

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 needs reviewing?

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

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media.co.uk



Pros & cons

- + High specification
- + Well-built
- Black only



Other options



MAVIC KSYRIUM UST £499

Designed to be used with Mavic's own tubeless tyres but compatible with others, these are 1,650g/pair, with 18f/20r bladed spokes, all straight-pull and radial except rear drive-side. mavic.com/en-gb



SHIMANO WH-RS500 £499

Tubeless-ready 1,648g wheelset with aluminium rims, straight-pull bladed spokes, and 16f/21r spoke count. madison.co.uk

Hunt

4 Season Aero Wheelset

£409/pair mavic.com

Hunt Bike Wheels' all-weather rim brake model features bladed spokes, tubeless tyre compatibility, and a semi-aero rim profile. It is built using corrosion-resistant brass nipples, well-shielded and sealed hub bearings, and easily sourced J-bend spokes. The result is a sturdy pair of wheels rated to a maximum 115kg for rider and luggage, and suitable for tyres from 25-45mm wide.

The latter fact makes the wheelset an attractive proposition for all-roads and touring cyclists, and is due to

the rim's 24mm external width. This creates a larger air chamber volume for the tyre and means the rim should not be used with a tyre narrower than 25mm.

The 28mm-deep rim shape has curved sidewalls to improve aerodynamic performance (compared with a box section), and features Hunt's tubeless-ready H-Lock rim bed profile, which includes ramps to guide the tyre beads into place and lips to keep them there once inflated. The wheels are supplied with rim tape suitable for use with tubeless tyres already fitted; the rim and tape

will also work with innertubes.

Spoke count is relatively high for this type of wheel: 24 radial in the front and 28 three-cross at the rear. The rear drive-side hub flange is larger for better-balanced tension, which on the test pair was pleasingly high throughout. Good spoke tension, plenty of spokes, and the rear wheel's all-tangent lacing ensure a taut feel and effective power transfer even under hard out-of-the-saddle efforts, plus crisp steering and reassuring directional stability at speed. Weight is impressive for the price point, at well under 1,600g.

Inexpensive, delivered true to within 0.1mm, correctly dished, and supplied with tubeless valves and spare spokes, Hunt's 4 Season Aero wheels are hard to fault unless you count shallow brake tracks needing careful block adjustment. ●

Richard Hallett

Verdict

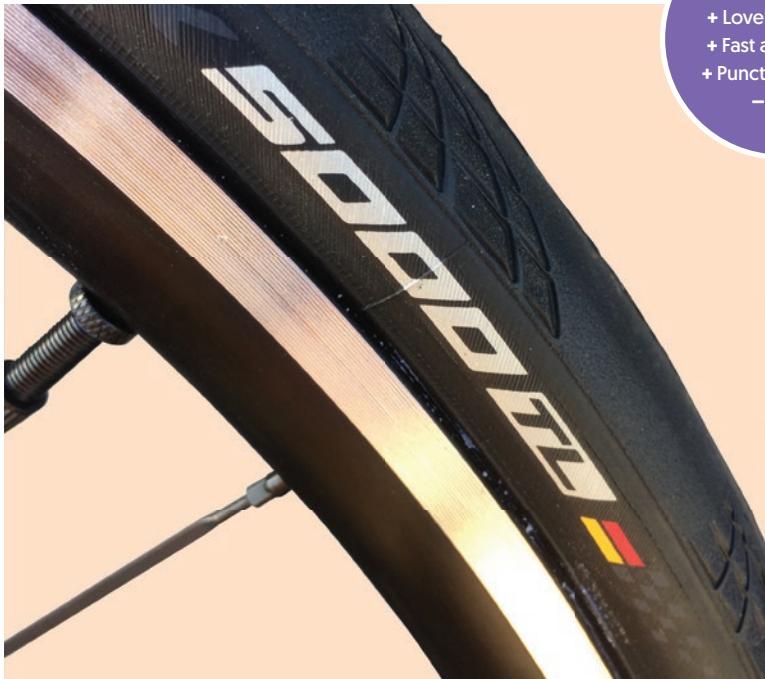
Well-built and boasting a comprehensive specification, this is a genuine all-rounder of a wheelset suitable for all-year use. The rim design and load capacity lend themselves to an impressive variety of activities.

Cycle's test promise

At Cycle, we are proudly independent. There's no pressure to please advertisers as we're funded by your membership. Our product reviews aren't press releases; they're written by experienced cyclists after thorough testing.

Continental Grand Prix 5000 TL

£69.95 conti-tyres.co.uk



Pros & cons

- + Lovely ride feel
- + Fast and grippy
- + Puncture control
- Pricy

It may have been a long time coming, but Continental's first dip of the commercial toe into the turbid waters of road tubeless tyres looks, albeit on the basis of 400 miles of test riding on one tubeless-ready wheelset, to have been worth the wait. Introduced earlier this year along with a non-tubeless clincher version that directly replaces the old GP4000 tyre, the new GP5000 TL is a true tubeless tyre rather than 'tubeless-ready', with an impermeable butyl-lined carcass that should retain air without the need for sealant (although Continental recommends sealant).

