

## 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

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I hope you enjoy the read.

Peter Eland  
Editor and Publisher, Velo Vision

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### Small print

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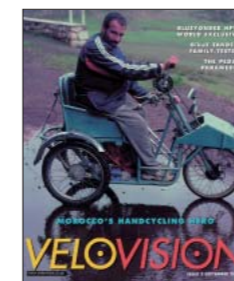
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VELO VISION AND VELO-VISION  
We weren't first with the name. Velo-Vision (note the hyphen) is a progressive HPV-friendly bike shop in Körten, near Bergisch-Gladbach, Germany, who also make their own recumbents. Velo Vision magazine is working in friendly harmony with Velo-Vision in Germany. Contact them on [www.velo-vision.de](http://www.velo-vision.de)



**Cover illustration:** Mohamed Azourar, a handcyclist from Morocco, has completed several long-distance tours, covering many thousands of kilometres. World cycle-tourist Claude Marthaler met and photographed this remarkable cyclist: read more on page 24.

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### FILL THE GAP

Able-bodied editors of cycling magazines like me find the subject of cycling for the disabled a hard one to judge. How can we know when we're being patronising, making assumptions, or just getting the tone wrong? How many readers are interested in a subject which may directly affect only a small number of them?

For these reasons perhaps, and certainly because cycling for the disabled isn't perceived as a topic that 'sells' mainstream magazines, it rarely gets any coverage in the cycling press.

Yet most cyclists will have wondered, perhaps fleetingly, about how their lives might change were they to lose the ability to ride a bike. Would I lose independent mobility, fitness, the wind in my hair? Or could I still, somehow, cycle?

The internet can be a wonderful source of information for those who can access it. Yet I've been told by a number of readers who are disabled, or who work with disabled cyclists, that there is still a huge 'information gap'. This is despite the splendid efforts of companies active in the field, who can modify standard or specialised machines to accommodate a huge spectrum of disabilities. Yet many who might like to get into cycling don't, simply because no-one is telling them what's possible.

The article about Morocco's long-distance disabled cyclists is a wonderful one-off, but I do hope that cycling for the disabled is a topic which will continue to figure in the magazine. I'd be delighted to work with any reader who might like to contribute an article on this or, of course, on any other cycling subject.

PETER ELAND

# CYCLE VISION 2001

*Cycle Vision, in early June, is probably Europe's biggest recumbent event. Peter Eland went across for the show.*

The sheer scale and professionalism of the Dutch HPV scene was a bit of a shock to the system. In the UK at least, there's just nothing like this event. It wasn't just the impeccably organised racing or the quality and diversity of the trade stands which impressed me, but also the sheer number of recumbents and riders who came along. Several thousand are estimated to have attended on each of the two days, and recumbents (and just a few uprights) were leaning against just about every available surface at the height of the event.

Before moving on to the pictures of the event, here are some of the my overall impressions:

★ The Challenge and Optima stands, both with a wide range of beautifully-finished bikes. Some of the Challenge machines, with welded aluminium frames, seemed to have been dipped bodily into the anodising bath, and looked stunning. The friendly competition

between these two companies has clearly been good for the Dutch recumbent consumer, with both offering very refined machines. Several other manufacturers, such as M5, were up to the same high standard.

★ A very high standard of home-built machines: there was a display area set aside for visitors to show off their handiwork. Cycle Vision was also a great opportunity for any homebuilder to get supplies. Machined bottom bracket shells, dropouts, seats, bearings, chain pulleys, small-wheel rims, tyres and tubes: all were on sale in abundance and at often ridiculously low prices. ★ And if you didn't fancy building your own, there were 20 or 30 second-hand machines on display, as well as other used machines on various trade stands. Again, to British eyes some of the prices seemed remarkably low. Presumably this simply reflected the larger numbers of recumbents 'out there' filtering through to the second-hand market.

★ The racing: this sort of passed me by, as I spent most of my time in the trade tent either selling Velo Vision or taking pictures and talking to people. But the huge (car-scale) test track was certainly great for the competitors, and the races attracted a good audience through the day. There were impressive performances: Bram Moens of M5 Recumbents won the 200m sprint event at over 85km/h (53mph), and at the other end of the spectrum Axel Fehlau in White Hawk rode the six-hour event at an average speed of over 54km/h (34mph) – covering just over 327km in the time.

★ There was also a test-track for trying out recumbents, but I never got a chance to even go and look at it! It was a longish walk over to the middle of the race circuit.

