

# WHYTE whyte.bike REVIEWS



**“Whyte’s T-130 family has set a new benchmark”**

★★★★★ [bikeradar.com/WHAT](http://bikeradar.com/WHAT) MOUNTAIN BIKE Magazine



“Close to perfection. The sorted sizing, geometry and suspension puts this 130mm bike in a class of its own.”



mbr Magazine

“A seriously capable, well balanced bike that encourages you to give it a proper thrashing every time you hit the trail”

MBUK ★★★★★ MBUK Magazine

“If we had to pick just one bike to ride for the rest of time it would be the Whyte T-130S”



mbr Magazine

- T-130 S “almost flawless - the Bike of the Year”
- T-130 RS “a new benchmark - Trail Bike of the Year”
- T-130C RS “Intoxicating”
- G-160 S “superb poise and confidence”
- Wessex “Endurance & Sportive Bike of the Year”
- Dorset “Best in Test”
- 403 “When did my kid get faster than me?”
- 909 “The definitive UK Hardtail”
- 801 “an instant hit”





Whyte's T-130 family has set a new benchmark for outrageous flat-out character and full-gas speed in an easy-peddalling mid-travel package



WHAT  
MOUNTAIN BIKE

---

**TRAIL  
BIKE  
OF THE  
YEAR**

**WINNER 2016**

**Whyte T130 RS £2750**

---

We thought Whyte's T-130 RS might be the TBOTY bike to beat as soon as we rode it, and we weren't wrong.

---



WHAT  
MOUNTAIN BIKE  
**TRAIL  
BIKE  
OF THE  
YEAR**  
WINNER 2016

**W**hile we loved the extended top tube length, and slack and low geometry of Whyte's 900 series' hardtails and its T-129 and G-150 full-suspension bikes, its 2015 T-130 bikes had stayed relatively short and – if we're honest – frustratingly conventional. However, Whyte promised something significantly different when it opened the doors on its demo van on Ilkley Moor for an early preview in June last year.

As soon as we saw what emerged we didn't need telling that the 2016 T-130 was a very different beast, with no trace of conventional geometry compromise. Even in the car park the way the big bar sits behind the fork brace when you look over the short stem makes it easy to see why it's got so much insolent swagger. The long 631mm top tube that gives it so much high-speed-confidence contrasts with the ultra-short, single-ring-specific, Boost-148mm-hubbed 420mm chainstays at the rear end. Whyte has also deliberately tuned the Monarch DebonAir damper-controlled suspension to feel tight and taut once you push past the sensitive traction-grabbing sag zone. Add a super-low 322mm bottom bracket, and a bit of frame- and wheel-flex to glue down traction and the speed it'll carve turns is phenomenal. It powers hard out of

corners or up climbs even with just a ballpark pressure setup too, with only the limited ground clearance occasionally causing issues.

The result is a bike that loves to launch or manual off every lip, drift every corner and generally make maximum mischief from every metre of the trail. It's far from just a goofy playbike too and when you're chasing along singletrack in a pack the Whyte actively seems to generate speed even when you're not trying. When you do get involved and start pumping and driving the bike rather than just showboating, it leaves other bikes – including longer travel ones – like they're stood still.

The Pike fork makes a massive difference over similar shaped Sektor forked bikes and the Shimano XT transmission never skipped a beat either. Even though the SRAM Roam 30 wheels and WTB tyres aren't the stiffest way to connect to the trail, even if you push the tyres way too hard it always catches you and steers you back onto the trail like an indulgent parent rather than punishing you like you deserve. The result is a bike that took all our testers on a crazy dance along the ragged, flat-out edge of control but always bought them back grinning madly and begging for another lap.

**Weight 13.65kg**  
[www.whyte.bike](http://www.whyte.bike)

THE HIGHS

✓ Radically stretched front and sawn-off rear create dangerously addictive flat-out trail-attack geometry.

✓ Fork and rear shock are superbly synced for a tight, speed-breeding suspension character that works great with minimal set-up time.

✓ Lifetime warrantied bearings, external bottom bracket practicality with state of the art, stiffness-boosting single-ring-specific, Boost axle performance.

✓ Excellent Race Face oversized axle crank with Shimano XT direct mount gears and powerful brakes on stumpy stem, and a wide bar communicate maximum feedback and control.

THE LOWS

✗ Wheels and frame aren't the stiffest but it always manages to hit its mark and stay hooked up however daft you get.

✗ Limited pedal clearance and steering wander can irritate when heading up.



THEY SAY...

*"WHETHER IT'S THAT CRUCIAL TRACTION BALANCE ON THE CRUX MOVE OF A KILLER CLIMB OR CALMLY MAKING A TURN MILLIMETRES FROM THE EDGE OF POTENTIAL DISASTER ON A FLAT-OUT DESCENT, WE'VE DESIGNED OUR BIKES TO HANDLE SUPERBLY IN EVERY SITUATION"*

WHYTE



BIKE OF THE YEAR



# WHYTE T-130 S

£2,299 / 27.5in / [whyte.bike](http://whyte.bike)

*British engineering brilliance with an almost flawless performance makes this short travel ripper our winner*

## NEED TO KNOW

- Cutting-edge 130mm-travel trail bike that ticks every box
- Dedicated SCR (Single Chain Ring) frame design for 1x drivetrains
- With generous top tube lengths and four frame sizes, the tallest and smallest riders are accommodated
- Featuring a 760mm bar and stubby 50mm stem, the T130 S is primed and ready to rip

Being a relatively small UK brand, Whyte doesn't have the resources to launch individual bikes in exotic locations. Instead, it releases all of its new models at once. It's probably not the best marketing strategy for maximising brand exposure, but it's a great way for us, the media, to ride all of Whyte's latest bikes back-to-back.

