

BIKE TEST

Maxxis Rekon rear tyre rolls quick, but the tread is optimistically low for the majority of UK conditions

True four-bar suspension design offers low anti-squat for smoothness and excellent bump swallowing

The S-150 is available in three frame sizes, where the length of the medium is equivalent to most brands' size large

Whyte's wide-pivot, single-chaining-only design makes for a super-solid frame



# WHYTE S-150 CRS

£3,499

## SPECIFICATION

**Frame** Carbon/alloy  
**SCR** 150mm travel  
**Shock** RockShox Deluxe RT Debonair  
**Fork** RockShox Pike RC Debonair, 150mm travel, 42mm offset  
**Wheels** Whyte boost hubs, WTB ST i29 TCS rims, Maxxis High Roller II C3/Rekon EXO 29x2.5/2.4in tyres  
**Drivetrain** Descendant 7K Eagle chainset, SRAM GX Eagle shifter and r-mech.  
**Brakes** SRAM Guide R, 180mm  
**Components** Whyte 6061 780mm bar, Whyte Gravity 40mm stem, KS LEV-Integra 150mm post, Whyte custom saddle  
**Sizes** M, L, XL  
**Weight** 14.9kg (32.8lb)  
**Contact** whyte.bike

## GEOMETRY

**Size tested** Medium  
**Head angle** 65.4°  
**Seat angle** 74.4°  
**BB height** 340mm  
**Chainstay** 435mm  
**Front centre** 777mm  
**Wheelbase** 1,212mm  
**Down tube** 728mm  
**Top tube** 623mm  
**Reach** 459mm

**B**ritish brand Whyte has been at the cutting edge of mountain bike design for the last few seasons. It was one of the first to develop longer, more stable geometry and 1x-specific frames and it also pioneered the steering-stabilising, reduced fork offset trend.

More recently, Whyte has shifted from full aluminium frames to offering smooth, sleek carbon front triangles on its top-end models. This modern attitude seeps into the S-150C RS, which offers the same carbon front/alloy rear frame as the top Works version, with a more competitively priced specification.

It's essentially a hard-hitting trail/enduro machine where the S stands for the ability to switch between fat 27.5 Plus wheels and tyres, to a sharper, more precise 29er model with 'normal' 2.5in tyres, which is also how the bike is sold.

## SUSPENSION

Being pitched at the trail end of long-travel riding means that, as a weight saving measure, the S-150 gets a RockShox Pike fork and Deluxe shock. There's a Charger II damper in the reduced 42mm offset Pike, but it's the cheaper 'RC' version, with less sophisticated internals and only low-speed damping adjustment.

The RockShox Deluxe RT shock is driven by Whyte's signature four-bar design to deliver 150mm of travel. It has a really smooth action under pedalling and braking, where the bigger volume DebonAir negative spring and sealed bearing in the shock yoke increase sensitivity further. The shock also sports an on/off lever that increases the damping threshold for climbing.

## COMPONENTS

The rear end on the S-150 has tons of clearance and, as we mentioned earlier, can handle 27.5in wheels with 2.8in wide tyres. But the stock 29x2.5in Maxxis Wide Trail tyres fitted offer a more intuitive ride on most trails.

WTB ST i29 rims spread the reinforced tyre sidewalls wide enough for good stability, but the wheels aren't the lightest, smoothest or fastest when accelerating or climbing. The lower profile rear Rekon tyre also reaches the limits of its grip quickly in wet conditions, prioritising speedy rolling over braking traction and control.

Whyte's own-brand gear is solid and functional without being overly flashy. Essentials like the short stem/wider bar, excellent grips and comfy saddle are sorted, all we had to do was tip the nose of the saddle down a touch to optimise the seated climbing position.

SRAM Guide R brakes with 180mm rotors are standard trail bike fare, but less sensitive and powerful than the Code brakes elsewhere. Full marks, though, for the 12-speed GX Eagle drivetrain.

## PERFORMANCE

Composed and relaxed, the S-150 embodies the old bike-test cliché of being 'confidence inspiring'. The steering feels easy and natural and the riding position keeps your hips and core in the sweet spot through berms, turns and any awkward sections of trail.

The low BB and progressive suspension lower your feet, which aids balance when leaning and darting through chinks and turns, but there's enough support and clearance to ensure the soundtrack to every climb

isn't your pedals clattering on rocks and roots. Geometry wise, the S-150 is relatively slack and long, and the suspension feels controlled rather than bouncy. This means that jumpy, flicky and hyper-active riders might find it a bit muted.

Despite having 7mm less travel than advertised, you can release the brakes and let the Whyte roll on without it ever feeling too flustered at speed. The brand's signature reduced offset fork adds stability and helps keep a lid on the front tyre tucking in on the steepest rutty turns and chutes. This calmness also compensates for the slightly hesitant action on the mid-tier Pike, which is less inclined to trace every bump and ripple than the pricier, stiffer Lyrik fork on Cube's Stereo.

## VERDICT

The whole Whyte S-150C RS experience exudes calmness and confidence. The damped, stiff chassis, together with the planted steering, allows riders of all levels to push hard. It doesn't hurt either that the low dynamic BB height and long frame offers a solid, attacking foundation for berm-slashing and holding tight lines on off-cambers.

The flip-side of Whyte's solidity is that the weight is pushing 15kg. It masks its bulk really well, but sudden accelerations are muted. Also, we'd like to see a grippy rear tyre fitted as standard.



TEST WINNER!  
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**HIGHS**  
Calmness personified, delivering increased confidence

**LOWS**  
Not the flickiest or most playful bike



Own-brand bar and stem tick the short and wide boxes



Internal seat clamp keeps the Whyte's lines super-sleek



Bearings all round and a shock extension raise sensitivity levels