As usual at such events, the enthusiasm and friendliness didn't end with the 'official' close of play at the racetrack venue. Although many Dutch visitors just made day-

trips (the country is small enough to make this little hardship), most of the 'overnighters' were camped at t'Oppertje, about 45 minutes ride away. Thanks to the crew at Hafa Ligfietsen for the loan of a bike to get me there ... Until dark, there was plenty of talking, trying out of bikes and general badinage. It would probably have helped if I spoke or at least understood Dutch, but I was made to feel very welcome anyway.

Next year's dates haven't been set as we went to press, but I gathered that there's talk of moving it away from the Lelystadt test track where it's been held the last few years. The cost of renting the venue keeps on rising, I'm told, and it might be nice to have somewhere with the camping and other accommodation a bit nearer. That said, the current venue is really superb in every other respect, and the event as it is has clearly gathered plenty of momentum. Wherever it is, I'll be back next year.

Travelling to and from the show was a bit of a challenge – I needed to carry 600 copies of the magazine over with me. In the end, I got a lift in a car to the ferry port at Hull, then unpacked bike, trailer and lots of magazines. With 80+kg of mags on board, the trailer tyres were looking a bit squashed, but I only had to pedal it across the port and onto the ship ...

Everyone waiting to get on thought I was Dutch – and one mentioned that even by the standards of Dutch cycle tourists, I was carrying rather a lot of weight with me! Too much, as it turned out, to get up the ramp into the ferry – luckily, I got a push.

At the other end, Velo Vision's new Dutch distributor, Danny Siepman, met me, and gave me a lift onwards. Bike and trailer were left chained up mightily at Europoort, where I found them safe and sound at the end of the weekend. I travelled back on the Sunday using a train to Amsterdam and a bus to Europoort – oh, it's so nice to have public transport turn up on time, unlike the usual UK experience! Then, I pedalled back onto the ferry, off the other end, and over to Hull station, where the (delayed) train to York carried bike and now empty trailer home.



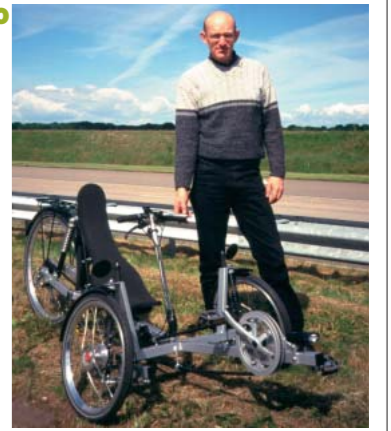
**Bike and trailer snuggle neatly into the vast space allocated to bikes on the train from Hull**



**ABOVE** Quite possibly the longest solo bike I've ever seen.

**RIGHT** If you like carbon fibre, this is the place to go. Most of these are M5 low racers, waiting their turn on the track.





**1 - 3** Flevobike, the inventors of many an innovative machine in their time, decided a few years ago to concentrate on what they do best, designing. So they've now sold all of their existing models and production capacity to various other companies, and are concentrating on design consultancy, calling themselves Flevobike Technology.

The Flevo 'Bike', 'Trike', 'Racer', 'Limit' (which was once the carbon Alleweder I think) and the Oke-Ja have all gone to Ligfietsshop Tempelmann. The 'Basic' and 'Fifty-Fifty' are now handled by Sinner Ligfietsen, and the Alleweders by Velomobiel.nl. The back-to-back tandem is in the hands of a company called B.E.L. in Tilburg. Contact details for all of these, and other companies mentioned, are at the end of this report.

At Cycle Vision Flevo were displaying the chassis for the Versatile, a new velomobile still under development, but showing off a few interesting technologies.

The entire drivetrain is enclosed, running inside the aluminium beam from the 'centralised' chainring at the front to the modified Rohloff hub at the suspension pivot. The drive then runs from a gear bolted to the Rohloff's spoke holes on to the rear wheel, concealed inside a neatly CNC-machined aluminium casing.

The front suspension system has the steering controlled by a 'joystick'. The only bit not obvious from this is how the two front wheels would be linked together!

**4** This self-built trike and matching trailer was a formidable sight on the road, giving an impression of great safety if not great speed.

**5** A rare beast – the stainless steel Chinkara. Only a handful were ever made, and this is the first I'd seen in the flesh. It's as elegant and nicely finished as the pictures suggest.

**6 - 7** This bike, the 'Masq' by Pieter de Jong, is made largely from extruded aluminium. It had a fully-enclosed drivetrain, including a concealed derailleur system, according to the description. Not bad for a home-built!

I'm not quite sure what the widget around the rear tyre is for. I think it must be a mudguard, aiming to 'scrape' water off the tyre before it gets thrown off the wheel towards the rider. I wonder if it works?

