

CYCLOPEDIA

Questions answered, subjects explained – Cyclopedia is your bimonthly cycling reference guide



Right: Iolze Dymond

Technical

Rohloff hub in SS frame

Q I have a steel singlespeed cyclocross frame with horizontal rear drop outs and cantilever brakes that I'd like to upgrade with a Rohloff hub gear. Is this practical? Or worth it? If so, what size of chainring and sprocket would you recommend? My other thought is to scrap this idea and simply purchase a new bike with disc brakes.
Tom Newman

A The basic (not thru-axle) Rohloff hub has an over-locknut dimension (OLD) of 135mm. Your singlespeed cycle may have a rear wheel OLD of 120mm or 130mm. If the latter, and your frame is steel, you can spread the rear ends to accept the Rohloff hub. Ideally this should be a permanent modification – search online for 'cold-setting a cycle frame' – rather than simply springing the ends apart each time.

Bear in mind that the Rohloff requires a left-hand dropout shaped to prevent the hub axle turning as the cycle is ridden; your frame's dropout may not be suitable. You'll also need to decide on some way of taking up chain slack if the slot in the dropout is used to prevent axle rotation.

Recommended gearing will depend on factors including wheel size and your riding style. A 50/19 setup will give a range of gears from around



A deep LH dropout or a torque arm is required

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Health

Winter riding break?

Q I ride all year round, perhaps having the odd week or fortnight off here and there. There are others who think having a break in winter is beneficial. Is it? I find having a break just sets me back to the extent that it takes me quite a while to get back to fitness.
TrevA, on the Cycling UK Forum

A This is more a philosophical question than a medical one, Trev, and everybody will have a different view. Some people hate cycling in cold, wet or windy conditions. Some are afraid of breaking a bone in icy weather, and some prefer to go indoors and use a turbo trainer during the darker months. There are others who just love to be outside in the fresh air and find it benefits their mental health.

From a fitness perspective, if you stop training for up to a week you will probably come back refreshed and no less strong. After a fortnight you are starting to lose muscle and cardiac fitness, and after a month it will take several weeks of training to regain your previous level of fitness. The answer is very personal and all about perceived risk and benefit. If you go out cycling in winter, wrap up warm and use good lights, but essentially just do what feels right for you.

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