



Welcome

Buy the shiny new one. Bin the old one. Never mind that it still works. This new one is 2.7% better, has these swoopy frame profiles, and look, it comes in orange. Everyone likes orange this year; all the reviews say so. Sure it's expensive, but can you put a price on being 2.7% faster/gnarlier/happier?

That's broadly the message I've absorbed from reading the adverts – and some of the reviews – in cycling magazines lately, in order to update a feature on the website (cyclinguk.org/cycle/guide-cycling-magazines). I've embellished my first paragraph, of course. I've no idea if orange is popular or not...

This isn't a critique of the bike industry. It's their job to sell us things. Doing that is harder if the advert says: "Yeah, it's basically the same as last year's, but we changed the head angle by half a degree and we've got a new font for the lettering on the down tube." There will always be gloss. It's the market economy. It's how the wheels of industry turn.

Except those wheels fell off during the pandemic due to supply problems. Next day delivery and instant in-store gratification were, and largely still are, off the table. We couldn't necessarily get what we wanted. Consumerism took a hit.

Happily, cyclists are well placed to weather that minor inconvenience. Bikes aren't computers: they improve incrementally at best. Last year's model, last decade's model – even last century's model – is likely good enough. So long as we can buy oil, grease, and any truly essential replacement parts, we're good to go. We're lucky.

DAN JOYCE
Cycle Editor

Coronavirus
For updated advice regarding the Covid-19 outbreak, visit: cyclinguk.org/coronavirus

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Wishing Bridge, Gap of Dunloe
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