**8 - 9** Almost all of the machines at Cycle Vision, apart from the faired trikes like the Quests and Alleweders, were two-wheelers. Unlike any UK event, where you'll always see an abundance of unfaired recumbent trikes, I saw just a tiny handful, and a fair number of these were pivot-in-the-middle Flevotrikes.

An exception was the Optima stand, where they were showing their good-value 'Rider' machine - and a rather cool full-suspension



limited-edition 'off-road' version. The venue wasn't ideal to try it out, but one of their employees had a bit of fun shooting up and down the grass banks at the side of the test track. A neatly-made machine, perhaps it might be a more affordable alternative to the off-road 'Crank-it' quad recumbent from America.

**10** Another approach to full-suspension trike design came from Nico Pluijmers, a former publisher who is now turning his energies to making an affordable, full-suspension recumbent trike. The trike pictured here is his first prototype. Like a good number of the Dutch builders, he uses a McPherson Strut arrangement for the front wheels to give useful travel without 'trespassing' into the space needed for the rider's legs. The support for the top of the suspension element can also double as a useful mounting point

for a fairing. He's promised to keep in touch as the design develops.

**11 - 12** Cycle Vision is the place to go for fully-faired bikes and trikes: I'd never seen so many in one place. The most popular commercial machine seemed to be the Quest (painted striking yellow). It's all rather confusing at the moment, with various companies changing their names, but if I've got it right it's now made by Velomobiel.nl in Dronten. The Quest is geared largely for efficiency, with a body profile similar to that of a windmill blade, and wheels enclosed within the fairing. This limits the turning circle but, they say, it's still OK for Dutch bike paths and roundabouts.

There were also plenty of homebuilt fairings, many to an incredibly high standard. Riding over to the venue from the campsite one morning helped me realise why they're so popular: on dead flat roads across open countryside (so

with good sight lines), and into a remorseless headwind, the idea of a streamliner is rather appealing. And it wasn't even raining!

**13** Hubert van Hamm of Radical Design had a few interesting developments to report. His company, which makes recumbent-specific luggage bags and the folding 'Cyclone' trailer, has been busy keeping up with demand, so haven't been advertising widely.

The Cyclone is a neat little trailer, based around an aluminium frame of large suitcase size. It's 'selling point' is that in a few instants, you can remove the drawbar and wheels, and stash them away and you're left with what looks just like a large fabric suitcase-type bag. They have made a few improvements recently, including a much faster and easier release mechanism for the wheels. A neat wheel bag which straps to the top makes it easier to 'fold' if you've got luggage on board. They also had a new bag, designed





to piggy-back onto a hard-shell recumbent seat without needing a carrier rack for support, ideal for lightweight touring or day rides. Finally, Hubert demonstrated their new line in 'front rucksacks' – designed to be worn on the chest as you ride recumbent!

**14** Sonja Labordus kindly agreed to be photographed in her splendid T-shirt. She apparently has one of those computer-controlled embroidery machines at home, and (purely as a hobby) had been making up some recumbent-themed shirts. She was scouring the stands in the trade tent for brochures with nice side views of recumbents to add to her collection.

**15** Shown in the 'Homebuilders' area, this was an impressively sturdy-looking load trike built onto the front end of an old ladies' bike frame. I'm ashamed to say I don't know who built it, despite the information being clearly displayed



on the informative notices affixed to each of the home-built machines on display. My picture just isn't quite sharp enough to make the words out, and I took no other notes.

**16 - 17** This is the 'Vanout' by A.J. Koenen from Rotterdam: a rather fine recumbent constructed mostly out of wood. I particularly liked the rear suspension, using the natural flexibility of plywood to provide the 'bounce'.

**18** Completing the trio of wooden bike creations was this neat conversion of a child's bike into a recumbent.

**19** The M5 Carbon Low Racer looks absolutely stunning – and no doubt it's quite fast, too! Weighing 8.5kg complete, it's claimed to be the lightest production recumbent in the world. Apparently, the frame has a high-density foam core, with carbon partitions for added strength.



The futuristic steering setup puts the hands close together for aerodynamics, with the wrists supported by a second set of carbon 'wings'. The matching carbon front fork is said to weigh just 350g.

**20** Perhaps because it was a largely race-oriented event, there were lots of low-racers! My new agent, Danny Siepman of Zephyr Ligfietsen, is among several manufacturers producing these rather fast machines. He actually produces framekits, for riders to build up themselves. Most of the ones on show were equipped with tail fairings, often in carbon (or glass) fibre, sometimes in wood, as on Danny's own bike pictured here. Quite a few also had one-sided forks, presumably for enhanced chain clearance.



#### CONTACTS

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