

GEAR UP

Components, kit, accessories and more, reviewed by specialist journalists, CTC staff – and you.

This issue: GPS unit, books, tyres, tools & more

REVIEW OF THE MONTH



- PROS**
- + Easier learning curve
 - + Outdoors-proof
- CONS**
- Operation in gloves

Garmin
OREGON 600 £369.99
garmin.com

IT SOUNDS simple: purchase a GPS unit, download a good route, and away you go. The reality for many is that GPS devices act as an indicator of location but anything else is impossible to fathom without hours of trawling through websites or phoning a techy friend. 'If only Apple made Garmins' my wife said. In the Oregon 600, it feels like they have.

The Oregon 600 (there's also a 600t, 650 and 650t) is designed for a range of outdoor activities. Compared to my Edge 605, it's more robust, having better waterproof seals. Another plus is that power can be supplied by AA batteries or a rechargeable NiMH battery pack, so on longer tours you don't have to worry about finding an electric socket. It lasts 16 hours on two AAs.

The major step forward is that it is far more intuitive. The 3-inch screen zooms

like an iPhone's and the menu settings are touchscreen. I trialled it for a week of planned rides, downloading GPX files, and using the microSD card for Northern Europe from my existing Edge 605. The function I really liked was the back circular arrow on the screen that returns you to your original routing once you'd zoomed out on the touchscreen. I did still have to phone a friend to help load the routes, but the learning help for this model is far lower than any other GPS unit I have used or owned. I would thoroughly recommend it.

The price above is for the unit and 1:50k OS mapping for the whole of the UK on microSD card. It's £50 cheaper with just Garmin's Topo mapping for UK & Ireland. A bike mount for it costs £13.99.

Reviewed by CTC tour leader Neil Wheadon

SUBMIT A REVIEW

If you want to submit a review, write or email the editor – details on page 3 – for advice. Each one printed wins a Green Oil Eco Rider Deluxe set worth £34.99.

For more about Green Oil's environmentally friendly bike products, visit green-oil.net

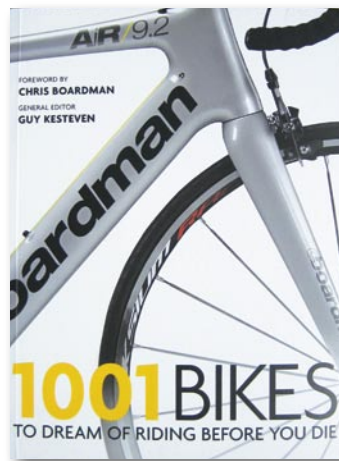


Cassell Illustrated
1001 BIKES
 by Guy Kesteven
 £20

octopusbooks.co.uk

THE FULL title of this 960-page doorstopper is '1001 bikes to dream of riding before you die'. Most significant bikes, from the Rover Safety to the Specialized Stumpjumper and beyond, are here. But so are some I wouldn't dream of riding. There are odd editorial decisions: the Sinclair A-bike gets as much room as the Draisine and more than the Moulton F-frame; imperial measurements are prioritised, even though *no one* calls a 15mm axle a 3/5in axle; and not every bike gets a photo. There's a bias towards modern road and mountain bikes too. Despite this, I rarely disagreed with the writers. It's

an interesting compendium of bikes, at its best as a book to dip into (to look for your own bikes?). Well suited to coffee tables or Christmas stockings. ISBN 978-1844037636
 Reviewed by Dan Joyce



The British Library
LADY CYCLING
 by FJ Erskine

£7.99
 shop.bl.uk

SUBTITLED 'WHAT to Wear and How to Ride', this book was first published in 1897. Reading the synopsis, I expected to wince at the contents. Instead I found many parallels to cycling in the present day. Billowing sleeves and woollen corsets seem unthinkable, but the reference to the wide array of clothing options and styles is applicable today. Similarly the Riding in Towns chapter seems to set out nicely the basis for the current National Standard for cycle training. I would recommend this as a light-hearted read. Miss Erskine's knowledge and passion for the subject are clear and paint an informative picture of what it was like for a lady to cycle in the late 1800s. The references to CTC made me smile, and the services provided back then sound marvellous: free entry to French ports, lady consuls in each town, and more. ISBN 9780712357272.

Reviewed by Emma Parkin



- PROS**
- + Less mud in your eyes
 - + Keeps stanchions cleaner
- CONS**
- Carbon isn't cheap

RockGuardz
MUDGUARD CG325 (Short) £35.50
 rockguardz.com

THIS MOUNTAIN bike mudguard zip-ties to the suspension fork's bridge and lower legs, much like a Mucky Nutz Face Fender. It's carbon fibre rather than plastic, making it pricier but more rigid. Clearance was okay even with a 60-622 Racing Ralph, and it never flexed or came loose to touch the tyre. At speeds below 12mph, it did a good job of stopping mud from flicking up into my face. The medium and long versions (490 and 570mm) should provide better

higher-speed coverage than this short one (325mm). This guard also helps to keep mud from being sprayed onto the fork stanchions and seals. Due to the way it's shaped, it's designed to fit only the following forks: Fox 32, Fox 34, Fox 36, Fox 40, and RockShox Boxxer. It weighs 76g. The only downside is cost: a Mucky Nutz Face Fender XL will do much the same job for £10.99 and weighs only 30g.

