



## Welcome

There's no such thing as bad weather, only bikes without decent mudguards. Rambler Alfred Wainwright may have cautioned against unsuitable clothing but for cyclists it's the mudguards that really matter. Without them, damp winter rides – especially winter *group* rides – are a like sitting beside a dirty-water lawn sprinkler.

So why do so many road cyclists go without? I was thinking about this towards the end of an autumn century ride, when the heavens opened and the unprotected back wheel I was then sitting behind started spraying like a potter's wheel. My first thought: this is ridiculous.

My second thought: the industry is selling the dream of inappropriately impractical bikes to people who subsequently invest too much cash in them to admit they've bought the wrong bike for year-round riding on a soggy island in the north Atlantic.

Maybe that's where the denialism gets in. "If this bike, which the cycling media tells me climbs like a mountain goat, corners like a cheetah wearing ice skates, and is absolutely worth four and a half stars, will not take mudguards, well, mudguards are unnecessary, QED."

Fortunately there are workarounds. Not those little flaps that fit under the saddle to stop a soggy bum, but reasonably long mudguards designed to make road bikes wet-ride ready. We've tested four sets this issue – see page 69. I can think of a few riders who need to read this right now. How about you?

DAN JOYCE  
Cycle Editor

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**On the cover**  
Camping in the Namib Desert by Nicolás Marino/Alamy

Top to bottom: Keir Gallagher, Steve Melia, Richard Pearce, Jane John

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