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FEATURE

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Sometimes it feels like barely a year goes by without the British racing scene facing, if not a crisis, then at least some serious, fundamental problems. Sponsorship, races, teams and riders come and go — that is the natural order of things.

The issue right now is that many of these factors are coming together at the same time. Combine that with rising costs and ever increasing levels of bureaucracy and paperwork and you have a very serious issue. There are lots of concerned parties we spoke to for our feature (turn to page 28).

The British scene has never had it as good as over the previous five or six years, with high-quality national and international races aplenty, and TV coverage and sponsors coming into the sport. Organisation has become ever more professional, even at local levels, with the brilliant NEG and accredited marshals scheme.

These are all welcome developments that we don't want to lose. But they cost money. At a national level the costs increase further as closed roads and policing come into play.

So how to maintain the current standards when investment falls away? This is the problem facing the domestic cycling scene, and there are no easy answers.

MY HIGHLIGHTS THIS WEEK

12 Classics season starts this weekend!

40 Grouptest — shoes lovely shoes

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**SIMON
RICHARDSON**

Editor

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Will the new Notio change cycling?



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Where next for British racing?



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Pro training secrets – try their sessions





IN FOCUS

▲ **Grippy gradient** Caleb Ewan (Lotto-Soudal) sprints to victory ahead of Sam Bennett (Deceuninck-Quick Step) on the vicious climb to Hatta Dam on stage two of the UAE Tour. The pictures and the TV barely do this climb justice. When CW walked up it we struggled to keep our balance. It's a test of skill as much as power as it would be easy for your back wheel to slip or your front to lift off the ground.

Photo Yuzuru Sunada

Evenepoel 'not in his best shape' as he cruises to Algarve victory

Belgian still building towards Giro d'Italia in May

Belgian wunderkind Remco Evenepoel fired a warning shot to his rivals after he won his biggest race to date at the Volta ao Algarve, where he said he wasn't yet in his best form.

The Deceuninck-Quick Step rider's victory comes hot on the heels of his overall win at the Vuelta a San Juan earlier in the month. However, Evenepoel played down what that means for his chances at the Giro d'Italia in May.

"No, no, that's not my goal. I'm only working hard for my own goals. I'm working hard for two months' time, I'm not in the best shape yet but I still have time, still a long way to go but I'm already happy with where I'm at now," Evenepoel said.

On Sunday Evenepoel beat time trial world champion Rohan Dennis to win the stage five time trial in Portugal and seal overall victory on the final stage. The 20-year-old beat Dennis by 10 seconds, with Stefan Küng (Groupama-FDJ) in third.

Evenepoel had taken the race lead with an explosive attack that no one could follow in the final metres of the summit finish of Alto a Foia on the race's second day.

Then on Sunday he crossed the line just behind Dan Martin (Israel Start-Up

"I knew every corner, every hole in the road"

Nation), who had set off two minutes before the Deceuninck-Quick Step rider. His time was a new fastest for this course, which has been used in the Portuguese race for the past three years.

Geraint Thomas (Ineos) finished in 25 minutes, 51 seconds slower than when he won this time trial stage in the 2018 edition.

Evenepoel finished 38 seconds ahead of Max Schachmann (Bora-Hansgrohe) on GC, with Miguel Angel López (Astana) in third, one second slower.

Speaking after the finish, Evenepoel said: "I'm really happy. I knew it was just 20km full gas and I started quite fast and then I knew in the hilly sections I had to recover well so that's what I did.

"I just went all out, the communication with the car was perfect, I knew every corner, every hole in the road. I'm very happy."





The Belgian continues his steady trajectory to the top of the sport

OPINION

My view

VERN
PITT

CW news editor



Ever since his debut junior season when he demolished all in front of him and ripped the World Championship road race field to pieces, Remco Evenepoel has been tagged as the next big thing.

Some will even tell you that he may be a once-in-a-generation rider that'll win almost at will. And when you win 32 races (including classification jerseys) in a season with only 27 race days that's probably a logical conclusion.

At that time there was good reason to be sceptical. Cycling history is littered with 'next big things' that never blossomed into what we all expected them to be. Even the great Peter Sagan hasn't proven to be the steamroller of the Classics that many thought he'd be.

Evenepoel's debut pro season did, however, do something to thaw my

"WITH EVERY PASSING VICTORY HE CREEPS CLOSER TO JUSTIFYING THE HYPE"

scepticism. He got a win at the Baloise Belgium Tour, besting the strong Lotto-Soudal pairing of Victor Campenaerts and Tim Wellens in the process. And there was the high-profile victory at the Clásica San Sebastián. However, for both of these he was the beneficiary of team tactics working to great effect.

Probably more telling was his European TT title and his second place to Rohan Dennis in the World Championship TT, which showed his raw talent more vividly.

With every passing victory he creeps closer to justifying the hype. Maybe the 2020 Giro d'Italia will be a step too far, but at this point I believe in Remco Evenepoel.



The final podium with Ken Van Rooy (second) and Alessandro Fancellu (third)

Stedman eyes Yorkshire top 10 after biggest career victory

Canyon-dhb score huge Turkish stage-race win, writes *Vern Pitt*

Canyon-dhb p/b Soreen rider Max Stedman has set his sights on a top-10 finish at the Tour de Yorkshire in May after racking up the biggest win of his career at the Tour of Antalya in Turkey at the weekend.

The Berkshire-born rider raced to third place on the race's summit finish on stage three. He then used his team-mates to defend his slender two-second lead in the intermediate sprints for bonus seconds on stage four to take the jersey.

Stedman said: "The climb wasn't an overly hard one. It was one of those five-six per cent fast climbs, it wasn't goat territory. It all kicked off with a few attacks and little Ben Tullett got in a three and then I bridged to that three. Then with 2km to go Riccardo Zoidl (Felbermayr-Simplon Wels) just went for it [and won]. I was fourth place with about 10m to go but managed to nick the bonus seconds with a surge at the line."

The 24-year old, who has been under the tutelage of team manager Tim Elverson for

five years, said the .1 ranked race was "my biggest GC win by far and probably the team's biggest win".

Speaking after just one and half hour's sleep following a night of celebrations in the hotel nightclub, Stedman said he now hoped to do well at the Tour de Yorkshire. "I think Yorkshire is the hilliest to date, that should be nice. I've never really had a smooth run there in the last two years. Last year I was caught in the crosswinds and the year before that I had a mechanical," he said.

"I'd like to take inspiration from what James Shaw and Scott Thwaites did last year [finishing fifth and eighth]. A top 10, or five, would be a great result," he added.

Unsurprisingly for a rider his age Stedman is keen to get noticed by Pro Continental and WorldTour teams to try and make the step up to the higher ranks. His performance last week in front of Alpecin-Fenix and Sport Vlaanderen-Baloise, should increase his chances of that happening.

Van der Haar returns to winning

Lucy van der Haar (née Garner) made her return to the top step for the first time in nearly five years at the Dubai Women's Tour.

The 25-year old had been expected to be a big force in the sport after she won the World Championship junior road race in Copenhagen in 2011.

But she last won a race at La Route de France in 2015 when she rode for Liv-Plantur. She then spent three win-less years at Wiggle-High5 before joining her current squad Hitec Products last season.

Following her victory she tweeted: "Can't believe we just won the first ever. Can't thank the girls and team enough for helping me win the GC in today's stage."

Van der Haar's victory was built on winning the sprint on the race's first day. She then collected a second place on the following day before defending her lead on the steep climb to Hatta-Dam on the race's third stage, where she finished third.

She even picked up a top 10 in the race's final sprint stage, a 112km jaunt starting and ending at Dubai Festival City.

While surviving those stages may sound perfunctory it was no mean feat given the race organisers barrier placing was at times haphazard, verging on dangerous. For instance, stage two saw riders ushered into half the road by desperate marshals just metres before the finish line, which hadn't been painted on the road.

Van der Haar is set to race Omloop Het Nieuwsblad on Saturday, where she'll face some of the sport's biggest names including Annemeik van Vleuten (Mitchelton-Scott).



Van der Haar ends win drought



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Mapei return to cycling team sponsorship with UK club

A jersey with a big history heads down to the little leagues

The iconic multi-coloured Mapei cubetti jersey has adorned many of the sport's greatest riders as they won Monuments, Classics and Grand Tours but it's not been seen in action since the professional team folded at the end of 2002.

Now the design will be seen in the peloton once more as it has been revived for small UK club Halesowen A & CC Academy, a junior and under-23 team of 10 riders based out of the Halesowen velodrome near Birmingham, after it struck a sponsorship deal with the Italian grout and adhesive manufacturer.

Academy manager William Fotheringham said: "We actually got contacted by Mapei because their UK head office is close to the track and they have a policy of supporting local sports clubs."

As a cycling journalist, author Fotheringham was well aware of the brand's legendary status within cycling built on its domination of one-day races and Classics through the 1990s with riders such as Johan Museeuw, Andrea Tafi and Franco Ballerini, so jumped at the opportunity.



Halesowen Academy riders are keeping the Mapei legacy alive

“Most of the riders weren’t born when Mapei had a team before, but they’re really aware of the legacy”

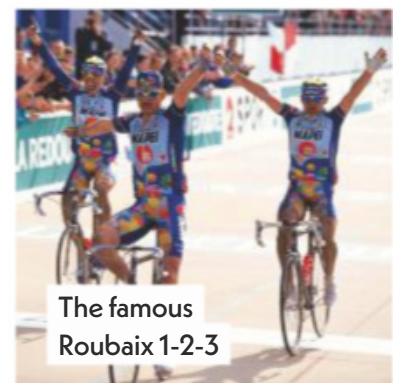


The cubetti jersey on show in the Midlands

Mapei's top cycling moments

Podium lock-out at Paris-Roubaix, 1996

The story goes that team boss Patrick Lefevere received a call from Mapei CEO Giorgio Squinzi as his three riders approached the Roubaix velodrome, instructing him that Johan Museeuw must win this race ahead of team-mates Gianluca Bortolami and Andrea Tafi.



The famous Roubaix 1-2-3

Rominger's Vuelta victory, 1995

Though mostly a Classics team, Mapei did enjoy some Grand Tour success courtesy of Swiss Tony Rominger. Nowhere was he more dominant than at the Vuelta a España in 1994 where he took the lead on stage one, putting it beyond doubt in the second week and taking six stages on his way to Madrid.

Fabian Cancellara's first pro win, 2001 Tour of Rhodes

Spartacus, as he'd later come to be known, had been a product of Mapei's fierce development system and duly fulfilled his billing as the next big thing just months into his first pro contract, taking the time trial at the two-stage race and the general classification.

Tafi takes the final edition of UK Wincanton Classic, 1997

While far from the squad's highest-profile win, it regularly made the trip to the UK for this race, winning it first in 1994 with Gianluca Bortolami and then later with Andrea Tafi in 1997, in what would prove to be the last running of the race.

Museeuw wins Tour of Flanders, 1995

Already a proven winner at this race, the 1995 edition was the first time a rider wearing the cubetti jersey won a Monument — a characteristic that would come to define the team as it picked up 12 wins in the Monuments during its lifespan.

"The second I said we were interested it was about getting the cubes back on a jersey... I went in and explained about the academy and that went up to [Mapei founder] Giorgio Squinzi — in total it took six months to tie up."

Squinzi pulled his sponsorship of the pro team after Stefano Garzelli's positive doping test in 2002 (it carried on as Quick Step-Davitamon) and Mapei's involvement in cycling has been smaller ever since, becoming a UCI sponsor, noticable at the road World Championships.

He added: "To some extent they [Mapei UK staff] were aware of the company's history in cycling; they knew there was an association but I don't think they were aware of the importance of the name.

I think they are quite surprised at the interest we've had."

Although the wider Halesowen A&CC club dates back to 1937, the academy team was started in 2015 to help develop young riders who wanted to go into elite UK teams or at least have a lifelong involvement in the sport.

Fotheringham said most of the sponsorship will be used to fund sending riders to races such as the Junior Tour of Ireland.

"The irony is most of the riders weren't even born when Mapei had a team before but they are absolutely flabbergasted. They are really aware of the legacy," he said.

The team's first race is set to be the Evesham Vale road race on March 8.



PREVIEW

Omloop Het Nieuwsblad

Ghent, Belgium, February 29

Greg Van Avermaet was in a bullish mood discussing his form after the Volta ao Algarve last week ahead of Omloop Het Nieuwsblad on Saturday, the first cobbled Classic of the year.

"I'm very happy with my condition at the moment," he said. "I don't think I have climbed better in my life. It gives me confidence, but we'll have to wait and see what it will bring on the cobbles," he told Dutch outlet *Wielierflits* at the Portuguese stage race.

The Belgian, who was second last year behind Zdeněk Štybar (Deceuninck-Quick Step) will no doubt find his climbing legs come in useful at the 13-berg Omloop, which opens the Northern Classics season and mines some of the richest berg-filled

seams in Flanders. Among these are big-name climbs from the Tour of Flanders, the Muur-Kapelmuur included.

"Am I still looking for confirmation for the Omloop? No. The condition is there," added a confident Van Avermaet, who had ridden to 15th place on the first of the Algarve's summit finishes.

As well as last year's runner-up position, CCC team rider Avermaet has already won Omloop twice, in 2016 and 2017. This year he will have to contend with an array of well-wintered opponents whose focus has been sharpened by Tokyo. Among these he can count Owain Doull (Team Ineos), freshly bolstered by a stage win at the Tour

de La Provence, and the considerable firepower of the Lotto-Soudal team, who will field Tim Wellens and new signing Philippe Gilbert — both of whom featured in last year's top 10, and both on home ground.

However, perhaps the biggest obstacle Van Avermaet will have to face will come from the ProTeam ranks in the form of Mathieu van der Poel of wild-card team Alpecin-Fenix. The reigning cyclo-cross world champion has had a low-key start to the season at the Volta ao Algarve

and is yet to ride Omloop. But in his first full road season last year he won two Classics, including Amstel Gold.

**"I don't think
I've ever
climbed better"**



STATS

- 13 classified climbs
- 8 sections of pavé
- 6 wins among the riders who will line up on Sunday

DISTANCE

200km (men),
127km (women)

RACE TIMINGS

Women: 11.43-15.20

Men: 11.35-16.40

Full details at
www.omloophetnieuwsblad.be

Van Avermaet will bring
his A-game to the pavé

CRUNCH POINTS

■ Leberg (37km to ride, men)

With 45km to ride, the race enters its endgame, where riders encounter a total of seven bergs (four of which are cobbled), plus three further sectors of pavé. Right in the middle of this last 45km the riders are hit with a machine-gun barrage of berg-pavé-berg-berg, all within the space of less than 10km. At the end of this test is the Leberg — 700m long with a gradient peaking at 14 per cent, this would be the perfect time for anyone 'on a ride' to launch a move.

■ Eikenmolen (28km to ride, women)

At 700m, with gradients of up to 12 per cent, the Eikenmolen is steep and long enough to create meaningful gaps. With only the Muur-Kappelmuur and Bosberg left in the way of climbing, anyone with

designs on the win is likely to use the Eikenmolen (which is not tackled at all by the men) to gain an advantage. If anyone is strong enough, it could even act as the launchpad for a solo break.

■ Muur-Kapelmuur (17km to ride, men and women)

Mimicking the much missed Tour of Flanders decider, the Omloop pays a visit to Geraardsbergen's most famous landmark. The steep, cobbled slopes of the Muur have been the launchpad for countless attacks over the years, and any non-sprinting rider still in the mix and feeling strong is likely to try their luck. The sucker punch of the Bosberg comes 4km later, giving any escapees a chance to consolidate their gains before the final 12km run-in to Ninove.

CONTENDERS

Zdeněk Stybar (Deceuninck-Quick Step)

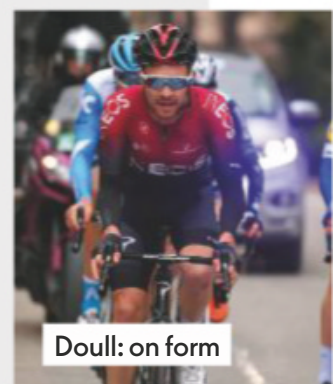
A month of hard cyclo-cross under his belt in December looks to have paid off for last year's Nieuwsblad winner Stybar, who has already shown his hand with a stage win at the Vuelta San Juan. Expect to see him at the sharp end of this race.

