

# Test Centre

Which products will survive the 220 test this month?

220's team of expert, independent testers put each product through its paces in real-life training and racing situations. They report back honestly, rating the product on performance and value. On our sliding scale of 1-10, 1 is disastrous, 5 mediocre, 10 simply perfect.

91 Triathlon products

96 Bike Lights

101 Cube Aerium Team vs  
Quintana Roo Kilo

## Kurt Kinetic Pro £235.00

The Kinetic Pro Trainer is a versatile turbo that offers a superb quality of ride. Resistance is provided by a smooth and quiet fluid unit that's attached to a 2.7kg (6lb) flywheel and, unusually, you get an extra 5.4kg (12lb) flywheel disc that you can add to change the level of difficulty. A neat touch.

The standard set-up is ideal for high-intensity sessions, including hard interval workouts. Add the larger flywheel for endurance rides; it's a 10sec job that requires no tools so you could even do it mid-session with minimal disruption, although we never felt the need.

There's no handlebar-mounted resistance control but we didn't find that a problem, the

flywheels and bike gears providing an extensive range of resistances, all of them feeling realistic and consistent whether we were doing 30sec sprints, 60rpm strength work or longer, low-intensity sessions. The resistance stayed reasonably consistent as temperatures built up, too.

The Kinetic is easy to set up out of the box, and a well-designed quick-release system makes getting your bike on and off a cinch. The widely spaced legs keep everything stable, while the overall production standards are

excellent – this is a robust and durable piece of kit. You also get a DVD that features three workouts for you to ride along to.

So, all round this is a fantastic turbo trainer – we'd score it a 10 on performance alone. The only stumbling block is the price. You can buy cheaper – much cheaper – but if high quality and an authentic ride feel are important to you, the Kinetic really is hard to beat.

- Realistic ride; wide range of resistances; brilliant build quality
- The price tag – ouch! Much cheaper trainers are available
- Planet X  
01302 724000 www.planet-x-bikes.com

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PHOTOS: JONNY GAWLER



## Oval Concepts A900 JetStream Carbon TT £349.95

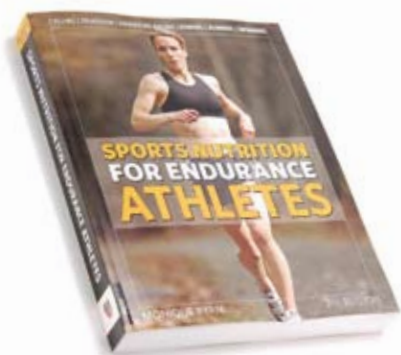
From the tidy carbon-fibre lay up to the intricately machined dropouts, everything about these forks shouts 'high quality'. However, by far the most distinctive feature is the twin aero-blade design of each leg. The idea is that the gap between the blades pulls turbulent air off the top of your front wheel and directs it outwards, creating a fairing effect for the fast-moving spokes behind the fork. Oval claim a time-saving of 55secs per hour at 50kph. Sadly, we're not in a position to either prove or disprove the aerodynamic claims – yes, the 220 wind tunnel is temporarily out of action – though any reduction in drag has to be good news.

Hitting the scales just shy of 500g, these aren't particularly lightweight forks, but that's only really an issue when you're accelerating or climbing. Once fitted the fork's straight blades are incredibly stiff in all directions, meaning there's virtually no flex, even when you're out of the saddle or braking hard. The flipside is that the A900s don't offer much shock absorption.

The ride isn't harsh, but it's not forgiving either; these forks are all about speed. But, as our accountant quite rightly pointed out, they should be at this price.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Stiff, aero and beautifully made. In terms of outright performance – brilliant</li> <li>➤ How much? Quality doesn't come cheap when you're buying the best</li> </ul>	<b>8</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Upgrade 01403 71611 www.upgradebikes.co.uk</li> </ul>	



## Sports Nutrition for Endurance Athletes Monique Ryan £15.00

This is a second-edition version of a US book first published in 2002, and is a comprehensive text that covers the basics of exercise physiology (necessary to fully understand sports nutrition rationale) as well as the vast subject of sports nutrition, both from a theoretical and practical standpoint.

This book is a great resource for any endurance athlete – be it a triathlete, road cyclist, mountain biker, swimmer, rower or distance runner – with a special section devoted to each discipline.

It covers every aspect of sports nutrition: types, sources and quantities of the three major food groups (carbohydrate, fat and protein); the important areas of food timing and planning; a section on hydration; an excellent 'lowdown' on ergogenic aids.

The only criticism is that it's an American text. So, from a practical viewpoint, putting the meal plans into full use may become a little confusing for some.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ An excellent resource on both nutrition and physiology; more for the serious endurance athlete</li> <li>➤ It's a shame it's not an English text</li> </ul>	<b>8</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Cordee 0116 254 33579 www.cordee.co.uk</li> </ul>	

## Gore Running Wear Evolution N2S £60.00

At first glance the cut on these tights looks a little strange – like the backside is going to be too baggy. However, once on, the anatomical cut and clever use of fabric panelling shines through.