So, at the 2016 product launch in Cwmcar, we merrily ripped around the same challenging test loop on the T-129, T-130 and the G-160. All great bikes in their own right, but it was the new T-130 that really stole the show.

Not only was it the sleekest looking bike that Whyte had produced, after years of coming close, Whyte finally nailed the performance of the rear suspension. Livelier than the T-129, yet every bit as capable as the G-160, the new T130 S was the breakthrough that Whyte needed to put its suspension platform on the same level as the likes of Trek and Specialized.

And it didn't stop there. Being the newest bike in the line, the T130 benefits directly from Whyte's existing SCR (Single Chain Ring) frame design that allows for a much wider main pivot to improve frame stiffness without excess weight. Yes, there's no option to fit a front derailleur to the T-130 S even if you wanted to. The frame also benefits from the wider Boost dropout standard, making for a more solid rear wheel and further reducing flex.

## CLOSE TO PERFECTION

If you've not ridden the T-130, you're probably wondering why Whyte is so hell-bent on maximising frame stiffness. The answer is simple. You need only take a look at the geometry chart to see that the T130 S is designed to be ridden every bit as fast and hard as your typical 160mm bike, so it needs to be stout.

In fact, at the launch, the T130 S came with a RockShox Revelation fork, and with its slender 32mm stanchions it was completely out of its depth. By the time our production T-130 S arrived for a proper First Ride, Whyte had already replaced the Revelation with the new 35mm chassis RockShox Yari. It's basically a cheaper version of the Pike, and the missing piece of the puzzle. The T-130 S was now complete and, best of all, the price hadn't crept up along with the fork upgrade.

When testing the T130 S for our Do-it-all Trail Bike test in January, we found ourselves thinking that the handlebar had two degrees too much backsweep, and that the grips could be a couple of millimetres thicker. Going into this sort of detail is a good indication that we're struggling to find anything else wrong with a bike. After all, if it's going to be a balanced review, there's got to be something wrong, right?



Single chainring lets Whyte make frame gains



Stubby 50mm stem and 760mm bar are a perfect pair

Sure, if you're an aggressive, or heavier rider, you'll probably want to add a couple of Bottomless Tokens to the rear shock just to prevent it from bottoming too easily on jumps and drops. Other than that, the Whyte T-130 S is ready for anything, just as it comes.

Whyte has been trying hard to get all of its ducks in a row for a couple of years now. It was ahead of the curve with geometry and fit. It was also one of the first brands to really get behind single ring-only drivetrains. Its bikes are also very competitively priced, given that you can still walk into a shop and try one for size.

With the T130 S, Whyte now has the suspension performance to offer the complete package. It's one of the best trail bikes to grace the pages of mbr, and it joins a handful of greats, like the Orange 5, Lapierre Zesty and Specialized Stumpjumper. It's crazy to think that it's only been on sale for 12 months and it's already a classic. 2016 has been a truly amazing year for Whyte, and we're sure that the T-130 S winning our Bike of the Year award is just the beginning of bigger and better things. Roll on 2017...

## SPECIFICATION

- Frame** 6061-T6 aluminium SCR, 130mm travel
- Shock** RockShox Monarch RT Debonair
- Fork** RockShox Yari RC, 130mm travel
- Wheels** Sealed bearing hubs, WTB Asym i23 rims, WTB Trail Boss 27.5x2.25in tyres
- Drivetrain** SRAM GX1000 chainset, r-mech and shifter
- Brakes** SRAM DB5, 180/160mm
- Components** Whyte, RockShox Reverb Stealth seat post
- Sizes** S, M, L, XL
- Weight** 13.56kg (29.89lb)

## GEOMETRY

- Size tested** L
- Head angle** 66.1°
- Seat angle** 69.4°
- BB height** 331mm
- Chainstay** 421mm
- Front centre** 764mm
- Wheelbase** 1,185mm
- Down tube** 710mm
- Top tube** 631mm
- Reach** 467mm

# WHYTE T-130C RS REVIEW

by Trev Worsey



PHOTO: ROSS BELL  
WWW.ENDURO-MTB.COM

British company Whyte have always championed good geometry and the Whyte T-130C RS epitomises that approach with numbers that, even on paper got us excited. With its sharp lines and long, low and mean demeanor the Whyte looks like a hunched sprinter ready to explode out of the blocks, but would the numbers add up on the trail?

The T-130C is UK company Whyte's top of the line aggressive trail bike, offering 130 mm of travel and a potent geometry for those that enjoy some gnar in their daily riding sandwich. Designed in the UK, the T-130C bristles with clever design solutions for the rugged British weather, from the generous mud clearance, and ingenious integrated seat clamp to secure bearing covers to keep the worst of the grime out. The RS spec features SRAM's Roam 40 wheels, a Rockshox Pike RC fork and Monarch Debonaire RT3 shock, all good choices in our books. The SRAM X1/X0 11 speed drivetrain provides precise shifting and SRAM Guide RS brakes keep the speed down. The T-130C RS is single ring specific, allowing the pivots to be wider and stiffer.