CW rating ★★★★★

Owain Doull (Team Ineos)

This will be the Welshman's first race back since his win at the Tour de La Provence earlier in the month. This seems to be a good time of year for him and he's capable of a result here.

CW rating ★★★



Doull: on form

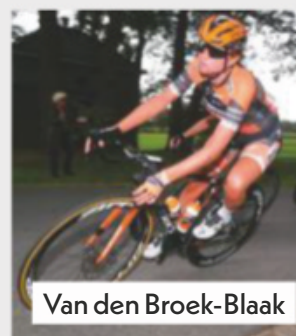
Lizzie Deignan (Trek-Segafredo)

Three times a podium finisher, including a win in 2016, Deignan knows what is required from this event. In her first full season following the birth of her daughter, she has set her sights on the Olympics and even though this is her first race in 2020 we expect her to be on form here.

CW rating ★★★

Chantal van den Broek-Blaak (Boels-Dolmans)

Like Deignan, last year's winner van den Broek-Blaak has yet to reveal her form but is



Van den Broek-Blaak

well versed in how to do well here, with two seconds and a third to complement her win. She's backed by a set of strong team-mates, including Jip van den Bos (third last year) and Anna Van der

Breggen, winner here in 2015.

CW rating ★★★★★

Annemiek van Vleuten (Mitchelton-Scott)

Van Vleuten has unfinished business this season having crashed out at the Rio Olympics four years ago. Her winter training has been "flawless", and she expects to be "there from Omloop".

CW rating ★★★★★

Junior wins North Road

Stockwell and Grace hardest riders against the North Road clock

National junior 25-mile time trial champion Ollie Stockwell got his 2020 season off to a great start with victory in the North Road CC Hardriders on Sunday morning.

The 17-year-old from Hertfordshire — the reigning national junior road race champion who is heading to Belgium this week to ride Kuurne-Brussels-Kuurne — proved fastest by 46 seconds over a course shortened because of roadworks.

He clocked 51:33 and looked set to be challenged for the win by Josh Crow-Stewart (Arctic Aircon) until a puncture ended his rival's hopes. Instead, previous winner Lloyd Chapman (Loose Cannon's Conditioning) took second.

"I was quite nervous because I haven't done a time trial in quite a while and the North Road Hardriders is difficult, but I thought a top-three finish was achievable," said Stockwell.

"I know the roads around here well as I train on them. The weather didn't really bother me, I did switch to shallower wheels but stuck to a disc on the back."

Cambridge University CC rider Elspeth Grace was fastest female, and joined Rob Walker and Jack Kellam in the winning team.

Elsewhere Jake Sargent led a one-two for FTP Racing in the Severn Road Club Hardriders 25 in Gloucestershire with Felix Wilkinson runner-up, and Corinne Clark (Swindon Wheelers) fastest woman.

Also in Gloucestershire the Salt and Sham CC 10 on Saturday was won by Ross Phelps (Bristol RC) in 20:55, while fastest female Megan Dickerson (Skoda DSI Cycling Academy) clocked 23:06 to take fourth overall.

In road racing, a solo break proved



"I was quite nervous, the North Road Hardriders is difficult, but I thought a top-three was achievable"

enough for Tom Nancarrow to secure the first win of the season for Nopinz Symec Race Team at the Primavera Road Race

in Devon on Sunday morning.

The 21-year-old medical student from Truro powered away early in the 55-mile elite race and crossed the line

around a minute and a half ahead of his nearest rivals.

His team-mate Red Walters won the bunch sprint for second spot after having also tried to break clear, but settled for second after working with the rest of the team to stop any rivals chasing down Nancarrow.

Riders in Lancashire weren't so lucky, with the Clayton Spring Classic Handicap being cancelled because of flooding.

#CW5000



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OPINION



Tubeless tyres are a no-brainer
when the going gets rough

MOLLY WEAVER



How tubeless tyres won me over

Ever since tubeless tyres first burst onto the scene (no pun intended), there's been much debate around them. As with most advancements in technology, there are pros and cons, and I myself have mixed feelings.

After one season using them on the road, I was relieved to switch back to clinchers. My experience was perhaps tainted by the fact that I was using the first generation of tubeless tyres and there were definitely some teething problems.

Like many other early users, I swore to never use them again while stranded hours from home, with an unfixable tyre at my feet, sealant all over my hands, and a long wait to be rescued from the rain.

Given how few punctures I suffered on the road each year, the fallout when I did experience one with tubeless tyres was enough to outweigh the positives for me.

It might seem strange then that I chose to fit them to my gravel bikes this winter. I'd decided to keep an open mind, and trust the advice of those who were more experienced than me at off-roading.

And in theory it was working. Over the past few months I'd ridden off-road almost every day, and pushed a gravel bike to its limits in terms of terrain and riding surface. So far, no punctures. Even so, I was still sceptical.

But I'd never been able to conclusively say that my lack of punctures was due to tubeless technology. Until last week.

During one long ride through the gravel, bogs and mud of mid-Wales, I got to bask in the glory of my tyre choices. I pulled thorn after thorn out of my tyres, sealant spurting onto my fingers, with the hiss of air slowly stopping with each rotation of the wheel. In total I counted 12 guaranteed punctures that I didn't have to deal with that day, and only six-eight psi was lost.

After my earlier trials and tribulations with tubeless tyres on the road, this was enough to convert me on the rough stuff. When it comes to off-roading, I'm definitely a tubeless fan.

Former pro Molly Weaver is taking on some new challenges for Orbea RT

JACOB TIPPER



WE SHOULDN'T HAVE EMPTY SPOTS AT THE WORLDS

The penultimate World Championships before the Olympics this weekend is a time for GB to shine. It's the conclusion of a four-year cycle which normally involves various bits of revolutionary kit being rolled out, while some serious strength blocks start to pay dividends. But the individual pursuit and kilo won't have any GB representatives.

It isn't uncommon to have empty GB places at a major championships. UK Sport's performance targets revolve around winning a boat load of medals at the Olympic Games. And so far they have been very successful at doing this, securing UK Sport money, and helping use that money to develop the sport.

For an aspiring athlete, representing your country is what you dream of. But it is unfortunately something only a small number of athletes will ever get the opportunity to achieve, so seeing the Worlds slots regularly go empty seems unjust. I understand the rationale: scoring points for the Worlds in non-Olympic events does not help them towards their Olympic targets.

It's frustrating knowing life-changing opportunities for non-squad riders are being passed up. I personally believe British Cycling should have a duty to respect all major events and any athletes who have the right to compete in them.

Jacob Tipper rides for Ribble Pro Cycling and Huub-WattBike and runs his own coaching company

ELLIE DICKINSON



PRIDE IN THE JERSEY

As you read this, my 2020 World Championship campaign will be well under way. I will be competing in the team pursuit.

I cannot believe it has been a year since we were last in Poland, dealing with mixed emotions after taking a silver medal. This World Championships is, of course, the fourth of the Olympic cycle, so it prompted me to look back over the years and acknowledge the feelings I have been lucky enough to experience.

A wave of nerves instantly floods through my body whenever the World Championships are mentioned but I don't want to harp on about my nerves; it's putting me off my tea.

Instead, I want to share my feelings on this Worlds with you.

Last week on the track, the sprint squad were tackling a race effort and all of the younger sprinters came into the stands to watch, along with all the support staff. The riders and coaches inside the track centre all cheered them on. A wave of emotion flooded my body. It was a proud feeling. I didn't have a clue how the lads' race efforts went but regardless of the outcome, I feel so proud to be a rider in this team. Bring on the Worlds 2020.

Ellie Dickinson is a GB track cyclist bidding for a TP spot in Tokyo



TWEET OF THE WEEK



Geraint Thomas

It's my 14th year as a professional, but I still managed to forget my aero suits, HR strap and my wash bag. Baby brain or just getting old? @geraintthomas86

"I'm so proud to be a rider in this team. Bring on the Worlds 2020"

THE HUB

All the news you might have missed from the last seven days



Will the coronavirus claim Italy's greatest races?

Races under threat in Italy Milan-San Remo, Tirreno-Adriatico and the Giro d'Italia could all be cancelled following the coronavirus outbreak in Italy. So far three people have died and the number of cases in the country has passed 150.

Schools and universities have closed, Serie A football games have been postponed, and now bike races also look to be under threat.

"We are very worried about the spread of the epidemic," Mauro Vegni, the director of Giro organiser RCS Sport, told Italian news outlet *Corriere*.



Fuglsang's taken an impressive early season GC victory

145

kilometres... the total distance of Zwift's new Haute Route Watopia stage race — the perfect antidote to what has so far been a decidedly inclement 2020.

Taking place from April 3-5 across three stages in Zwift's own 'Watopia' cyber world, it is a collaboration between Zwift and the amateur events, which are held in mountain ranges around the world.

Zwifters will enjoy plenty of climbing: 890m on stage one (48km), 1,166m in just 25km on stage two; and 1,333m on stage three (72km). Yikes!

■ **Chinese races cancelled** Three upcoming Chinese races have been postponed due to the coronavirus outbreak.

The Women's WorldTour-ranked Tour of Chongming Island, the Tour of Zhoushan Island (2.2) and the Women's Tour of Taiyuan (1.2) have all been put on ice. The UCI is due to decide which to cancel completely on March 15.

The virus had already prompted the cancellation of the Tour of Hainan ProSeries stage race in February.

■ **Ex-pro admits doping** Former WorldTour cyclist Pirmin Lang who rode for IAM Cycling, has confessed to doping during his career.

The 35-year-old spent eight years as a pro, finishing second in the Swiss National Championships 2016.

"I cheated throughout my professional career as a cyclist," said Lang in a statement. "I was part of the 'Aderlass' network. I lied and I am responsible for my actions. I regret it." Following the admission, Lang has left his post as sports director at the Continental-level Swiss Racing Academy.



Fuglsang wins Ruta Jakob Fuglsang (Astana) got his season off to a flyer last week, winning the Ruta del Sol in Andalusia, Spain, by a hefty 59 seconds ahead of Aussie Jack Haig (Mitchelton-Scott), with Mikel Landa (Bahrain-McLaren) 13 seconds further back in third. Fuglsang began the five-stage race with a win in the mountains, and never rescinded the lead. He won the hilly third stage and sealed the deal in the 13km final-stage TT, where he was second.



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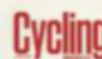
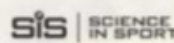
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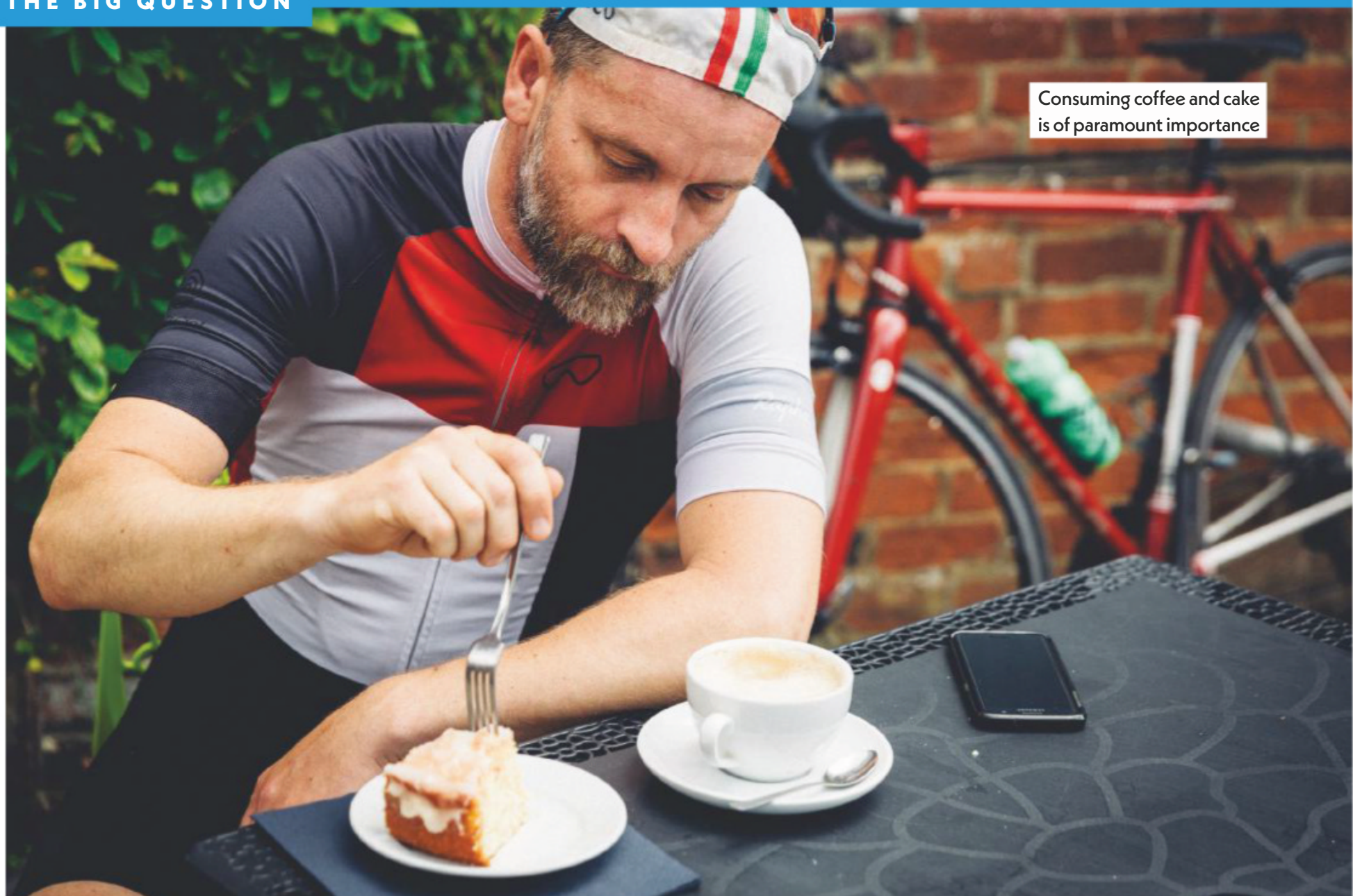
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Consuming coffee and cake is of paramount importance

It's not a proper ride unless I've...

■ ... had coffee and cake on the way back in.
Rob Buoy

■ ... had a pint of Ruddles at the finish.
Martyn Chappell

■ ... made two of my cycling colleagues swear out loud because of the pace/climb/distance covered. *Barry Jones*

■ ... won a sign sprint by 1cm, even if said sign was a weak bridge one. *Stuart Hannan*

■ ... been outside. Indoor rides don't count. ANY ride outside is a proper bike ride. Even my one-mile commute. *Will Unwin*

■ ... changed two inner tubes, at least once for the wife, ran out of CO2 and

had my backside handed to me on the hills!
Tony Unwin

■ ... bonked hard and contemplated getting a train home. *Daniel Ellis*

■ ... sat outside a petrol station with a can of Coke and a pack of sweets after bonking or being very close to. *Anthony Samwise Lock*

■ ... got left behind on every ascent! Then caught up on the descent! *Ian Anderson*

■ ... that one person says "let's just ride easy" and then that person is the first one to drill it. *Joe Campola*

■ ... got one of my children's songs playing on an endless loop in my head. *Ian James*

■ ... put on my race cape, 30 seconds before the rain stops. *Damian Gunn*

■ ... felt my teeth rattling around my head as I curse at the state of the roads. *Luke Turner*

■ ... sworn at the never-ending headwind. *Polly Weasel*

■ ... stopped at the roadside for a nature break. *Darren Rider*

NEXT WEEK'S BIG QUESTION...

Finish this sentence: the best thing about the Classics is...

