What's different about this chainring spider is that it's designed to rotate backwards by 6, 9 or 12 degrees to reduce pedal kickback on full-suspension mountain bikes. In theory the suspension will work better – like that of a bike without a chain – and it'll be more comfortable. £279.99, ochain.bike

Bike tech

Ratio 12-speed Upgrade Kit

Convert your 11-speed SRAM road shifter to work with a 12-speed SRAM mountain bike Eagle derailleur and cassette to gain wider range gearing. The DIY kit includes a new ratchet with 12 steps rather than 11. £49.50, ratiotechnology.com

New tech

Squire Inigma BL1

An enigma it isn’t: it’s a keyless lock operated by Bluetooth from your smartphone or Apple watch. Trelock did Bluetooth locks sooner (the SL460 Smartlock) but Squire’s D-lock is Sold Secure Gold. It can be set to open for multiple users. Expect more locks to follow this trend. £159.99, squirelocks.co.uk

Events 2020 RECAP

Despite the pandemic, Cycling UK organised over 30 online events, tutorials, and forums this year. We’ve chatted to legends like Alex Dowsett, Lizzie Deignan and Rebecca Charlton. We’ve discussed the barriers to women cycling and talked about adventures, the menopause, and family cycling in our virtual Women’s Festival of Cycling. And we’ve run webinars on cycling maintenance, given tips on commuting, and talked about our new off-road route, King Alfred’s Way. If you missed any of these, catch up this winter: youtube.com/c/CyclingUK/videos.
Try this

BE A CHAMPION FOR DIVERSITY

Do you want to encourage others from different backgrounds to take up cycling? Our new Diversity Champion volunteering role is for club cyclists who would like to ensure that people from a variety of races, religions, abilities, cultures, sexual identities and orientations are made to feel welcome and take part in group riding activities. The Diversity Champion’s Toolkit shows you how you can: promote, celebrate and raise awareness of diversity and inclusion; and recommend ways of improving the experience of and engaging with diverse groups. For more information about what the role entails, see cyclinguk.org/diversity-champions-toolkit.

Sarah Mitchell

New Chief Executive of Cycling UK

Why do you cycle? I started because I couldn’t afford the Tube in London. Now I automatically get on my bike for almost every local journey: commuting, shopping, meeting friends.

How far do you ride each week? It used to be a minimum of 60-70 miles commuting. Now I’m working at home it varies.

Which of your bikes is your favourite? I only have one! It’s a good old workhorse Ridgeback commuter bike.

What do you always take with you when cycling? Waterproof trousers. (Also handy for cycling in a skirt and keeping warm.)

Who mends your punctures? The fantastic team at Finsbury Cycles!

It’s raining: bike, public transport, or car? Bike.

Lycra or normal clothes? Lycra, depending on changing options at the other end. I own lots of crease-proof dresses.

If you had £100 to spend on cycling, what would you get? A camera. I had a nasty incident in February which made me realise how useful these can be.

What’s your favourite cycle journey? Cycling through Hyde Park in the evening over the Serpentine. There’s a good, new-ish cycle lane and the road gets quieter after dark. It feels like an oasis in the centre of town.

What single thing would most improve matters for UK cyclists? Segregated and connected cycle lanes would give lots more people the confidence to take their bikes out, and connected routes would mean that bikes can actually be a practical alternative to cars for those short journeys.

Picture this...

If our ongoing #12nightsoutin1year challenge is anything to go by, bad weather is just another excuse for adventure. Rain and storms haven’t stopped the UK’s bikepackers heading out into the wilds and sharing their exploits. To take part, and be in with a chance to win great prizes, visit: cyclinguk.org/12-nights-out-in-1-year. Pictured is September’s winner, taken by Sam Walsh.

Bike Hacks

CHEAPER SEALANT

Tubeless tyre sealant isn’t cheap. A pint [473ml] of Stan’s No Tubes sealant has an RRP of £18. My [editor Dan Joyce’s] mountain bike has 29+ tyres and I use at least 100ml in each so it doesn’t go far. I discovered Oko Off-Road Grade tyre sealant in a shop that sells sit-on lawnmowers. It costs £12 for 1,250ml: two-thirds the price for over two-and-a-half times as much! The thicker fluid isn’t meant for mountain bikes but it’s working fine in my big, low-pressure tyres. You could dilute it if need be – then you’d have even more for your money.