

is currently matched to a Middleburn 46-30 chainset and previously worked equally well with a 50-34 compact.

The challenge is to find a shifter or 'brifter' that works with your favoured sprocket count and brake preference – cable or hydraulic, rim or disc. Shadow-type mechs won't work with older 10-speed Shimano road or below-10-speed MTB shifters, so mine is controlled by a Microshift BS-M10 bar-end shifter.

I have also run an older Deore 9-speed mech and 40-tooth sprocket using a Lindarets Road Link (Cycle Dec 2015/ Jan 2016), operated by an old Ultegra 10-speed brifter. For more suggestions, see cyclinguk.org/lower-gears.

Richard Hallett

Health

Trapped nerve

Q I have what feels like a trapped nerve where the rhomboid, trapezius and scapula meet. I've long had some odd sensations in that area, like prickly heat. More recently I've occasionally had sharp pain while cycling. The discomfort builds steadily, then results in an incredibly sharp pain linked to physical movements (turning my head side to side or raising it). It fades fairly quickly, and getting off the bike and stretching helps an awful lot. I'm at a bit of a loss as to what to do. I



Left: Alamy

Q My disc-brake bike doesn't have a hole for a mudguard mount in the fork crown. What's the best solution? I have had reasonable success with stays that mount on the QRs. Under the fork, the best I could do was superglue Velcro to the fork and guard but it was never rattle free. Anything better out there? **mattscm, on the Cycling UK forum**

A Try getting creative with zip-ties. You can drill small holes – two per tie is usually enough – and wrap the ties symmetrically around the crown, crossing them either side of the steerer tube to prevent the mudguard sliding down. Pieces of inner tube – which can be secured using double-sided carpet tape – can be used to prevent abrasion of the fork surface.

Richard Hallett

cycle a lot, with a range of bikes on a variety of terrain. **Jon in Sweden, on the Cycling UK forum**

A Nerve pains can be related to pressure on the nerve from cycling or from a nerve nipped where it exits the spine. This can also give a bit of tingling numbness or weakness in the area supplied by that nerve. This can apply to both arms and legs (as in sciatica). To get a proper diagnosis for your pain, you should consult a physio or similar – and possibly have an X-ray.

If it is a tight muscle it should respond to strengthening exercises, while a trapped nerve will need different treatment. Sometimes pressure on the wrists or hands or where your bottom presses on the saddle or feet on the pedals can damage a nerve locally. This needs careful attention to your position and setup on the bike, and maybe some extra padding. Nerve pain can be extremely debilitating and stop you riding far until it settles, so it is worth getting it dealt with.

Dr Kate Brodie

Technical

Mudguards without mounts

Technical Frame modifications

Q I'm looking to add some cable stops to a Tange Prestige steel frame which has none. I've considered epoxy and clamps, but I want to investigate doing a proper braze-on. Before I just give it a bash with some steel rods recommended from a local DIY store, I'm wondering what would be the typical rods/flux to use? And what temperature it's likely to need? Can I use my butane torch for copper pipes? **Jupestar, on the Cycling UK forum**

A Do you have any experience with brazing? If not, it might be better to give the job to a frame builder, who will use an oxy-fuel torch. This burns the fuel gas – usually acetylene or propane – with oxygen for a much hotter flame. Propane burns in air at 1,980°C and with oxygen at 2,820°C; oxy-acetylene burns some 280°C hotter. It's unlikely you'll get enough heat from a butane torch, which burns butane in air for a flame temperature of around 1,970°C.

Although heat will be lost to conduction through the frame tube, it may work for a small part using silver solder, which melts at a lower temperature (around 670°C) than brazing rod. Silver solder requires a specific flux and exceptional cleanliness for a secure joint, and its use is considered a trickier technique than brazing. It's also considerably more expensive. If you decide to give it a go, consider using properly made stops from a supplier such as Ceeway (ceeway.com). Watch a few tutorials and practise on some scrap tube beforehand.

Richard Hallett

Get in touch

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