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Safety issues at Dubai Women's Tour finishes

How are they supposed to see that funnel at sprint speed? Very dangerous in a group of that size at that speed. Did the men's race use the same course and finish line? *Sue Williams*

Maybe risk assessment has a different meaning for this race organiser. *Malcolm Borg*

Wouldn't see that at a third-cat race. Don't need rules — just common sense. *Vic Snape*

What is the UCI doing to check race organisers are meeting at least a minimum standard of safety for riders? Oh yeah... they're checking your sock length. *Daniel Ellis*

Ridiculous. These errors should not be happening! *Carlos Passant*

How on earth can this happen? UCI, please explain? *Graham Harcourt*

This is so shockingly dangerous for the riders. Common sense would solve the problem, but if that is absent the UCI has to step in. It sets the rules where safety is concerned. Haven't seen anything from the CPA or the Cyclists' Alliance reacting to this. They need to stand up for their members. *Milly Vickers*

When countries new to pro cycle races are granted permission to put on events, do they have experts come in from elsewhere to help them get it right? Whoever the organiser of this race is should not have received a licence to run it. *Pete Jones*

E-scooter evasion

A fortnight ago I was riding my bike about one-and-a-half to two feet away from the kerb when an e-scooter came up on my inside, catching me by surprise. I was pushed to my right into the path of a car which was just about to overtake.

Luckily for me, the motorist had anticipated the actions of the e-scooter rider and hit his brakes. I caught up with the e-scooter rider and asked him why he was on the road. He told me to “f*** off” and then tried to lean into me. I leaned back and pushed him onto the pavement which left him in a heap. I was not prepared to end up under a car.

Why are these scooters allowed on the road? Apparently they are illegal to use on pavements and roads.

I got home and had a set-to with one of the suppliers of the scooters. I was told they are not illegal and that cars are more dangerous! *Graham Tooley, email*

Ed — The problem is not with e-scooters but with the people who use them in a dangerous or anti-social manner (same with any mode of transport). Being the newest mode of transport means they attract attention, but don't use the actions of one individual as an excuse to disparage everyone who uses an e-scooter.

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BREAKING DRAG

Are CdA-measuring tools the tech of the future? Tech editor *Michelle Arthurs-Brennan* investigates

Every decade a new piece of training-focused tech is revealed to the cycling community. First it was odometers, then in the 1980s heart rate monitors appeared. In the 1990s it was power meters then GPS devices when we entered the new millennium.

Each new creation is met with questions over the need for such equipment and puzzlement over the complexity of the system and the data it provides. It can take a generation of cyclists to grow up with the technology before it becomes widely adopted.

Eventually, the successful items become commonplace — they're built in

to the equipment on our bikes and next thing you know we're giving each other virtual kudos on social media for the numbers the tech records.

Are coefficient of drag (CdA) measuring tools the latest bit of tech that will become part of our riding? In 20 years' time will we be unable to imagine training without them, or will we still be looking at this tech with a frown asking, "But does it actually work?"

CdA tells you the size of the front facing silhouette of you and your bike. This is what is hitting the wind and creating 95 per cent of the resistance you are pedalling in order to overcome. It's what is holding you back.

Tolerances are small — a WorldTour pro will be knocking out around 0.17 in TT mode, while on a road bike without

optimisation you might sit at 0.4. The lower the number the better, and it can be brought down by making changes to your position and kit.

There are several methods for measuring CdA. You can check in at a wind tunnel and work with an aerodynamicist, but you won't be able to guarantee your findings are played out on the road. You can book in with an expert who will use mathematical equations to determine drag from the velodrome, or you can experiment yourself.

There are several tools available which use algorithms to predict a number (BestBikeSplit.com or the Aerolab within Golden Cheetah). All of these require an expert, a subscription, or a fairly robust understanding of physics.

CdA measuring tools aim to take away a lot of the complexity. They do

KING



so by combining wind speed, humidity, air pressure, air density, and then cross-referencing those with power and speed data to obtain a figure, which can be displayed in real time via a cycling computer head unit.

There are several brands on the market — including Notio and Aeropod — with many more likely to emerge in the future. Garmin purchased Alphamantis, makers of the AeroStick, back in 2017 but we've yet to see a finished product.

Dan Bigham's own 2019 time trial bike had a Notio CdA tool proudly strapped to the handlebars, and he and his fellow record-breaking, National Championship winning Huub-Wattbike team pursuit riders have used the tool to great success.

"The benefits the tool has given us have been huge," Bigham says.

"Effectively it's a high-speed data logger that enables us to record and measure variables we've never had access to before, especially on the track. In the team pursuit, its completely revolutionised how we analyse the event how we analyse training and do aero testing."

It sounds perfect, so why aren't we all using them?

CdA tools are the absolute antithesis

of 'fit and forget'. In terms of usability, they're probably where power meters were in 1989, when a roll-down test was part of the calibration process. And there's a lot more that can go wrong.

"A power meter is made up of two sensors, one measuring torque and one measuring cadence; the equations are pretty simple beyond that," says Bigham. "On the aero side, you're trying to calculate air density, air speed, measure power, wheel speed, slope, roll angles, vertical vibration on the tyres — so many more variables than power meters have to deal with. You have to be a bit more detail-focused to get good quality, repeatable data out. I think it's going in the right direction but it's probably not something that Joe Bloggs can walk into a bike shop, buy, chuck on and answer



Notio's tool clamps neatly on to the aero bars

questions in 10 minutes. There are some caveats to it and that's just unfortunately how science works. It's something you've got to work at. Getting reliable data is about designing a good experiment."

To use a CdA tool effectively, you'll need to understand the factors which can affect the readings — gusts, traffic, movement of the rider — and know when to eradicate a certain piece of data.

"With Notio, I've had riders repeat within 0.001 on CdA, which is pretty awesome, but some riders have been five times worse than that," says Bigham. "That's the difference of 15 watts. That's just the nature of atmospheric conditions in the real world, but also riders need to be able to get on the bike and replicate everything they did in the previous run.

"The gear you were in, how you held the bars, where you sat on the saddle, all that stuff has a massive bearing on aerodynamics; if you can have a great handle on it you can test down to a very small detail. If you don't, then you can't," Bigham adds.

Numbers on the go

There are two obvious applications for these devices: comparing position and equipment for optimisation, and using live data on the move to ensure that the position designed in training is being used when racing. Except, according to the experts, the latter is best avoided.

Aerocoach's Xavier Disley tells me: "Testing position or equipment like helmets would be a very good use of a CdA tool, under the right conditions. I think having the numbers in front of you, they'll move around quite a lot, especially once you introduce traffic. I'd advise against using it for target races. You don't want to be making decisions on the fly that might be based on the conditions around you.

"I see it more as a self aero testing tool, or for post-hoc analysis — perhaps if you do your club TT every week and there's not a lot of traffic, using the device you can track changes over the course of a few weeks," Disley adds.

Bigham says much the same: "I don't ever use the live data on the head unit, I think it'd be naive to look at the numbers during a race, you should focus on holding the position."

Aero testing yourself

If you've decided that aero testing is for you, then you'll need to adhere to a set testing protocol that you trust.

"Someone who wants to optimise their kit and position can use this equipment, but they need to set time aside to do it properly," Disley says. "A device like this

that will automate some of the processes is quite useful, but making sure you do a bit of homework on getting your protocol sorted is the main thing.

"Make sure you do A/B testing, do long runs where possible, find a good venue, and stick to testing on a nice day. And make sure you have time set aside to look at the data afterwards.

"If you're doing this at home, you probably don't have a velodrome, so I'd

recommend that you try and choose somewhere that has very low traffic, a consistent road surface, and is somewhere

"You should focus on holding the position during a race"

physically useful for you — for example a loop where you can return to your equipment."

The smaller the margin between comparisons, the harder it's going to be to discern — for example, the 40-watt difference between me on the aero bars versus base bar was quite simple, but the difference between the helmets opened up room for error.

"There will be a tipping point where the resolution of the piece of kit won't be able to detect a difference. Once you understand what that is, as long as you're testing equipment outside of that realm of things, then you're OK," Disley says.

It's also pretty important to understand how changes in CdA translate to watts — particularly since the CdA numbers are very small. There are calculators available online to help you with this — but as a rule of thumb, a 0.01 change in CdA accounts for around eight watts at 40mph, and 12 watts at 45kph.

You would not be alone in thinking that this seems — well — a bit too much like a very complicated and expensive version of a school science experiment.

Based on my experience, these tools are clearly incredibly clever pieces of kit, which in the right hands could make the difference between a gold medal and disappointment. If you're not so scientifically inclined? That one-off trip to visit an expert might benefit you more than a purchase of a device you can — in theory — use every day.



Huub-Wattbike's
pursuitists-cum-scientists



Quiet roads are crucial for an accurate CdA reading

WE TRY IT

CW gives it a go

Eager to experience this emerging technology, I set off on a journey of CdA exploration with the Notio. Unveiled at Eurobike in 2017 it is now on sale for \$950 (around £730).

The device works alongside an app which is currently iOS-compatible only. Data can also be communicated to a Garmin head unit via Connect IQ. Basic interpretation can be completed in the Notio app, while detailed analysis has to take place in 'Golden Cheetah Notio'.

The first step, before using the device, is running a calibration test. This involves riding 3km out and back, and this test needs to be repeated with each bike switch. Since my only iOS device available was an iPad, I ran my calibration tests with the iPad nestled in a backpack.

The test needs to be carried out

on a relatively flat road, with a smooth surface and limited traffic. My first run was unsuccessful, I imagine because despite selecting the ideal road, I was interrupted by a school coach and two horse riders along the way. My second calibration attempt proved successful.

I began my comparison testing alongside expert tuition — working with Aerocoach's Xavier Disley at Halesowen outdoor velodrome near Birmingham.

We kicked things off by collecting data from three baseline runs. Riding an Argon 18 time trial bike in a speedsuit and TT helmet, but wearing arm and leg-warmers and without having optimised the position in any way, my CdA averaged out at 0.22 with no clear erroneous pieces of data.

This complete, we then tested myself on the aero bars versus the base bar — basically to sense-check the device. This showed a 37.7W improvement, suggesting the equipment worked well when looking at large optimisations.

Moving on to smaller differences, the data became harder to interpret. When running an A/B/A/B test comparing a Specialized Evade road helmet (A) with a Giro Aerohead TT helmet (B), one set of data gave us a 16W improvement from the TT lid while test two's 'A' data produced an errant figure which suggested the Evade was faster. Clearly, it's not, and we removed this data set from the test.

Removing the leg and arm-warmers and doing my best hunch with the standard aerobars fitted, I could get down to 0.202 — the numbers were going in the right direction and were sensible given the optimisations made.

Swapping the Notio to my road bike for regular rides, Disley and Dan Bigham's warnings about ever-changing data on the move began to make a lot of sense. The figures are presented as a rolling 60-second average, and factors such as being stuck behind lorries, riding through hedged lanes, braking, accelerating and getting out of the saddle all caused fluctuations, with a lag due to the rolling average.

As is common in emerging tech, the software wasn't without glitches. Pairing the Notio with my Garmin 520, I experienced drop-outs where data was communicated to the app but not to my head unit, and there were times when I had to restart the app to download files. When I asked Notio about this, the brand said, "This is a known issue, and expect we'll have a fix for it soon."

Notio also note that it's "best not to ride in wet road conditions" and the limited warranty does not apply to damage caused by water. This tech is still in its infancy, and early adopters may need to put up with hurdles. However, Notio was quick to answer all my questions and updates are ongoing.

BRITISH RACING'S FINANCIAL BLACK HOLE

As historic British races fall off the domestic calendar at an alarming rate, *Chris Marshall-Bell* sets out to find out why races are struggling and what can be done to fix it

Photos SWPix, Andy Jones



When racers of all levels meet on the start line for the early season races of January through to March they'll often hear the question: "How was your winter?" If that question was asked of Britain's elite-level races the answer would most likely be rather bad, leaving them in a perilous state.

In January, iconic races like the Eddie Soens and Lincoln Grand Prix were in danger of being scrapped (the two have since been saved after an outcry from supporters heralded new investment).

In February, the East Cleveland Klondike GP scrapped its women's race due to monetary concerns, while E/1/2 races the Tour of Sussex and Bourne CiCLE Classics both announced that they would not continue in 2020 due to similar concerns.

Cycling Weekly spoke to race organisers of the National Road Series and British Cycling, with all agreeing that the future of elite racing in the UK is at risk.

We found the average cost of running a race is between £45,000 and £65,000 — with four of the 10 National Road Series races from 2019 that we spoke to still needing to find additional sponsorship for this season's events. Many organisers also admitted investing their own savings to ensure the races went ahead.

More high-profile races, the Tour of Britain, Women's Tour and Tour Series — all organised by Britain's biggest race promoter SweetSpot — are without title sponsors for this season.

The number of non-UCI races has constantly fluctuated throughout the past decade and the scene appeared in rude health last season. But economic uncertainty — largely attributed to the unstable political and economic climate

— is blamed by many for the sport's present ills. All organisers that *CW* contacted reveal that local businesses have little interest in sponsoring a bike race due to the uncertain direction the country is headed.

To compound matters, the cost of policing and event insurance is rising. This requires organisers to seek more sponsorship than ever before. Not surprisingly, companies are reluctant to part with several thousands of pounds for what Richard Williamson, whose company Velo29 runs the Stockton GP and East Cleveland Klondike GP, admits is a "questionable return on investment".

Cycling's well-documented lack of a sustainable business model, plus its inability to attract paying spectators because of its roadside nature, are two other reasons behind the widespread problems, but there is also dissatisfaction with the communication and working arrangements between races and British Cycling.

Aware of the issues that needed addressing, British Cycling created a new job of elite road racing manager at the turn of the year, with former Madison-Genesis rider Erick Rowsell taking up the post.

While he is motivated to solve the problems, the 29-year-old conceded that the current picture is bleak. "This year isn't a write-off, but it's a year to reset and take stock. We have lost some big teams and sponsors from the sport domestically. I know races are struggling and things can only get better," he says.

Television axed

Controversially, and to the angst of many race organisers and riders, British Cycling recently announced — without

prior warning to anyone — that from the 2020 season, highlights from the National Road Series would not be shown on Eurosport.

It cited poor viewing figures of 732,000 viewers across the 18 men's and women's races in 2019, and claimed that investment of over a million pounds in the last three years had not yielded the results it had intended. A news highlights package will now be produced and sent to local news outlets, which the governing body feels will give it more bang for its buck.

BC bemoaned that it was "unable to deliver a calendar that offers regular scheduling, at the quality required, and that provides the necessary viewership and outcomes for broadcasters to get them to commit to televise, so we have been unable to achieve our initial aim."

Williamson says that Stockton Council will be livid upon hearing the news. "It's going to have a massive effect, not having Eurosport," he says.



Big UK races rely on TV coverage to attract sponsors

“Stockton Council fund 100 per cent of the Stockton GP and when I meet with them all they want to talk about is TV. They will hit the roof when they find out it won’t be on Eurosport.”

“The primary reason that they fund the event is to make Stockton look good to as many people as possible and this news means that they have probably lost 75 per cent of their audience.”

“This news will make them rethink, and question what the point is of having the race. Spending £40-60k for them is a huge thing, so it really has to work out for them. It has to tick a huge amount of boxes.”

Dan Ellmore, Lincoln GP organiser, agrees. “I have been able to say to sponsors that we have 250,000 viewers and to them that is a lot of people. I understand that things change, and I get why BC are cutting back, but now I have to work harder to pitch my race to sponsors.”

Richard Fletcher, organiser of the bi-annual Manx International that is next set to run in 2021, adds: “Without TV coverage, how then are you going to get a sponsor to put money in, if they have nothing to show for it? It’s a vicious circle at the moment,”

However, it’s not that the coverage

itself was universally loved. A common complaint was that Eurosport showed highlights at unsociable times.

“A big criticism as a bike rider was how poor the coverage was on Eurosport,” Rowsell says.

“I never knew when I could watch it, and if I did catch it, it was on at 6am or 10pm, but I wouldn’t know if it was on for 15 minutes or 30 minutes.”

Nonetheless, Rowsell understands why organisers are upset. He adds: “This news hasn’t helped things and it’s a blow. I’m not able to really put a positive spin on that.”

