

Velo Vision Sample Article

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If you have any problems or suggestions about the magazine in general, or this PDF article in particular, please email me at

peter@velovision.co.uk

I hope you enjoy the read.

Peter Eland
Editor and Publisher,
Velo Vision

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Velo Vision is published quarterly by Velo Vision Ltd. Daily news and updates can be found on www.velovision.co.uk

ISSN 1475-4312

Velo Vision, The Environmental Community Centre, St Nicholas Fields, York, YO10 3EN, UK
Tel/Fax +44 1904 438 224 (from UK, 01904 438 224)
Email peter@velovision.co.uk
Website www.velovision.co.uk

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER: Peter Eland
ART DIRECTOR: Brian Holt
WEB PROGRAMMER: Simon Ward
PRINTER: Stephens & George Magazines Ltd, Merthyr Tydfil, Wales, UK. Tel 01685 388 888

PUBLISHING SCHEDULE:
Issue 20: early December 2005
Issue 21: early March 2006
Issue 22: early June 2006
Issue 23: early September 2006

Velo Vision is a member of **ink**, trade association of the alternative press in the UK. www.ink.uk.com

VELO VISION AND VELO-VISION We weren't first with the name. Velo-Vision (note the hyphen) is a progressive HPV-friendly bike shop in Kärten, near Bergisch-Gladbach, Germany, who also make their own recumbents. Velo Vision magazine is working in friendly harmony with Velo-Vision in Germany.

Velo Vision is printed on paper produced from sustainable forests to Nordic Swan standards.



COVER PHOTOGRAPH:

Riders enjoy the York Cycle Show mass parade.

OPPOSITE:

Cycling photographer Jason Patient catches the evening light on the VeloVisionaries ride.

Both photos by Peter Eland.

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DELIGHTFUL DIVERSITY

It's a thoroughly mixed bag this issue, as we take a rollercoaster ride by human power on land, water and even in the air. But why should a cycling magazine include these more unusual forms of pedal power? After all, few readers will find pedal boating or airship travel useful in their everyday cycling lives.

First, because I find human power in all its forms fascinating, and I hope you do too. It's also pure inspiration: after hearing that someone's pedalled to Hawaii, or crossed the Channel by human-power airship, it's hard to whinge about a bit of rain preventing you from cycling to work.

So if seeing watercraft and aircraft in our pages irks the purists, so be it. There is plenty of more conventional (for us at least) fare in this issue too, including a wonderfully diverse collection of reader reviews, a look back at an enjoyable summer of cycling, and tests of some impressive new bikes. Thanks again to all who contributed, and enjoy the read!

Peter Eland

CYCLING SUMMER 05

We round up the summer's cycling events with reports from CycleVision in the Netherlands and two UK gatherings: the York Cycle Show and Cyclefeast in Northumberland.



CYCLE VISION

All change for the world's largest recumbent event! As you'll have read in previous reports (Issues 3, 7, 11, and 15) the long-term venue for CycleVision has been the automotive test track at Lelystad. But the desire for a change, and to attract a new range of visitors triggered a move for 2005 and collaboration with some more mainstream events. The new location is the Zandvoort (motor) racing circuit on the North Sea coast just south of the port of IJmuiden (connected by ferry to Newcastle and other UK ports). Alongside the usual recumbent activity, there were conventional road-race events, and a mass ride ending at Zandvoort on the Sunday. But it was cold and overcast for most of the weekend, with occasional rain, so visitor numbers weren't spectacular.

The circuit, with gradient changes and relatively sharp corners, was quite a change from the flat oval at Lelystad, the venue for previous years. But a bigger challenge, especially for faired racers, was the extremely strong wind.

Away from the racing, the pits area had been converted to act as a trade show venue, with exhibitors in each of the pit 'garages'. Visitors' bikes were everywhere as well, and most conspicuous was a huge crowd of (mostly) Quest velomobiles.



ABOVE: Over 300 racers had registered, and for many races there were large numbers of competitors on the track.

BELOW: The 'pits' area was set up as a trade show, and visitors added to the numbers of bikes, trikes and velomobiles on display.

Total sales of these are now close to 300, I'm told. We reviewed these vehicles in Issue 14.

