight cycles require careful tightening to provide adequate clamping force and, importantly, to ensure the fastener is not over-tightened – with potentially dangerous consequences should it fail. The amount by which they should be done up is known as tightening torque, or twisting force, and on cycle parts is usually measured in Newton-metres. Where a specific tightening torque is provided by the manufacturer, it can generally be found marked on the component part. While it is possible for a skilled and experienced operator to tighten small fasteners correctly, many mechanics prefer to use a torque wrench, which tells the user when the desired torque is reached.

The two tested here operate in different ways. Effetto Mariposa's Giustaforza is the more sophisticated, and employs a classic 'breakaway' indicator to tell when the wrench reaches a preset limit. A knurled wheel turns a threaded rod to compress an internal spring that pushes against a cam, which allows the head to move to the side with an audible click when sufficient torque is applied to overcome the force of the spring. Breakaway torque, from 1 to 8Nm, is indicated by a scale on the wrench's barrel.

Torque talk

Lezyne's Torque Drive is a much simpler device that relies on a high-tensile steel torsion rod housed inside its shaft. This twists by a known amount when subjected to a given amount of torque. One end of the rod is locked to the lever end of the shaft while the other sits within the tool-holding tip, which is free to

move within the head of the shaft. As torque – from 2-10Nm – is applied, the tip turns in the head, and the amount (and therefore degree of twist) is shown by the scale on the head. The operator must observe as the indicator moves and stop applying increasing force when the correct figure is reached. The tool may need to be repositioned so the scale can be seen as the fastener turns.

Both gave the same reading (within the limitations of their scales) when tightening a 5mm bolt to 5Nm. The Effetto is calibrated at the factory; the Lezyne's precision-machined torsion rod may be expected to provide comparable accuracy.

Both tools accept standard ¼" drive tool bits and are supplied with a decent selection including hex and Torx bits in sizes suitable for their torque ranges of 1-8Nm and 2-10Nm respectively. ●

Richard Hallett

Other options

RITCHEY TORQUE KEY £22

Non-adjustable wrench – in 4Nm or 5Nm models – with selection of bits: 3, 4 and 5mm Allen, T20 and T25 Torx, #1 Phillips.

upgradebikes.co.uk



TOPEAK NANO TORQBAR £27.99

Non-adjustable wrench that's available in 4, 5, and 6Nm models. Includes 3, 4 and 5mm Allen keys and T20 and T25 Torx.

extrauk.co.uk



Verdict

Of the two, the dearer Effetto is the easier to use. The Lezyne's low cost, however, puts accurate parts assembly within wider reach.



Pros & cons
 + Effective UK weather protection
 + Stylish design
 – Suits a lean build best

Stolen Goat

Climb & Conquer Winter Cycling Jacket – Mashup

£149 stolengoat.com

Climb and Conquer – it's a strong name for a hardy jacket, which first made an appearance in 2014. This new women's version has a strong new look too. With female cyclists still crying out for more choice when it comes to design, this 'Mashup' of coloured stripes is certainly head-turning, and probably the reason why the popular sizes sold out as soon as it was released. (More have been ordered.)

I got my hands on a medium in the nick of time – just before storm Diana lashed the country in late November 2018. "Inland gusts of 50mph and persistent heavy rain" looked like the perfect first test for a jacket that promises to

"keep you warm and dry in the harshest conditions". So I set off for a reasonable 25-mile loop.

Fit and function

With swimmer's shoulders and a long body, the fit wasn't perfect for me. The sloping-shoulder cut of the jacket is better-suited to a more delicate frame, and it bunched at the back of my neck and around my waist. However, the arms were just right, and the soft cut of the stretchy cuff fabric perfectly hugged my wrists and was a breeze to tuck gloves under.

Despite the storm, the temperature was hovering at a mildish 9°C, so I opted for a short-sleeve base layer

underneath. Although the jacket is made from 'Tempest Protect' waterproof fabric, the seams and zips aren't sealed. It offers excellent breathability. I arrived home overly warm (the jacket is recommended for wear in –8°C temperatures), but with a bone-dry top and phone.

That day, the jacket fended off the rain and the wind and everything else Mother Nature threw at me, while the brushed cream-coloured lining was soft on my arms. After another few weeks of riding and a few washes, the performance was still excellent. And to this day it smells unusually fresh.

For commutes home in the cold and the dark (the price of this jacket means I wouldn't just save it for best), I upgraded to a long-sleeve base layer and was still toasty in almost-freezing temperatures. The back pockets, made reflective with 'pixelated fabric', helped to keep me seen, although, for long A-roads with fast traffic, I would prefer some brighter-coloured stripes in the mash-up. ●

Charlie Lyon

Other options



MAVIC SEQUENCE THERMO JACKET
 £130

This high-stretch, warm winter jacket comes in a vibrant red (also in blue-grey) and a reflective all-over print. mavic.com



DHB AERON WOMEN'S FULL PROTECTION SOFTSHELL £110

A 'budget' option for a wind/waterproof softshell, this insulated jacket has a dropped rear tail. wiggle.co.uk

Verdict

A warm and weatherproof winter jacket for women in an interesting – and top-selling – design. The cut suits leaner frames better than a swimmer's build.