Bob Howden, president of BC and organiser of the Ryedale GP, takes a pragmatic view, pointing out that cycling isn’t able to command broadcast fees like football, and notes its comparatively limited audience. “The question I would ask is: do races really rely on TV coverage? I am different because I essentially sponsor Ryedale myself, but are there better ways to get coverage without TV?”

**“This year isn’t a write-off
but it’s a year to reset and
take stock”**

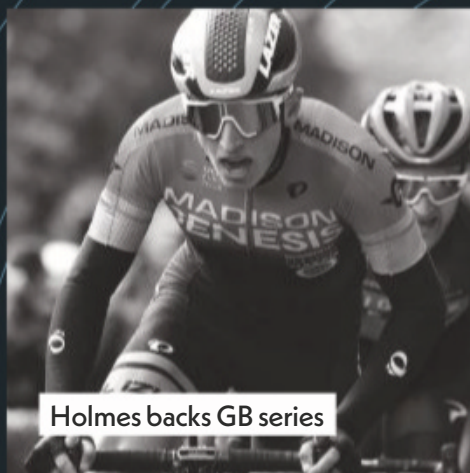
RIDER OPINIONS

View from the peloton

In spite of concerns about the direction of elite road racing in the country, many of the scene's best riders are passionate about defending the quality of racing.

After denying Richie Porte his annual win on Willunga Hill at the Tour Down Under in January, Lotto-Soudal's new WorldTour pro **Matt Holmes** said: "Teams need to really look at the National Series in Britain. They are not UCI races, but they should count [towards attracting WorldTour teams]. There are no easy races to win."

Speaking to CW last spring, Tom Stewart of Canyon-Soreen anticipated the current debate, but launched a defence of the racing. "The scene is healthy but



it will always struggle because of the financial model. We can't get much money from TV rights, there aren't as many TV viewers, and we must never charge people to stand at the side of the road.

"I don't have the answers, but we have to be careful not to be negative about it. I'm not a massive fan of the scepticism.

"In 2018 the national champion was Connor Swift. There are more riders than ever getting paid from riding in the UK and the quality of racing is the best it has ever been."

Cash or kit?

British Cycling films all National Road Series races, and it also provides races with a podium truck, timing equipment and barriers. The national federation also contributes towards other costs, which reduces the amount of investment that races need to find.

But Fletcher believes that BC should cover additional, inevitable fees. He says: "Sometimes commissaires and judges are appointed from the other side of the country; these guys, same with the National Escort Group [the motorcycle marshals that close roads], don't exploit their expenses — they do it for the love of the sport, too — but BC should pay for them.

"Medical cover and insurance is getting more expensive — these are costs that I doubt BC understand. My personal view is that if BC met some of these known and unavoidable costs of running a race, it would leave

the organiser to focus on attracting commercial sponsorship."

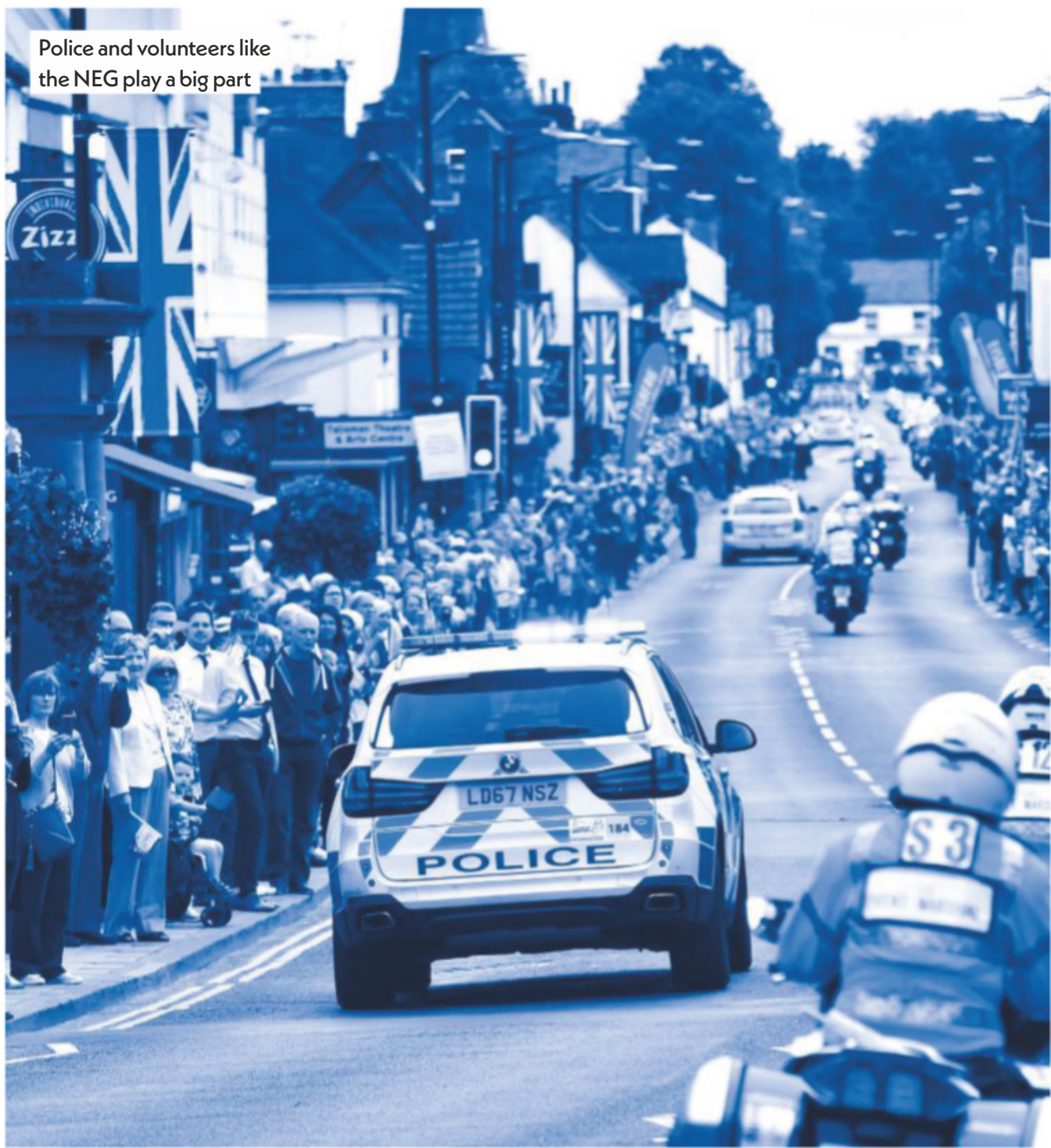
Ellmore agrees about the money. "Each race is different. At Lincoln we don't need the timing, PA or the podium truck because we have our own facilities. I'd throw them out and have the money instead because that would pay my police and stewards bill.

"BC's investment would benefit some organisers better if they received it in cash, and others if they just received the goods and products.

"These are the silly mistakes. We can tweak things and have better flexibility. If we have got a box deal and it can't fit into a box, then it seems at the moment like we have to lump it in. It doesn't make organising races easier."

Former UCI president Brian Cookson told CW that organising races has always been for clubs and a group of organisers, and not for the national federation.

Police and volunteers like the NEG play a big part



“Like with Eddie Soens and Lincoln, people have pulled together and helped”

Howden also dismissed the suggestion that BC should cover more costs as unfeasible.

He says: “People think that BC is awash with money, and yes, compared to other federations around the world we are fortunate, but that money is ring-fenced, and right now we don’t have a ring-fenced fund from our own stakeholders to support domestic racing.

“Money that goes into the domestic scene comes from membership fees and entry fees.”

Rowsell argues that if BC committed more money, it would make races less sustainable, because there may be in a point in the future when BC’s funding is reduced and thus they would have to reduce their investment in domestic racing.

He asks: “If BC paid £20,000 to cover all costs, can they maintain that for the next 20 years? I get the point, definitely, but I think it’s maybe more sustainable for the organisers to sustain their own races.”

The wheel turns

Some race organisers are aggrieved with the exclusive sponsorship deal that BC has with banking giant HSBC, and before that with car sales business Motorpoint. It’s this branding that dominates events on the UK National Road Series calendar.

HSBC UK has an eight-year deal with BC, the total value of which has never been disclosed but the federation’s accounts show it made a “significant contribution” to £9m of sponsorship revenue in 2019.

Organisers claim it reduces the field of sponsors that can invest in their events, especially as they are prohibited from contacting HSBC’s competitors in the financial sector.

It’s notable that races that appear to be secure are all beneficiaries of a healthy dose of council funding. Cookson, who in a return to his race organising roots in 2019 organised the inaugural Lancaster GP, believes that getting local authorities onside is imperative. This is to ensure an event can preserve its future without the annual stresses of where to source fresh investment.

Cookson says: “When putting on a major road race, the first thing to get is the major authorities on board for

road closures and race signage. All that is way behind entry fees because you can’t have a proper race without road closures.

“The costs are quite substantial and we got the council to take on board those costs. If you can offload those costs onto the local authority, then you get private sector sponsorship to cover prize funds and officials’ expenses.

“Working in collaboration with local councils takes a lot of work but it’s possible to do it.”

However, the cancellation of the Bourne CiCLE Festival earlier this month, after just one successful edition, was prompted by the local council. The race’s key backer decided to remove its support, showing that even this route is fraught with dangers.

In his short time in the job of elite road manager at BC, Rowsell has impressed organisers. His appointment has given them hope that there may be a path to shore up the scene’s finances but there is an inescapable scepticism.

“Unless something changes, then, yes, this story of race closures will continue,” Ellmore notes.

Cookson takes a less reserved and more upbeat tone, noting the sport’s cyclic nature. “Sometimes we are guilty of crying too quickly in these situations. Like with Eddie Soens and Lincoln, people have pulled together and helped. Events will continue for years to come,” he says.

With an acceptance that he has only been in his post a matter of weeks, Rowsell sums up the enormity of the challenge when attempting to answer how to solve the conundrum.

“That’s the money question, isn’t it?” he says. “In all honesty I don’t know, but going forward we need to find answers and find ways to improve it.

“I was lucky enough to make a career racing here in the UK, and I will do everything I can to improve the scene, save it and make it better.

“I wouldn’t want to watch what we have fall away. I want future British riders to have the opportunity to make a career here and maybe use it as a stepping stone to the WorldTour.”



World Sprint Championship

August 31, 1954

Britain's Reg Harris (foreground) defeats title holder Arie van Vliet of the Netherlands in the finals of the world professional sprint championship in Cologne, Germany. It had been three years since Harris's previous run of victories in the discipline from 1949 to 1951, but here he showed he still had what it took at the age of 34.

This race would prove to be something of an end of an era as van Vliet, aged 38 and who had won four world titles and Olympic gold between 1936 and 1953, would never regain the sprint world title (though he would pick up further Worlds medals in 1955 and 1957). Meanwhile for Harris the 1954 race would give him his last rainbow jersey.

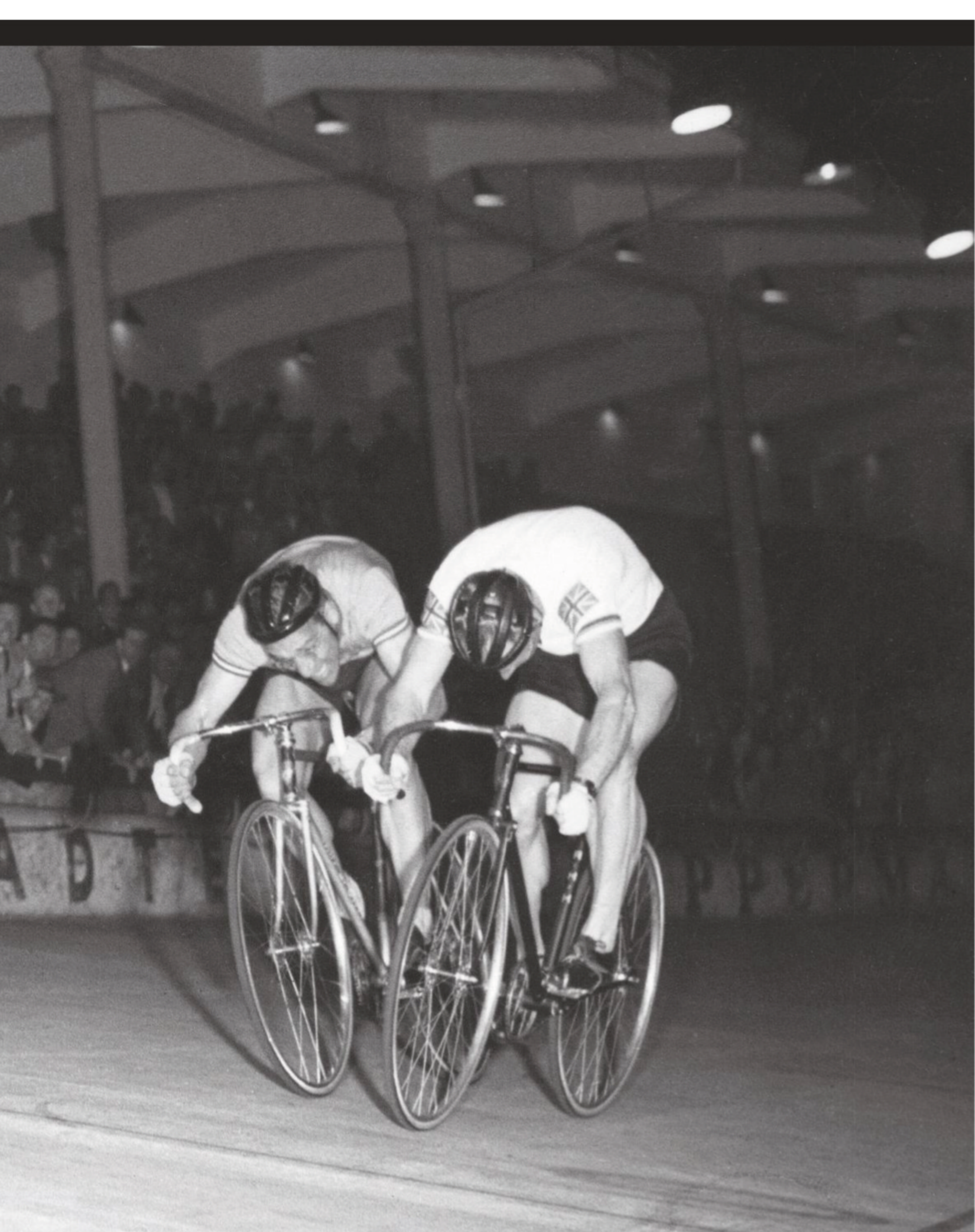
Harris would, however, remain competitive, despite his somewhat advancing years, for several seasons to come. He would go on to lower his the kilo world record a further two times in his career (he'd already done so three times by the time this photo was taken) in 1955 and 1957.

He was still competing 20 years after the 1954 Worlds when he claimed a national title in the sprint.

This was of course the tail end of a storied career that saw Harris become a household name in the 1940s and 50s. The Bury-born rider is rightfully commemorated with a statue in the Manchester velodrome.



Photo Cycling Weekly archive



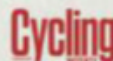
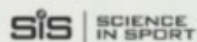
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8 Mar	Wiltshire Wildcat Wiltshire
22 Mar	Suffolk Spring Classic Suffolk
29 Mar	Ridgeway Rouleur Oxfordshire
18 Apr	New Forest Spring & Cycling Festival Hants.
19 Apr	New Forest Spring & Cycling Festival Hants.
3 May	Surrey Cyclone Surrey
16 May	Jurassic Beast Dorset
30 May	Ride Cotswolds Gloucestershire
13 Jun	Vale Velo North Yorkshire
28 Jun	Peaks Tour Derbyshire
12 Jul	Mendips Sportive Somerset
25 Jul	Malvern Mad Hatter Worcestershire
9 Aug	Ride Yorkshire North Yorkshire
5 Sep	Sussex Downs Classic Sussex
19 Sep	New Forest 100 Hampshire
4 Oct	Box Hill Original Surrey
17 Oct	Cobbler Classic Northamptonshire
1 Nov	Cycling Down Dementia Norfolk Norfolk
7 Nov	Cycling Down Dementia South East Surrey

*See event page for details

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Connor Swift's Canyon Ultimate

A look at the 2018 national champion's winter training bike

Yorkshireman Connor Swift is gearing up for his second season with Arkéa-Samsic, and we caught up with him while he was out logging winter miles on his Canyon Ultimate.