Talking of total sales, on the Sunday there was a presentation for the winner of the '50,000th Dutch Recumbent' competition organised by a group of 11 specialist recumbent dealers. They estimated that since the beginnings of the recumbent industry 20 years ago, 45,000 machines had been produced in the Netherlands, plus an additional 5000 or so home-builts. They then organised a 'National Recumbent Day' on the 20th March with plenty of publicity and events to get people who hadn't tried a recumbent before to give it a go. Then, anyone who bought a bike in the next two weeks was entered into a draw to be named the "50,000th recumbent" and to win a bike to the value of 1500 Euros. The lucky winner, drawn from the 54 people who bought recumbents in the competition period, was a Mr Wille from Den Briel.

At the trade show two trends stood out. As at the SPEZI (see last issue) trikes seemed to be on the increase, with ICE travelling over from the UK for the first time and, as ever, getting mobbed on their stand. Optima also had examples of their Rhino models with and without full suspension, plus a few KMXs were also there, as well as several home-built trikes.

The other trend was that the 'big three' Netherlands recumbent makers (Challenge, Optima and M5 Ligfietsen) were all competing hard to offer seriously lightweight machines. All were claiming sub-10kg weights for their flagship machines. We had a full review of the Challenge Hurricane SL last issue. Optima were also in there with their Baron X-Low, claimed at sub 9kg. M5 have bikes starting at a claimed 8.7kg. But it's always hard to make valid weight comparisons – at this level, component choice is more important than frame design, and it's relatively 'easy' to lose a few 100 grams by throwing money at expensive parts.

For details of next year's event, check www.cyclevision.nl or the *Velo Vision* event listings

Text and photos: Peter Eland



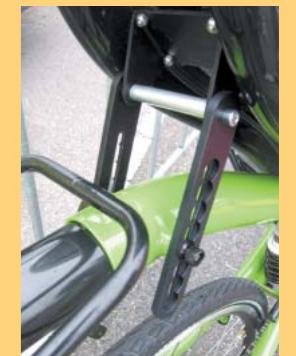
M5's latest super-light recumbent (above), the TiCa Low Racer with, as its name suggests, a combination of carbon fibre and titanium in its sleek frame. They've also developed their own very lightweight calliper brakes (right), even more cut-away than the Challenge ones we showed last issue. M5 Ligfietsen: Tel +31 118 628759 or see www.m5-ligfietsen.nl



I hadn't realised that Flevobike's popular Oke-Ja design (left) is still being made, by a company called Forty Bike in the Netherlands. Now with suspension and called the 'Oke-Ja Plus', the bikes cost from 850 Euros. Among the nice features is a very wide and fast range of seat adjustment. Forty Bike: Tel/Fax +31 186 572 523 or see www.fortybike.nl



We've reported before on Czech recumbent maker AZUB's range of recumbent bags, but they had a new prototype on show at CycleVision: an improved Brompton front bag. Ladislav Blaha of AZUB is a keen Brompton user and wanted a more stylish, waterproof bag, with room for a helmet. The also wanted to ensure that the bag would hang properly when carried. The usual Brompton front bag is carried by a loop in the frame, off to one side of the bag, so it hangs at an angle, bumping into your legs and looking silly. He's also added a shoulder strap for extra convenience. Other changes to the AZUB range included a tidied-up seat mount (below right) and an 'off-road' version of the Max model, complete with fat 26" off-road tyres. Ladia said that this simple change to the styling had made the bike hugely more popular on the test-track...



One of the most ingenious bikes on show was the Minq 2 prototype (left), developed by Erik Hartemink. It employs the Bauke Muntz front wheel drive design which we described in issue 15 page 42. Since then vast improvements have been made in terms of handling: whereas I just couldn't ride it a year ago, this time I jumped on and rode away without a problem. It even handled nicely at low speed. A particularly clever feature is that the seat, which also forms a low-level carrier rack, is detachable. So you have somewhere comfortable to sit at your destination, as the illustration by Bauke Muntz demonstrates.

Bram Smits, Bauke's other collaborator, had also brought a two-wheeler using a subtly different front-wheel-drive system, but again the improvement was significant: no problems riding it straight away. Both bikes were demonstrating the design freedom that comes from a compact front-wheel-drive layout. I'm sure there'll be more to see next year! See www.minq.nl or www.fastfwd.nl for more details.



I initially thought this home-built machine (above) had rocket-assist – but the tubes on the back were just for waterproof storage.