

# 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 Hi-Viz Hump Waterproof backpack cover, worth £24.99.

For more about the Hump and other hi viz items, contact Respro on 020 7721 7300 or see the website: [respro.com](http://respro.com).



## GARMIN EDGE 500 WITH HRM £249.99

Reviewed by Editor Dan Joyce

Garmin's Edge 500 isn't a digital mapping device but a 'GPS-enabled cycling computer', which uses satellites rather than a wheel magnet and sensor to track your rides. I've seen more and more appearing on the handlebars of clubmates, probably because it's easy to use and provides so much data.

Set up is simple: turn it on, wait a minute for it to pick up satellite signals, then go. You don't need to calibrate it for your bike's wheel size and you can swap it between bikes with no fuss (two O-ring fastened mounts are provided).

On the bike you can toggle the Edge 500 between three screens, each of which can display between one and eight customisable data fields, such as elapsed time, time of day, speed, average speed, distance, direction heading, elevation, grade of slope, temperature, heart rate, average heart rate, cadence, power, and a variety of lap-based readings. For some of these

fields you need a compatible heart rate chest strap and crank sensor (provided here but not with the £200 version) or a compatible power meter (which isn't provided).

I couldn't process that much information when I was riding quickly so had at most five fields on screen one, mostly to do with heart rate and speed. Screen two was handy for time and distance. I ignored screen three.

Even if you're not looking at this information while you ride, you can transfer it to your PC or Mac for analysis when you get home. You can upload it to Garmin's 'Connect' website (which includes your route on Google maps) and you can export it in a variety of formats, including .gpx – which you can import into a mapping program.

The Edge 500 is a fully featured, easy-to-use 'wireless computer' / heart rate monitor that will also log your routes via GPS. As a touring tool, it's no



substitute for a map-displaying unit like the Edge 800. What it excels at, of course, is as a training device for fitness cyclists. It will display and log you all the data you could want – and then some. The facility to swap it between bikes in seconds makes it especially useful. Weight: 56g. Size: 67×47×18mm.

*Details: [garmin.co.uk](http://garmin.co.uk)*



## SCHWALBE NOBBY NIC TYRE £49.99 EACH

Reviewed by Editor Dan Joyce

Deep mud, dry hardpack, grass, rock – off-road surfaces vary widely in the UK, sometimes within one ride. Finding a tyre that's a genuine all-rounder isn't easy, especially if you want it in 29 inches. But Schwalbe's Nobby Nic is just that. I've ridden these 29×2.25 Nobby Nics through thick March mud, on powder dry trails, and over the slate of Coed y Brenin. Grip has been consistently good, rolling performance decent, and I've had no punctures or problems. Both tyres run with the V of the tread blocks pointing backwards, which is an unusual orientation for a front tyre. It works fine.

Sportier riders might want a faster tyre on the back for summer (Schwalbe recommend a Racing Ralph), but more recreational riders needn't bother. Width is on the small side for a 2.25in tyre – more like a 2in – which means it'll fit tighter rear triangles. I've done most miles on the 2010 version, which is 737g; the 2011 Nobby Nic is 660g and tubeless ready. The price is high but you get what you pay for. Two clubmates have been running, and liking, 26in versions. Sizes: 54-559, 57-559, 60-559, 62-559, 57-622 (tested), 60-622.

*Details: [schwalbe.co.uk](http://schwalbe.co.uk)*

## QUOC PHAM TOURER SHOES

£149.95

Reviewed by CTC Challenge for Change organiser Ciaran Meyer

These stylish leather cycling shoes are geared towards cyclists who would prefer not to carry a second pair of shoes with them when cycling to the office or to meet friends, and they do not disappoint. When I first saw the shoes, I was a little concerned about the height of the soles and the minimal contact points with the floor, which are a result of the recess required for the integrated MTB pedal system. My concern was unfounded and the shoes were very stable when I was walking in them. The shoes have stiff soles to maximise power transfer but this does not make them uncomfortable to walk in. Initially the shoes were quite tight but after several hours' use the leather gives to provide a very comfortable fit. While pricy, they look good and are comfortable both on and off the bike. Sizes 41-47, black, brown or tan.

From: [quocpham.com](http://quocpham.com)



## ELLIPTIGO £1,999

Reviewed by CTC member Karen Soper

As a runner and cyclist, I was curious about the treadle-driven Elliptigo, which is a kind of saddle-less bicycle and an impact-free training device for runners.

The Elliptigo feels stable and very tall when you're standing on the treadles, although I struggled to ride it one-handed when signalling. It was fine climbing and descending, as the 8-speed Shimano Alfine hub provides a good range of gears. I'd have liked more robust wheels to cope better with our pot-holed roads, plus fittings for waterbottles and luggage.