The TL's three-ply carcass uses a 60tpi casing rather than the clincher's 110tpi, the heavier material said to work better in the tubeless format, and its bead

has a specific shape moulded in a soft rubber to provide a better seal with the rim. Both clincher and TL tyres use a BlackChili tread compound, remixed to improve grip and rolling resistance, and employ a technology named Active Comfort. This comprises a thin layer of special rubber under the tread to dampen road vibration.

Conti's customary Vectran anti-puncture belt is retained, and the tread gets a laser-etched micro pattern for better adhesion in slippery conditions. The TL is heavier by 90g in 700×25C size yet offers a claimed 5% improvement in rolling and puncture resistance over its tubed sibling, which itself is claimed to be 12% and 20% better respectively than the old GP4000.

All very well, but road tubeless technology needs to be easy to use if it is to attract cyclists. I tested the sample tyres on Hunt's

4 Season Aero tubeless-ready wheelset, inflated to 80/90psi front/rear, at which pressure they measured 27mm wide. Both tyres seated near-instantaneously with a smart 'pop' and, inflated to 80psi, lost about 40psi overnight without sealant, which reduced to around 5psi once Conti sealant was added.

The riding experience is entirely convincing, with a supple, comfortable ride quality and an intriguing sound from the sidewalls like that of a fast tubular. On a club ride through the Cambrian mountains, the tyre and wheel combo impressed me with its speed, comfort and grip, especially on shaded hairpin bends, where dry tarmac can turn to wet and back in metres. No punctures or cuts on wet, gritty Welsh back roads suggests they're tough too. Sizes: 25-622, 28-622, 32-622, 28-584. ●

Richard Hallett

Other options

SCHWALBE PRO ONE £60

Impressively fast tubeless road clincher with a decent size range, but the tyre can cut easily. Weighs 260g in 700×25C. schwalbe.com/en



HUTCHINSON FUSION 5 ALL-WEATHER £60

Sturdy, grooved, wet-weather ElevenSTORM® tread means this tubeless tyre is 325g in 700×25C. hutchinsontires.com



Verdict

Conti's new tyre combines comfort, speed, grip, and ease of installation with the expected tubeless benefit of riding uninterrupted by minor punctures. ▶



Pros & cons

- + Everyday practicality
- + Study construction
- Pannier fitting issues



Specialized Pizza Rack

£53 specialized.com/gb

Why "pizza rack"? It's sold in a pizza-style flat box; the top section screws to the side-plates so it can be disassembled to lie flat. And the rack's platform, at 33.5x27cm, is about the right size for strapping pizza boxes to. It's not just for trips to Domino's, however. Specialized say this aluminium porteur rack "was designed to be a stout companion piece to any around-town commuter or touring rig".

It weighs 900g and is rated for a 15kg load, which can be split between the top platform and panniers on the sides. Those panniers need top hooks that fit 13mm rails; some will only fit 12mm and narrower. If the pannier's lower fixing is a horizontal plastic cleat, you'll probably find that this sits below

the bottom of the rack as there's only 19cm from the mid rail to the lower rail. Having bags unattached lower down didn't bother me when shopping but would on tour. The solution? Some DIY to reposition the lower hooks, or the use of bags with a upward pointing lower hook or a hook-and-strap fixing.

To carry, you'll need luggage straps or a suitable box or crate. Specialized have recently launched a top-bag for this rack called the Pizza Bag (£90). I initially used a cardboard box (free!) with holes bored in it, secured to the rack with cable-ties. Later I fitted a plastic 25-litre Basil Bicycle Crate (hipsters may prefer a wooden apple crate). I've left this permanently attached, for a container that you can simply chuck stuff into turns out to be

really useful on an urban bike. Bear in mind that if you load the rack heavily, the handlebar has a tendency to swing round when pushing or parking. So you might want a steering damper.

To fit the Pizza Rack, your bike needs mid-fork eyelets and a hole in the fork crown. I fitted it to three different bikes: my wife's Specialized Roll, my Genesis Vagabond, and my Genesis Longitude. It ended up tilted back slightly on the Longitude but that's not a problem. Lots of Dutch bikes with front platform racks have them set up just like that. There's a threaded eyelet at the front of the rack for attaching a front light where it won't be obscured by the rack's load. ●

Dan Joyce

Other options



MINOURA GAMOH PORTEUR FRONT RACK £59.99

This platform rack (29x43cm) attaches to the fork crown and dropout eyelets, so should fit more bikes. Maximum load is 18kg. zyrofisher.co.uk



SURLY 24 PACK £149.99

Expensive but well made chrome-moly rack. Fitting requires fork crown and mid-fork mounts. It's rated to carry 13.6kg, and has a 27x40cm deck. ison-distribution.com

Verdict

A porteur rack that works really well on an urban runaround, once you've attached a basket or crate. It'll also go touring – with some caveats re. pannier attachment.

