

GEAR UP

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

This issue: cycling jeans, a multitool, and more

REVIEW OF THE MONTH



Osloh
LANE JEANS
\$178 PLUS P&P
olsoh.com

I FOUND these US-designed jeans on Kickstarter after looking for some trousers that I could cycle in but also wear to work. I invested, as did enough other backers for them to go into production. Six months later, my Lane Jeans arrived, packaged beautifully like the precious cargo they were. They've hardly been off me since! I use them commuting around London on my Brompton. After four months of heavy usage, they still look good as new. On a recent trip to Berlin, which included a cycle tour on city bikes, my European colleagues all wanted to know where they could get their pair!

The detail is what makes them special. The quilted, chamois-reinforced crotch is superb: very comfy and durable. The pockets are deep and double lined, so as not to wear through. Like a lot of men, I keep my wallet in the right rear pocket. Normal trousers mean this can be uncomfortable when cycling, but on the Lanes the wallet is nestled in a deeper

pocket and you don't end up sitting on it when riding. There's also a side pocket for your phone and deep front pockets for coins or keys. Other features I like are the panel reinforcement on the right inner leg near the chain, plus an ankle snap so I don't need to tuck the jeans into my socks. The stitching is the best I have seen on any trousers.

At around £112 plus shipping, these jeans are not cheap, but pound for pound they are great value for money because they should last for years. CTC members can get a 15% discount on a single pair of jeans by using the code 'CTC15'. That code also grants a 14-day return-or-exchange service using a UK address.

Reviewed by Paul Tuohy

- PROS**
- + Comfortable, durable seat
 - + Neat details
- CONS**
- Good value but not cheap

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



Swrve
Cordura Regular Fit jeans

£80
swrve.com

WHILE I DO most of my miles in bike gear, I do most of my journeys in jeans. Given a suitable saddle, this doesn't cause discomfort – although it does wear holes in the denim eventually. That should take longer with these Swrve jeans, as the cotton (55%) is blended with Cordura. The jeans are cut well for cycling, with an extra panel in the (unpadded) gusset so you don't sit on a seam, and knees that are stitched to articulate. There's some stretch in the fabric too. The legs are cut close at the ankle. I use a cycle-clip because I ride fixed; I'm too old to roll the right leg part way up my calf, which reveals a reflective stripe. Two of the belt loops are reflective too. I like these jeans a lot: they're tough, comfortable, and the price is fair. Sizes: 28-36in waist.

Reviewed by Dan Joyce

- PROS**
- + Abrasion & shower resistant
 - + Comfortable cycling cut
- CONS**
- Roll up my trouser leg? Really?



Left photo by Hanna Habazin



- PROS**
- + Very bright
 - + Inexpensive
- CONS**
- Availability

Maia
RX1000 LI-ION FRONT LIGHT £59.99
 tweekscycles.com

MY COMMUTE is 95% off-road, using a bridleway. I needed an affordable light bright enough to get me to and from work without hitting too many holes or overhanging branches. Maia claim 1000 lumens for the RX1000. It is very bright, with a wide spread of light that illuminates well into the distance. I have yet to need the high setting, and on road I use low.

The lamp attaches with a rubber O-ring; two sizes are supplied. Also in the box is a mount for a

helmet, which I found fiddly. On the low setting (100 lumens), the battery lasts 28 hours. It lasts 6 hours on medium (500 lumens) and 2.5 hours on the full 1000 lumens. Charge time is 3.5-4 hours.

It's a great light and represents excellent value. The service from Tweeks was good too. (Ed's note: the RX1000 was out of stock as we went to press but will be available again soon. The brighter Maia DX2000 – £89.99 – is available.)

Review by CTC member Mike Merrel

Biologic
CIPHER GLOVES
 £25
 paligap.cc

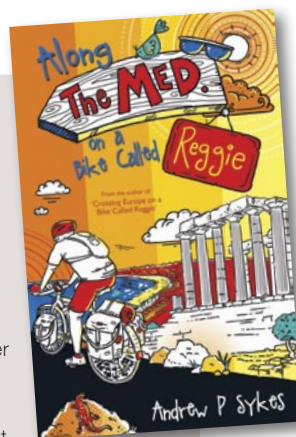
THE CIPHER gloves are made from a thin, soft-shell, stretchy fabric, and the quality of the workmanship appears quite high; simply as a glove, I really liked them. I found the raised grip dots were of great help when using the zips and fastening clips of my backpack. The USP, however, is the 3M conductive fabric that allows the wearer to utilise touchscreen devices without having to take the gloves off. I used my Android phone to test this, as well as various train ticket and Oyster card top-up machines. All worked as well as when gloveless. I have quite long fingers and my fingers fit snugly to the tips, which I believe is key to my own success using touch screens; my partner tried the same gloves, which were slightly too long for his fingers, and he found using the gloves frustrating, so a tighter-than-normal fit seems best. You'd not want to email or text with them on either, and in chillier weather I found the thumb and forefinger areas noticeably colder, which may be owing to the thinner 3M material or the tighter cut. Wrists are short, so couple with long sleeves if the weather is cold. Sizes XS-XL.