**“If the reason you ride is to have as much fun as possible, then the Whyte T-130C RS is intoxicating.”**



### Conclusion

The Whyte T-130C RS is an excellent bike, happy to be pedaled all day with a geometry that unlocks skills and style that you didn't know you had. If the reason you ride is to have as much fun as possible, then the Whyte T-130C RS is intoxicating. It's a very enjoyable bike to ride fast, and in the hands of an experienced rider can hustle along at ridiculous speeds.



“happy to be pedaled all day with a geometry that unlocks skills and style that you didn't know you had.”



LONG  
TERM



Size tested **Large**



## Guy's Whyte T-130C RS £3499

I know I've really synced with a long termer when I'm secretly delighted that my next year's bike is late arriving, meaning I'm going to have to keep using this one for testing a while longer. When it does finally head back to Whyte's south coast HQ it's not just me who'll be upset either as it's been the number one 'spare bike' choice of my northern test riding team. The time some of them took to get their own bikes sorted out and give the Whyte back is deeply suspicious too. It's a great sign of the remarkably universal ride appeal of the Whyte though. Flatout free riders were amazed it only had 130mm travel. Techy singletrack segment hunters saw their Strava trophy cabinet fill rapidly during their Whyte time. Even Dave who'd pretty much become a roadie had his love for playing silly buggers in the mud shocked back into him by just how easy everything suddenly was to

ride. He even loved the bonkers 800mm Pacenti bar and 25mm stem combo. The T-130C is still the bike I'm judging all incoming 2017 test machines against too, and when its replacement eventually does get here it's going to have to be seriously sorted to live up to the standards the Whyte has set.

### Best thing about the bike

The best part is all of it! I could pick individual components, the radical long and low geometry, the tight, tough frame or the quietly sorted suspension. However, it's how all its individual parts sync together so brilliantly that makes the Whyte outstanding.

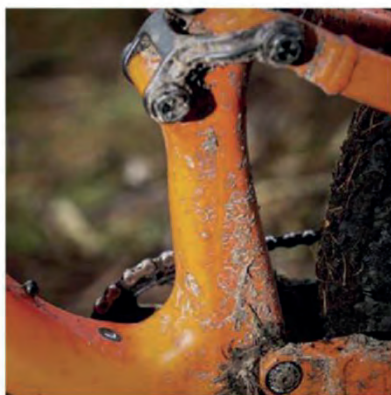
### Most important upgrade

It's not a bike that needed much fettling. The most significant upgrade I made to the Whyte at any point was adding the superb DT Swiss XMC 1200 wheels, which boosted acceleration and agility to a whole new level.

### If you had the cash, would you buy the bike?

Yes. Absolutely, unequivocally yes. I simply didn't ride a more addictively involving, multi-purpose, madness-ready trail bike all year. It's loaded with spot-on componentry for the money too.

[www.whyte.bike](http://www.whyte.bike)



# GET READY TO ROCK STEADY

## THE WHYTE G-160 S

PHOTOGRAPHER: MATT STAGGS TESTER: JASON DREGGS

Whyte Bikes are a proud British-designed bike company who strive to build you a bike that works wherever you need it to go in whatever the weather. Over a decade of development has gone into their pressure-forming techniques, resulting in their high performance frame construction. Whyte's G160 S, as used on the EWS scene, is definitely aimed at the gravity crowd and the aggressive all-rounder. *AMB* reviewed a G160 back at the end of 2014 – but the industry has moved on a little since then, especially in terms of suspension refinement, and of course a few industry standards, like Boost spacing.

### FIRST LOOK

At a first glance the 6061 aluminium frame stands out with a very nice aesthetic. The G160 has a noticeably long top tube and nice short chainstays at 425mm. The frame has some very nicely finished welds, and is covered with small details that show the attention paid by Whyte's engineers and designers. From the rubber seal on the seat tube, the replaceable (and colour-matched) inserts for the post mount disc brake, through to the BSA standard (threaded) bottom bracket shell. All these things add up to a frame that stands up to more conditions, and should have a longer service life.

The G160 is also super slack. As in, 66 degree head angle slack. Whyte have really pioneered the long top tube, short back end and slack head angle geometry, and truly back their stance. Even when you look at the T129 we tested in our last issue, you can see that Whyte design their bikes to be slacker and longer than others, keeping the handling sharp with short back ends, short stems and wide bars.

The G160 is a little different out back compared to the last one we tested. The Single Chainring Specific swing arm not only supports 148x12 Boost drop outs, but it has been designed without needing to accommodate a front derailleur. This means you get symmetrical stays to keep the weight down and the stiffness level up, with a

wider bearing stance. It also frees up a load of space in the most crowded part of the bike where your tyre, chain, suspension movement and seat tube all potentially collide in an additional heap of mud.