The treadles make quite a loud 'flapping' noise until you get the Elliptigo up to cruising speed. It works all the normal leg muscles, and climbs very well, although I didn't feel it was equivalent to running.

The main stumbling point is the price, which seems very high considering the level of the components fitted and what £2,000 would buy you from a conventional cycle shop. A cheaper price might get beginners to try this exercise too.

From: [elliptigo.co.uk](http://elliptigo.co.uk)

## JAMES & LONGBOURNE MICRO CASE £34.95

Reviewed by CTC Community Cycling Development Manager Steve Bailey

The Micro Case is from gentlemen's shirtmakers, James and Longbourne of London. The instructions claim that four ties, five shirts, trousers, wash bag and accessories for your overnight stay will arrive in pristine condition. I managed three shirts and two ties and struggled to close the case; trousers went in the bottom of the pannier. Granted it keeps things together, but they're clothes: they will get creased. I still had to wave an iron at my shirts at journey's end. Packed, it fits nicely into an Ortlieb pannier, though not in my Brompton 'briefcase bag'. Well made? No. At £35 a go, the



piece of cheap plastic used for the toiletries bag does not befit J and L. I am guessing it will end up with the breadmaker at the back of the cupboard. I'll do as I always have: fold 'em and roll 'em.

From: [jamesandlongbourne.co.uk](http://jamesandlongbourne.co.uk)

## SPA TI BRAKE BOLT £7

Reviewed by Technical Editor Chris Juden

Spa's strong, lightweight 6/4 titanium bolt solves the problem of fitting dual-pivot brakes to older frames without recessed holes. A modern front brake will go on the back, so all you need do is replace the very short rear bolt with this much longer one. It suits all the Shimano and Tektro dual-pivot brakes we've been able to try it on and fork crowns up to 40mm thick. Don't forget to reverse slip-in brake shoes when rotating front and rear brakes, or the pads may slip out!

From: [spacycles.co.uk](http://spacycles.co.uk), 01423 887003





### SWRVE MEN'S SEE MY KNEES SHORTS £65

Reviewed by Editor Dan Joyce

Swrve make 'urban cycling apparel'. If you're not keen on the Lycra look, it's just as suitable for other uses, such as – with these shorts – touring or day rides. The 90% nylon/10% spandex fabric is lightweight, water resistant, and dries quickly. While there's no liner, the double-ply seat has a seamless crotch and you don't particularly need Lycra shorts underneath. There are five pockets and a reflective tab on the belt loop. You may well need a belt too. I'd have preferred to have been able to cinch the waist with integral adjusters, which aren't provided. But these are nicely made, practical cycling shorts that don't look odd off the bike. Sizes: 28-36in waist, in black or grey.

From: [swrve.co.uk](http://swrve.co.uk)

### EXPED DRYPACK PRO 25

£26.99

Reviewed by CTC Tour Leader Neil Wheadon

For off-bike excursions when touring, I've previously tried to cram as much as possible into a bar bag, tying a coat around the strap. It's uncomfortable and rarely practical. This drypack has changed that. It combines a drybag with simple rucksack attachments. I already use drybags within the panniers and so the Drypack's day job is to double up as such. The only weight gain for me was a pair of lightweight straps. I've used the pack extensively at home and abroad in some extremely foul weather and it's performed very well.

From: [exped.com](http://exped.com)



## Cycle shorts



### Brian Robinson – A Gentleman Cyclist

£17.99

Reviewed by CTC Press Officer Alex Bailey

This 100-minute

documentary about British racing cyclist Brian Robinson is a collection of lo-fi camcorder interviews containing some interesting information about racing in the 1950s, cut with footage of Brian's current cycling activities, long sequences of vintage film reel and adulatory narration. Faster paced and with higher production values is the 40-minute bonus film, The Brit Pack, featuring interviews with half a dozen riders from the 1950s Tours de France. Buy this only if you've got a computer: my disc didn't work in a conventional DVD player. Available from [bromleyvideo.com](http://bromleyvideo.com), 01932 879940



### The Bicycle Book

£16.99

Reviewed by CTC Information Officer Julie Rand

Bella Bathurst wrote

this book as she couldn't find a publication that covered all the aspects of cycling she was interested in: from the beautifully simple geometry of bicycles to the influential role the machines played in the emancipation of women in the early Twentieth Century. The Bicycle Book is a cornucopia of fascinating facts and stories about the world's most liberating vehicle and will entertain any reader, from the most ardent time triallist to the club run idler, with sections on topics as diverse as customised framebuilding, cycle couriers and even watercycling on the Thames in 1913! 356pp hardback, Published by HarperPress, ISBN 9780007305889