

Opinion Letters

THIS MONTH GARISH SHOES, STYLISH JERSEYS, AIRPORT ARGUMENTS, E-BIKE PROS AND CONS, AND GOING GREENER...

These Northwave Extreme Tech SBS shoes are comfortable to wear. But those colours!



Letter of the month

THE FUTURE'S ORANGE?

Last week I was forced to buy some new cycling shoes. Forced, because I dislike buying shoes. I am an average UK male, but either my feet are weird or cycle shoe designers have something other than normal feet in mind. I can imagine the scene, unveiling next year's shoe line-up to the board:

"Here are next year's road shoes. They're made of lithium reinforced titanium with poly-oxy-norm-ortho-carbonate toe-poppers."

"Do they render the wearer helpless and immobile the minute they step off the bike?"

"Naturally."

"What last did you use?"

"The ostrich foot last. Ostriches having just one long thick toe means the shoes won't fit any normal human, which is only fair as everyone will be in equal pain."

"Very good. What about the MTB/leisure shoe?"

"It's bright orange with day-glo green highlights. Look!" Gasps of delight from the board, with one lone voice: "But it has laces."

A pause. "It's bright orange with day-glo green highlights – look." Board erupts in cheering...

Do shoe designers ever wear them? Do they even ride bikes? Oh well, my new shoes have laces and green highlights – but at least they're not orange.

John Knight

Win a set of Lezyne lights worth £110

The letter of the month wins a set of Lezyne Macro Drive 1100XL / Strip Drive Pro lights, courtesy of Upgrade Bikes. The versatile front light delivers 1100 lumens on its highest setting yet lasts 78 hours on its lowest, while the rear – at up to 300 lumens – is ultra-bright even in daylight. For more information about these lights, or to find your local stockist, visit upgradebikes.co.uk



Get in touch

LETTERS are edited for space, 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. Feedback for the next issue must arrive by 23 December.

WRITE TO: Cycle, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ or email cycle@jamespembrokemedia.co.uk



Top-class tops

Before seeing the 'Kit Inspection' article last issue, we ordered two short-sleeved cycling shirts from the Heritage Range for our cycle tour from Porto to Lisbon in September. We were slightly concerned that they might be too warm for the high temperatures of Portugal.

We worried unnecessarily: they were perfect. They fitted well and kept us cool when it was hot and warm when it was cooler. They drew lots of admiration and positive comments from other touring cyclists.

Cycle had been delivered on our return, and we read the article with enthusiasm.

Anne & Paul Newman

Warning: gaz

The folding Campingaz stove that clicks onto a cylinder is a great product but Birmingham airport wouldn't accept the fitting in my hold luggage or hand baggage. I explained that it could be any old brass fitting, and popped it into my mouth to show its harmlessness.

The supervisor – it had reached the point of being banned from boarding – kept referring to the poster, which did indeed show the fitting, albeit with the gas cylinder attached. So I spent a week in France making tea over a smouldering damp fire!

David Burton



Raising a glass

The article 'Raising a glass' by Sam Jones in the Oct/Nov issue of Cycle really struck a chord with me. Like Sam, I too lost my Dad in very sudden, devastating circumstances.

Like Sam, with the support of others around me, I have continued to cycle. It has undoubtedly kept me sane at the worst time of my life. My Dad always loved to hear about my cycling expeditions, and I know that he'd be really pleased that I'm still getting out there.

Many thanks for such a great magazine. I love reading it as soon as it drops through my letterbox.

Name withheld by request



Greener choices

Cycling is a more sustainable pastime than many others, but I wonder if Cycle could give more information to help us make greener choices? The last edition had a group test of waterproofs. Are any of these better for the environment? Have any of the companies worked to reduce the toxic chemicals used to make them? Are there better green alternatives to the man-made fibres we all cycle in?

When you review bikes you compare frame materials for their performance, but never which has a lower carbon footprint or is more recyclable at the end of its life. I think there is also space for articles to encourage the industry to be more green. When I buy bike parts, I'm always amazed at how much packaging there is.

I'm sure members would be a great source of information about how to eke out the life of components and save on world resources.

Trevor Cox



Power to the people

As well as social rides, my club, Bognor and Chichester CTC, has longer Sunday rides. I wanted to do them but felt I would be too slow on the hills on my old Marin, so a year ago I bought a Cube Touring Hybrid 400 e-bike. It has made the most wonderful difference to my life. I still use my Marin for the social rides but have now been able to do long rides up to 90 miles with power to spare.

The e-bike has actually made me stronger. The Sunday riders go about 17mph on the flat, which I find I can manage, and I don't even notice the transition from assisted to unassisted.

To anyone who is thinking of getting an e-bike, I would say: study the reviews and get the best you can afford.

Maureen Flint

Tight lipped

Twice recently, riders in my club on Orbea Gain e-bikes have been unable to get the tyres off the rims after suffering punctures. The first time we were in a nice warm kitchen, trying to repair a slow puncture. Today we were outside our local café, and again the wheel, tyre, and our hands were dry. What chance would you have getting the tyre off on a cold, wet winter's day?

Tubeless tyres and rims set up with innertubes are a disaster. What the manufactures of road e-bikes must consider is that many of the people who purchase their bikes are older, some with failing health or suffering from arthritis. Please sell e-bikes with normal clincher wheels!

I have an Orbea Gain with normal clincher wheels, incidentally. It's a fabulous bike.

Dave Anness

Obituaries

Are published online at cyclinguk.org/obituaries. Contact publicity@cyclinguk.org



Photo of the month

Dover to Durness

The above photograph was taken at the start of Brian Wood's Dover to Durness tour, which ran from 4-18 May 1990 and took in Cape Wrath. Apart from Brian, I can't remember the names of the other members of the party. I have ordered my new Cape Wrath Fellowship certificate.

Jenny Leese

CYCLING UK FORUM

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



...THE BEST UK PLACE TO LIVE FOR CYCLING

David9694: One day my wife and I are going to retire to our dream house, somewhere in the UK. If cycling, on and off-road, was the only consideration, where would you choose? I'd like to be in the midst of a swathe of patchwork, rolling countryside, interesting villages and market towns.

mrtrip: I live in the Test Valley and love it. Market towns, endless quiet lanes, off-road trails, and the New Forest a stone's throw away.

cyclop: Dalbeattie in Dumfries and Galloway. Year round cycling on very quiet lanes or Dalbeattie Forest when it's icy, snowy, very windy or very cold.

eileithya: Inland from Hull/Beverley. Big open country, lots of lanes,

easy access to ferries for overseas trips.

Oldjohnw: Having just returned from a week in the Yorkshire Wolds, it's where I'd go, given the opportunity. Hilly enough to challenge but not to put off. Hundreds of miles of empty roads, gorgeous villages, pubs and tea rooms.

Icsunonove: Welsh borders? West of Hereford, up through Kington, Knighton, Clun, SW Shropshire. Although you'll need to like hills and your own company. **soapbox:** Dumfries and Galloway get my vote. The British Cycle Quest (just over half of them bagged) has been very successful in taking me to counties that I wouldn't ordinarily have considered for cycling. I think Shropshire was the most pleasant surprise of all. I could retire there.