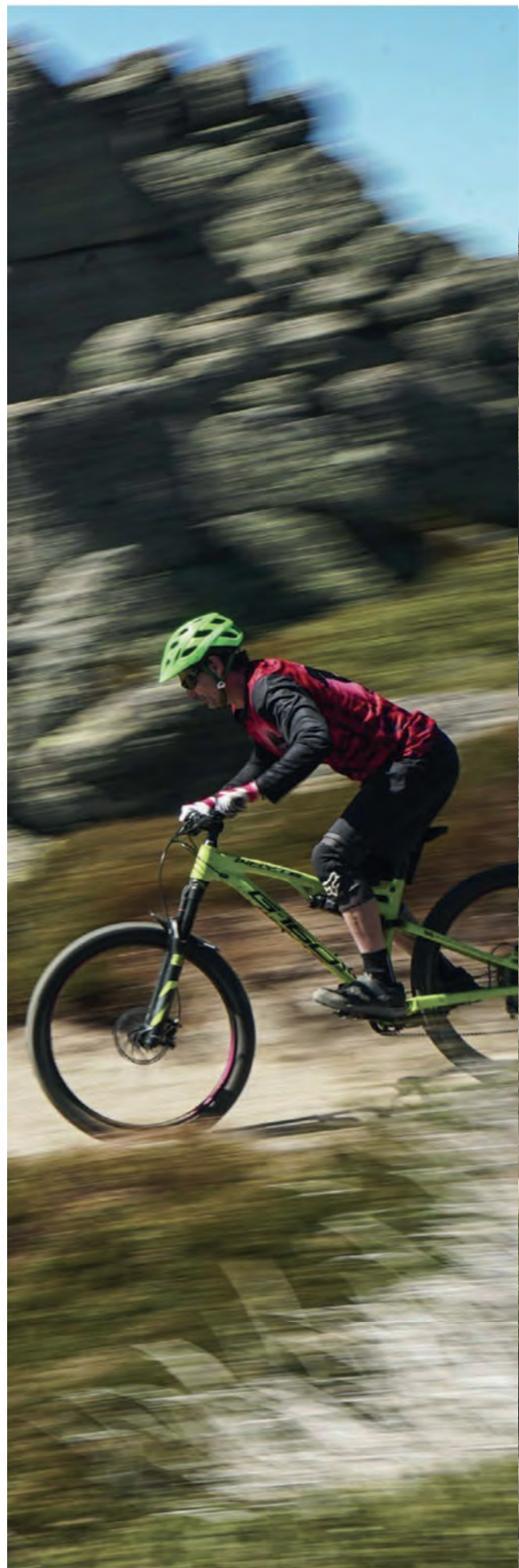
Whyte use Quad 4 suspension on all their dual-suspension models. The pivot placement of this four-bar linkage keeps the rear of the bike as short and as stiff as possible meaning the rear wheel is right under you, thus giving it a lively feel when accelerating and cornering.

Not as commonly well known as one of the big three bike brands, Whyte are fast becoming renowned for supplying riders who really know what they want and what works. That combination of longer top tubes (it's 50mm longer than my other medium bike) and shorter chain stays (425mm) adds a level of stability and agility other big brands are only just starting to achieve. This entry level G160 at \$4450 boasts

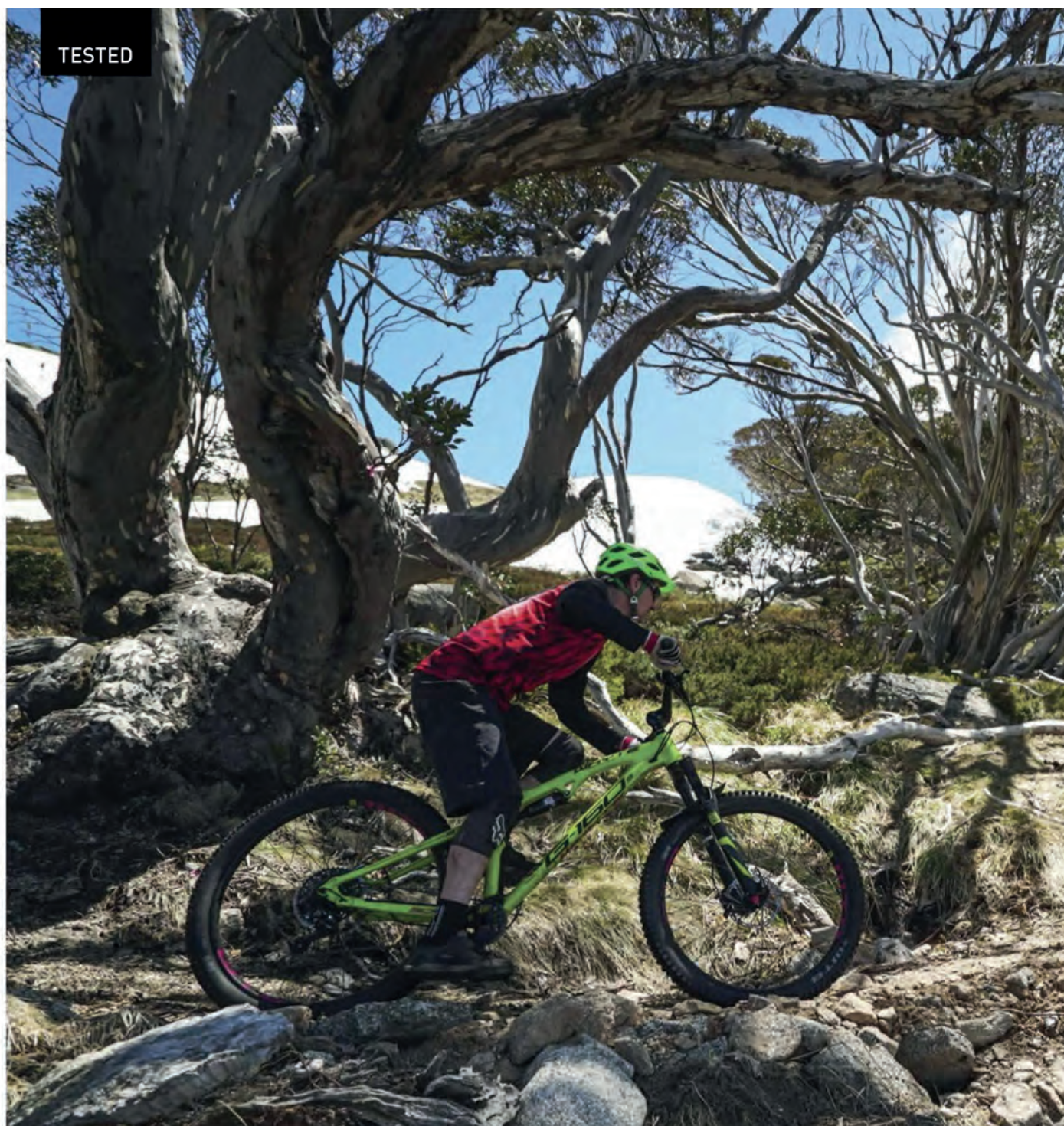
### JASON DREGGS RIDER BIO

Riding Experience: 20 plus years riding mountain bikes around Australia and abroad.