Reviewed by Jacqui Shannon

Completely Novel
ALONG THE MED ON A BIKE CALLED REGGIE
 £10.99
 cyclingeurope.org

CTC MEMBER Andrew Sykes is a secondary school teacher who in the holidays enjoys cycle touring in Europe. His first volume of travel writing 'Crossing Europe on a Bike Called Reggie' was acclaimed for its warm and witty style. In his next book, he describes the 6,000km journey he made last year that was loosely based on Eurovelo 8, a route from Greece to the southern tip of Portugal. Reggie accompanies him again, and Andrew's personification of his bicycle is one of the more entertaining aspects of the book: Reggie is not just a means of transport; he is a friend and travelling companion too. Andrew's eloquent and evocative style of writing conveys not only the hardships of the road, but also its joys and jublations, such as his and Reggie's non-stop ascent of Mont Ventoux. However, the numerous typos detract a little from the language teacher's lively prose. A 'descent cup of coffee' anyone? See me in detention! ISBN 978-1-84914-505-3

Reviewed by Julie Rand



- PROS**
- + Smartphone operation
 - + Decent dexterity
- CONS**
- Fit determines functionality



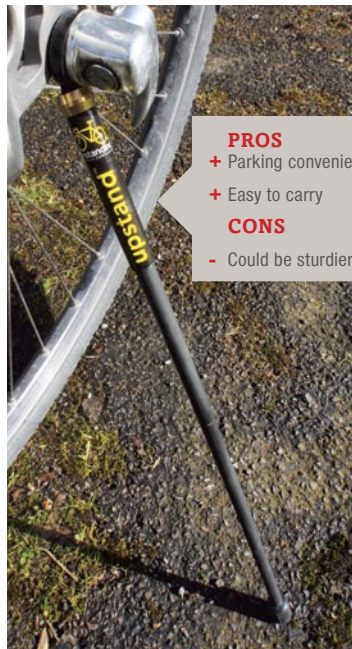


Upstanding Bicycle Co. UPSTAND

\$39 PLUS P&P
upstandingbicycle.com

MY COMMUTER bike has a kickstand neatly integrated with its rear dropout. It's so useful I want one on my tourer too, for impromptu photo stops etc. But clamp-on stands are heavy and ugly. So when I saw the Upstand on Kickstarter, I was in! I bought the Upclip too (5g of plastic that fits beside and under a bottle cage), since I'd rather keep it on the bike than in a pocket. One end of this 35cm short, 8mm slim and 36g light tube has a rubber tip; the other contains a strong magnet and pops onto a 15g steel tab secured by the rear axle quick-release. And there you have it: a neat little stand!

The Upstand is not as quick to deploy as a kickstand, but easier than lugging a loaded bike across to a tree etc. It's most suitable for day-rides or tours with luggage support, as it's not really designed for a loaded bike: one must be careful to stop on a firm and level surface and to position the Upstand vertically, else the tube will bend (or its tip will sink) and the attachment tab may swivel.



- PROS**
- + Parking convenience
 - + Easy to carry
- CONS**
- Could be sturdier

If the bike should fall, the tab seems to bend in preference to kinking the tube, which is good because it's easy to bend the tab back – and steel this soft can be bent a lot of times. So whilst it's not as sturdy as I'd hoped, I find the Upstand useful enough to be worth the modest addition of 60g to my load – for which I should really get a Click-Stand Max (click-stand.com), but that'll surely be heavier and slower to deploy.

*Reviewed by Technical Editor
Chris Juden*

On-One MIDGE HANDLEBAR

£19.99+
on-one.co.uk

THE MIDGE is a flared drop handlebar similar to the Salsa Woodchipper that Chris Juden tested on the Salsa Fargo (Oct/Nov 2012). It's meant for off-road use primarily. The drops are 57.5cm apart at their widest point, so when your hands are on them you've got much better steering leverage than with a conventional drop bar. It's easy to set up your bike so your hands fall naturally onto the drops, as the bar has a shallow drop and forward sweep. And it's worth doing that, for while you can still use the tops and hoods positions, the steering feels strangely light when you come up off the wide drops. If you've got a cyclo-cross bike or rough-stuff tourer, the £20 that the Midge now costs makes it an affordable experiment. I liked it on forest fireroads and non-technical grassy tracks, and it was okay on tarmac too. On difficult off-road terrain, a flat bar offers better control and body positioning. The Midge is available in 25.4 and 31.8mm clamp diameters. It weighs about 300g.

Reviewed by Dan Joyce



- PROS**
- + Firm steering on drops
 - + Cheap
- CONS**
- Hoods position less useful

Stique Ltd STIQUE MULTILEVER £24.95

stique.bike

THE MULTILEVER is a Kickstarter-funded bike tool constructed from 'metal replacement, engineering grade polymer'. The innovative design consists of a set of three tyre levers held together with strong magnets. The tools include 4mm and 5mm Allen keys, a T25 Torx wrench and a Phillips #2 screwdriver and a magnetic socket on one of the levers that forms an effective handle. There are also two spoke keys, a built-in bottle opener, and spaces for two split-links, puncture patches, and two £1 coins.

The Multilever is certainly strong; it removed 16in Schwalbe Marathon tyres, a job that has broken several of my previous tyre levers. It's missing a chain tool, and I'm sure the thermometer and HRM battery storage could be replaced by things more useful. I found it hard to remove stored coins from the levers too. But overall the Multilever is well-designed and robust. With its neoprene pouch, it will find a long-term home with my bikes.

Reviewed by Seamus Kelly

- PROS**
- + Tough tyre levers
 - + Easy to use
- CONS**
- No chain tool

