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Cover photo: Josh Reid avoiding the ice on a track in the Pentland Hills. By Markus Stitz



From the editor

Wainwright's famous maxim that "There's no such thing as bad weather, only unsuitable clothing" rang a little hollow. I was riding uphill through a blizzard: 40mph wind, a 'feels like' temperature of -7°C , and snow filling the sky like static on the dead channel of an analogue TV.

"That looks awful," read the WhatsApp from a riding buddy in response to the pictures I sent him.

It wasn't. The weather was certainly bad but I didn't have a bad time. It was exhilarating. There was little danger as it was a traffic-free cycle trail. My mountain bike's tyres (9psi) were finding traction in the snow. I wasn't cold or wet as I had suitable clothing, including the Altura jacket on page 58.

A more useful maxim might be: "There's rarely such thing as a bad ride, unless you're wearing unsuitable clothing." In Finland, children still cycle to school when it's snowy and -17°C and lower. (Google it. It made me feel less polar explorer, more bloke on a bike.)

Winter's bigger problems for cyclists aren't meteorological; you can always sit out a cold snap in the UK anyway. They're rooted in human behaviour. Careless drivers slewing cars in conditions they're unprepared for. Impatient drivers peering through portholes in frosted windscreens. (One such drove so close to me a few years ago that my right pedal scratched his passenger door.) Heavy lorries damaging tarmac so frost-cracking occurs, leading to potholes.

I've had one scarily deep pothole encounter already this winter. Luckily while riding a bike with huge tyres (60-622 Schwalbe Big Apples). The bike bucked but rolled through - just. Take care out there.



DAN JOYCE
Editor



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