Generally Rides: Rocky Mountain Altitude, OnOne singlespeed, Trek roadie, Seven CX/gravel bike  
Height: 178cm  
Weight: 67kg  
Bike Test Track: Thredbo, Northern Beaches



TESTED



160mm of travel with a RockShox Yari fork up front and a RockShox Monarch Debonair R with the new fast black coating for some very smooth feeling travel. I was very excited to throw my leg over this enduro beast and put it through its paces.

#### ON THE TRAIL

Looking at the bike from a distance you instantly know it is going to be a comfortable descender, especially with 780mm wide 35mm diameter bars on a 40mm stem. If you love short steep climbs, though, then you are not going to be a big fan of this bike. The G160 is a little long up front for tight fast-paced switchback climbing - I had to slow down and really steer the bike around corners. But with the long top tube and 66 degree head angle it's determined to go down the mountain and do it fast! The SRAM GX 1x11 drivetrain and SRAM

**"A FEW PEDAL STROKES TO GET IT UP TO SPEED, AND THE BIKE COMES ALIVE. IT REALLY WAS A CASE OF 'HOLD ON TIGHT' FOR A SUPER-STABLE RUN DOWN THE HILL AT MAXIMUM WARP SPEED."**

Descendant crank set provide all you need with the 10-42 cassette and 30t chain ring. Shifting was always precise even under the harshest demands with no need for a larger chain ring. If your trails are different to mine and you need more or less - you can easily upsize or downsize your chain ring. Your local Whyte dealer should be able to sort this out for you before you roll out the door. The WTB i29 rims on Whyte's own Boost spaced hubs come with WTB's 2.5" and 2.4" Convict and Ripper tyres front and rear respectively. The big girth and tubeless specific tyres gave me a lot of confidence and bite when it came to cornering. Getting my hands on this bike just before the start of summer, I decided to take it down to Thredbo's opening weekend and give it a real honest hit out on the Flow trail and the 10km long All-Mountain trail. This is where riding the bike really stood out. A few pedal strokes to get



it up to speed, and the bike comes alive. It really was a case of 'hold on tight' for a super-stable run down the hill at maximum warp speed.

Setting up the bike was easy, all I did was adjust the fork and shock pressures for 30 per cent sag and I was away. For Thredbo, I installed a chainguide for that 'just in case' moment. Given how the G160 is intended to be ridden, a chainguide truly can be a very simple piece of kit to keep you on the bike for longer.

The G160 absolutely gobbled up everything thrown at it. It did take a few runs to get used to the longer geometry as body position was vital to get the bike around corners and keep the front end down. Lifting the front end up was a little hard but with a tall stem stack this soon became easy to manoeuvre. I tried and tried to drift through some corners but the excellent grip and short chain stays meant the bike just wouldn't let go!

**OUR TAKE**

If you're a rider who is intent on the descent then the G160 could be the basis of a great bike for you. The geometry and suspension action means it is pretty much point and shoot, and the amount of traction and stability means that new lines will be discovered on all your local trails. As this is the first G160 in the range, it is worth noting that some of the parts could benefit from a boost. If you were looking to take this bike to its full potential, then a shock upgrade to something which can cope with longer runs and harder hits could be a wise investment. As it stands, it's \$4500 very well spent on a bike that is going to help your riding progress to another level.

**ESSENTIALS**

BRAND	Whyte
MODEL	G160 S
RRP	\$4450
WEIGHT	14.4kg (as tested)
FROM	Carbuta
AVAILABLE SIZES	S, M (tested), L
FRAME	6061 Aluminium, Boost drop outs.
FORK	RockShox Yari RC, 16Cmm, Boost
SHOCK	RockShox Monarch Debonair R, 160mm
SHIFTER	SRAM GX 11sp
DERAILLEUR	SRAM GX 11sp
CRANKSET	SRAM Descendant GXP, XSYNC direct mount 30T chainring, 11 Speed Alloy
BOTTOM BRACKET	SRAM GXP Team, 73mm
CHAIN	SRAM PC-1110, 11sp
CASSETTE	SRAM XG-1150 10-42, 11sp
HUBS	Alloy double dealed cartridge bearing, Boost, 32h
SPOKES	WTB 2.0mm
RIMS	WTB STs i29 Rims with TCS System
TYRES	WTB Convict TCS front, WTB Ridder TCS rear
BRAKES	SRAM Guide R, 180mm
STEM	Whyte Gravity Stem, 40mm
HANDLEBARS	Whyte Custom Alloy, 35mm Bar Bore, 15mm Rise, 780mm
SEATPOST	RockShox Reverb Stealth 125/150/170mm, 30.7mm, MMX
SADDLE	Whyte Custom dual density

## BRUTE FORCE, GENTLE ON THE WALLET

# WHYTE G-160 S REVIEW:

by Trev Worsey



The Whyte G-160 Works is a monster of a bike, its uncompromising super long and slack geometry brings downhill bike confidence and performance to the enduro sector with the right rider. The Whyte G-160 Works is not a bike for gentle trail rides, it's for smashing through rocky direct lines and going against the clock. However, at £4799 the Works model comes at a hefty cost, we tested the far more affordable £2499 Whyte G-160 S to see its animal instincts are equally as feral!

