

CYCLOPEDIA

Bike finder

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LIGHTWEIGHT GRAVEL BIKE

• **For:** Richard Whitlock, aged 70, from Sandy, Beds. • **Bike needs:** I've had a Ribble Sportive but recently enjoyed a gravel bike. I want a light bike suitable for use mainly on road and occasionally off road. Usually do 30-70 miles. I have my eye on a previous year's Giant Revolt Advanced Pro 0. • **Must have:** A wide gear range. Able to take 25-50mm tyres. Maybe electronic gears. Relaxed cycling position. Lightweight. • **Budget:** £2,000-£3,500.



Richard Whitlock

Stephen Shrubsall



You could go one of two ways here. You stipulate a relaxed geometry on a gravel bike to use primarily on the road. You can have your cake and eat it with the **Santa Cruz Stigmata CC** (santacruz bicycles.com). It's a little over budget at **£3,999** for the cheapest,

SRAM Apex version but you may be able to find it on sale.

While it doesn't boast the more upright riding position you might want, it's comfortable enough for 70-mile outings and, crucially, has a bias towards the blacktop. I've never ridden a more capable gravel bike on the road. It offers a light and lively ride with a wide enough spread of gears to hold speed on the flat and winch up steep inclines. The finishing kit comes courtesy of Easton. I rode a Santa Cruz Stigmata CC for 120 miles at the Dirty Reiver Gravel race in Northumberland and it didn't miss a beat.

For more off-road comfort, the **Giant Revolt X Advanced Pro 2** (last year's model reduced to **£2,699** at giant-bicycles.com) is well worth consideration. While not as sprightly on the road – mostly as a result of being heavier, with increased compliance from a front suspension fork and an integrated suspension/dropper seatpost – it's very capable in most off-road environments. I used an iteration of this machine for Traws Eryri, which is billed as a mountain bike ride, and rarely felt under-biked. However, whereas the Santa Cruz could happily hold its own on a road-bound club run, you might feel your speed ebbing on the Giant.

**SANTA CRUZ
STIGMATA CC**
£3,999



Dan Joyce



If you'll be riding only occasionally on well-groomed off-road trails, an all-roads bikes like the **Sonder Colibri Ti Ultegra Di2** (**£2,999** at time of writing, alpkit.com) might suit you better than a 'full fat' gravel bike. This bike runs 32mm tyres with mudguards or 35mm+

without, and it ticks all your boxes.

Alternatively, get a gravel bike and swap the tyres. Supple, wide tyres with a slick or file-pattern tread will transform any gravel bike's ride on tarmac but will still work fine off road when it's dry. Last year's **Giant Revolt Advanced Pro 0** was **£5,499** so if you've seen it for under £3,500, that's a good deal. I'd recommend fitting **Rene Herse Snoqualmie Pass TC** tyres (**£82 each**, rene-herse.co.uk). I've done century rides and fast club rides on these tubeless 44mm tyres. They're outstanding.

The **Boardman ADV 9.2** (**£2,250**, boardmanbikes.com) is a great-value alternative to the Giant. It has a lightweight carbon frame and fork, plus the electronic gears you want: SRAM Apex XPLR AXS. This is 'only' a 1x setup but the 40/44 (25in) bottom gear is lower than that of most road bikes. At 9kg, I'd class it as light. If the riding position isn't relaxed enough, buy and fit a different stem and/or a riser drop bar (see 'DIY Bike Fit', last issue). For the tyres, I'd suggest the 38mm **Rene Herse Barlow Pass TC** (also **£82**) to give plenty of mudguard clearance, although the Snoqualmie Pass tyres should fit the frame. Other fast gravel tyres, such as the **Panaracer Gravelking Slick TLR** (**£55**) in 40mm width, would also work.

**BOARDMAN ADV
9.2 £2,250**
**RENE HERSE
BARLOW PASS
TC TYRES £164**