The 2018 British national road race champion moved from the folding Madison-Genesis team to join the French outfit in May 2019. Before he moved to France Swift took a win at the Redditch edition of the Tour Series, as well as top-10 finishes at the Tour de Yorkshire and Tour de Normandie.

Arkéa-Samsic has penned a two-year deal with Canyon, and riders have access to the lightweight Ultimate, wind-cheating Aeroad and Speedmax time trial bike.

Preparing for what 2020 has to offer, Swift is training on his dazzling white Ultimate, with the team logo stamped proudly on the fork blades and chainstay bridge, with his own name on the top tube, complete with a Union flag.

With terrain and conditions in mind, his machine is specced out for grimy pre-season miles, with a pair of 25mm Continental 4 Season tyres fitted to 40mm Dura Ace carbon wheels.

The groupset matches, in Shimano's top flight Dura-Ace incarnation, and Swift uses the brand's power meter chainset with 54/42 chainrings and 172.5mm cranks. All his numbers are fed to a Wahoo head unit.

Up front, Swift uses Canyon's Category 1 CP10 Aerocockpit carbon bars, with a 410mm width, 130mm drop and reach of 74mm. The 24-year-old has perched himself on a Sella Italia Flite saddle.



TRAINING ESSENTIALS

An Exposure TraceR rear light is ready to shine if the ride is extended and Swift stuffs his tubes in a Zefal saddle bag

PEDALS

Swift's Shimano pedals feature an extra 4mm spacer at each pedal spindle, widening the q-factor to create the pedal stroke he's looking for



Swift's Ultimate is specced with Aerocockpit bars



SILCA YPSILON TRAVEL KIT

No one needs tools that arrive in a fancy presentation box and cost more than is perhaps absolutely necessary — but sometimes it's nice to treat yourself, and your bike.

The Y-wrench is a handy workshop tool in any guise, but this version from Italian-born and now US-based tool the merchant offers something a little different. At the centre of this Ypsilon (say it ip-si-lon) travel kit is a high strength CrV steel spine, with fairly standard fixed 4mm and 5mm hex keys. In place of the customary 6mm key is a



quarter-inch bit collet with a magnetic attachment — and in the box you'll find a selection of steel hex bits (in 1.5, 2, 2.5, 3 and 6), Torx bits (in T8, T10, T15, T20, T25 and T30), and screw bits (PH1, PH2, SL4 and SL5). This should cover all but the rarest of bicycle tinkering needs in one tidy, travel-ready package.

Tight tolerances reduce the chance of every mechanic's worst nightmare — rounding out bolts — while ergonomic grips guard against slippage and offer comfort in use. The lightweight composite body means you'll have no qualms about packing this kit up on your travels, either.

If you're looking to really push the boat out, the Ypsilon is also available in a home version, in a birch case with magnetic closure, for £110.

■ **Price: £75**
■ **www.silca.cc**

Photos Andy Jones



BRAKES

Disc brakes will be almost universal in the pro peloton this year

POWER METER

Shimano's Dura-Ace power meter collects Swift's wattage data



The Brit is starting his second season with the Pro-Conti squad

Sub-£200 shoe test

Michelle Arthurs-Brennan and James Bracey test six pairs of road shoes all retailing at a palatable price point

The connection between a rider's feet and the pedals is one of three pivotal contact points – and as per all three junctions between human and machine it's important that the union is a comfortable one.

Top-end shoes are now a serious investment, with plenty of brands turning out offerings over £300. However, drop down a few rungs on the ladder and for £200 you can get a performance-driven pair packed full of trickle-down features from the premium end.

The most common closure mechanism at this price point is a dial, with the vast

majority of brands using technology from third party provider, Boa, though some have created their own version.

Top stock shoes will use a carbon sole. At £200, some brands roll out a carbon composite, whilst others save cash by opting for nylon injected with carbon. This cuts the price and typically bulks up the weight – but can also offer a little flex which some riders might welcome over the rigidity of the more premium versions.

Weight is a factor in decision-making, and it's influenced by the sole as well as the material of the upper. However, with discrepancies usually little more than

100g, our recommendation would be to prioritise fit over the number on the scales.

When it comes to shoes, a lot of fit fine-tuning comes down to personal preference, though knowing which brands offer a wider fit and which will suit narrow feet can go a long way to helping you select a pair that will work for you, though we'd always recommend you try before you buy.

We've compared six pairs of shoes at this popular price point. They've all got their pros and cons – but of course only one pair could claim the title of 'best on test'.

Sidi Genius 10 £200

Sidi's Genius shoes have gone through many changes over their tenure as a mainstay in the Sidi range. This iteration has a new sole and closure system.

The stiff upper microfibre material uses more eco-friendly, water-based, rather than solvent based products. Upper venting is kept to a minimum, making this a pair of shoes that performs admirably in adverse conditions – and a couple of particularly sweaty turbo sessions didn't leave us lamenting a lack of breathability.

Sidi has also tweaked the fit of the Genius 10s to take them even further away from the notorious narrow toe box of old; they're nice and roomy in the toe area with

Weight
626g
size 43

plenty of wiggle room. The side panels didn't bite and the heel cup gripped well even when sprinting hard.

One area where the Sidis fall down is the retention system. The Tecno-3 dials flip up and tighten very well but we found it was all too easy to over tighten them, and you can't incrementally release the mechanism. Instead, you have to push the fiddly side buttons and release quite a bit of tension before repeating the process. We could get the right fit eventually but found the process a little annoying, though we do like the top strap for its ability to be adjusted at both sides to achieve comfort.

Some riders will be put off because the Genius 10 doesn't have a 'full' carbon sole – it has a nylon sole injected with

carbon – but the stiffness is comparable to shoes at a similar price. It's also good to see that the shoes don't suffer from being too tall like cheaper nylon soles tend to be, keeping your foot closer to the pedal.

Flexibility around the outside edges of the soles is good. We experienced no hotspots or discomfort with the Genius 10 shoes. They are a bit hefty compared to some and this can be noticeable on a really long day but the upside is that this weight equals durability. Sizes start at 36 and max out at 48.

www.saddleback.co.uk

8

“They're nice and roomy in the toe box with lots of wiggle room”



Giant Surge Elite High Volume £195

A behemoth of the bike world, Giant has made huge strides in manufacturing almost all equipment required to ride a bike in-house — from wheels to tyres and saddles to shoes, including these, the Surge Elite HV. They sit one rung below Giant Surge Pro shoes, but feature many of the same technologies.

For starters, the brand has continued the use of its ExoBeam sole. Unlike the pure carbon of the Surge Pro, it's a mixture of carbon and glass fibre composites but the theory behind it remains the same: it produces better pedalling efficiency while reducing knee pain.

While it's hard to comment on the provision of better efficiency, we did find the sole to be stiff — stiffer than the Fizik Tempo Overcurve R4 shoes also on test. It provided a great platform to complete hard efforts. Giant also says

Weight
543g
size 43

the cut-away sole keeps the weight down but on our scales they weighed in at 543g for the pair, almost 30g heavier than the Fiziks.

The upper is made of a PU material and features Giant's ExoWrap technology that sits free of the shoe and when tightened using the single Boa dial, the wire pulls up from the base, providing



support around the whole foot. The size 43s tested here came up small despite them being one of Giant's high-volume models. Our tester suffered rubbing across the top of the toes and pinching at the sides of the feet. We found this to be the case with the Giant Surge Pro shoes, too, but did find that they 'gave' in time.

Happily there was no nipping around the ankles and the grippy material in the heel helped keep the shoe seated even during high cadence efforts.

The white and black shoes look smart and the PU upper feels tough and resistant to wear. Those that commute by bike will also be pleased to know that the heel elevates the ExoBeam away from the floor, reducing scuffing.

Sizes start at 40 and top out at 48, for women Giant offers its Liv shoes, though there's no option at this price point.

www.giant-bicycles.com

7

Fizik Tempo Overcurve R4 £194.99

The Fizik Tempo Overcurve R4 sits at the top of Fizik's 'Tempo' line. The Overcurve name refers to the shoe's construction and how it wraps around the ankle. It's comfortable, and our tester didn't suffer from any pinching or rubbing. The shoes feature extra padding below the ankle and also boast additional gripping material on the heel.

There are perforations across the body of the shoes to help with venting and a series of additional vents built into the carbon sole. Certainly during indoor sessions we never felt that the shoes were too stuffy or warm.

Weight
519g
size 43

The Fiziks tighten via a single Boa IP1 dial, and the lacing of the wire runs across the top of the foot. We didn't experience any hotspots on the top of the foot, though we did have to ratchet the dial round quite a lot to get it to sit tight.

The blame doesn't lie purely with the shoes, though. Our reviewer opted for



a size 43.5 over standard 43 sizing, usually finding a need to upsize in cycling shoes to avoid any foot numbing. However, there was no such thing to worry about with the R4s as they allowed for plenty of wiggle room in the toe box, so sizing up wasn't necessary. These shoes are probably better suited to those with wider feet, though — it's worth trying before buying if you can.

The R4's sole is described as moderately stiff and we tested the shoes on both long endurance rides and indoor turbo efforts and found no real weakness or discomfort.

The black colour brings the Fizik Tempo Overcurve R4 in at under the £200 threshold, but if black isn't to your taste you can spend £15 more and get the very jazzy iridescent colourway. Sizes begin at 36 and top out at 48.

www.fizik.com

8

Shimano RC7 £179.99

Sliding a foot into a pair of Shimano RC7 shoes, we were pleasantly surprised to find plenty of wiggle room at the toes while the padded rear kept us well locked in.

At the top, there are two Boa L6 dials. This L6 step on the Boa ladder provides you with incremental tightening via a clockwise turning mechanism, but to loosen the dial off you pull to release all the way. The dual dial system spreads the tension across the synthetic leather upper, and offers a great fit.

Shimano has provided a carbon sole at the price point. This comes up on its own 'Stiffness Index' as a 10, only two down from the top-end S-Phyre RC9.

Putting the shoes to the test in the

town-sign sprint during *Cycling*

Weekly lunchtime rides, power transfer felt spot-on, and on the flipside we never experienced the discomfort of vibration that can occur in an overly stiff base.

These shoes feature Shimano's 'Dynalast' technology. The goal is to provide an optimised toe-spring section, creating a more efficient upstroke by reducing the loss of power than can occur between the 200°

and 360° crank angles. This is the sort of optimisation that you might notice while straining at the Wattbike screen trying to draw a peanut. We didn't really notice it, but you could argue that the difference might add up over long hours in the saddle.

The synthetic leather upper — available in black, white, or a swanky red fade — has a suppleness to it, with a truly stunning oil slick effect which we loved.

Shimano has gone big on breathability — there are small perforations all along the body of the shoe, with additional venting on the tongue and a metal grated vent at the sole. This could be handy in the summer but we did notice extra draughts in winter.

Our size 40 pair came in at 468g — placing the RC7s at a reasonable middle ground against competitors.

Sizes start at 38, and proceed to 50. Women's shoes start at 36 but the range tops out at the lower spec RC5.

www.freewheel.co.uk



Weight
468g
size 40

Cycling
BEST ON
TEST

Bontrager Velocis £179.99

Velocis is the name given to Bontrager's second-tier road kit that shares many features of the flagship models but at a more affordable price.

The shoes use a very light, perforated synthetic material for the upper, with a reinforced toe box as well as extra material to stabilise the heel.

A BOA IP1 dial takes care of the majority of the retention but Bontrager has also added a Velcro strap to adjust tension across the forefoot. The tongue is almost luxuriously padded and this extends around the top of the shoe to cushion and hold the heel.

The carbon/fibreglass composite sole Bontrager uses for the

Velocis is very thin at around 8mm in depth at its thickest. This puts the foot closer to the pedal axle for increased efficiency. On

Bontrager's scale, it's labelled as a stiffness index of 10 out of 14.

In the real world it is incredibly stiff around the fore and mid-foot area, which is where you need it but has a bit

of tuned flex at the toe as well as some lateral/twisting flex. This is almost ideal for a shoe that the majority of us will never race in as it allows the foot to naturally move a little more, thus increasing all-day comfort without

compromising pedalling efficiency. The Velocis has to be one of the most comfortable shoes we've worn in a long time. The fit was almost perfect and the soft upper conformed to our tester's foot shape as if moulded.

Performance under load was excellent; this was especially noticeable riding into a hard 70-mile headwind ride when every pedal stroke mattered. The stiffness is perfect for a rider wanting to make sure efficiency is maintained without resorting to an incredibly stiff and invariably expensive race shoe.

The only issue we could really have with the Velocis is that they might not be the best shoes for lower temperatures owing to the perforated nature of the upper and the vented carbon sole. There's men's and women's versions, with sizes from 36 to 48.

www.trek bikes.com



Weight
462g
size 45

9

9

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Giro Trans BOA £179.99

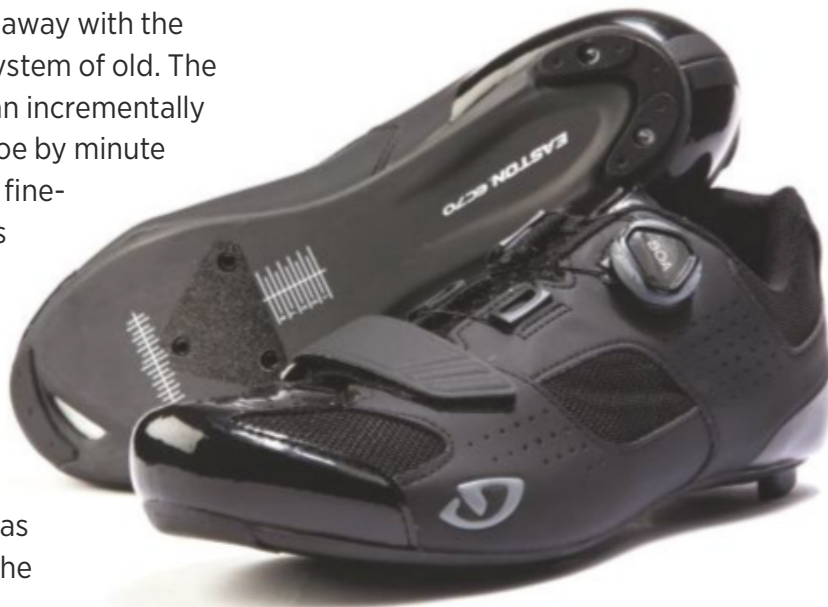
For Giro the Trans model has always represented the gateway to high performance within its road shoe range. It's the first model to feature a full-carbon sole and share significant tech with the ever-popular, high-end Empire and Imperial models.

The Trans has now had a complete update and Giro has done away with the ratchet buckle retention system of old. The single BOA L6 dial used can incrementally tighten and release the shoe by minute amounts, really helping to fine-tune the fit. It also benefits from being able to fully release the tension by lifting up the dial, perfect for rapidly kicking off wet shoes at the end of a cold ride.

The way Giro shoes fit has always been nicely down the

Weight
618g
size 45

middle in terms of width. We found the toe box provided plenty of wiggle room and the heel retention is impressive when you consider it doesn't look or feel overly engineered. We did find that these shoes pinched slightly at the outside of the forefoot; this



was more about the upper material than the actual fit as it has very little 'give'. The good news for those of you who have wide feet is Giro also makes the Trans BOA in a HV (High Volume) version, giving all of us an option to use them in anger.

The Easton EC70 carbon sole provides plenty of stiffness and pedalling efficiency while still retaining a low stack height.

After riding several pairs of Giro shoes featuring this sole, it's noticeable that it isn't as stiff as other full-carbon offerings. This isn't a criticism per se as the level of flexibility is quite minute but is more than enough to enable the Trans BOA to perform without pain or hotspots on longer rides.

Aesthetically, the Trans Boa isn't quite as slick as other offerings at the same price point, though it does provide a good level of ventilation via the perforated sections.

www.giro.co.uk

8

Verdict

Shimano RC7 gets the edge

There wasn't a pair of shoes on test that didn't impress us in one area or another. However, there can only be one winner — and in this case it had to be Shimano.

