

Gear up!

A cross-section of cycling products selected and reviewed by CTC staff, specialist journalists and CTC members

Submit a review

If you want to submit a review, write or email the editor – details on page 80 – for advice on how to go about it. Each one printed wins a short-sleeved CTC cycling jersey worth up to £39.99. You can choose either the modern or vintage design. To see the whole range, visit www.impsport.com and click 'CTC' in the 'Shop by Range' panel. To order by phone, call 01522 500505.



B&M CYO HEADLAMP £85

Reviewed by Technical Editor Chris Juden



Last year Busch & Müller dazzled me with the brilliance of their IQ-Fly headlamp. Such is the pace of LED developments that B&M have a new lamp that's 50% brighter still! I fitted them both to switch and compare.

In theory the Cyo's 60 lux ought to illuminate 22% further ahead than the Fly's 40. It probably does, but the most obvious improvement is a broader spot and smoother spread of light. It's also a much more stylish lamp, dispensing

with the reflex reflector that makes the Fly so tall and locating the electronics, with a neat rotary switch, in the back of a compact and streamlined unit 52mm diameter by 66mm long. The integral lens hood is a nice touch that saves the user having to tape over the top to prevent being blinded by his own lamp.

This is the 'sport' model, costing £85, with 'plus' (standlight) and 'senso' (automatic switching) features. Cheaper versions are available without the senso, for use with bottle or hub ('N') dynamos. All have the standlight, which is as bright at standstill as a halogen bulb at full speed.

In Germany there's another model, Cyo-R, which partly obscures the lens with a reflector required by law in that country. (But with a lamp this good, who needs a reflex reflector?) The Cyo-R nevertheless has a 40 lux spot and even more scatter onto nearby surfaces.

Details: imported by amba-marketing.com, tel: 01392 829903

GREEN OIL GREEN CLEAN £8.10 (1 LITRE)

Reviewed by cycling journalist Michael Stenning

Made from 100% natural ingredients, Green Clean claims to shift mud, grease and grime with just a cold-water rinse. I was sceptical, but sprayed my filthy rough-stuff tourer and left it for two minutes as directed. Sloshing cold water over the frame using a

car sponge saw mud fall away. More stubborn areas required help from a soft brush and another spraying.

Afterwards paintwork was pristine, with no evidence of streaking or damage to bright work or seals. At just over £8, this effective ecologically sound cleaner is just as competitive as traditional sprays, and it's safe around children, pets and plant-life.

Info: www.green-oil.net, 020 8313 9074



PINHEAD SECURITY SKEWERS

£60 (PINHEAD FOUR PACK)

Reviewed by Gary Zanco ('Mr X' from our locks article), security expert

Pinhead's locking nut kit aims to secure wheels, seatpost, stem and forks from theft. First impressions: the dome nuts appear to have been hardened to resist attacks from chisels or screwdrivers. The Pinhead key allows the owner to apply a good level of torque without slipping off.

My first attacks used basic tools – pliers, pipe wrench, mole grips etc. It was almost impossible to gain any purchase on the dome nut and on the occasions where the tool did grip, it was impossible

gain ground because of tension holding it firm. The seat post nut and stem nuts are both shielded by alloy bevels and I couldn't get a grip on them. Verdict: pass.

My next level of attacks were with a pocket-sized tool that a thief might use. Again, the tool slipped repeatedly. However, given that the skewers might be carelessly fitted with the spring washers backwards (bulge outwards), I tried again like this. This time the tool removed both wheels in about 60 seconds. So getting the washers right makes all the difference. Verdict: pass.

Installing Pinhead skewers to your bike makes a lot of sense. If a thief decides that stealing your wheels is too

much hassle, you've won. It goes without saying you'll also need a good bike lock. Details: £60 is for the Four Pack (headset, seat bolt, two skewers). Distributed by 2pure.co.uk, tel: 0844 811 2001



GROUND EFFECT POPSICLE £54 (APPROX)

Reviewed by CTC Cycle Champion Helen Biggerstaff

New Zealand has a similar climate to ours, albeit six months apart, and Kiwi company Ground Effect have a great selection of winter clothing that's well suited to UK riding. I have been riding with their Popsicle top as a base layer on colder days and solo on warmer ones. This top has a merino wool inner layer to suck sweat away from your skin and the outer is a hard-wearing polyester. At the front, a WindFoil panel reduces the chill of the wind. In addition, the front zipper opens down to the waist to allow loads of ventilation, should you need it. When zipped up, the neck is high and keeps out winter draughts. The Popsicle comes with good attention to detail: elastic thumb loops, twin zipped rear pockets with reflective piping, a sew-in tube repair patch, and a longer back to keep your lower back warm. It's good value too.

