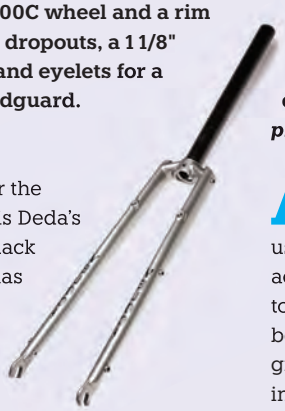
A If you are looking for loose balls only, try an online bearing supplier such as Simply Bearings (**simplybearings.co.uk**). A full complement of loose balls, easily held in their races for assembly by using grease, will support a greater load than caged balls and, if your bearing races are indented, may well smooth any notchy sensation as they won't match the number and spacing of the indentations.
Richard Hallett

Technical

Forking out for a holiday

Q I'm planning a car-free family cycling holiday in the Netherlands. The adult bikes (Sabbath Septembers) will need to carry both front and rear panniers, but the bikes have carbon forks that aren't suitable for a front rack. Can you recommend a suitable replacement steel or aluminium fork? It needs to be compatible with a 700C wheel and a rim brake, and have QR dropouts, a 1 1/8" threadless steerer, and eyelets for a front rack and a mudguard.
John Alesbrook



A The standard fork for the Sabbath September is Deda's now-discontinued Black Rain model, which has 44mm of offset and an axle-to-crown dimension of 377mm. If you wish to retain your bike's steering 'feel' and its orientation with the ground, you'll need to find a fork with dimensions to within 1mm of these. This may mean going to a custom builder as the nearest readily available off-the-peg fork, Surly's Long Haul Trucker (£169.99, **ison-distribution.com**), has an axle-crown distance of 390mm. This will raise the Sabbath's front end by 13mm, slackening the head and seat tube angles by a little under 1º. Another option is the Veloci Tracklocross fork, pictured, from Brick Lane Bikes (£195, **bricklanebikes.co.uk**), which is made for 35mm tyres (10mm smaller than the Surly fork) and may be closer to the height you want.
Richard Hallett

Health

Tennis elbow

Q I've had tennis elbow for about eight weeks after sawing logs in the garden. I've not been to see a GP about it yet (because it's not easy to see one), but I have finally made an appointment. I have been resting the elbow as much as possible but am wondering if getting back on the bike will prolong the recovery. The most painful thing is picking up a cup of coffee.
plook, on the Cycling UK Forum

A Tennis elbow is a condition thought to be due to heavy or repetitive use of the muscles of the forearm. The action causing the damage will continue to be painful until it heals and should be avoided if possible. If handlebar grip position is contributing then this is included in the things to avoid.

It may be possible to protect the elbow with a splint, while pain can be minimised with paracetamol or ibuprofen. A physiotherapist can demonstrate some stretches. Strengthening the muscles of the forearm with light weights will also provide some protection.

Most experts advise waiting at least a year before intervention as the condition usually settles on its own. If it persists then there are surgical options. The question of whether to wait for full recovery will depend on how much you miss cycling. It is unlikely to make much difference in the long run. For more details, see **nhs.uk/conditions/tennis-elbow/prevention/**.
Dr Kate Brodie

Technical

Out of alignment

Q The steel fork on my bike is a tiny bit out, maybe by a couple of millimetres, such that the axle is not sitting true. The wheel goes in and has clearance, but leans slightly to one side. The load is badly distributed and is killing the bearings in super quick time! I'm tempted to try to force it straight, or file a couple of millimetres into the dropout to make the wheel sit straight in a bent fork. An alternative is to buy a new fork but I don't really want to bin the one I've got.
Jupestar, on the Cycling UK Forum

A There are several ways a steel fork can be misaligned, each easily checked, and usually rectified, by a frame builder. This sounds like the fork has been pushed to one side, which tends to make the wheel rim sit offset between the blades even when the fork ends are correctly spaced. It can be checked by placing the steerer tube on a flat surface, such as a wooden block, placed on another such as a kitchen worktop. The block needs to be high enough for the fork to clear the worktop when rolled along it.

Measured alternately, the two fork ends should reach the same height above the worktop when the face of the crown – or the front of the legs just beneath it – is vertically aligned. (This can be confirmed using a try square.) If they're not, and assuming you can hold the steerer firmly in, say, a bench vice without damaging it, each leg can be pulled in the required direction by half the difference between the two, leaving them spaced at 100mm between the inner faces of the ends. Go gently and don't overdo it as most steel forks don't need much force in the sideways plane.
Richard Hallett

Get in touch

EMAIL your technical, health, or legal questions to *editor@cyclinguk.org* or write to Cyclopedia, Cycle, Cycling UK, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford, GU2 9JX. Cycle magazine cannot answer unpublished queries. But don't forget that Cycling UK operates a free-to-members advice line for personal injury claims, **TEL:** *0330 107 1789*.