



ROSE XEON CW

£1529 > Aero efficient, distance friendly ride that's a serious bargain

There are two Ss dominating cycling now: sportives and Strava. Rose's easy riding aero bike is not only brilliant for both but an absolute bargain too.

The Xeon CW is the aero road option from the German-based cycling superstore. Drag reduction starts with the minimal frontal area despite the full carbon tapered fork. The internal cable routing entries give neat, low profile cable entry and the tubes get clipped trailing edges for turbulence management. An asymmetric buttress behind the seat-tube increases stiffness of the press-fit bottom bracket without interfering with front mech function. The skinny A-frame seatstays flatten and curve at the seat-tube junction to smooth out the rear end ride. The deep down-tube gets an extra low single bottle position or higher twin bottle one.

The full Shimano Ultegra baseline is pimped out with lightweight Ritchey cockpit kit and a Rose carbon aero seatpost for the super-light Selle Italia integrated monorail saddle. Compared to the obvious competition it's nearly a kilo lighter than BMC's £1800 TMR02 and 700g lighter than the £1649 Giant Propel Advanced 1, with only the £1799 13 Bikes Intuition Gamma running it close at 7.74kg. It's not quite as punchy as the Propel and TMR, but it's stiffer than the Intuition when you stamp on the pedals.

Aerodynamic efficiency gives the Rose a sense of slight tailwind speed sustain and it racked up some ego-

SPECIFICATION
Weight 7.56kg (M)
Frame High modulus T40/T60 carbon fibre
Fork Modulus full carbon, tapered
Gears Shimano Ultegra 6800, 52-36x11-28T
Brakes Shimano Ultegra 6800
Wheels Mavic Cosmic Elite 5 WTS
Finishing kit Ritchey 4-Axis stem and WCS Evo Curve bar, Rose Monolink full carbon Aero seatpost, Selle Italia SLS Kit Carbonio Monolink saddle

boosting Strava PRs during testing. Despite wheels that have a reputation for stubborn turning at speed and blowing about badly in gusty conditions it always felt in control when we were putting the pressure on or the wind was playing rough. Stress-free handling means you can stay low and aero in exactly the descending/turbulent conditions where it matters most.

Despite the firm ride of the monorail saddle and stiff wheels with skinny Mavic tyres the overall ride quality is impressively forgiving and fatigue free.

Our only gripes are about the Mavic wheel 'upgrade' Rose supplied off its extensive options menu. That means we would recommend sticking with Rose's own brand RS1400 wheels; they're lighter, can also be specced with 25c Continental GP4000S tyres, and drop the already outstanding value price by another £47.

THE VERDICT

An outstanding, top value, friendly-handling aero bike that's comfortable over distances

★★★★★



Carbon fork's in keeping with the low weight theme, while Shimano Ultegra brakes keep the Rose under control

As long as you're okay with the racy ride position, the Rose is an enjoyable and easy distance cruiser

Shimano Ultegra gearing helps keep overall weight low on the already lightweight frameset

HIGHS
Fast, friendly and fantastic value

LOWS
We'd stick with the stock wheels

BUYIF
You want a brilliant blend of maximum speed and minimum spend



Internal cable routing makes for a neat and aerodynamic look



A few minor niggles with tyres and brakes take the edge of the Alur

BTWIN ALUR 700

£749.99* > Is this BTwin really alluring?

If we hadn't known the price we'd have sworn this bike would be nearer £1000. It has everything you'd expect at around a grand - carbon fork, tapered steerer, sub-9kg weight, Shimano 105, internal cabling - and its lifetime guaranteed triple-butted frame, whose geometry leans towards endurance comes with the UCI seal of approval.

The ride is on the firmish side, though not unduly so, but other than that the negatives are few and far between. The Hutchinson tyres are average and we're not sure that a non-aero road bike gains from direct-mount brakes. They don't lack power, but the rear is housed behind the bottom bracket. This picks up day-to-day detritus, and even with their powder coating they're going to need more cleaning and maintenance. On the plus side, the 12-28 cassette and compact chainset should cope with most cyclists' needs.

SPECIFICATION
Weight 8.96kg (L)
Frame 6061 aluminium
Fork Carbon/alloy steerer
Gears Shimano 105, BTwin chainset 50/34, 12-28
Brakes Shimano 105 direct mount
Wheels BTwin
Finishing kit BTwin stem, bar and seatpost, BTwin Comp saddle, 23mm Hutchinson Equinox tyres

Along with 10-speed Shimano 105, BTwin's in-house wheels are another highlight, their claimed sub-1800g weight down there with the likes of Mavic's Aksium. The 20/24 spoke count keeps the mass low, the hubs run smoothly and are good enough for BTwin's under-19 team to train on. The Alur also comes with BTwin's own Look-compatible pedals.

*As we go to press, it's down to a more bargainous still £599.

THE VERDICT

With a spec list you'd expect from pricier bikes, this is an impressive package

★★★★★