Details: actual price is in NZ\$ so is exchange-rate dependant. Order at www.groundeffect.co.nz



QUECHUA SILK LINER £19.95

Reviewed by Sheila Simpson, editor of Arrivée magazine

If you cycle camp or fly with your bike and head for basic third world hotels, then you'll almost certainly need a lightweight fleabag. I found my traditional cotton sheet sleeping bag impossibly heavy and bulky to carry as cabin luggage, so headed for Decathlon and bought their budget silk liner.

The basic rectangular version is an ample 205cm x 85cm, yet is lightweight at 140g in its stuff sack, where it packs down to 16cm x 8cm. Even though I have dry skin, the silk feels very soft and is warm without making me hot and sweaty. Altogether a very comfortable bag, which still smelled sweet after a fortnight's use. It can be hand- or machine-washed on minimum temperature and dries quickly. For campers, with shaped sleeping bags, there are also basic mummy and, slightly more expensive, Ripstop mummy versions.

Details: www.decathlon.co.uk

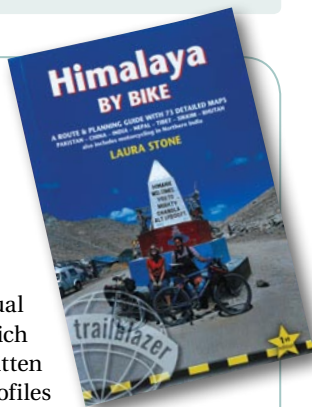


TRAILBLAZER'S HIMALAYA BY BIKE £16.99

Reviewed by expedition cyclist Cass Gilbert

Thinking of touring amid the highest mountain range in the world? Laura Stone's Himalaya by Bike gives an overview of the logistics of planning your trip, before describing classic routes in the area, such as Pakistan's Karakoram Highway, Manali to Leh in Northern India and Tibet's Friendship Highway. Other more unusual destinations are also covered. Woven into these route outlines, which cover distances, altitudes and accommodation, are engagingly-written cultural, geographical and anecdotal boxouts, plus handy route profiles so you can see what you're letting yourself in for. The hand-drawn maps are clear and there are lots of glossy photos. It's a practical and inspirational guide.

Details: ISBN 978-1-905864-04-1, www.trailblazer-guides.com, www.himalayabybike.com



LEDSystem³

Elite²⁶
6° Spot or
13° Flood



- Available as 6° Spot or 13° Flood versions
- Cree XRE R2s - currently the brightest leds
- 850 lumen output
- Warm colour temperature
- Upgradable LEDs
- Lumicycle's own driver technology delivering 95% efficiency
- Power Modes: Flashing, Low, Mid, High and Boost
- Integral fuel gauge
- Power mode indicator
- Easy high - low switching
- New 2.6 ah battery bag
- System weight 369 g
- Helmet mountable
- 3 hours at full power - 40 hours on low, 88 hours flashing
- Quick release fitting for large and standard bars
- Fast Charger
- Full support and spare parts

£249.99



www.lumicycle.co.uk
or call on +44 (0)870 757 2229
email: sales@lumicycle.co.uk



FREPACK META-2

£73 PLUS £8 FITTINGS

Reviewed by Technical Editor Chris Juden

Lots of bikes lack the means to attach any luggage. The rider who wishes to commute on one is obliged to wear a rucksack and suffer an aching, sweaty back. A rucksack nevertheless has its advantages once you've parked up. So how about a rucksack on a bracket under the saddle? That's the Frepack range of luggage by Rixen & Kaul, makers of the ubiquitous Klick-fix bar-bag mount. It even uses the self-same bracket on an extender that clamps simply and securely by a stainless band around the seatpost.

We tested the largest (26 litre) Frepack

because its internal dimensions (width 30×22×45cm tall) fitted a mid-sized laptop computer – with room to spare. Carried thus it's cushioned from road vibration by the fabric of the bag. There's also some give in the bag's spring-steel support frame. You lift a cushioned flap on the back of the bag to reveal this frame and clip it into the bracket. The shoulder straps are tethered out of the way and it's generally a well thought-out design, allowing quick and easy transitions from back to bike and back again.

The load doesn't sway noticeably and neither is its high centre of gravity a problem when riding. All bikes are designed to have weight on the saddle, after all.



At over £70 for the bag, plus £8 for the Klick-fix and Extender, it's not a cheap solution to the bare bike luggage problem. But it's a good one, and compared to the price of a laptop...

Details: imported by greyville.com, 01543 251328.

