

INTO THE RIDE #17**BAGARAMA**

A collective review of RANS recumbent bike bags

By Randy Schlitter



A. Z-Bag, our latest offering custom made to fit the new Zephyr seat. B. The Tailpack, the original streamliner bag that has been copied by many, but never equaled. C. Another cargo carrying innovation from RANS, the Brief Case bag, designed to carry a laptop in protected capture, comes with a special rain cover and attach system. Made of molded fabric foam laminate, neat stuff! D. Another molded fabric foam laminate, this case fits perfectly into water bottle cages, or inside another bag to hold tool kits, or tubes. E. The revised and improved Commuter bag, very popular, very functional.

Riding season is here! And one thing that makes a ride more enjoyable is being able to carry small payloads of much needed items. A place to put a small tool kit, pump, tubes, and tire will payback big, once you flatted miles from town. Of course all our seats, with the exception of the new Zephyr seat, have a compartment in the top. This is large enough to carry a few items; however if you prefer to pack a more extensive support system there are many options.

The very early Stratus and Nimbus bikes featured a fairing that included a "cargo" bag. It was large enough to house water bottles, a pump, jacket, and lunch. A small nylon bag was provided to stuff water sensitive items.



The handlebar fairing had the dual purpose of a storage compartment.

This was phased out with the advent of new styles of handlebars. To retain cargo capacity rear and front racks were offered and many standard panniers were used in place of the fairing cargo pod.

A bag that slipped over the top of the seat was created a few years back which became very popular and is known as the Commuter Bag. It came in high visibility yellow and covert black. Both featured

enough reflectors to ward off any night collisions. After a short absence the Commuter Bag has returned to the lineup, and in a much improved form. The new Commuter Bags are tough, heavy duty Cordura, have very high quality, and are made in the USA.



The new improved commuter bag features a tough exterior of Cordura Nylon.

This bag remains a top seller because of the large volume, and ease of attaching or removing from the bike. It uses the slip over mesh system pioneered in the Tailpack bag. A large strip of reflector material makes it blindly obvious in headlights, plus the large mesh overlap keeps the bag tight against the seat, for less bag sway while underway. A small security strap on the bottom prevents easy removal from the bike, thwarting a would-be thief.



Lace this strap around the sprint braces to slow down unwanted removal of your Commuter Bag.

The now famous and much copied Tailpack has been one of our best selling bags of all time. This little jewel seems to fit into the stream of things with a style and flair not ever seen before on bents. The Tailpack is just the right volume for typical day rides and serves also to streamline the flow of air off the back of the seat. We have heard outrageous claims from owners about 2 and even 3MPH increases in speed when using the bag, but cannot account for it other than a good dose of optimism. This bag has some neat features that make it worth considering. The top is crisscrossed with bungee to allow

the retention of extra items on the top deck. Shoulder straps are included to make off the bike transport easy. The mesh pocket allows easy install on the seat.



Our Tailpack, the original streamliner bag, has been rumored to increase cruise speeds 2 to 3 MPH, by no admission or claim from us.

Our Brief Case bag is one of the slickest bags in the running. Made from a molded foam fabric sandwich, it is effectively a hard shell case with a soft heart. The tough exterior is a very weatherproof nylon. Inside is a soft, padded case to house a laptop. The attach system features the easy slip over design with a pull out rain cover. The blazing fluorescent lime green cover sticks out like a sore thumb even on a gray and rainy day. This bag is now reduced in price; see ShopRANS for the current special on this bag. You don't have to use it to haul your laptop and it makes a great bag otherwise.



A very cool material makes this super sleek briefcase bag that if inclined safely houses your laptop, or other valuable cargo.

In the same material comes the Cage Case. This can ride inside another bag to hold a tool kit, key or such, or drop it into the water bottle cage. The molded case is light, and hard to crush, offering added protection to items within.



With the invention of the Zephyr seat came the need to carry a small amount of cargo. The very lightweight Z-Bag is the perfect compliment to the light seat. There is room for the essentials when taking that cross-country ride. Designed along the same lines as our Tailpack the Z-bag offers function and sleek styling.



The wide selection of RANS bags offers the day rider or commuter some great options. For those needing to pack enough for touring, take a look at the rack options. Most models of our bikes can use a front or rear rack that accepts many of the popular touring systems. The new under seat rack, The Easy Reacher provides yet another alternative. Hopefully one of these cargo-carrying options will enhance the benefit of owning a RANS recumbent. For details and specials on the products, check with your bike dealer, www.shoprans.com or just pick up the phone and call. Enjoy the spring riding, stay safe, and stay into the ride!

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