Previews

Casuals

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

Style counsel

Got a favourite outfit to ride in? We'd love to see it. Tag @wearecyclinguk on Instagram or email your cycling photos to: @cycle@jamespembrokemedia.co.uk



1 Axa Classic £10

That rare thing: a battery headlight that bolts to your bike. Runs for 50 hours on 2xAAA batteries (included). Output is 4 lux, enough for a 15m beam. Chrome or black. amba-marketing.com



2 SmartHalo 2 £131

The bike computer for urban commuters? It links to your phone and functions as a navigation device, fitness tracker, 110dB alarm, and 250 lumen light. It also alerts you to incoming calls and gives weather updates. uk.smarthalo.bike



3 Cube Cargo

Hybrid £4,449

German bike giant Cube throws its hat into the e-cargo ring with a Bosch CX-drive front loader. Optional bench seat, seatbelts, and rain canopy. cube.eu/uk



4 Vaude Womens

Skomer II Dress

£90

A lightweight dress that packs small, dries quickly, and doesn't need ironing. Handy for touring. On offer at Cotswold Outdoor at £49 at time of writing. Sizes: XXS-XXL. vaude.com



5 Brompton London Waterproof Jacket

£150

This jacket is waterproof (15k) and breathable (also 15k) but doesn't shout 'cyclist!' off the bike. There are zipped underarm vents, fold-away reflective panels, and plenty of pockets. brompton.com



6 Cannondale Treadwell EQ

£799.99

A fattish-tyred cruiser with 1x9 gearing, hydraulic discs, a porteur rack, mudguards, and a more upright riding position. An aluminium frame and fork keep the weight down. cannondale.com

7 Alpkit Woodsmoke Mountain Shirt

£59

Made from Thermotech polyester that insulates well, dries quickly, and has a bit of stretch for a better fit, this flannel shirt would suit mountain biking, bikepacking, or touring. alpkit.com



Practical pedalling

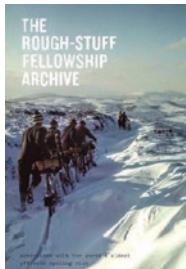
For more information about commuting and transport cycling, visit cyclinguk.org/commuting

Reviews Books

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST CYCLING-RELATED READS



Rough-Stuff Fellowship Archive



Details

By: Intro by Mark Hudson
Publisher: Isola Press
Price: £30 (£27 to RSF members)
ISBN: 978-0995488632

It's a beautiful work of publishing that calls to be picked up and flicked through. The photos, organised by seasons of the year, chart some of the (mis)adventures of the club and its members from the '50s to the '80s. Cue short shorts in the snow, cycling capes, and some incredible landscapes! It goes to show that today's obsession with all the latest kit isn't so necessary if you've

a will for adventure.

The real highlight for me is the account of the 1958 Iceland Expedition. It reads like a polar exploration, and is a fascinating insight into how the cycling community aided in the planning of such trips.

I love this book. I show it to all my cycling pals and have joined the RSF on the back of it. I can't recommend it enough.

Sam Jones

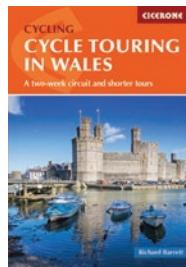


More online

The Rough-Stuff Fellowship is affiliated to Cycling UK.
For more details, visit:
cyclinguk.org/local-groups/roughstuff-fellowship

Print queue

Cycle doesn't feature all books received. Reviewers pick the ones they think you need to know about from the Editor's shortlist. Send review copies to: *Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ*



Details

By: Richard Barrett
Publisher: Cicerone
Price: £12.95
ISBN: 978-1852849887

Cycle Touring in Wales

DESPITE ITS FEARSOMELY lumpy terrain, Wales is a great country for a cycle tour, with stunning scenery, quiet roads, pleasant towns, and a wealth of history. This pocket guide details a series of routes using largely traffic-free paths and lanes that combine into a circumnavigation. Several rides across the middle also included. Featuring clear maps, informative route descriptions, and ride profiles, this guide will prove invaluable for anyone visiting Wales by cycle.

Richard Hallett



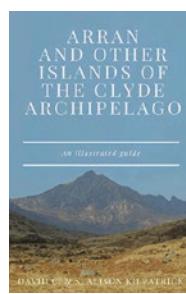
Details

By: Graeme Fife
Publisher: Thames & Hudson
Price: £29.95
ISBN: 978-0500022719

Great Cycling Climbs: The French Alps

AS AUTHOR FIFE points out, there's a unique appeal to the Alps that anyone with a passing interest in the professional peloton will identify. If you've ever dreamt of riding in the French Alps, you'll flick to the famous climbs. The descriptions have been broken down by area, making this a superb planning resource, though it belongs more on the coffee table than in a pannier. It's well written, the photos are incredible, and the stories will leave you knowledgeable about both routes and history.

Nik Hart



Details

By: David C and Alison Kilpatrick
Publisher: FastPrint
Price: £10
ISBN: 978-1784566265

Arran and Other Islands of the Clyde Archipelago

AS MUCH ENCYCLOPAEDIA as guidebook, this book has detailed information – with photos – on everything from ancient standing stones to common fauna and flora to Victorian public toilets (one of Rothsay's "most impressive sights"!). Although interesting, it can feel a quite academic at times and it lacks any cycling routes, although some walks are suggested.

Keir Gallagher