



## EDITORS' AWARDS

As we head into the offseason, it's high time we take a look at the memorable people, races and products that defined the cyclocross year. For our Editors' Awards, we didn't simply emulate all the same categories posed to our readers, but rather tailored them to our own experiences with products we had the ability to test, with a focus on items released in the last two seasons.

### BEST RIDERS AWARDS

Male Domestic: *Jeremy Powers*  
Female Domestic: *Katie Compton*  
Euro Male: *Kevin Pauwels*  
Euro Female: *Marianne Vos*



### BEST HIGH-END CANTI

*Avid Shorty Ultimate* Excellent performance and versatility. (MSRP \$196/set)

### BEST MID-RANGE CANTI

*Shimano CX70* (pictured) More elegant than its predecessors, accommodates different post and rim widths, strong brake pads and a decent price. (MSRP \$129.98/set)



### BEST BUDGET BRAKE

*Tektro's CR720* Good mud clearance, height-adjustable brake pads, awesome budget-saving price of \$59.98 per set.

### BEST TOOLBOX ACCESSORY

Even though nothing can equal the ride of a tubular or the convenience of a tube, it's no secret we're big tubeless fans, and the affordable *Stan's Tire Sealant* makes it all happen (and if you're lucky, it might seal your punctured tubulars). We believe if you pooh-pooh its promise you either haven't tried it, didn't get it dialed, or have more wheels and time than we do. (MSRP \$2.95 for 2 oz)

### TIRES

We always say the only two cyclocross-specific components on a bike are tires and brakes, so we geeked out big-time in those areas. In terms of tires, when it gets muddy and slippery, we opt for the tall-knobbed and aggressive *Challenge Limus*, and when conditions are dry and hardpacked or grassy, *Vittoria's XN* file tread with decent side knobs is our choice if we have to foot the bill. If limited to just one tire, we choose the *Specialized Terra* (pictured)—although it's the company's mud tire, the knobs aren't very tall and it's a fine, modern, do-it-all choice.



When it comes to clinchers, *Schwalbe's Rocket Ron* has the best chance to keep us upright and moving forward in the mud, but don't forget you can get the *Limus* in an "open" tubular as well. When ultimate speed is important, *Kenda's Happy Medium* keeps everyone happy with a nice diamond file tread with a side knob, and it comes in three sizes including an awesome, trail-worthy 40c. We're known to ride Kenda tires tubeless, but do so at your own risk. Want to buy just one tire and keep it for the season, regardless of Mother Nature's mood? We grab a *Clément PDX Crusade* for the front, *Kenda Slant Six* in the back (mismatched tires are blasphemous we know), or if blessed with a pair of Road Tubeless wheels, a carbon-bead (and sadly discontinued) *Hutchinson Bulldog*.

## BIKES

Bikes are a fun category for us, but it's important to note that our tiny staff doesn't ride all 100+ bikes on the market during one season. On the *Budget* end, we only tested four bikes in the last year: the Specialized Crux Comp, the *KHS CX300* (MSRP \$1,799), the disc-equipped Raleigh Roper and Airborne Delta. The Crux felt a bit more racy but offered Apex instead of the KHS' Rival, and the massive mud clearance of the CX300 got us more excited for really muddy days. The *Race Bike* category was a tight one, coming down to a tie between the *Redline Conquest Team with SRAM Force* (MSRP \$3,499) and the *Cannondale Super-X with Rival* (MSRP \$3,759). We fell in love with the svelte Super-X but think the Redline is a better value and has a ton of small frame features like internal cabling, and a rear disc brake mount.



**BEST GEAR TREND** *Mini V-brakes*: Great power and they reduce fork shudder.

**BEST MUNCHIE** *Chocolate #9*  
(MSRP \$3/\$4.99, incl shipping)

**BEST AFFORDABLE WHEELS**  
*Williams Cyclo-Cross tubulars* (MSRP \$399/set)



**BEST HIGH-END WHEELS**  
*Zipp Firecrest 303 Tubulars*  
(MSRP \$2,300/set)

**BEST EMBRO** *Mad Alchemy*: Great, diverse products, and many collaborations with prominent 'crossers. (MSRP \$19.95/4oz) We also like Enzo's stick application.

**BEST CHAIN GUARD** *N-Gear Jump Stop*: Versatile and effective. (MSRP \$11.99)

## COMPONENT GROUP

Shimano's new *CX70 crank, chainrings, pulley-less top-pull front derailleur and front shifter with two trims* had us back to appreciating the joys of a double chain ring.

## DREAM BIKE

We dream too, and are fortunate to have ridden your dream bikes in the *Moots Psychlo-X RSL* (MSRP \$4,765 frame/fork) and the *Raleigh Hodala singlespeed* (MSRP \$2,200 frame/fork). They're both awesome frames and we second the Readers' choices.



## PEDALS

For muddy conditions, we like the mud-clearing ability and light weight of the mid-range *Eggbeater 3* (MSRP \$120), and in drier areas opt for *Shimano's M-540*—a fine, reliable performer at an attractive price point. (MSRP \$89.99)



## DOMESTIC EVENT OF THE YEAR

*CrossVegas*  
It may be a grass crit, but the quality of riders, the tactics and often the finishes are amazing.



**EVENT MOST LIKELY TO LEAVE YOUR HEAD HURTING,**  
from either the drinking or the "barriers" *SSCXWC*



**EVENT OF THE YEAR** *Koksijde World Cup Dunes!* And 68,500 fans can't be wrong.

## BEST VENUE

*Gran Prix of Gloucester*  
Great spectating from up on the hill or the rock, North Shore coastal scenery, beer sponsor, has sand, grass, pavement, often mud and sometimes snow.

## BEST NEW EVENT

*New Year's Resolution Race*  
Great two-day event that leads into later Nats.