



at a point just above the dropouts. The two tubes effectively replace the single lowered top tube of a 'ladies' frame and improve on it by bracing the seat tube against bending at the point where the tubes cross.

This design, popular in the past with manufacturers for its ease of construction, can be further improved by using a single large diameter lowered top tube with small diameter tubes running to the dropouts from its junction with the seatstay, as the single large diameter tube is considerably stiffer in both bending and torsion. This design also does away with the need for lengthy twin lateral tubes and can be built with a standard top tube and seatstays. If you would nevertheless prefer the full twin lateral design, suitable lengths of small-diameter, for example 5/8in (17.875mm) thin wall chrome-moly steel tube may be obtained from a factor such as ProFormanceMetals.co.uk. Either design can be fillet brazed if suitable lugs are unavailable.

Richard Hallett

Technical

How much power?

Q In the Cycle2Charge review (Aug/ Sep 2024) you quote a maximum output of 1W for this but according to the manufacturer's website the device can deliver 0.5 amp (2.5W) when riding at 12kph and 1 amp (5W) at 21kph. Please can you check and update, if I have understood this correctly?

Peter Hutchison

A You are correct: maximum output is 1A, which at the USB standard 5V makes 5W. As noted by Cycle2Charge, this may not be enough to charge some devices directly, in which case the advice is to use the V3 to charge a powerbank battery and then use this in turn to charge the device. My apologies for the mistake.

Richard Hallett

Technical

Goodbye to clipless

Q I am considering ditching my SPD-SL pedals and going back to using toe clips and straps with normal road-type pedals. Does anyone manufacture the old-type shoe plates to use with this design of pedal? I'd want to fit them to shoes with the three-point SPD-SL holes, so as to be able to continue to use the rather expensive road shoes I have.

Terry McNamara

A Old-school slotted shoe plates were generally designed to be nailed to leather shoe soles. Shortly before they became obsolete, shoes with adjustable plates, each specific to its sole, became available. Neither is suitable for modern 'road' soles. Take a look at the Bythlon pedals (cyclinguk.org/bythlon-pedals), which may, perhaps with the addition of straps, fit your bill.

Richard Hallett



Technical

Reaching out

Q I have some old short-reach brakes. Will these brake-calliper extenders from eBay do the job better than buying longer reach brakes or save buying a whole new set of brakes?

Mark James

A These extenders drop the blocks by 10mm, which, if enough to let them reach the rim correctly, will indeed save buying a calliper or two. However, the leverage ratio between the calliper's input and output arms will change, reducing the braking effect you will get for a given squeeze force on the brake lever. If you find your brakes no better than adequate as they are, consider longer reach calipers, which retain the desired pull ratio and provide the intended braking performance.

Richard Hallett

Health

Cyclist's cough?

Q I am 61 and in quite good health. A few years ago my wife told me that I have a tendency to cough whenever I cycle. I hadn't noticed but now I notice it all the time. It doesn't appear to be related to weather conditions or the distance I have ridden. I don't suffer any discomfort but it feels as though there is constantly mucus in the back of my throat. It doesn't appear to restrict my breathing or prevent me from riding up steep hills. Should I be worried about this?

Martin Dibley



Left: Getty Images

A Many people notice a chronic cough despite having healthy lungs and normal exercise capacity. This can be a symptom of acid reflux. Acid rises up the throat from the stomach, especially when pedalling strenuously up a hill, for example, and causes irritation to the larynx. This will produce mucus and an annoying, repetitive cough. Lying flat in bed at night can also aggravate the symptoms.

To reduce the frequency of the cough, you could avoid eating a large meal before cycling, avoid carbonated drinks and keep to a healthy weight. A dose of antacid such as Gaviscon may soothe the throat and suppress the acid. If this does not improve things, your GP may be prepared to prescribe you an acid suppressant as a trial. For most people this is just an annoyance and nothing more.

Dr Kate Brodie

Get in touch

EMAIL your technical, health or legal questions to editor@cyclinguk.org or write to Cyclopedia, Cycle, Cycling UK, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, GU2 9JX. Cycle magazine cannot answer unpublished queries. But don't forget that Cycling UK operates a free-to-members advice line for personal injury claims, **TEL: 0330 107 1789**.