**“brings downhill bike confidence and performance to the enduro sector”**

### Riding the Whyte G-160 S

No sooner do you throw a leg over the low frame do you start to understand its intent, it is a very long bike, the reach of 495 mm (in size Large) is 5 cm longer than the 'low and long' Santa Cruz Nomad, but the 425 mm chainstays are shorter – aggressive is the word here! The 66° head angle and wide bars hold a line well over rough ground and the steep 74.3° seat angle provides an efficient pedalling position. The riding position feels spacious and very inside-the-bike over the long frame, with plenty of room to throw your weight around behind the wide bars.

# “superb poise and confidence”



The G-160 is for going fast, riding this bike gently is akin to getting into a Bugatti Veyron and driving round in 1st – pointless! You need to feed it speed for it to sing. Adopting an aggressive attack position and really driving the bike hard rewards with superb poise and confidence, charging through roots and over rocks like a demented bull! The Quad-4 suspension sinks into its travel well, providing massive amounts of grip but care is needed to set the SAG properly as the end stroke feels a little regressive, good for lighter riders but heavy riders more than 80 kg will need to pop some bands into the shock to firm up the spring curve a little (a 10 minute job). The Whyte G-160 S is more stable than poppy, while it's happy to launch off booters and send drops, its special skill is charging crazy lines and mopping up big hits.

**“Its extreme geometry is perfect for enduro racing and smashing downhill tracks in the woods. . . . like lighting a firework then hanging onto it.”**



## Conclusion

The Whyte G-160 S is an uncompromising gravity focussed animal, hitting a price point that will not break the bank. Its extreme geometry is perfect for enduro racing and smashing downhill tracks in the woods. Those looking for a long-legged trail bike will find the long front centre intimidating and hard to manage, but for aggressive riders with the skill to get the G-160 up to speed it will feel like lighting a firework then hanging onto it.



PHOTO: FABIAN RAPP  
LOCATION: KRONPLATZ / SAN VIGILIO - DOLOMITES  
[WWW.DESIGN-INNOVATION-AWARD.COM](http://WWW.DESIGN-INNOVATION-AWARD.COM)





## Whyte Wessex

British brand Whyte's latest endurance bike, the Wessex, is the very definition of an all-conditions road bike. The sculpted, modern carbon fibre frame champions a racing pedigree, while the 30 mm tires, hydraulic brakes, 2 x 11-speed drivetrain, and space for mudguards highlight the Wessex's year-round potential. With a muscular frame, the Whyte Wessex accelerates with the vigour of a race bike, dominating punchy climbs, while simultaneously being comfortable enough for day-long epics on the roughest country roads. The long wheelbase adds stability on white-knuckle descents, while the wide-stance fork ensures precise handling. The Whyte Wessex is perfect for the enthusiast who demands performance whatever the weather, from arduous winter chain gangs to crushing summer sportives.

Weight: 8.76 kg



# Whyte Wessex



**Verdict:** A British designed bike that is perfect for year-round British road cycling  
**Weight:** 8,800g **Contact:** [www.whyte.bike](http://www.whyte.bike)



by [David Arthur @davearthur](#) October 19 2016

Racing aside, it's all the bike you really need for year-round riding in the UK, fast enough for sportives and pacy training runs, comfortable and reliable for grinding out winter miles, and at home on longer commutes. Only a British company could design a bike that is absolutely, perfectly, 100 per cent suited to the demands of year-round UK road cycling.

## “A British designed bike that is perfect for year-round British road cycling”



The Wessex has been a long time coming from Whyte. Although the traditionally mountain bike-focused company has gradually moved into the road bike market with the likes of the Suffolk we reviewed last year, the brand new Wessex 'is conceived to be the ideal British road bike' and has only been made possible with the advent of the latest technology – advances such as wide tubeless-ready rims, decent tubeless tyres, hydraulic disc brakes and thru-axles.

### Ride and handling

My first ride on the Wessex was an enjoyable, if tiring, 140km loop of some of the finest Cotswolds countryside, the testing ground that helped form Whyte designer Ian Alexander's blueprint for the new bike. With a change to a 120mm stem and the saddle set to my height, I immediately felt at home on it, and that's always a good sign of a test bike – that no radical changes are required and the fit and position feel natural.

**“What a bike! For grinding out long winter rides with mudguards or tackling summer sportives without, the Wessex is the ideal choice”**



Rolling along country lanes, it's immediately obvious that the bike benefits from a stable and surefooted balance, a result of the long wheelbase – 1003.3mm on this size 54cm model. The steering feels predictable and relaxed in a straight line and weaving through the turns. Out of the saddle and up steep and long ascents, the Wessex climbs authoritatively, the front end displaying a crispness with no hint of flex from the fork or rub from the disc brake.

As you settle into a steady rhythm, the 30mm-wide Schwalbe S-One tyres roll with surprising pace for such a big tyre. There's no hesitation in the way they pick up and maintain speed, and no concern that they generate any excessive drag compared with narrower tyres. The large volume tyres, run at a low pressure – between 70-80psi (it's worth experimenting with these wider tyres to find the sweet spot) – really take out the hard edges of some of the more badly surfaced roads sadly in abundance in the Cotswolds.