The carbon composite sole provided us with an excellent blend of stiffness and comfort, and aside from the Sidis, which use their own system, Shimano was the only brand offering two retention dials to spread the tension. The oilslick effect on clean, white shoes had us itching to get these kicks out of overshoes as soon as possible.

A very close second, Bontrager's Velocis come with some notable merits — a lower weight despite being tested in a larger size for one. The Velocis shoes also come in a wider range of sizes, with women's models starting at an EU 36, which is a big plus.

Giro's well-ventilated Trans BOA would make for an excellent choice in summer, even if aesthetically they didn't tick all our boxes, whilst the Sidi Genius

Bontragers offer all-day comfort



The RC7s boast a carbon composite sole



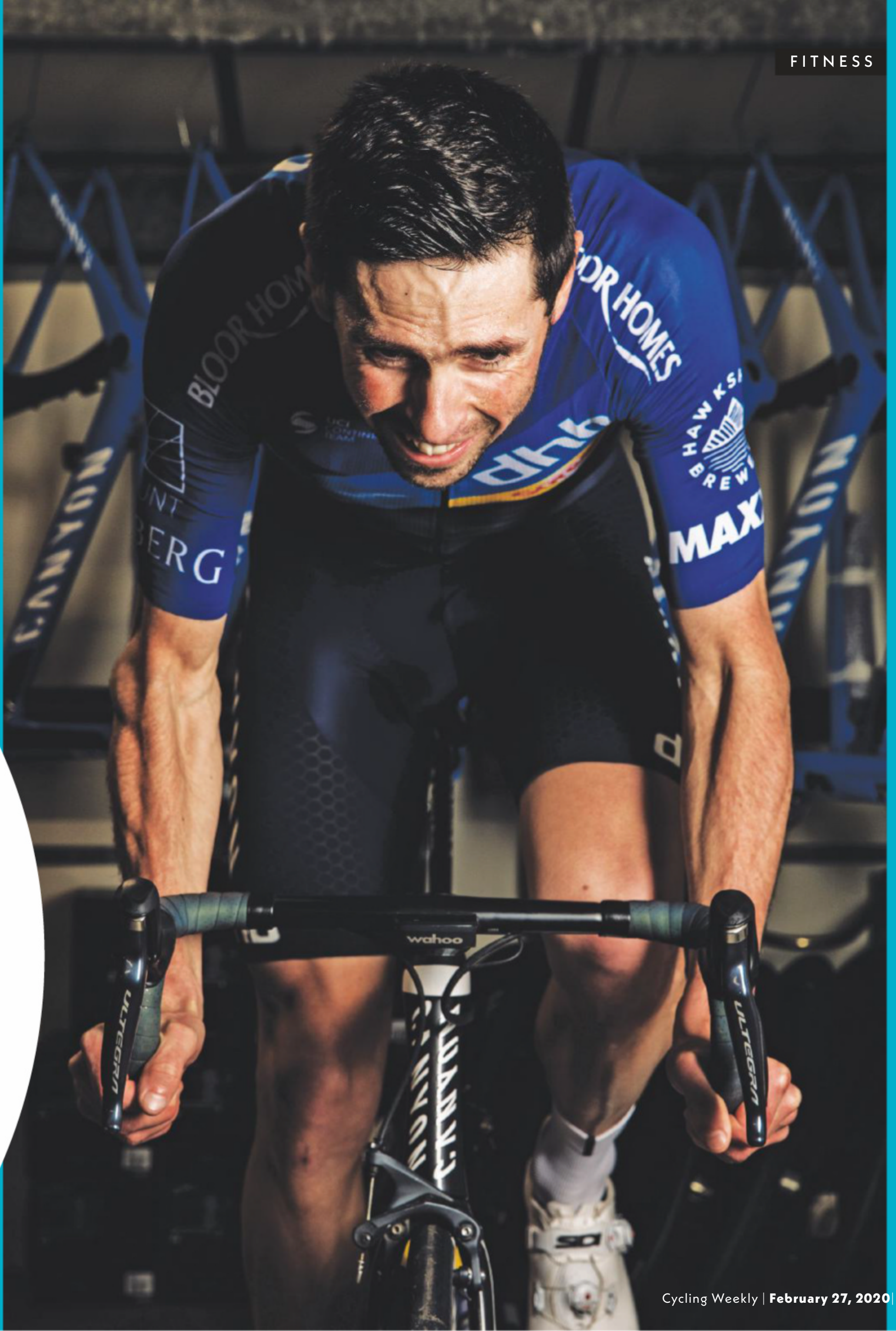
“They quickly had us itching to get them out of our overshoes”

10s had fewer vents and felt warmer, enough to make them more suited to poor conditions. Giant's provision of the ExoBeam sole at this price point represents great value, though for us the fit caused some pinching. Conversely, Fizik's R4s came up a little wide, though this could be a plus for those seeking enough wiggle room at the toe box.

TURBO SESSIONS

HAND-PICKED BY PROS

As winter storms continue to batter Britain,
Steve Shrubsall sends out a distress call to pro
riders pleading for their favourite turbo sessions





turbo training is getting better and better. The features and perks provided by indoor cycling platforms are multiplying all the time as indoor training becomes ever more enticing. Who knows, perhaps it won't be long before our status as cyclists depends wholly upon our virtual badges of honour. Back in the real world, the turbo is a powerful tool for improving your fitness and preparing to ride outside.

Pro riders are becoming just as partial to indoor sessions as we time-crunched amateurs. They know that a targeted session can effectively home in on a particular aspect of fitness. Whether you're a cyclo-crosser, time triallist, crit specialist or stage racer, choosing the right workouts will help you build a power profile that best suits your racing. To that end, we have spoken to six pro riders and asked them to share with us their favourite indoor training session and explain why they value it, when they use it, and how it can work for you too.

SEEKING STAGE RACE RHYTHM

**TOMS SKUJINS,
TREK-SEGAFREDO**

The first Latvian to earn a spell in the Tour de France's polka-dot jersey, Skujiņš currently plies his trade at Trek-Segafredo, where he has the enviable task of supporting Grand Tour favourites Vincenzo Nibali and Richie Porte.

FAST, FASTER, FASTEST

ALEX PATON, CANYON DHB P/B SOREEN

Winner of the sprints jersey in the 2018 Tour of Britain, UCI Continental level rider Paton has pieced together a 70-minute workout that bolsters your chances of operating at the business end of a bunch kick.

Best for: Road racing, crits
When to do it: Once a week

- **Warm-up:** 5min @ Z1
- **The session:** 20min @ Z3; 20min (alternating 2min @ Z4, 2min @ Z2); 20min (alternating 1min @ Z5, 1min @ Z1)
- **Warm-down:** 5min @ Z1

Alex Paton says: "You always feel a bit rubbish when you first get on the turbo, so it's just a case of pedalling for the first five minutes. Then I break the hour down into three 20-minute sections. The first 20 minutes is Zone 3 continual steady effort, at about 300 watts. The next 20-minute block I break into two minutes on, two minutes off — spending two minutes at around 350-400 watts, followed by two minutes hovering around 200 watts, repeating over and over for 20 minutes. After that, it's another 20-minute block of one minute on, one minute off — the 'on' is around 500 watts and the 'off' is as easy as possible.

"I've found this session to be really beneficial in terms of time-efficiency. It also covers lots of different levels of effort and works different energy systems. You cover a lot of ground, so to speak, in an hour."

CW says: In some ways replicating a race scenario, where efforts gradually ramp up into a high-speed crescendo, Paton's turbo session covers most bases required during a competitive event. The initial Z3 interval will work some way to maintaining or pushing up his FTP, while the final one-minute efforts, performed at 500 watts, work on VO2 max, and it all amount to an impressive sum of total kilojoules burnt.

Naturally then, when the indoor trainer calls, the three-time Tour of California stage winner uses it as an opportunity to fine-tune his stage-racing craft.

Best for: Stage racing, long one-day races
When to do it: Fortnightly

- **Warm-up:** 10min @ Z2
- **The session:** 2 x (20mins alternating 30sec @ 90rpm, 30sec @ 120rpm); 5mins recovery between sets
- **Warm-down:** 5min @ Z1

Toms Skujiņš says: "I really struggle with race rhythm. When I don't focus on it, I ride a pretty low cadence, but being able to ride a higher cadence is beneficial because you're saving your muscles for the finale. If you ride at 80rpm the whole day, your muscles are too tired when you need to push. At the same time, riding at low rpm is necessary to build strength."

CW says: Skujiņš uses the turbo as a means of fine-tuning his efficiency for the rigours of stage racing, as well as building leg strength. Ultimately, he works on sparing his type-two muscle fibres for the



Paton's 70-minute session covers all the important bases

final kilometres of a stage race — saving himself for a fast finish, or to be able to perform the best domestique duties possible.

CROSS PURPOSES

**IAN FIELD, 5x BRITISH
CYCLO-CROSS CHAMPION**

Multiple national cyclo-cross champion, and founder of coaching company Veld

Coaching (veldcoaching.com), Field uses an indoor session during the week leading up to a big race, citing it as the perfect sharpener for cross racing.

Best for: Cyclo-cross

When to do it: In the week leading up to a big race

■ **Ramped warm-up:** 3min @ Z1, 3min @ Z2, 3min @ Z3, 3min @ Z4

■ **The session:** 2x (15sec @ max effort, 15sec @ Z1; 30sec max effort, 30sec @ Z1; 45sec @ max effort, 45sec @ Z1; 1min @ max effort, 1min @ Z1)

DODGING DENNIS & CO.

Sport in a storm

With the second storm in as many weeks having left the British Isles a dishevelled mess, you'd need to be pretty hard or pretty idiotic to venture out with the likes of Storm Dennis — 'Rohan' to his mates — breathing heavily down your neck. Hopping aboard the turbo quite neatly quashes the potential of succumbing to airborne silver birch branch or piece of garden furniture as you hurtle down the road out of control. Cozy up and listen to the howling wind and rain from the comfort of your pain cave while preparing yourself for a season of sun-kissed podiums and PBs.

■ **Recovery between sets:** 10min @ Z1

■ **Warm-down:** 10min @ Z2

Ian Field says: "This session replicates the on/off nature of cyclo-cross. From my experience and the research we've done using race data, we know there aren't many long efforts in cross — there's always a corner or technical section breaking up the effort."

CW says: Although this is a fairly typical turbo trainer session — time-efficient with lots of top-end work — it melds perfectly to the explosive efforts Field needs to execute to compete at the highest level of cyclo-cross.

MAKING IT COUNT FOR THE CLASSICS

**OLIVER NAESEN,
AG2R-LA MONDIALE**

A perennial protagonist in the Spring Classics — last year making the podium in both Milan-San Remo and Ghent-

Naesen's threshold efforts help him crush the Classics



Wevelgem — Belgian pro Naesen has also been an integral part of Ag2r team-mate Romain Bardet's Tour de France tilts. When he's not slogging out mountainous winter mileage in off-season training camps, the 29-year-old steps astride a turbo trainer for a high-intensity threshold session with plenty of bang for its buck.

Best for: Improving threshold power

When to do it: Once a week

■ **Ramped warm-up:** 2min @ Z1, 2min @ Z2, 2min @ Z3, 2mins @ Z4, 5min @ Z1

■ **The session:** 3x 10min @ Z4

■ **Recovery between intervals:** 10min @ Z1/2

■ **Warm-down:** 10min @ Z2

Oliver Naesen says: "I'm never on the turbo for too long, but it's always high-intensity work. I usually do about an hour. I always start with a gradual warm-up: two minutes at 200 watts, two minutes at 250 watts, two minutes at 300 watts and two minutes at 350. Then I'll do five minutes easy. After this, I always do 10 minutes on and 10 minutes off. I'll often do a threshold session so about 400 watts for 10 minutes, then easy for 10 minutes, finishing with a warm-down."

CW says: Naesen weighs about 74kg, making his 400 watt threshold intervals

equate to a whopping 5.5 watts per kilo — the kind of power some of us are lucky to hold for more than a few seconds. Perhaps incorporating more threshold work into our weekly sessions could edge us mortals closer to the Ag2r man's WorldTour pedigree.

KEEPING IT SWEET

JOSCELIN LOWDEN, DROPS

Rider with UCI Women's Continental team Drops, Joscelin Lowden includes a Worlds Mixed TTT bronze medal in her palmarès. She opts for sweetspot efforts — conventionally considered to be 88-93 per cent of your functional threshold power (FTP), an effort level described as "comfortably uncomfortable".

Best for: Time trialling; improving FTP

When to do it: Once or twice a week

■ **Warm-up:** 10min @ Z2

■ **The session:** 3x 20min @ sweetspot

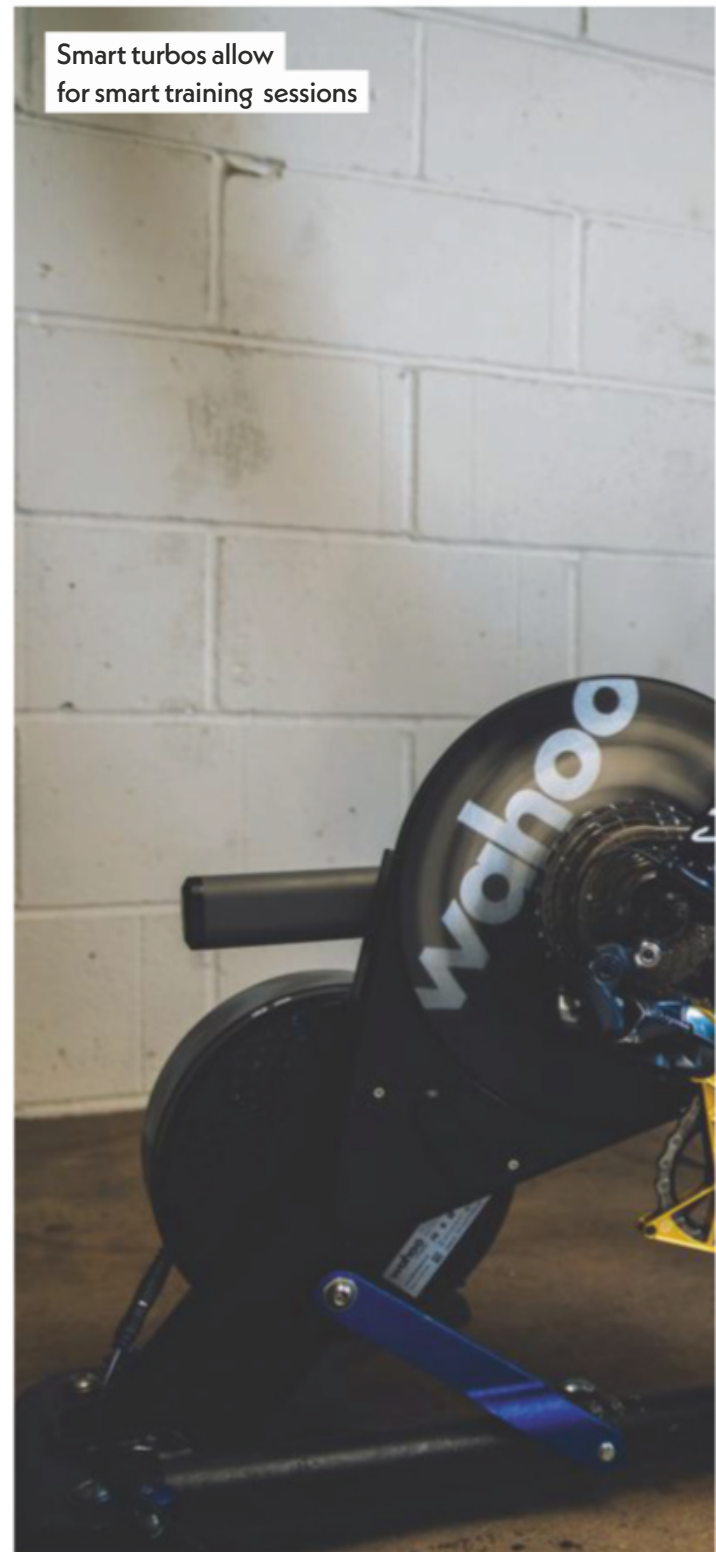
■ **Recovery between blocks:**

5-10min @ Z1

■ **Warm-down:** 5min @ Z2

Joscelin Lowden says: "Training at sweetspot is really good to get in some

Smart turbos allow for smart training sessions



quite high-intensity without too much stress or load. Minute for minute, it's hard to beat the adaptations gained. Training harder than sweetspot induces greater physical strain, of course, but the recovery cost is also greater."