Reviewed by Dan Joyce

Leatherman
MAKO TI
BIKE TOOL

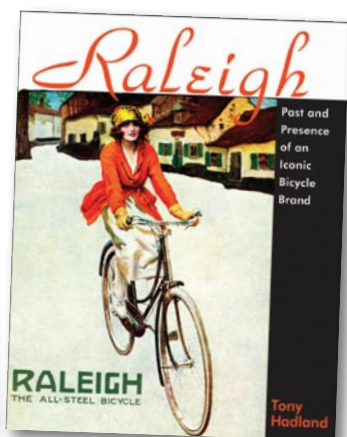
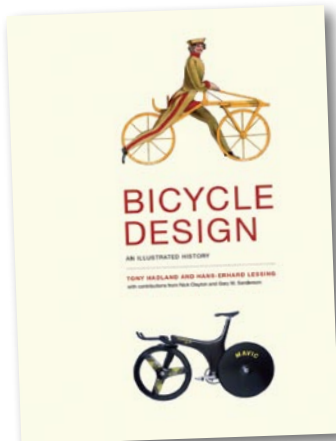
£34.95
 whitbyandco.co.uk



- PROS**
- + Very light
- CONS**
- Fiddly, loose bits
 - No chain tool

AT JUST 42G, the Mako Ti does most of what you need a multi-tool to do. It doesn't have a chain breaker or flat-head screwdriver but the four bits – 5 and 6mm Allen, Phillips head screwdriver, Torx T25 – will deal with most cycling bolts. It is a bit fiddly: the bits have to be carefully held in the driver to stop them falling out and then mischievously rolling off to hide in the gutter or grass. Other functions include 8, 9, 10, 15 and 16mm box spanners, 14- and 15-gauge spoke keys, and a bottle opener. The first Mako Ti sent to me was flawed: the sliver of metal that separates the spoke keys was missing, making both unusable. The replacement was okay. If you are in the game of shaving grams, this may be the mini-tool for you.

Reviewed by Chris Peck



Van de Plas Publishing & MIT Press

RALEIGH

by Tony Hadland **£24.50**

BICYCLE DESIGN
by Hadland and Lessing **£24.95**

cyclepublishing.com & mitpress.mit.edu

GIVEN RALEIGH'S recent renaissance, it's a good time to see where they came from – which was, of course, Raleigh Street, Nottingham, where Frank Bowden liked the bike so much he bought the company. After that it gets a bit complicated, hence the 370 pages on everything from boardroom battles to lug-making processes; the riders from Zimmerman to Harris; and the bicycles from Record Ace to Chopper. It's a lot of book, mostly in somehow appropriate black and white, the exception being the chapter on the famous posters.

Bicycle Design, meanwhile, is destined to become the definitive record of our wonderful wheels. It

confirms von Drais as our founding father and dismisses all others: Sivrac, Leonardo, even a certain K Macmillan. But what did happen is all there. It covers every type of bicycle: racers, folders, mountain bikes, and even recumbents. Plus all the bits: luggage, saddles, lighting etc. It's not as shiny as the Raleigh book but it's well illustrated, often with the patent drawings. There's an excellent contents and index so you can easily look up, say, the first disc brake (1893) or monoblade (1872).

Both books are a must for any cycling bookshelf. ISBNs are 9781892495686 and 9780262026758 respectively.

Reviewed by Mike Burrows

Schwalbe

DURANO PLUS TYRE **£39.99 (folding)**

schwalbe.co.uk

WHEN MY last Michelin Krylions wore out, I fitted Kevlar-beaded Durano Plus tyres to my fixed-wheel road bike. They've done around 4,000 miles since, with no punctures and mostly cosmetic wear. The Plus in the name tells you that they're reinforced with a layer of springy rubber, like Marathon Pluses. There's less of it here (5mm), but these tyres are still heavier (380g each) and a little harder to fit than most 25mm tyres. What's surprising, even though they feel a bit stodgy, is that the rolling performance is decent. My roll-down tests suggest they're marginally slower than 25mm Continental Gatorskins. If you absolutely must win the club run race to that signpost, there are quicker tyres. But for year-round dependability and longevity, these take some beating. I also put one on my turbo bike and that's wearing well too. The 2015 version has a slightly different tread pattern. Also available in 23-622 and 28-406 with a Kevlar bead, and in 23-, 25- and 28-622 with a wire bead for £5 less and around 50g more.

Reviewed by Dan Joyce



- PROS**
- + Puncture resistance
- + Wear life
- CONS**
- Harder to fit

MacWet

SHORT CLIMATEC SPORTS GLOVES **£29.99**

macwet.com

THESE 'MULTI-SPORT' gloves lack the palm padding of cycling gloves. I didn't mind: my bikes are all comfortable enough with bare hands. The gloves are made from polyester, polyamide, and polyurethane, with a bit of elastane for stretchiness. The palm feels like suede, and MacWet make much of its grip in the wet and dry. I found it no better or worse than cycling-specific gloves. What is noticeable is the excellent manual dexterity the gloves afford. I could operate a camera without removing them. They come in 14 sizes so it's easy to get a snug fit, and they're quite thin. They're spring-to-autumn use only; the 'fleece-backed lining' is insufficient in the depths of winter. The cuffs are too short for cycling too, as your wrists are exposed. The long-cuff version (same price) would be better.

Reviewed by Dan Joyce

- PROS**
- + Good dexterity
- + Don't slip in wet
- CONS**
- Not winterproof