CTC VINTAGE MERINO WOOL JERSEY £75

Reviewed by editor Dan Joyce

This limited-edition jersey uses the same retro design as the existing CTC vintage short sleeve top, with a simple white-band design. The words 'since 1878' are on the left sleeve and one pocket, and the winged wheel logo is on the back too. What's different is that this jersey is made from merino wool rather than lycra. This is cosy and soft rather than itchy against the skin like some wool. It wears well, and doesn't smell even after several rides. When you do need to wash it, it goes in the machine on a delicate wash. Detailing is neatly embroidered, and there are three rear pockets and a quarter-length front zip. The price is directly comparable to other classically styled woollen jerseys, and of course this one advertises CTC. It's available in blue and white only, in men's fit; a women's version is on the cards.



Info: sizes S-XXL. To order, visit www.impsport.com and click 'CTC' in the shop by range panel. To order by phone, call 01522 500505.

1LESSCAR HI VIZ VEST £14.95

Reviewed by Technical Editor Chris Juden

Okay it's just a hi-viz vest, but it's so green! No, really: it's made by a worker-owned cooperative from ethically sourced fabrics in a small Northamptonshire factory and printed by another workers' co-op using water-based inks. Every vest contributes 50p to Waltham Forest bike recycling project and carries their trademark slogan: 'every bike is 1 less car'. 1lesscar also make organic fair-trade cotton T-shirts and hoodies. The green hi-viz vest does come in other colours: lots of bright fluorescent ones and lots of sizes, especially little ones, for another slogan of 1lesscar is: 'worn by kids not made by kids'. They sent us lots, which are now being worn by members of CTC staff and their families, large and small, respectively.



Details: available post free from 1lesscar.org.uk

GORE HELIUM WINDSTOPPER GILET £39.99

Reviewed by CTC member William Wake

Just how much protection can a sleeveless, mesh-backed 150g vest provide against a British winter? Worn over a base layer and winter jersey, this gilet is all I wear on most cold rides. The fabric is very windproof and does a great job at keeping the body core protected. The zip has a good sized tab to help gloved hands to grip it and the mesh back has neat slots cut in it so that you can get to your

jersey pockets. The Helium's pockets, being small and located at the front, are difficult to access and best used for a slim wallet or other small items not required on the move. When it's very cold or wet, the gilet has provided a useful and almost weightless extra layer under a soft-shell jacket. It is a slim fit and the mesh back gives it a bit of stretch.

Details: sizes S-XXL, www.gorebikewear.co.uk



Best of the rest

MOUNTAIN BIKING TRAIL CENTRES

– THE GUIDE £17.95



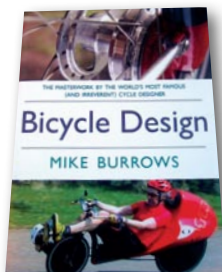
It's a comprehensive user's guide to 67 trail centres across England, Scotland and Wales, giving descriptions and distances for the different trails at each site, along with difficulty levels, facilities, and directions to get there. Recommended.

www.v-publishing.co.uk, ISBN 9781906148010

BICYCLE DESIGN BY MIKE BURROWS £9.99

Still good. Now in its third edition, and lacking Jo Burt's lovely illustrations, this book remains an excellent and irreverent insight into cycle technology – particularly for riders who want to go faster.

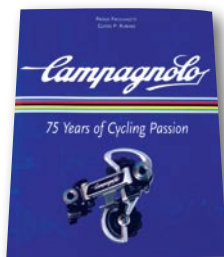
www.cyclebooks.co.uk,
ISBN 9781905005680



CAMPAGNOLO: 75 YEARS OF CYCLING PASSION £27.50

A coffee-table history book of the Italian component manufacturer, with excellent old photos and period adverts, the contents include everything from founder Tullio Campagnolo's early innovations (plus a bit on the bicycle's own history) right through to 11-speed Super Record.

www.cordee.co.uk, ISBN 9781934030370



RIDO R2 SADDLE £24.99 PLUS £5 P&P

Reviewed by editor Dan Joyce

Rido's revamped saddle keeps its stealth-bomber shape, which is convex where your sit bones are. Like dearer anatomic saddles with cutaways, it removes pressure on your perineum. The R2 is padded, which better suits the more upright posture of recreational road riding or touring. For racing, I prefer the original unpadded Rido. Both look odd, but who cares? They work.

Info: weighs 440g.

Available from Rido:

www.rido-cyclesaddles.com, 01394 450 755



DROMARTI

LIFE WITH PASSION



Storica £169



Race £139



Sportivo £149

Dromarti Revives the Leather Shoe

These beautiful handmade Italian leather cycle shoes come in options to fit most pedal systems. You can even use the Race and Storica with traditional toe clips.

Produced in small quantities by Marresi in Italy, you should order now to avoid disappointment.

www.dromarti.com Tel: 020 8785 5736

DROMARTI LIFE WITH PASSION