

BIKE TEST

Right Time, right place

The Speeder offers affordable entry to the sought after Time club, but there's nothing cut price about the ride

Long before the carbon explosion, Time was quietly turning out some exemplary examples of how carbon race bikes should ride. Its bikes have long been sought after by riders who seek high performance but with a comfortable ride. Time fans will readily tell you that once you've ridden a Time you'll always ride a Time. But entry to the club has never been cheap – until now.

The Speeder is a first for Time. It's an affordable bike designed by Time and manufactured in the Far East. Some would say Time is gambling with its reputation, but the company knows a thing or two about bikes and after testing the Speeder we think that the gamble has paid off.

The focal point of the Speeder's ride is the frame. The 12K carbon is pretty standard but the attention to detail and the quality of finish is something special. The Speeder mimics the classic lines of Time's high-end bikes. Look closely and you'll notice the formed tubes, sleek stays and tidy, sharp joints. Lacking in

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bulbous, garish bulges, everything on the Speeder is done for a reason, and the restrained approach rules. It's just as tidy on the inside of the frame too; there's no forming bladder discarded like an empty crisp packet, and the interior of the Speeder is as clean looking as the outside. Time really has gone to town on quality control and it shows.

The ride has a solid tone. The Speeder is perfectly tuned to the road. At cruising speed the bike feels relaxed; not soft or forgiving, just very well poised. Aptly named, the Speeder allows you to cover

many miles without realising it. Lay down the power, though, and the bike sharpens up underneath you. This is most noticeable when climbing – you can almost feel the tight rear pushing you up the road. The more you push it, the better the response. The Speeder favours the stronger rider and although the solid frame dampens road buzz you certainly wouldn't class it as forgiving. The Pilot full-carbon fork matches the frame perfectly and gives a real sense of confidence with a purposeful direction.

The bike is clearly race-orientated but comfortable enough not to scare off the experienced enthusiast. Larger riders found the ride more comforting than the lighter lot, but if you're a novice you may find the direct feel and steering take a bit of getting used to.

Component fest

The quality ride has a lot to do with the balanced componentry. It's not the lightest of bikes but that bit of extra weight seems to suit the solid feel. The 39/53 double and 12-25T cassette lays down the basis for the Speeder's feeling of intended pace and the Campagnolo Veloce drivetrain is dependable, although we do miss the multi-downshift of the higher-end Ergo levers.

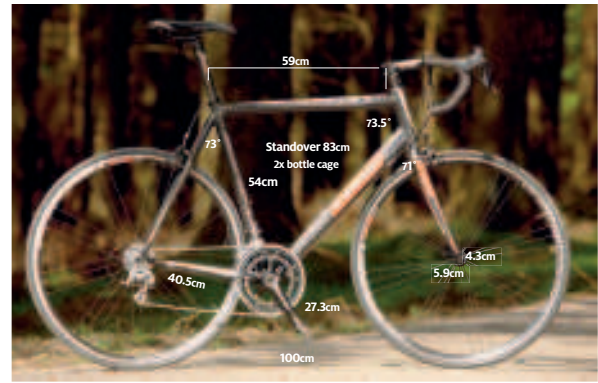
Finishing kit is all from Chicken Cycles' (Time's UK distributor) stable of components. It distributes an impressive line, which also means you get kit with a difference. Cinelli VRJ bars and stem are simple but very effective. They have a good shape and a firm hold on the Pilot fork, giving plenty of good feedback. The Selcof carbon post and Selle Italia saddle combination is a good one, and certainly doesn't rob you of any of the frame's character.

The only quibble in the spec comes from the wheels. The Campagnolo Khamsin G3 wheelset is quite a load for a light frame of this quality to carry. The Khamsins are strong, reliable and very direct, so you still get the feel of the frame coming through, but there's more to the refined ride of the Speeder's frame



Above and right: Cinelli's budget but great quality VAI stem and bar combo complete the cockpit

and fork, and the wheels just don't match it. Cost is the issue here and to appeal to the average Speeder buyer a lower price wheelset has been chosen. On the grand scale of things this is a minor issue, though, and the limitation of the wheels pales against the bike's overall ride.



Photos Robert Smith

We would like to thank the Forestry Commission for giving us permission to use the forest roads of South Wales in this shoot

TIME SPEEDER

£1650
www.chickencycles.co.uk

Frame and forks

SIZE TESTED: 58cm

WEIGHT AS TESTED: 8.670kg/19.1lb, no pedals

FRAME: Full carbon monocoque frame with alloy headset insert rings and alloy BB sleeve, alloy dropouts with replaceable gear hanger

FRAME WEIGHT: 1270g/2.8lb

FORK: Full-carbon Time Pilot with alloy dropouts

FORK WEIGHT: 340g/0.7lb

Frame alignment

HEAD-TUBE: Perfect

REAR TRIANGLE: Perfect

FORK: Perfect

Transmission

CHAINSET: Campagnolo Veloce forged alloy

172.5mm arms, 39/53 alloy rings

BOTTOM BRACKET: Campagnolo Veloce Ultra

Torque sealed cartridge external type

FREEWHEEL: Campagnolo Veloce 12-25, 10-speed

CHAIN BRAND: Campagnolo 10-speed

DERAILLEURS: Campagnolo Veloce short cage,

brazo-on type front with 31.8mm clamp

GEAR LEVERS: Campagnolo Veloce Ergo QS

PEDALS: None

Gear ratio (in)

Chain ring	Sprocket									
	12	13	14	15	16	17	19	21	23	25
39	88	81	75	70	66	62	55	50	46	42
53	119	110	102	95	89	84	75	68	62	57

Wheels

FRONT & REAR: Campagnolo Khamsin G3 pre-built, machined aero rims, sealed cartridge forged alloy hubs, 24 radial front, 27 2-cross/radial rear, stainless spokes

TYRES: Vredestein Ricorso 700x23

WHEEL WEIGHT: F 1375g, R 1860g

Other components

STEM: Cinelli VAI forged alloy 4-bolt oversized bar

clamp, twin-bolt 1 1/8in steerer clamp, 12cm

BAR: Cinelli VAI alloy anatomic, 44cm c-c

HEADSET: Time Quick Set sealed cartridge

SADDLE: Selle Italia, padded vinyl with steel rails

SEATPOST: Selcof carbon with alloy twin-bolt

clamp, 31.6mm dia, 330mm length

BRAKES: Campagnolo Veloce differential

ACCESSORIES: None

A Time all-carbon Pilot fork sits up front; Selcof provides the carbon seatpost and the padded anatomic saddle is Selle Italia

There are a lot of quality carbon race bikes on the market and many offer a higher level of specification, but you get something different with the Speeder. It's a star of a frame that shines through the blackness of an overcrowded carbon market. It's so well balanced and refined that it makes you feel special.

You're buying the reassurance of quality and Time's experience really shows on the new Speeder. In fact the only downside to the Speeder is that it's going to fuel your desire for one of Time's higher-end bikes. But don't worry; you've gained entry into the club with the Speeder. **PLUS**

VERDICT A BALANCED AND refined ride that's typically Time. Experienced riders can feel assured with the performance handling. Immaculately finished, the Speeder has a level of quality that's hard to find on many bikes at this price and the discerning rider will love the bike's character.

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