Windstopper fabric is used over the whole of the front, covering the stomach and quads, and also down the outer sides, the glutes, thighs and around the zipped back pocket.

As the Windstopper fabric has a much lower level of stretch, the tights are slightly pulled into a running stance that moulds nicely to the body. The higher stretch-fabric inserts over the rear hips, IT band area, most of the glutes and the hamstrings/inner thighs gives a great balance of holding the fabric against the skin while allowing free movement.

Gore really have created a good bit of kit, illustrated by one final example. The fabric cuffs below the knee are firm enough to hold the tights in place but won't restrict, and the design is such that the fabric doesn't bunch up. Just brilliant.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Fantastic design and cut; great use of fabrics; quality build</li> <li>➤ A little pricey; a bit heavy duty for racing out on the road</li> </ul>	<b>9</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Gore Running Wear 00800 2314 4000 www.gorerunningwear.com</li> </ul>	

## Cardiosport GO 35 HRM £59.99

The Cardiosport GO 35 HRM is a small design, which is perfect for those with petit wrists or for ladies. However, the downside is that the display is verging on tiny. It comes with all the basic heart rate monitor and sports-watch functions. You can set target zones to work within, and there's either an audible or visual alarm to keep you informed. Post-workout, you can also check back to see maximum, minimum and average HR data.

A 10hr stopwatch means you can keep track of all but the longest events, and the daily alarm offers a very useful reminder. Add to this a calorie counter, which helps you keep track of what you've burnt, and all the essentials are covered. The G035 offers a simple and easy way to venture in the world of HRMs, though tech heads might want to spend more for greater information feedback.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The price; simple to use; good intro into the world of HRMs</li> <li>➤ Only works with smaller wrists; stopwatch not adept for longer races; small display</li> </ul>	<b>8</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Cardiosport 02392 257388 www.cardiosport.com</li> </ul>	

## Rodi Blackjack C50 £899.99

Rodi has provided well-known brands with rims for years, and they've used all their experience to create this top-end wheel, the Blackjack C50, which provided a sublime ride during every one of the 550 test miles. As the name suggests, the rim is 50mm carbon, meaning its light in weight. The Sapim CX Ray bladed spokes – 18 front and 24 rear – are stiff and aerodynamic. So you get light, aero and versatile in one package, equating to one, maybe two, minutes over 40km compared to a basic wheelset.

With Conti Competition tubs the wheels felt bombproof; the sealed hubs rolled well and gave no troubles over a month; jagwire carbon-specific brake blocks offered sharp braking; the manufacturer's weight – 680g for the 18-spoke front and 850g for the 24-spoke rear – is accurate. Another option is the C40, which comes with 40mm full Carbon tubular, but why lose 10mm? Both include skewers, rim tapes and carbon-specific cork compound brake-pad set.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Aerodynamic and lightweight upgrade for triathletes that want a versatile wheelset</li> <li>- Brake pads tended to grab the rim so caution with braking in the wet; pricey</li> </ul>	<b>8</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ <b>Nemesis Active</b> 0870 950 2150 www.nemesisactive.com</li> </ul>	



## Lewis Kit Full Suspension Pavé £12.00

Lewis Kit's Full Suspension mitts are constructed with a durable synthetic skeleton that comprises three carefully located palm pads. These are designed to help reduce pressure on your ulnar nerves, which should stop the age-old problem of numb hands, especially on longer rides, that are caused by road vibrations.

These aren't the huge bulky pads you usually find and yet they still offer plenty of 'feeling' while riding. Mesh backs on the rear and large, soft, fleecy sweat wipes keep you cool on warmer days. These are particularly good because there are no rough patches in between – great for comfort and sweat- and snot-wiping duties. There's also a Velcro micro-adjust strap to keep them in place. All of this produces a quality, well-thought-out and subtle-looking riding mitt. And best of all they don't cost a fortune – a twin pack (two pairs of two!) will set you back a reasonable £20.

Once again Lewis Kit have produced a no-nonsense product at a great price.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Great price; good fitting; comfortably soft wipes; subtle looks</li> <li>- Nitpicking, but being primarily mail order, it's nigh-on impossible to try before you buy</li> </ul>	<b>9</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ <b>Lewis Kit</b> 07837 406560 www.lewiskit.co.uk</li> </ul>	

## Activesound MP3 £49.95

In Oakley-esque design, Imagine Sound has produced integrated sunglasses and MP3 player with a decent 1GB memory for a fraction of the Oakley price. The hang-down, adjustable speakers mean you can have the music in the ear or as background, and you can even rest the glasses on top of your head and still hear music. The three buttons are simple, though a touch elusive when on the move.

Okay, so it's clever, it's a great price, but it's not all positives: there's an irritating wind noise when cycling outdoors (which you obviously can't rectify with new headphones), the charge time is pretty long (2-3hrs), run time seems low (not much longer than an hour and a half on our version) and the lens flip-up over the bridge of the nose is a right nuisance.