The rims are laced to Whyte's own aluminium hubs with double sealed bearings, with 28 DT Competition butted spokes in each wheel.

As for the S-One tyres, there's not much I can say that Mike didn't already gush about in his review last year. Considering the size and the tread pattern, they're a fast-rolling tyre and provide stacks of traction in tricky conditions, when the road surface is coated with rain, mud and gravel. The V-Guard technology ensures the tyres withstand flats impressively well, even at lower pressures and slamming into rocks and holes. They also, via the larger contact patch and the dimpled tread pattern, let you make the most of the powerful hydraulic disc brakes.

### Conclusion

What a bike! For grinding out long winter rides with mudguards or tackling summer sportives without, the Wessex is the ideal choice. Okay, so it's not the lightest option, but it's more than comfortable and smooth enough and is fast and fun when you want to up the pace, but calm and collected when pedalling at a steady clip. And at £2,150 it's (relatively speaking) good value too – cheaper than the similarly specced Cannondale Synapse Disc.

### Verdict

A British designed bike that is perfect for year-round British road cycling

# WHYTE Dorset

£1,099

Designed in Britain to tackle typically British roads

BikesEtc

BEST  
IN TEST



**T**he Whyte Dorset is a bike that has clearly had some serious thought gone into it. From the frame design, via the little touches like the British flag appearing through the seat clamp to the internal cable routing with rubber grommets to dampen noise and movement, this is a fine machine.

The Dorset's also obviously been designed with urban riding and commuting in mind, with features such as the full mudguard mounts, rack mounts and quick-release skewers, complete with a screw-in lever that has a pentagonal bolt to prevent theft. The latter works well – just so long as you remember to keep it with you at all times in case of punctures or some other need to remove a wheel.

On the road, the bike picks up speed surprisingly easily, something which is helped in no small way by the smooth ride provided by the impressive Schwalbe tyres. Flat roads were a breeze and no matter what surface we took it on, the Dorset just got on with getting us where we needed to go. It almost felt like the rougher the road, the more capable the Dorset was of handling them.

It may be the heaviest on test, but we found the Dorset to be tenacious on climbs with its compact gearing getting us up even the steepest of inclines. OK, it's no rocket ship going uphill but never once did it feel too laborious. The downhill sections of our test ride were where it played its true trump card, though. The front end felt solid and stable at all speeds and through the corners, the relatively wide, flared handlebars combined with the grippy 30mm wide S-One tyres helped it hold a line superbly. Not once did it feel too slow or docile that we couldn't flick it about with ease.

While Tiagra might be at the lower end of the Shimano groupset line-up, the performance is surprisingly good with precise, easy shifting and an 11-32 cassette offering a wide enough range for all types of riding.

Overall, the Dorset is a bike that can turn its hand to anything the road can throw at it – and will keep you smiling whatever type of ride you take it on.



The Dorset proved more than a match for any road surface we threw at it



**GOOD**

■ **Cornering confidence**

Downhill or on faster, twisty roads it's as stable as it is fun.

■ **Tyres** The 30mm Schwalbe S-One rubber offers great grip.

■ **Components** Everything is perfect for its intended use.



**PRICE:** £1,099

**WEIGHT:** 10.58kg (54cm)

**FRAME:** Hydroformed aluminium, carbon disc fork, aluminium steerer

**GROUPSET:** Shimano Tiagra 4700, 10-speed

**BRAKES:** TRP HyRd, 160mm

**CHAINSET:** FSA Omega, 50/34

**CASSETTE:** Shimano Tiagra, 11-32

**BAR:** Whyte Compact Wing Bar

**STEM:** Whyte

**SADDLE:** Whyte Custom

**SEATPOST:** Whyte, 20mm offset

**WHEELS:** Whyte Road Disc

**TYRES:** Schwalbe S-One

**CONTACT:** whyte.bike



**NOT SO GOOD**

■ **Tubed wheels** Tubeless-ready rims would add to the appeal.

■ **FSA chainset** Can't match Shimano for smooth shifting.

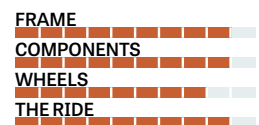
■ **10-speed groupset** The Tiagra 4700 works brilliantly, but an extra gear would be nice.



**CONCLUSION**

On paper, the Dorset wouldn't win any competitions, but on the road it's a perfect example of a bike that's been created as a complete package. The ride delivers exactly what it's designed to and will get you grinning with cornering and downhill flair that puts some pure race bikes to shame. 🚴

**Rating**



# A GROWN UP BIKE FOR MINI-SHREDDERS?

## WHYTE 403 KIDS BIKE REVIEW

by Trev Worsey



Boasting many features you would expect on a 'grown-ups' bike, the Whyte 403 is tough, capable and above all, great fun.

It's a fact, there is simply nothing more rewarding than seeing your kids enjoying the sports that you love. Getting them out in the fresh air and having fun on a bike is the dream for most bike mad parents. We have been testing the Whyte 403 for three months to see if it can handle life with a ten-year-old.

**“it's a bike we all wish we  
had owned as a kid.”**

The thinking parent knows that all is really needed is something robust, light and affordable, offering good brakes and confident handling – what is needed is a nice hardtail. Retailing for £625 the Whyte 403 is the most affordable kids bike in their range, boasting 26-inch wheels and well-chosen components it's a cool looking machine. Targeted at junior pilots from 125 – 152 cm, it's a bike we all wish we had owned as a kid.