Previews Casuals

RIDING YOUR BIKE IS RARELY A RACE –
AND NEEDN'T LOOK LIKE ONE

Style counsel

Cycling's sporting aesthetic doesn't encourage transport cycling or beginners. Help us redress the balance! Send your everyday cycling photos: @cycle@jamespembroke media.co.uk



1 Kikkerland Bird Bike Multi-tool £15

A bird in the hand! The feet are 2 and 3mm Allen keys, the tail feathers 4, 5, and 6mm, and the beak is a Phillips head screwdriver. kikkerland.com

2 Gazelle Classic £499+

Proper Dutch transport, this steel roadster has bump-softening big wheels (635mm rims), a relaxed seat angle (65°), and all the required accoutrements. gazellebikes.com

3 Shimano Transit Long-Sleeve Check Shirt £79.99

You can cycle in any shirt but this one won't get clammy: it's quick-dry polyester. There's stretch in the shoulders for a better bike fit, zip pockets, and reflectivity. bike.shimano.com

4 Osloh Women's Porteur Jeans £118.05

Other manufacturers note: it's not just men who want cycling jeans. These 98% cotton, 2% Spandex women's jeans have a lightly padded seat, plenty of pockets, and an adjustable waist. osloh.com



5 DZR Pigeon \$99

Millennials seem to like slip-on trainers, often sans socks. These ones are designed for SPD cleats. They're vegan too. An option for Shoreditch fixie-riders or other clipless utility cyclists. dZRshoes.com

6 Brompton Tote Bag in Cherry Blossom £80

Practical luggage that looks less like a pannier off the bike, this coated-cotton and leather handbag is showerproof (a rain cover is also included) and has a capacity of about nine litres (28x30x11cm). brompton.com

7 Endura Wms Urban Primaloft Flipjak II £119.99,

A two-in-one hooded jacket, the Flipjak II is reversible: the brighter colour and reflective logos are for bike use, the more subtle styling for wearing off the bike. It's showerproof and windproof either way. endurasport.com



Normalise cycling

Help Cycling UK campaign for active travel funding. Visit cyclinguk.org/wouldyourather

Reviews Books

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST CYCLING-RELATED READS

Print queue

Cycle doesn't feature all books received. Reviewers pick ones they (and hopefully you!) want to read from the Editor's shortlist. Send review copies to: Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ



Designing for Cycle Traffic



CAMPAIGNERS KNOW THE feeling. We can see a piece of cycle infrastructure isn't good enough, but what *should* it be like? What's best practice? What should we push councils and engineers for?

This has the answers. John Parkin is Professor of Transport Engineering at UWE, Bristol – and a lifelong everyday cyclist, as it happens – and his new book is a superb resource for campaigners and advocates, as well as its main audience of students and design professionals. He's big on inclusivity, all-ability cycling, pleasant urban environments, and the idea that bikes are fast, efficient transport that need proper infrastructure to unlock

their huge benefits for everyone.

It's not for the coffee table; it's a dense, peer-reviewed, comprehensively-referenced academic work with equations and formulae at the back. It won't tell you how to campaign. But it will supply all those facts, figures, studies, data and researches that back up your gut feelings with hard evidence when you're engaging with councillors or designers.

It's also readable, fascinating, and resolutely pro-cycling, of course. While it is pricy, it's an invaluable reference that should be in every local cycle campaign's library. Recommended.

Rob Ainsley

Details

By: John Parkin

Published by: ICE Publishing

Price: £60

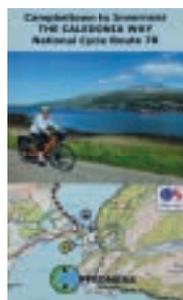
ISBN: 9780727763495



When Rob met John

As well as reviewing John Parkin's book, Rob interviewed him. Read his account here:

cyclinguk.org/JohnParkin



The Caledonia Way

THE CALEDONIA WAY takes you 235 miles from Inverness to Campbeltown in Kintyre through classic Scottish mountain scenery. This guide – the fourth in a series that combines superb attention to detail with a friendly “written by enthusiasts” feel – is the perfect size to pop in bar bag. The OS maps are easy to display on the go as it's spiral bound. Divided into six sections, each includes the route description, points of interest along the way, plus information on distances and gradients etc, and details of off-shoots from the route to explore.

Roland Seber

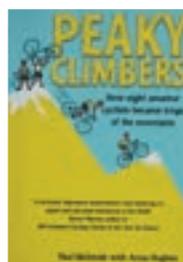
Details

By: Janet & Martin Moss

Published by: The Offcomers

Price: £15

ISBN: 9780995677036



Peaky Climbers

WATCHING THE PELOTON on the classic climbs of the Tour de France, the riders seem beyond the realm of mere mortals. So for eight middle-aged amateurs, less fit than they'd like to be, taking on 20 epic climbs in seven days was a real challenge. More than the pain, exhaustion, or euphoria at each summit, what stands out is how casual acquaintances can become such a tight-knit, supportive team. The author writes: “In the end, that's what made the Peakies. No man for himself.”

Sophie Gordon

Details

By: Paul McIntosh

with Anna Hughes

Published by: Brown Dog Books

Price: £10

ISBN: 9781785453335



Me, My Bike and a Street Dog Called Lucy

IF I OWNED a bookshop, I wouldn't be sure which shelf to put this on. It's as much a book about adventure as it is about the human spirit and the love of dogs. But it's also about isolation, mental health, and companionship. Cycling and a dog trailer are simply the context for a remarkable story about a Scottish-Iranian adventurer setting out to cycle the world. It's a heart-warming, inspiring read.

Duncan Dollimore

Details

By: Ishbel Holmes

Published by: Bradt Travel Guides

Price: £9.99

ISBN: 9781784776077