CW says: The classic sweetspot workout may be simple, but it is also very good for you. Because it's a comparatively sedate session, it's possible to do more than one a week. Doing blocks of sweetspot increases mitochondria — the powerhouse of the cell — and is considered a great way of boosting all-round fitness levels. Lowden's long intervals should see her in great form for the start of TT season.



DEDICATED FOLLOWER OF ATTACKS

**ABI VAN TWISK,
TREK-SEGAFREDO**

Promising WorldTour rider Van Twisk has recently signed for Trek-Segafredo where she rides in support of fellow Brits Lizzie Deignan and Elynor Backstedt. Having marked her arrival to professional cycling with notable performances in the Santos Women's Tour, Van Twisk often takes to the turbo to tune up her top-end fitness.

Best for: Improving dynamic power
When to do it: Weekly

- **Warm-up:** 20min progressive through each zone up until 85 per cent max heart rate
- **The session:** 3x (10min alternating 30sec @ Z4, 15sec @ Z1); 5min recovery
- **Warm-down:** 10min @ Z2

Abi Van Twisk says: "Because it's short and intense, it replicates following an attack, before recovering, then following when they go again."

CW says: Van Twisk's 60-minute workout is time well spent on the turbo. It's a long session that incorporates hard efforts applicable to racing scenarios.

TRY THIS CW's favourite turbo sessions

2x 20mins FTP intervals

For a classic threshold-booster and fantastic time trial training, you can't beat this session:

- **Ramped warm-up:** 2min @ Z1, 2min @ Z2, 2min @ Z3
- **The session:** 2x 20min @ FTP, with 10min recovery between
- **Warm-down:** 2min @ Z3, 2min @ Z2, 2min @ Z1

30/30s

It's always satisfying when big numbers appear on your power meter, and this microburst session allows for just that. Pace your efforts, though, as it's easy to blow up if you go too hard too early.

- **Ramped warm-up:** 2min @ Z1, 2min @ Z2, 2min @ Z3
- **The session:** 4x (5min alternating 30sec max effort, 30sec easy); 5min @ Z2 recovery between sets
- **Warm-down:** 5min @ Z1/2



WATT WORKS FOR ME

Matthew Holmes

The Lotto-Soudal neo-pro on winning as a rookie, training 'flat-out' and avoiding easy options

You've just made a stunning breakthrough, beating the king of Willunga Hill

Richie Porte on his home tarmac to win the final stage of the Tour Down Under

Under. Quite simply: how?

It's difficult to know because I hadn't been feeling that great for the rest of the race — a mix of good days and bad days. Over the winter, I'd been unsure whether the training set by my new coach was working for me, and sure enough, in Australia I felt not half as good as I normally would. I just happened to be in the right place at the right time for that last climb.

OK, let's rephrase: what sort of training usually works for you?

Well, for the last four years, I've had a coach [Bob Tobin] who sets training totally differently to how most people do. We rarely do more than 15 hours a week, and just loads of Zone 3, sweetspot and sprints — hard efforts the whole time. No steady riding; always smashing it round. I've got a reputation locally — whenever people see me out training, I'm always riding flat-out on my own.

On that basis, do you think a lot of riders do too much easy-paced riding? Should we all be doing more high-intensity work?

It wouldn't work for everybody.

I think it's too hard for a lot of people. But yes, as I always say about good juniors and youth riders: the reason they're good is usually because they ride with men. I always rode with my dad and his friends, so I would be constantly at Zone 3 or 4 — flat-out all the time!

The danger as soon as you go full-time, when you've got all day to train, is that you roll round steady much of the time — you stop doing what made you good in the first place.

Are there

any training myths or misconceptions that you think need debunking?

I don't know. It's just about finding what works for you. Riding 30 hours a week all winter might

PROFILE

Age: 26

Height: 5ft 10in

Weight: 67kg

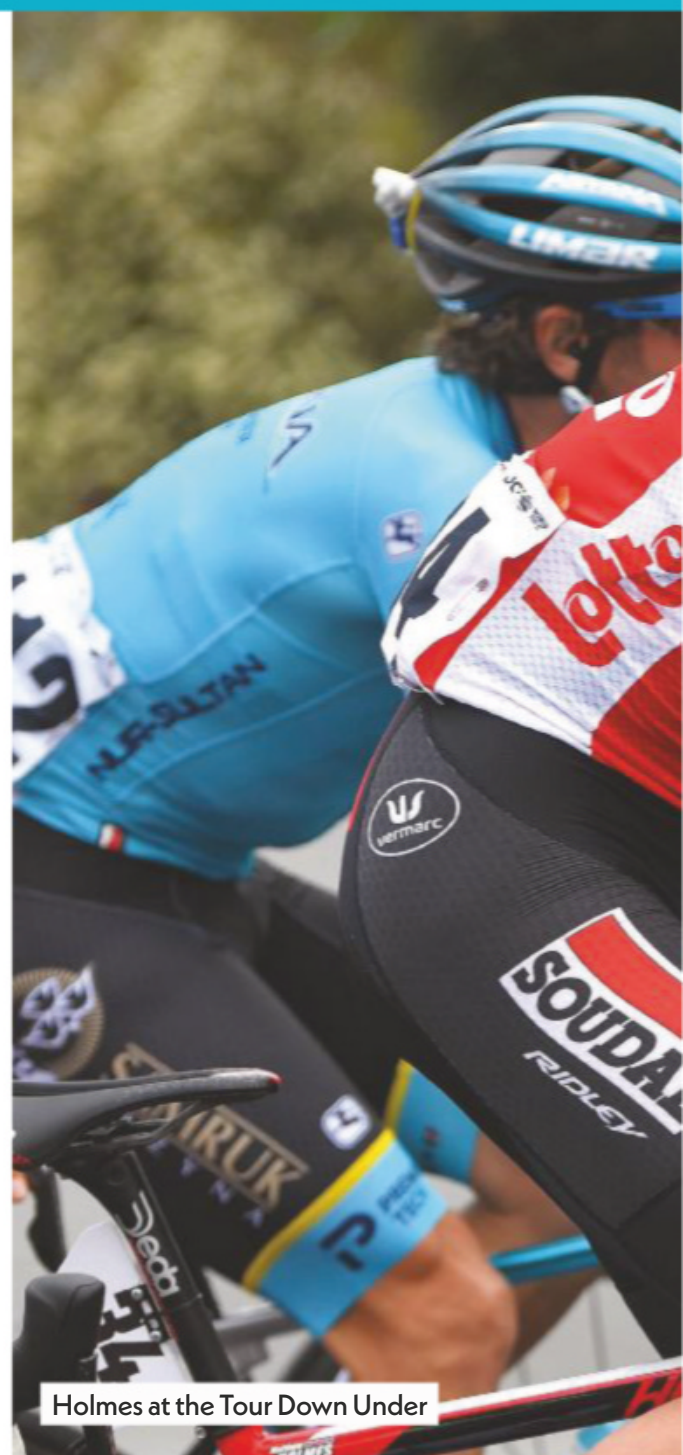
Lives: Macclesfield, Cheshire

Rides for: Lotto-Soudal

Best results: 1st — Stage 6, 2020 Tour Down Under
6th — GC, 2019 Tour de Yorkshire
5th — GC, 2017 Tour de Yorkshire

[@MatthewHolmes51](#)

[matthew_holmes](#)



Holmes at the Tour Down Under

work for some people. As long as you're riding along pedalling hard, I think it's quite straightforward. Plus a lot of trial and error to work out how to get better.

Looking back on your years of steady progress, which characteristics have been

the most important for you?

Definitely the most important thing is to have it in the head: to be able to suffer. The training that I do, most people just couldn't do

QUICK-FIRE FAVES

Motivational turbo song?

Just whatever's on the radio — usually Radio 1.

Way to spend a rest day?

A walk and a picnic in the Peak District.

Place to ride?

Here in the Peak District.

Training-related product?

Power meter.

Guilty pleasure?

Chocolate. Lindt, 50g a day at least.



FAVOURITE POST-RIDE MEAL?

I honestly don't have one.

Me and my girlfriend [Josie Knight] are both cyclists and we're a bit hopeless with food. We'll quite often get back and there's nothing in the cupboard. I quite like to stop at a cafe near the finish instead. It's a good way to lose weight, having no food in the house!

**"QUITE OFTEN,
THE CUPBOARDS
ARE BARE"**

FAVOURITE SESSION?

I do loads of sweetspot efforts, aiming for about 350W: I'll do three 30-minute efforts, or even two one-hour efforts within a four-hour ride.

The other one I like is eight 15-second sprints, six one-minute sprints (at my best, 650-700W for all six), then a few five-minute VO2max efforts at around 420W. That's a pretty hard day.



A day off in the Peak

it — they wouldn't be able to hurt themselves every single day.

What do you think gave you that toughness?

I was always really small as a kid. I've raced since I was 10 years old, and I was absolutely tiny, so I've never had it easy. Juniors [who mature early] never really have to try hard, whereas I've got used to suffering. Getting an absolute kicking becomes normal.

One piece of advice for an aspiring amateur?

Just ride with people better than you. Never take the easy option. My dad's a bit of a nutter and would always half-wheel me, taking me on chain-gangs since I was tiny — you have to seek out the hardest thing to do.

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TIME TRIALS

SAT, 22 FEBRUARY

Salt and Sham CC 10 (Rangeworthy, Gloucestershire):

1. Ross Phelps (Bristol RC)	20.55
2. J. Griffiths (Bikestrong-KTM)	22.19
3. T. Scorer (Royal Navy & Royal Marines CA)	22.31
4. M. Dickerson (Skoda DSI Cycling Academy)	23.06
5. J. Lawrence (Salt and Sham CC)	23.07
6. R. Borek (Bristol South CC)	23.23
7. T. Cross (Univ of Bristol CC)	23.24
8. W. Hamilton (Bristol South CC)	23.44
9. A. Metherell (Salt and Sham CC)	23.56
10. A. Whittaker (Salt and Sham CC)	24.03

Women: Megan Dickerson (Skoda DSI Cycling Academy) 23.06

Veterans: Jeff Lawrence +3.10

Team: Bristol South CC (Rob Borek, Will Hamilton, Andy Legg) 1:10.34

SUN, 23 FEBRUARY

North Road CC hardriders 25 (Brookmans Park, Hertfordshire):

1. Oliver Stockwell (Flamme Rouge CT)	51.33
2. L. Chapman (Loose Cannon's Conditioning)	52.19
3. R. Walker (Cambridge Univ CC)	52.54
4. J. Brown (ActiveEdge RT)	53.17
5. J. Jenkins (Richardsons Trek RT)	53.41
6. J. Mulvey (ActiveEdge RT)	54.46
7. J. Kellam (Cambridge Univ CC)	55.07
8. J. McKay (PB Performance)	55.53
9. N. Candy (North Road CC0)	55.59
=10. N. Harrigan (Gravesend CC)	57.02
=10. James Lloyd (JRC Shutt Ridley RT)	57.02

Women: Elspeth Grace (Cambridge Univ CC) 1:02.49

Veterans: Neil Harrigan +10.01

Road Bikes: James Jenkins

Severn Road Club 25**(Stone, Gloucestershire):**

1. Jake Sargent (FTP Fulfil the Potential Racing)	54.34
2. F. Wilkinson (FTP Fulfil the Potential Racing)	54.44
3. R. Grover (Rogue Racing)	55.23
4. T. Chapman (Frome & Dist Wheelers)	56.53
5. J. Griffiths (Bikestrong KTM)	57.49
6. D. Bolton (Bristol South CC)	59.29
7. J. O'Dwyer (Dursley RC)	59.39
8. M. Davis (FTP Fulfil the Potential Racing)	1:00.03
9. R. Carless (Swindon RC)	1:00.36
10. L. Smith (Bristol South CC)	1:00.40

Women: 1. Corinne Clark (Swindon Wheelers) 1:03.39

Veterans: Tony Chapman

LAST WEEK

Tour des Alpes Maritimes (February 21-23)

Nairo Quintana (Arkéa-Samsic) tasted victory for the second time this year with this win on his team's home soil of France. It was won with a victory atop the Col d'Eze overlooking Nice on the race's second day. The Colombian triumphed over a strong field that included Richie Porte (Trek-Segafredo) and Romain Bardet (Ag2r). The

ROAD RACING

SAT, 22 FEBRUARY

East London Velo Winter Series round six (Redbridge circuit, Essex):

2, 3, 4: 1. Paul Burton (Paceline RT); 2. T. Cullen (Otley CC); 3. C. Poole (London Dynamo); 4. T. Johnstone (Velo Schils-Interbike RT); 5. A. Freeman (Chelmer CC); 6. C. Peck (Athlon CC); 7. M. Day (Orwell Velo); 8. M. Lord (Lee Valley YCC); 9. S. Hodges (Verulam-Really Moving); 10. T. Yiangou (UEA Velo).

Fourth Cat: 1. William Weatherall (Hope Factory Racing); 2. O. Fox (unattached); 3. D. Clark (Orwell Velo); 4. L. Avenell (Brother UK); 5. W. Taylor (unattached); 6. G. Hale (UCL Cycling Club); 7. O. Wood (Brother UK); 8. B. Marchant (Clapham Chasers Run & Tri); 9. B. Johnson (unattached); 10. A. Mollison (Hornchurch CC).

Women: 1. Ffion James (Hope Factory Racing); 2. C. Hayes (Awol); 3. G. Cowen (Les Filles RT); 4. C. Denise (CC Luton); 5. M. Deliu (Velociposse); 6. M. Bullock (East London Velo); 7. F. Rainer (Velociposse); 8. E. McCabe (Welwyn Wheelers); 9. J. Andrews (1904 Race Team); 10. A. McDonald-Bowyer (UCL).

Full Gas Winter Circuit Series round 18 (Lee Valley VeloPark, London):

E, 1, 2: 1. James Jenkins (Richardsons-Trek); 2. I. Hope (Wolfe RT); 3. C. Cole (LKY7-SD Racing); 4. S. Norman (Bedfordshire Roads RT); 5. T. Lynch (unattached); 6. R. Barrett (Southborough & Dist Wh); 7. M. Holmes (Arctic Aircon RT); 8. H. Macfarlane (unattached); 9. D. Mitchinson (Contour Cycles); 10. K. Henderson (Southborough & Dist Wh).

3, 4: 1. Alfie Aldridge (Verulam-Really Moving); 2. W. Leach (unattached); 3. G. Mitchell (London Dynamo); 4. S. Skinner (Paceline RT); 5. G. Oehlert (Worx Factory Racing); 6. S. Blom (Pretorious Bikes); 7. J. Buchanan (Balham CC); 8. C. Lima (Penge CC); 9. A. Lawrence (JRC-Shutt Ridley Race Team); 10. J. Shuttleworth (West Drayton MBC).

Women: Stephanie Wheatley (Full Gas RT).

Abingdon RT Winter Crit Series round three (Abingdon airfield, Oxfordshire):

E, 1, 2, 3: 1. Callum Slade (JAM Cycling RT); 2. F. Pett (DAP CC); 3. D. Roper (Ride 24/7); 4. C. Ager (Jam Cycling RT); 5. J. Hale (Worx Factory Racing); 6. M. Mottram (Vitus Pro Cycling); 7. E. Ward (Inflite Dynamic Rides RT); 8. G. Turner (VC Equipe); 9. J. Francis (ActiveEdge RT); 10. M. Conner (Jam Cycling RT).

Third Cat: 1. Luke Houghton (Verulam-Really Moving); 2. O. Rastall (GS Mossa); 3. F. Loveday (Team Surrey Cycling); 4. D. Neupauer (Reading CC);

only Brit in the race was neo-pro Mark Donovan, who helped his Sunweb team leader Nicolas Roche to sixth.