# We love this! The Get-A-Grip long seat clamp is easy to use for those with small hands.



After 3 months of testing, our 10-year-old stunt pilot loved the Whyte 403. It has proven tough enough to shrug off the knocks and scratches that kids specialise in, and has required minimal attention. The well thought out geometry offers smooth and stable handling, heaps of confidence and can be hustled along rapidly with an experienced test pilot. For cost focused parents, at £625 the 403 is an excellent buy, while it is more expensive, it offers a far superior ride to catalogue bikes while undercutting the best competition without adding too much heft. With Whyte's strong reputation the 403 should hold its price well at resale or be tough enough to pass down through a whole squad of mini-shredders. But be warned, this bike may result in an embarrassing case of 'when-did-my-kid-get-faster-than-me?'

## “serving up lashings of confidence, reliability and above all fun”

### Conclusion

The excellent Whyte 403 offers a 'grown up' ride while serving up lashings of confidence, reliability and above all fun to the most important mini-shredder in your life. While more expensive than the standard 'catalogue' bike, seeing your kid grinning from ear to ear as they fall in love with riding is priceless. The Whyte 403 is a great buy.



# THE DEFINITIVE UK HARDTAIL

## WHYTE 909 REVIEW

by Trev Worsey



### Riding the Whyte 909

Hardtails live and die by their geometry numbers, and it's great to see that Whyte have brought their 909 bang up to speed with a thoroughly progressive geometry. The angles are very well balanced, spacious without being barge like, slack without being a chopper, with a generous 459 mm reach in the size Large and tight 425 mm chainstays. Being a hardtail the 73° seat angle is fixed and puts the rider in an efficient position over the pedals for good power delivery. The 641 mm stack is tall and riders who like to really push the front wheel hard into turns will look to slam the stem as low as possible.

**“pedal like an animal and it takes on the daftest lines with total confidence.”**





We were impressed with the 909's confidence inspiring riding position, the balanced geometry and slackish 66.5° head angle gives you plenty of room to get behind the bars, pushing through roots and off drops with ease. It's an easy bike to exploit and had us winding it up to full speed on hard trails within just a few minutes of introduction. The wide and slack front end allow you to slide and drift the rear with total ease, perfect for the sort of 'good-times' riding that hardtails encourage. Steering is precise and visceral, snapping from line to line with ease while the Fox Float 34 Performance fork does a good job of fending off the hard hits.



**“The 909 is a great bike, reminding us of just how fast you can ride on a proper, sorted hardtail.”**

The 909 is a great bike, reminding us of just how fast you can ride on a proper, sorted hardtail. Beginner and intermediate riders will find it a confidence building bike with very composed handling and enough reserves to compliment poor line choices. Advanced riders will find the 909 a raw and aggressive trail missile, a bike that would be just a happy putting in fast laps of a local trail centre as rocking up to the start line of an enduro race.

**“For those looking to smash out ride after ride without the complexity and expense of a full suspension bike, it's faultless”**

#### **Conclusion**

Offering a great ride and composed handling the Whyte 909 brings a smile to the face of any level of rider. The aggressive stance encourages you to pedal like an animal and it takes on the daftest lines with total confidence. For those looking to smash out ride after ride without the complexity and expense of a full suspension bike, it's faultless.



# WHYTE 801

£750 / 27.5in / whyte.bike

## NEED TO KNOW

- New frame design takes Whyte's proven hardtail geometry and handling to a lower price point
- Air-sprung 120mm RockShox 30 fork is easy to adjust and service
- Short stem and a wide handlebar boost confidence and control
- The XL size option is actually big enough for taller riders

## All the attitude of the amazing 901 in a more affordable package

It's rare that I hop on a size medium bike and instantly think that it fits. Even at 5ft 11in tall, more often than not, I find myself riding the largest bike in the line. Not so with the new Whyte 801 hardtail.

As a result of the revised geometry and sizing, standover clearance on the 801 is way better than any of the £750 bikes that graced the pages of this year's Hardtail of the Year test. An added bonus of the sensible seat tube length being that it actually makes upgrading to a dropper post possible.

It's the slack steering geometry and stubby 45mm stem that really sets the 801 apart from its rivals though. A combination that puts you in a riding position more akin to a good full-suspension trail bike than one that's been designed for towpath plodding.

Whyte has also worked on improving the ride quality of the frame by increasing comfort. By switching to a chainstay mount for the rear brake caliper, it has been able to increase the effective length of the seatstays, which in turn makes the back end of the bike more forgiving.

Other aspects of the frame design are quintessentially British. The forward facing Get-A-Grip seat collar helps keep

the mud out while simultaneously flying the flag. It's a neat piece of design too, pressing against the seatpost rather than pinching the frame to secure it in place. Quainter, and somewhat redundant — thanks to more effective fork-mounted mudguards — are the bosses under the down tube for an old Crud Catcher.

All in, the new Whyte 801 is a very polished product, and while it certainly won't match the direct sales brands on price, after one ride in Wales I'm confident that the Whyte will run rings around the competition out on the trail.

*Alan Muldoon*

## mbr 1ST IMPRESSION



### HIGHS

Great shape and sizing make the 801 an instant hit. It won't shake your fillings out like some entry-level hardtails.



### LOWS

The fork has 9mm QR dropouts, not the stiffer 15mm Maxle. No clutch rear mech to reduce chain rattle and the grips are too skinny.