Comes with hard case, AC charger, USB cable, lens cloth and car charger, but will you use it just for the sunglasses and rarely power it up? Those who have shades already could get an iPod instead. Works on Mac and PC systems with USB 2.0 and MP3 or WMA formats.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Integrates glasses and MP3 player for wire-free tunes and eye protection</li> <li>- Buttons are fiddly to find; charge time is too long; the wind noise when cycling</li> </ul>	<b>7</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ <b>Imagine Sound</b> 0845 123 3949 www.imaginesound.co.uk</li> </ul>	





## Reebok Versatec

£17.99

Unfortunately, like last issue, Reebok seem to have produced a piece of kit that's sadly limited in its usage to a little light exercise or trying to look good at the gym.

That said, the actual cut of the top is very good in terms of movement. The 'T' back is just a 50mm strip of Play Dry mesh fabric, so the shoulder blades are completely uncovered and therefore totally unrestricted. The front and sides of the top are high enough to keep you covered, but not so high as to cause rubbing or chafing.

In spite of this, and Reebok's use of technical fabrics, moisture retention during exercise is a problem. The double-layer front panel can become saturated, and as it becomes heavier it loses some support. The lack of any kind of cup shaping, or rubber gripper around the chest, may mean that once both the skin and top are wet, it may ride up.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Comfortable; stylish; unrestrictive during exercise</li> <li>- High moisture retention; not shaped for support; poor during heavy exercise</li> </ul>	<b>6</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ <b>Reebok</b> 0800 698 5678 www.reebok.com</li> </ul>	

## Asics Greene IM £40.00

At first glance this appeared to be a simple plain t-shirt, but closer inspection revealed something more sophisticated.

This top incorporates Asics' new Inner Muscle (IM) technology, which has been designed to support and enhance the movement of specific muscle groups.

The Greene IM top employs an elastic panel across the upper back, the aim being to support the shoulders and scapula to produce a smoother and stronger running arm swing. It's also supposed to improve posture and reduce the onset of shoulder fatigue.

Don the top and straight away you can feel the rear panel holding your scapula in position, and during a run it does help to control your posture, which seems to aid relaxation.

The seam location around the IM panel is, however, a distracting irritant and may be a particular problem for those with broader shoulders. On the whole, though, this top could be good for running races and may reduce the chance of injury during training.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Quality base layer with the added functionality of posture assistance</li> <li>- Seams around the IM panel are poorly positioned and cause discomfort</li> </ul>	<b>7</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ <b>Asics</b> 01925 241041 www.asics.co.uk</li> </ul>	



## Lucozade Sport Caffeine Boost from 99p

As an energy drink, the 'Caffeine Boost' from sports nutrition behemoths Lucozade is a standard choice, providing 32g of carbohydrate per 500ml. Half these carbs are in the form of a simple sugar glucose, which is equivalent to two-and-a-half teaspoons of sugar. Strangely, it also contains artificial sweeteners, the logic and necessity of which escapes us.

The real selling point of course is the caffeine content. The 500ml bottle contains 80mg of caffeine, which is equal to a cup of instant coffee and slightly more than a single espresso shot.

For a real performance-enhancing effect, though, a caffeine dose should be 3-5mg caffeine per kg body weight - approximately twice the amount contained in this bottle. Further more, ideally the athlete needs to be 'caffeine-clean' before training or racing to experience the

potential performance benefits, so if you're a regular caffeine user, the effects of this drink will be minimal. Overall, for your health, we'd plump for a drink that's devoid of sweeteners.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ The sweet, lemony taste is pleasant enough on the taste buds</li> <li>- In an increasingly health-conscious society, we'd like to see the sweeteners banished</li> </ul>	<b>4</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ <b>Lucozade</b> 0800 096 3666 www.lucozade.com</li> </ul>	

## Zoggs Ultex Dartback £39.99

This stylish suit from Zoggs is one of four styles for women in its new chlorine-resistant range, designed for serious pool swimmers. The Ultex range features a new material pioneered by Zoggs, which has been created to rival Lycra, and carefully developed to help you get the longest life out of your cossie as you knock out the kilometres.

We couldn't test the suit for long enough to challenge the chlorine-resistance claims - will get back to you on that one in the New Year - but we what we can tell you is that this is one comfortable, well-designed and good-looking swimsuit. The design of the straps at the back allows for freedom of movement around the entire shoulder-blade area, while feeling almost undetectable. The front panel of the suit is lined, ensuring that the stitching won't chafe. There are plenty of claimed chlorine-resistant suits on the market but, whatever the ultimate performance of this

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ A comfortable, good-looking suit with super chlorine-resistant claims</li> <li>- Only comes in a couple of colourways for the '07-'08 season</li> </ul>	<b>8</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ <b>Zoggs</b> 01276 486500 www.zoggs.com</li> </ul>	

'revolutionary' fabric, this is a great suit for those who want to look good and swim well.