Setmana Ciclista Valenciana (Feb 20-23)

Former world champion Anna van der Breggen (Boels-Dolmans) soloed to victory on the race's second stage and then held on in relative comfort, even slightly extending

RIDER OF THE WEEK

Megan Dickerson
(Skoda DSI Cycling Academy)
Salt and Sham CC 10

The talented 23-year-old from Bristol brushed aside strong winds to finish fourth overall and fastest female at the Salt and Sham CC 10-mile time trial in Gloucestershire.

5. S. Alford (Warwick Lanterne Rouge CC); 6. G. Edwards (Cowley Road Condors); 7. A. Fisk (Oxford University CC); 8. T. Doole (Maybush CC); 9. R. Allen (Verulam-Really Moving); 10. M. Twelvrees (Reflex Racing).

Fourth Cat: 1. Edward Nicholson (unattached); 2. R. Down (unattached); 3. D. Nash (Oxford University CC); 4. M. Veal (Oxford University CC); 5. G. Fernandez Garcia (unattached); 6. W. Carter (unattached); 7. G. Highley (Inflite-Dynamic Rides RT); 8. R. Marlow (PMCC); 9. J. Kemp (GS Mossa); 10. J. Hill (Charlton Kings Velo).

Women 2, 3, 4: 1. Kristen Lovelock (Cowley Road Condors); 2. L. Watts (Awol); 3. M. Verdegaa (Poole Wheelers); 4. M. Hodges (Avid Sport); 5. L. Pittard (Team Vision Innovative Leisure); 6. F. Derbyshire (Army CU); 7. A. Jones (Cowley Road Condors); 8. J. Atkins (Abingdon RT); 9. R. Kearney (Team Vision Innovative Leisure); 10. R. Fisher (Abingdon RT).

SUN, 23 FEBRUARY

Primavera Road Race (Hatherleigh, Devon):

E, 1, 2: 1. Tom Nancarrow (Nopin-Symec Race Team) 55 miles in 2:09.07; 2. R. Walters (Nopin Symec Race Team) +1.24; 3. I. Evans (Wielerzone Nederland); 4. M. Houlberg (Meudon Pedal Heaven Le Col); 5. G. Kimber (Spirit Tifosi RT); 6. A. Stubbs (Royal Navy & Royal Marines CA); 7. O. Winwood Bratchell (VC Venta); 8. E. Morgan (Caffi Gruff); 9. E. Browne (The Bulls); 10. B. Harris (Maindy Flyers CC) all same time.

3, 4: 1. Maximillian Ashwanden (GS Mossa) 43 miles in 1:49.37; 2. S. Holwill (trainSharp Dev Team) +0.33; 3. C. Chandler (Bath CC) +2.57; 4. M. Pandagani-Sayce (Bristol Cycling Development Squad); 5. S. Medlyn (One and All Cycling); 6. S. Jones (Team Tor 2000); 7. M. Gibson-Clay (Mid-Devon CC); 8. A. Thomson (CC Bridgnorth); 9. I. To (Swindon Wheelers); 10. I. Cullen (Mid-Devon CC) all same.

her lead on the race's mountainous last day to win the GC. British riders Joscelin Lowden (Drops) and Lizzy Banks (Bigla-Katusha) put in impressive rides to finish 12th and 13th on GC respectively, the latter while helping her team leader to second. Elizabeth Holden (Bizkaia-Durango) also came close to victory in the sprint on stage three, just losing out to Lizbeth Salazar (Astana).

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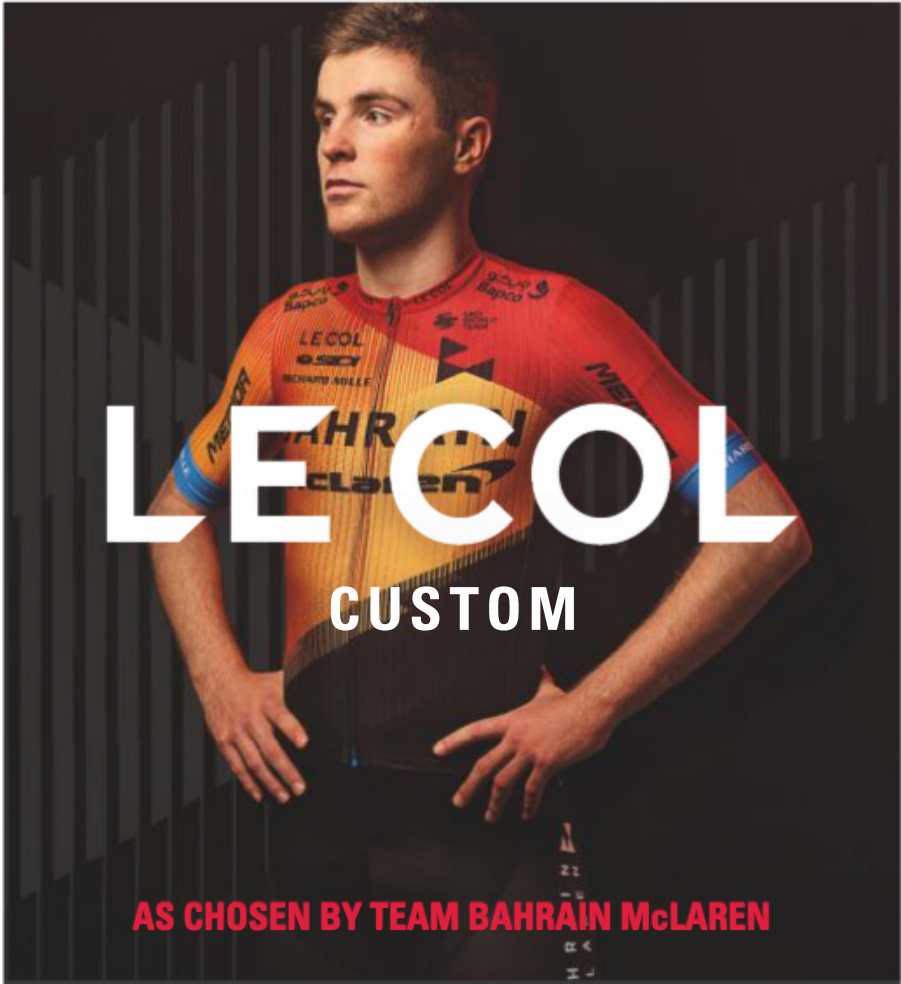
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Dr Hutch

After weighing up the options, the Doc concludes that the reading on the bathroom scales is but a ballpark figure

I have a racing weight. It is a figure that has not changed for a very long time. It is still, after all this time, recorded in various 'official' sources — old team bios, results. I think it's even diligently noted on the ProCyclingStats website along with my height, and some computer-generated scores for sprinting and climbing ability ('zero' and 'zero', since you ask).

I'll admit that my racing weight actually started out as more of an aspiration than an accomplished fact. Then, like a political party's manifesto pledge, it matured from a mere aspiration into more of a straight-up lie. People say age is just a number. In my case my racing weight is much the same: a number carefully calculated to make people jealous while staying just this side of unbelievable.

The only time I began to close in on it was the exciting day when I realised I could treat my bike and myself as a system, and



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credit any of the manufacturers' savings on bike weight as personal progress. A while after that I managed to find a pair of very sympathetic bathroom scales, and from then on, I stopped worrying.

Competitive cyclists are far from the only people who worry about their weight. The difference is that the general population usually wants to lose weight so they look 'better'. Most competitive cyclists want to lose weight despite the fact that they will, by most consensus, look rather worse — if aerodynamics has done nothing else for cycling, give it credit for the fact it's made riders much less ready to unzip their jerseys on a hot day so we're usually spared that creepy contrast of tanned and lithely muscled arms and legs alongside a ribcage that looks like an albino xylophone.

All the weight-related issues that apply to everyone else — health, vanity, social pressure, bullying — apply to riders as well.



Twilight zone: which one are you in?

Great Inventions of Cycling... 1980s: Training zones

Once upon a time there were four universally recognised cycle training intensities. There was 'easy', which was just casual noodling while chatting to your mates. There was 'steady', which was noodling harder, but not so hard you couldn't keep talking. In an ideal world, if you were the fittest rider in the group, as the pace rose you were able to conduct an uninterrupted monologue because you could remain in 'steady' while everyone else tripped into 'hard', which was, well, hard.

Beyond 'hard' there was '****ing hard', which is more or less self-explanatory. The only way to tell the difference between these zones was experience, breathing rate, and how long you could keep it up for.

In the 1980s someone invented the heart rate monitor. This allowed a new degree of accuracy. In the spirit of scientific progress, the proponents of heart rate training improved on the whole concept by calling the different intensities 'zones' and giving them numbers.

The early versions of the theory gave each zone a specific training effect, from 'fat-burning' to 'VO2 Max training'. This wasn't a very good description of what was really happening, but it was a cracking way to sell heart rate monitors.

Science has now improved on the theory by adding more zones. Most systems now use five or six zones, which is why we're all 50 per cent fitter than we used to be.



“It’s like being trolled by Sir Isaac Newton”

There is no greater compliment you can pay a rider in the spring than to tell them they look thin. There is a reason that most cycling journalists’ standard greeting to a pro rider is to tell them they’re looking skinny. It’s the sort of flattery that gets them an interview.

This is no healthier for cyclists than for anyone else. But we have an extra enemy — physics. When it comes down to it, gravity is an utter sod. If you weigh less, you go up hills faster. It’s like being trolled by Sir Isaac Newton. Worse, unlike the vagaries of form, aerodynamics or psychological resilience, weight is very easily measured. It’s also dangerously simple to work out how much faster you’d have got up a climb if you’d been lighter.

A couple of years ago I heard of a team director who had decided what each of his riders’ optimum weights was, then

instituted a Weight-Watchers style weigh-in once a week and posted the results on the team WhatsApp group.

When someone pointed out that his was a sure-fire way to give riders an eating disorder, he said, “That’s the idea.”

Much like a tabloid showbiz editor’s take on it, in cycling the transition from ‘too fat’ to ‘too thin’ is instantaneous. Quite a few racing cyclists find out where the line is by crossing it. Others cross it but don’t even notice. They attribute their disastrous collapse in form to anything else, because being light has become such an end in itself.

While in general I would suggest you take cycling advice from anyone other than me, I still think that I inadvertently found the best solution to the weight problem, and that’s to lie. Just knock three or four kilos off reality. More if you want. Recalibrate your scales if necessary. It literally takes a weight off.

ACTS OF CYCLING STUPIDITY

Not long ago I was chatting to a very scientifically orientated rider. Someone who keeps a detailed training log so that he can base his training on the best available evidence, rather than relying on guesswork and the last random magazine article that happened to catch his eye.

He mentioned that his best ever 10-mile time trial effort had come at the very end of a season following two weeks of total idleness, a 3kg weight gain, and was accomplished with a monster hangover from a stag do the previous day.

Despite his enthusiasm for evidence-based training, when I asked him what happened when he replicated this preparation for another TT, he looked baffled and said he’d never repeated it, “Because that would be stupid.”

Sporting Cyclist magazine

The magazine that transformed the way the British looked at cycling

You want an instant hit of pro racing excitement and glamour? You've got multiple sources — from websites to live streaming, from Instagram to Twitter, it's all there for you. It wasn't always that way...

Back in the post-war era there were two main sources for cycling news — *Cycling* magazine and *The Bicycle* magazine. *Cycling* concentrated solely on domestic matters, and even within that it more or less ignored any racing except traditional time trials and track racing. *The Bicycle* had a wider outlook and reported on overseas races as well as domestic road racing, which was on the rise after decades of being suppressed by the British cycling authorities.

At least readers had a choice. Then in 1955 the two titles merged — in theory. In practice *Cycling* continued as before, and *The Bicycle* disappeared, with none of its staff kept on. That left a gap in the market, and it didn't take long for it to be filled.

Coureur ('the magazine for the Sporting Cyclist') was launched late in 1955, and was

almost entirely the work of one man. John Borland Wadley ('Jock' to his friends, 'JB' to his readers) had been working for *The Bicycle* since before the war, and he was steeped in continental cycling culture, spending days and weeks following the major races (often on his bike, with a typewriter in one pannier), photographing and reporting on them in a vivid, immediate voice that owed more to the breathless prose of continental sports papers than traditional British journalism.

Importantly, JB was just as interested in domestic time trialling and long solo touring as he was in exotic foreign events, and he had a particular fondness for long-form TTs and place-to-place record attempts, which he reported in loving detail. That mix of home-grown and continental reporting gave the magazine wide appeal and after a year or so of sporadic publication it attracted a sound financial backer. From early 1957

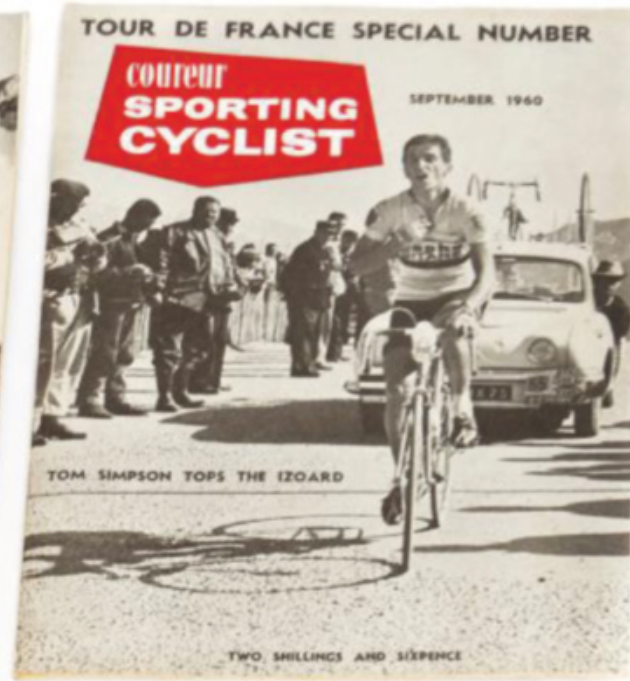
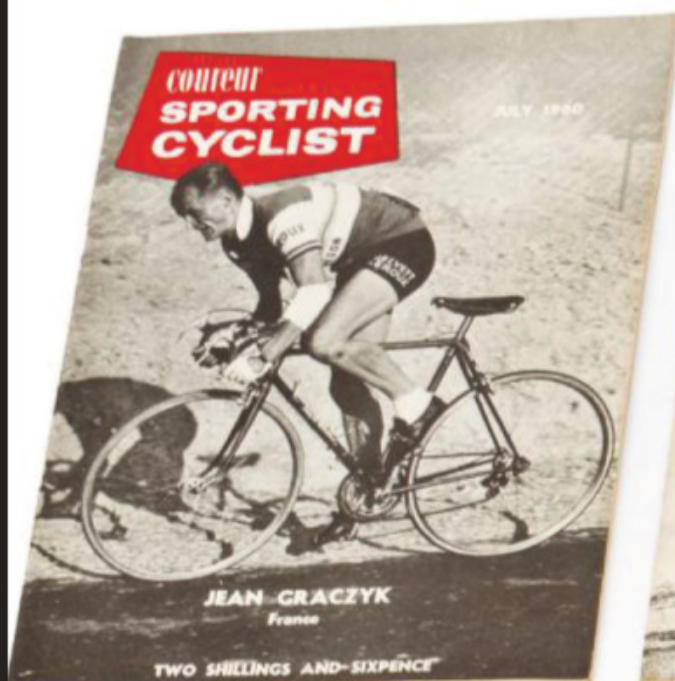
Sporting Cyclist (as it was now known), was published monthly and sold well, riding the wave of British continental success which Wadley's reporting and encouragement of Brits heading overseas had helped to make possible in the first place.

Sporting Cyclist lasted until 1968, when another merger with *Cycling* saw Wadley squeezed out again — he was offered a job, but declined. However by now 'foreign' cycling and road racing were no longer niche interests, they were mainstream, and this time *Cycling* would go on to reflect that. As *Cycling Weekly*, it still does. Editors and journalists come and go, but Jock Wadley's influence lives on.

NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE ON SALE THURS MARCH 5

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